



The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

(617) 623-8656

December 13, 2018 – January 14, 2019

Feasts, Gifts, Treats

Bordeaux in all Price Ranges

2015 Saint-Emilion Grand Cru (Château Viramière)

Regular Price \$24.99 – Sale Price \$19.99 NET

We can always count on L'Union de Producteurs de Saint-Emilion to deliver a fantastic value. The 2015 Château Viramière is a full-throttle, earthy, dry red with smooth, ripe tannins. Very drinkable now but will develop for five plus years.

2015 Pessac-Léognan (Château Larrivet Haut-Brion)

Regular Price \$49.99 – Sale Price \$39.99 NET

Larrivet Haut-Brion has become one of our absolute favorite red Bordeaux. It ain't cheap, but it always gives more than other red Bordeaux in its price range. The 2015 is truly gorgeous. Its heft is derived from its high proportion of Cabernet Sauvignon, its grace and charm from the Merlot and Cabernet Franc. This will mature early and will drink well for 10 plus years.

2015 Pessac-Léognan (Domaine de Chevalier)

Regular Price \$99.99 – Sale Price \$79.99 NET

As much as we adore the Larrivet Haut-Brion, Domaine de Chevalier is a cut above. This historical property has been on a roll recently. The 2015 rivals the great 2010 and will age for a good decade or two.

2008 Pauillac Cru Classé (Château D'Armailhac)

Regular Price \$109.99 – Sale Price \$87.99 NET

D'Armailhac is a neighboring estate to the great growth Mouton-Rothschild also owned by the same famed Rothschilds. This wine (and the Gruaud-Larose below) have just arrived from ideal storage in Bordeaux. This is a classic earthy, structured Pauillac now entering a mature drinking window.

1989 Saint-Julien Cru Classé (Château Gruaud-Larose)

Regular Price \$249.99 – Sale Price \$199.99 NET

Gruaud-Larose has a centuries-old track record of long-lived wines. If you want to experience a beautifully mature Saint-Julien and/or have a friend who will soon turn thirty, this wine is the perfect choice.

Barolo

2013 Barolo (Ballarin)

Regular Price \$29.99 – Sale Price \$23.99 NET

We applaud the folks at Ballarin for their incredible wines and their modest prices. In 2013, a great vintage for Barolo, they made this gift. Rose petal aroma, raspberry fruit, and gorgeous structure.



Amarone

2013 Amarone della Valpolicella 'Ravazzol' (Ca' La Bionda)

Regular Price \$59.99 – Sale Price \$47.99 NET

Whoever first tried to take the most perfectly ripe Valpolicella grapes, dry them, crush them, and then ferment them was a mad genius. Certainly not an inexpensive way to make wine, but the extra steps and extended fermentation lead to long-aging and dense, powerful wines. The 2013 Ravazzol from Ca' La Bionda is a dark and elegant Amarone with deep fruit, amazing structure, and a long, rich finish.

The Very-Classy Spéciale

2016 Viré-Clessé 'Cuvée Spéciale' (André Bonhomme)

Regular Price \$23.99 – Sale Price \$18.99 NET



We have long adored the Macon-Viré wines of the now retired Henri Goyard, but rejoiced when the French wine authorities created the Viré-Clessé appellation, rewarding exceptional growers for their superior Chardonnays. We now hold André Bonhomme in 'Spéciale' regard. This

2016 is fresh and crisp, ripe and full, long and delicious.

Two Crus Meet as One

2017 Dolcetto d'Alba 'Coste & Fossati' (G.D.Vajra)

Regular Price \$24.99 – Sale Price \$19.99 NET

There seems little that the Vajra clan can't do to charm us. Their Dolcetto-based Langhe Rosso blend is perennially popular, but it is the blend of two fine crus that elevates Dolcetto into the, dare we say, elite. This 2017 is a complex combination of beautiful fruit, striking minerals, and ripe, round tannins.

Textbook

2016 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Textbook)

Regular Price \$27.99 – Sale Price \$21.99 NET

There are plenty of great Napa Valley Cabernets, but we still seek the available and the affordable. Thanks to a tip from a long-term customer, we found this Pey family Cabernet Sauvignon. Textbook is just that. Ripe, dark fruit, judicious tannins, smoky, toasty oak, and dusty cocoa deliver the Napa Valley goods.



Royal Rioja

2014 Rioja Crianza (Viña Real)

Sale Price \$13.99 – \$142.70 case of twelve



Let us hope that the Viña Real Crianza continues to be a great value for old-school Rioja. Given that the 2014 spends more than a year in French and American oak barrels and ages further in bottle, it is an absolute steal. All the grapes come from the Rioja Alavesa district, so the wine gives off a lovely sandalwood perfume. The palate is rich and round, with fine tannins mingled with warm plummy fruit. A great match with a pork and chickpea stew.

