



The Wine and Cheese Cask

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January 15, 2020 – February 14, 2020

A Pre-Tariff European Wine Newsletter

We fervently hope that the threatened tariffs on European wine never materialize, but as a precaution we have focused our recent purchases on the eurozone to maintain an inventory of some of our favorite wines. First up, French.

Viré-Clessé

2018 Viré-Clessé 'Les Pierres Blanches' (André Bonhomme)
Sale Price \$19.99 – \$203.90 case of twelve

We recently read that the US purchases 60% of the production of Pouilly-Fuissé. This surprised us because we have shifted our purchases to the relatively new super-Macon appellation of Viré-Clessé. The 'Les Pierres Blanches' from Bonhomme comes from a stony, high-elevation vineyard and gives the expected earthy, dry, mineral flavors of un-oaked Chardonnay. A light touch of apricot and peach fruit leads into the crisp, dry finish.



La Garrigue

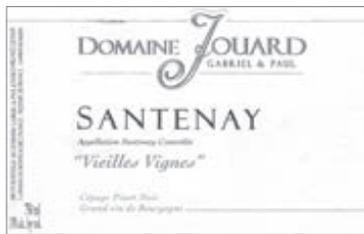
2017 Côtes du Rhône 'Cuvée Romaine' (Domaine La Garrigue)
Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve

Those seeking Rhône values have long gravitated to this label. The La Garrigue is a stuffed and loaded blend of de-classified Vacqueyras that always belies its price. The 2017 is juicy and delicious and requires serving with bold foods. A North African curry with lamb sausages or a hearty Indian eggplant dish would match well.



Santenay

2016 Santenay 'Vieilles Vignes' (Domaine Jouard)
Sale Price \$23.99 – \$244.70 case of twelve



Santenay has a reputation of being 'sauvage' or a bit wild, and this 2016 from Jouard lives up to it. This old-vine bottling is packed with spicy plum fruit and a bloody, gamy flavor.

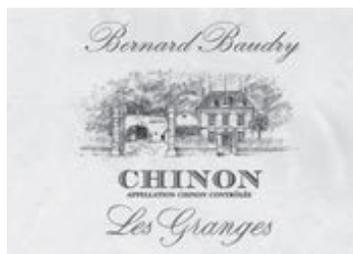
This is a throwback Burgundy that is perfect with a winter-

strength Boeuf Bourguignon packed with lardons and mushrooms.

Chinon

2018 Chinon 'Les Granges' (Bernard Baudry)
Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

Now retired, Bernard Baudry will always be the face of this Domaine, but with the deeper and more intense 2018 'Les Granges' we get the impression that his son Mathieu has made his mark. This is as drinkable as past cuvées, but has a spicy, brambly fruit and an earthy flavor that is more terroir driven than previous versions. Drink this lively Cabernet Franc with a roasted salmon with mustard and leeks.



Reuilly

2018 Reuilly (Dyckerhoff)
Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve



This wine kept on disappearing from our shelves, so we put on our veteran retailer tin hat and asked the wholesaler

how many cases they had left. Luckily they had just the right amount (or so we think) for a winter newsletter. With its fresh citrus and pear fruit and lingering, dry finish, this 2018 Loire Valley Sauvignon Blanc is a delight. Grab some sushi and go.

Pouilly-Fumé

2017 Pouilly-Fumé 'Vieilles Vignes' (Régis Minet)
Sale Price \$23.99 – \$244.70 case of twelve

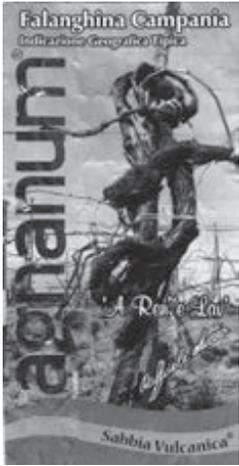
Just across the Loire River from Sancerre is the village of Pouilly-sur-Loire, home to a much smaller appellation that also makes a flinty, crisp Sauvignon Blanc. If anyone claims that they can tell the difference between Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé they are probably a producer who makes both. To our tastes an excellent Pouilly-Fumé carries a bit more body than a Sancerre and has very flinty mineral flavors that last long into the finish. Enter Régis Minet's 2017, a polished, ripe and round, old-vine Sauvignon with a lean, long streak of delicious minerality. A fantastic wine for broiled haddock, new potatoes, and spinach.



