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Hello K&L Wine Club Members,

Spring has finally arrived and it's time to celebrate this fair-weather season with some great vino! At K&L the start of the year means more tasting appointments and a series of buying trips around the world, in search of great new wine. I've tasted a lot of samples and culled the best of the bounty for our wine clubs. Whether your Club's wines this month are from Italy, Sonoma or Burgundy, they are some of my absolute favorites and I hope you'll love them as well.

Club Français members will enjoy a dry white from the Vouvray region of the Loire valley, alongside an older vintage of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Both wines come from newer producers whose enthusiasm and passion for winemaking led them down the difficult path of starting their domaines from scratch in appellations that were already well developed. Now a few years on, both are seeing the recognition that their passion deserves. Truly, the wines speak for themselves.

In the Signature Red Club this month we look at one of the most classic varietal combinations: the Rhône blend. This mix of varietals has been a key player in wine production from Spain to South Africa, France and the US for years, but what makes it so successful? We'll compare one from the Rhône Valley itself, with one from Sonoma. Both wines are a few years from vintage date and are now showing beautifully the strengths of this classic blend.

The Premium Club returns to two well-loved classic varietals, popular for good reason: Chardonnay and Cabernet. As is often the case, we've found that the better values are coming from across the pond. Sure, K&L staff members tend to be Francophiles, but when you experience the quality of the Bordeaux and the Burgundy we have this month, I think you'll agree with me that these wines surpass many a domestic Cabernet or Chardonnay.

In the Best Buy Club we're featuring two wines you'll have fun with: a Pinot Grigio and a Malbec. The Pinot Grigio comes from a small estate in Isonzo, Italy. It's made by one of Italian buyer Greg St. Clair's favorite small producers. The Malbec is from a winery in Salta, Argentina, that makes some of the most stunning wines from this high-elevation region that I have had the pleasure to taste.

Club Italiano members are sure to enjoy Greg's two red picks this month: a Dolcetto from a very focused and driven winemaker in the Piedmont region, and a Sangiovese/Merlot blend from the Marche. Better known for its white wines, the Marche is becoming a great region for reds. Thanks to Greg's discoveries there, we have the benefit of tasting these little-known wines.

As April is also a Champagne month, don't forget to check out Gary's write up on his two picks this month from the northern end of the region. There is always a reason to buy Champagne, particularly at the great Club pricing he is offering.

Heather Gowen, K&L Wine Club Director  
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# Le Club Français

While many domaines or châteaux in France are handed down generation to generation, some young wine professionals must start from scratch. This can be quite a daunting task if you are in a well-developed appellation with many famous estates. Such was the case for both of the domaines whose wine we enjoy this month. While one of the domaines has now reached its second generation, both are still very much newcomers in the eyes of their neighbors. Still, the wines they produce speak of the highest quality and can compete with some of the top names in their respective regions.

In 1974, Pierre and Mireille Giraud converted what used to be Mireille's family distillery into a small winery in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. While Pierre's family had long been in the vine-growing business, he was the first member to start his own domaine. Leasing a mere four hectares of neighboring vineyards, Pierre and Mireille plunged into the challenge of developing their own domaine. Today, their son François attends to the care of the now 30-hectare estate, and their daughter Marie makes the wine. While leasing may not seem like the optimal *modus operandi* for a new domaine, in fact this helped the family in their quest to select the excellent plots that would eventually comprise their estate. The Giraud family took an interest early on in organic farming, and now their vineyards are fully certified. Marie takes care in the winemaking to use less oak than is traditional in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and instead makes use of concrete and stainless steel to separately vinify the juice from each of the parcels that go into the final cuvées. The Girauds feel that this is a more transparent way to experience the depth and character of their unique vineyards. I was thoroughly impressed with the **2013 Domaine Giraud Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$24.99)** upon tasting it earlier this year. While 2013 was a year fraught with challenges for many producers, you would hardly guess that from this wine. It has mellowed out beautifully, and now sings in the glass with resonant red berry fruit, tobacco, cured meats and black pepper notes. The tannins have softened with time and added to the texture of this medium-bodied red. The layers of flavor continue on into a very drawn-out finish. We recommend decanting this wine before serving it.

Our second wine this month comes from an even newer producer. Vincent Carême, together with his wife Tania, founded Domaine Vincent Carême in 1999 in the Vouvray region of the Loire Valley. Chenin Blanc, the grape used to make Vouvray, is one of my favorite varieties, so I was excited to include a Vouvray in the club's offerings. Deciding which Vouvray to feature seemed difficult, but the quality and passion that Vincent brings to his work as winemaker outshines many of his more established neighbors, and shows so clearly in his wine, that in the end it was a straightforward decision. The **2016 Domaine Vincent Carême "Le Clos" Vouvray Sec (\$34.99)** is a dry style Vouvray, with crisp, focused acidity, excellent weight and texture on the palate, and lots of potential to age. The Le Clos cuvée is one of Vincent's top wines and sees 12 months in third-fill barrels prior to bottling. This strengthens the wine's textural richness on the palate and gives excellent structure. One of the great aspects of Chenin Blanc is its ability to age gracefully, thanks to its naturally high acidity. While the wine does drink beautifully now and displays plenty of fresh orchard fruit, it should develop honeyed aromas and exotic spice notes with a few more years in bottle and would be a treat to pair with roasted game birds.



