



3005 El Camino, Redwood City, CA 94061
Phone, to place orders: (800) 247-5987
Wine Club extension: 2766
Fax (650) 364-4687
theclubs@klwines.com

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Hello K&L Wine Club Members,

As springtime arrives in the Bay Area, it's also time for a slew of wine arrivals at the port. Our inventory is flush again with wines from all over the world, and with this wealth of wines we have some truly great Club picks, from New Zealand Syrah to Grand Cru Riesling and Columbia Valley Cabernet. We're featuring wines of every stripe, and if you're looking to re-stock your cellar there's never been a better time, especially at these club prices.

I'm particularly happy to present two incredible values for the Club Français. Despite the recent uncertainty with tariffs and trade wars, our relationships with wonderful French producers hold strong. We have a beautiful Right Bank Bordeaux from the 2014 vintage and a stunning Grand Cru Riesling from Alsace to share with you. Both purchased directly in France, they have arrived on our shores in perfect time for this month's club shipments.

In the Signature Club we have two surprising finds. From the many candidates for this month's selections, the two that won out—purely by taste—are a little off the wall. We have for you a New Zealand Syrah and a Petit Verdot from Napa Valley. Both wines are drinking beautifully, and they're some of my favorite discoveries yet this year. If you've never had Petit Verdot, now is the time to try this rare varietal. The bottle we have is aged to perfection.

By contrast, in the Premium Club we are sticking to the classics this month with a Chardonnay and a Cabernet. The Chardonnay is one of those deals that you won't want to miss, and it's not likely to last on our shelves. It's a lovely Russian River Chardonnay that normally retails for \$30, so the club price of \$14.99 is a steal. Our Cabernet is also a stunning specimen, a testament to Washington's Columbia Valley region. I've said before that the Columbia Valley is one of my favorite sources for excellent value Cabernet, and this is just another example of its bounty.

Our Best Buy Club members will also enjoy Chardonnay this month, of the French variety. It's a stunning, crisp and mineral-driven wine from one of our favorite little growers in the South of France. We pair this with a sumptuous, easy-drinking Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir. It's not often that you get this caliber of Santa Rita Hills Pinot for this great a price, so now is a great time to stock up if you're a Pinot fan.

Greg St. Clair, our Italian buyer, has two fun wines lined up for the Club Italiano this month as well. The first is a classic, elegant Barbera d'Alba from one of his favorite producers in the region, and the second is a little-known gem from the Marche. It's a full-bodied, bold red that might surprise you and will round out your Italian wine education nicely.

Hoping you enjoy your March wines during this lovely spring.

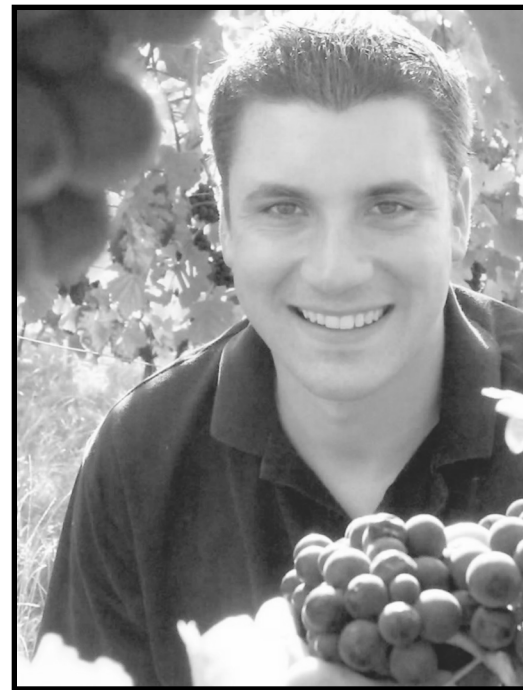
Heather Gowen, K&L Wine Club Director
heathergowen@klwines.com

Le Club Français

I'll have to admit that for the last few months, trade wars have made for a rocky ride in the wine business. I've been particularly worried about our Club Français and our relationships with the many French producers whose wines have graced our shelves over the years. However, here we are. It's March and we have two gorgeous French wines to share with you, imported directly and still with incredible value. It wouldn't be a true K&L club if we didn't feature a lot of Bordeaux. This month's St. Emilion is absolutely stunning, and drinking like magic right now. The second selection, which I'm very excited for you all to enjoy, is from one of my favorite newer producers at K&L, Julien Schaal. This Alsatian Grand Cru Riesling is what great white wine is all about. It's intense, powerful and incredibly nuanced, all within the guise of a light, crisp and pretty exterior.

If you are a skeptic of the Riesling varietal, Julien Schaal might just offer the cure you need. I'm not always the biggest Riesling fan myself, but this wine simply won't be gainsaid. Its power and depth are undeniable, and it hails from one of the oldest Grand Cru vineyards in Alsace, the Kastelberg. Julien Schaal and his partner Sophie run an interesting life, hopping between Alsace and South Africa following the seasons. Most winemakers will say that one harvest a year is stress enough. Julien opts to make wines in both hemispheres, doubling the workload. He has a deep passion for both his native Alsace and the Cape region of South Africa. We have been lucky enough to secure several of his Alsatian wines at K&L, and we picked the star of the show for **the Club Français. The 2018 Julien Schaal Kastelberg Grand Cru Riesling Alsace (\$24.99)** is bone dry, yet has a surprising weight and depth to the palate. The aromas are, of course, intense and stunning with lime zest, elderflower liqueur, honeysuckle and apricot all playing a role. On the palate the array of flavors continues and the finish is completely dry, leaving you eager for that second sip. This is a wine to age. You may enjoy it so much now that you'll be surprised to hear that Grand Cru Alsatian Riesling is unspeakably gorgeous with about five to seven years under its belt. It can certainly be aged beyond that too. At the very least I recommend that if you like this wine, you get an extra bottle or two to lay down for several years.