Back to Naples

2018 Falanghina (Agnanum)

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



Our first offering of the Agnanum Falanghina was such a success that we went ahead and bought another dozen cases. The winery and vineyard are located to the west of Naples in the Campi Flegrei, an active volcanic zone. The vines range from 60 to 200 years in age, no chemicals are used in the vineyard, a minimum of sulfur is used at fermentation, and none at bottling. The result is a deliciously fresh white with gorgeous floral aromas and a salty tang to the finish. This is a wonderful wine for seafood and pasta. We also have a few cases of

their red wine made from the Piediroso grape. Great for pizza, it smells like basil and tomato grown in a volcanic crater.

Nebbiolo

2016 Langhe Nebbiolo 'Perbacco' (Vietti)

Sale Price \$24.99 – \$254.90 case of twelve

The wines of Vietti are some of Piedmont's finest across their entire range. Their Perbacco Nebbiolo comes from grapes grown only in the Barolo zone villages of Castiglione Falletto and Novello. The wine is aged for two years in barrel and another year in bottle before release. This 2016 drinks

well now and will hold for another decade, developing nuance and length. A great red for a long-braised brisket.



Nerello Mascalese, Sicily's Great Red

2018 Etna Rosso (Pietradolce)

Sale Price \$23.99 – \$244.70 case of twelve



Sicilian wines have improved immensely over the last twenty years. Now they are regarded as some of the best wines of Italy. We have been repeatedly charmed by Pietradolce's Nerello Mascalese grown at altitude on the northern slopes of Mount Etna. The 2018 is

etched with an earthy volcanic aroma, tactile tannins, and light but lingering red berry fruit. This is a graceful red wine that can be served with seared tuna in a spicy tomato sauce.

Nahe



2017 Riesling Trocken (Kruger-Rumpf)

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

The Nahe is an underrated source for good German Riesling. The firm of Kruger-Rumpf excels with dry Riesling in a simple, refreshing style. This 2017 is snappy and fresh with

crunchy orchard fruit and a fine dry finish.

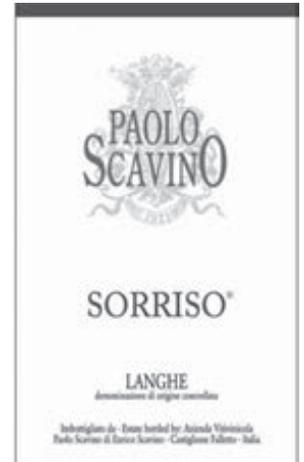
Sorriso

2018 Langhe Sorriso (Scavino)

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

Acute observers have noticed that there is usually a Scavino Barolo on our shelves at any given moment. While tasting through their various 2016 Barolos, we came across this 2018 white blend that charmed us, especially given its sale price. Normally \$17.99, this blend of

Chardonnay (40%), Sauvignon Blanc (40%), and Viognier is a steal at \$14.99. The Chardonnay gives the Sorriso its smooth texture, the Sauvignon Blanc its freshness, and the Viognier lends it lovely aromas of white flowers and apricots. No oak touches this white, yet the Sorriso has enough weight to make it a perfect winter white to have with a pork loin. It's also versatile enough to have with a spicy ceviche at the start of a meal.



Barbera d'Asti



2016 Barbera d'Asti 'Villa della Rosa' (Pico Maccario)

Sale Price \$8.99 – \$91.70 case of twelve

The estate of Pico Maccario is home to the largest single vineyard in Piedmont. Within its 70 hectares, 58 are planted to Barbera and each row is marked with a red rose bush, some 4,500 in all. This is truly the Villa della Rosa. Their wines are among the best values of the Asti zone. 2016 was an excellent year for Barbera and

the quality of this bottling far exceeds its price. The charming raspberry fruit and peppery finish is perfect for easygoing everyday fare like meatloaf or a stew of lentils.

Dolcetto



2018 Dolcetto d'Alba (Cantina del Pino)
Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve

Dolcetto is among the most versatile of red wines to match with food. It is especially good with vegetarian dishes involving mushrooms and beans. The

2018 from Cantina del Pino is a ripely dense, plummy red with gentle tannins and an earthy, dry finish.

