



3005 El Camino, Redwood City, CA 94061

Phone, to place orders: (800) 247-5987

Wine Club extension: 2766

Fax (650) 364-4687

theclubs@klwines.com

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Hello K&L Wine Club Members,

A very happy holiday season to you all! 2020 has of course been a difficult year in many ways, and it feels good to have the holidays to celebrate. I hope this season brings joy and good wine to all of you! I'm excited to share with you some very special bottles that I think will brighten your holiday tables and help ring in 2021.

In the Club Français we have a stunning Champagne from a brother and sister duo. This wine is classic, clean and very mineral-driven and is a perfect bottle for New Year's. Members of all of our clubs will want to consider buying one at the deeply discounted club cost. In addition, Club Français members will enjoy a stunning Châteauneuf-du-Pape from a new producer in our portfolio. It's from the lauded 2016 vintage and is showing beautifully. It would be a great accompaniment to a rich holiday meal.

Full-bodied reds are a must for winter, and the Signature Red Club features two bold blends this month. One is a right-bank Bordeaux from the family behind Château Angélus, and the second is a hearty, Rhône-inspired blend from the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Stylistically they have striking differences, but they're both beautiful food wines and each shows how to do a big, bold red well. These would be perfect for rich winter dishes with red meat.

The Premium Club focuses on the aspect of wine production that is perhaps the most variable, but also the most important: people. We have a bright, well-crafted Pouilly-Fumé from one of our favorite little grower-producers in the Loire that is a pure representation of the love and hard work of the couple who made it. And alongside this we have a Syrah blend from Stolpman Vineyards in Ballard Canyon. This project by Stolpman highlights the immense contribution of the vineyard workers, and is one of the most delightful reds I've tasted all year.

We have two charming French wines for our Best Buy Club members this month, both imported directly from small producers. One is an old-vine Beaujolais, packed with bright flavor and a perfect candidate for a holiday ham pairing. The second wine is a beautiful match for New Year's oysters—a zippy Sauvignon Blanc from Touraine in the Loire Valley.

Italian wine lovers, Greg has you covered this month with two classics. If you need some hearty Italian reds to warm up your December, look no farther than the stunning Chianti Classico and the dark-fruited Valpolicella Ripasso that he's featuring for the Club Italiano.

Finally, December is a Champagne month, and Gary brings back wines of two very popular producers. He's got a vintage Blanc de Blancs from Launois and an organic Extra Brut bottling from Pierre Paillard. We don't anticipate having stock on these wines for long, so don't forget to buy your New Year's bottles now.

Cheers to you!

Heather Gowen, K&L's Wine Club director

heathergowen@klwines.com

Le Club Français

At K&L we cannot pass up any occasion that calls for Champagne, so this holiday Club Français shipment includes an excellent bottle of bubbles. Champagne buyer Gary Westby reserved this very special bottling far in advance for us to feature this month. In addition we have an exciting new Châteauneuf-du-Pape from a producer we haven't seen at K&L for quite some time.

The estate at Château Gigognan has a history stretching back to Roman times, and eventually became the property of the bishops of Avignon. More recently, the estate was acquired by Anne and Jacques Callet, who over the last few decades have completely rebuilt the winery, restoring the Château and replanting where necessary. Slowly they began acquiring additional parcels, and now the domaine includes 30

hectares in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, including the famed "Clos du Roi" vineyard. Located in one of the driest areas of the Rhône Valley, this special vineyard sports the famous *galet* stones, which radiate heat back onto the vines after sunset. That's a particularly helpful trait for the development of the heat-loving Grenache vines. Clos du Roi is also very exposed to the Mistral, a strong northwesterly wind that challenges the vines, forcing them to grow stronger, deeper roots. The **2016 Château Gigognan "Clos du Roi" Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$29.99)** is about 60% Grenache, with 30% Syrah and 10% Mourvèdre, and is aged in a combination of stainless steel and oak barrels. It's full bodied, packed with dense, dark fruit, and shows notes of licorice, thyme and pepper. Its structure isn't shy, but has started to integrate nicely with the bold fruit on the palate. While it's certainly a wine that can age, it also can drink well now with a good decant, at least an hour.

Champagne Philippe Gonet is located in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger in the Côte de Blancs, one of the most prestigious areas of Champagne. The Gonet family has tended vines in Champagne for seven generations. Today the domaine is run by brother and sister Pierre and Chantal Gonet, who craft an array of top-quality wines and house them in the stunning 18th century cellars dug deep into the chalk soils of Mesnil. Pierre and Chantal introduced the TER wines to their portfolio to highlight some of the special vineyards that go into their production. The wine we've chosen for this month is the **Philippe Gonet TER Noir Brut Champagne (\$29.99)**. TER Noir is a classic Champagne in that it is roughly one third Chardonnay, one third Pinot Noir, and one third Pinot Meunier—the traditional Champagne grapes are all represented. Pierre, the winemaker, has chosen not to let the wine go through malolactic fermentation, and he ages it in large-format, neutral oak barrels. The result is a Champagne that is both bright and poignant.



