

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

APRIL 2018



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OYSTER BLISS XXI
A TOAST TO ANDRÉ CHATENAUD
INTRODUCING CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

OYSTER BLISS XXI

OYSTER BLISS IS BACK! After a seven-year hiatus, the most original of all Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant events has returned to our beloved 1605 San Pablo Avenue parking lot. The inaugural Oyster Bliss took place in December 1991—when eating raw oysters was a foreign and stunning idea to many, many customers. Kermit had to pull out all his creative writing stops in pitching that party to his clients:

Look at one fresh on the half shell. The mouthwatering beauty of it. The colors. How it glistens. Slide your finger upon its surface. What an incredibly sexy texture. Some consider it an aphrodisiac. Others remark upon the rush of energy and well-being it provokes. The French attack a platter with gusto. Americans mostly say yucko. NOT HERE!

You loyal customers took the leap with Kermit and became the devout ambassadors of raw oyster indulgence that you are today. For that, we thank you.

The big white tents will go up, music and smoke will waft through the air, Curt Clingman will grill sausages and shuck oysters, Bartavelle will pour our carefully selected wines, and Christopher Lee, Old-Fashioned Butcher, will hawk his handmade, pre-packaged raw sausages. On top of all that, André Chatenoud, vigneron from Château de Bellevue in Bordeaux, will be in attendance.

See you there!

Saturday, April 21 • 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Event presented by Curt Clingman and Bartavelle Coffee & Wine Bar



LOIRE REDS

by Emily Spillmann

“Never would a noble man detest a good wine.”

FRANÇOIS RABELAIS, RENAISSANCE WRITER (AND FACE OF JOGUET’S LABELS)

2014 CHINON “CLOS DE LA DIOTERIE” CHARLES JOGUET

Charles Joguet once mused that he had gotten a lot of experience *drinking* good wine while studying art in Paris, but that that was far from teaching him how to *make* good wine. On the long road of trial and error, he discovered a respect for patience over manipulation. “Finesse is the opposite of action,” he said in *La Revue du Vin de France*. “You have a *terroir*, a microclimate, and you do what you can with it.” Clos de la Dioterie is the essence of finesse: a harmony of ripe fruit aromas followed by silky spice on the palate; the freshness of a just-ripe blackberry and a trace of vanilla to soften the acidity. A wine that is easy to call pretty, in the most charming sense of the word.

\$59.00 PER BOTTLE

\$637.20 PER CASE

2015 BOURGUIL “NUITS D’IVRESSE” C. & P. BRETON

Ah, those good old *nuits d’ivresse*! Here’s to the memories of the evenings when a little too much was just right, you know? All the discoveries made, the friendships forged, thanks to that glass—or three—of peppery, slightly herbal, and nonetheless lip-smackingly juicy Cabernet Franc. Cheers to the classiest “drunken nights” you’ll ever taste, with a little help from the Bretons!

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE

\$388.80 PER CASE

2016 SAUMUR CHAMPIGNY “LES MÉMOIRES” THIERRY GERMAIN

The youngest of these three wines is the one that deserves to age the longest. While this cuvée pays tribute to the *mémoires* of the 110-year-old vines from which it was born, you can honor your bottle by “forgetting” it for some time. Better yet, invest in a couple bottles and open them periodically. A wine of this caliber—complex and packed with potential—is duly shy in its youth. The discreet balance, the soft hint of rose petal, the tang of bright fruit: all foreshadow a very interesting future.

\$65.00 PER BOTTLE

\$702.00 PER CASE

A TOAST TO ANDRÉ CHATENOUD

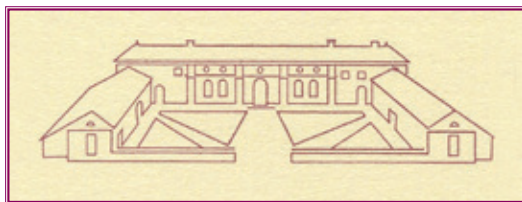
by Dixon Brooke

THIS MONTH I have the distinct pleasure of writing about two of my favorite French vigneron. I feel very fortunate that I will also be able to introduce you personally to André and his wife, Catherine, on Saturday, April 21, here in Berkeley at our Oyster Bliss celebration. André joins us to celebrate what has been a fabulous career at his Château de Bellevue in Lussac-Saint-Émilion, a small town sitting on a vast deposit of white limestone that is as legendary as any *terroir* in greater Saint-Émilion. André will retire in style on the heels of vinifying a *grand millésime*, vintage 2015, which will soon be on boats traveling to markets all across the country.

