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Hello K&L Wine Club Members,

It's June and exciting things are happening in the Wine Clubs. We've got some fun selections this month with SUMMER written all over them. But before we get into the details, I want to introduce myself. David recently asked me to get involved with the wine clubs, and I'm absolutely thrilled. I've been running the Personal Sommelier service for a while now at K&L, and am excited to be involved with our other monthly clubs. Maybe it's contagious at K&L, but I've got a passion for getting people show-stopper wines at weeknight prices. If you know me from the sales floor in Redwood City over the last several years, I'm the girl who probably always undersold you. I'll be working with the Beffas and our other buyers to do the same thing here in the Clubs.

So, what have we got lined up for this month? Well, our Signature Red members will be enjoying a theme of "Field Blend Classics." We've got a stellar southern French wine from a small producer who is doing everything the hard way, but the right way. Thierry Rodriquez runs a biodynamic winery in the Languedoc that, albeit a newer domaine, is producing true classics. By way of contrast, we are pairing this wine with a California field blend from a Northern California winery called Prospect 772. Founders Ron Pieretti and Wendy Sanda have a background in food and wine, and a particular love for Rhône varietals. These two wines should be great fun side by side.

Following on the South of France theme, our Premium Club members will be enjoying their summer *vacances* on the Mediterranean, with a white and red from the Languedoc region. Both wines are blends, and they come from two of the older wineries in the region. Craft and quality are built into these wines, with the benefit of long traditions of careful viticulture and winemaking. It's easy to be a Francophile when it comes to wine, but these two selections will have you dreaming of long summer days on the French Riviera. More specifics inside!

Best Buy Club members, if you're planning a barbeque any time soon you'll want to bring out the Stephen Vincent "Crimson" wine we've got for you this month. California summer is packed into this bottle, and it's extremely food friendly. Our second selection is one of my personal favorite hot-weather picks—a Muscadet from a small producer that we work with in the Loire Valley. If you need a poolside sipper that's incredibly layered and complex, and all too easily quaffable, this is the bottle.

Italian wine fans, Greg has a great duo for you this month. He's paired a special Barbera with an Italian classic, a Malvasia. Thanks to our direct buy, we're able to swing a great deal on the white, and get you a high-end Barbera—one that normally retails for \$30.

And yes! It's a Champagne month, so look out for the great wines that Gary has on offer this month, a Rosé and a Brut from two of our favorite direct-import producers. As always, Gary's wines are spot on for this lovely summer season.

Heather Gowen, K&L Wine Club Director  
heathergowen@klwines.com

# Signature Red Collection Wine Club

As I mentioned, we are featuring field blends for the Signature Club this month. What does that term refer to? Before we became so enamored of varietally labeled wines, many winemakers planted their vineyards to several different varietals and made a cuvée of the resultant wine, to achieve what was essentially a regional style, more representative of the place than of one particular grape's characteristics. There's plenty to be said for varietal labeling and the trend toward transparency for the consumer. But often with change, some good things are lost. I wanted to bring us back for a minute to that old-school way of making wine, where the focus was on place and style, and less on the minute varietal details. Of course France has a long history of regional cuvées, and California too has field blends in its winemaking roots. So this month let's look at two wines in this old-school model: one from the south of France, and one from our own neck of the woods.

Our first wine comes from the tiny appellation of Faugères in the Languedoc. While that's not necessarily on every wine aficionado's top destination list, you can stumble across absolutely stunning wines in this region, such as the **2015 Mas Gabinele "Faugères" Languedoc-Roussillon (\$26.99)** that we are featuring this month. Thierry Rodriquez is the man behind this classic French Grenache-Syrah-Mourvèdre, and I have to say he does everything right. He started this small domaine back in 1997, and he hasn't done things the easy way. The sandstone-schist soils in this area are extremely nutrient poor, meaning that the vines have to struggle and have naturally quite low yields. Even so, Thierry insists on sustainable farming practices and harvests all his fruit by hand, sorting out unfit berries right there in the vineyard. Handling in the winery follows the same philosophy, with long, slow fermentations, gentle extraction, and a discerning balance of old and new French oak. But I don't need to bore you with all the details—taste the wine and you'll see what this attention to detail has created. More importantly, you'll get a good sense of the region, and see how a cuvée of this caliber can be more than the sum of its parts.

By way of contrast, we've got another old school field blend for our second Signature Red selection this month, and this one is from our own backyard, in California's Calaveras County. In classic California fashion, the **2015 Prospect 772 "Black Tie Charlie" Sierra Foothills (\$22.99)** is a big, full-bodied wine, blended from Syrah and Petit Syrah, and showcasing the power of our California sunshine. The founders at Prospect 772, Ron Pieretti and Wendy Sanda, are big into food-and-wine pairing, and design their wines with the table in mind. With this motivation, their wines are all cuvées or field blends. Rather than parse out detailed varietal wines, they opt for wines that showcase their origins and include expressions of more than one grape. Did I mention that Ron and Wendy also happen to be in love with Rhône style wines? Their Black Tie Charlie is a Southern French-inspired wine that is also true to its California roots. It's a perfect contrast to the Faugères—similar background, but different regional expression. Both wines might involve a high percentage of Syrah, and both are made meticulously. The key to their differences lies in the climate, soil and terroir that each represents. So, pour yourself a glass and immerse yourself in the style of a region, whether France or California.