Located 10 minutes outside of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, the original Château of the Gigognan estate, completely renovated and restored, now houses an upscale bed and breakfast as well as a tasting room.



Pierre and Chantal Gonet inherited not only the family winemaking traditions, but also a beautiful Chateau and wine cellars dug in 1783.

Without the influence of malolactic fermentation, the wine is without that rich creamy character of many Champagnes. Rather, it's focused purely on the fruit and above all on the minerality. The Chardonnay grapes for this wine come from a section of Mesnil known as "Le Champ de la Truie," and are very influenced by the chalk soils here. The Pinot Noir in contrast comes from the Aube department in southern Champagne, from a little vineyard in Montgueux called "Le Tertre." The Pinot Meunier is grown in a small village called Monthodon, on the south bank of the Marne river. The Pinot Noir and the Pinot Meunier add fruit and body to the wine, and the Chardonnay contributes a stark, chalky minerality, lending to a seamlessly elegant whole. It will be the perfect wine to toast in the new year of 2021!

Signature Red Club

What better way to welcome winter than with two fine, full-bodied red wines? We are featuring a stunning Right Bank Bordeaux, and a rich California Rhône-Style red from the Sierra foothills. Whether you are planning an elegant holiday dinner or just looking for a nice rich red for the chilly winter nights, this month's selections have plenty to offer.

Château La Fleur de Boüard is the pet project of Angélu owner Hubert de Boüard de Laforest and his daughter Coralie. Convinced of the unexplored potential in the Lalande-de-Pomerol region, Hubert purchased this 25-hectare property in 1998, and he has invested in re-working the entire property with a sustainable growing approach and a winery of innovative design, including an entirely gravity-fed system to allow very gentle extraction of the fruit. The onsite oenological lab is just as impressive, and is used to study the soils, vines and climate as well as winemaking techniques. With all of this investment and expertise to hand, the wines of La Fleur de Boüard are nothing short of stunning every year. Of course, in great vintages like 2015, the quality and finesse of the wines are even greater. The **2015 La Fleur de Boüard, Lalande-de Pomerol (\$26.99)** is a perfect choice for a fine holiday dinner. It is silky, dark fruited and elegant, but still displays some underlying tannin. It is best drunk with a hearty meat dish such as prime rib. It's already drinking beautifully, although I would recommend decanting it for around an hour before enjoying it, to really allow the wine to open up and have the full range of flavors show their best. It would be a perfect wine to accompany Christmas dinner.

Our second wine is from a little winery that we've featured before here. A couple of years ago we came across Prospect 772, and quickly fell in love with the range of Rhône-style wines they produce. The winery is located in the Sierra Foothills in Calaveras County, and was founded by Ron Pieretti and Wendy Sanda, two industry professionals who have set out to produce food-friendly wines based on their favorite Rhône varieties. This month we have the new release of **2018 Prospect 772 "Black Tie Charlie" Sierra Foothills Red Blend (\$22.99)**, which is composed of 50% Petit Syrah and 50% Syrah. True to its name, this wine is dressed to the nines, decadent and almost flamboyant in its rich, luscious profile. It's a bold choice of varieties—a Petit Syrah and Syrah blend could easily go off the rails and be far too tannic and dense—but it's



The inverted, conically shaped fermenters at La Fleur de Boüard winery allow the cellar workers to move the wine by gravity instead of pumps.

carried off with a seamless elegance that I can only attribute to the quality of the fruit and winemaking. Not only is the tannin restrained and nicely integrated with the fruit, the wine itself is already open and ready to drink. I would love to drink this one alongside a nice rack of lamb, perhaps for a New Year's Eve dinner!

Premium Club

As much as wine is about the variety, the climate, the winemaking choices, it's even more about the people involved. Whether you're a small grower-producer making and marketing your own small production, or part of a team producing wine on a big scale, you know that people are a huge part of the wine.

Our first wine this month is from our dear friends and longtime K&L partners, Franck and Betty Millet. When Franck and Betty inherited the family vineyards in Bué, Sancerre, in 1991, they took Franck's family tradition to the next level. They began making wine in addition to farming vines, and also marketing and selling all their own production. The couple now owns vineyard land in three appellations, including Sancerre, Menetou-Salon and Pouilly-Fumé. The latter is where this month's wine is born. Just across the river from Sancerre, Pouilly-Fumé is known for having a higher level of Silex in its soils; Sancerre tends to have more limestone. This lends the wine a richer mouthfeel and less linear acidity, with beautiful stone fruit notes. The

2019 Franck Millet Pouilly-Fumé (\$14.99) displays all these classic characteristics, and represents another great vintage for the Loire Valley. Most of all, the wine displays the passion, hard work and vision of a couple making their own wines from the vine to the glass.