The Bordeaux that we feature this month always makes me smile, as it is from one of K&L's favorite properties, and is, as always, an incredible value. We've featured the wines of Hélène Garcin-Lévêque in the K&L Clubs before, and those of you who were with us last year may remember our 2001 Barde-Haut featured in this club last summer. If any of you purchased an extra bottle, now is the perfect time to pull it out for a vertical tasting, because this month we feature the **2014 Barde-Haut, St-Emilion (\$34.99)**. Those who have been around K&L for a bit know some about Hélène's elegant wines and her modern, clean style. Together with her husband Patrice, she runs several properties in Bordeaux and



Julien Schaal is a native of Alsace who has also fallen in love with South Africa. He and his partner Sophie make wines in both countries.



Hélène Garcin-Lévêque and her husband Patrice have converted the entire production of Château Barde-Haut to organic farming and winemaking.

also an Argentinian winery, the famed Bodega Poesia. Barde-Haut is one of their top properties, acquired several decades ago by her mother Sylvaine Garcin. Since then it has seen quite a bit of investment from the family, and Patrice now makes the wines himself. A dedicated winemaker, he rarely leaves the vineyards, so Hélène is more the public face of Château Barde-Haut. The 2014 vintage was a good one; the wines are more classic than the opulent 2015s, and far better than the hit-and-mostly-miss 2013s. With the classic structure of 2014, this wine has a long life in front of it, so you'll want to decant it about an hour before tasting. It is sumptuous, rich, elegant and intense with loads of blueberry and cassis both on the nose and palate. The tannins are still firm, but the edge has rounded out nicely so it's already in fine shape for your Friday night steak.

Signature Red Collection Wine Club

For the Signature Red Club this month, both our wines are a little unexpected. What happened is, we tasted many wines and had two big standouts. They are from opposite corners of the globe, and are unrelated in terms of style, aging or varietal. They were both so tasty I simply had to include them in the club. So I can only say they are united in that they are both surprising gems. It's not often that you hear someone raving about a New Zealand Syrah, much less a Napa Valley Petit Verdot. These two wines, however, are some of the best I've tasted so far this year. Both strike that perfect palate balance that makes a wine stand out.

So let's start with the wine that probably caught your attention first: the **2010 Sempre Vive Napa Valley Petit Verdot (\$26.99)**. If you're like me, you were skeptical as soon as you heard "2010 Petit Verdot." Petit Verdot is rarely bottled on its own, except as a whimsical project for winemakers.

The varietal is best known for its ability to add tannin, color, and density to a Bordeaux blend. It's often used in minuscule quantities in these blends, and is almost considered a trick of the trade, used to tweak a final blend. You can see why I was skeptical in approaching this wine. I've rarely had single varietal Petit Verdot, and when I have it is typically too bold and harsh. This wine, however, completely blew me away with its refinement and poise. Age has beautifully polished out the tannin and mellowed the intensity of the fruit, and what we have is a perfect claret-like wine, ready to be paired with your Friday night steak. Here's a little about the origins of this wine. It's made by Romeo Vineyards, just north of Calistoga, where the Romeo family makes deeply expressive wine off the old vineyard that they purchased back in the 1990s. The vines are some of the oldest in the area, with some planted back in the early 1970s. You can feel the intensity of the old-vine fruit bringing concentration and depth of character to the finished wine. We were lucky enough to find this older bottling, now drinking with perfect maturity.

Our second wine comes from one of my favorite wineries in New Zealand. Known more for its Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc, New Zealand actually produces incredible wines of every stripe. In Hawke's Bay, where Trinity Hill is located, the warmer climate is particularly suited to producing bigger reds such as the Bordeaux and Rhône varietals. This month's **2016 Trinity Hill "Gimblett Gravels" Syrah Hawke's Bay (\$22.99)** is the most stunning Syrah I've had this year. The Gimblett Gravels region



The ancient, gnarly vines at Romeo Vineyards produce incredible, intense fruit with small, concentrated berries that pack a big punch.

