

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

APRIL 2015



April Fool's Caption Contest: See inside cover for details

KL SHOCKER: "STERILE FILTRATION A BLESSING"
101-POINT WINES ■ RAVENEAU SWITCHES TO BEER
BIG SELECTION OF UNNATURAL WINES

APRIL FOOL'S CAPTION CONTEST

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? YOU TELL US!

Submit your best caption for this month's cover photo at kermitylynch.com/caption by April 18. The winner will receive a free print of a Gail Skoff wine photo, and his or her name and caption will appear in next month's newsletter.

To view Gail's work, check out her site at www.gailskoff.com.

— SPECIAL TASTING EVENT —

DANIEL BRUNIER OF VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE AND ANGÉLINE TEMPLIER OF J. LASSALLE

Please join us Thursday, April 30, for a special tasting featuring two of our most beloved producers, Daniel Brunier of Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe and Angéline Templier of Champagne J. Lassalle. The tasting will feature wines from Champagne, Gigondas, and Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

We'll be closing off our parking lot to allow for a more intimate tasting experience with limited seating but plenty of room to move around. In the event of rain, the tasting will move inside to Bartavelle Coffee & Wine Bar with more limited seating.

Thursday, April 30, 5:00–7:00 PM

\$35

Flight of 9 wines

Including hors d'oeuvres by Bartavelle

All tasting wines will be 15% off in our shop during the tasting

Event presented by Bartavelle Coffee & Wine Bar

101-POINT SAMPLER

by Anthony Lynch

This month's sampler contains six wines that received a perfect score—or better. Our panel of experts sampled each wine on separate occasions, at his or her desired pace, with appropriately selected food, and in good company. The wines were rated with total respect to the context in which they were tasted. The judges came to the conclusion that these six wines, when imbibed with consideration for the style of wine and region of origin, represent the best of their respective class. All wines therefore received a rating of at least one hundred points.

PERHAPS YOU TOO will award these wines outstanding scores when you consider their originality, individuality, and integrity to the style each represents. They are maybe not the six best wines ever, but they are honest translations of their *terroir*, grape, and grower. They excel within their respective class rather than trying to overwhelm all with power or flashiness. Ostertag's old-vine Sylvaner, for example, does not have the complexity and grandeur of a mature *grand cru* Burgundy, but it truly shines when matched with a variety of diverse cuisines, and you will be hard-pressed to find a better Sylvaner. Tempier's Bandol lacks the polish of many of today's highest-rated reds, yet we appreciate it precisely for its rusticity and untamed soulfulness. Any of these six can be one-hundred-point wines—find the cuisine, mood, and company that bring out the best of each and you are assured a genuinely fulfilling experience.

PER BOTTLE

2013 MÜLLER THURGAU “SASS RIGAIS” • MANNI NÖSSING . . .	\$30.00
2013 LES VIEILLES VIGNES DE SYLVANER	
DOMAINE OSTERTAG	25.00
2013 PATRIMONIO BLANC • YVES LECCIA	38.00
2012 VACQUEYRAS “CUVÉE AZALAÏS”	
DOMAINE LE SANG DES CAILLOUX	34.00
2012 BANDOL ROUGE • DOMAINE TEMPIER	46.00
2011 CHINON “LES VARENNES DU GRAND CLOS”	
CHARLES JOGUET	37.00

Normally \$210.00

SPECIAL SAMPLER PRICE

\$168

(a 20% discount)

FRANCE AND ITALY

by Dixon Brooke

2011 SAINT JOSEPH BLANC DOMAINE FAURY

When you think of the great Saint Joseph appellation, don't forget to think of white as well as red. Though much less of the former is produced, it is one of France's most unique, versatile, and delicious white wines. Made predominantly from Roussanne and Marsanne grown on granite hillsides above the Rhône, the best examples are dry yet ample, with an unctuous texture and hints of honeysuckle and pit fruits like apricot and peach. Lionel Faury's interpretation is distinguished by its elegance, class, balance, and stylishness, a lot of adjectives you might not think to employ for this humble country wine. With a few years of bottle age on it, it is polished and ready to give maximum satisfaction, as an apéritif, with assorted appetizers, or with fish or fowl.



