

Alsace, you might museum hop, take in the sights of unique cities like Strasbourg or Colmar, and seek out the most distinctive dishes from the region’s quasi-German cuisine. Or, in Corsica, you could spend a week or two just driving around the island, seeing—and tasting—how different each corner is from the next. Of course, my personal favorite, maybe tied with Provence, is Burgundy, a wine lover’s heaven. Even beyond wine, this region has so much to do and see. Beaune and Dijon have lots to offer, and for side quests outside of town, don’t miss the medieval abbeys of Vézelay, Fontenay, and Cluny on the way to or from stops at your favorite domaines.

If you like the *New York Times*’ “36 Hours in . . .” format, you can find one for five of the six regions featured in this month’s club (plus a robust guide for Corsica, the one region they haven’t published a “36 Hours” for yet). For even more on-the-ground and up-to-date recommendations, a few of our growers have shared some ideas on where to eat, drink, sleep, and visit, which you can find on the back of this bulletin. —TOM WOLF



BORDEAUX according to *Bénédicte and Grégoire Hubau of Château Moulin*

Where to eat, drink, & sleep

L'Auberge Saint Jean
Bistro Pharell
Le Bouchon Bordelais

Exploring

Les Jardins de Bordeaux
La Cité du Vin
Les Bassins de Lumières
La Rochelle
Rochefort (La Corderie Royale)

CASSIS & MARSEILLE according to *Jonathan Sack of Clos Sainte Magdeleine*

Where to eat, drink, & sleep

La Brasserie du Corton (La Villa Madie)
Sanctuary of Sainte-Baume
Restaurant La Stazione (Cassis)
Restaurant Grenat (Marseille)

Exploring

Balade sur la Route des Crêtes (Cassis)
Calanques National Park by boat (Cassis)
Basilique Notre-Dame de la Garde (Marseille)



EASTERN CORSICA according to *Anne Amalric of Domaine de Marquiliani*

Where to eat, drink, & sleep

L'Auberge de L'Inzecca (Ghisoni)
L'Imprévu (Aléria)
Auberge L'Écurie (Aléria)

Exploring

Ziplining at Vecchia Mina (Ghisoni)
Archaeological Museum of Aléria
Hike around the Étang de Terrenzana

TOURAINE according to *France Breton of Domaine Catherine et Pierre Breton*

Where to eat, drink, & sleep

Chez Gaster (Tours)
Café de la Loire (Chouzé-sur-Loire)
Les Années 30 (Chinon)
La Cuverie—Gîte du Domaine Catherine et Pierre Breton (Restigné)



CHEVALIER

VIVE LES VACANCES!

MAY 2025



FRENCH SUMMER VACATION

If you hear “French summer vacation” and your imagination drifts immediately to the country’s south, you’re not alone in yielding to the irresistible allure of that region. After all, Kermit probably spends more time in Bandol than anywhere else. It seems like more writers have meditated on this region than any other throughout France. And, after much deliberation, my family and I couldn’t refuse the call of Provence last spring, splitting our stay between an inland region around Avignon and the coast in Bandol. Thanks to the Mediterranean sunshine, stunning coastline, great food and wine, Provence—and the Côte d’Azur in particular—have held a firm grip on pop culture and our collective imaginations for decades, if not centuries.

But Le Sud is hardly the only swath of France outside of Paris worthy of our summer vacations. Regions like Burgundy, Bordeaux, the Loire, Alsace, and Corsica all have so much to offer—especially if you love wine. In the Loire, for instance, you can spend days cycling from château to château or hiking, foraging, and eating around *Le Jardin de la France*’s fruitful woods. In

2022 BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE *BLANC* “BAUME NOIRE”
◆ CLOS SAINTE MAGDELEINE \$50

ABOUT A DECADE AGO, Kermit stared up at the steep, limestone terraces rising up from Clos Sainte Magdeleine’s seaside domaine in Cassis and knew that this terroir would be perfectly suited to Vermentino, the variety behind some of his favorite white wines made just across the sea in Corsica. Though used predominantly in white blends in southern France, Corsican Vermentino is vinified and bottled alone, producing chiseled, mineral, and complex whites that, at their best, draw comparisons to Chablis.

