



The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

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October 15, 2013 – November 14, 2013

Crisp Fall Whites

Südtirol/Alto Adige

2012 Pinot Grigio (St. Michael-Eppan)

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



The cooperative winery St. Michael-Eppan makes some of the freshest whites of Alto Adige. The 2012 Pinot Grigio is subtle and persistently dry, with aromas of freshly cut hay and flavors of ripe apricots. The finish sustains with bracing minerals and measured, crisp acidity. Try this with a

grilled trout or a sautéed pork chop with a side of braised cabbage.

Sea and Sardinia

2012 Vermentino di Sardegna 'Costamolino' (Argiolas)

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

We have recommended this wine thousands of times over many vintages. There is a built-in logic that a wine from an island in the middle of the Mediterranean must go with seafood. The Argiolas Vermentino certainly does go with seafood, but it superbly matches stronger condiments like peppers, lemon, capers, and herbs that can marinate and garnish these dishes. This strong dry white is ideal with a grilled swordfish served with a gremolada-style relish.



Muscadet Goes With Everything

2012 Muscadet Sèvre et Maine 'La Levraudière' (Bonnet-Huteau)

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

Muscadet is one of the best bargains in the whole world of wine.



Why is that? It could be that too many people confuse it with the sweet Muscat. And some people believe that it only goes with oysters. It might be because Muscadet comes from the region around the city of Nantes and hardly anyone goes there for a vacation. We rejoice that Muscadet is not expensive because we simply adore it. Dry, minerally, and very

crisp, it is of course great with oysters and just about any seafood dish. This month's Muscadet comes Bonnet-Huteau. Their 2012 La Levraudière is a gorgeous dry white with wisps of peach, leafy tea, and zesty minerals.

An Old Friend

2011 Pinot Blanc (Trimbach)

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

For a long time the Trimbach Pinot Blanc has been a staple recommendation for Thanksgiving, as we find that it matches a cornucopia of dishes. The 2010 is a wonderfully balanced, drier than usual vintage of this apple-scented delight from Alsace.



Why Wachau?

2012 Grüner Veltliner 'Frauengärten' (Pichler-Krutzler)

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

The Wachau is a breathtaking stretch of the Danube where steep hillside vineyards hug a bend in the river. Many consider this to be the best white wine producing region in Austria, and if you added Europe to that title the point would at least be arguable. This area has many of the complex equations needed to make

great whites. It has a warm dry summer and cool evenings. It has varied stony soils and good exposure to sunlight. It has Grüner Veltliner, a great grape capable of soaking in the sun and sucking up the minerals. With only 3% of Austria's production, wines from the Wachau can be expensive, but when they taste like the 2012 Dürnsteiner Frauengärten from Pichler-Krutzler they can also be illuminating bargains. This lovely white has expansive mineral and pepper aromas along with a ripe but crisp finish.

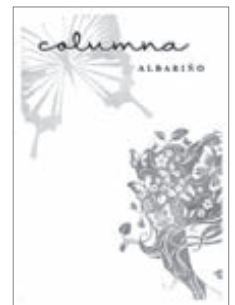


Trials and Tributaries

2012 Rias Baixas Albariño (Columna)

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

In Galicia many rivers run to the sea. These Rias resemble the fjords of Norway but with the important bonus that the region is home to the fine white grape Albariño. The Miño is the main river of the region and for a while it coincides with the border between Spain and Portugal. Columna hails from the sub-region of Tea, a river that flows into the Miño. This inland area is warmer and drier (though still wet by Spanish standards) and yields a fuller, more aromatic wine. The best match for Albariño we've found is with sweet bay scallops sautéed with butter and herbs, but crab is not far behind.



Bird-Friendly Organic Chianti Classico

2011 Chianti Classico (Castellare di Castellina)

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



Castellare di Castellina is owned by Paolo Painerai, a highly successful publisher, but Castellare is no trophy estate. Painerai is serious about its place in the history of Chianti Classico. The grape is Sangioveeto not Sangiovese. The vineyards are all organic and help to preserve the bird population which gets star billing on the label. In the 2011 vintage the beautiful Beccofrusone

(*Bombycilla garrulous*) adorns the front label. The wine itself has an admirable balance of graceful cherry fruit and evenly ripened tannins, with an overall elegance.

