



The Wine and Cheese Cask

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March 15, 2016 – April 14, 2016 2014 Beaujolais and 2015 Rosé

Now is a great time to be fond of Beaujolais and its superb crus. The 2014 vintage has delivered wines of charming aroma and lively finishes. Meanwhile container ships laden with rosé are now crossing the Atlantic with a haul of terrific pink wine from the 2015 vintage. See below for a couple of absolute favorites at their usual affordable prices.

Simply Gamay-zing

2014 Beaujolais Villages ‘Les Vignes de Thulon’ (Jean-Marc Burgaud)

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

Jean-Marc Burgaud’s Beaujolais Villages is always a super value, but the 2014 takes things to a new and juicier level. Pure aromas of strawberries and raspberries along with fresh herbs lead to a crisp, ripe palate of fruit flavor. Serve lightly chilled with a roast chicken and a potato and gruyere gratin for absolute delight.



Blanc de Beaujolais

2014 Beaujolais Blanc (Terres Dorées/Jean-Paul Brun)

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

Jean-Paul Brun has long made a lovely Beaujolais Blanc and he credits this to the rare limestone soil in his Bas-Beaujolais region. Chardonnay and limestone are a magic combination up and down Burgundy, and the tariff can be steep, so at this price Jean-Paul produces a terrific bargain. The ripe apple fruit, scents of hay, and the ever-present earthiness are seamless and dry.

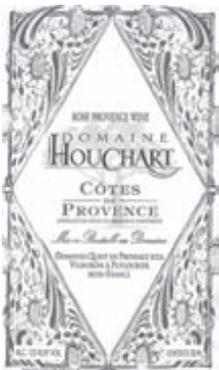


Provence

2015 Côtes de Provence Rose (Domaine Houchart)

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

Without Provence the rosé revolution would never have occurred. There was a time when uppity food writers would rave about the wines when consumed sur place and then conclude that they would not ‘travel well.’ Well, they do travel, and superbly, because producers like Houchart do everything possible to bring fresh, lively wine to many different markets. This 2015 is another excellent Houchart, with peachy fruit and a delightfully dry finish.



Ros de Pacs

2015 Penedès ‘Ros de Pacs’ (Parés Baltà)

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

When temperatures fell to below zero on Valentine’s Day we thought that the wine of romance would be a hearty red, but rosé was still very much in demand. So much so that we now gladly consider it a year-round wine. In Catalan Spain rosé is ros and the sisters-in-law winemakers Marta and Maria Elena make a deeply colored, spicy dry ros from organic Garnatxa, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon. A great bargain and wonderful with a spicy fish and rice dish.

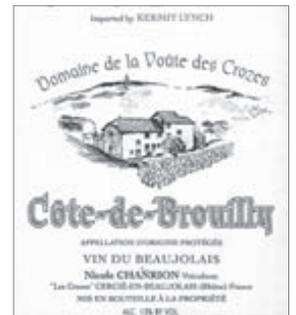


Côte-de-Brouilly

2014 Côte-de-Brouilly (Domaine de la Voute des Crozes/Nicole Chanrion)

Sale Price \$19.99 -- \$201.30 case of twelve

Let us first state that the Cru Beaujolais wines from Brouilly and those from the much smaller Côte de Brouilly are two very different wines. Brouilly produces pleasantly aromatic wines with easygoing charm. The Côte de Brouilly vines are on the hill of Mont Brouilly and produce deeper, darker wines with better concentration and real structure. The 2014 from Nicole Chanrion is as fine an example of wine made from Gamay as you will find. It is not obvious in any way, but delivers a complete picture of the grape, the vineyard, and the vintage with its balance of ripe fruit, earthy flavor, and brightly tannic finish. This is a great wine for salmon.



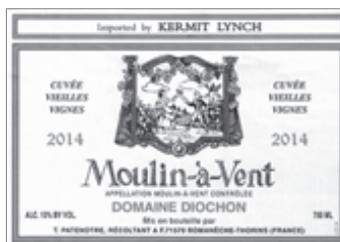
Moulin à Vent

2014 Moulin à Vent (Domaine Diochon)

Sale Price \$19.99 -- \$201.30 case of twelve

The Côte de Brouilly is a tough act to follow, but Domaine Diochon’s Moulin à Vent has a case to state.

With its raw beef aroma and strong but ripe tannins, this 2014 Cru shows a more powerful side of the Gamay grape, while still revealing its charm after some aeration. Have this with a seared skirt steak.