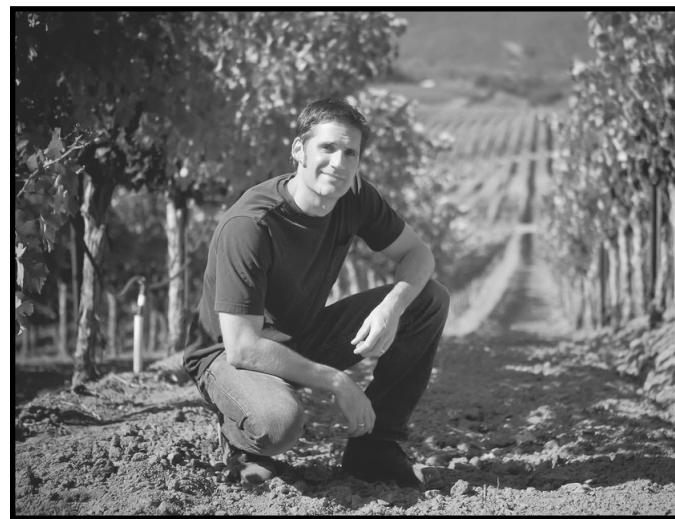
in Hawke's Bay is a rocky old river bed, nutrient poor and with excellent drainage. These elements, together with the cool nights and long growing season, spell world-class Syrah. Right away you can tell from the nose that this is a serious wine—it's loaded with blackberry, blueberry and bramble, fine ground black pepper and something savory that reminds me of black olive. On the palate the depth of flavors persists, and the full body is balanced and lifted by crisp, bright acidity. For such a rich and full wine, it is surprisingly light on its feet. While it drinks beautifully now, I would recommend that if you like the wine you stash a few away to keep for several years, because this will age like the best Northern Rhône in your collection. It is an opulent wine that likes richly flavored dishes such as cassoulet or braised short ribs.

Premium Wine Club

This month in the Premium Club we are focusing on the classics. There's almost always a perfect occasion for a bottle of Chardonnay or Cabernet. These two varietals have come to the forefront of the wine world for many reasons and without getting into too much history, let's just say that they are classics, and I wanted to share with you two of my current favorites. Our Cabernet comes from Washington's Columbia Valley, and exudes all the classic structure and rich fruit that you could look for from this region. The Chardonnay is from one of California's most famous regions, the Russian River Valley.

We've featured the wines of Eric Kent previously in the K&L Clubs. This month's **2017 Eric Kent "Luke's Grove" Russian River Valley Chardonnay (\$14.99)** is a deal not to be missed. Our normal retail is \$30 on this wine, and it is worth every penny of that higher price. Kent Humphrey, together with his wife Colleen Teitgen, created the Eric Kent winery as a celebration of art and craft. Colleen's background is in art, and they proudly partner with local Sonoma artists to feature their work in a sort of wine label gallery. For Kent's part, after pursuing a career in academia followed by a stint in advertising, he found home in the wine cellar, and began working with vineyards he loves throughout Sonoma to produce incredibly balanced, expressive wines. This Chardonnay that we've been lucky enough to land for the club is all Stiling Vineyard fruit, owned and farmed by the famed Dehlinger family. Kent goes for a middle-of-the-road style, using some new French oak and some large-format, older barrels with frequent lees stirring to create a great mid-palate texture. The wine is at once bright and rich. It has beautiful clean aromas of yellow pear and Honeycrisp apple, and a palate that has beautiful creamy depth and a mélange of orchard fruits and lemon curd. The finish is surprisingly crisp and dry, making for a beautifully balanced whole.

I've mentioned in previous months that Washington state is a great source for excellent old-school Cabernet with a great structure and beautiful dark fruit. This month we've come across another great Cabernet from the eastern part of the state. Ryan Patrick was started as a family winery but has quickly grown to be a fairly large producer, with several labels. This month's wine comes from their "Rock



Having made his mark in the Sonoma wine scene, Kent Humphrey has access to many top-tier fruit sources, as for example with this month's Stiling Vineyard Chardonnay.

Island" series, and is a stunning Cabernet, blended from three of Washington's premier vineyard sites. The grapes for the **2016 Ryan Patrick "Rock Island" Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (\$14.99)** hail from the Wahluke Slope, Rattlesnake Hills, and Red Mountain regions of the Columbia Valley. The team at Ryan Patrick uses fruit from each of these AVAs to achieve a beautiful blend, representing the best of Columbia Valley Cabernet. The wine was aged in 20% new American Oak barrels for 18 months, and then blended to taste and bottled. It is just now coming into its own with rich cassis, prominent blackberry leaf, cedar and tobacco notes. On the palate it is silky smooth with unctuous black fruit and latent savory tones. It's a perfect example of the excellence this region can achieve.



Washington's Columbia Valley is home to a surprisingly large number of AVAs. Wahluke Slope in particular is known for top-notch Cabernet.

Best Buy Wine Club

For our Best Buy Club members, we have a rare treat. Often in the Best Buy Club we like to present unknown varietals or small producers from up and coming wine regions. Less often can we feature classics that normally would command a high price tag. This month, however, we have a stunning Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir, and a lovely, delicate French Chardonnay. Normally these wines would be too pricy for our clubs, but thanks to our direct relationship with this boutique French producer, and our Kalinda label, we've managed to bring both these wines in to share with our club members.

