



# The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

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## March 20, 2023 – April 17, 2023

### More Italian Reds

Great wine is made in every Italian region and it is generally reasonable in price and adaptable with food. Here are six overachieving red favorites from five different regions.

#### Drinkable Barolo

**2018 Barolo ‘Serralunga’ (Ferdinando Principiano)**

**Sale Price \$49.99 – \$509.90 case of twelve**



One can argue whether Barolo is ever reasonably priced. Here is our current contender. This Barolo from Ferdinando Principiano comes from Nebbiolo fruit entirely from the celebrated village of Serralunga. Principiano usually makes a single vineyard Barolo from the

Boscaretto cru, but in 2018 he supercharged this bottling by adding Boscaretto fruit to the Serralunga. Made with a gentle pressing, fermented in stainless steel with natural yeasts, and aged in large old oak *botti*, this Barolo is very approachable. 2018 is a lighter vintage which will benefit consumers more than collectors. This is beautifully floral with a deep earthy energy. Serve this with long-braised short ribs and polenta.

#### Coste & Fossati

**2021 Dolcetto d’Alba ‘Coste & Fossati’**

**(G.D. Vajra)**

**Sale Price \$22.99 – \$234.50 case of twelve**

When a Barolo producer chooses not to replace their organic old vines of Dolcetto with more profitable Nebbiolo vines, you know the resulting wine is a labor of love. Vajra’s Coste & Fossati has always been a favorite among our ‘serious’ Dolcettos thanks to its consistent depth and complexity. The 2021 showcases black cherry and plum fruit backed up with spice. Although less muscular than usual, it still has the tannic power to go the distance for another five to seven years. To drink now, open it while you’re cooking and it will be ready for your extra cheesy lasagna.



#### Neapolitan Pizza Wine

**2021 Piediroso ‘Sabbia Vulcanica’ (Agnanum)**

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

Agnanum is a fascinating winery located in the Astroni Natural Park in western Naples. The Piediroso vines are planted in volcanic sand and deliver an herb-scented, cherry-fruited red with ripe tannins. This easygoing red is perfect for pizza, but will also be enjoyable with a bowl of beans drizzled with fine olive oil.

#### 13th Century Classico

**2018 Chianti Classico (Pagliarese)**

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

The Pagliarese Chianti estate dates to 1242, and one of its early proprietors, Neri Pagliarese, played a part in papal history and contributed to the poetic literature of the 13th century. Felsina Berardenga, also an old Chianti estate, recently purchased Pagliarese and has set about restoring the winery while releasing an affordable Chianti Classico. Their 2018 is a generous, structured red made for the Tuscan table. Have this berry-scented and firmly tannic red with a meaty ragù.



#### Moretto Monovitigno

**2021 Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro ‘Monovitigno’**

**(Fattoria Moretto)**

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



When we first tasted Fattoria Moretto’s regular Lambrusco it was a real eye opener. It was deeply serious with cool purple fruit and gripping tannins, and has been a staple on our shelf ever since. Yet we noticed on importer Kermit Lynch’s website that they also make a single vineyard Lambrusco. The 2021 Monovitigno

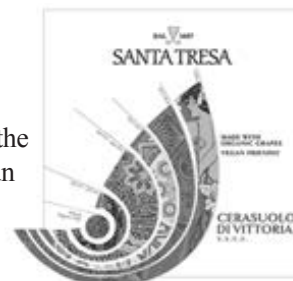
finally arrived to our market and after tasting it we bought all that was available. This is a wonderfully elegant fizzy red that is clearly meant for food. Have this with a bowl of *tortellini in brodo* with sautéed spinach and shards of Parmigiano.

#### Cherry Picking

**2020 Cerasuolo di Vittoria (Santa Tresa)**

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

A few months ago we featured Santa Tresa’s charming Frappato. This month we have their more serious Cerasuolo di Vittoria, a blend of Nero d’Avola and Frappato. The name Cerasuolo refers to the wine’s cherry color, *ceràsa* in the Sicilian dialect. At Santa Tresa they allow a portion of the Nero d’Avola to wither on the vine to give it a deeper flavor. The 2020 is a spicy, fruity red that will be perfect with a tomato mozzarella salad along with seared tuna.