In a larger winery it can be more difficult to trace this human connection, but one of our favorite Central Coast wineries is doing just that. When I look for club wines I taste first and ask questions later, so when I first tasted the **2018 Stolpman Vineyards "La Cuadrilla" Ballard Canyon Red Blend (\$14.99)** I had no idea of the very special project that it represents. Stolpman Vineyards is one of the few wineries that employs their vineyard workers year round. Offering a more stable job to the crew results in a more dedicated team. Several years back, vineyard manager Ruben Solorzano took this concept a step further and began assigning small *cuadra* or vineyard blocks to his team members, for them to farm and harvest independently. The resultant wine was theirs to keep. Today the "Cuadrilla" program has expanded to include about 10% of Stolpman Vineyards production, and the profits of the Cuadrilla wines are returned to the crew



We had the pleasure of hosting Betty and Franck Millet at K&L a couple of years ago, after working with them for 20-plus years.



Ruben Solorzano, the mastermind behind the Cuadrilla project, is the subject of this year's "Cuadrilla" label. In reality he has no such tattoos. It's a playful representation of him covered with images from past Cuadrilla labels.

members who care for the *cuadra* blocks. The blend is slightly different each vintage, as Ruben rotates which blocks are involved in the program. This year's blend is 70% Syrah, 15% Sangiovese, and 15% Grenache aged in neutral French oak. I loved this wine as soon as I tasted it. It's a pleasing, medium-bodied, fruit-forward wine with just the right kick of peppery spice. Food friendly, well balanced and all too easily quaffable, this wine is easily a house favorite.

Best Buy Wine Club

At K&L we've purchased wines directly from France for over 30 years, and in that time we've learned a lot about the direct purchasing model. We're blessed to have made some amazing connections over the years, and our buying team has become expert at seeking out an array of small producers with little to no representation in the U.S. This month we're highlighting two of our favorites.

Jean-Michel Dupré is a passionate champion of old vines. When he inherited a small plot of gnarly old vines in Beaujeu, Beaujolais from his father, Jean-Michel's interest in wine was piqued, and as he did his research and started to work in his tiny, two-hectare plot, he became thoroughly convinced of the unique quality and power of an old vineyard. Since then, he's sought out small, forgotten old-vine sites throughout Beaujolais. He makes an array of characterful wines from these vineyards, many of which house vines that are over a century old. This month's **2019 Domaine Jean-Michel Dupré Beaujolais-Villages "Vignes de 1940" (\$9.99)**, as the name suggests, is made of fruit from vines planted in 1940. Jean-Michel explains that one of the reasons he is so drawn to old-vine fruit is the power and concentration of the berries, and here that is seen in spades. Dark fruited and rich aromas give way to a strong mineral bent, thanks to the granitic soils that these vines are planted in. Lighter bodied as it is, this little wine carries plenty of gravity and depth in the array of intense flavors it presents in the glass. Jean-Michel recommends pairing it with grilled fish or poultry or enjoying a glass alongside a charcuterie board.

Our second wine is from a family-owned estate in Saint-Julien-de-Chédon, a part of the Touraine appellation in the Loire Valley. Established in 1804, Domaine du Vieil Orme is a small estate producing both still and sparkling wines. The current generation's owner and proprietor, Laurent Benoist, is very focused on sustainable farming and winemaking practices. He believes winemaking is an art, bounded by the medium of the terroir and the fruit, and ultimately an expression of the winemaker's own taste. Being based in Touraine, Laurent has more flexibility than many of the neighboring appellations, as many varieties are allowed in this appellation. Laurent makes several different wines, including red and white from some of the less classic grapes of the region. I found his **2019 Domaine du Vieil Orme Sauvignon Blanc Touraine (\$9.99)** one of the best expressions of his work. Snappy sweet pea and gooseberry aromas give way to a softer palate with pear, white peach and grapefruit zest all making an appearance. The acidity is of course vibrant and fresh, and there's a pleasing tinge of lemongrass on the finish. It's a perfect accompaniment to seafood, and mussels make a particularly good match.



Laurent Benoist along with his son and future vigneron Louis, use sustainable farming methods while tending their vines.

Club Italiano

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

I first visited the property of San Leonino more than 25 years ago. It's in the southwestern corner of Chianti Classico, about six miles south of Castellina in Chianti, the center of the commune that bears its name and ten miles north of Siena.

It is a lonely stretch of twisty road in a bucolic setting with olive trees, vines and sheep grazing on the rolling hills dotted with cypress trees.

