

# CHEVALIER

THE ART OF THE CASSE-CROÛTE



JANUARY 2026



## THE ART OF THE CASSE-CROÛTE

A decade ago, I eagerly accepted an opportunity to work a harvest in France. I was living in Burgundy at the time, working at our office in Beaune, and I wanted some hands-on experience in the vineyards. I romanticized the work, anticipating world-class views, tasty fruit, and leisurely time outdoors. An hour into snipping ripe bunches of Pinot at dawn, reality sank in: this Burgundian rite of passage was not for the ill-prepared! The work was physical and repetitious, requiring a certain strength of both body and mind. As the labor continued, my appetite grew, and by mid-morning, it was time to refuel. We broke for a very welcome *casse-croûte*.

A traditional *casse-croûte* is a hearty snack that's enjoyed in place of a more formal French lunch. It has similar components no matter the region, typically featuring local charcuterie, cheese, and baguettes. In Burgundy, we set down our pruning shears to enjoy wheels of soft *citeaux*, *comté*, bricks of salted butter, *jambon persillé*, terrines, quiches, sliced ham, cornichons, lentil salad, *moutarde de Dijon*, gougères, and a variety of *saucisson sec*: foods of

substance that stick to your ribs, so to speak. Eating like this before noon feels uniquely French, especially when the food is washed down with wine! But after such a physical morning, a spread like that is well-earned and thoroughly appreciated.

When we are on the road visiting our growers in France, some of whom are featured in our club this month, we build up a similar appetite. The itinerary is stacked with tasting appointments, and after sipping and spitting wines all morning, the *casse-croûte* couldn't come sooner. Vignerons are masters of this meal, accustomed to serving a group of hungry, hardworking wine lovers, and it shows in every spread they lay out for us. But I'd argue that the real value of the *casse-croûte* isn't the nourishment it provides; it's the glimpse it offers into a cultural custom. Sitting down to a less formal, more personal moment with our growers is what it's all about. In this month's club, we are featuring wines from vignerons who curate a particularly satisfying *casse-croûte*, who manage to send us on our way with bellies full of all the good stuff. When pairing the selections this month, think no further than this: share a bottle with friends and family alongside a bountiful platter of cured meats, local cheese, and lots of good bread! —JANE AUGUSTINE



NV CHAMPAGNE EXTRA BRUT 1ER CRU “PLATINE”

◆ NICOLAS MAILLART \$84

IT HAD BEEN MANY YEARS since we introduced you to a new selection of ours from the Champagne region—not for lack of trying! A few years back, we finally found what we had been looking for in the small Champagne village of Écueil, on the Montagne de Reims, in the cellars of Nicolas Maillart. Nicolas has made wine at his family estate since 2003 and has had two decades to hone and perfect his house style. He controls, farms, and manages all of his vineyards himself, working all of his soils. His Champagnes are pure, elegant, terroir-transparent, stylish, and delicious!

A very pale rosé color from the high percentage of Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier in the blend, Platine soars with a beautiful perfume of orange blossom and an incredibly soft mousse.

*Pairs well with pâté en croûte, fried chicken, and popcorn.*

2024 VIN DE CORSE ROSÉ “GRIS DE MARQUILIANI”

◆ DOMAINE DE MARQUILIANI \$29

IF CERTAIN BOTTLES ARE EMBLEMATIC OF KLWM’s early history—Tempier’s Bandols and Joguet’s Chinons, to name just two—Anne Amalric’s rosé is one of the essential cuvées that have come to define the second half of our five decades in business. Kermit discovered it about fifteen years ago over lunch at the base of Corsica’s Monte Grosso, in a corner of the island so rural and rugged that cows grazed in the restaurant’s parking lot. It soon became one of the wines that causes a stir among the staff when it lands in Berkeley.

For starters, it performs a mesmerizing kind of trompe l’œil: two red grapes, Sciaccarellu and a splash of Syrah, have produced a white wine? No, it’s a rosé, all right, but it has a nearly transparent hue because pressing the grapes very gently draws only the faintest hint of color. I haven’t tasted another *vin gris* that is so simultaneously weightless, ethereal, and full of character. A gentle wave of peach, melon, and spring flowers rolls over the palate and lingers long past your last sip.



*Pairs well with marinated olives, fried shellfish, and panisse.*

## 2023 RIESLING “RÉSERVE”

◆ MEYER-FONNÉ \$31

FÉLIX MEYER IS A STAR in Alsace and has spent the last few decades putting his village of Katzenthal—known for its distinctive granite soils—on the map. Racy and elegant, his wines are difficult to resist young but have all the right qualities for the cellar.