In the foothills of the Pyrenees, the small family winery Domaine Begude produces a variety of surprising wines from their old vineyards, which are just north of Limoux. Owned and operated by British couple James and Catherine Kinglake, Begude is farmed entirely organically, with a biodynamic approach. The Kinglakes purchased the property in 2003 and have spared no expense developing the quality of the little estate's production. The wines are made by Laurent Girault, who also manages the vineyard. His background consists of work both in the south of France and New Zealand, where he made wines at the prestigious Rippon Vineyards. The production at Domaine Begude is rather out of the ordinary for the region. The Kinglakes have chosen to declassify much of their production in favor of more freedom to produce the wines they feel are most expressive of their unique terroir. Rather than produce a regionally-labeled red and white, they produce an array of varietal-labeled wines. Today they are one of our best direct imports with an array of wines from Chardonnay, Viognier, Pinot Noir and even Grüner Veltliner. Two unique Chardonnays head the bill. The **2018 Domaine Begude "Terroir 11300" Chardonnay Haute Vallée de l'Aude (\$8.99)** is a light, crisp expression of the varietal, made in stainless steel and highlighting what they feel



When James and Katherine Kinglake purchased Domaine Begude, it was a run-down little property. They've made great advances with it.

to be the best of their terroir (11300 is their postal code). The aromas are almost tropical, with hints of papaya and pineapple complementing more traditional orchard fruits. On the palate the wine is quite light bodied and refreshing with notes of verbena and lemongrass coming into play. For those of us who like Chardonnay on the light side, this is a perfect choice.

Our red is a “Kalinda” label project, which means that I unfortunately can’t say a lot about it. The idea behind our Kalinda label is pretty phenomenal, though. Basically we work with top-notch producers across the world to produce wines for us that are bottled anonymously under the Kalinda name. It’s thanks to our long-standing friendship with this producer that we’ve been able to create our **2018 Kalinda Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir (\$10.99)**. Pinot Noir from this AVA typically runs in the \$30-\$40 range, and this producer is particularly notable in the region. It’s a great opportunity for our customers at our normal retail of \$15.99, but at this club price, it’s an unbeatable bargain. For me, the quality jumps out of the glass at the first sip. The aromas themselves are heady and rich with ripe summer cherries and a hint of cola. On the palate the wine has a pleasant, medium body with very soft, rounded tannin and a velvety feel. You’ll also note the sweet oak spice here—it’s not a wine that shies away from oak, but the oak is very well incorporated and complements the rich red fruits beautifully. For me this is a classic Pinot Noir, speaking of its unique roots in the Santa Rita Hills. It’s a perfect accompaniment to many weeknight dishes, but I almost prefer this wine on its own, cocktail style, since it is quite complete in itself.

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

The first wine featured in the Club Italiano this month is the **2017 Daniele Conterno Barbera d’Alba (\$24.99)**. Every time I suggest this winery to someone the first question is, are they related to Giacomo Conterno or Aldo Conterno? When I first tasted the wines it was the first question I asked! It’s sometimes a curse to have the same name as somebody famous. You’re judged against them rather than on your own right. So I know you want to know, are they related? Yes. Giacomo Conterno’s sons Giovanni and Aldo took the reins at Giacomo’s winery in 1961. Eventually Aldo Conterno left to start his own winery. Both strands have continued with great success, sons working with fathers and then taking the reins. Franco Conterno’s son Daniele makes the wine at Franco Conterno and has also started his own label, Daniele Conterno.

The winery is in Bussia, the most famous “vineyard” in Monforte d’Alba. The vineyard names in Barolo have all recently been officially recorded. The other communes in Barolo have a lot of tiny parcels scattered across their regions. In Monforte, because Bussia is such a famous name, a whole lot of people claimed they were Bussia and not the tiny localized parcel where they were actually located. So now Bussia is a huge, expansive “vineyard,” really more like a region. Still wonderful names but I enjoy the fractionalized map much more.



The Cascina Sciulun, home to the wineries of Franco Conterno and Daniele Conterno, lies in the heart of Bussia.

This Barbera is a Superiore, and therefore is aged for one year in 20hl to 25hl barrels and comes from vineyards in Monforte d’Alba, Barolo and Novello communes. It is a classic, high-acid Barbera and I suggest you decant it an hour ahead of time to allow the wine to flesh out a bit. Have it with rich, cream sauce pastas. The classic American lasagna would be perfect as well.

The next wine comes from the Marche. Verdicchio is the top wine from this Adriatic region, and the best known in the U.S. The area’s red wines are not names that roll off our customers’ tongues very often: Rosso Conero, Lacrima di Moro d’Alba, Rosso Piceno. The Il Pollenza estate, where our wine was made, lies about an hour’s drive south of Ancona and is about 35km inland from the Adriatic Sea, in the province of Macerata. It is an incredibly beautiful estate that belongs to an ancient and famous Marche family with history going back to 1200. They’re even related to two Popes. The family’s current wealth comes from the energy sector: They run API, one of Italy’s biggest energy producers. The current head of the family is Count Aldo Maria Brachetti-Peretti, who has four children. Chiara married the Baron Giangiacomo Serena di Lapigio; Ferdinando Maria married the Principessa Mafalda Von Hessen; Benedetta married the Marchese Leopoldo Balestra di Mottola; and Ugo Maria married the Contessa Isabella Borromeo Arese Taverna.



The magnificent Pollenza winery, at the center of the 530-acre estate.

There’s a reason I gave the Royal Lineage a go there. The winemakers at this estate are royalty in their field. From 1999 to 2006, Dr. Giacomo Tachis, perhaps Italy’s best known winemaker (Sassicaia etc.), was in charge. Upon his retirement, Dr. Carlo Ferrini took over. He’s the author of the “Chianti 2000” program, instituted while he was head winemaker for the Chianti Classico Consortium. So: two of the biggest names in Italian winemaking. The **2015 Il Pollenza Marche Porpora (\$14.99)** is 50% Merlot and 50% Montepulciano and spent 12 months in a mix of French barriques and tonneaux. It’s a full-bodied wine that will be best suited for grilled meat or hearty casseroles. I’d decant this wine an hour ahead as well.