*Vincent Carême tests the brix (sugar levels) in his grapes in preparation for the 2018 harvest.*

# Signature Red Collection Wine Club

Happy April to our red wine enthusiasts! This month we are taking a look at one of the classic blends. A Rhône blend is so-called of course for its origins in the south of France, but this blend of varietals is successful in many regions, from Spain to South Africa and the US. We'll compare this month a classic Côtes du Rhône from an ancient estate and an established California Rhône blend from Sonoma. Both wines are a few years past vintage date, and are showcasing perfectly some of the unique strengths of this well-loved blend.

Longtime club members will remember seeing the name Fontbonau before in their club selections. At K&L, Fontbonau is an annual event. It's always fun to see a new vintage arrive, and compare the subtle differences of each year's cuvée. We've loved this little domaine for many years, and for good reason. Fontbonau has been a farm in the Enclave des Papes since the 15th century. Situated north and a little east of Avignon, this ancient domaine began as a subsidiary of the neighboring Benedictine

priory. Currently it is run by two childhood friends, Jérôme Malet, who inherited the estate from his family, and Frédéric Engerer. Engerer, a very good friend of K&L, is the managing director of a stunning portfolio of wineries including Château Latour, Eisele Vineyards, Domaine d'Eugénie, and Château Grillet. He has helped Jérôme Malet modernize Fontbonau and freshen up the winemaking style. Grenache is the dominate grape in the **2014 Domaine Fontbonau, Côtes-du-Rhône (\$20.99)**, followed by Syrah. These two varietals are the classic and fundamental ingredients in a good Rhône blend. Grenache is friendly to hot climates, and produces large berries with thin skins. It tends to be less tannic than many reds, and produces beautiful, soft, fruity flavors. Syrah produces smaller, thick-skinned berries that make for deeply tinted, more tannic and earthy wines. It's easy to see why the two varietals mesh well and are often favored in warmer climates. Fontbonau's classic Côtes du Rhône is full bodied and richly fruited with sweet aromas of black cherry, huckleberry and wild thyme. On the palate the wine displays more structure with fresh red-berry acidity and well-integrated tannin texture. The finish adds a savory dimension, with a slight emphasis on mushroom and wet leaves. We have loved this wine for three vintages. I love how this one is developing, and would recommend pairing it with lamb dishes.

Our second Rhône blend comes from closer to home, in Sonoma. Amapola Creek winery is the pet project of winemaker Richard Arrowood. Richard is one of the early greats in Sonoma, and has made wine in the area since 1974. Working as winemaker for Chateau St Jean for many years and eventually founding Arrowood winery, Richard has finally "retired" to focus on his estate vineyard and winery, Amapola Creek. Few know the climate and terroir of Sonoma better than Richard. While Sonoma is mostly known for Cabernet, Richard feels that a Rhône blend has a calling here too, and he makes a masterful one, named after his wife Alis. The **2013 Amapola Creek "Cuvée Alis" Sonoma Valley Red Blend (\$28.99)** brings out a different side of the classic Rhône blend. This wine is also Grenache dominated, but includes a good proportion of Mourvèdre in the blend, lending the wine weight and deep black fruit. With bottle aging, this wine has also developed a beautiful savory olive and cured-meat element, which adds further complexity. A great example of the more savory and full bodied Rhône style, Cuvée Alis would work perfectly with grilled meats, and even steak.



*Childhood friends Jérôme Malet (left) and Frédéric Engerer (right) work together on Fontbonau.*

# Premium Wine Club

Last month in the Premium Club, I ventured into some new territory and presented a Syrah and a Sauvignon Blanc, often less popular varietals, but good for a change. This month we return to the classics with a Cabernet and a Chardonnay. Those of you who shop in store at K&L may know that more often than not when you ask a K&L staffer for a Chardonnay or a Cabernet, they are going to walk you over to the French side of the store. We might be a little biased toward France when it comes to these varietals, but the truth is, we have some great deals based on our direct buying program in France, and we like sharing these with you. Such is the case with this month's selections.

The bounty of Bordeaux's 2015 vintage has hardly passed here at K&L, and we recently received in a shipment from one of our favorite little wineries. This Château, despite its ancient heritage, is a bit undiscovered on the market, and always outperforms its price point. The **2015 Cap de Faugères, Côtes de Castillon (\$14.99)** is a bright spot on the Right Bank, with buoyant cassis, huckleberry and silky texture, complemented by an underpinning of classic structure and elegant eucalyptus and graphite notes. Owned now by perfume designer and oenophile Silvio Denz, Cap de Faugères is one of a few Châteaux in the Côtes de Castillon that can trace its lineage back into the 18th century. This charming old estate has been thoroughly modernized and new cellars have been installed by the same architects responsible for Pichon Longueville's beautiful facility in Pauillac. As is the case with most Bordeaux, this is best either cellared for a few years longer, or decanted for a good hour or two before drinking.

