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February 2009

Dear Wine Club Members,

As I write this we are in the midst of a January heat wave in Northern California, while the rest of the country is mired in cold. Even here, the nights are still cold. Of the ten wines from our five clubs this month, seven are hearty reds designed to help you brave the winter cold.

This month's club wines come from Argentina, Italy, Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne and California, truly demonstrating that wonderful wines are being made around the world. Argentina has quickly supplanted Chile as the hot wine region in South America. Beginning in 1998—the breakout vintage as far as press coverage goes—Argentinian wines have been recognized as having the potential to be world-class. Now more than ten years later, Argentina has seen a huge influx of French, Italian and American winemaking families who recognize that its terroir can produce the world's greatest malbecs. We have two spectacular malbec-based offerings, one in our Signature Club that got 94 points from Robert Parker and another in our Premium Club from an estate owned by a famous Bordeaux producer.

The Champagne Club's first wine this month is the Henriot "Souverain" Brut non-vintage, a classically styled house Champagne designed to satisfy the enthusiast with its depth and complexity while keeping the novice happy with its bold fruit. The second selection is from one of our favorite direct-import producers. Franck Pascal's Cuvée Extra Brut Reserve is a spectacular sparkling wine with a rich palate nicely opposed by a dry finish.

This month the Best Buy Club's first wine is a steal and one of my favorite under-\$10 white wines, the 2006 Chateau Souverain Alexander Valley Chardonnay. It is a dazzling wine that displays bright fruit and nice toasty oak. The second Best Buy Club wine is the 2006 Emile Chandesais Bourgogne Pinot Noir, which could easily pass for a wine of twice the price.

The Premium Club this month has a distinctly French feel even if only one of the wines actually comes from France. The 2005 Château L'Estang Clos Kalinda Cuvée demonstrates what K&L does best, which is find great wines and deliver them to you at a great price. The other offering is the 2005 Hacienda al Plata Malbec from Argentina. It's made by the same winemaker as the very highly acclaimed Poesia.

The Signature Red Club turns down more potentially great wines than any other. The wines that do make the cut have a long lineage of prior great selections to live up to. This month we have a wine that got 94 points from Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate*, the 2006 Achaval Ferrer Quimera. It's a stunning blend of malbec and cabernet sauvignon that showcases what kind of quality can be achieved from the mountainous vineyards of the Mendoza region. The other wine is the 2004 Valentine "Tory's Block" Cabernet Sauvignon from Mendocino County, another up-and-coming wine producing region.

Our Italiano Club this month stays with the theme of red wines. Greg St. Clair, our Italian Buyer, has outdone himself this month with two selections that deftly display how terroir-driven wines from Italy can be, and why that makes them so great. Our first selection hails from Friuli, which is known for its great white wines but has an emerging growth of fine red-wine values, while our other selection is an absolute steal from Lombardy, where a few brave producers have been tinkering with making pinot noir.

Cheers,

Alex Pross

Wine Club Director, K&L Wine Merchants

Signature Red Collection Wine Club

2004 Valentine “Tory’s Block” Cabernet Sauvignon, Mendocino Valley

I swear that it is just one big coincidence that for the Valentine’s Day month, this club has a wine from Valentine Vineyards. We just happened to taste this wonderful Cabernet Sauvignon a few months ago and knew we had to find a spot for it in our club. Valentine Vineyards is a small, family-owned winery just outside of Alexander Valley, on a plot of land where Rodney Strong planted cabernet sauvignon vines in 1976. Bob Valentine purchased the vineyard in 1987 from Sonoma Vineyards, which had owned and operated the vineyard from its original planting. Once Bob took over, he began to sell his fruit and also make wines that are 100% Valentine fruit from his Echo Valley vineyard. Valentine Vineyards has garnered numerous awards and gold medals, which prove not only the success of Bob Valentine but also the capability of Mendocino to create world-class wines.

Right from the first sniff you can tell this wine is going to have some big, gorgeous fruit on the palate. Aromas of fresh crushed black raspberries, red and black fruits, herbal notes and a touch of oak all virtually leap from the glass. On the palate the wine displays excellent balance with soft, lush fruit that melds very nicely with herb and mineral notes, which add complexity and structure. The finish has a tautness thanks to the racy acidity and restrained use of oak. That restraint allows the wine to show all of its beautiful fruit; with too much oak, fruit could have been obscured. This wine can be enjoyed now but like most of the 2004 vintage Cabernet Sauvignons, it can be laid down and enjoyed over the next 15 years. This is the perfect accompaniment to grilled steak or pork dishes, when you want a wine that has bold fruit but also harmony and finesse.

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$22.99.

2006 Achaval Ferrer Quimera, Mendoza, Argentina

Founded in 1998, Achaval Ferrer has quickly come to exemplify the growing Argentinian wine movement. The aim and passion at Achaval Ferrer is to make the greatest wines to come out of Argentina, using Argentina’s indigenous qualities and having each wine express a sense of place and varietal. Each growing site has its own distinct flavor and personality. They include extremely high-altitude vineyards with unique volcanic and sandy soil composition, with copious sunlight and cool nights. The winemaker for Achaval Ferrer is famed Italian winemaker Roberto Cipresso, who has worked at Case Basse, Poggio Antico, Ciacci Piccolimino and La Fiorita. Roberto has honed his skills working with many of Italy’s finest winemakers and winery owners. He has taken his passion to Argentina, where he is fashioning some amazing single-vineyard Malbecs along with his Bordeaux blend “Quimera” wine.