Re-order Offers

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

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

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

For a complete, up-to-date inventory listing, visit us online at: www.klwines.com.

Le Club Français Previous Offerings

2016 François Labet Bourgogne Rouge Vieilles Vignes @ \$24.99 per bottle

This cuvée is composed of fruit from the family's oldest vineyards in and around Beaune. The wine itself is made in a very classic Burgundian style, which is to say restrained, earthy, lighter in body but with incredible structure, aromatics and depth. It's well worth decanting this bottle an hour or two before drinking, as it opens up beautifully with a little oxygen. It's a wine I would recommend pairing with game hens, pheasant, or wild mushroom galette.

Launois "Veuve Clemence" Brut Blanc de Blancs @ \$34.99 per bottle

This all-Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs Champagne is aged for an extra year on the lees before bottling, and hence has a depth of character and texture that beautifully rounds out the chalky, mineral-driven bent of a classic Mesnil Blanc de Blancs. On the palate a subtle almond note complements the creamy, round texture and contrasts nicely with a linear burst of acidity and citrus zest. The fruit for this bottling is culled from the best old-vine plots in Mesnil, located on the tops and the bottoms of the hillside.

2018 Domaine Laroche Chablis "St-Martin" @ \$26.99 per bottle

Domaine Laroche has an incredibly long history, stretching back to the 12th century abbots who first planted grapes in the Chablis area. Today the estate is no longer in monastic hands, but retains an impressive array of historic vineyard sites. The "St-Martin" cuvée is composed of wine from some of the estate's top vineyards. It is classic in its minerality and crisp, stony style, and also incorporates a surprisingly soft palate with Honeycrisp apple and yellow pear showing through the veneer of bright, chalky acidity. It's an ideal accompaniment to sushi or poke.

2012 du Glana, St-Julien @ \$29.99 per bottle

This venerable claret needs a decanting to show its full potential, but after about half an hour or so it really comes alive. Deep olive and dark chocolate aromas complement the eucalyptus and huckleberry fruit. On the palate the wine's tannin and acidity are nicely integrated and the development shows in the guise of savory cigar and pepper notes. Alongside this is a pretty red berry note, plus a hint of eucalyptus. All around well-balanced, and slightly lighter in body, this wine is absolutely built for food. In particular, I envision serving this with a rack of lamb or a steak and roasted root vegetables.

2015 Château du Mourre du Tendre Châteauneuf-du-Pape @ \$29.99 per bottle

This Châteauneuf-du-Pape opens with rich aromas of dried herbs, red currant and cured meats. Slightly smoky on the palate, the wine has beautifully mellow, round tannin with full body and layers of spice and fruit. The finish here is exceedingly long and complex. The wine already shows a fair amount of development and is in its first drinking window. Paired with grilled meats, it's an immediate win, but this wine is versatile and could work well with almost any savory dish that displays the right amount of body and flavor to balance the power and depth of the wine.

2017 Domaine Bart Marsannay "Les Finottes" \$23.99 per bottle

Thanks to sandy soils, this wine is particularly aromatic, and the fruit profile is soft and inviting. Pierre Bart, the current generation owner and winemaker at Domaine Bart, treats this wine to no new oak, using only concrete and older oak barrels to showcase the delicate fruit. On the nose the wine displays bright red cherry fruit with sweet clove and nutmeg. The cherry fruit continues into the palate where it is complemented by savory wild mushroom and hints of forest floor. The body is on the lighter side, and the finish is of lingering baking spices.

Signature Red Club Previous Offerings

2017 Anthill Farms Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

This lovely Pinot Noir is composed of fruit from two vineyards. One is perched on the low coast near the Petaluma Gap, and the other sits higher in elevation on the first coastal ridge inland and slightly further north. The vineyards share a significant marine influence, with cold, foggy afternoons and slow ripening conditions. The wine from this fruit is highly aromatic, lighter in body with bright red berry fruit and surprising herbal notes. It's a culinary delight in terms of pairing. I personally love it accompanying foods that are umami rich, such as wild mushroom risotto.

2015 De' Ricci "SorAldo" Vino Nobile di Montepulciano @ \$24.99 per bottle

The de Ricci estate traces its origins back to medieval times, and today its cellars are still a destination for tourists, as they literally consist of an underground church, and boast giant barrels some two stories high. The SorAldo bottling, named for the current proprietor's father Aldo, is composed of Sangiovese, and boasts deep, violet and cassis aromas, underscored on the palate with sumptuous fruit and rich baking spices. It's gorgeous to drink all on its own, or pair with richer, fatty meats such as veal or duck.

2018 Stolpman Ballard Canyon Grenache @ \$24.99 per bottle

The unusual terroir of Ballard Canyon is surprisingly well suited to Grenache, a somewhat finicky varietal. One of the most inland AVAs of Santa Barbara, Ballard Canyon is a hotter, drier climate than most, but still enjoys the cooling influence of the ocean, funneled down the Santa Ynez Valley. This influx of cool air keeps the acidity in the ripening fruit and makes for a beautiful expression of Grenache with full, rich palate weight and stunning aromatics. Although it's a bit youthful, this Grenache displays boisterous berry notes both in the nose and on the palate. It's vibrant with plenty of fresh acidity to bolster the softer texture of the tannin. It's a wine that's lovely to sip on its own and would also accompany poultry very well.