Our Chardonnay hails from Burgundy, and is from another excellent vintage, 2016. In Burgundy, vineyard sites are of the utmost importance and are often split among various producers. The small Croix Jarrier vineyard near Macon-Verzé produces fruit for large domaines and some small growers. Domaine Leflaive produces an expression from this site that normally retails for about \$40. We've found that the better value comes from the local cooperative, Vignerons de Terres Secrètes. This small cooperative makes a Macon Verzé that's a perfect

expression of this southern side of Burgundy. The **2016 Vignerons de Terres Secrètes Macon Verzé "Croix Jarrier" (\$14.99)** is full bodied with rich, creamy texture, and it's loaded with yellow pear, honeycrisp apple and white peach fruit. A beautiful, chalky minerality underlies the wine, and the whole is seamless. Best enjoyed in the next year or so, this is a great accompaniment to roast chicken, grilled scallops and risotto, or mildly spiced pork dishes.



*A glimpse of the beautiful setting of Château Cap de Faugères.*



*In the Macon region, limestone-based ridges strongly influence terroir.*

# Best Buy Wine Club

Our Best Buy Club members have the advantage of tasting wines from all over the world on a regular basis. This month we have two favorite values, one European and one South American. Both come from unique terroirs in their respective regions. One is a serious Malbec from the village of Salta, Argentina, and the other a delicious Pinot Grigio from one of Italian buyer Greg St. Clair's good friends in Friuli.

Giovanni Blason's picture may look familiar to many of you. We featured one of his red wines in the Club Italiano a few months back, and now we have the opportunity to share with you his most popular wine. Pinot Grigio is, of course, one of the classics in Italy, popular for good reason. Light, easy drinking and versatile, this wine is both inexpensive and easy to love. While inexpensive Pinot Grigio is a bit of a glutted market, if you find a small producer who is focused on quality, you can still find an excellent wine. Such is the case with Giovanni Blason, a young winemaker in Friuli who made the decision to stop selling his grapes to a large cooperative and start making wine himself. The result is fantastic. Since most Pinot Grigio on the market comes from large cooperatives blending fruit from all over the region, there is less discernable terroir, and an emphasis only on preserving simple, fruity characteristics. Giovanni's **2017 Blason Pinot Grigio Isonzo del Friuli (\$8.99)**, by contrast, is very expressive, both of the beautiful Isonzo region in which his estate is situated, and of his own winemaking style. The grapes grow in an alluvial limestone soil, also heavy in iron deposits. This makes for a mineral-rich wine with very expressive floral aromatics. Giovanni uses a little bit of skin contact while fermenting the wine as well, which lends extra texture and weight to the palate, so that this wine has it all: depth, body, stunning aromatics, and freshness. He recommends using this wine as an apéritif, or with light seafood appetizers.

This month's accompanying red wine comes from a favorite winery in Argentina. Year after year we have enjoyed the stunning wines from the Amalaya Bodega in Salta. This small, high-elevation village grows some of the most intriguing wines in the country. The classic grapes are present, Malbec and Torrontes, and they take on special characteristics in this distinctive climate. This Malbec is sourced from two vineyard sites, Las Mercedes and San Isidro. The deep, sandy soils of Las Mercedes vineyard encourage the development of beautiful, heady aromatics in the wines. San Isidro, by contrast, is home to rocky soils with more nutrients. This soil makeup forces the vines to dig deeper and develop heartier, more mineral-driven berries. Thanks to the differing vineyard sites we get a great combination of aromatics and mineral elements, which complement each other well. The **2016 Amalaya Malbec Salta (\$10.99)** has deep, dark fruit with an elegant layer of minerality in the background. The aromatics are heady, with violet, plum, and huckleberry. The tannin is quite soft, and the wine flows easily across your palate. This is a very flexible wine in terms of food pairing. It can work well with appetizers, picnic foods, and pizza. I personally love this wine all on its own, or "cocktail" style.



*A familiar face returns to K&L's wine clubs. Giovanni Blason is the mastermind behind our most popular Pinot Grigio.*

# Club Italiano

Notes by Greg St. Clair, K&L's Italian wine buyer.