\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

2001 BAROLO BUSSIA "VIGNE VECCHIE" ALESSANDRO E GIAN NATALE FANTINO

How often can you find a Barolo with almost fifteen years of age for a price like this? That is a rhetorical question. From the Fantinos' oldest vines in Monforte d'Alba's storied Bussia *cru*, the raw material here is second to none. All of the secondary flavors you'd expect from a Barolo with this kind of maturity are starting to emerge: earth, wood smoke, tar, leather, tobacco, truffles, dried flowers, citrus peel . . . It's time to get creative in the kitchen and let this bottle breathe while it awaits a rustic slow-cooked main course.



\$55.00 PER BOTTLE

\$594.00 PER CASE

CATHERINE & PIERRE BRETON

by Clark Z. Terry

ON A STUNNING Saturday afternoon in late February of this year, we had the pleasure of hosting Catherine Breton and her daughter France for a small tasting at the café next to our shop. Even after a long week of working the California market and holding five public tastings over six days, Catherine was *en forme*—energetic and enthusiastic about presenting her wines.

Below we offer three wines from Catherine and her husband, Pierre. Each comes from Bourgueil and is made from Cabernet Franc. These obvious similarities illuminate the not so subtle differences between them, making it worth your while to try them all.

2013 BOURGUEIL “FRANC DE PIED”

Much credence is given to wines bearing the name *vieilles vignes*, “old vines,” or, in Italian, *vigne vecchie*. But what about young vines? Do they not have merit? What makes the Franc de Pied most delicious is its youthfulness (twelve-year-old vines!). Serve it with a slight chill, and you’ll have a satisfyingly fresh red with medium fruit and a light dusting of herbs and tannin.

\$33.00 PER BOTTLE \$356.40 PER CASE

2012 BOURGUEIL “LES GALICHETS”

A meal cooked at home—that’s what this wine merits. My pairing was a roasted whole chicken, raw kale salad from the garden, and garlicky mashed potatoes. The tannins are soft, the fruit is concentrated but balanced, and there’s enough structure to age but plenty of pleasure now.

\$29.00 PER BOTTLE \$313.20 PER CASE

2010 BOURGUEIL “LES PERRIÈRES”

It might sound odd to say, but collectors are the most value-conscious buyers out there. They may buy a lot, but they know that values exist at any price.

For those of you with cellars, the Bretons’ Perrières is, hands down, one of the greatest wines being made in the Loire. What is remarkable about the Perrières is that it has such firm structure, fine tannins, and deep concentration of fruit without being overpowering or heavy. It does not blast your palate with its omnipresence. The Perrières is refined and delicate, but reserved when young—five to ten years from now it will blossom. Whether you have a small wine fridge or an underground stone cellar: if you collect, here’s more for your money.

\$43.00 PER BOTTLE \$464.40 PER CASE

ALBERT BOXLER

NOT JUST RIESLING

by Anthony Lynch

2012 MUSCAT

Dry Muscat, from one of Alsace's most historic estates. Akin to riding a unicorn through a rainbow in an enchanted field of blossoming wildflowers. Like biting into all the juiciest fruits in the world—at once. And then that clean, mouth-watering, dry finish . . . This is not just Muscat, it is Boxler's Muscat *sec*. Give it a try.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

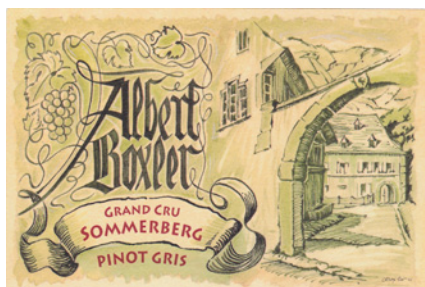
2011 PINOT GRIS GRAND CRU SOMMERBERG “WIPTAL”

Embrace, do not fear, the slight sweetness in this honeyed, fragrant Pinot Gris. Play up its voluptuous texture by matching it with something equally rich and unctuous. Pork belly, creamy cheeses, and newly legal foie gras come to mind.