*Thierry Rodriquez, proprietor and winemaker at Mas Gabinele in the Languedoc.*

# Premium Wine Club

For our Premium Club members, this is a month of zeroing in on place and tradition, with two classic wines from historical domaines of the Languedoc in the south of France. What's so special about the Languedoc? Two things: a very long winemaking tradition, and unique terroir. Our two selections include a white wine hailing from one of the oldest winemaking properties in the region, and a red wine from a special little vineyard that's quintessentially French Mediterranean.

Our first wine's domaine has incredibly old winemaking roots. If you've ever wanted a real connection to ancient Roman history, here's your chance, in the form of the **2016 La Chapelle de Bebian Blanc (\$15.99)**. This property has been making wine since the time of the Roman centurion Bebianus, after whom the area is named. But don't worry—this wine doesn't come packaged in goatskin. The winemaking has seen some advances since the 1st century, and is now in the capable hands of Australian-born oenologist Karen Turner. In all seriousness, I think you're going to love this fresh little wine, blended from Grenache Blanc, Roussane, Clairette and Viognier. Karen vinifies each element separately, then blends to taste. She uses only stainless steel and neutral oak barrels, so there's plenty of pure varietal and terroir expression. The composition is classic for the Languedoc, and the resultant wine rocks the boat a little for us American consumers. It's fresh, vibrant and versatile, showcasing a uniquely Languedoc style and legacy.

We're sticking to this lovely region for this month's red wine, the **2015 La Grange Coteaux du Languedoc "Castalides" Reserve (\$13.99)**. I'm pretty excited about this wine, as I believe it's a near-perfect example of terroir translated into a glass. A long-established winery, Domaine La Grange is a big supporter of biodynamic farming, and sustains a great diversity of plant and animal life in its vineyards. The Mas de Couy vineyard, source of this Reserve wine, is home to rosemary, thyme, wild gorse, olive trees, and quite a few critters. This little plot is situated perfectly for Grenache and Mourvèdre, the classic Languedoc varietals, to grow in the warm Mediterranean climate. The plot is hedged by Garrigue woodlands and it's cooled by breezes from the nearby Cévennes mountain range. The vines themselves are over 50 years old, and have had plenty of time to assimilate the influence of the soils into their low yields. The winemaking is clean and guided, but doesn't attempt to overpower what is essentially already very expressive fruit. The resultant wine is full-bodied, unctuous, and subtly spiced. You really do get hints of the wild herbs and great mineral depth coming from the soil in this unique vineyard. There's an excellent savory quality derived purely from the old-vine character, and the whole is loaded with bright, expressive berry fruit. I think you'll love it. It's a great companion to this month's white, ready to transport you to a summer *à la Méditerranée*.



*Karen Turner, head winemaker at St Jean de Bebian.*



*View from the Mas de Couy vineyard at Domaine La Grange.*

# Best Buy Wine Club

The Best Buy Club is always pretty exciting to me. This is where some of our best deals shine. So what did we find for you this month? Not only are we featuring one of my favorite Loire Valley whites, we're also coming back to our California roots with a classic red blend from Stephen Vincent. With a delicate, poised and fresh white wine on the one hand and a bold, spicy and smoky red on the other, you might say we can't get more opposed in terms of flavor profiles. But these two wines are equally expressive and fitting for summer. Whether you've got a barbecue planned or a picnic on the beach, both of these wines are going to go great.

Our first wine is a classic California field blend, and extremely food friendly: the **2013 Stephen Vincent "Crimson" Red Blend (\$10.99)**. Robert Goyette, the winemaker, says this is his favorite wine of his whole portfolio, because there are no restrictions for him as winemaker. Basically, Robert's goal is to make a classic and bold wine that represents all the best of California. The varietal combination changes from year to year as with any field blend. In the 2013 vintage, Robert made the call to go with a high percentage of Petit Syrah. A few other California classics are packed in here as well, including Syrah, Zinfandel, Cabernet, Merlot and Malbec. This may sound like a recipe for a strong and tannic monster, but Robert's winemaking captures the best elements of each grape and sets off the final product in a seamless manner. Being a few years from the vintage date, this wine is well integrated and ready to drink. In particular the Petit Syrah has taken on a smoky and spiced character that is absolutely begging for something grilled. So pour yourself a glass now and get that barbecue going. This is the kind of wine summer evenings are made for.