Roberto Voerzio is an intense man whose eyes penetrate, seemingly to your very soul. He's not fierce, just exceptionally intent on his perceived path of life and winemaking. He started his winery in 1986, so it's not exactly ancient by Italian standards or even in Piedmont, which compared to Tuscany is a relative newcomer. Roberto's winery is in La Morra, the furthest west of all the Barolo Communes and generally considered the most delicate. We're still talking Barolo, yet Roberto's wines are anything but delicate. Roberto's wines are powerful because he's a believer in intense, green harvesting, the practice of cutting fruit off the vine just before the grapes begin to color, to increase the ability of the remaining grapes to become fully ripe. This is nowadays a pretty standard practice amongst folks making high quality red wine. Roberto does green harvesting not only for all of his Barolo but also on down to this wine, his Dolcetto. The **2016 Roberto Voerzio "Priavino" Dolcetto d'Alba (\$21.99)** is all organically farmed and is fermented with indigenous yeast in stainless steel tanks; this wine doesn't see any wood aging or any fining or filtering. This wine is full of ebullient fruit, lots of ripe blueberry. It is bold and dramatically displayed with an excellent mid palate, a touch of tannin to frame it, and a long and balanced finish. I love Dolcetto this time of the year. With the weather a bit blustery and cool, my go-to is a plate of grilled sausage and polenta. A simpler and better match there is not!



From the "Belvedere" in La Morra, the view across the Barolo DOCG.

As I look back over the last few months I've been showing a lot of wines from the Marche. I've talked about how much I love this overlooked region in Italy and how it reminds me of what Italy was once like. Tuscany, as beautiful as it is, finds itself overrun with ex-pats who are finding their lives "Under the Tuscan Sun" and just oceans of tourists. The Matelica region of the Marche is one of the most unique growing zones in all of Italy; it is a north-south valley in the middle of the Apennine mountain range that once was a salt lake. The orientation of the valley closes it off from the warm coastal waters (the opposite of the west coast of the US) and gives it a more continental climate of cold winters, hot summers but cool nights, the perfect balance to make vibrant wines. This area is known for its white wines in the Verdicchio di Matelica appellation where the whites do very well with the cool evenings. It's never been much of a red wine zone. Well, with Global Warming, the 2015 vintage allowed the red grapes to completely ripen where in some past vintages it's been a struggle. The **2015 La Monacesca "Camerte" Marche Rosso (\$17.99)** is 70% Sangiovese which gives its wine its backbone, length and structure while the 30% Merlot gives the wine a bit of richness, supple flow and personality to the stern Sangiovese. The wine shows lots of ripe cherry character balanced with a meaty savory expression from the Merlot. Try it with your favorite recipe for Spaghetti Bolognese!

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In the heart of the Apennines, Matelica stands out as a unique growing zone.

# Champagne Club *Notes by Gary Westby, K&L's Champagne buyer.*

This month we have two selections from the far north of Champagne, one from just south of Reims, and one from some of the very few vineyards north of the city. Both are Pinot powered and complex wines, made the old-fashioned hard way. They also come from areas rarely visited by tourists—a great idea for club members heading to the region!

Christiane & Christophe Boulard tend a twenty-acre estate on the very northern edge of Champagne. Their village, Cormincy, is at the very top of Champagne, the northernmost village in the Massif Saint Thierry. Everything is made with two old coquard basket presses in the winery, which require manual work with pitch forks. Their **Boulard-Bauquaire “Carte Noire” Brut Blanc de Noirs Champagne (\$34.99)** is a combination of half Pinot Noir and half Meunier, entirely from estate vines in Cormincy. This is a very autumnal wine with plenty of dark fruit and Pinot savor. I love the subtle, porcini complexity in this wine, and love to pair it with paté, stuffed mushrooms, or onion tart as the apéritif. It is also a great partner with soups, from French onion to butternut squash.



*Christiane and Christophe Boulard with their old Coquard press.*

Louis Brochet has 32 acres in Ecuil, just south of Reims. His **2013 Louis Brochet “Adèle” Millesime Brut Champagne (\$34.99)** is composed of two thirds Pinot Noir and one third Chardonnay. He named it after his daughter, who was born in 2013. It is not an understatement to say that he worked very, very hard to get this exactly right. For this vintage, he used almost exclusively a few old plots of a special massal selection of Pinot Noir called Pinot d’Ecuil that had been selected and planted by his grandmother. The Chardonnay comes from old-clone plots, and all of the fruit is Premier Cru and estate grown. Louis vinified this vintage entirely in stainless steel, and it has a great red cherry quality that almost reminds me of Volnay. I’m looking forward to pairing my bottles of this Champagne with smoked trout or miso-glazed salmon, although it is also an excellent apéritif.



*Louis Brochet surveys his vineyards.*

# Re-order Offers

As a member of a K&L Wine Club, you have the opportunity to order previous offerings from any of our clubs. The following pages contain a “backlist” of each club. Please note the special club prices for each wine. You can make re-order purchases via phone, email or your online account. Our order desk is open 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven days a week. If you have any wine club-related issues, or wish to place an order, please call us at 800-247-5987. In addition, you can email us at [theclubs@klwines.com](mailto:theclubs@klwines.com).