Winter Strength Rosés

2018 Rioja Rosado (Muga)

Sale Price \$11.99 – \$122.30 case of twelve

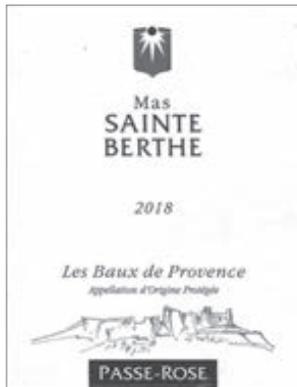
2018 Les Baux de Provence Rosé 'Passe-Rose' (Mas Sainte Berthe)

Sale Price \$11.99 – \$122.30 case of twelve

European rosé was once said to “not travel well,” which is a polite way to say that it tastes better there than here. Agreed. Today rosé comes from many different regions in many different hues and most drink very well even in winter in Somerville. Muga’s Rosado is made much like their other wines, with some barrel age and deep structure.



We lept at a much better price when it was recently offered. Its persimmon color leads to a zesty wine with a dry, peppery finish. Great with a baked artichoke and red pepper rice. Same goes for the pleasantly crimson Passe-Rose from Mas Sainte Berthe. This is completely dry, with firm tannins and subtle fruit, making it a great wine to have with food. Try it with a fish stew.



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Specialty Foods

Gouda Month!

Gouda gets its name from the city it was traded in, Gouda, in Southern Holland. Today it refers to the style of cheese. One can tell how old a wheel is from the texture inside. If it is young it will have a smooth and creamy texture. As it ages the cheese will become drier, darker, and harder, developing tyrosine crystals. These occur when the proteins are broken down during the aging process. The amino acid tyrosine gets released and creates the crystals that are often referred to as the “salty crunch” people crave. This month we are offering four different kinds in four different flavors for you to try.

Wilde Weide \$28.99 per lb (Regular Price \$29.99)

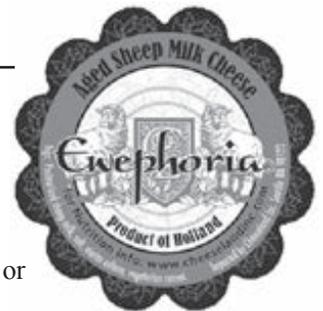
Wilde Weide is a Dutch Boerenkaas (Farmhouse Gouda) made with raw cow’s milk and aged for 15 months. Though it has plenty of rich flavors to satisfy fans of aged Gouda – brown butter, whiskey, and caramelized nuts come to mind – the finish is light, grassy, and fruity, with a subtle sweetness akin to candied pineapple. The texture is just as complex; though mildly dry and crumbly with a slight crunch from amino acid crystals, the cheese is still creamy enough to melt on the tongue. The name appropriately translates from the Dutch to “wild meadow,” evoking the lush pastures on which the farm’s cows graze, an element of terroir which is clearly expressed in the flavors and aromas.

L'Amuse Brabander \$22.99 per lb (Regular Price \$23.99)

This gouda made in the Brabant region of Holland and produced with the pasteurized milk of Saanen goats is cave ripened in slightly higher ambient temperatures, which ensures proper drying and results in a fuller flavor. The result is a harmonious melding of the caramel sweetness of an aged gouda with the freshness of goat’s milk.

Ewephoria Gouda \$20.99 per lb (Regular Price \$21.99)

Enjoy this lovely dessert cheese from Holland with fresh fruit and nuts! At one year old it has developed sweet, light caramel notes. Made with vegetarian rennet and pasteurized sheep’s milk, it is perfect for a nutritious snack or an after-dinner treat.



Ancient Gouda (Roomano Pradera) \$15.99 per lb (Regular Price \$16.99)



Funny thing, this cheese from the Netherlands technically isn’t a Gouda – only because it has less than 48% butterfat. This four-year-old cheese carries an amazing heavy butterscotch flavor and wonderful tyrosine crystals for bite.

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Wines of the Month — January 15, 2020 through February 14, 2020

2018 Custoza (Gorgo)

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

This seven-grape ‘misto’ white is clean, crisp, dry, and organic. Its pear-like fruit is perfect for a risotto or a flash-fried fish.

2018 Bordeaux Rouge (Château Le Mayne Turon)

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

Who says you can’t drink Bordeaux young? This deliciously dry blend of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc is an all-purpose red for roast meats, root vegetables and blue cheeses.

2018 Sangiovese Superiore ‘Le More’ (Castelluccio)

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

This Sangiovese hails from Romagna and has every bit as much character as its Tuscan cousins. Its upfront cherry fruit and lively dry finish make this a fine match with spicy pasta or a simple pork roast.

2016 Côtes du Rhône (Mas Arnaud)

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

While Grenache is the predominant grape in most Côtes du Rhône, Mas Arnaud has more Syrah. This results in a less fruity, more peppery red. There have been many excellent vintages in the Southern Rhône, but 2016 is the current benchmark.