You could also appreciate its glorious lusciousness and grandeur unaccompanied—it makes a marvelous apéritif, a sensuous nectar that exudes pure class. Its elegant golden fruit is perfectly balanced by the sensation of slick wet stone.

\$75.00 PER BOTTLE

\$810.00 PER CASE



2012 PINOT NOIR “S”

Pinot Noir is not recognized as one of Alsace's “noble” grapes, and thus it cannot be awarded *grand cru* status. This Pinot Noir, however, is grown on the steep granite hillside of the *grand cru* Sommerberg, right alongside Boxler's “noble” Riesling and Pinot Gris plantings. It also receives *grand cru* treatment in the cellar, aging for eighteen months in used barrels, as they would do in Burgundy. With a gorgeous bouquet of spiced dark forest fruit and a deep, concentrated flavor expressed with velvety elegance, this is Alsace's unofficial *grand cru* Pinot Noir.

\$60.00 PER BOTTLE

\$648.00 PER CASE

VALLE D'AOSTA

THE INTRIGUING REDS OF CHÂTEAU FEUILLET

by Dixon Brooke

2013 VALLE D'AOSTA "FUMIN"

Maurizio Fiorano is always hard at work every time I visit his tiny cellars in the town of Saint-Pierre, just east of Courmayeur after you traverse the Monte Bianco tunnel coming from France. He is a perfectionist in all aspects of his profession, and it shows in his precise, invigorating mountain wines. This red, produced from the native Fumin grape, has the smoky hints you would expect from a grape with this name. It is Maurizio's most full-bodied red, but the 2013 is particularly elegant, thanks to a cooler-than-usual growing season. The flavors and aromas are uniquely Valdostana, this proud region of stunning peaks that shares French and Italian cultural heritage. I encourage you to buy a few bottles and discover what I mean—you won't regret it.

\$35.00 PER BOTTLE

\$378.00 PER CASE

2013 VALLE D'AOSTA "TORRETTE SUPÉRIEUR"



Maurizio makes two wines from the sub-zone of Torrette, in the northwestern Valle d'Aosta. This small area encompasses wines made predominantly from the native Petit Rouge grape. His regular Torrette is aged in stainless steel and is fresh, bright, and relatively light-bodied. This Torrette Supérieur is aged in wood and the grapes are dried briefly before pressing, giving the wine more color, structure, and concentration. A captivating example of a pure Petit Rouge, it showcases its regional authenticity with great clarity. Harvested in late October from steep granite terraces, it has a bold delivery yet treads lightly. Intriguing sweet spices interspersed with forest berries and a granite

crunch like you'd expect from a good Côte de Brouilly all come together to offer a mouthwatering and singular experience.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

— PRE-ARRIVAL OFFER —

2013 DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES

by Daniel Brunier

THIS IS A VINTAGE we should celebrate at KLWM and VT: exactly fifteen years ago, our two families began a collaboration to give new life to this historic domaine in Gigondas—“a splendid garden of vines resting against the foothills of the Dentelles de Montmirail,” as a devotee of the site once described it.

And the garden is becoming more worthy of lovers of real wines, wines that deeply express their *terroir*. Perhaps by fate, the 2013 vintage has all the same characteristics as the wines produced in the early 1980s, a period that accompanied the first steps of the friendship that today links Lynch to Brunier and Brunier to Lynch.