Muscadet

2012 Muscadet Sèvre et Maine ‘Clos des Allées’ (Luneau-Papin)

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

The Luneau-Papin family make wonderful hand-harvested old-vine Muscadet. Their 2012 Clos des Allées may seem old for a Muscadet, but they have proven that their wines age well. This is pristinely crisp and dry with a lovely impression of minerals and orange rind, and a minty herbal finish. A fabulous wine for broiled haddock and wilted spinach.



Blaye



2010 Blaye-Côtes de Bordeaux (Chateau Roland la Garde)

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

The 2010 Bordeaux vintage keeps giving and giving. From the Côtes de Blaye comes Chateau Roland la Garde's excellent Merlot-based earthy dry red. This is packed with rich, plummy fruit, ripe tannins, and a long, layered finish. Have this with a strip steak and garlicky

mashed potatoes.

Valpolicella

2013 Valpolicella Classico Superiore ‘Rafaël’ (Tommasi)

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

Today most Valpolicella are soft, supple young wines that go from stainless steel vats directly into bottle and into the marketplace. This modern formula yields fresh, fruity reds that charm wine drinkers the world over. The Tommasi family adheres to an older order. This, their basic Valpolicella, is anything but basic. First the Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara grapes come from the Classico Superiore zone, the heart of the Valpolicella denominazione. Second, they age the wine for 15 months in large barrels of old Slavonian oak. This yields a deeper, spicier red that opens up as it breathes, with each glass better than the previous one.



Chasing the Solera

Fino ‘Inocente’ (Valdespino)

Sale Price \$19.99 per 750ml

Amontillado ‘Tio Diego’ (Valdespino)

Sale Price \$19.99 per 750ml

Palo Cortado ‘C.P.’ (Valdespino)

Sale Price \$39.99 per 750ml

Palo Cortado ‘Cardenal’ (Valdespino)

Sale Price \$150.00 Per 375ml

Even if the wines weren't great the Valdespino story would be fascinating. The family was growing grapes as far back as 1264 and producing wine in 1430. In the 1880s they were at the top of the Sherry world for their Fino 'Inocente,' which has always come from the Macharnudo Alto vineyard. As do these four wines. The Macharnudo Alto is almost pure albariza, a snow white chalky soil that is considered the best in Jerez. Inocente and Tio Diego are the last two wines in Jerez to be fermented in cask. Inocente spends ten years in cask under a veil of yeast called flor which keeps the wine fresh and



adds depth. Casks of Tio Diego spend twelve years under the veil of flor before they undergo six more years of oxidative aging after the flor subsides. These are both amazing examples of Fino and Amontillado sherry that have been kept alive by the aging, blending, and

refreshing of the many barrels in their parallel Solera systems. When barrels of Tio Diego head off into a deeper dimension and become Palo Cortado they become a separate Solera called Calle Ponce or C.P. for the street where the old bodega was located. This rarely commercialized, intensely dry wine is bottled at around twenty-five years of age. The end of the Macharnudo Alto Solera of Sherries is the Very Old Rare Sherry (VORS) Palo Cortado Cardenal, which is culled from the C.P. Solera, and contains just six barrels. This mind-blowing, profoundly deep and totally dry sherry is bottled at over sixty years of age and is one of the greatest wines one could ever taste. So what does one do with such intriguingly delicious wines? Have some chilled Inocente with Marcona almonds to start. Try the Tio Diego with a seafood soup or some cheeses. The Palo Cortados are best just by themselves, to experience one of the wine world's longest, most delicious histories.

Orvieto

2014 Orvieto Classico ‘Vignarco’ (Palazzone)

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

We ran out of our white wine of the month early in last newsletter period and substituted the Vignarco Orvieto. It turned out to be such a great value that we decided to continue at the sale price. This is a crisp, dry straightforward white that matches well with simple fish dishes or with a risotto with spinach and artichokes.

Specialty Foods

Dolcetto

2014 Dolcetto d'Alba (Vajra)

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



Vajra's Langhe Rosso, one of our best-selling Piemontese wines, is made primarily from the Dolcetto grape. So when we tasted the 2014 Dolcetto d'Alba from Vajra we were understandably smitten. This is a beautifully crafted, purple-hued, softly tannic charmer. If you are a mushroom lover, this is the perfect wine. Its own

earthy flavors match extremely well with funghi and many other vegetarian fare.