The estate has about 128 acres in vineyards, and the vineyard for Monsenese is at 1200 feet on a limestone-based schist soil called Galestro. This is the top of a slope that faces southwest, and as you go down the hill the soil turns more sandy with less limestone. It was purchased in 1994 by the Angelini Family who own multiple wineries across Italy, but it was Lionello Marchese, the past owner, whose vision created this wine as an homage to Siena. Back when this was first created,

a 100% Sangiovese wine in Chianti Classico was hardly a common thing. The classic blend was still required by law to have at least 10% and up to 30% white grapes. The Angelini family know a good deal when they see one and really understand how to keep quality up while giving the hands-on locals a chance to participate. The quality of this wine has done nothing but get better over the years. The **2015 San Leonino "Monsenese" Chianti Classico Riserva (\$23.99)** is fermented for about 18 days and then aged in 300-liter French oak barriques just slightly larger than the U.S. versions. 2015 is a superb vintage and I think you'll really enjoy this wine. I'd decant it a couple of hours ahead of time.

This month's next wine, the **2016 Tenuta Novare Valpolicella Ripasso (\$15.99)**, comes from a winery owned by the Bertani family, who had founded their own winery in 1857. When I first learned about the Ripasso method, it was mind numbing. What the hell were they doing! The method developed partly

because of the location. In Verona in September/October, rain is not unheard of, and pre-global warming temperatures made harvesting later very risky. To avoid rain they harvested early in September and let the grapes dry indoors to boost their sugar content. This is what made the famous Amarone. Meanwhile the "regular" Valpolicella wine, made with grapes that were not dried, was a bit wimpy and unpredictable. Enter Ripassa—ingenious! Here is what happens. The grapes for the Amarone

are usually crushed to make the wine in early February. After the juice sits on the raisined skins for a few weeks the wine is pulled off the skins. Those skins still have a fair amount of sugar so the regular Valpolicella, already wine for months, is poured on top of the skins and a second alcoholic fermentation starts. This second fermentation adds to the body and complexity, getting flavors from the Amarone. This Ripasso is not a mini-Amarone however. It is ultra-complex yet has relatively modest alcohol at 13.5% and is an ideal food accompaniment. I love the wine with non-tomato-based pasta or a piece of Parmigiano Reggiano.



One of the vineyards of San Leonino, Chianti Classico.



The Bertani family have owned Tenuta Novare since the mid-20th century. They used to blend the grapes into Bertani, but now they make wines just under this name.

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

Longtime Champagne Club members often comment that they appreciate the breadth of exposure that this club has offered over the years—the chance to taste Champagne from all of the various sub-regions, made in so many styles. This year has been an unusual one for the world (to put it mildly). Because of the closure of restaurants worldwide for a good portion of the year, the club has had better access to the top sub-regions and the most expensive styles. This month we are able to linger in the Grand Crus and offer you some of the most expensive styles: a vintage and an organically grown Champagne.

Mesnil is Champagne's most famous village for Chardonnay, and perhaps the most famous outright in all of Champagne. Its grapes are the most expensive of any for the négociants to purchase, and it is where Krug makes their famous Clos du Mesnil and Delamotte produces Salon. We are proud to offer the **2013 Launois Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne (\$34.99)**, which we have been selling for \$49.99 regularly this month, from the village of Mesnil. This cold, late vintage had producers harvesting well into October, and while it was not a great vintage everywhere, Chardonnay from the best villages did exceptionally well. This wine is made entirely from estate-grown, mid-slope, old-vine Chardonnay exclusively from massal selections, not clones. It is almost exclusively Mesnil, except for a plot from the Grand Cru of Cramant that was planted in the 1950s, added for mid-palate power. This is electric, dry, bracing Champagne that goes fantastically well with shellfish. I can't wait to have it with Dungeness crab. The fastest selling Champagne in the history of the club was the 2013 Bonville, another Grand Cru Chardonnay, and this might break its record. So don't wait if you want more.

Bouzy is perhaps the most famous of all the Grand Crus for Pinot Noir. It sits on the south-facing slope of the Mountain of Reims on perfect chalky soil. Here the Paillard brothers, Antoine and Quentin, make organically grown Champagne that's as good as the wines of any unobtainable producer anywhere in the region. Antoine and Quentin represent their family's eighth generation of growers and the fourth to produce and bottle the wines under the Paillard name. The **Pierre Paillard "Les Parcelles" Grand Cru Extra Brut Bouzy Champagne (\$34.99)** is 60% Pinot Noir and 40% Chardonnay, done almost entirely in stainless steel. Although dosed at just 3.5 grams per liter and labeled as extra brut, this is not an austere wine because of the steep south-facing slopes, and once again because of the massal selected, estate vines. While this wine will pair with perfectly with a salmon dish, it can also make a great apéritif. A toast to you!



Bernard and Séverine Launois in Mesnil.



Quentin Paillard outside the winery in Bouzy.