The 2006 Achaval Ferrer Quimera Red is easily their greatest Quimera to date, and probably their most classically styled. While Bordeaux may be the influence over the blend, the 2006 Quimera has its own personality, with fruit that seems riper and more dense, and with notes and flavors that most Bordeaux blends don’t achieve. On the nose the wine is slightly closed with notes of black fruits, rosemary, crushed rocks and cocoa powder all slowly evolving from the glass as it is swirled. On the palate the wine takes a further step in its evolution, displaying bright blue fruit and crushed-flower aromas and flavors, along with sweet oak that frames the rich, emerging fruit. The finish is long and supple, and it is easy to see the Bordeaux influence here; it is quite structured.



The Finca Diamante vineyard, which supplies most of the grapes for the Achaval Ferrer Quimera.

I would pair this wine with a nice steak such as a T-bone, Porterhouse or Filet Mignon, and just let the wine and beef play off each other.

We are not the only ones to love this wine. The most recent edition of Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate* (#180, December 2008) said "The 2006 Quimera reveals a similar luxurious personality, layers of flavor, and a finish that just won't quit. This sensational wine can be enjoyed in its succulent youth but should still be going strong in 12-15 years. (94 points)"

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is: Please Inquire.

Champagne Club

If you live in the Bay Area or the LA area, please join us for a Champagne tasting in any one of the three stores on Valentine's Day, Saturday, February 14th. Scotty Beckerley will pour in San Francisco from noon until 3 pm, I will pour in Redwood City from 1 pm to 4 pm, and Mari will pour in Hollywood from 2 pm to 5 pm. Drop in if you can. The cost will be \$20 and the line up will be great! Now, on to this month's selections. —*Gary Westby, K&L*

Franck Pascal Cuvee Reserve Extra Brut

Brand new to our direct-import lineup at K&L is Champagne Franck Pascal. I am sure that his Champagnes will become staples here at K&L. He is one of only two producers to whom I have ever given an order on the spot. I simply could not let him go to another importer! The Franck Pascal Cuvée Reserve Extra Brut is \$35.99 for club members, and an incredible deal at that price. Franck did his military service in the French Chemical Defense unit, and when he returned to his family's vines he took them completely organic. He told me that he was horrified to find that the same poisons used in chemical weapons are used as pesticides in the vineyard. Needless to say he feels very strongly about the subject! He has a very small estate, only eight and three quarters acres, all in the western valley of the Marne.

This bottling comes from old vineyards and is a blend of 90% meunier, 5% chardonnay and 5% pinot noir. It is 70% from 2004 with the balance coming from 2003 and 2002. This Champagne has an attractive straw color and a very nice, compact bead. On the nose it has an exotic, flowery personality anchored by savory croissant butter. It is exceptionally clean on the palate, with subtle pineapple fruit and just a hint of doughy richness. It finishes quite dry, as it should at only 5.6 grams per liter of dosage.

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$36.99.

Henriot "Souverain" Brut

The Henriot Souverain Brut Champagne has received many accolades from the press, including a big 92 points from *Wine Enthusiast* and a 90 point score from Tanzer. The family has been growing grapes in the Champagne region since the eighteenth century, and first started making their own Champagne in 1808. They had much success early on, even supplying Champagne to the Dutch royals by the mid-nineteenth century.

This bottling has quite a high proportion of reserve wines. One third of the blend is made of multiple old vintages, and the wine is aged for three years on the lees. It is a blend of 60% pinot noir and 40% chardonnay and is fermented in stainless steel tanks. This is a great bottle to have in the refrigerator for



Franck Pascal, out in his vineyards.

spontaneous get-togethers and surprise good news. It is very well balanced, and not so individualistic as to need a particular food partner, nor does it need a group of fussy wine geeks to appreciate it. It combines the toastiness that one often finds in big-house, non-vintage Champagnes with some nice apple and pear flavors and a little refreshing zing as well.

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$30.99.

Club Italiano

2007 Blason Franconia

Szeleslevelue, Chirokolistny, Modra Frankinja, Gamé, Kékfrankos Starovetsky Hrozen, Nagyburgundi, Frankovka, Lemberger, Blauer Limberger, Blaufränkisch, Franconia... what's with all of those scary names? They are all the same grape! In fact there are more than 80 variations on the name for this month's wine grape, which has Austro-Hungarian heritage. This Blason Franconia comes from Friuli. Franconia is probably not a grape many of you are familiar with; even in Friuli its resurrection as a varietal-labeled wine is recent. If it were one hundred years earlier, we'd be discussing Blaufränkisch rather than Franconia.

I love Friuli because it is one of the least touristy areas in Italy. Friuli is the easternmost region of Italy.

It's east of Venice and shares a border with Slovenia. Giovanni Blason and his consulting enologist Andrea Rossi have made his winery in Gradisca d'Isonzo into an award-winning machine. Gradisca d'Isonzo is a small city about four miles from the Slovenian border and about 20 miles north of Trieste. Giovanni's vineyards lie on the left bank of the Isonzo River, which is famed for its soils, rich in red clay and mixed with gravel. Friuli's unique geographic and climatic characteristics are accented by the Adriatic Sea to its south. Its northern border is with Austria in the Julian Alps. Although Friuli has been famous for its white wines, it has had a resurgence of indigenous, non-French varieties, and red varieties, with the help of a little global warming.