Red Cap Pinot Noir

2014 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Montinore Estate)

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

We have always enjoyed Montinore's Pinot Noirs, but the 2014 may be our new favorite. It is worth noting that they are Biodynamic and organic farmers, that they ferment with naturally-occurring yeasts, and let the wine settle and age in barrel. The 2014 vintage in Oregon had ideal growing conditions with enough heat for ripeness and a cool dry fall for complexity. And Montinore nailed it with this wine's lovely cherry fruit, mellow tannins, and foresty, elegant finish. It is also worth noting that this wine has a civilized 13% alcohol which contributes to its overall grace. Perfect for salmon or a seared duck breast.



Mont Damnés

2014 Sancerre 'Les Monts Damnés' (Thomas-Labaille)

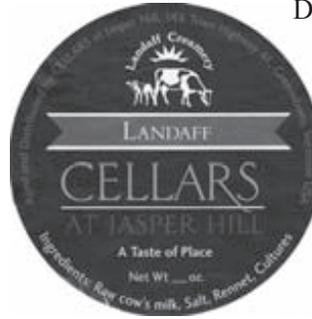
Sale Price \$21.99 -- \$224.30 case of twelve

The village of Chavignol rests at the base of Les Monts Damnés, an impressively steep vineyard in the appellation of Sancerre. To many this is a hallowed slope of Sauvignon Blanc vines, and the village has an impressive list of vignerons to prove it. Thomas-Labaille is a producer we buy in every vintage because the quality of their wine always

exceeds the price. In the 2014 vintage this ratio went way up. The nose is exotic with scents of quince and pineapple, the palate is classic Sancerre with a sublime earthy, mineral flavor, and the finish is electric with a reprise of the fascinating fruit. This Mont Damnés is damn fine.



Landaff \$16.99 per lb. (Regular price \$19.99)



Deb and Doug Erb of Landaff, NH came to cheese making as a way to revitalize their second-generation dairy-farm amidst declining milk prices. Landaff is a raw cow's milk farmstead cheese inspired by a traditional Welsh recipe. It has a natural rind and semi-firm paste with aromas of cave and grass and a mild flavor with a subtle tanginess. A versatile cheese, it pairs with a variety of accompaniments and melts very well. Aged at The Cellars at Jasper Hill Farm.

Cashel Blue \$14.99 per lb. (Regular price \$16.99)

A semi-soft and very creamy Irish farmhouse cheese developed in 1984 by Jane and Louis Grubb. Made with pasteurized cow's milks that yield a butter-yellow paste and marbled blue veining, it's rich and full in flavor but not strong; great with grilled steak or in a salad. We can't wait to try the simple grilled peaches with Cashel Blue recipe we found on the Kerrygold site!



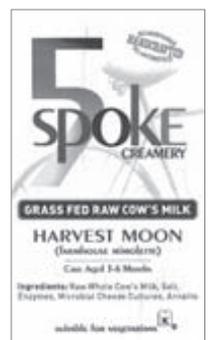
Douceur du Jura \$21.99 per lb. (Regular price \$23.99)



Douceur Du Jura is a pasteurized French cow's milk cheese in the style of the Alpine Reblochon but creamier and a little less pungent. A smaller format cheese with a lightly washed rind and soft gooey paste that oozes when ripe, it's just perfect to spread on a baguette.

Harvest Moon \$18.99 per lb. (Regular price \$21.99)

Harvest Moon was inspired by the 2013 FDA ban on the French cheese Mimolette. Made by 5 Spoke Creamery in Goshen, NY with French-sourced molds, Harvest Moon is a gorgeous homage with its distinctive small boulder shape, moonscape rind, and dark amber paste. Made with raw cow's milk, it's sharp with a hint of butterscotch sweetness that becomes more pronounced with age.



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Wines of the Month — March 15, 2016 through April 14, 2016

2014 Picpoul de Pinet (Félines-Jourdan)

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

Picpoul is Languedoc's best native white grape and its rise in popularity is due to its ability to be both full flavored and crisp. This white can stand up to hot spicy foods or complement a simple filet of sole.

2014 Campo de Borja 'Garnacha' (Borsao)

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

Borsao's Garnacha is once again a standout value with its ripe fruit and long smooth finish.

2014 Ventoux (Cristia)

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

Ventoux is turning out to be the greatest value red in the Rhone Valley. The 2014 Cristia is packed with peppery spice and subtle fruit, and the finish is firm and dry.

2013 Sangiovese (Di Majo Norante)

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

Di Majo Norante is a stellar winery in the little known province of Molise. Their ripe and rich Sangiovese is a full bodied, lively red that is perfect with red-sauced spicy foods.