**All wine can be purchased by the single bottle. Prices are shown after each wine listed.**

**Tax (in California) and shipping will be added to each order.**

***For a complete, up-to-date inventory listing visit us online at: [www.klwines.com](http://www.klwines.com)***

## Le Club Français Previous Offerings

2015 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas @ \$29.99 per bottle

With the phenomenal 2015 vintage, Domaine des Bosquets produced a beautiful and powerful estate wine, with perhaps more weight and concentration than in previous years. Most of the vines in production on the estate are nearing the 50-year age mark, and with the region's rocky soils, their roots grow deep, bringing up loads of mineral quality to the fruit, and providing the power and structure you'd expect in old-vine Rhône wines. On the palate this wine is layered and savory with olive, game, cured meats and dark berry fruit. The tannins have integrated well, and provide texture and shape to the wine, drawing out its long finish.

2015 Schlumberger “Saering” Riesling Grand Cru Alsace @ \$29.99 per bottle

This Riesling is dry, poised and highly aromatic, while maintaining beautiful palate weight. Though fresh, fruity and perfumed when young, this wine really takes a few years to develop its full potential of beauty and complexity. We are now a bit less than four years from vintage date, and the wine has a long life ahead of it. And yet, the wine is easy to enjoy right now. The recommended pairing for this wine in its present incarnation would be calamari, sushi, mildly spiced Thai cuisine, or fresh goat's milk cheese. As it ages and gains in weight and intensity, the wine can pair well with heartier dishes, including entrees such as grilled pork.

2014 Domaine J. Roty Marsannay @ \$36.99 per bottle

The first thing to say about this wine is that it needs not only to be understood in a traditional sense, but also enjoyed in a traditional manner. And by that I mean it needs a couple of hours in the decanter, and an accompanying meal throughout which to savor the wine as it opens and evolves in the glass. The wine is a bit secretive, just like the family who makes it, and requires a little patience. Once it opens up, it is thoroughly thrilling. This delicate Marsannay is restrained in character and extremely elegant with beautiful layers of wild mushroom, crunchy red cherry, bright cassis and subtle anise, clove and earth notes.

2016 Chante Cigale, Châteauneuf-du-Pape @ \$29.99 per bottle

This wine is a blend of 65% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre, and 5% Cinsault. It boasts elevated and spice-laden aromas with luscious berry compote on the palate, accented by silky tannin and precise acidity. Poised and well balanced, this wine already betrays its depth and complexity with a little decanting time. I'd highly recommend pairing this with lamb, smoked meats or dishes cooked with wild mushroom.

## Signature Red Club Previous Offerings

2016 Mount Edward Estate Pinot Noir Central Otago @ \$24.99 per bottle

Winemaker Duncan Forsyth has been in New Zealand's Central Otago region since the 1990s and planted some of the best vineyard sites in the area. Teaming up with winemaker Anna Riederer, who cut her chops at none other than Domaine Roulot in Meursault, Burgundy, the duo has gone on to produce some great Pinot. Anna's approach to winemaking is balanced and careful, not intervening overly much in the natural process, and aiming to achieve a finished wine that is not only complex in character, but textural, nuanced, and expressive of its terroir. Terroir is Duncan's department. Having planted many of the vineyards in the area, he knows the soils and vines like few

others. In Central Otago it's easy to get ripe fruit, but it's more challenging to produce wine that marries this ripe fruit with a sense of place and layers of complexity. I believe Duncan achieves precisely this in his estate Pinot Noir.

#### 2015 Calluna "CVC" Bordeaux Blend Chalk Hill @ \$24.99 per bottle

Elegant and restrained claret, showcasing the gorgeous fruit of Sonoma County alongside the poised structure and balance of a classically trained winemaker's technique. This wine is exactly what I'm looking for with a Friday night steak. The wine opens with elegant aromatics showcasing black cherry, eucalyptus and cigar notes, while the palate develops a medium body with classical structure, red currant and plum fruits and finishes with a long close, lingering on the palate.

#### 2016 Domaine de la Garrigue Vacqueras "La Cantarelle" @ \$26.99 per bottle

This cuvée "La Cantarelle" comes from some of the oldest vines on the property (70+ years), and both the Grenache and Syrah used in the blend display the concentration and power of an older vine. In particular the Syrah shows a tenacious peppery note, combined with a savory cured-meat aspect that nicely complements the deep black fruit of the Grenache. With savory elements showing beautifully, this would be an ideal candidate for wild game such as boar or venison and would also play well with smoked meats.

#### 2016 Eric Kent "Atoosa's Vineyard" Syrah Russian River Valley @ \$22.99 per bottle

This Syrah is deep purple, with concentrated cassis aromas and a rich, full-bodied palate that is full and fruity, while remaining crisp and light on its feet. The fruit is youthful and boisterous, with plenty of bright berry notes, and also betrays a mild pepper spice and an intriguing layer of savory meaty notes. This is a more polished version of Syrah, and highlights the concentration and depth that this varietal is capable of.