I love drinking this wine. It has a supple, ripe and soft richness as it flows across the palate. In the mouth it is full and fleshy; it lingers languidly while its terroir-driven flavors emerge. The nose is complex, ripe, plummy fruit combined with black pepper and hints of sage and gravel. It makes me think of a cross of a Côte du Rhône and a Bordeaux. Franconia is very food friendly, and although Friulian cuisine (like Friuli in general) is not well known in America, anyone returning from the area can attest to the superb quality, variety and preparation. —*Greg St. Clair*

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$7.99.

2003 Ca del Bosco Pinero

Ca del Bosco is one of Italy's most famous wineries. *Gambero Rosso*, Italy's leading wine reviewer, named it Winery of the Year for 2003 and has awarded more than thirty of its top, three-Glass awards to the winery over the years.

As a young man, Maurizio Zanella toured through France. He was stunned by the quality of wines and wished to create that quality in his native country. He returned to his parents' summer home and started making wines. He founded Ca del Bosco in 1968. Looking to further his abilities he returned to France to study at the Centre Oenologique de Bourgogne. Here at his family's property, Maurizio has



Andrea Rossi, consulting enologist for Blason.

been making award-winning sparkling wine for decades. Maurizio wasn't content to only make sparkling wine; he set out to conquer still wines as well. He started out with cabernet and chardonnay, making headlines in Italy and gaining a devoted following here in America, where his wines were in the best Italian restaurants. Like so many winemakers, Maurizio felt making a pinot nero (pinot noir) was a challenge he couldn't not try. Maurizio's 2003 Ca del Bosco Pinero is uniquely Italian, a ripe and robust pinot with lots of up-front fruit: blackberry, currant, cherry and raspberry all seem to be there. The wine is aged in small oak barrels (60% new) and that adds toasty vanilla and cocoa aromatics to the smooth, round and fleshy palate feel. This wine is elegant yet robust and drinkable now, but there is a twist. This wine sells for \$80 or more on the open market, but we were able to work a tremendous deal and can offer you the wine for \$28.99. Sssssssshhhhhhhh we can't show the Club price on this wine because the winery doesn't want the general public to know you're getting an unbelievable deal! Take advantage. —*Greg St. Clair*



Barrels at Ca del Bosco.

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is: Inquire—too low to print.

Premium Wine Club

2005 Hacienda al Plata Malbec, Argentina

Further proof that the wines of Argentina are to be bought and enjoyed comes in the form of this 2005 Hacienda al Plata Malbec. This wine is an unbelievably good value and drinks like a wine of two to three times the price. That's probably because it is made and sourced from vineyards and vines that produce a wine that costs three times what this one does. Malbec is the grape that put Argentina on the map. In the hands of a skilled winemaker and good vineyard manager, the grape can achieve amazing flavors and complexity. Malbec has several traits that make it an exciting varietal. The first is its ability to achieve dense, powerful fruit without being overly tannic (one of the main complaints about cabernet sauvignon). While malbec does have tons of fruit, it doesn't come off overripe or flabby like many of the merlots out there. Traditionally malbec will display dark fruit flavors, chocolate, minerals such as graphite, plus coffee and slight herbal notes.

The 2005 Hacienda al Plata Malbec is made by Patrice Leveque, owner of famed Bordeaux properties such as Clos L'Eglise, Château Branon, Château Barde-Haut, Château Haut Bergey and of course Poesia, their Argentinian property. With the help of consulting enologist Dr. Alain Reynaud, Patrice Leveque has created a wine that is eerily reminiscent of his Bodega Poesia wine. The 2005 Hacienda al Plata lets you know from the very first aroma that this is a serious wine, with deep black fruit, crushed volcanic rock, graphite and dark chocolate aromas. This wine smells silky. On the palate it delivers with a plush, velvety mix of blackcurrant, black cherry and blackberry fruit which mingles nicely with the dark chocolate and mineral notes. This finish is long, smooth and plush, with the dark fruit flavors setting like a Hawaiian sunset on your palate.



Hacienda al Plata winemaker Patrice Leveque and his wife, Helene Garcin-Leveque.

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$13.95.

2005 Château de l'Estang, "Clos Kalinda Cuvee" Côtes de Castillon

Since the late 1990s one of the best "Value" areas in Bordeaux has been the Côtes de Castillon, just east of St. Emilion. Many property owners from prestigious regions such as St. Emilion and Pomerol are moving into this area. One of our biggest 2005 Bordeaux sellers is d'Aiguilhe from Stephan von Neipperg of Canon La Gaffeliere fame.

We first tasted this Château de l'Estang in April 2008 and fell in love with it immediately. We were able to convince the owner, Jean Michel Ferrandez, and his négociant to give us some cases of a special batch he had and we named it "Clos Kalinda Cuvée." Well, here it is. And at a great price for such a pedigree.

This property is a 26-hectare (53 acre) piece planted on rolling hills in Saint Genes de Castillon at a density of 5000 vines per hectare—that's lots of vines in a small area. The vineyard is planted 70% to merlot and 30% to cabernet franc, with the average vine age being 35 years. There is a strict selection in the vineyard and at the winery, only 36 hectoliters per hectare (they are allowed 50). This wine is only 13.6% alcohol; that's on the lower level of the right-bank merlot wines from 2005.