Inspired by Kermit’s suggestion, vigneron Jonathan Sack set to planting a hectare of Vermentino, using *sélection massale* vines from Clos Canarelli at Corsica’s southern tip. Jonathan ages his Vermentino in sandstone amphorae with the goal of preserving and enhancing as much of its inherent elegance, minerality, and aromatic brilliance as possible. I recently opened a bottle of this pure Vermentino alongside oysters on the half shell—a perfect pairing—but Jonathan also recommended sea bream carpaccio, an array of antipasti, and grilled fish. It is a seafood lover’s dream wine. —TOM WOLF

2021 RIESLING *GRAND CRU* “GEISBERG” ◆ KUENTZ-BAS \$54
SITUATED IN THE TOWN OF Husseren-les-Châteaux, not far from Colmar, Kuentz-Bas’ vineyards span an area of ten hectares on the slopes around the village. The *grand cru* Geisberg is an exception, made from an extremely special terroir thirty minutes to the north. Many consider Geisberg one of the three best vineyard sites for Riesling in Alsace. Its steep slopes, terraced in stone, rise majestically above the gorgeous village of Ribeauvillé. It is also one of the smallest *grands crus* in Alsace, with only a handful of growers working its slopes. We were therefore thrilled when we learned that our own Kuentz-Bas managed to acquire two hectares, or nearly a quarter of this hal-
lowed ground. The results have been nothing short of breathtaking. Geisberg Riesling, when worked by a master vigneron, is a thoroughbred of a wine—racy and pure, of great breed and precision—a grandiose sculpture of time and place. —TOM WOLF



RGB
1317 ppi

2023 VIN DE CORSE “LE ROSÉ DE PAULINE”
◆ DOMAINE DE MARQUILIANI \$29

YOU DON’T NEED TO PRONOUNCE IT. All you need is a corkscrew and a wineglass. I discovered this marvel the final day of last summer’s visit to Corsica, right before flying to Marseille. I’d heard of a restaurant, La Flotta, up at the base of the imposing Monte Grosso. The paved road turned to dirt and then narrowed to a car’s width. Tossin’ and a-turnin’, wondering where in the ... and then, like finding an oasis in the desert, Gail and I reached a lone little restaurant under the looming granite peak. Cows grazed the parking lot.

The sommelier was a treat. We discussed the great domaines—Arena, Lec-
cia, Nicrosi, Abbatucci—and then she insisted we try a new wine, a young wom-
an’s first release, a rosé: “You’d better try it today because our staff has almost drunk it all up. We didn’t even put it on our wine list,” she said.

She poured one of the most memorable wines I’ve tasted—no, not com-
plex and grandiose. Not powerful and earthshaking. No, *au contraire*. Here’s a
rosé that is almost weightless. Perfumed on the nose, then an ethereal touch as
it spreads across the palate, then nothing remains but that gorgeous, heavenly
perfume. Yum. To know it is to love it. —KERMIT LYNCH, FEBRUARY 2012

2023 BOURGUEIL “TRINCH!” ◆ C. & P. BRETON \$28

IT’S RARE FOR ANYONE (much less vignerons, who work long days) to be pillars of the community, unofficial appellation ambassadors, *bons vivants*, cul-
tural icons, and producers of village-defining wines all at once. But then again, Catherine and Pierre Breton—along with their daughter France and son Paul—are highly unusual, genuine heroes of French wine, with a seemingly inexhaustible spirit and joie de vivre that courses through all of their endeavors.

Named for a German expression meaning “cheers,” championed by the poet and philoso-
pher Rabelais, their Trinch! cuvée embodies this energy. One of their most lithe and quaf-
fable *rouges*, it is a joyous and pure expression of Bourgueil Cabernet Franc, full of leafy, brambly, and graceful charm. —TOM WOLF



RGB
1204 ppi

2011 CANON-FRONSAC ◆ CHÂTEAU MOULIN PEY-LABRIE \$49

A WHOLE GALAXY OF WINE IS there to explore once you leave Bordeaux’s ar-
chaic and contentious classification system behind. Take Canon-Fronsac, where
Bénédicte and Grégoire Hubau tend their vines. In the eighteenth century, this
appellation’s wines were considered among the best in Bordeaux and were enjoyed at the Court
of Versailles. Today Canon-Fronsac is overshadowed by its more famous neighbors in the Médoc.
Values abound, and vignerons make wine for the table, not the auction block. The Hubaus’ Château
Moulin is a prime example, and at fourteen years old this stately red shows notes of pure red fruit,
cassis, and leather, with whiffs of earth and mint and a soft, supple palate. —DUSTIN SOISETH