Speaking of summer, one of my personal favorite sippers for this season is Muscadet. This dry, crisp wine hails from the Loire Valley, but is often put second to other French whites such as Sancerre or Chablis. It is made from the grape Melon de Bourgogne, which does particularly well in this cool northern climate. The **2015 Bedouet "Clos des Grands Primos" Muscadet Sevre et Maine Sur Lie (\$8.99)** comes from a small producer that we're working with directly. Bedouet is a family estate, founded in the 1890s and kept in the family ever since. Michel Bedouet is the current owner and winemaker, and has made the change to organic farming. The unique mixture of gneiss, mica and schist soils in his vineyard give the wine an elevated and layered mineral quality. The wine is also aged *sur lie*, which means that it has contact with the dead yeast cells for a period of time after fermentation. It picks up a lovely textural element from this process. It's also brimming with melon, citrus and orchard fruit—a perfect combination for a complex yet quaffable bottle. Our Loire Valley buyer, Keith Mabry, says this is one of the best Muscadets in the store, and I was lucky enough to talk him into featuring it for our Best Buy members. I'm hoping you will join me in the Muscadet fan club. This is a great bottle of wine at an unbelievable price, and it's picture perfect for summer.

Whatever this month entails for you, I think you'll find a place for these two wines, different as they may be. Whether you are opening the light, crisp Muscadet from the Loire or the bold and smoky "Crimson" from California, you'll find something uniquely suited to the season. Enjoy!



*Michel Bedouet in his vineyard in the Muscadet appellation.*

# Club Italiano

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

I will remember meeting Angelo Ferrio for the first time. A more ebullient person I've never met in my life, and seemingly indefatigable. His warm smile, coupled with his instantaneous and extraordinarily gracious openness, is something a bit unique for Piemontese. A few years ago I was in a restaurant and heard someone laughing across the room. I had no idea he was in San Francisco but it was Angelo all right. Once you've heard his one-of-a-kind laugh you'll never forget it. Despite all the charm Angelo is a serious winemaker. His roots are in agriculture, not only grapes but fruit trees as well. Before the local wine trade became profitable, peaches were the cash crop—not unlike Napa Valley before its wine boom. This humble foundation in the land grounds Angelo, while his ever curious-intellect has made him an excellent winemaker.



*Stefano Ferrio, left, is now running the family winery. He was of course taught by his father Angelo Ferrio, right.*

The nose of the **2013 Cascina Cà Rossa “Mulassa” Barbera d’Alba Superiore (\$25.99)** is complex, with so many components it's difficult to think which is dominant. The fruit quality is superb and it is a saturated aroma, deeply aromatic. It seems about to explode yet it shows no distinct “fruitiness,” and then the spices emerge, cinnamon, clove, allspice, black pepper, and coriander. Those seem to dominate for a second and then submerge as the earthy character jumps in. Porcini mushrooms, leather, soy seem to take over then subside. It is a heady experience. On the palate the wine shows a focused richness that stays on your tongue, not an amorphous flow. The flavors emerge with more fruit than earth and spice, then rearrange in the next sip. This is all followed by an extraordinary finish, long and persistent—the flavors don't seem to go away.

Malvasia? That word is probably making you all a little nervous right now, and I get it. My experiences with wimpy, slightly sweet California Malvasia Bianca still send shivers up my spine. Rest assured, this **2016 Ermacora Malvasia (\$13.99)** is a different wine, entirely different. Its DNA is in fact different, but due to legal rules in the Friulian wine appellations, it can only be labeled with the word Malvasia. So now you're asking ok what is this wine then? In Friuli it is referred to as Malvasia Istriana. It comes from the Istrian Peninsula just south of Trieste, land that is part Slovenia and mostly Croatia. I have to tell you as an upfront disclaimer I love this variety. I think it has an incredible upside, it's just saddled with this difficult name.

When Dario Ermacora started growing this grape, I jumped for joy. This is an up-and-coming varietal in Italy, on the lips of most everyone in Friuli. It's making a powerful presence in restaurants even though a decade ago there was almost none anywhere but on the Carso plateau. The nose is full of stone fruit, plum, peach, and apricot with hints of lemon and jasmine. On the palate the wine has a powerful presence marked by full-bodied character, with a decided weight to it even though this wine sees no oak at all. In your mouth the fruit takes a back seat to the minerality as its searing



*Dario Ermacora documenting my tasting.*

presence is noted, buoyed by a bit of salinity. This wine cries out for a piece of fish to enjoy it with. They do a bit of lees stirring on this wine so texturally you feel richness that couples nicely with the savory salinity. The wine finishes with a creamy, tangy freshness that makes you feel you're at the seaside.

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

**Obsessed Producers for June** This month in the Champagne Club we are featuring two of the “true believers” of Champagne. These producers are obsessed with quality, and have chosen a path (to them the only path) to get there. From the little village of Pierry, just south of Epernay, we have Bruno Michel, who is obsessed with his vines and their health, an organic true believer. From Bèthon, in the Sezanne region of Champagne, we have Le Brun de Neuville. This producer goes to the tremendous trouble of ageing their Champagne on the lees on a cork instead of a crown cap—the *prix de mousse* true believers. I think both of these producers have achieved their goals, and I hope you'll agree.

The **Bruno Michel “Blanche” Brut Champagne (\$34.99)** is one of the top deals that I have been able to offer to the club. This wine usually sells for \$49.99 and is worth every penny of that higher price. Bruno's estate is completely certified organic, certified vegan and also certified for too many other things to list here. I think the most important is that he is certified crazy for his vines; he does not have a single commercial clone in his vineyard and has selected and grafted every vine himself from his ancestral plots. He makes his own complex compost for his estate and also for most of the famous organic growers in the region. He is experimenting with permaculture, and can talk all day about soil health. His wines are some of the highest quality that we offer, and have depth at the top level. The Blanche is half and half Chardonnay and Meunier, is aged over five years on the lees and dosed at about seven grams per liter. This is soulful stuff and has an effortless quality that is almost impossible to describe or resist. It has great toast and spiced apple aromas and flavors, and a crisp, dry finish.