We love the vibrant style of this wine. It has deep color, and blackberry aromas with a touch of cassis. The tannins are round and the wine has great acidity so it will age well in your cellar. We recommend decanting this wine for one hour before serving. Perfect with a winter stew or even a prime rib roast. Very informative back label here. Enjoy! —*Clyde Beffa Jr.*

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$13.95.

Best Buy Wine Club

2006 Chateau Souverain Chardonnay, Alexander Valley

The Best Buy Club is all about values, and there aren't many chardonnays that are better values than the 2006 Chateau Souverain Alexander Valley Chardonnay. Alexander Valley is a region that has gone far too long without the recognition that it deserves. Located in the northern corner of Sonoma County slightly to the east, Alexander Valley is known for producing excellent chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon. Chateau Souverain has been fashioning some of the best value wines to come out of not only Alexander Valley but all of California. Chateau Souverain's winemaker, Ed Killian, has taken the potential of Alexander Valley to make excellent wines, and has realized its full potential. Far too frequently the mere mention of the name Napa or Sonoma means you are going to have to pay at least \$15 to \$20 to get any kind of quality. But often you can find a wine from Alexander Valley in that price range that can compete favorably against wines that cost two to three times as much.



The 2006 Chateau Souverain Chardonnay Alexander Valley is everything you could want from a California chardonnay. The wine starts out with a tantalizing nose of white flowers, tropical fruits and sweet, rich oak. On the palate the wine has surprisingly good balance with bright zippy fruit, good mouthfeel, sweet, rich oak and enough acidity to keep the wine lively and not appear heavy at all. If you're on the constant search for a case-worthy chardonnay then your odyssey is over, because the 2006 Chateau Souverain is the "holy grail" of chardonnay values.

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Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$9.49.

2006 Bourgogne Pinot Noir, Emile Chandesais

Pinot noir in the Best Buy Wine Club? Seems impossible these days when a new California pinot noir retails for \$50-plus. Even small Burgundy reds are \$20 and up. That is why we selected this wine. One of the benefits of 2009 is that it's a buyer's market. We originally were going to have this in the Premium Club, but we held out and now present it in the Best Buy Club. Enjoy our success and taste this. We have only about 30 cases left for resale. It has a subtle garnet color and a delicate, floral and spicy nose. It is alluring and round on the palate with flavors of cherries, berries and spice. The assemblage from different terroirs results in a very pleasant feeling of structure and balance. The finish is straight and clean, with a good length. Perfect with white meats in sauce (veal, rabbit, etc.), pasta and lightly grilled foods, this modern-style wine offers a good introduction to Burgundian pinot noir. Drink now and through the next four years. —*Clyde Beffa Jr.*

And from Keith Wollenberg, K&L Burgundy Buyer: "This bright and engaging Bourgogne Rouge is made from 100% pinot noir. It is a bit earthy in character, with pretty, cherry fruit notes. It will accompany lighter dishes such as roast chicken or grilled salmon, beautifully. Maison Chandesais is in the Chalonaise, not far from the famous three-Michelin-star restaurant, Lameloise. This property is now owned by the Chablis producer Michel Picard, who has built a strong and vibrant domaine in only two generations. Under his ownership, the wines have continued to improve. This is a terrific value in everyday pinot noir, for any region!"

Your re-order price for this wine as a club member is \$9.49.

Re-order Form

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 prices for each wine. The phone number to place orders is 800-247-5987. The order desk is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you have any wine club-related issues, call us at x2766 and we will help you resolve them. We have a voice-mail system, and if we can't take your call immediately we will return it as soon as possible. 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

Champagne Club Previous Offerings

_____ Bottle(s) of Francoise Diligent Carte Blanche Brut @ \$33.99 per bottle

The Moutard-Diligent family has a lot of experience growing grapes and making wine in Champagne's Côte de Bar area—they have been doing it since the 1600s! This very tasty Champagne is a blanc de noir made entirely from pinot noir harvested from vines that are ten to 20 years old. It is given three years of ageing on the lees. In the glass it has a pale color with a hint of gold from the pinot noir and a slow, spiraling bead. The wine is very savory on the nose, and reminds me of Côtes de Beaune Burgundy with Champagne brioche integrated perfectly into the aroma. On the palate it is full bodied and has plenty of forthright pinot fruit. It is dosed at an extraordinarily light one gram per liter, and finishes dry, refreshing but not at all harsh.

_____ Bottle(s) of Demoiselle, Tête du Cuvée @ \$33.99 per bottle

The Demoiselle Tête du Cuvée Brut Champagne is 80% chardonnay and 20% pinot noir and goes through primary fermentation in 100% stainless steel. It completes malolactic fermentation in stainless steel and is then bottled and aged for three years on the lees. It's quite golden in color with a touch of green from the high chardonnay content, and has a decadent, generous nose that the pinot dominates. Flavors of buttered toast, apples and even a bit of chanterelle

mushroom unfold on the complex palate. This is very vinous, potent Champagne with quite a bit of length. The unusual bottle has flowing, curved linear glass at the bottom, inspired by *art nouveau* of the Nancy school.