The wines are tight, fresh, alive, slightly austere, and savory, possessing beautiful drinkability. It's as if chance put us face-to-face with our very own tastes, our first loves, to celebrate this fifteenth anniversary. We like wines with grip and strong personality, fragrant of *garrigue* and stones; wines that offer something to chew on as well as to drink. Don't we say, “Everything happens for a reason”?



The 2013 Terrasse du Diable has a beautiful intense ruby color. The nose reminds us of northern wines—black cherry, not too opulent, but dense. It is tight on the palate; there is no southern heaviness—it is mineral and slightly austere but with a great freshness. The finish is reminiscent of *réglisse* and anise (rare for red wines); it is saline and clean, with firm tannins—a great cellar-worthy wine.

The 2013 Racines has a more ample nose; it is spicy, with *garrigue*, thyme, and rosemary notes—in short, a Provençal nose. The palate is a blend of clove and red berries; it is unctuous and deep. More approachable now than Terrasse du Diable, it has a good tannic structure that suggests great potential for the cellar.

PER CASE

2013 GIGONDAS “TERRASSE DU DIABLE”	\$480.00
2013 GIGONDAS “LES RACINES”	480.00

*Pre-arrival terms: Half-payment due with order;
balance due upon arrival.*



Daniel Brunier

© Gail Skoff

CHABLIS, MILLÉSIME 2013

by Anthony Lynch

2013 CHABLIS • ROLAND LAVANTUREUX

The generous fruit here—apple, pear, peach, lemon, lime zest—is reflective of the vintage, which saw a heat spike late in the season that gave the vines an extra boost before harvest. The excellent ripeness provides this Chardonnay with round edges and ample flavor to accompany the characteristic Lavantureux *snap*. In case there is any doubt, its crisp finish of tangy minerals is a reminder that we are still dealing with top-class Chablis.



\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

2013 CHABLIS “LES TRUFFIÈRES” DOMAINE COSTAL

Here is a single-vineyard bottling that easily shows *premier cru* pedigree thanks to its unusual depth and complexity. You may detect a hint of black truffle in the aroma, which has become a trademark of this *terroir* over the years. You might also find a mouth-filling, creamy texture upheld by lively acidity and that Chablis *typicité* that leaves your palate tingling fresh after each sip. Don't miss out on one of the best wines of the vintage, and one of the better values of the appellation.



\$30.00 PER BOTTLE

\$324.00 PER CASE

BORDEAUX

by Chris Santini

2013 ATLANTIQUE BLANC “DÉFINITION” DOMAINE DE L’ALLIANCE

A couple years ago Daniel Alibrand told me how he once threatened to smash a bottle of his wine over a retailer’s head who refused to give it a try. “That way,” he told me, “he’d be sure to have a taste!” Daniel is a peaceful guy, but times were tough back then. Nobody wanted to hear about Bordeaux, especially an estate based in Sauternes. It was just not hip enough for the too-cool-for-school crowd. As a result, the bank threatened to take the Alibrands’ land and house, all while their first child was due any day. Desperate times called for desperate measures, and Daniel began insisting—short of breaking bottles on anyone—that people just try it and see. That’s all it took. To try Alliance is to drink Alliance. Whether his sweet Sauternes or this bone-dry, unusual, and inviting *blanc*, his wines are nothing short of addictive. Once people gave it a whirl, they all came back for more, and the rest is history.

\$42.00 PER BOTTLE

\$453.60 PER CASE

2011 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION “LES GRIOTTES” CHÂTEAU DE BELLEVUE

Ever feel like you need a little bit of Bordeaux “Lite”? You want some of that unique Bordeaux *terroir*, some of the spice and some of that Merlot fruit, but you really don’t need any austere tannin, or any woodiness or big alcohol? This one’s for you. Easy-drinking with a sour-cherry touch—with a mere 12.5% alcohol, to boot—this one truly tastes great, and just may be less filling, too.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE

2005 FRONSAC • CHÂTEAU HAUT LARIVEAU

“Wild” isn’t a word frequently associated with Bordeaux, so here is a rare exception. All natural yeasts, the slightest dollop of sulfur, no filtration or fining, and (of course) organic farming make this a bit of a flamboyant bird in an otherwise composed and sober red Bordeaux landscape. A fun library release straight from the estate that is ready to drink tonight.