His Riesling Réserve combines a mélange of different terroirs with a dose of declassified *grand cru* Riesling as well. Crisp and zesty, it’s stimulating enough for an apéritif but generous enough for your main course.

*Pairs well with crab cakes, chicken wings, and tarte flambée—recipe on back!*



## 2024 SAUMUR CHAMPIGNY “CUVÉE DOMAINE”

◆ THIERRY GERMAIN \$29

THIERRY GERMAIN IS ONE OF THE Loire Valley’s most pensive and ever-experimenting vigneron. Whereas some winemakers who can be described this way produce eccentric cuvées, Thierry offers Cabernet Franc bottlings that are incredibly pure, pretty, and refined. They demonstrate how Saumur Champigny is among the world’s very best terroirs, alongside Chinon and Bourgueil, when discussing red wines made from this grape variety.

Thierry has honed his craft over decades to get to this point. After moving from his native Saint-Émilion to Saumur in the 1990s, he trained with the legendary Foucault brothers of Clos Rougeard. Then he set off on his own, spending years tweaking his farming approach and earning the respect of the locals, who were initially skeptical of an outsider from Bordeaux. He has pursued organic and biodynamic viticulture for more than a decade, and it shows in the freshness and purity of his wines. The 2024 Cuvée Domaine delivers Thierry’s trademark elegance, with notes of blackberries, forest, and graphite.



*Pairs well with jambon-beurre, Loire cheeses, and spanakopita.*

## 2023 SAINT JOSEPH ROUGE “LA GLORIETTE VIEILLES VIGNES”

◆ DOMAINE FAURY \$55

VIGNERON LIONEL FAURY DRIVES A Ford Ranger, has an eyebrow piercing, and is a world-champion water jouster. On his off days you’ll find him out grilling by the pool. He’s effortlessly cool and happens to be cooking up some of the hottest wines in the northern Rhône. Despite his brawny veneer, Lionel prefers to make supple reds with soft tannin and ample freshness.

His old-vine Saint Joe “La Gloriette” features lively, peppery aromatics right at the first pour. The roots of these vines run deep, and deep is what you get in the glass, too—a rich mix of black olive, fennel, and raspberry. Dependable year in and year out, it’s made from the domaine’s oldest vines, situated in the famed “Le Blanchard” parcel on the northern tip of the Saint Joseph appellation. A charismatic yet serious Syrah, as multifaceted as its maker.

*Pairs well with grilled beef or chicken skewers, tapenade, and mushroom tart.*

---

## 2022 BOURGOGNE PASSETOUTGRAIN

◆ DOMAINE ROBERT CHEVILLON \$56

AH, THE GREAT TERROIRS OF Gamay: Morgon! Moulin-à-Vent! Nuits-Saint-Georges??? Believe it or not, Gamay has been grown around the Côte d’Or for centuries and served a much greater historical purpose than cheap juice for the harvest pickers. Traditionally made Burgundian Pinot Noir, especially in the colder pre-global warming years of yore, took several years to unwind and shed its tannin and austerity. Gamay gave the growers something young and bright to drink in the meantime. *Passetoutgrain*, a word based on old local patois and generally meaning “toss it all in,” is an archaic and rapidly disappearing local appellation for field blends of Gamay and Pinot Noir that are harvested and cofermented together. The Chevillons, world renowned for their muscular and powerful Nuits-Saint-Georges, show a softer side here. Fresh and smooth Gamay/Pinot blend from the slopes of Nuits-Saint-Georges—that’s not a phrase you hear every day. Pass the peas and *passé* the tout-grain, please!