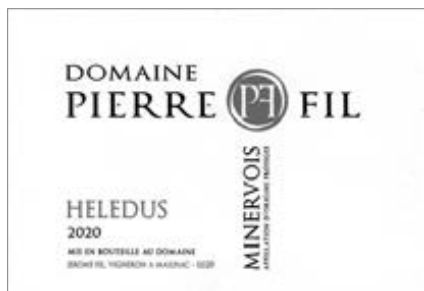


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## Minervois

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**2020 Minervois 'Heledus' (Domaine Pierre Fil)**  
**Sale Price \$13.99 -- \$142.70 case of twelve**



Located east of the famed medieval city of Carcassonne, the region of Minervois has been making wine since Roman times. But it wasn't until the last few decades that effort and capital went

into producing terroir-driven wines in a region previously known more for volume than quality. The Heledus from the multigenerational winemaking Fil family is a perfect example of how far Minervois has come. Equal parts organic Mourvèdre, Syrah, Grenache, and Carignan blend seamlessly into a silky, savory, cocoa-dusted red that makes for a delicious partner to *merguez* and lentils.

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## Les Vignes d'à Côté

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**2021 Collines Rhodaniennes Syrah (Yves Cuilleron)**  
**Sale Price \$16.99 -- \$173.30 case of twelve**

Yves Cuilleron has built an impressive portfolio of Northern Rhône wines with famous appellations like Condrieu and Côte Rotie, as well as this humble yet delicious Syrah from his home village of Chavanay. This 2021 Syrah has a floral and peppery nose, spicy red berry fruit, and a robust, earthy, dry finish.

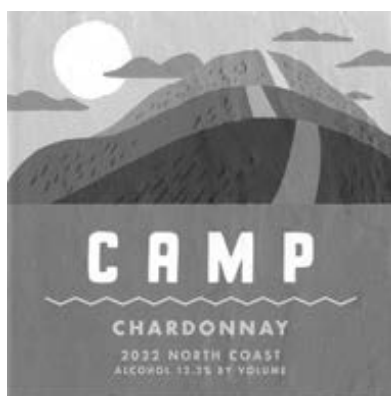


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## North Coast Camping

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**2022 North Coast Chardonnay (Camp)**  
**Sale Price \$17.99 -- \$183.50 case of twelve**



The fruit for Camp's 2022 North Coast Chardonnay comes mostly from a vineyard in the Alexander Valley. It is fermented in stainless steel with natural yeasts and aged in a mix of stainless vats and previously used French barrels. This results in snappy and fresh green

plum fruit and a lively dry finish.

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## A L'Ecart Chenin

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**2020 Saumur Blanc 'L'Ecart' (Clotilde Legrand)**  
**Sale Price \$19.99 -- \$203.90 case of twelve**

We have been impressed by every vintage and cuvée of Clotilde Legrand's Saumur-Champigny. Only recently did we learn that she makes a small amount of Saumur Blanc. We tasted it and, of course, it's delicious. It tickles the palate with salty minerals and cool, subtle fruit.

A great white for roasted salmon and *beurre blanc*.

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## Herdade do Rosé

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**2022 Alentejano Rosé 'Mariana' (Herdade do Rocim)**  
**Sale Price \$14.99 -- \$152.90 case of twelve**

The arrival of the first rosé of the latest vintage is as much a harbinger of spring as the longer days and more moderate temperatures. Our first featured 2022 rosé is from Herdade do Rocim, a husband and wife team in the Vidigueira subregion of Alentejo in southern Portugal. The hills and granite soils in Vidigueira give their wines distinctive minerality and fantastic freshness despite the hot climate. With ripe white peach and strawberry fruit plus a cool, stony, dry finish, this organic rosé is a great way to welcome spring, especially when served with grilled shrimp and vegetables or a plate of fresh cheeses.

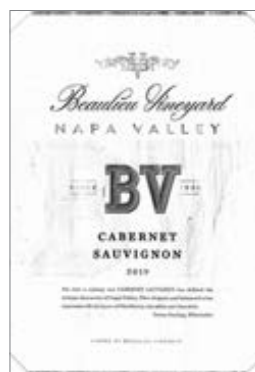


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## A California Classic

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**2019 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Beaulieu Vineyard)**  
**Sale Price \$29.99 -- \$305.90 case of twelve**



Beaulieu Vineyard's basic Napa bottling has always been a good choice when looking for the dusty dryness and rugged fruit of Cabernet Sauvignon. But in recent vintages it has been fine tuned and greatly improved. Fearing warmer vintages, the current regime chose to maintain a larger canopy of leaves to shade the fruit. They also decided to harvest earlier to preserve freshness. It's still a big California

Cabernet, but more chiseled and precise. The fruit is sourced from Napa's blue-chip sites in Rutherford and Calistoga, and aged 18 months in a mix of French, American, and Hungarian oak. Get out the grill and have this with a dry-aged rib eye.