\$37.00 PER BOTTLE

\$399.60 PER CASE

SOUTHERN FRENCH REDS

by *Dustin Soiseth*

AS A WINE LOVER, I find that my affections are always being pulled in different directions. Often I gravitate toward graphite-laced Loire Cabernet Francs or chiseled Alsatian Rieslings, but lately the warm, sunny reds of southern France are drawing me in with a tractor beam–like intensity.

2013 CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE “L’O DE JONCIER” DOMAINE DU JONCIER

Early harvesting and a quick fermentation help keep this biodynamic red light on its feet. It is full of fruit but still manages to refresh—an ideal combination for extended patio enjoyment.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE **\$172.80** PER CASE

2011 CÔTES DU VIVARAIS A. GALLETY

We usually consider the southern and northern Rhône valleys to be discrete entities, with Grenache dominating at one end and Syrah at the other. In the area where north and south meet, though, the Côtes du Vivarais, the distinction isn’t so clear-cut. Take Alain Gallety’s brooding red that, like a vinous Janus, looks both north and south. Here Syrah and Grenache are equal partners. The deep fruit and savory elements of the former join with the freshness and *réglisse* of the latter to make a compelling case for this hilly viticultural borderland.

\$29.00 PER BOTTLE **\$313.20** PER CASE

2010 BANDOL ROUGE DOMAINE DE TERREBRUNE

Reynald Delille’s *Bandol rouge* is a different animal than most—more finesse than raw power. The domaine’s vineyards obviously play a part, being situated on limestone bedrock and cooled by Mediterranean breezes, as does a strict organic regimen. His wine really starts to shine after a few years in bottle when the earthy, savory, mineral elements start to peek through the youthful fruit, and we’re already seeing that with the 2010 vintage.

\$38.00 PER BOTTLE **\$410.40** PER CASE

ANTOINE ARENA

NEW ARRIVALS

by Anthony Lynch

CORSICAN WINEMAKING has come a long way in recent years, and it would be foolish to deny Antoine Arena's role in its transformation. Having taken over the family domaine as much out of national pride as out of passion for the land, Antoine pioneered a new school of viticulture on the island—one that focused on *terroir* and rejected the industrial, chemical approach that had become the norm by the 1980s. His pioneering attitude led him to create a number of striking single-vineyard wines from indigenous grape varieties, setting the bar for quality and kicking off a resurgence of artisanal production by contemporary Corsican vigneron, now in full swing.

The offerings below are 100% Niellucciu from Patrimonio's clay and limestone, grown organically and bottled unfiltered, unfiltered, and with minimal added sulfur. The wines are young and greatly benefit from aeration—we suggest decanting them for at least a couple of hours to better appreciate these most natural, transparent expressions of Patrimonio's *terroir*.



2012 PATRIMONIO ROUGE “MORTA MAIO”

“The eldest myrtle,” a young-vine bottling from a plot of land the Arena family has worked for more than four hundred years, refers to the wild bush that makes up a large part of Patrimonio's wild scrubland, or maquis. A somber, earthy aroma opens up to rustic red berry fruit and suggestions of the very same maquis. Medium-bodied with hints of spice and game, it demands thick slices of country charcuterie.

\$45.00 PER BOTTLE

\$486.00 PER CASE

2012 PATRIMONIO ROUGE “CARCO”

Carco is Arena's flagship parcel, a well-exposed slope two miles from the sea that Antoine had to manually clear of massive white limestone boulders. These stones have left their mark: it tastes as though a dusting of pulverized rock coats the chewy black fruit. Slightly austere and deeply mineral, it has a freshness and tannic backbone that will allow for a thrilling evolution over the years.