#### 2013 Poggiarellino Brunello di Montalcino @ \$29.99 per bottle

As classic a Brunello as you can find in Montalcino. I'll bow to the expert and include Greg's tasting notes: "The nose is full with layers of wild cherry and dense dark fruit while porcini, saddle leather adds to the complexity. On the palate this wine is a blockbuster, powerful, structured yet the fruit richness is still the dominant character as once again the wild cherry and porcini emerge. A long, powerful finish, balance and structure gives this wine a superb life ahead." While this isn't the best bottle to open now (unless you have several hours to decant it), if you can bury it away for a couple of years in your cellar or wine fridge, it will absolutely blossom in your glass upon opening.

#### 2015 Domaine L'Ostal Cazes "Grand Vin" Minervois La Livinière @ \$19.99 per bottle

Owned and operated by Jean-Michel Cazes of Château Lynch-Bages fame, this property produces full-bodied Minervois wines that punch far above their modest price point. The wine is full of heady aromas of cassis, black plum and savory olive. On the palate the dark fruit is complemented by a light menthol note and a stunning balance of tannin and acidity. The savory component develops throughout and lingers after the finish, with a trace of game, forest floor and mushroom.

#### 2015 Puy Blanquet, St-Emilion @ \$23.99 per bottle

This St-Emilion is not only classic and food friendly, it also appeals to a variety of palates. With a definite concentration of black and red berry fruit, the wine maintains elegant tannin and acidity structure to give it definition. The aromatics are stunning—full and expressive violet, cassis, plum and anise dominate, and the layers of fruit, spice and earth notes are endless. The beauty of the 2015 vintage is that the wines are open, balanced and drinkable now. If this does make its way to your cellar, it will go the long haul with aging.

#### 2015 Pellegrini Russian River Pinot Noir @ \$25.99 per bottle

Pellegrini is one of the oldest names in the California wine business, and the wines are still incredible. Not only does this Pinot show the best qualities of the Russian River appellation—silky tannin and luscious dark fruit—but it also has an elegance and surprisingly delicate aromatic quality that completely caught me off guard. Wherever you fall on the Pinot spectrum, I think this wine will win your favor with its perfect poise and balance.

## Premium Wine Club Previous Offerings

### 2014 Adrich Browne “Perli Vineyard” Mendocino Ridge Syrah @ \$14.99 per bottle

This Syrah is grown in a cool climate, and has open, perfumed aromatics with black berry fruit, cassis, and sage on the nose. On the palate it transitions to medium body with fresh acidity, mild tannin and a long follow through. Loads of concentrated blueberry fruit complement the slightly earthy notes that come into play on the close. I would highly recommend this with roasted lamb dishes, and smoked game.

### 2018 TWR (Te Whare Ra) Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough @ \$14.99 per bottle

Made by our friends Jason and Anna Flowerday in Marlborough, New Zealand, this lovely wine is aromatically stunning, with quince and gooseberry, transitioning into lemon curd, grapefruit and honeydew on the palate. The texture is round and smooth, without being too oppressive or weighty. This wine is an excellent accompaniment to white fish and tapas-style finger foods.

### 2016 Haut Musset, Lalande-de-Pomerol @ \$14.99 per bottle

This is one of the earlier 2016s to hit our shores, and the wine is gorgeous and expressive right off the bat. With a higher percentage of Merlot, this wine is softer than you would expect of a young Bordeaux, and displays a perfect marriage of deep black berry fruit, currant leaf, mint and anise spice, combined with an elegantly poised structure of silky tannin and bright acidity. The resultant wine is young, certainly, but can be drunk now, preferably as an accompaniment to hard cheeses, Sunday roast, or savory poultry dishes.

### 2017 Tilth Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc @ \$14.99 per bottle

This wine immediately caught my attention when tasting for the Premium Club, and I quickly sealed the deal. Learning a little more about James and Hilary, owners and winemakers at Tilth, I could see why the wine attracted me. The fruit comes from the Burkett Vineyard in Napa, and it's crafted in a style that is at once bright, crisp, and bursting with soft tropical fruit notes. The aromatics are stunning, with grapefruit peel, quince, lemongrass and honeydew melon. It's actually a rather versatile wine in terms of pairing, though perhaps it is best enjoyed simply on its own or with finger foods.

### 2016 La Monacesca Verdicchio di Matelica @ \$14.99 per bottle

Hailing from the tiny DOC of Verdicchio di Matelica, La Monacesca produces excellent high-elevation white wines—complex, precise, crisp and layered. This Verdicchio is bursting with lemongrass, nectarine and honeysuckle aromas, followed by a palate of cool passionfruit, nectarine and citrus rind. The weight is pleasantly round, with a dry, grassy finish. It's a little weightier and more complex than many a Verdicchio. Pair with cured meats, hard cheeses and olives.

