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Dear Wine Club Member,

Welcome to October! As the year end approaches, our Clubs are taking a turn toward classic wines from iconic regions. We are featuring two Bordeaux reds, a Grenache-Syrah-Mourvèdre from the Rhône Valley, a Sonoma Pinot, a Napa Zin, and a Cab Franc from the Loire. Hope you're ready to cozy up with these delicious reds!

This October looks a bit different for us, as our Champagne Tent Event, one of our favorite annual gatherings, will have to be postponed until 2022. But we'll still be celebrating our love of Champagne with Gary Westby's outstanding Club selections. Mark your calendar for next October, the Tent Event cometh!

As a Bay Area gal, it's hard for me to let go of summer, especially here in foggy San Francisco. So, I'm sneaking in a zesty, aromatic white from Spain's Penedès region to help us savor any last warmth of the season. You'll also see our Club's last rosé for the year. It's a bit more serious than your standard porch pounder, and can pair nice with fall dishes.

As always, I'd love to hear what food pairings you've enjoyed with our selections this month. Tag your photos on Instagram @klwines using hashtag #klwineclub, and we'll share them with our community!

Tchin-Tchin,
Jin Zhang | Wine Club Director & Head Sommelier



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Best Buy Wine Club

2020 Vins El Cep "OT" White Penedès \$9.99

The Penedès region lies just south of Barcelona along Spain's Mediterranean border, overlapping the territory for the sparkling wine Cava. Vins El Cep is owned by four families, including Montse and Mercè Masana (pictured). Together, the families produce unique, terroir-driven Cavas and still wines. They have been early adopters of biodynamic and certified organic practices. The "OT" is made from the Xarel-lo grape in small stainless steel tanks and then aged for four months on lees to develop depth. You can expect orange blossom, tangerine, marmalade, honeycomb, and apricot notes. There is a nice acidity as well. Our staff tasted this wine with some soy garlic Korean fried chicken, and it was absolutely delicious.



2018 Haut Peyruguet, Bordeaux \$9.99

Grown on the clay-limestone hillsides at the highest point of the Gironde River, this concentrated blend of 60% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 20% Cabernet Franc shows notes of black fruit, walnut, and chocolate. The Merlot adds color, roundness, and fruit; the Cabernet adds finesse, richness, and elegant tannins. It's medium-bodied with firm, smoky tannins still in place—you can bet this young wine will continue to develop for a while to come. Decant now or sock away for a rainy day.

Signature Red Collection

By Ryan Woodhouse, Domestic Buyer

2019 Denman Ranch Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$24.99

What do you get when you cross the ex-cellarmaster of Littorai, the assistant winemaker from Flowers, plus ample funding to make the very best wines you can... then a global pandemic comes along? The answer is phenomenal wines, from top-quality, iconic vineyards, at ridiculously sharp pricing. These are some of the finest values I've ever found in my ten years at K&L. This wine is almost entirely from the highly regarded Griffin's Lair Vineyard in the Petaluma Gap. It is a vibrant wine that really shows the cool side of Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir: crunchy red fruits, bramble leaf, savory spices, tree bark, and damp earth. It's focused, energetic, and wildly food friendly. Great acidity and some tactile tannins leave you craving another sip or perhaps another visit to the cheese and charcuterie board!



2014 Sky Mount Veeder Zinfandel \$24.99

Mount Veeder is one of Napa Valley's most prestigious sub-AVAs. The grapes ripen slowly and are exposed to long hours of sunshine thanks to their position above the fog. Sky's vineyards are located up above Mayacamas on the top of Mount Veeder and are planted in rugged, red, rocky, volcanic soils. In addition to organic farming practices, the winery is powered by a single solar panel. The fruit is crushed in a tiny, 100-year-old wooden basket press and aged in entirely neutral French oak.

The resulting wine is a stunning mix of wild spicy fruit, deep earthy notes, and beautiful structure that will cellar well for many decades to come. You'll find a complex nose of blackberries, raspberries, eucalyptus, game, pepper, lavender, and bonfire. In 2017, the family lost their home and a portion of their vineyards to the devastating wine country fires, but they are still here and eager to share their special wines with you.



Premium Club

2018 La Source du Ruault Saumur-Champigny \$14.99

In the verdant Middle Loire Valley, Saumur-Champigny is known for producing the freshest and most aromatic Cabernet Franc, and we love the expression from La Source du Ruault. In 1998, Jean Noël Millon became the seventh generation to take over this family domain. They are certified organic and use biodynamic practices like following moon cycles, herbal preparations, and home-grown compost. The wine is made in a three-hundred-year-old tuffeau limestone cave, where the wines also mature quietly in vats or barrels nine meters underground.

The vibrant aromatics flying out of this wine remind me of my mother's favorite Sichuanese dish, Tiger Skin Peppers, which is jalapeño peppers blistered in the wok and seasoned with black vinegar. The wine is juicy and crisp with fresh red berry and tobacco notes. Loire Valley is famous for rillettes made from pork, goose, and rabbit, and such a pairing would make the wine absolutely sing.

2018 Clos St. Antonin Côtes-du-Rhône \$14.99

Clos St. Antonin is a 15-hectare estate located within the Côtes-du-Rhône Village of Plan de Dieu. The Sabon family of Domaine de la Janasse purchased this small estate in 2014. The whole family is involved with farming and winemaking, but Isabelle Sabon is heading this new project as winemaker.