\$45.00 PER BOTTLE

\$486.00 PER CASE

NEW WINES FROM OLD FRIENDS, OLD VINES FROM NEW FRIENDS

by Julia Issleib

2014 CABRIÈRES ROSÉ “PREMICES” CHÂTEAU DES DEUX ROCS

In the case of certain properties we work with, the role of the winemaker is so central that we refer to them by the winemaker's name rather than the domaine name. For instance, Château Saint Martin de la Garrigue would only be called “Zabalia” in KLWM offices. It's not surprising that when Jean-Claude Zabalia left that property and started his own, Château des Deux Rocs, we soon followed. Here's his newest release, the 2014 Cabrières Rosé—a rosé of character, with fleshy red fruit and floral aromas. Its intense fruit and tannic backbone will make it the perfect match for spicy Mexican or Thai food.

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE **\$161.46** PER CASE

2013 COLLIOURE ROUGE “LA PINÈDE” DOMAINE LA TOUR VIEILLE

If you can't make it to the south of France this year, here's a way to bring the Mediterranean sun to you. A smell of this wine will conjure visions of deep blue sea and dark green *garrigue*, and you will have the impression that the warm autumnal afternoon sun is shining on your skin.

The elements have given plenty of power to this dark chocolaty beauty but also delicate hints of violets and stone fruit. Its concentration will complement a roast well, served alongside potatoes with rosemary.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE **\$270.00** PER CASE

2013 CÔTES CATALANES ROUGE “ROC” DOMAINE VINCI

Our collaboration with this domaine is only two years old, a whopping seventy-eight years younger than the Carignan vines that account for 70% of this lip-smacking blend (the remaining 30% is Mourvèdre). Thanks to the vine age and the vineyard's high elevation, the wine is quaffable and juicy, at a mere 12.5% alcohol. At the same time, it showcases its southern soul through dark, ripe fruit, licorice, rosemary, and thyme. Enjoy it with red meat, simply grilled.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE **\$270.00** PER CASE



SPOTLIGHT ON SESTI

by Anthony Lynch

2012 ROSSO DI MONTALCINO • SESTI

There are many reasons to love the Sesti estate, in scenic southern Tuscany: the divine sights and scents of the hilltop grounds, the family's open-armed warmth and generosity, the majestic complexity of their noble Brunello bottlings . . .

This Rosso di Montalcino, however, seems to capture a bit of everything that makes the place special. It is a pure Sangiovese exuding the essence of the Tuscan countryside, with a bright, refreshing aroma of cherry, herbs, and traces of dusty earth. Offering more than a glimpse into the Brunello's power and splendor at significantly lower cost, it is fully expressive today with the potential to evolve further. Few wines are better suited to tomato-based dishes, wild mushrooms, grilled vegetables, or a hearty *ragù* over fresh egg noodles. The sustainable production method—attentive respect for the environment every step of the process—is just the cherry on top.

\$39.00 PER BOTTLE

\$421.20 PER CASE

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.

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KLWM'S FIRST FRUITBOMB

by Anthony Lynch

2014 CORBIÈRES ROSÉ
"GRIS DE GRIS"

DOMAINE DE FONTSAINTE

Fruitbomb in the sense that each sip delivers an explosion of delicious fresh fruit! That's right, folks. Our favorite, most affordable rosé is back, and the 2014 edition is as mind-bogglingly quaffable as ever. Tangerine, nectarine, grapefruit, wild strawberries, and more feature in this most crisp and thirst-quenching of libations. Once you've had a few sips and experienced the dry, focused, lingering finish, a mere glimpse at its heavenly color will have you drooling like Pavlov's hound. And I can guarantee that after a few glasses of the delectable 2014 Gris de Gris, you'll be in classical condition.

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE

\$161.46 PER CASE