You will notice right away that the **Le Brun de Neuville “Authentique” Brut Rosé Champagne (\$34.99)** does not look like other Champagne. It has an *agrafe* (French for staple) holding the cork in instead of a classic cage and capsule. This cork is the second cork that the bottle has had in it. Most Champagne is aged on a crown cap (like a beer cap) in the cellar, and is only corked after disgorging. The cellar master at Le Brun de Neuville believes that natural cork is a far better material for long-term ageing, as it is more hermetic but also introduces a tiny amount of oxygen into the wine when first inserted. The results are hard to argue with. This Rosé has incredible complexity married to vivacious freshness. It is composed of 67% Chardonnay, and 33% Pinot Noir. Of the Pinot Noir, 17% is vinified as a still red wine, then blended into the assemblage to add color and flavor. Once the blending is set to taste, the second fermentation takes place, resulting in a lovely Rosé Champagne, bursting with great dark cherry fruit flavor. This wine would be ideal with tuna poke. To open it, simply hold the cork in while prying the staple outwards with the handle of a spoon.

A toast to you! —*Gary Westby*



*Bruno Michel in his beloved organic vineyards.*

# 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](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)***

## Signature Red Club Previous Offerings

2015 Loring “Keefer Ranch” Russian River Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

The Loring “Keefer Ranch” Pinot Noir is full of all the concentration and purity of fruit you can find in \$50 to \$70 bottles of California Pinot Noir: rich and round on the palate with plenty of freshness on the finish. You'll see Keefer Ranch releases from superstars like Kosta Brown and Failla as well, but you'll never see them for a price this good! The wine is so delicious you can enjoy it straight, with or without food.

2015 50 by 50 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

Gerald V. Casale (bassist in and founder of the band Devo) is a passionate Pinot Noir fan, and makes this wine in small lots from Rodger Creek in the Sonoma Coast AVA. It's composed of 50% Dijon 667 clone and 50% Pommard clone, and spent 15 months in French barriques. We've been working with Gerald for a couple of years now, and are very excited to have some of this very tiny-production wine.

2013 John Duval “Plexus” Barossa Valley SGM Blend @ \$23.99 per bottle

This wine annually receives rave reviews from every critic on the planet, and from each and every one of our Aussie-wine-loving staff. Normally a \$35 bottle. The 2013 Plexus is a blend of 54% Shiraz, 32% Grenache, and 14% Mourvèdre, making it the Aussie version of a Rhône blend. With layer upon layer of fruit, woody spice, and plenty of texture, it's one of the most elegant wines that comes out of Barossa every vintage. I'm well aware of the clichés that consumers hold against “jammy” Australian Shiraz, and I go out of my way to confront and break those stereotypes whenever possible. As if diving right into that stereotype boiler room with a California Merlot wasn't enough, I've decided to double down with this old fashioned Shiraz. In both cases, I think you're going to be seriously wowed by what's in the bottle. The term “serious” should also apply to this Plexus.

2016 Achaval Ferrer Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$24.99 per bottle

Where can one find mountain-grown Cabernet for a great price? In Mendoza, Argentina, where Achaval Ferrer sources its fruit from mineral-rich mountain soils, resulting in nuanced and beautifully balanced flavors. Bordeaux estates have their eyes on Mendoza. The conditions and Cabernet-friendly climate have shown tremendous and cost-effective results, as evident here in this 2016 Achaval Ferrer Cab, with juicy black fruits, hints of earth and tobacco, and a full-bodied finish. We'd be hard pressed to find a Cabernet this polished and profound at this price locally. Ferrer is a widely respected red wine producer, known for its old-school approach to new-world winemaking. Their wines are textbook in style and varietally correct, as is clear from the first sip of the 2016 Cabernet.

2015 Bravium Pinot Noir Anderson Valley @ \$24.99 per bottle

The 2015 Bravium Anderson Valley Pinot Noir from vineyards in the far reaches of Mendocino Valley. The wine is 100% Pinot Noir aged for 11 months in a combination of French and Hungarian oak of which 33% was new. The resulting wine is delicious. It's loaded with bright strawberry and raspberry aromas along with mineral and a cool rush of mint on the nose. The palate is bright and lively with strawberry and raspberries cascading throughout and a crunchy mineral and spice note on the end. This delightful red should pair well with roast chicken, poached salmon or lamb chops. *Wine Enthusiast* gave it 92 points.

### 2013 Domaine Fontbonau Côtes du Rhône @ \$22.99 per bottle

In 2008 this property was run down, but had 70-year-old Grenache and 30-year-old Syrah vineyards. The soils consist of sand, silt and fine clay, all ideal for growing classic Grenache. This wine drinks more like a fine Châteauneuf-du-Pape than a Côtes-du-Rhône. Thanks to the old vines and soil composition it has impressive structure and depth. It's loaded with dark berry fruit, silky tannins and complex structure. It drinks like a wine easily double the price. Enjoy this succulent red with lighter red meats and earthier fare. It's a great match for lamb or veal.