André does not have a successor, and the wines from his great *terroir* will never be the same under new, foreign ownership. This is all the more reason to celebrate what André accomplished during his mighty run by raising our glasses, brimming with one of his fine Merlots, and stocking our cellars with as many library wines as we can get our hands on. You can't put away too much of these beautiful liquid memories that will last decades. André is of Swiss origin and managed Bellevue with painstaking yet unpretentious precision. He was a gracious host and became legendary for the lunch he would prepare for our traveling clients at Bellevue every year: a house-made foie gras terrine served cold followed by local duck breasts grilled over vine cuttings. There is, of course, nothing better with a glass of his wine.

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FROM CHÂTEAU DE BELLEVUE

	PER BOTTLE	PER CASE
2014 SAUVIGNON GRIS	\$23.00	\$248.40
2011 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION	26.00	280.80
2011 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION (<i>magnum</i>)	56.00	302.40
2009 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION	27.00	291.60
1998 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION	30.00	324.00





André Chatenoud by his wife, Catherine



Anne Amalric of Domaine de Marquilliani samples Sciaccarellu grapes

© Gail Skoff

JUICY REDS

by Anthony Lynch

2016 VALTÈNESI “LA BOTTE PIENA” LA BASIA

I’m guessing nobody has heard of the Valtènesi appellation, and it’s probably not much help to say that this small DOC, situated on the western side of Lake Garda, is home to the Gropello grape. The variety can only be found in this little pocket of Lombardy, where it produces fun, easy-drinking reds laden with playful red fruit and peppery spice. To maximize the experience, a plate of fresh *pappardelle* with a porcini *ragù* is recommended but by no means mandatory. A slight chill, however, is certainly in order for this charming red, a delightful wine destined for early drinking—before noon, if you so please.



\$17.00 PER BOTTLE **\$183.60** PER CASE

2016 ÎLE DE BEAUTÉ ROUGE DOMAINE DE MARQUILIANI

After assuming the reins of the family olive farm and turning the modest acreage under vine into the source of Corsica’s most coveted rosé, Anne Amalric took on a new challenge. The 2016 vintage marks her second time producing red wine from the Sciaccarellu, Syrah, and Grenache planted around the old Marquiliani olive mill, sandwiched on the island’s east coast between towering granite peaks and the Mediterranean Sea. This gentle red matches the ethereal nature of Anne’s rosé: it is exactly what you crave when the first rays of spring peek through the clouds, when the time is right for a cool, medium-bodied, unpretentious *rouge*. With its tart brambleberry and hints of Corsican herbs, Anne’s is just the ticket.

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE **\$280.80** PER CASE



THE WIZARD OF MONTPEYROUX

by Dixon Brooke

VIGNERON SYLVAIN FADAT has been quietly creating masterpieces in this wild and beautiful corner of France's Languedoc region for the better part of three decades. His hometown of Montpeyrroux is located up in the mountains an hour from the coast, north of Montpellier, in an area referred to as the terraces of Larzac. A myriad of soil types, native *garrigue*, wild game, and fresh cooling breezes combine to create an ideal growing environment for the vine. The game sure does come in handy with the wines, too.

2015 LANGUEDOC BLANC "AUPILHAC"

This blend of Grenache Blanc, Ugni Blanc, Clairette, and Vermentino is planted in the *lieu-dit* of Aupilhac, the little corner of the Larzac behind Sylvain's winery on the lower limestone slopes of Mont Baudile. All of Sylvain's wines show a strong sense of place, as his organic viticulture and minimalist treatment in the cellar coax the essence of his land. It tastes as if bees had harvested the nectar and pollen of all the local flowers and herbs and brewed it into wine.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE

2014 MONT BAUDILE ROUGE "LE CARIGNAN"

Mont Baudile is the limestone massif that rises to the heavens and both dominates the skyline and regulates the climate in Montpeyrroux. On its southern slopes, Fadat maintains his vineyards for his historic and best-known red cuvées, his Montpeyrroux *rouge* and this Carignan; deposits of blue marl give these wines deep, dark color, full structure, and incredible longevity. Le Carignan is the pure varietal Carignan that Kermit originally fell for when he first visited the winery decades ago. He immediately recognized it as France's best Carignan, a crown that remains intact today. Sylvain's inaugural vintage, the 1991, still drinks beautifully.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE

