



CLUB ROUGE *by Anthony Lynch*

DECEMBER 2013

2012 LAMBRUSCO GRASPAROSSA DI CASTELVETRO “MONOVITIGNO” • FATTORIA MORETTO

Go to Emilia-Romagna and chances are you'll be served a large platter of locally produced *salumi* and cheeses. This is likely to be accompanied by another Emilian specialty, the ubiquitous, sparkling Lambrusco. In a region plagued by its reputation for high-yielding vines and phony sugary wines, it is a relief to still encounter producers crafting an authentic, old-fashioned, dry *frizzante*. In the hills overlooking the vast Po Valley, Fabio Altariva and his brother Fausto organically cultivate forty-plus-year-old Lambrusco Grasperossa vines for one of the few single-vineyard *Lambruschi* in existence. The duly named Monovitigno is packed with dense, earthy tannins and striking red fruit. This is a Lambrusco of *terroir*, meant to be enjoyed with food, with no pretense whatsoever.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2009 GIGONDAS “TERRASSE DU DIABLE” DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES

With the abundant Provençal sun, cleansing mistral, and scenery dominated by limestone outcroppings and aromatic *garrigue*, Gigondas has all the makings of a great wine district. With old vines planted at altitude at the base of the famous Dentelles de Montmirail, Les Pallières in particular represents an exceptional *terroir*. Having two experienced vignerons doesn't hurt, either. The Brunier brothers from nearby Vieux Télégraphe have all the know-how to coax the best out of Pallières' rustic *terroir*, producing elegant wines with the most natural methods possible, save a minute dose of sulfur at bottling. Terrasse du Diable, from Pallières' highest-elevation parcels, is a monumental blend of Grenache (90%), Mourvèdre, and Clairette. Give it some time in a decanter to bring out the best of the chewy, *garrigue*-soaked black fruit, but no need to rush: a 1959 opened recently was still kicking.

\$48.00 PER BOTTLE

\$518.40 PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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GRILLED STEAK WITH ANCHOVY CAPER BUTTER

by Christopher Lee

Flying over the green hills of the Irish countryside toward Dublin, I realized this is where grass-fed beef thrives naturally. The abundant grass gives the beef its quality and terroir. “Grass-fed” is nearly meaningless in Ireland, where grass feeding is simply what they do. Corn feeding is very limited because, well, they have neither the corn nor the climate to grow it.

Aging is one of the other important contributors to taste. The marbling of grass-fed beef is often low, so the carcass cannot sustain long aging. But in Ireland, the best grass-fed beef is aged twenty-eight days, sometimes longer. You rarely see this in the United States. Irish beef is some of the most delicious beef you’ve ever encountered. Its fat runs in delicate rivulets through the meat, in contrast to the web-like, almost smeared marbling you see in this country. Irish beef grills to a wonderful lusciousness.

Along the way I discovered the exceptional Dexter beef, a breed that seems to be all the rage in Ireland and the U.K. Though it’s originally an Irish breed, the English have claimed it as their own. Small of frame, long of horn, the cattle are suited to Ireland’s wet climate and rolling hills, and they thrive here.

Bob Cannard, the thoughtful farmer who raises vegetables for Chez Panisse, also raises Dexter beef in Sonoma County. We’ve roasted whole Dexter carcasses on spits constructed by Bob’s clever brother, Jack. Many meters of silver foil were involved, but the result was amazing, all 560 pounds. Fantastic! But don’t try this at home.

I like the tang and saltiness of anchovy butter with grilled steak. And it’s easy.

½ pound unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
2 small cloves garlic, pounded to smooth paste in mortar with a pinch of salt
10–12 anchovy fillets, salt- or oil-packed, pounded to paste in mortar

2 tablespoons salt-packed capers, rinsed and soaked for 30 minutes, lightly chopped
4 six-ounce aged steaks, New York strips or bone-in rib steaks
Olive oil
Sea salt
Thyme sprigs

Mix butter, garlic, anchovies, and capers in a small bowl to blend ingredients. Adjust seasoning. Rub steaks with olive oil, salt, and thyme sprigs. Grill over a hot fire or in a hot cast-iron pan to medium rare. Off the fire, rub steaks with some of the butter. Slice to order.

Serves 4