

ADVENTURES CLUB

by Anthony Lynch • JANUARY 2015

2013 KERNER • MANNI NÖSSING

The Kerner grape is the result of a cross between Riesling and Schiava by a German breeder in 1929. While Kerner has enjoyed significant popularity in Germany—it was once the third-most-planted variety—it also has a foothold in Italy's Alto Adige, with approximately 60 hectares in cultivation. Kerner's resistance to cold is crucial in this mountain habitat, where winter temperatures can drop far below freezing, while its tendency to bud late is equally important in avoiding harmful spring frosts. It seems perfectly adapted to the high-altitude slopes of the Valle Isarco: in this white wine district just south of the Austrian border, Kerner vineyards such as Manni Nössing's reach 700 meters in elevation, giving wines with racy acidity and an exotic fragrance. With the 2013 vintage, Manni's Kerner exhibits a complex aroma of tropical fruit, striking the palate with significant weight and penetrating minerality. This elegant, vibrant white is not to be taken lightly.



\$30.00 PER BOTTLE **\$324.00** PER CASE

2013 BEAUJOLAIS • DOMAINE DUPEUBLE

Given that Domaine Dupeuble was founded in 1512, the twenty-five years we have been importing their Beaujolais to the United States seem almost insignificant. Yet they are a testament to the quality and consistency that the Dupeuble family has achieved in their wines, with vintage after vintage reflecting the easygoing spirit of the region and the hard work of these dedicated vigneron. While it is a relatively large operation—the Dupeubles farm 47 hectares—the domaine has been family-run since its inception and has stuck to the traditional methods of Beaujolais in the face of industrialization and commercial trends. In other words, they are careful to farm sustainably, limit yields, harvest by hand, and ferment with indigenous yeasts using carbonic maceration. The 2013 Dupeuble Beaujolais is true to its school, deliciously quaffable yet well worth taking a moment to appreciate its tantalizing aroma dominated by fresh flowers and perfectly ripe red fruits.

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

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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SOUPE À L'OIGNON GRATINÉE

by Christopher Lee

Few dishes are more Beaujolais-friendly than French onion soup, which is one of my favorite dishes, perfect in cold weather for lunch, dinner, or at midnight. It makes a wonderful meal accompanied by butter lettuce salad with mustardy dressing, sprinkled with chopped chives. Be sure to brown the onions for the soup carefully, and make a good beef stock. If you happen to have duck fat lying about, sauté the onions in that instead of butter and oil. Life will never be the same.

2 pounds yellow onions, thinly sliced	3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons unsalted butter	2 quarts beef stock
1 tablespoon grape seed oil	1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon sugar	Sea salt

Melt butter with grape seed oil in a heavy-bottomed pan. Add sliced onions and stir to coat. Cook over moderate heat for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until onions are translucent and soft. Sprinkle with sugar. Lower heat and cook for 30 minutes. As crust forms on bottom of pan, scrape crust back into onions with a wooden spoon. Repeat each time a crust forms. Continue until onions are an even, deep golden brown. Do not turn up the heat. Take care with this step and go slowly so onions don't burn. When browned, sprinkle onions with flour and cook for two minutes, stirring continuously. Pour two cups of beef stock into onions and stir well to absorb flour. Add remaining broth, bay leaf, and simmer gently for 20 minutes. Remove bay leaf. Adjust seasoning with sea salt.

Assembling the soup:

Warm onion soup	4 ounces grated Gruyère or Cantal cheese plus 2 ounces grated Parmigiano
1 onion, peeled, cut in half	2 ounces unsalted butter
4 teaspoons Armagnac	8–10 thin slices of Gruyère or Cantal cheese
½ cup young Beaujolais	8 ceramic soup bowls or terrines
8–10 pieces country-style bread, cut 1 inch thick, crust trimmed, lightly toasted	

Ladle soup into bowls to ¾ full. Grate a tablespoon of onion into each bowl. Add ½ teaspoon Armagnac and 1 tablespoon red wine. Cut toasted bread to fit bowl and place on top. Sprinkle grated cheese on bread and dot with butter. Lay slices of Gruyère over top to form a cap covering soup. Bake in 425°F oven for 18–20 minutes until cheese forms gratinéed crust. Serve on napkin-lined plates.

Serves 8

Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo in Berkeley and co-founder of the Pop-Up General Store in Oakland, California. Read his blog at <http://oldfashionedbutcher.blogspot.com>.