Brol Grande

2015 Bardolino Classico 'Brol Grande' (Le Fraghe)

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve

Because its neighbor Valpolicella has Amarone in its portfolio and Bardolino does not, it will never gain equal economic stature. Yet we appreciate Matilde Poggi's Brol Grande as much as we do the Ca' La Bionda Amarone on the Front Page. She only makes this Bardolino Classico in the finest vintages. While most Bardolino is a simple fruity quaffer, this wine has savory depth, earthy intensity, and a compelling finish. The influential Italian wine guide Gambero Rosso's highest award is the Tre Bicchieri. The 2015 Brol Grande and the 2013 Ca' La Bionda Amarone both received Tre Bicchieri.



"La Garrigue"



2016 Côtes du Rhône 'Cuvée Romaine' (Domaine "La Garrigue")

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve

The producers at "La Garrigue" give free rein to importer Eric Solomon to blend the 'Cuvée Romaine' and the

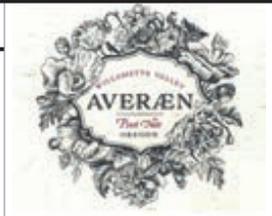
results are always superb. If you like a big Rhône dominated by olive and herb scents and an almost chewy texture, this is the Rhône for you. A healthy dose of Mourvèdre augments the Grenache and Syrah in the mix, giving it powerful tannins and a gripping, dry finish. For a heavy-duty roast leg of lamb.

Averaen

2017 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Averaen)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

Pinot Noir and Oregon are a match made in heaven. Gracefully aromatic, Willamette Valley Pinot Noir continues to improve and represents terrific value. The 2017 Averaen wins the three-legged race with gorgeous fruit, lively tannins, and a piney, foresty finish. As good with salmon as it is with steak and mushrooms.



Pièce d'Or

2014 Bourgogne Blanc 'Pièce d'Or' (Vincent)

Sale Price \$13.99 – \$142.70 case of twelve

The details are hazy, but this wine was originally destined for a wine-by-the-glass program at a fine dining establishment on Nantucket. The ship missed the island and the Vincent Pièce d'Or docked in Somerville. This is bracing and dry, lean and crisp. Have with a broiled sole and parsleyed potatoes.



Languedoc Blanc

2017 Languedoc Blanc (Château de Lascaux)

Sale Price \$9.99 – \$101.90 case of twelve



Languedoc is better known for its red wine, but here is a bargain organic white from Château de Lascaux. This dry, spicy white is a blend of Vermentino, Roussanne, Marsanne, Viognier, and Grenache Blanc. Have this with a

hearty fish soup laced with saffron and garlic.

The Gini is in the Vineyards

2017 Soave Classico (Gini)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

The Gini family has been making wine since the 18th century, and it is their old, superbly situated organic vineyards of Garganega that are responsible for the quality of their Soave. Claudio and Sandro, the current Ginis in charge, claim that they have never had to plant a Garganega grapevine. Their father Olinto and preceding generations took care of that. This wine, their not-so-entry-level Soave, is made from vines over sixty years of age located in the Antica Zona di Produzione. This un-oaked, very dry white is a complex mix of crispness, nuttiness, and salty mineral flavor attributed to the marine fossils found in the vineyards. Fantastic for a pasta dish with artichokes.



Old and Gold

2009 Bourgueil 'Prestige' (Lamé-Delisle-Boucard)

Sale Price \$21.99 – \$224.30 case of twelve



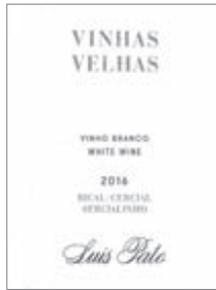
We'd like to give these folks a medal, but they don't need another one. Their wines regularly win awards at the major agricultural shows. This month we have plumbed the depths of Lamé-Delisle-Boucard's magnificent cellar for a few cases of their gold medal-winning 2009 vintage. This is maturing well, with the primary fruit evolving into wonderful earthy, dry flavors. A beauty with a roast chicken and fine platter of cheese.

Pato

2016 Beira Atlantico Branco 'Vinhas Velhas' (Luis Pato)

Sale Price \$19.99 – \$203.90 case of twelve

Along the coast of northern Portugal lies the wine district of Bairrada, part of the larger Beira Atlantico region. Arguably the most famous producer there is Luis Pato, whose red wines have almost single-handedly elevated the status of the local Baga grape. But his white and sparkling wines are just as deserving of recognition. The Vinhas Velhas is a blend of three distinctly Portuguese white grapes from 45-year-old vineyards: Bical, Cercial, and Sercialinho (a grape Pato and his father saved from obscurity). As it warms up, the wine takes on nutty undertones but remains fresh and stony, with white peach, blossoms, and citrus pith. It has the length and depth of a much more expensive wine and undoubtedly would command a higher price if it were from a more famous wine region. However this wine can only come from one place. With a broiled whole branzino or a plate of steamed shellfish, this is the closest one can get to tasting a unique region of Portugal – without actually going there.