### \_\_\_\_ Bottle(s) 2013 Von Strasser Diamond Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$29.99 per bottle

The 2013 Von Strasser Diamond Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot and 1% Merlot aged in 100% French Oak of which 30% is new. It is blended from six vineyard sites within the Diamond Mountain District, and designed to be more approachable than your typical Diamond Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon. The wine begins with a nose of dark berry fruit, blueberry, blackberry and leather notes. The palate is a delightful mix of black licorice, coffee, pomegranate and subtle earth tones. The finish is long and lingering with supple tannins which will allow the wine to age gracefully. Pair this with a perfectly seared Filet Mignon, or put it in your cellar and allow it to sleep for 10 to 15 years and be amazed at its evolution.

### \_\_\_\_ Bottle(s) 2014 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas @ \$24.99 per bottle

The 2014 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas is a blockbuster of a wine, loaded with bright red fruits such as cherry, strawberry and raspberry along with spice and peppery notes. This lush, suave offering is irresistible. The fruit and spice along with the fine tannins and hints of rich oak give this wine a long, smooth feel that deftly unfurls on the palate. A great red wine. You can pair this ideally with pork, lamb or veal thanks to its pretty red fruits and spice notes. *Wine Spectator* gave this 90 points; *Vinous Media* gave it 88-90.

## **Premium Wine Club Previous Offerings**

### 2016 Alma de Cattleya Sonoma County Chardonnay @ \$24.99 per bottle

Columbian-born winemaker Bibiana Gonzalez Rave has a prestigious background making wine in Bordeaux, Burgundy and South Africa. It was in Sonoma that she finally found her heart's terroir. So she decided to put down roots. With a desire to make expressive wines from her new home, the newly established label Alma de Cattleya is focused on sub-\$30 options that exhibit the crisp, cool climate character of Sonoma County fruit with a message geared toward consumption rather than collecting. Formerly the head winemaker at Lynmar, Bibia is using her relationships with local growers to source excellent fruit from under-the-radar sites around the region.

### 2016 Loring Wine Company "Cooper Jaxon" Pinot Noir @ \$14.99 per bottle

Blending fruit from vineyards like Rancho La Viña, Kessler-Haak, Clos Pepe, John Sebastiano, Aubaine, Rosella's, and Sierra Mar, the result was about 1700 cases of this wine: pure "California" Pinot Noir that captures the fleshy and fruit-forward style of the Golden State's best locales, while keeping the price tag more than reasonable.

### 2005 Puelles Gran Reserva Rioja @ \$16.99 a bottle

The 2005 Puelles has a few years of barrel maturation in both French and American oak. After twelve years in the bottle the fruit begins to fade just a bit, allowing the secondary flavors of spice and leather to begin moving forward into the palate. I think the 2005 Gran Reserva at twenty bucks might even be better than that legendary 1999 vintage we sold case upon case of. Tasting it with Joe, our Spanish buyer, I was practically jumping up and down. The wine pours over the palate with a soft and silky core of fruit, but not the ripe and juicy red berry fruit you see in a young Rioja. I can't think of a more exciting wine to put into the Premium Club!

### 2014 Vignerons des Terres Secrètes St. Veran "Les Cras" @ \$14.99 per bottle

This wine hails from a cooperative in Burgundy's Macon region, where some of the best white wine values in the world come from—Chardonnay or not. This particular wine is made from Chardonnay in an area of the Mâcon where the soils are very stony and calcium-rich, helping the grapes retain their acidity and preserve their freshness. Unlike California Chardonnays, St. Veran wines see little to no oak, so the wines speak to the quality of the grapes themselves. I think you'll understand what I'm talking about when you take your first sip of this wine. A pure and clean-flavored Chardonnay, it refreshes the palate with lively acidity while tempting your taste buds with stone fruit

flavors and accents of white flowers. It's Chardonnay in its truest form.

#### 2016 Arnaldo Caprai Grechetto @ \$14.99 per bottle

The 2016 Arnaldo Caprai Grechetto comes from the Colli Martani DOC in Umbria. This 100% Grechetto-based wine is aged for just three months in stainless steel and then an additional three months in bottle, to produce a bright and zippy white that's ready for immediate consumption. An intense perfume of exotic fruits, yellow peach and floral notes greets the nose and the lively, acid-based palate displays yellow fruits and peach notes with chalky notes and mineral tones. Perfect with seafood, salads or a cheese plate, this refreshing white is incredibly versatile and pleasing. It's a perfect example of the white wine renaissance going on in Italy. These wines used to be somewhat boring but thanks to lower yields and renewed commitment to excellence they are now interesting, bold interpretations of indigenous grape varieties. James Suckling gave this 91 points.