2016 Atamisque Cabernet Sauvignon Uco Valley @ \$24.99 per bottle

The pungent nose of this wine displays red berry, eucalyptus and a slight black pepper note not uncommon in South American Cabernets. On the palate it is clean, with the black pepper moving a little to the forefront over a layer of red and black berry fruits. The tannin is beautifully polished, with great texture that nicely complements the little lift of acidity. Incredibly well balanced for a Cabernet, it drinks almost like a Bordeaux, but with the greater weight and ripeness of a California Cabernet. Altogether, it is its own wine, a uniquely Argentinian expression of the varietal.

2015 Von Strasser Diamond Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$29.99 per bottle

With a normal retail price of \$44.99, this is a super deal. Rudy von Strasser, founder and winemaker of Von Strasser Winery, has made his mark on the Napa wine scene with his highly acclaimed Diamond Mountain Cabernets. Sitting on the northwest side of Napa, Diamond Mountain District is a part of the Mayacamas Range, dividing Napa Valley from Sonoma Valley, and produces some of the most characterful Cabernets, with very long aging potential. The 2015 vintage was particularly fine in Napa, and although the Von Strasser Cabernets are built to age, this wine is already showing so many fine characteristics that it's difficult to wait for a future date to open and enjoy it.

2015 Keenan Napa Valley Merlot @ \$19.99 per bottle

This is Merlot that is anything but boring. Intense dark cassis fruit is balanced by distinctive menthol and cigar notes. The wine perfectly marries a rich, velvety texture to bright, focused acidity and ripe but firm tannins. It's an incredible example of the power and depth that Merlot can achieve in the right circumstances. This wine comes from the nine acres planted right around the Keenan winery up on Spring Mountain—also found in the Mayacamas range. It's the perfect location to grow serious Merlot, and if you haven't yet tasted a wine from Keenan, this is a phenomenal introduction. It normally retails for \$39.99, so your special club pricing is literally half off.

2016 Talley Estate Arroyo Grande Valley Pinot Noir @ \$24.99 per bottle

Talley's estate wine is composed of fruit from two of their oldest vineyards: Rincon and Rosemary's. The wine is made and barreled by vineyard block, then blended to taste for the final product. Winemaker Eric is a wizard at blending, and the wine is always stunning. I find this 2016 vintage perfectly balanced, with cool red fruits dominating. The aromas include notes of culinary herbs and baking spice, while the texture shows very fine-grained tannin that marries perfectly with the fresh, bright fruit profile. Eric uses a blend of new, second-fill and third-fill barrels to make this wine, and the added texture and spice profile from the oak adds another layer of complexity.

2016 Puy-Blanquet, St-Emilion @ \$24.99 per bottle

This lovely Right Bank wine is composed of 75% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. With the larger percentage of Merlot, it is silky and velvety, with delicate black fruits and classic menthol notes. Pierre Meunier, the vineyard manager for Château Puy-Blanquet, is quite particular in the vineyard, and continues to plow, leaf crop, and harvest by hand in the traditional manner. The winemaking is clean and precise, highlighting the excellent fruit profile, while maintaining good tannin and acidity structure. Although it is quite open and accessible right away, this wine can certainly age for several years more to develop the tertiary qualities that are now latent. This is a beautiful pairing for sumptuous and slightly fatty dishes such as roast duck.

Premium Wine Club Previous Offerings

2018 Château le Rey “Les Argileuses” Cotes de Castillon @ \$14.99 per bottle

The “Les Argileuses” bottling comes from the portion of the estate where green and blue clay dominate. This unique soil is a trademark of the Right Bank, and particularly well suited to Merlot. The density of the blue clay forces vines to send roots down deep, and the water-retaining properties of both green and blue clay provide the vine with water even in hot dry spells. Winery director M. Meyrou decided to produce this wine entirely in stainless steel to underscore and highlight the fruit character presented by these unique soils, so this young Bordeaux is surprisingly approachable and drinkable now.

2015 Onward “Casa Roja” Contra Costa County Old Vine Carignane @ \$14.99 per bottle

Sandwiched between San Francisco Bay and Suisun Bay is the Casa Roja vineyard, a patch of vines planted in the 1800s to Carignane, Mourvèdre, and Malvasia Nero and composed of 100% sandy soils. Faith Armstrong Foster has championed this forgotten site with this old vine Carignane. It’s subtly savory with smooth dark fruit and is surprisingly light on its feet, with lively aromatics. Sandy soils often make for more aromatic, elegant and lighter bodied wines, and that’s exactly what lifts this Carignane, giving it the perfect balance of elegance and depth.

2017 Castello di Volpaia Chianti Classico @ \$16.99 per bottle

I tasted this wine last fall with our buyers and found it a perfect little Chianti Classico. Not only is it bright and fresh, bursting with red cherry and sandalwood notes, it also has the seriousness and depth of much pricier Chiantis. Volpaia’s Chianti vineyards are some of the highest elevation in the DOCG, and their Chianti features much brighter, more elegant fruit than many from the region. For me, this is the ideal Chianti: medium bodied, beautiful aromatics, crisp red berry fruit, and nice layered earthy tones.