Signature Red Club Previous Offerings

_____ Bottles of 2004 Chateau de la Gardine Chateaufeuf du Pape @ 24.99 per bottle

This is showing magnificently right now like many of the underrated 2004 Chateaufeuf du Papes. The wine has a seductive nose of black plums, spice, minced meat and creosote aromas that give way to a palate that displays a kaleidoscope of flavors such as dark chocolate, espresso, cherry liqueur and black fruits all framed by sweet, opulent oak. The finish, while bold, is buffered nicely by the racy acidity and copious tannins which hint at a wine easily capable of aging gracefully for the next five to 15 years. —*Alex Pross*

_____ Bottles of 2005 Clos Kalinda, St-Emilion Grand Cru @ 21.99 per bottle

Our first Bordeaux wine under the Kalinda label. We waited some thirty years before we did one and 2005 was the perfect vintage to do a Bordeaux wine with our name on it. We tasted and blended up a wine we thought would be a great drinker now and also a fine cellar candidate. The brilliant color is bordered with brick-red tints; the expressive bouquet offers a succession of cherry, cinnamon and fine toasted oak. On the palate, the flavor is at the same time fruity and woody. Supple in the mouth, fine chewy tannins, flavors of black fruit, and a very good finish. Like most of the 2005 Bordeaux, this wine should be decanted if you are drinking it now. I think this wine will grace the table the next time we have a prime-rib dinner.

_____ Bottles of 2000 Château Verdignan, Haut Medoc @ \$18.99 per bottle

Jean Mialhe became owner of Château Verdignan and its neighbor Coufran in 1972. He has transformed it into an important, yet little known Bordeaux Château. We carried their wines in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when they were quite hard and tannic. Since 1999, the Verdignan wines have been more supple and forward. It's still old-style Bordeaux, but it shows much more fruit. The 2000 is a great bargain. This was a great year, and this wine just tastes very good. It is certainly the best vintage ever produced by this property. It is balanced, with silky tannins complimented by great acidity and red berry fruit. Perfect with a prime rib roast or rack of lamb.

_____ Bottles of 2006 Savigny Les Beaune Aux Fourches, Champy @ \$23.99 per bottle

Aux Fourches is a single vineyard located just to the right after the fork in the road toward Pernand Vergelesses, as you come from Beaune to the village of Savigny. This shows a very pretty floral nose, bright red fruit, and lots of length. Lovely though it is, this is serious wine, with very good concentration and substantial tannins at the finish. It's drinkable now, particularly with decanting, but it will age very well in your cellar. —*Keith Wollenberg*

_____ Bottles of 2005 Château Cantelys Rouge, Pessac-Leognan @ \$25.99 per bottle

The vineyard plantings are 60% cabernet sauvignon, 35% merlot, and 5% cabernet franc, and the average vine age is 16 years. The 2005 vintage will long be remembered for drought conditions. We had great success selling the 2003 Cantelys in the club and now we are proud to offer the even better 2005 vintage. James Suckling of the Wine Spectator scored it 89-91 points and said: "Intense aromas of blackberry and wet earth follow through to a full-bodied palate, with round and soft tannins. Silky. Impressive." I could not have said it better. —*Clyde Beffa Jr.*

_____ Bottles of 2005 Gigondas "Ventabren" Moulin de Gardette @ \$26.99 per bottle

The Gigondas Moulin de la Gardette "Cuvée Ventabren" is the estate's top cuvée, and hails from the estate's oldest vines, some of which are nearly 100 years old. The 2005 Cuvée Ventabren is composed of 70% grenache, 20% syrah and 10% cinsault, with the latter two varietals fermented together. It has a beautiful garnet color and a gorgeous nose of cherry, licorice, wet stones and a hint of bacon. On the palate, it is medium-full bodied and opulent, with great depth, length and persistence. The 2005 Cuvée Ventabren is simply a gorgeous example of what can happen when talent, dedication and great terroir come together. Bravo Jean-Baptiste!

_____ Bottles of 2005 Etude Merlot, Sonoma Valley @ **SPECIAL PRICE \$23.99** per bottle

This starts with bright, heady aromas of blackberry, black plum and olive that lead to a core of rich, concentrated fruit. The structured yet supple tannins wrap around the lush red fruit and mingle with notes of white pepper. The finish leaves a long, lasting impression of fruit richness backed by hints of smoky spice. This wine, while extremely accessible in its youth, possesses excellent potential for aging. Finally, a merlot that can make a cabernet fan smile!

____ Bottle(s) of 2005 Chante Cigale Châteauneuf-du-Pape @ \$25.99 per bottle

Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate* scores this 90 points and lists the retail price at \$30 to \$38. "2005 Châteauneuf du Pape has a deep ruby/purple color and classic Provencal aromatics of garrigue, ground pepper, kirsch, and loamy soil notes. Medium to full-bodied, richly fruity, it has soft, silky tannins and decent acidity. This is a 2005 Châteauneuf du Pape to drink now and over the next 10-12 years."

Club Italiano Previous Offerings

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

____ Bottle(s) of 2006 Ferrero Rosso di Montalcino @ \$16.99 per bottle

The 2006 vintage is a blockbuster, intense, fully ripened, and potent and will produce Brunello of considerable character when released in 2011. The Rosso from this vintage are really good, stunning power and depth. In 2006 Claudia and Pablo made a wine with deep color, ripe plummy fruit that just flows out of the glass with layers of lush black cherry. The lush palate feel commands attention and still is classic, but the sangiovese acidic bite has been replaced with supple, satin-like chords that give the wine length without coarseness. This wine is wonderfully full bodied yet really drinkable now. Try it with grilled meats drizzled with extra virgin olive oil, or a classic pinci pasta with a meat ragu.