*Pairs well with gougères, charcuterie, and falafel.*



NV Champagne Extra Brut 1er Cru "Platine" <i>Nicolas Maillart</i> <b>CHAMPAGNE</b>	54% Pinot Noir, 26% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Meunier	Vines planted in 1990s Clay, limestone	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52°F	Orange blossom, brioche, petrichor Stony, refreshing, luscious	Drink now through 2030
2024 Vin de Corse Rosé "Gris de Marquilliani" <i>Domaine de Marquilliani</i> <b>CORSICA</b>	95% Sciaccarellu, 5% Syrah	20-year-old vines Schist and granite gravel with silt	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52°F	Acacia, honeydew, lychee, wet stone Perfumed, weightless, thirst-quenching	Drink now
2023 Riesling "Réserve" <i>Meyer-Fonné</i> <b>ALSACE</b>	Riesling	Vines planted in 1969 and 2006 Gray marl, granitic colluvium, alluvium, limestone	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52°F	Lemon zest, beeswax, minerals Delicate, balanced, food-friendly	Drink now through 2030
2024 Saumur Champigny "Cuvée Domaine" <i>Thierry Germain</i> <b>LOIRE</b>	Cabernet Franc	4- to 70-year-old vines Sand, clay, <i>tuffeau</i> limestone	Serve <i>cool</i> 56–60°F	Blackberries, cassis, graphite Fruit-driven, elegant, silky	Drink now through 2032
2023 Saint Joseph Rouge "La Gloriette Vieilles Vignes" <i>Domaine Faury</i> <b>NORTHERN RHÔNE</b>	Syrah	Vines planted between 1937 and 1976 Granite	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62°F Decant recommended	Pomegranate, black cherry, leather, lilac Herbaceous, souful, complex	Drink now through 2035
2022 Bourgogne Passetoutgrain <i>Domaine Robert Chevillon</i> <b>BURGUNDY</b>	$\frac{2}{3}$ Gamay, $\frac{1}{3}$ Pinot Noir	45-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>cool</i> 56–60°F	Cranberry, forest floor, wild herbs Bright, fresh, supple	Drink now

front cover: Casse-croûte with Thierry Germain. © JIMMY HAYES  
inner panel, left: Pork belly à la Catherine Breton.

© JOANIE BONFIGLIO

inner panel, right: Lunch at Domaine de Marquilliani.

© JOANIE BONFIGLIO

far left: Anne Amalric. © GAIL SKOFF

middle, top: Félix and Aura Meyer. © JIMMY HAYES

middle, bottom: © JIMMY HAYES

near left: Charcuterie at Domaine Robert Chevillon.

© JOANIE BONFIGLIO

back cover: Tarte flambée in Alsace. © JIMMY HAYES

To reorder any of our Wine Club selections, please give us a call at 510.524.1524  
to speak with a salesperson, or send us an email at wineclub@kermitynch.com.

# TARTE FLAMBÉE

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

Tarte flambée—or flammeküche, as it's known in German-speaking areas—is a rustic tart of onions, lardons, and crème fraîche. There's nothing like it in the United States. The usual comparison to pizza is perfunctory, even when covered in good Gruyère. When well done, it is remarkable. These days crème fraîche and fromage blanc are available in many stores and at many farmers' markets. The dish is scrumptious with the delicious Riesling Réserve from Meyer-Fonné.

## DOUGH

2 cups all-purpose flour  
5 ounces cold, cubed  
unsalted butter  
2 pinches sea salt  
2–3 ounces ice water

## FILLING

4 ounces smoked bacon,  
cut in 1-by-¼-inch lardons  
2 yellow onions, peeled,  
core removed, thinly sliced  
2 tablespoons whole butter  
3 ounces crème fraîche  
3 ounces *fromage blanc*  
½ teaspoon sea salt  
Pinch of nutmeg  
2 ounces whipping cream

Blend flour, butter, and sea salt together to cornmeal stage; a plastic bowl scraper works well for this. Add ice water a spoonful at a time, adding just what you need to form dough into a ball. Do not knead the dough more than you have to; overworking toughens the dough. Press dough into a flat disc, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for a couple of hours or overnight.

Simmer bacon in ½ cup of water over medium heat until water evaporates. Lower heat and brown bacon, stirring often, about 3 minutes. Drain bacon in a strainer and cool to room temperature. Sauté onions in butter over medium heat, about 15 minutes; then turn heat to low and continue to cook onions until they are tender but without color, about 10 minutes more; tip off any excess fat. Cool to room temperature.

Remove the dough from the fridge and roll dough out on a floured surface, either a round or rectangle, as you like. Lay dough on parchment paper on a baking sheet. Combine crème fraîche and *fromage blanc*, salt, and nutmeg, and spread evenly on the surface of the dough to within ½ inch of the edge of the dough. Distribute onions on cheese also to within ½ inch of the edge. Distribute bacon evenly over onions. Fold edge of dough over onions by about 1 inch, or flute the edge. Brush lightly with cream. Chill for 30 minutes in fridge. Bake at 425° F for 18–20 minutes, turning twice, until tart is golden on top and bottom is lightly browned.

*Serves 6*