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. 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.

Le Club Français Previous Offerings

2016 Ferraton Père et Fils “Les Murailles” Gigondas @ \$29.99 per bottle

Mostly Grenache, this wine also has small amounts of Syrah and Mourvèdre, which bring color, weight and tannin to the blend. At four years since the vintage date, the wine is hitting its stride nicely. It can still use a half-hour decant, but once it opens up it is beautifully layered, rich and complex. The nose shows full, heady aromas of luscious black cherry and cassis, and hints of cedar and leather. The palate is a nicely weighted array of red fruits, licorice, ripe tannin and fresh, bright acidity. All of the elements come into play nicely here, and the wine offers a number of pairing options such as braised lamb and stew.

2018 Henri Costal “Les Truffières” Chablis @ \$29.99 per bottle

What I love in this wine is the poignant juxtaposition of bright tropical fruits and vibrant acidity with a heavy textural element that rounds out the palate and gives the wine more weight than initially anticipated. The “Truffières” vineyard is located in Villy, just north of the town of Chablis, and has a textbook example of the Kimmeridgian limestone soils for which Chablis is well known. The vines are farmed organically and the wine is aged in stainless steel for ten months, with a brief three-month finishing period in large-format oak barrels.

2015 Baron de Brane, Margaux @ \$39.99 per bottle

This wine is the second label from famed Margaux house Brane-Cantenac. The property has been in the care of the Lurton family for several generations, and the wines are legendary. Produced mostly from the property’s younger vines, the Baron de Brane label gets the same careful winemaking and cellaring as the Grand Vin, albeit with a shorter stint in oak barrels before bottling. This makes for a wine with a more vibrant fruit profile, a bit more approachable in its youth. This vintage is a blend of slightly more Merlot than Cabernet Sauvignon, and shows all the classic elements that make Margaux wines so famous. The aromas are stunning, showing that crushed violet quality unique to the appellation. On the palate the wine is full and rich with bright and vivid fruit, excellent structure, and all the bones to age beautifully.

2019 Aurore Dezat Sancerre @ \$19.99 per bottle

Aurore Dezat’s small estate in Sury-en-Vau is home to three soil types: limestone, flint (or silex) and clay. The combination of these soils produces wines that have a real depth of character. The 2019 is another delightful vintage, and as soon as it hit our shores, we decided it needed to make an appearance in the Club Français. The aromas jump out of the glass, with wet stone, grapefruit, gooseberry and Meyer lemon. On the palate the fruit is clean and soft with bright acidity and layers of mineral depth.

2018 Jean-Michel Giboulot Savigny-lès-Beaune “Aux Grands Liards” @ \$29.99 per bottle

Aux Grands Liards is a vineyard nestled right in the heart of the Savigny-lès-Beaune appellation, just below a band of Premier Cru sites such as Aux Serpentières, Aux Gravains, and Les Lavières. This vineyard’s unique soil has the famous Burgundian limestone but also a ferrous clay, which lends a nice depth and dark brooding quality to the fruit produced here. This 2018 release, youthful though it is, already displays all the traits of a great wine. The fruit is darker and richer than you might expect in French Pinot Noir, while the tannin is fine grained and the acidity is fresh and vibrant. It’s clean, polished and modern, with an approachable air, yet it has the structure and bones to age gracefully.

2016 La Chablisienne Premier Cru “Vaucoupin” @ \$29.99 per bottle

This is a stunning example from this Premier Cru vineyard site. Vaucoupin is located on the south side of Chablis, with very steep southern-facing slopes abundant in the mineral-rich Kimmeridgian soils for which the best sites in Chablis are known. This lovely wine is still in its youthful bloom, drinking beautifully with bright tropical fruits, fresh acidity and vibrant minerality. It can also continue to age phenomenally well, and develop deep honeyed, dried stone fruit notes as it reaches maturity.

Signature Red Club Previous Offerings

2017 Casa Silva “S38” Colchagua Valley Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$24.99 per bottle

Crafted from a single block in the famous “Los Lingues” vineyard of Chile’s Colchagua Valley, this unique Cabernet exhibits massive dark fruit, mocha, sweet anise and hints of black pepper. Rich and luscious on the palate, the wine is well structured and will easily stand up to your best steak preparations.

2017 Quartz Reef “Bendigo Estate” Pinot Noir Central Otago @ \$24.99 per bottle

Quartz Reef winery is situated in the Bendigo sub-region of Central Otago. Bendigo has the reputation of being one of the warmer sites in Central Otago, and its Pinot Noirs have a deep, vibrant fruit core. The wine’s aromatics are pronounced, with black cherry, clove, allspice and wild strawberry all making an appearance. On the palate the fruit continues, with a pleasant weight, fresh acidity and very mild tannin presence. There’s a fantastic savory aspect to the wine as well that is reminiscent of olive, thyme, and sage. It’s really a perfect match for poultry of any kind.