\$388.80 PER CASE

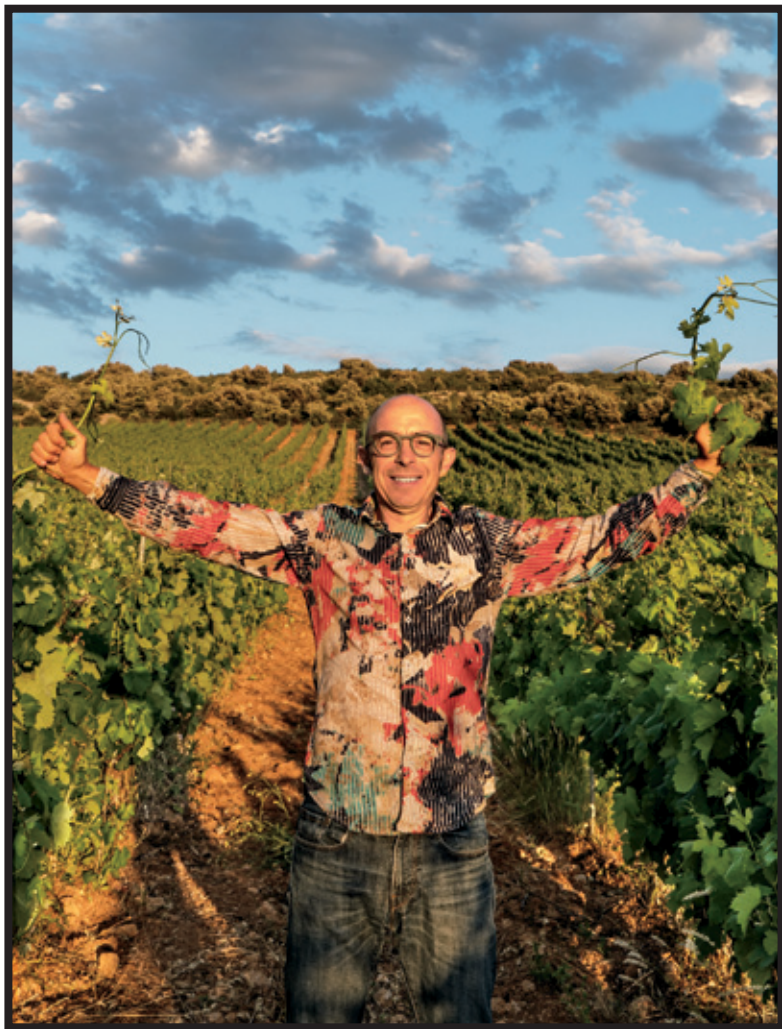
2015 LANGUEDOC MONTPEYROUX ROUGE "LES COCALIÈRES"

Sylvain long imagined developing a vineyard on the northern slope of Mont Baudile, which he ultimately accomplished over a decade ago and christened

“Les Cocalières.” This magical site—an amphitheater-shaped former volcano bed loaded with volcanic and limestone rocks and surrounded by wild thyme and olive trees—is planted to both white and red grapes for his two cuvées. The red brings a freshness and finesse that is markedly different from the wines from Aupilhac. I am still enjoying my bottles from the 2005 vintage, the vineyard’s first great year for red. You can always recognize it in Fadat’s lineup, thanks to a whisper of wild honey on the nose.

\$35.00 PER BOTTLE

\$378.00 PER CASE



Sylvain Fadat, king of Les Cocalières

© Gail Skoff

NEW FROM PROVENCE

INTRODUCING CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

by Anthony Lynch

THE PICTURESQUE STONE VILLAGE of Villars-sur-Var lies a thirty-minute drive north of Nice, in the heart of the Provençal pre-Alps. Perched high above the banks of the Var River and surrounded by massive limestone façades, the town is an oasis of vineyards amid dense woodland and craggy bluffs: Villars has a long tradition of winemaking, and many residents still vinify a barrel or two every year for home consumption.

Roch Sassi of Clos Saint-Joseph is the only grower to bottle any wine eked from these incredibly rocky slopes. His wines fall under the Côtes de Provence appellation, even though the much cooler *terroir* here has little relation to the rest of the AOC. Villars, in fact, represents a secluded island of Côtes de Provence that enjoys a unique microclimate, the dry Mediterranean heat buffered by cold air currents flowing down from the surrounding mountains. These conditions allow for full ripening at remarkably low alcohol levels, maintaining bright acidity and lively fruit in the wines.