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Plan de Dieu is an under-the-radar AOC, often in the shadow of its more famous neighbors Cairanne and Rasteau. But it's the best of both worlds: Plan de Dieu has the potential richness of Rasteau with the lift and precision of Cairanne. This wine is made from 60-to-70 year-old Grenache (60%), Mourvèdre (30%) and Syrah (10%). The grapes are farmed organically, harvested by hand then partially destemmed and fermented by natural yeasts. In the glass, you'll find a classic GSM blend: plush tannins, rich ripe black fruit, dark chocolate, baking spices, and leather. This calls for red meat!

Le Club Français

2006 Barde-Haut, St-Emilion \$37.99

Made by one of our favorite producers in St-Emilion, Hélène Garcin is a talented winemaker and a vivacious personality, whose wines exude as much charm and life as she does! Barde-Haut is a 250-year-old property that forms a natural amphitheater particularly well exposed to the south overlooking the Dordogne valley. With a great site and a top-notch winegrower, Hélène's husband Patrice Lévêque, this is one of the best values you'll find—it's a 15-year-old for under \$40 bucks!



I recommend decanting for at least an hour, up to overnight, in the bottle. (It was even better the next day for me!) You'll be rewarded with dried herb notes along with tobacco, dark chocolate, and black fruits.

2020 Château de la Noblesse Bandol Rosé \$21.99

On the southern tip of Provence and bordering the Mediterranean coast, Bandol is famous for its rich rosés and reds made from the powerful Mourvèdre grape. Agnes Cade and her father, Henri Gausson, cultivate the fourteen sunny hectares of their family estate. This zesty rosé is a classic Provençal blend of Mourvèdre, Grenache, and Cinsault. Don't let the pale color fool you, this rosé has quite a bit more body than your standard poolside sipper, and makes a perfect accompaniment to fall fare like roasted pork loin, salmon, or sweet potatoes. Aside from the usual suspects of citrus and stone fruit notes, you can also expect red berries and spices to jump out of the glass. The spice in this wine can even complement highly seasoned Asian and Mediterranean dishes.

Il Club Italiano

by Greg St. Clair, Italian Buyer

2018 De' Ricci Rosso di Montepulciano \$11.99

I have received a lot of emails from K&L fans after Italian vacations that usually start with, "Let me introduce you to Luigi; we stayed at his agroturismo, and he makes the best wine!" Early on in my career I tried some of these leads, and, well, the wines weren't always as good as the vacations must have been. So, when I got an email a few years ago about the De' Ricci winery, I said, "Sure, thanks for the tip."

Lo and behold on my last day at the last Vintaly, after I'd just finished tasting through my list, I turned and around and I was standing in front of the De' Ricci booth! It was a strange beginning, but what a wonderful experience with the Trabalzini family, and their wines are delicious. This Rosso di Montepulciano is made from Sangiovese, and if you ever get to Montepulciano, theirs is the cellar you want to visit! Featured on a Rick Steves episode, it's one of the most impressive cellars I have ever seen.



2019 La Prevostura "Garsun" Piemonte \$27.99

Over the past couple of decades, the region of Alto Piemonte has become a force, producing some of the most interesting Nebbiolo-based wines in Piedmont. Alto Piemonte? Yes! It means upper Piedmont, and it stretches from about 60 miles west of Milano to Gattinara, then west to Carema, about 35 miles north of Torino. More than a century ago this was the largest and most productive winegrowing region for reds in Piedmont, when Barolo and Barbaresco were not producing much of anything. The region went dormant for almost 70 years thanks to a couple of world wars and an overwhelming immigration from the countryside to the city.

La Prevostura was reborn in 2001, and began making wines of exceptional quality. The 2019 La Prevostura "Garsun" Piemonte is a blend of Nebbiolo (65%), Vespolina (25%), and Croatina (10%). This wine is delicious! I would try this with a roasted chicken, but that's just me!



Champagne Club

by Gary Westby, Champagne Buyer

As the leaves begin to turn color and the temperatures slowly cool off in many parts of the country, here in California we have some of our most beautiful weather, and a call for refreshing Champagne to take advantage of the last days of outdoor dining. For this month, we have two bright, lively Brut bottlings to toast to the changing season with. They are contrasts in production methods, one from among the oldest of *grande marque* producers, made from a huge combination of villages and vintages, and the other from one cru and only one year; the fabulously lively 2014 millésime.

Henriot "Souverain" Brut Champagne \$34.99

The Henriot "Souverain" Brut Champagne is composed of about 50% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay, and 10% Meunier from 26 villages. I say "about" because their reserve program includes a perpetual blending tank that makes keeping track of exact percentages almost impossible. This "solera" wine is added to each year with the lots that they find most ageable, regardless of grape type or cru, with an equal portion taken out each year to give complexity to the reserve wines, which total at least 40% of the blend. The wine is then aged for four years on the lees and dosed at 8 grams per liter.

The result is the brightest and most refreshing of any of the *grande marque* non-vintages to my palate. I find the wine to have great acidic drive and minerality, and as *chef de cave* Alice Tétinne (pictured above) says, it has a "perfectly balanced ballet of aromas." I love this for an aperitif or with some potato chips.

2014 Franck Bonville "Millésime" Brut Blanc de Blancs \$34.99

The 2014 Franck Bonville "Millésime" Brut Blanc de Blancs is from a vintage that I have been telling anyone that will listen to load up on. This long, cool, even growing season has given us wines that remind me so much of the 1988s when they were young, and they promise to have a long life... But they taste so good that many won't make it past tonight! This is all Chardonnay from estate-grown vines in the Grand Cru of Avize, dosed at 6.67 grams per liter.

It has the freshness, the baguette toast, and the meyer lemon cream of the best of Chardonnay in Champagne. I loved it with the sushi pictured, especially with the maguro.

A toast to you!