The Grand Cru Co-op

Grand Cru Brut Champagne Blanc de Blancs (Le Mesnil)

Sale Price \$44.99 – \$485.90 case of twelve

In the village of Le Mesnil-sur-Oger a hectare or two of Chardonnay vines will ensure a family several generations of very good income. Two high-profile Champagne brands with lofty prices are friendly aristocratic rivals in the village, but to our astonishment the Union des Propriétaires Récoltants

Le Mesnil-sur-Oger also makes a superb Blanc de Blancs from the Grand Cru Chardonnay grapes. This is such lovely bubbly. Chalky and austere, it is the perfect aperitif before a meal and lovely with smoked seafood.

A Brut and a Sauvage

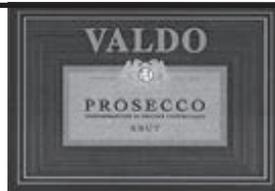
Prosecco Brut (Valdo)

Sale Price \$9.99 – \$107.89 case of twelve

Valdo returns. This is the absolute leader in the “Spritz” category, but is a fine sparkler on its own.

American Sparkling Wine ‘Sauvage’ (Gruet)
Sale Price \$17.99 – \$194.29 case of twelve

We have long admired the Gruet sparklers from New Mexico, but this is their stunner. Pure Chardonnay, fermented with natural (sauvage) yeasts, this has a crisp purity and long, lean dryness.



Specialty Foods

Cuor di Bufala \$18.99 per lb (Regular price \$20.99)

One of the newest offerings from La Marenmmana, a farmstead dairy located in Tuscany, this cheese elevates the subtle nuances of buffalo milk. This delicate, semi-firm cheese dances on the palate with hints of grass, lemon, and mushroom rounded out with a perfectly seasoned finish. Cuor di Bufala pairs wonderfully with a fig jam or an assortment of cured meats.



Hinman Settler \$28.99 per lb (Regular price \$29.99)

This limited-release blue cheese from Vermont’s Jasper Hill is a perfect marriage of creamy cow’s milk and the silky, grassy notes of sheep’s milk. The deep and bold flavor of this cheese transitions smoothly to a complex range of textures and finishes with a slight gameyness that evokes memories of summer walks through the countryside. Hinman Settler is made with raw sheep’s milk locally sourced from Bonnieview Farm and its unique flavor will certainly be a focal point of your next cheese board.



Tomme Adrienne \$23.99 per lb (Regular Price \$27.99)

A beautifully ripened goat’s milk cheese from the Loire Valley already sends our taste buds into a flutter. Add to that a generous layer of black summer truffles? Now we’re truly in heaven. The light, tangy flavor of the goat’s milk provides a perfect contrast to the robust and earthy flavor of the truffles. These bold but balanced flavors are complemented by the delicate, rural flavor of the natural rind. As attractive to the eye as it is to the tongue, this cheese is decadent yet refined, conflicting yet balanced – and completely delicious.



Champlain Valley Pyramid Scheme \$25.99 per lb (Regular Price 27.99)

What is rich, buttery, creamy, and surely the guiltiest pleasure of the cheese world? Yes! The triple cream! Pyramid Scheme from Champlain Valley Creamery has added a delightful twist to the classic triple cream by adding a fine layer of vegetable ash to the exterior. The bright citrus flavor of the ash cuts through the rich, sweet flavor of the cheese to create a sophisticated flavor not often found in a triple cream. Enjoy this cheese as an hors d’oeuvre or as a dessert with fresh fruit and Champagne.

Happy Holidays!

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Wines of the Month — December 13, 2018 through January 14, 2019

2017 Insolia (Tenuta Ibidini)

Sale Price \$9.99 – \$107.90 case of twelve

Our best Sicilian value producer has made a fragrant, delicious dry white Insolia. Perfect for swordfish or a chicken Marsala.

2016 Rioja (Campo Viejo)

Sale Price \$8.99 – \$97.09 case of twelve

Young and fresh, with cherry and plum fruit, this pure Tempranillo will be a nice match with a paella of chorizo and clams.

2016 Cabernet Sauvignon (Montes)

Sale Price \$8.99 – \$97.09 case of twelve

Cabernet Sauvignon from Chile truly delivers for the price. The 2016 Montes is a full-bodied, well balanced, ripe red for burgers and pasta dishes.

2017 Pays d'Hérault Rouge (Moulin de Gassac)

Sale Price \$7.99 – \$86.29 case of twelve

Another terrific value from the Guilhem clan at Mas de Daumas Gassac. This rigorously dry red will match equally well with a lentil stew or with a spicy chili.