A proud ambassador of Villars' winemaking history, Roch farms his five hectares organically and also has introduced biodynamic practices, such as the use of herbal preparations to boost the vines' immunity and ward off disease. Rigor in the vineyard means top-quality raw material and less need for intervention in the cellar: "I don't like working in the *cave*," Roch jokes. Accordingly, his wines are fermented naturally and bottled unfined with little or no filtration.

Thanks to this rare combination of an exceptional *terroir* with meticulous viticulture and tasteful, pragmatic winemaking, it was love at first sniff with the wines of Clos Saint-Joseph.

2016 CÔTES DE PROVENCE "BLANC DE BLANCS"

Upon first dipping my nose into a glass of this *blanc*, it became instantly clear that this is unlike any Provençal white I had ever encountered. A delicate aroma of flowers in bloom prefaces its textural fullness—a fleshy complement to the precision and stoniness conferred by this remote *terroir*. It leaves the palate with a mouthwatering salinity that is all too often lacking in southern whites. The blend features Rolle, Ugni Blanc, Sémillon, and Clairette, fermented and aged in a combination of *barriques*, *demi-muids*, and cement *cuves*.

\$48.00 PER BOTTLE

\$518.40 PER CASE

2015 CÔTES DE PROVENCE ROUGE

Syrah, Mourvèdre, Grenache, and Cabernet Sauvignon up to ninety years old make up this cuvée. The alcohol clocks in at a very reasonable 13%—how about that for a Provençal red? Gamey notes mingle with velveteen dark fruit, the whole showing elegance and restraint. A limestoney freshness ensures great balance whether you choose to uncork it now or in a decade.

\$48.00 PER BOTTLE

\$518.40 PER CASE

2015 CÔTES DE PROVENCE SYRAH

While the name of the domaine honors Roch's great-grandfather, it also brings to mind the great northern Rhône appellation Saint-Joseph. The association with fine cool-climate Syrah is not unwarranted: the grape shows a special affinity to the extreme environment of this less-traveled side of Provence, so much that Roch chose to spotlight it with a special cuvée. Thick, dense, chewy tannins frame this brawny red jam-packed with spice and savory goodness. It belongs in your cellar somewhere between the Bandols and the Hermitages.

\$67.00 PER BOTTLE

\$723.60 PER CASE



Roch Sassi and partner Constance Malengé amid vines planted in 1925

WHITE BURGUNDIES

by the Retail Staff

2016 PETIT CHABLIS ROLAND LAVANTUREUX

A delightful wine and an excellent value!

Petit Chablis is Chardonnay grown in Portlandian limestone (slightly different from the Kimmeridgian limestone in which Chablis grows), and the Lavantureux family raises it in stainless steel tanks after aging it five to ten months on the lees. Crisp, dry, and racy, it works swimmingly with oysters on the half shell, scallops, and white fish such as petrale sole or halibut.

The 2016 is Petit Chablis at its best, a perfect balance of weight and stoniness.

—*Michael Butler*

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2016 CHABLIS “LES TRUFFIÈRES” DOMAINE COSTAL

Les Truffières was the first Kermit Lynch wine I ever tasted, back at Cloverleaf Fine Wine in Royal Oak, Michigan, and it spurred my incredible journey into the world of wine. At the time, I was heavily into craft beer and could hardly discern a Chardonnay from a Sauvignon Blanc, let alone the subtle differences within a wine region. But in that moment, this Chablis taught me the importance of *terroir* and how wines must be true to their sense of place. As we watch many wines of the world trend toward uniformity, sterility, and safety, Les Truffières seems fearlessly authentic. While its steely minerality and focused acidity are expected in any good Chablis, the subtle hint of black truffle and the waxy texture clearly reveal this wine’s unique sense of place. —*Will Meinberg*

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

2015 SANTENAY BLANC 1ER CRU “LES GRAVIÈRES” • JEAN-MARC VINCENT

Sometimes, you can tell a lot about a domaine by how they spend money. Jean-Marc and Anne-Marie Vincent spend their precious euros on labor—skilled workers who harvest their fruit in multiple passes, bunch by bunch, to get each grape at the perfect moment of ripeness. That ain’t cheap. The Vincents can’t

command Meursault- or Puligny-level prices for their beautiful, stony Santenay *blanc* from the *premier cru* Gravières vineyard, but they make it with that level of quality anyway, and that tells me all I need to know. —*Dustin Soiseth*