### 2015 Domaine l'Oiselet Vacqueras @ \$14.99 per bottle

From an all-organic estate in the southern Rhône, this wine has clean aromas of cassis, blueberry, clove and licorice followed by a soft palate full of bright berry fruit with defined tannin and clean acidity. A light oak spice comes into play and nicely complements the boisterous fruit and clean mineral aspects of the wine.

### 2016 Les Vignerons d'Estezargues “La Granacha Signargues” Côtes du Rhône Villages @ \$14.99 per bottle

This wine is made from an old Grenache vineyard in the small town of Signargues, not far from Avignon. This little vineyard boasts an average vine age of 80 years, and produces some of the most spectacular fruit in the region. You may be wondering why the label sports the Spanish version of the word, “Granacha”; this is the name of the grape in local dialect. The old-vine fruit expresses itself beautifully in both the stunning aromatics of this wine, and the layers of spice that support a complex fruit profile.

### 2015 Pomeys, Moulis @ \$14.99 per bottle

Lusciously fruited aromas of blueberry, blackberry, plum and cedar shavings transition into a medium bodied wine with lighter tannin and very well integrated structure. On the finish, lingering berry and baking spice notes play on. There is nothing closed about this wine. It's ready to pour and enjoy now: an excellent Bordeaux for the skeptics.

## Best Buy Wine Club Previous Offerings

### 2018 Radley & Finch Chenin Blanc Western Cape @ \$9.99 per bottle

This is made by two of South Africa's top wine gurus: Thinus Kruger and Pascal Schildt. These two men have a passion for making the everyday great. While it had been a few years since I first tasted the Radley & Finch wines, the great impression they left with me was indelible, and when South Africa buyer Stephanie mentioned she had a bottle of the new Chenin Blanc release, I was thrilled to taste it. It doesn't disappoint. Thinus makes Chenin Blanc in a style that is light, fresh, and zesty, while maintaining enough weight on the palate to make it substantial. The result is a delicious wine with complexity and depth, that is at the same time all too easily quaffable.

### 2016 Domaine Petroni Corse Rouge @ \$9.99 per bottle

This wine is a blend of the local Corsican varietal Niellucciu, with Syrah and Grenache. Niellucciu is a clone of Sangiovese that has long been cultivated on Corsican shores and has taken on some characteristics unique to its island home. More rugged and earthy in style, it still sports the bright, red cherry notes characteristic of its heritage. The sandy and clay soils of the vineyard heighten the aromatic qualities of this unique grape and ensure a solid structure. The Syrah lends weight and black fruit to the blend, while the Grenache fills out the body nicely. As you enjoy this unique Corsican wine, don't be afraid to pair it with hearty winter dishes, particularly smoked meats.

### 2016 Mas de Sainte Croix "Doceur de Fruit" Côtes du Rhône Rouge @ \$9.99 per bottle

This is a lighter style "bistro" wine with pretty floral notes and red plum on the nose, and fresh cherry and strawberry fruit on the palate. It finishes dry with a lingering trace of baking spice. Delightful as a cocktail wine, this would also work perfectly with roast chicken and vegetables for a mid-week dinner.

### 2016 Allram Grüner Veltliner Kamptal @ \$9.99 per 1L bottle

This Grüner is light in body, with exuberant aromatics of lemongrass, quince, gooseberry and lime zest. On the palate it is clean and focused with pretty white pear and gooseberry fruit, crisp acidity and a lingering finish. One of the great strengths of Grüner Veltliner as a varietal is its unparalleled ability to pair well with the difficult dish. In particular it can work with vegetables that have a bitter characteristic like artichoke or asparagus, and is also friendly to umami-rich foods. I'd recommend pairing this with sushi, grilled vegetables, pork or tapas.

### 2016 Momo (Seresin) Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough @ \$9.99 per bottle

This organic Sauvignon Blanc is fresh and snappy as you'd expect, but with an added complexity and texture from the native yeast used in fermentation. Alongside the lemongrass and citrus notes, this wine abounds with white peach, nectarine and a slight nutty lees quality. I'd highly recommend this as an apéritif or cocktail wine, though it would also work well with salads and lighter vegetarian fare.

## Club Italiano Previous Offerings *Notes by Greg St. Clair, K&L's Italian wine buyer.*

### 2014 Givi "Akatron1" Etna Rosso @ \$23.99 per bottle

Owner Giovanni "Givi" La Fauci started making fruit distillates in 1987, gathering cherries, apples, peaches, plums and prickly pear from the slopes of Mt. Etna to make fruit eaux de vie, and eventually getting grape skins and making grappa. Giovanni then became interested in wine, bought some 40-year-old vineyards on Etna's north face at over 2200 feet, and started to make wine. That brings us to the 2014 vintage; it was a sensational vintage for Etna Rosso and the perfect one to introduce you to Givi. I find this wine full of wild, marasca cherry aromatics, while on the richly textured palate it is expansive, showing its power and giving a luxurious feel while the finish has lots of earthy, spicy notes that show more soil than fruit. Perfect for rich and spicy pasta dishes or grilled meats.