RGB
300 ppi

2022 BOURGOGNE CÔTE CHALONNAISE *ROUGE* “LA FORTUNE”
◆ DOMAINE DE VILLAINE \$86

IN THE EARLY 1970S, as Aubert de Villaine joined Domaine de la Romanée-
Conti, perhaps Burgundy’s most exalted domaine, he and his wife Pamela pur-
chased a run-down domaine thirty miles south in Bouzeron, which they also
made their home. At the same time that Aubert was overseeing the most prized
Pinot Noir vineyards in Burgundy, he was also falling in love with what may have
been the region’s most overlooked vineyard land.

I couldn’t help but think about this paradox recently upon meeting with
Aubert’s nephew, Pierre de Benoist, who now runs the domaine. Someone lik-
ened Pierre’s new Rully *premier cru* “Rabourcé” vineyard to the legendary “Cros
Parantoux” parcel in Vosne-Romanée. While most vignerons would eagerly
accept, even encourage, this comparison, Pierre simply deadpanned, “Or maybe
Cros Parantoux is exactly like Rabourcé,” before flashing a mischievous grin.
What Pierre playfully reaffirmed was that the de Villaines have been fervent
believers in the Côte Chalonnaise for decades, not as a source of value-driven
equivalents of the Côte-d’Or’s great sites, but as an extension of Burgundy’s
noblest terroirs.

From a parcel with exceptional terroir for Pinot Noir, La Fortune is light in
body yet deep in aromas of crushed red fruits and hints of peppery spice that
evoke true, old-school Burgundy. —TOM WOLF

     					
2022 Bouches-du-Rhône <i>Blanc</i> “Baume Noire” <i>Clos Sainte Magdeleine</i> PROVENCE	Vermentino	Vines planted in 2013–2014 Limestone	Serve <i>cool</i> / 50–54°F Decant optional	Provençal herbs, sea spray Energetic, stony, saline	Drink now through 2030
2021 Riesling <i>Grand Cru</i> “Geisberg” <i>Kuentz-Bas</i> ALSACE	Riesling	70-year-old vines Limestone, marl, sandstone	Serve <i>cold</i> / 48–52°F Decant optional	Lilies, acacia, white peach Generous, elegant, deep	Drink now through 2035
2023 Vin de Corse “Le Rosé de Pauline” <i>Domaine de Marquilliani</i> CORSICA	80% Sciaccarellu, 15% Vermentino, 5% Syrah	20-year-old vines Schist and granite gravel with silt	Serve <i>cold</i> / 48–52°F Decant optional	Citrus blossom, minerals, fennel Ethereal, refreshing, zesty	Drink now
2023 Bourgueil “Trinch!” <i>Catherine & Pierre Breton</i> LOIRE	Cabernet Franc	30-year-old vines Gravel	Serve <i>cool</i> / 56–60°F Decant optional	Pomegranate, brambly fruit, pepper Punchy, mineral, quaffable	Drink now
2011 Canon-Fronsac <i>Château Moulin Pey-Labrie</i> BORDEAUX	95% Merlot, 5% Malbec	65-year-old vines Clay, limestone, molasse	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> / 58–62°F Decant recommended	Strawberry, cassis, earth Pure, soulful, woody	Drink now through 2030
2022 Bourgogne Côte Chalonnaise <i>Rouge</i> “La Fortune” <i>Domaine de Villaine</i> BURGUNDY	Pinot Noir	20- to 25-year- old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> / 58–62°F Decant recommended	Cherry, plum, leather, vanilla bean Bright, silky, aromatic	Drink now through 2035

front cover: Lunch at Domaine de Marquilliani. © GAIL SKOFF
inner panel, left: The garden at Domaine de Villaine. © JIMMY HAYES
inner panel, right: Colmar. © JIMMY HAYES

far left: Jean-Baptiste Adam and daughter, Laure. © JIMMY HAYES
middle: Pierre Breton and daughter, France. © JIMMY HAYES
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