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## Cune's Reserva and Clásico

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### 2017 Rioja Reserva (Cune)

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



Compañía Vinícola del Norte de España launched in 1879 in Haro, the capital of the Rioja wine region. They were an immediate success and needed to expand. They hired a French architect who built an expansion, replacing the stone and brick columns

with an innovative metallic structure and ceiling that made it easier to work with the many barrels involved in a Rioja winery. After a certain tower in Paris, this might be Alexandre Gustave Eiffel's most famous work. Under this roof, Cune's best wines still age. The 2017 Reserva is 85% Tempranillo with the rest Garnacha, Graciano, and Mazuelo. It is a gorgeous, smooth red with aromas of raspberry and sandalwood along with nicely framed oak and tannins. Have this with a roast leg of lamb.

### 2018 Rioja Blanco 'Monopole Clásico' (Cune)

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

Cune's regular Monopole white is a fresh stainless steel-fermented white, but a decade ago an inquisitive critic reminded the winery that Monopole once was much better. They located an old bottle, tasted it, and decided on the spot to bring back the retired winemaker (nicknamed 'El Brujo') to resurrect the old Monopole. The

now-christened Monopole Clásico is made to the old recipe. The young wine made from Viura grapes is aged in large neutral barrels, and after

8 months a measure of Manzanilla sherry is added. This adds a nutty, chalky flavor to the already toasty and rich white.

Try this amazing Rioja with a shellfish-based paella.



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## Specialty Foods

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### Serious Cheeses for Serious People

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This month we are featuring a collection of cheeses that can assuredly be described as the boldest (or at least the oldest) of their respective styles. They are all intrinsically limited

in their availability because of seasonal restrictions or other incredible factors that really push the boundaries of "small batch" production.

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#### Comté AOC (aged 36 months) - \$34.99 per lb

Rodolphe Le Meunier - France

Comté is one of the most ubiquitous of French cheeses and is, in fact, the most-produced AOC cheese in the country. While most of the production is aged between four and nine months, a few select wheels are destined for something grander. This 36-month Comté from the master *affineur* Rodolphe Le Meunier is a wonderful example of the transformative powers of time. The paste is rich, nutty, and studded with tyrosine crystals for that perfect crunch.

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#### L'Etivaz AOP Alpage (aged 12 months) - \$29.99 per lb

Gourmino Cooperative - Switzerland

In 1932 a small group of Gruyère makers broke off from the herd. Disaffected by modernization efforts pushed by "Big Gruyère" these cheesemakers doubled down on traditional production methods. Each batch of fresh summer milk is hand-stirred in copper kettles over a wood fire, before being pressed and aged at an altitude of over 2000 meters. Sure, Gruyère is great, but L'Etivaz is for lovers.

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#### Fontina Valle D'Aosta DOP Alpeggio (aged 4 months) -

\$29.99 per lb Valle D'Aosta Coop - Italy

This cheese is a perfect example of the difference that altitude makes on milk, grass, and indeed the entire micro- and macro-biome. Made exclusively with summer milk from cows grazing high in the Italian alps, this cheese is both complex and subtle. The unmistakable spicy quality of raw milk is balanced by the creamy flavor and supple texture of whole milk. Rich with notes of wild grasses and flowers, this is a truly unctuous example of Fontina.

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#### Beaufort AOC Alpage (aged at least 3 years, but probably 4) - \$39.99 per lb

Rodolphe Le Meunier - France

Straight from the "lost-and-found" bin at Rodolphe's cave, this one-of-a-kind Beaufort is the very definition of "limited release" and once it's gone, it's gone forever. We're not certain how or why this wheel came to exist in the first place but we do know for sure that it is not a regular product for Rodolphe. Which is a shame, because it is absolutely delicious. The flavor is bold and nutty with notes of dark chocolate and beef broth. Be sure to try this while you can!

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## Wines of the Month — March 20, 2023 through April 17, 2023

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### 2021 Apremont (Philippe Ravier)

**Sale Price \$11.99 -- \$129.50 case of twelve**

Wines made from the Jacquère grape in the French Savoie are some of our new favorite whites. Ravier's 2021 Apremont is crisp with orchard fruit aromas and a dry, minerally finish. Great for fish and fondue.

### 2021 Jumilla (Honoro Vera)

**Sale Price \$8.99 -- \$97.09 case of twelve**

This great bargain from Eastern Spain is made from organically grown Monastrell. It's packed with plummy fruit and an earthy, dry finish. Have this with roast pork along with rice and beans.

### 2022 Blanc du Midi (Côté Mas)

**Sale Price \$9.99 per Liter -- \$107.89 case of twelve**

Here's a value Liter. Paul Mas has created a fresh, dry, and aromatic southern French blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Vermentino. Great for a seafood risotto.

### 2016 Castillon – Côtes de Bordeaux (Château Tour Grand Mayne)

**Sale Price \$11.99 -- \$129.50 case of twelve**

We were surprised when this 2016 red Bordeaux was offered again at an even better price. Château Tour Grand Mayne is smooth, rich, and dry. Good with roasts and blue cheese.