____ Bottle(s) of 2003 Sella e Mosca Alghero Tanca Farra @ \$18.99 per bottle

The island of Sardinia is one of the least known regions in Italy. Tanca Farra is an intriguing 50-50 blend of Cannonau (grenache) and cabernet sauvignon that is fairly unique in Italy but produces a remarkable flavor profile. The soft palate roundness of the grenache, its nose full of Middle Eastern spices, combines with the more structured and earthy cabernet, which adds a hint of herbaceous notes. It all comes together in a succulent and savory wine.

____ Bottle(s) of 2005 Bricco Del Cuci "Bricco San Bernardo" @ \$17.99 per bottle

This winery is about as big as your garage, ok maybe slightly bigger, and was built around the time Columbus was dodging hurricanes in the Caribbean. *Bricco* is a Piemontese word for the top of the ridge—and from this ridge the view of the Alps is unbelievable. The San Bernardo vineyard produces powerful, dark fruit, classic dolcetto, rich and broad on the palate. The yield is a very low (for dolcetto) three tons per acre. The wine is powerful, dark and full of exotic fruits with great balance and wonderful length. This is a wine for aged cheese, game or lamb.

____ Bottles of 2006 Terre Del Vulcano Fiano di Avellino @ \$14.99 per bottle

For me fiano has always been the most important white grape in Campania. Its body, minerality and well-documented longevity offer more complexity and structure than any other. Fiano has an inherent richness that makes it work as an apéritif, but the underlying minerality and great acidic balance make it an excellent food accompaniment. Fiano is versatile! Crustaceans, scampi, tiny baby octopus, salmon or snapper or a fresh cheese would do very well.

____ Bottles of 2007 Convento Muri Gries Lagrein Scuro/Dunkel @ **SPECIAL PRICE \$14.99** per bottle

Lagrein is the Alto Adige's most powerful and famous indigenous grape variety. It has been said to have its genetic roots in Syrah. The wines are dense, dark and meaty, not unlike what you might expect in Syrah This 2007 is an excellent example of this varietal, in a spectacular vintage. The wine is soft, supple, seductive, complex, full of blackberry fruit, earth, licorice and violets, almost opaque in color, and fresh crushed black pepper, it's like a cross between Bordeaux and Burgundy. Try it with Gnocchi in a Wild Boar Ragu or a Tiröler Grostl, sort of a potatoes-onions and pork scramble....it's bliss!

____ Bottles of 2005 Gianni Brunelli Rosso di Montalcino @ **SUPER SPECIAL PRICE \$19.99** per bottle

The 2005 Gianni Brunelli Rosso di Montalcino is a throwback to the days when wines were under 14% alcohol. Is that still possible? Yes, this is 13.5% alcohol. This wine is classically styled. It has the classic dark Marasca cherry aromatics and flavors that are so representative of this side of Montalcino while being true to its long, lean and elegant origins. No new oak here; this wine is aged for eight months in 30HL Slavonian oak barrels and has been in the bottle now for two years. It needs some decanting or aeration and should be served with rich dishes like lasagna with a béchamel sauce or spicy beef stews. It is also good with high-fat-content cheeses. Enjoy!

____ Bottles of 2003 Castel Ruggero Chianti Classico @ **SUPER SPECIAL PRICE \$16.99** per bottle

A blend of 80% sangiovese with 15% merlot and 5% cabernet franc. This wine is tremendous; the nose alone is full of

so much intrigue, spice, nuance and outright boldness it would be enough for me. In the mouth the wine is vibrant, focused and long with layers of mineral, spice, fruit and touches of herbaceous complexity that make it really powerful. It's like a tightly wound spring that slowly uncoils as it opens in your glass. Have this with a big T-bone steak, or some white beans with fresh olive oil if you don't do the meat thing.

____ Bottles of 2005 San Vincenti Chianti Classico @ **SPECIAL PRICE \$18.99** per bottle

Very rich, with great mid-palate feel. The nose is molten galestro, sweet earth, tobacco, new saddle leather, sage, and rosemary, spicy, vibrant and full of mineral. On the palate the wine really comes together. The density is balanced by length and touches of sweet plum and bright cherry fruit, alternating with the earthy nose to create a sensational wine. I'd drink it with grilled, rosemary-marinated pork chops or a big thick T-Bone steak.

Premium Wine Club Previous Offerings

____ Bottles of 2006 Flora Springs "Barrel Fermented" Chardonnay Napa Valley @ \$13.95 per bottle

Flora Springs "Barrel Fermented" Chardonnay Napa Valley is your quintessential California chardonnay. This wine traditionally receives multiple 90-point-plus scores from the press and is one of the most sought after under-\$20 chardonnays on the market due to its highly consistent quality. If you're a fan of the rich, tropical-fruit-style chardonnays in the mold of Rombauer or Beringer Reserve, then you'll love this Flora Springs. It has a delightful nose of acacia flowers, honeycrisp apple, pineapple and candied ginger that give way to a palate of tropical fruit, pear, fig and rich buttery oak that are nicely highlighted by the rich, viscous mouthfeel. The wine never feels heavy or clumsy thanks to ample acidity, which enables a wine of this size, weight and structure to be full-bodied yet amazingly light and nimble on the palate.