2015 Domaine de Fontbonau, Côtes du Rhône @ \$24.99 per bottle

A joint project between Frédéric Engerer of Château Latour and Jérôme Malet, a vine grower from the Roussillon, Domaine de Fontbonau produces one of the best Côtes du Rhône on the market. Full-fruited and rich, with elegant structure and bright acidity, this Côtes du Rhône drinks like an elegant Châteauneuf-du-Pape, but with more approachability. At five years past vintage date, it’s completely integrated and the tannin structure has mellowed into a pleasant textural element as the fruit begins to show some depth and development. I would recommend pairing this with a rack of lamb.

2018 Kalinda Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

We use the Kalinda label to bring you wines from top producers in California at a deeply discounted price. The catch is, we can’t tell you who made the wine. While I can’t say much about the origin of this wine, I can share a few facts. If this bottle had its normal label, it would retail for about \$70, but it’s actually not commonly available via retail. It’s a cuvée of fruit grown in a few different vineyards throughout the Sonoma Coast, and it’s a luscious, medium-bodied Pinot Noir with dark fruit, supple, ripe tannin and balanced acidity. The whole is seamless and elegant. The finish lasts for minutes, and the wine has the bones to age.

2016 Keller Estate “El Coro Vineyard” Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

The Petaluma Gap is a distinctive sub-region of the Sonoma Coast, which forms a sort of wind tunnel, pulling cool breezes and morning fog inland from the Pacific. With its high elevation, the El Coro Vineyard is particularly affected by the cool breezes and produces distinctive Pinot Noir with elegant aromatics, dark fruit and bright acidity. The wine shows an array of red fruits with fine-grained tannin that has mellowed and integrated nicely. It is slightly weightier on the palate than you might expect, and strikes a perfect balance of rich, luscious fruits and vibrant acidity.

2017 Precedent “Kirschenmann Vineyard” Mokelumne River Lodi Zinfandel @ \$26.99 per bottle

This ancient vineyard was planted in 1915, and the vines are own-rooted, head trained and dry farmed. The sandy silica soils and the river’s cooling influence make this vineyard one of a kind. Nathan’s winemaking hand has everything to do with highlighting this incredible fruit. When you think Lodi, you often think of an incredibly dense, high-alcohol Zinfandel, but here we have a highly aromatic wine (thanks to the silica soils) that is both intense and elegant. Although the wine is stunning on its own, it’s also sophisticated enough for a steak pairing, and would make a perfect companion to grilled meats as well.

Premium Wine Club Previous Offerings

2018 Finca Villacreces “Pruno” Ribera del Duero @ \$14.99 per bottle

Neighboring the famous Vega Sicilia winery, Finca Villacreces is a hidden value property in the Ribera del Duero. This wine is a blend of fruit from some of the sandier sites on the property, and displays a more aromatic, slightly lighter profile than the other wines of Villacreces. It has a vibrant purple color and aromas of cassis, cedar and olive. The medium body displays intense dark fruit and bold tannin. Predominately Tempranillo with some Cabernet Sauvignon blended in, this is without a doubt a food wine.

2018 Clos du Gaimont Vouvray @ \$14.99 per bottle

Clos du Gaimont is a small parcel of the famous Clos du Nouys vineyard, situated in the heart of Vouvray. With a strong limestone presence in the soils, this Clos produces mineral-rich fruit with snappy acidity and intensity. The wine is completely dry and quite light with chalky minerality, heady floral aromas and a pleasing compilation of orchard fruits, honeycomb and lemon curd on the palate. Francois Chainier, the owner and winemaker, recommends pairing it with goat cheese and a fresh, rustic loaf, and I couldn't agree more.

2018 Groundwork Wines Santa Barbara County Syrah @ \$14.99 per bottle

Syrah should be unabashedly peppery, dark hued and a little tannic. This is as honest and balanced an expression of Syrah as you'll find. Winemaker Curt Schalchlin hasn't polished away all of the character of the variety with additions in the cellar, nor has he taken his hands off the wheel. The fruit comes from two vineyards—the White Hawk Vineyard in Cat Canyon, a sandy site just 20 miles from the Pacific, and the Old Potrero Vineyard in Arroyo Grande, a dry-farmed plot with a soil profile full of fossilized sea shells. It's aged in neutral French oak that lends a great texture to the wine and helps soften the tannin structure just a touch. If you like the wine now, buy a couple of extra bottles to lay down for a few years. Despite the modest price point, this is a Syrah that will age gracefully.