\$65.00 PER BOTTLE

\$702.00 PER CASE

2015 PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU
“HAMEAU DE BLAGNY”
COMTESSE DE CHÉRISEY

The *premier cru* vineyard straddling the line between Meursault and Puligny-Montrachet in the tiny Hameau (or hamlet) of Blagny boasts a *terroir* that exhibits the ideal characteristics of both worlds. Warm days and cool nights on the steep, east-facing hillside create the interplay that produces a truly harmonious wine. Chérissey’s offering displays Meursault’s power and richness as well as Puligny’s chiseled flintiness and minerality. Silky-textured, laden with fresh spring acacia blossoms, sea and smoke, and a finish longer than some eighteenth-century novels, it is at once charming and vibrant, supple and velvety: the perfect balance. —*Jennifer Oakes*

\$100.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,080.00 PER CASE

2015 POUILLY-FUISSÉ
“LA CROIX VIEILLES VIGNES”
DOMAINE ROBERT-DENOGENT

Having lived for a year in the town of Mâcon, I am partial to wines from this lesser-known Burgundian region. Wines from the Mâconnais are often overlooked, and whenever I’m defending my uncouth preference, I turn to the wines of Domaine Robert-Denogent to argue my case—to highly pleasing results. Case in point: their Pouilly-Fuissé La Croix. From a vineyard of eighty-year-old vines on blue schist soil comes this complex and chiseled wine with a striking mineral backbone and lush, round body. Bright acidity from the soil, warm suppleness from the sun, and depth of flavor from the old vines—what more can you ask for? —*Maeve Decouvelaere*

\$49.00 PER BOTTLE

\$529.20 PER CASE





VALUES FROM GUIDO PORRO

by *Anthony Lynch*

2016 BARBERA D'ALBA "V. S. CATERINA"

Porro's Barbera straddles the line between an everyday pizza wine and a more substantial red that expresses nuance and can even improve with age. For a Wednesday night pasta dinner, it checks all the boxes: ripe berry fruit with cleansing acidity; richness contrasted by vivaciousness. However, if you have a cellar, don't hesitate to lay down a few bottles: in a balanced vintage like 2016, this wine has serious potential. The 2003, for example, still drinks superbly. After all, these Barbera vines sit in a privileged Barolo site, so there is no shortage of pedigree.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE

2016 LANGHE NEBBIOLO "CAMILU"

Don't be fooled: this is a simple Langhe Nebbiolo in name and in price, but there is much more to it. The grapes are sourced from parcels adjacent to two legendary Barolo *crus* in the commune of Serralunga d'Alba: Lazzarito and the fabled Vigna Rionda. Having tasted Porro's Baroli from these two sites, I infer that the Lazzarito portion provides this Nebbiolo with its surprising finesse, in the form of plush, toothsome fruit and a lovely perfume of dried flowers. The Vigna Rionda portion, conversely, supplies power and earthy grip. You'll find enough structure to take this *rosso* seriously, but not enough to keep you from gulping it down unabashedly.

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE

\$280.80 PER CASE

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM GUIDO PORRO

PER BOTTLE

2016 DOLCETTO D'ALBA "V. PARI"	\$20.00
2013 BAROLO "V. S. CATERINA"	48.00
2013 BAROLO "V. LAZZAIRASCO".	49.00
2012 BAROLO "V. S. CATERINA"	47.00
2012 BAROLO "V. LAZZAIRASCO".	47.00



A snowy day in Serralunga d'Alba

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1605 San Pablo Avenue at Cedar Street in Berkeley

Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant Oyster Bliss Motto

**DARE NOT SERVE ME ONE,
SERVE ME A DOZEN!**

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT—TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Title to all wines sold by Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant passes to the buyer in California, and the buyer is solely responsible for the shipment of wines. We make no representation as to the legal rights of anyone to ship or import wines into any state outside California. In all cases, the buyer is responsible for complying with the laws and regulations, in particular those relating to the importation of alcohol, in effect in the state to which the buyer is shipping alcohol. In placing an order, the customer represents to Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant that he/she is at least 21 years of age and the person to whom delivery will be made is at least 21 years old.