____ Bottles of 2005 Château St-Hilaire, Haut Médoc Cru Bourgeois @ \$13.95 per bottle

Only 8000 cases a year from this small estate located 80 km north of the city of Bordeaux in a village called Jau Dignac et Loirac in the north Médoc. Deep gravelly soil along with a clayey-chalky subsoil provides this value-priced Bordeaux red with plenty of stuffing, especially in the ripe, precocious vintage of 2005. The blend is 50% cabernet sauvignon, 45% merlot and 5% cabernet franc, vinified in stainless steel and aged for one year in oak (one-third new each year). This wine has so much upfront fruit on the nose—tons of raspberries and cassis. It has a sweet fruit palate impression with fine acidity and a lingering finish. A fantastic wine to have on hand for strip sirloin on the grill, steak fajitas or burgers. The famous Mr Boissenot is the consultant here.

____ Bottles of 2005 Château Maurac, Haut Medoc Cru Bourgeois @ \$12.95 per bottle

This château-bottled wine is a K&L Direct Import and an excellent value, too! Fabulous year; if you liked their 2003, you'll love this 2005. The wine has blackberry aromas that follow to the palate. It shows some power and richness from its northern Médoc location. It has a fine sweetness on the palate and a lingering finish. It will cellar well. If you drink it now, decant it one hour in advance and serve it with a rare New York Steak.

____ Bottles of 2007 Jean Merieau Gamay de Touraine "Bois Jacou" @ \$13.95 per bottle

Ruby red in the glass, this starts out with aromas of white pepper, rhubarb and minced-meat pie that seamlessly flow to a palate that displays elegance and balance. The wine's lithe structure is bolstered by great acidity, which showcases the subtle flavors of sour cherry, minerals, wild herbs and exotic spice. On the finish the wine comes all together and lingers on the palate before fading away with pepper notes. This wine will pair well with roasted chicken, plank-roasted salmon and foods that call for a red wine with good acidity without harsh tannins.

____ Bottles of Kalinda Sekt Riesling @ \$12.95 per bottle

Sekt is the German name for sparkling wine, which the Germans are passionate about and drink on a regular basis. Produced of 100% riesling, this sparkling wine is fresh and vibrant with fine bubbles and a creamy mouth feel underscored by the beautiful stone fruits and snappy acidity that we love in riesling. At 11.5% alcohol this is a lighter style of bubbly that won't overwhelm the palate before a meal or become too taxing when many wines are served.

____ Bottles of 2006 Olivet Lane Chardonnay, Russian River @ \$13.95 per bottle

A chardonnay with tropical fruit flavors along with good acidity and minerality. The oak is there to frame the wine but doesn't interfere with the great core of fruit. This is a case-worthy buy and should be your go-to chardonnay. Enjoy this with grilled chicken, sausages or any other fare that you would pair with a white wine.

___ Bottles of 2004 Chateau Ste. Michelle Orphelin, Columbia Valley Washington @ \$13.95 per bottle
Orphelin was born when the winemakers chose to create a true Rhône-style blend, while showcasing Washington's true potential for Rhône varieties. The wine bursts with ripe, red fruit and layers of spice and milk chocolate. On the palate, candied cherries and ripe strawberries abound, offering an enticing, complex mouthfeel and a smiling finish. The next time you have lamb or a pork chop, adopt a glass of Orphelin and become a foster drinker.

___ Bottle(s) of 2005 Domenico California Montepulciano @ **SUPER SPECIAL PRICE \$11.95** per bottle
The 2005 Domenico Montepulciano is sourced from vineyards in California's Central Valley and is a blend of 88% montepulciano, 10% petite sirah and 2% merlot. The wine spent 18 months in French and American oak. The result is a medium-bodied on the palate with oaky flavors and aromas of cherry, anise, plum and blackberry. The wine has soft, lush fruit that has a velvety texture with just enough oak to accentuate and frame the abundant fruit flavors. This wine can pair wonderfully with veal or lamb and of course your favorite pasta dish.

___ Bottle(s) of 2006 Kirkham Peak Napa Merlot @ **SPECIAL PRICE \$12.95** per bottle
From one of Napa Valley's most respected family-owned wineries. Grapes come from the Yountville and Stags Leap area of the Napa Valley. This is something of a Bordeaux blend, as there are small amounts of cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc in the wine. It was aged for almost two years in new French oak. This wine has firm acidity and structure as well as an elegant bouquet of red berry fruit with a hint of menthol, cherries and spice. It is a thoroughly satisfying wine that will make a perfect addition to your rack of lamb dinner. It is young; decanting one hour in advance will soften it. This wine will age well for several years in your cellar.

Best Buy Wine Club Previous Offerings

___ Bottles of 2007 Weingut Allram Grüner Veltliner (1.0L), Austria @ \$8.49 per bottle
The property's philosophy: "Production of organic, high quality products which have been processed using utmost care and state-of-the-art technology." That care and dedication really show in this month's wine. Fermented and aged in stainless steel and bottled with a crown cap, this is the perfect liter, fresh, light and snappy, and delivering all the thirst quenching you look for in a wine like this. The nose is textbook Grüner Veltliner filled with spice and pepper, snap pea and grapefruit. It is sleek, focused and juicy owing to the wonderful bright acid structure of the vintage. Enjoy with gusto over the next couple of years.

___ Bottles of 2003 Chateau Ste Michelle "Indian Wells" Merlot Columbia Valley Washington @ \$9.49 per bottle
The 2003 Chateau Ste Michelle "Indian Wells" Merlot Columbia Valley Washington has an intoxicating nose of cocoa powder, kirsch, red cherry syrup and cigar box which on the palate turns into a smooth, supple red wine featuring flavors of crushed red and black fruits, graphite, volcanic rock, bittersweet chocolate and herb flavors. The finish is lively with good structure and a harmoniously long finish that not only accentuates the wine's fruit but also its touch of oak, helping to frame the ample fruit and body of the wine. *Wine Spectator* obviously agreed, giving it 89 points and designating it a "Smart Buy."