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

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

2018 Aurore Dezat Sancerre Rouge @ \$14.99 per bottle

If you love silky, round Pinot Noir with gorgeous dark cherry notes and layers of spice, framed by bright acidity and great mineral depth, this wine is for you. You might be surprised to find such a luxurious and open Pinot Noir from such a cold region, known for its tangy, mineral whites, but here we have it. Although this wine is still young, it shows beautifully once you give it a little air in the glass or in a decanter. This red would pair nicely with roast game birds and of course any hard, nutty cheese.

2018 Bravium Chardonnay Russian River Valley \$14.99 per bottle

This Chardonnay is a beautiful rendering of the Reis Vineyard, from which it hails, high on a ridge some nine miles from the coast in the Russian River Valley AVA. This cool site lends freshness to the fruit, and winemaker Derek Rohlf’s careful handling in the cellar makes for a stunning Chardonnay with body, depth, and lift.

2015 Kurtz Family Barossa Valley Shiraz @ \$14.99 per bottle

This wine is as classic as it gets for the Barossa. Situated in Light Pass, right in the heart of the region, Kurtz Family Vineyards grows some of the best full-bodied, deep-fruited Shiraz to be found in the Valley. The 2015’s generous fruit profile is well balanced by the punch of peppery spice and great texture on the palate. Big, rich and full, this wine is certainly one of the bolder expressions we’ve featured this year, and is a great bottle to return to for any richer meat dishes on your menu. It would pair particularly well with braised lamb, or pork.

Best Buy Wine Club Previous Offerings

2018 Allram Grüner Veltliner Kamptal 1L @ \$8.99 per bottle

The Kamptal area is one of Austria’s premier growing regions for both Riesling and Grüner Veltliner, and here the Allram family established their reputation. The wine we focus on this month is a blend from several of the best parcels. Crisp and bracing, the wine sports heady aromatics of verbena, lemongrass and white pepper. On the palate

it displays beautiful lemon curd and fresh granny smith apple, together with delicately spiced pepper and subtle herbal notes. An array of dishes can pair beautifully with a classic Grüner such as this. It truly comes alive alongside richly spiced dishes (think Thai spice), with fried foods, and with umami-laden dishes such as cooked asparagus.

2017 Hahn “GSM” Central Coast Grenache/Syrah/ Mourvèdre @ \$10.99 per bottle

From a historic Central Coast property, this Hahn GSM bottling is brimming with character and eminently food friendly. It sports soft red berry fruit with a touch of black pepper and a pleasantly weighty palate. It’s currently in a perfect drinking window. The fruit is still buoyant and bright, and a slightly savory note is just coming into play. This perfect marriage of freshness and savor makes it ideal for food pairing. One of my favorite matches for the wine is a smoked BBQ brisket, and it also is a great candidate for a hamburger or pizza.

2016 Enrique Mendoza “La Tremenda” Monastrell Valencia Spain @ \$9.99 per bottle

Full-bodied, inky and bursting with dark cassis, licorice and bramble fruits, this beautifully intense wine hails from Valencia, in the Alicante area of Spain. “La Tremenda” refers to the vineyard site from which this wine hails, and indeed the effort of the vines in this arid and rocky terrain is tremendous in the best sense of the word.

2018 Joostenberg “Little j” White Blend Paarl @ \$9.99 per bottle

This delightful South African wine is a blend of predominately Chenin Blanc, with smaller amounts of Viognier and Roussanne blended in to round out the fruit and floral components. This wine is made using only the “free run” juice, the juice that flows freely off the skins in the first pressing. It is aged in stainless steel, and bottled with a bright, fresh, and tangy profile. Refreshing and light, this is not your honeyed and heavy style of Chenin Blanc. It’s perfectly crisp, and delightful with a variety of plates. Perhaps it’s best paired with white fish, salads or light tapas.

2017 Chance Creek “Terroir 95470” Redwood Valley Sauvignon Blanc @ \$10.99 per bottle

Chance Creek is one of those little-known gems that California abounds with. In a state as large as ours, and as suited to wine-growing, a wealth of terroirs produce an incredible variety of wines, some popular and world-renowned, and some like this wine: under the radar, but humbly phenomenal. Boisterous aromas of grapefruit, verbena and pineapple fill the nose, while the palate presents a cohesive array of tropical fruits with a lovely medium body and cheerful, vibrant acidity. The finish is clean but lingers. It’s an ideal pairing to seafood and also a great apéritif wine.

2017 Edgebaston “Pepper Pot” Red Stellenbosch @ \$8.99 per bottle

This wine is one of the best arguments I’ve found for the incredible value of South Africa. As its playful name suggests, this spicy red is a Syrah-dominated blend, featuring classic Rhône varieties. David Finlayson, owner and winemaker at Edgebaston, created this red with the joy of the everyday in mind. It’s a fruit-forward style, bursting with luscious black cherry and cassis flavors, while retaining a spicy edge, definitive structure, and a clean finish.