Seriously Superiore

2009 Barbera d'Alba Superiore (Castello di Neive)

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

What makes a Barbera d'Alba Superiore? In the case of Castello di Neive it means producing this wine in only the best vintages and aging it for 12 months in French oak barrels. In effect this means giving the best Barbera grapes a care and handling similar to the that given to the Nebbiolo grapes that go into Barbarescos. Because Barbera has very little tannin the barrel aging adds structure. The more than adequately ripe 2009 vintage produced a deep, smooth, and full-bodied red. Have this with a fresh pasta dish sauced with mushrooms and taleggio.



Nobile Riserva

2009 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva (Tenuta di Gracciano della Seta)

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

Like the Barbera Superiore above, this Vino Nobile has been given the royal treatment. In order to achieve Riserva status Tenuta di Gracciano ages the wine in barrel for two years and then another year in bottle before release. This Tuscan treasure is ripe and rounded and has an admirable freshness of fruit within its deep core of earthy flavor. Have this with a grilled porterhouse rubbed with garlic and sprinkled with parsley.



Down South

2012 Nero d'Avola (Tenuta Ibidini)

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



Nero d'Avola is a dark and flavorful Sicilian red. The Valle delle Acate winery, whose Frappato we adore, also makes a great value Nero. With its spicy dark fruit the 2012 Tenuta Ibidini is poised to go along with your favorite late season eggplant, pepper, and tomato dishes.

Two Non-Traditional Riojas

Last month we featured two Riojas whose barrel-aged qualities exemplified traditional Spanish winemaking. This month we have two non-traditional producers who prefer a fresher, fruitier style.

2012 Rioja 'Graciano' (Rio Madre)

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

If you enter Rioja from the east Alfaro is one of the first villages of the Rioja Baja. Growers here are not wedded to the Tempranillo. Instead Garnacha and lately the fascinating Graciano thrive in the more Mediterranean conditions. This is our second vintage of Rio Madre, a 100% Graciano that is full of purple-fruited aromas and dusty, cocoa-laced tannins, with a soft, ripe finish. This wine's rich penetrating fruit is ideal for a dish of rice and beans with spicy peppers.



2012 Rioja 'Pedregoso' (Abel Mendoza)

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

Perhaps it is not fair to call Abel Mendoza a non-traditional producer, because before barrels arrived in Rioja all wine



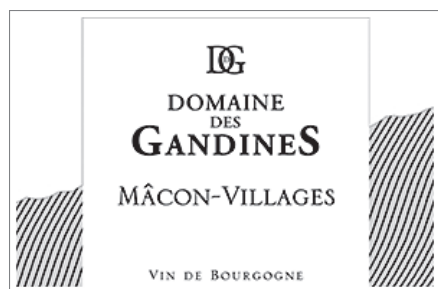
was made by a method called carbonic maceration in cement tanks. Most often this results in a fresh, fruity, light Tempranillo, but Mendoza's wines begin in exceptional vineyards, producing terroir-based reds with much more earthiness than fruit. First

of all Señor Mendoza is a respected cosechero who knows the vines around his base of San Vicente de la Sonsierra as well as any other. It is difficult not to call his wines Burgundian because these are aromatic yet subdued expressions of Tempranillo. They are bottled by soil type. This 2012 Pedregoso comes from 40-year-old vines from stony soils and begins with subtle, dusty dry flavors before the gentle fruit arrives after being open for an hour. This is the kind of Rioja to have with a roasted duck and some root vegetables.

Three Facets of French Chardonnay

Chardonnay will always be one of the most popular white wines, but it is still interesting to go back to its Burgundian homeland to see where it began and where that prickly term 'terroir' always complicates the conversation.