2017 Simon di Brazzan “Blanc di Simon Tradizion” Friulano Isonzo @ \$14.99 per bottle

This is a standout white: it's light and crisp, but not flippantly fruity or overtly simple. It has a depth and complexity that surprised me. The texture on the palate is great—creamy and with a pleasant weight that belies the crisp acidity and fresh citrus notes. It's a beautiful combination of elements with subdued orchard fruits rather than bright tropical fruits, and a smooth, elegant finish. I loved enjoying this wine cocktail style alongside a nutty aged cheddar and toasted almonds.

2019 Astrolabe Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough @ \$14.99 per bottle

The wine is highly aromatic with gooseberry, quince and sweet pea aromas. On the palate it light and crisp, with ripe tropical fruits of mango, pineapple and papaya making an appearance. The finish is clean and snappy, with a hint of lemongrass and passionfruit. It's a perfect match for an herbed salad with goat's cheese.

2018 Casa Madero 3V Valle de Parras Mexico @ \$14.99 per bottle

This is made by one of Mexico's finest wineries, hailing from the Valle de Parras in the state of Coahuila. Blended from the three varietals Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo and Merlot, this masterful wine is bold and luscious with dark fruit and eloquent peppery spice notes. It's a perfect pairing for a summer barbecue, and like any good red blend, it loves smoky, char-grilled foods.

2018 Domaine de Fondrèche Ventoux Rouge @ \$12.99 per bottle

Deeply mineral at its core, this lovely fresh young red is still singing with bright cherry and blueberry primary notes on the palate, with layered spice and soft but resilient structure. With 50% Grenache, 30% Syrah and 20% Mourvèdre, the wine is compositionally as classic a Southern Rhône as you could wish.

Best Buy Wine Club Previous Offerings

2016 Farmstrong White Field Blend Suisun Valley @ \$9.99 per bottle

While the fruit for this wine comes from three separate vineyards, it was all picked and pressed as one lot and vinified with native fermentation. The variety breakdown is 41% Grenache Blanc, 35% Albarino, and 24%

Verdelho. It has slightly floral aromatics with white peach, nectarine, papaya and pineapple showing on the palate. Winemaker Faith Armstrong ages the wine in neutral French oak and stirs the lees to create a great palate texture that contrasts nicely with the vibrant acidity and bright, tropical fruit notes.

2017 Sisters Ridge Pinot Noir North Canterbury @ \$9.99 per bottle

This great value in Pinot comes from the folks at Mt. Beautiful winery in New Zealand's North Canterbury region. Lighter bodied, with bright, crunchy red fruits, it has an elegant nose of strawberry, golden cherries and clove. On the palate the fruit is balanced against crisp acidity and a nice clean finish. It's a perfect pairing for turkey dinner, and also may be a good option to stock your wine fridge with if you're a Pinot fan like me.

2019 Grand Bateau Blanc @ \$9.99 per bottle

Grand Bateau is a project from the team at the famed Château Beychevelle in Saint-Julien. Beychevelle is one of only ten Châteaux classed as fourth-growth properties in the famous 1855 classification. The quality of Beychevelle has always been high, and in the Grand Bateau wines, the quality is strikingly evident. The Grand Bateau Blanc is made from 100% Sauvignon Blanc, and is bright and tropical with a fresh, appealing fruit character and a slight touch of vanilla on the close. It's a perfect pairing for fried fish and for goat cheeses.

2018 Grand Bateau Rouge @ \$9.99 per bottle

Grand Bateau is a project from the team at the famed Château Beychevelle in Saint-Julien. Château Beychevelle is one of only ten Châteaux classed as fourth-growth properties in the famous 1855 classification. The quality of Beychevelle has always been high, and in the Grand Bateau wines, the quality is strikingly evident. The Grand Bateau Rouge is dark fruited with bright acidity and fresh black olive and cassis notes. It's a great accompaniment to a charcuterie platter with hard cheeses, toasted nuts and olives.

2018 Atance "Cuvée No 1" Valencia @ \$9.99 per bottle

This wine is 70% Merseguera and 30% Malvasia. While the Malvasia adds the stunning floral aromatics and the acidity to this wine, the rest is all the indigenous variety Merseguera, the star of the show. It offers a wine with medium body, subdued orchard fruits, tangy lemon curd and a vibrant mineral presence. Grown at high altitudes in an arid climate with sandy loam soils, the vines have to struggle and the roots are quite deep, contributing to the rich mineral character in the wine. This would be a treat with seafood paella.

2018 Kalinda Central Coast Chardonnay @ \$9.99 per bottle

This 2018 vintage is a classic rendition of the varietal, with notes of Honeycrisp apple, yellow pear, peach and a creamy texture underscored by just a touch of sweet baking spice and a subtle nuttiness. If you were looking for your new house Chardonnay, look no further.