2016 Kalinda Paso Robles Red Blend @ \$8.99 per bottle

When we first tasted a barrel sample of this wine in its infancy I was impressed with how straightforward and delightful it was. The wine is beautifully representative of its region. The fruit is present and bold, but not overripe. The structure is honest and the execution of the wine is perfect. It brings together a number of elements including earthiness, spice, red and black fruits, mellow tannin and a clean finish.

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

2015 Baldéro Chianti Classico @ \$14.99 per bottle

This Chianti is a blend of 90% Sangiovese and 10% Merlot. The San Casciano Val di Pesa commune frequently produces higher acid Sangiovese, so this wine’s dash of Merlot rounds out the edges and plumps up the mid palate. The wine sees seven months in used barriques and tonneaux, then does most of its aging in stainless steel tanks to preserve the fresh fruit and supple mouthfeel.

2015 La Fiorita Rosso di Montalcino @ \$24.99 per bottle

This lovely Rosso, made by famed winemaker Roberto Cipresso, is a powerful wine from a powerful vintage. It is fermented in Slavonian oak barrels for ten days and then aged in used 5-hl French oak barrels for ten months. I suggest you decant this wine an hour or two ahead of time and have it with rich pasta dishes or a grilled T-bone.

2016 Peter Zemmer “Furggl” Lagrein Alto Adige @ \$23.99 per bottle

No one is sure of the origin of Lagrein. It is grown almost exclusively in the Alto Adige/Süd Tirol, and the lineage of the grape seems to be lost in the fog of genetic history and undiscovered ancestral grapes. Most tasters will notice that it has, and I take a lot of liberty saying this, a bit of Syrah-like character. See what you find as you taste it. The wine has a lot of black pepper and wild herbs and I think it goes best with a hearty stew or cassoulet. This is a powerful wine; I suggest you decant it an hour ahead of time.

2018 Peter Zemmer Schiava Alto Adige @ \$12.99 per bottle

This virtually unknown varietal is seriously good. One of the things that takes most people by surprise is the color. It's more of a dark rosé than a red, and the moment you put your nose in this wine you can see why: There's an explosion of aromatics, black pepper, blood orange, star anise and forest berries. This is a wine that seems so BIG in the nose but then is medium light on the palate. It's feisty, fresh and best served at cellar temperature, 55°. It is a perfect accompaniment to salumi, roasted chicken or veal.

2015 La Monacesca Syrah Marche IGT @ \$26.99 per bottle

This unique Syrah comes from the Marche's Matelica Valley. It's a perfect climate for Verdicchio, but Aldo Cifola decided 25 years ago to plant a tiny amount of Syrah and he has waited until now to finally release one. This 2015 wine is 100% Syrah and spent 20 months in used barrique. Released in April of this year, it's a powerful and structured wine, and could use an hour or three in a decanter before current drinking. 400 cases were made.

2014 Cantine Viola Rossoviola @ \$22.99 per bottle

This wine comes from the town of Saracena in the Province of Cosenza. The town takes its name from the Saracens, or Muslim conquerors. The Cantine Viola Rossoviola is made from the Magliocco Dolce grape, also known as Marsigliana Nera and not to be confused with Magliocco Canino. Magliocco Dolce is a late-ripening (harvest starts in early October) and tannic variety. It's grown on mostly red clay over limestone substrate at 1500 feet above sea level on the southern boundary of the Pollino National Park. At that elevation the grape keeps its freshness while still showing its power. The Barolo of the south! This is a wine with power and depth, and it does show a fair amount of tannic structure. It's ideal with braised meats or hearty casseroles.

2017 Marco Carpineti “Tufaliccio” Lazio Rosso @ \$20.99 per bottle

A blend of 70% Montepulciano and 30% Cesanese grown at over 1300 feet, this is fermented and aged only in stainless steel. The high tone cherry-like aromatics are incredible and come from the Cesanese. The richness, power and structure come from the Montepulciano, one of Italy's most underrated grapes. I love the Tufaliccio's spicy, crunchy character. It's so vibrant and full of flavor, I think you'll love it. This should be served at cellar temperature.

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

Bernard Lonclas Blanc de Blancs Brut Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle

This shows off the famous Turonian limestone soil of the village of Bassuet, on the eastern frontier of Champagne. When I tasted it I was shocked at how much Chassagne-Montrachet-like weight and minerality it had. The nose is full of the creamy, baguette toast that one would expect from a top-quality Champagne, and it also has intriguing notes of coconut and Meyer lemon. This makes a great apéritif, and also pairs very well with oysters or lobster.

Courtois Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne @ \$34.99 per bottle

This wine is grown in soil that is a mixture of limestone, clay and chalk, and gives rich wines with plenty of weight. This wine is very full bodied, even grassouillette, making it perfect as an end-of-winter apéritif. It will also go very well with all manner of savory pastries and pâté. The wine itself is loaded with buttery brioche and comes across decadently loaded with toast. The best thing about the wine is how focused and fresh it is on the finish. This is dry and long wine with class.

2009 Dérot-Delugny Millesime Brut @\$34.99 per bottle

This 10-year-old vintage Champagne is a blanc de noirs and composed of half each Pinot Noir and Meunier from the oldest vines on the estate. It has a wonderful sourdough toast nose and has a touch of smoke on the savory, dark cherry palate. After eight years on the lees it still has a vigorous bead, and will go very well with paté, stuffed mushrooms or savory tarts.