2011 Mâcon-Villages (Domaine des Gandines)



Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.30 case of twelve

In the hands of a good grower and thanks to warm clay soils, a Mâcon-Villages will rise above its station, resulting in a rich, dry white. The 2011

from Domaine des Gandines is a golden-hued Chardonnay with lovely pear and apple crispness and a lively dry finish that hints at roasted grain. Despite being the least expensive of these three offerings it is the fullest-bodied – and it's also made with organic grapes.

2012 Petit Chablis (Domaine Chenevières)

Sale Price \$15.99 – \$163.10 case of twelve

Petit Chablis is not a smaller version of Chablis but a small area of vineyards away from the main growing region that still has a favorable exposition.



The 2012 Domaine Chenevières is Chablis to its core with an exquisite balance between flinty earth and ultra-thin slices of crunchy, barely ripe fruits. Have this with shellfish or a delicate sauté of sole.

2011 Bourgogne Blanc (Paul Pernot)

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

As much as we love the entire range of Paul Pernot white Burgundies, after tasting his basic Bourgogne Blanc we



find it more difficult to recommend his Puligny-Montrachet. Age is a factor. While the Puligny needs time, the Bourgogne Blanc is meant to be drunk young, and in 2011 it has all the ingredients of a fine Côte de Beaune. The interest-

ing aromas of hazelnuts and custard may be the result of its barrel age, but the deep dive into earthiness must be due to the Pernots' fine old vineyards.

Monterey

2011 Pinot Noir (Irony)

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

If you'd like to start your Thanksgiving planning early we'll suggest this nicely concentrated Pinot Noir value from Monterey County. The 2011 Irony is packed with ripe berry fruit and a soft, leathery finish. This is a sizable deduction from its regular price of \$14.99.



Here Comes the Sun

2010 Alicante (Tarima Hill)

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



While the sun certainly rises in the east and we have the Atlantic, we still like to dream of the day when we will wake regularly to the warmth of the sun rising over Alicante in the east of Spain next to the Mediterranean. Until then we have a great

alternative in the 2010 Tarima Hill Monastrell, the closest thing to bottled sunshine. This is densely packed with smoky, peppery fruit, and a long lingering finish. Impressive, full-bodied, and ready for a spicy, chorizo paella.

An Auslese Vintage

2006 Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Auslese (Dr. Fischer)

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

There are a lot of great white wines in this newsletter, but this one has above-average pedigree and value. The village of Ockfen is in the Saar valley, where the harvest arrives dangerously late. In 2006 heat and humidity wreaked havoc on the vineyards in the summer months, reducing the chances of a sizable harvest. A golden autumn rescued the vintage, but the results were a rare combination of low-yielding, perfectly ripe Auslese-level grapes and little else. The Fischers were kind enough to hold back some of this exceptional harvest until it was approaching gorgeously ready-to-drink status, resulting in an exceptional value for its prädikat and age.



The real question is how to pair this wine with food. It has a decided sweetness, but at this age it appears drier than the Spätleses we also have on offer. If you are feeling adventurous try this with very spicy Szechuan food or have it with a fruit tart and some ripe blue-veined cheeses.

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Wines of the Month — Oktober 15, 2013 through November 14, 2013

2010 Palmela (Dona Ermelinda)

Sale Price \$7.99 – \$86.49 case of twelve

Portugal is great at making gutsy, intense reds for short money. This 2010 hails from Palmela and is a blend of Castelão, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Touriga Nacional.

2010 Bordeaux (Château Haut-Domingue)

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

This elegant 2010 Bordeaux is an equal parts mix of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. It's earthy and honest and very good value from a great vintage.

2012 Rioja (Cortijo)

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

Are you getting the idea that we really like Rioja? This fresh Tempranillo from Cortijo is soft and fruity with a nice dry finish.

2012 Rueda (Las Brisas)

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

Rueda is the white house wine in hundreds of Madrileño Tapas bars. Las Brisas is a superb fresh Verdejo that is perfect for seafood.