___ Bottles of 2007 Côtes du Rhône, Domaine Maurelle @ \$8.49 per bottle
The 2007 Domaine de la Maurelle Côtes du Rhône is arguably the best vintage ever from this estate. On the nose, expressive notes of black cherry and blackberry fruits hold their own against more delicate notes of black olive, roasted herbs and a whiff of mineral. On the palate you'll find similar characteristics, along with fine tannins and good underlying acidity that make the Maurelle Côtes du Rhône a great candidate for pairing with a variety of Mediterranean fare. A direct buy makes this an even better deal, but even at a significantly higher price, this delicious Rhône red, based on grenache, would be a steal. You will want a case of this on hand to go with pizza, pasta, ribs, chicken—whatever you tend to eat on, say, a Tuesday!

___ Bottles of 2005 Jean Louis Denois "Les Olivieres" GSM @ \$9.49 per bottle
The Oliviers boasts a wonderfully intriguing nose of dark-berried fruits, smoke and spice box. The tannins are supple, fine grained, and beautifully balanced with just the right amount of snappy acidity. Enjoy this southern French red with a variety of Mediterranean-inspired dishes, including oven-roasted vegetables, roasted pork with ratatouille or a selection of cheeses with a big loaf of fresh bread.

___ Bottles of 2006 Kalinda Niersteiner Riesling (GA Schneider) @ \$9.49 per bottle
Produced by our friends at Weingut Georg Albrecht Schneider, this comes from Nierstein in the Rheinhessen, famous for its red slate soils that render silky, refined rieslings of great aromatic richness and above all, value. You will love this riesling's nose of apricot and peach and its vibrant and refreshing personality, infused with the warmth and mineral-tinged smokiness of red slate. With an ever-so-slight hint of fruity sweetness, this makes a wonderful companion to yellow curries or spicy Asian dishes. Drink now and over the next 5 to 8 years.

___ Bottles of 2006 Penfolds Chardonnay Thomas Hyland South Australia @ \$8.49 per bottle
Penfolds has delivered to us a wonderful value in chardonnay. The Thomas Hyland chardonnay has a wonderful core of bright fruit with aromas of lanolin, white flowers and crushed stones which creates a harmonious and well-balanced wine. This bottling is made from grapes sourced from the Adelaide region and this wine has much in common with its more heralded and expensive sibling, the Yattarna chardonnay made by Penfolds. The quality attained by this bottling is achieved by the unique climate of Adelaide.

___ Bottles of 2007 Domaine Begude "Le Bel Ange" Chardonnay Languedoc @ \$9.49 per bottle
K&L is proud to feature the latest release of Domaine Begude's "Le Bel Ange" Chardonnay (the beautiful angel). It is composed of 85% chardonnay and 15% chenin blanc. An inviting citrus nose will greet you, along with delicate nuances of honeydew melon, pear and wet stone. The Bel Ange is a superb candidate for a house white as it can be enjoyed on its own at the end of a long day, or with a variety of seafood, salad and light white meat dishes.

___ Bottles of 2005 Rosemount Show Reserve Chardonnay, Australia @ **SPECIAL PRICE \$6.99**
per bottle
The 2005 Rosemount Show Reserve has gorgeous aromas of tropical fruits. On the palate the wine displays peach, pineapple and citrus flavors. There is enough oak to satisfy fans of richer chardonnays while the acidity keeps the wine in perfect harmony. Perfect with grilled chicken.

Additional Club Specials

1995 Burgess Vintage Selection Cabernet Sauvignon

Special Club Price \$34.99 (Regular K&L price \$39.99)

If you've been a fan of the other older vintage Burgess cabs we've been fortunate enough to have uncovered, then the 1995 will blow you away. Aromas of candied cherries and Asian spice are quickly followed on the palate by black cherries, black plums and bitter chocolate. A large-scale wine that has ample fruit and oak. It is amazingly smooth and supple.

2005 Chante Cigale Châteauneuf du Pape "Vieilles Vignes"

Special Club price \$34.99 (Regular K&L price \$39.99)

93 points Robert Parker. "Deeper, fuller, broader, and fuller-bodied than the regular bottling with greater concentration, depth, length, and I assume, much better aging potential as well, the 2005 Châteauneuf du Pape Vieilles Vignes is a beauty. This is a bold wine of considerable exuberance, with impressive levels of kirsch-like fruit intermixed with some blacker fruits, ground pepper, incense, and roasted herbs. It is very full-bodied, has admirable glycerin and depth, noticeable but sweet tannin, and a 40+-second finish. This is a super Châteauneuf du Pape that should hit its peak in 2-4 years and last for 15 or more years." (*Wine Advocate* #173, Oct 2007)

2006 Seigneurs d'Aiguilhe, Côtes de Castillon

Special Club price \$14.99 (Regular K&L Price \$16.99)

This is the second wine of Stefan Von Neipperg's Château d'Aiguilhe. It is fresh, pure merlot with some spice—a perfect everyday Bordeaux. K&L's Steve Greer says: "Sweet fruit aromas dominate this wine's nose as well as its palate with a nice background of spice. The beauty here comes from the polished tannins and lower-than-usual acidity, which combine to give this wine its elegant mouthfeel. A lovely wine with a slightly spicy finish."