### 2015 Tenuta Santori Rosso Piceno @ \$15.99 per bottle

This bold and fruit-filled wine is a blend of 65% Montepulciano and 35% Sangiovese and in order to preserve more of its fruit character the wine is fermented in 80% stainless steel and 20% barrique for 4-6 months. This is a wine that cries out for grilled meat.

### 2015 Blason Bruma Rosso Friuli @ \$14.99 per bottle

This wine is a 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot blend, and its grapes are harvested in the first weeks of October and fermented in barrique. Fermenting white wines in barrique isn't a difficult task; you just pour in the

juice. For red wines you need to ferment on the grape skins, and if you've ever seen the bung hole on a barrique you know it would take a lot of effort to stuff all the skins in through that opening. Solution: stand the barrique on its end and take the top off. It works perfectly other than it adds up to an immense amount of work because you can't fit a lot into a barrique! Patient winemaking and a glorious 2015 vintage has made the Bruma Rosso.

**2016 Tenuta di Trinoro "Le Cupole" Toscana @ \$24.99 per bottle**

The blend of the Le Cupole is 42% Cabernet Franc, 40% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Petit Verdot. It isn't exactly a red Bordeaux, nor does it have much resemblance to a Napa Cabernet blend. I find that there's far more central acid focus: that part that lines up right down the middle of your tongue and gives the wine lift and balance. The nose is complex and saturated: full of cassis and blackberry but with hints of pencil shavings, cigar box and a hint of smoke. The finish is long, powerful yet not overpowering. It's best to decant this wine for an hour or so if you have the time and I feel it will age well for another decade plus.

**2013 Tenuta Sant'Antonio Scaia Paradiso Veneto @ \$16.99 per bottle**

This is a blend of local Veronese grapes—40% Corvina, 20% Corvinone, and 20% Rondinella—with, to make it unique, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. They call it a Super Veneto—take that Tuscans! I was impressed first by the bold, wild cherry nose that pulls you in. The palate texture lured me in further. The grape vines are cut and the bunches left to wither on the vine for a couple of weeks, giving it a bit of an Amarone touch, yet it's well balanced and lively. Aged for ten months in French tonneaux, it's perfect for cold nights in front of the fireplace.

**2012 Terre de Trinci Sagrantino di Montefalco @ \$27.99 per bottle**

This spends one year in barrique and then is held to allow it to develop in the bottle. The 2012 vintage is the current release. The late release gives the wine time to come together and develop secondary and tertiary flavors rather than relying on primary fruit character. The results are a powerful yet graceful wine. The tannins are more directional than forceful and they frame the powerful fruit richness. This is a big wine, best perhaps as an accompaniment to aged hard cheeses. To fully appreciate it, try it with Pizzoccheri, the classic buckwheat pasta dish of the region. Google that to find a recipe. It has chard, cheese and potatoes and it's a truly hearty dish!

## **Champagne Club Previous Offerings** *Notes by Gary Westby, K&L's Champagne Buyer.*

**Pascal Lallement "Brut Reserve" Champagne @ \$29.99 per bottle**

This wine shows off the pretty side of red-fruited Champagne. It is composed of 40% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier and 20% Chardonnay, and is aged for nearly five years on the lees before being disgorged. With just the right amount of toast, cool dark Pinot fruit and a very compact group of streamers, this drinks well by itself, but really comes alive with caviar.

**Sollemme "Terre Sollemme" 1er Cru Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

From a small organic vineyard in Villers-aux-Noeuds, this Champagne is a blend of 55% Meunier 25% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay that is aged three years on the lees. The name Sollemme is a combination of *sol* for *soliel* or sun, and *emme* for *femme* or woman. Winemaker Olivier's goal is to make feminine, delicate Champagne that have are bright like the sun. I think that he has succeeded with this gentle, light Champagne that has subtle toast and restrained apple fruit. This is a great apéritif Champagne, and is at home by itself as it is with a plate of cheeses.

**Gilbert Jacquesson "cuvée Prestige" Brut Champagne @ 34.99 per bottle**

This is a creamy, deep, brioche-laden Champagne with a truly unusual amount of complexity and depth. It is entirely barrel fermented and aged for six years on the lees. Composed of 40% Meunier from the 2010 harvest that spends a year in barrel before bottling, and 30% Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from 2011. An ideal partner for pâté or charcuterie. Fewer than 3000 bottles were made, and the Champagne Club took a third of the entire production!

**Marcel Vezien Secret d'Eclaires Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

The Vezien family have a very small plot of Pinot Blanc on their property, and use 5% in this fascinating Champagne. The other 95% is composed of Chardonnay, making this an exotic blanc de blancs. This Champagne is extroverted, rich and exotic, with hints of mandarin along with white flowers and subtle toast. This is ideal on its own as your apéritif, as it is soft, elegant and full of flavor. I think a little truffle-salt popcorn makes it even better.