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

2016 Zenato "Alanera" Rosso Veronese @ \$17.99 per bottle

The Zenato family has been growing classic Valpolicella grapes here for decades, but for the Alanera they changed the blend a bit. This wine is 55% Corvina (the main grape in Amarone), 25% Rondinella and 10% Corvinone, and they rounded out the blend with 5% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. I really love the smooth texture of this wine and the layers of complex flavors. You might not think that different 10% in the blend would really change the wine, but it gives it a flavor array that you just don't see in regular Valpolicella. I think this wine is super as an everyday choice. Just sit around and enjoy it with a burger off the grill. Make that an Impossible Burger for you vegetarians!

2017 Gaudio Barbera del Monferrato Superiore @ \$21.99 per bottle

This wine is striking. One of the first things I noticed was the purity of the aromatics, and that comes from the vineyard's being at almost 1000 feet. It's just pure Barbera, wild cherry and plum. The vineyard for this wine is 30 years old and planted in maritime clay deposit. The wine is fermented in stainless steel and aged in first- and second-use barriques, which give a supple texture to the wine's focused acidity. This is a boldly flavored wine. I would have it with grilled sausage and polenta.

2016 Decugnano dei Barbi "A.D. 1212" Umbria Rosso @ \$19.99 per bottle

Decugnano dei Barbi is mainly an Orvieto producer but in an attempt to break out of the classic wines,

Claudio and his son Enzo decided to make their top-of-the-line wine a blend of 65% Syrah, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Montepulciano, aged in French barriques. I have to admit that I was not looking forward to the blend, having tasted too many bad experiments, but I was pretty floored tasting this wine. It has power, suppleness, and a lot of character—and for this price it's a superb deal.

2017 Tenuta San Francesco "Tramonti Bianco" Costa d'Amalfi @ \$19.99 per bottle

This charming white is a blend of three local grape varieties: 65% Falanghina, 30% Biancolella and 5% Pepella (I just love saying them all together—they roll off your tongue). The wine is fermented using indigenous yeast, and it's fermented in stainless steel so you just get the real character of the grapes and soil. The nose is full of honeydew melon and rhubarb touched with a bit of salinity. This is a wonderful, balanced wine, perfect with grilled snapper.

2017 Roberto Voerzio "Priavino" Dolcetto d'Alba @ \$22.99 per bottle

The nose is full of blueberries, violets, leather and spice. On the palate this Dolcetto shows it is not a wimpy little wine. It has power, tannins (albeit easy to drink) and it fills your mouth with a dense richness. The flavors are bold and dramatic, with lots of ripe fruit, chocolate, leather, tobacco, and spice fleshing out the tannic structure. The finish replays the bold fruit character but sits up nicely and has real lift in the finish. The wine is all organically farmed and is fermented with indigenous yeast in stainless steel tanks; it doesn't see any wood aging, fining or filtering.

San Venanzio Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Brut @ \$11.99 per bottle

Compared with many other Proseccos from the area, this wine has a crisper, more focused character that is the growing fashion in America. I love this wine's expressive vibrancy. It is the perfect afternoon Aperitivo. Or, if you want to upgrade your Aperol Spitz, use San Venanzio and you will definitely notice the difference!

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

Damien Hugot Brut Rosé Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle

95% Chardonnay from the northern crus of Chouilly and Cramant. The color of this wine comes from an ancient plot of Meunier that Damien Hugot's grandfather planted in the *sud*-Epernay village of Chavot. Even he does not know how old this plot is; he knows it is over 50 years. He keeps a solera of this red wine, which adds complexity to the Champagne, even though the final content of this profound red wine is only 5%. I find the wine to have a nose of French toast with subtle strawberry fruit, and exceptional texture and minerality, from the top-class, Grand Cru Chardonnay in the mouth. Delicate enough to have on its own as the apéritif, this also makes a great partner to salmon.

2014 Louis Brochet "Alain" Millesime Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle

This Champagne is composed of two thirds Pinot Noir and one third Chardonnay. It is 10% barrel fermented. The rest is done in stainless steel, and the wine goes through only partial malolactic. This wine reminds me of the best of the 2004s, and even the 1988s when they were young; it is a graceful, elegant wine with some lovely pain au levain and dark cherry Pinot Noir savor in the middle. If you like this as much as I do, it is worth getting some to age. "Classic" vintages like this are happening less than once a decade now.

Ariston Aspasic "Brut Prestige" Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle

Paul Vincent makes this from a selection of his oldest vines spread across his estate in the picturesque hamlet of Brouillet. The Champagne is composed of 50% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Noir and 25% Meunier and is 100% the 2012 vintage, although not labeled as such. As one would expect from a wine with seven years on the lees, this is a rich Champagne with lovely brioche character. The texture is exceptional, with lots of tiny bubbles, as Paul prefers to run a little over the normal six atmospheres of pressure for all of his wines. The far northern location of the vineyard insures virile acidity to balance the decadent old-vine richness. This is an excellent Champagne to serve with pâté as a starter, or with a barbecued salmon main course.