#### 2015 Stéphane Aviron "Vieilles Vignes Chenas" Cru Beaujolais @ \$14.99 per bottle

The 2015 Stéphane Aviron "Vieilles Vignes Chenas" Cru Beaujolais is a stunning example of what Beaujolais can and should be. Beautifully fruited with racy notes of wet earth, herbs and spices, this delightful red wine can be slightly chilled and enjoyed with a multitude of cuisines. It is light enough to pair with fish courses such as salmon and sea bass, and it can also pair with pork, veal and some lighter beef dishes. Fresh and fruity but in no way insipid, this complex red is incredibly versatile.

## Best Buy Wine Club Previous Offerings

#### 2016 Herencia Altes Garnatxa Negra Terra Alta @ \$9.99 per bottle

Terra Alta is located in the southernmost portion of Catalunya. With soil types ranging from calcareous clay to sand, along with a wealth of great Garnatxa (Grenache) vines, this is a great place to look if you are a fan of Côtes du Rhône or Grenache from elsewhere. Dark cherry aromas with hints of hot stone lead to a tasty palate, full of fleshy fruit, with balanced tannins and a mineral thread running through the wine. Very solid and tough to beat for the price! —*Joe Manekin, Spain, Portugal & South American Wine Buyer*

#### 2016 Cicada by Chante Cigale Metieranee @ \$9.99 per bottle

Chante Cigale means singing cicada (a type of grasshopper/cricket), and the Cicada red is their early-drinking any day Grenache/Carignan blend. The property has been in the family since the 19th century and is currently run by Alexandre Favier, who assumed the reins at the ripe old age of 20. The domaine is planted to 40 hectares of red and 5 hectares of white on 45 different parcels throughout the appellation. —*Keith Mabry, Rhone Valley Wine Buyer*

#### 2015 No Curfew California Red Wine @ \$9.99 per bottle

A blend of several classic red varieties including Zinfandel, Syrah, Petit Syrah, and Malbec. We popped a bottle and it was everything Bob said it would be: robust, balanced, typically California, and a smoking hot deal for the price.

#### 2015 No Curfew California Chardonnay @ \$9.99 per bottle

A wine that offers plenty of round fruit and freshness in a classically California style. It has texture and weight, but without all the oak and butter that many bargain-label brands use to mask a lack of character in inexpensive grapes. As any good winemaker knows, a wine is only as good as the fruit that it comes from. In California today, it turns out that knowing how to source that fruit is just as important as knowing what to do with it.

#### 2011 Domaine de Nizas Languedoc @ \$9.99 a bottle

This blend of Syrah, Mourvèdre, and Grenache from the south of France is similar to a Côtes du Rhône in style and recipe. However, unlike most wine on the shelf at this price, it is already aged and ready to drink. Inexpensive wines, if well made, can transform and evolve into something greater, every bit as well as pricier selections. As a wine ages in the bottle, the tannins will integrate into the wine and the mouthfeel will soften, condensing into a more plush and silky texture. The fruit dissipates and the secondary flavors like savory herbs and spice begin to come forward. Those flavors come from the core of Domaine de Nizas' terroir, a unique mosaic of three soil types. The limestone and clay soils make more powerful wines. When planted with Syrah, they create wines with red fruit and violet characters. The Basalt soils are volcanic based, unique within the Languedoc region, and rare throughout the world.

Syrah planted on basalt soils often results in wines with spice and licorice notes alongside a good tannic structure. Maturing a wine in bottle allows those terroir-driven flavors to come forward with evolution, but it generally comes at a price. In the case of this 2011 Nizas, we managed to pack it in for ten bucks—a rare treat indeed!

#### 2015 Carrick Sauvignon Blanc @ \$9.99 a bottle

This wine is a direct import to K&L, meaning we purchased the wine directly from Carrick in New Zealand and brought it into the states without paying the middlemen who generally take a cut of the profits. That's why the price is so good. Notes from Stefanie Juelsgaard, K&L team member who is a passionate advocate for the wines of the Southern Hemisphere and organic and bio-dynamic winemaking as a whole. "Carrick winemaker Francis Hutt is championing the bio-dynamic approach to winemaking of crafting wines in the vineyard versus the cellar. Sauvignon Blanc is rarer in Central Otago than its neighbor to the north, the well-known region of Marlborough, making this wine even more special. Even though the effort required is much higher, Carrick performs all vineyard maintenance projects by hand, such as leafing and harvesting, as they believe this produces the finest wine and showcases the exceptional qualities of the region. Fermentation is carried out using only wild yeast and aging takes place in neutral French oak barrels, lending some texture and richness to the palate. The climatic influence of this area results in a stunning wine showcasing tropical fruit, driving acidity, flinty minerality, and bright citrus notes." —*Stephanie Juelsgaard, K&L New Zealand & Australia Team*

#### 2015 La Posta "Fazio" Malbec @ \$9.99 per bottle

The 2015 La Posta Malbec is named for grower Domingo Fazio, whose Malbec is grown at 3,500 feet elevation in the Tupungato region of Mendoza. Besides all of the calling-card flavors of cassis and soft red fruits, the wine has freshness and grace. It's of a quality that I typically associate with \$20-\$25 Malbecs—those that display elegance and finesse as well as texture.

#### 2016 Rickshaw California Pinot Noir \$10.99 per bottle.

Rickshaw wines are sourced from myriad vineyards across California, all of them sustainably farmed. The grapes for the 2016 Rickshaw California Pinot Noir come from Sonoma Coast, Santa Barbara, Anderson Valley and Monterey. The wine has a powerful streak of red cherry fruit, subtle spice and dried herb aromas. It is lively and fresh with great balance and firm tannins. A great example of an affordable, delicious California Pinot Noir. You can enjoy this wine on its own, or with grilled meats, pizza or pasta dishes.

#### 2014 Domaine du Vieil Orme Malbec-Cabernet Touraine Rouge @ \$9.99 per bottle

This Malbec-Cabernet Franc blend is a truly striking wine, and an exceptional way to introduce our club members to this special property. Composed of equal parts Malbec (known locally as Cot) and Cabernet Franc, the wine is aged in stainless steel, keeping the fruit in its most vibrant state. It is loaded with flavors of sweet black cherry and blueberry jam, crushed thyme and savory spices. It is open, forward and delicious. This wonderful red will pair beautifully with braised pork dishes, creamy cheeses, and herb roasted chicken.

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

#### 2016 Treves Petite Arvine Val d'Aosta @ \$21.99 per bottle

With the help of his mother, Treves Gianni took over his grandparents' farm in Montjovet in Italy's Aosta Valley in 1997. Their legacy was a robust farm known largely for producing Fontina cheese, plus fruits, vegetables, potatoes, and a variety of grains and herbs. Their devotion to producing healthy, local food was the heart of the farm, and fortunately the farm continues now to produce a little wine.

#### 2016 Marcarini Nebbiolo @\$17.99 per bottle

This 2016 has a density, ripeness and suppleness to it that is just luscious; it has an extra layer of textural complexity that softens Nebbiolo's natural tannic structure and makes your drinking experience more beneficial. Nebbiolo isn't just a winter night wine. Maybe Barolo does better that way, but Langhe Nebbiolo is a year-round wine. While risotto and polenta are the classic hearty choices for Nebbiolo, I love it with chicken dishes and with simple rich pasta dishes as well.

#### 2015 Barone Ricasoli Chianti Classico @ \$17.99 per bottle

The 2015 Barone Ricasoli Chianti Classico is a blend of 80% Sangiovese with 15% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. As I'm sure most of you know, 2015 was an exceptional vintage across Italy. Here in this bottle you have a wonderful example! This is a really unique wine. I find it almost the best of both worlds: You get added complexity and body as with an Amarone, yet the delicacy and drinkability of everyday Valpolicella.

#### 2014 Venturini Valpolicella Classico Superiore "Semonte Alto" Ripasso @ \$21.99 per bottle

The Venturini family founded their winery in 1963 in the village of San Pietro in Cariano. Their vineyards are at an average elevation of 820 feet in a fossil-rich limestone soil. They use the area's traditional Pergola system, extending the vines up and out rather than just parallel to the row as you'd see in California. I love the flavors of this wine, savory and earthy with lots of spice and hints of candied fruit. I had my bottle with a sausage and cream spaghetti and it was blissful!

#### 2011 Badia di Morrona N'Antia @ \$24.99 a bottle

The 2011 Badia is a blend of predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot, a more Bordeaux-like blend for sure. It is aged for 15 months in barrique. In its youth this wine had a little too much evident barrique but now it has aged into a wonderful expression of the Pisan countryside. I think this is a wine you need to have with bolder food such as leg of lamb or a rich lasagna.

#### 2015 Cascina Val del Prete Barbera @ \$14.99 a bottle

The wine is fermented in stainless steel and then aged in neutral barrels for about six months, until the wine goes through the malolactic fermentation. I love this wine. There's just a fun-loving nature about it and you can't not like it. There's so much fruit and freshness it's fabulous. Barbera's fresh and vibrant acidity always makes it a great match for dishes that have more richness. One of my favorite matches is sausage and cream pasta with red chili flakes or black pepper. The acidic zip in the Barbera is the perfect foil for the richness of the cream. Try it, you'll love it!

#### 2016 Silvano Follador Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore @ \$16.99 per bottle

Silvano and Alberta Follador started with a tiny parcel of land that they had inherited from their paternal grandfather; a few years later they received a slightly larger plot from their maternal grandmother. In all they have four plots for a total of just over eight acres of vineyards. That is small, and for a Prosecco producer it's micro tiny. When I first met Silvano and Alberta they made an array of wines but since the 2014 vintage they have made just one, a blend from all four vineyards. They make 2275 cases a year of their Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Brut Nature. The grapes are all indigenous: Prosecco (now called Glera), Verdiso, Perera, and Bianchetta. In this 2016 bottling the residual sugar was 0.0%, which is bone dry. You won't find many bottles of Prosecco like this! Last year Ian d'Agata, who writes for the website Vinous, wrote "Silvano Follador is in my opinion the single best producer of Prosecco today." I'd agree with him.

#### 2010 Vigneti Massa Barbera "Monleale" @ \$22.99 per bottle

If you're really an Italian wine geek you'll know of Walter Massa, producer of this wine. There are lots of versions of Barbera that are fresh, crisp and bright and many that are aged in new barriques giving them a toasty and more tannic character; but this Barbera "Monleale" is neither. It is sourced from three old-vine vineyards in the hills around the small town of Monleale. The vineyards are mostly marine clays, which offer high-toned aromatics. The wine is aged in used barriques, and I mean used. This isn't a wine that's affected by lots of new oak. It spends just short of two years in barrel. The wine is unfiltered, and fermented using only indigenous yeasts. It is held back until Walter feels that it's right, and that's why the 2010 is just coming to us now. I find this wine extraordinary. The nose is so complex, with layers of fruit, earth, and spice intertwining in a symphonic effect of aromatics. On the palate the wine has verve. After all it is Barbera so the acidic structure dominates, but the wine has a supple richness that is mouth-filling. The flavors are complex, dynamic and stunning. Try this with a risotto or a filled pasta, it's incredible!

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

### **Château de Bligny "Grand Reserve" Rosé Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

This is distinctive for being the area's only Château-bottled Champagne, as all the other castle owners buy grapes rather than farming them. It is made the old fashioned hard way, on two old, manual coquard basket presses out of a half-and-half combination of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The wine gets its color from 10% Pinot Noir that is vinified red. When I last visited, Export director Kalina Ivanova treated me to a great visit, which also included their Clos, one of the few walled vineyards in Champagne. The wine has a lovely fruit expression, with clean strawberry aromas balanced by pie crust. It is a very pure rosé that can be enjoyed as an apéritif, but it comes to life with savory food like charcuterie, or better yet game birds. The Château de Bligny "Grand Reserve" Rosé Brut Champagne is usually \$49.99 retail, so it will go fast at your Club price of \$34.99.

### **2008 Fluteau "Symbiose" Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

As you may already know, the 2008 vintage is perhaps the best vintage in a generation in Champagne, with stellar ripeness and power married to uncommonly high acidity and freshness. The conditions were almost identical to 1996, but almost all of the wines turned out better, since the estates were prepared by the experience of that great vintage. Cold east winds combined with lots of sun in the fall led to some of the most loaded, complex wines in a long time. Like the Bligny, the Symbiose is half Chardonnay and half Pinot Noir, but the Symbiose is vinified white. It has enjoyed eight years of ageing on the lees, yet is still as bright and fresh as you could want. This has great texture and a fine bead from the long ageing, but it is so vivacious right now that I would recommend having it with shellfish. Try it now, and then lay down a case to drink over the next ten years! A toast to you!

### **2011 Egrot Brut Grand Cru Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

Many of you in the Champagne Club have visited Elisabeth Goutorbe and Jean-Marie Egrot at their home in Aÿ, and even more of you have met her at tent events. A few years ago, they changed the name of the house from Elisabeth Goutorbe to Egrot et Filles, to avoid confusion with the many other members of the Goutorbe family in Aÿ. This Champagne is composed of two thirds Pinot Noir and one third Chardonnay from some of the chalkiest soil in all of Champagne. While this vintage proved challenging for many, some of the best plots in the grand crus did exceptionally well, producing wines of both power and finesse. This is one of those wines, and has plenty of richness for drinking on its own, but also the backbone of minerality to pair with the best salmon or tuna fillets.

### **Charles Ellner "Qualité Extra" Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

This Champagne is composed of 50% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay and 20% Meunier. It is aged for almost five years on the lees and is treated to an addition of one-third reserve wines. This wine has great red cherry Pinot Noir fruit framed by baguette toast from the long ageing, and it also has surprising snap and length. This is an ideal apéritif, and will go fantastically well with gougères, parmesan crisps and all manner of finger foods. A toast to you!

### **Maxime Toubart "Pur Meunier" Brut Champagne @ 34.99 per bottle**

The Maxime Toubart "Pur Meunier" Brut Champagne comes from one plot in Le Breuil, on the edge of Champagne next to Brie. This area is so cold that even Meunier has a hard time ripening fully. Luckily, this over-forty-year-old plot is well exposed, facing due south. This wine is very well aged, based on 2008 with reserves from 2007 representing half the blend. It has a golden color that promises the spicy, cakey wild aromas and flavors that follow on the nose and in the mouth. I can promise that you will be the first person on your block to have a single-vineyard Champagne from Le Breuil. It took me 28 trips to Champagne before my first visit!

### **\_\_\_\_\_ Bottle(s) Trudon "Monochrome" Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle**

Jerome Trudon is one of the few Champagne growers with whom we work who has a diploma of oenology. He worked for 12 years in Reims at Roederer, and for two years at Roederer Estate in Anderson Valley before returning to the family farm in 2009. He is a fastidious winemaker, and his Trudon "Monochrome" Brut Champagne is the cleanest, most precise pure Meunier that I have tasted. His nineteen-acre vineyard is located in Festigny, the same village as Michel Lorient, whose Champagne has also been in the club. It is planted to 90% Meunier, but only the oldest, best plots go into the Monochrome, and most of it is made from the Haie d'Amour site in the picture. This bottle is based on 2013, and has a strikingly pure nose of white flowers and freshly baked bread. On the palate, the Champagne is medium bodied and has a great bead of tiny bubbles. The best thing about the wine is the length and minerality, more reminiscent of a Blanc de Blancs than a Meunier!