



# CHEVALIER

THREE DECADES

JANUARY 2019



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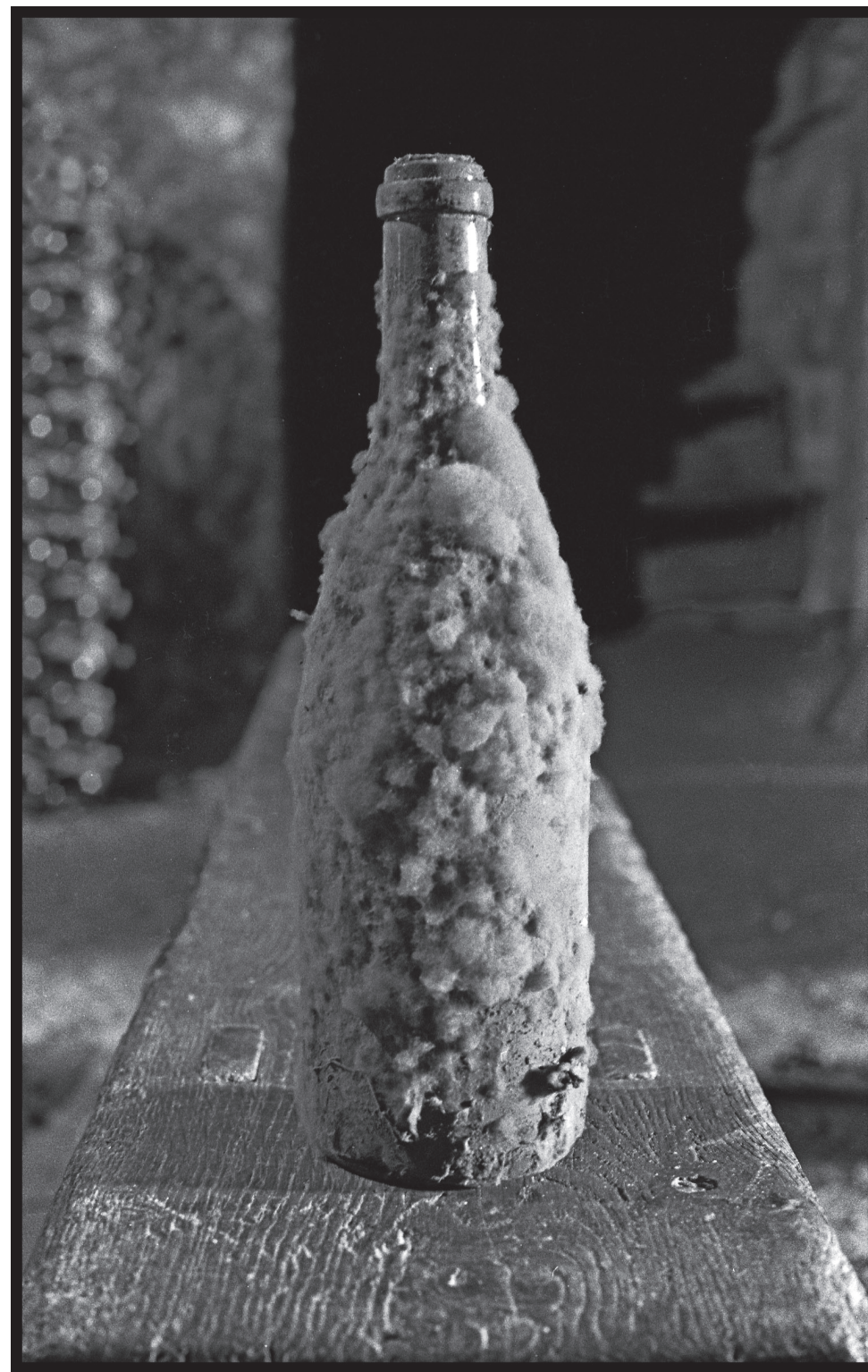
**F**ORTY-SIX YEARS SINCE FOUNDING, the KLWM family now consists of roughly two hundred wine-producing domaines spread throughout all corners of France and Italy. While many of these are recent additions to the portfolio, as we continue to search far and wide for new talent hidden away in the Old World's finest wine-growing regions, other producers represent long-term collaborations dating back to the early days of Kermit's career. A remarkable twenty-five growers have participated in this adventure for thirty years or more, and you will meet six of them in this month's shipment.

Thirty years may not seem like very long in the grand scheme of French wine. After all, Greek settlers first planted vineyards along modern-day France's Mediterranean coast more than two and a half *millennia* ago, Cistercian monks began developing the idea of *terroir* in Burgundy seven *centuries* ago, and the AOC system as we know it recently celebrated eight whole *decades* since its creation. But from a vigneron's standpoint, it means thirty years of fighting off rot, overcoming rain, hail, and drought, and praying—sometimes successfully, other times less—against devastating frosts. It means thirty years of pruning, plowing, and harvesting, often in the nastiest of weather conditions. And it means thirty years of crushing, pressing, racking, tasting, bottling, and shipping. Such persistence is no easy feat.

Our goal is to find vignerons who deliver each year, crafting thirst-inspiring, *terroir*-driven wines even in the most challenging of vintages. These longtime partners set the example thanks to their uncanny ability to translate their land into bottle year after year. Many other producers cannot say the same: wineries are sold; styles change; disputes arise; people retire or pass away. Kermit even claims to have dropped one domaine from the portfolio because the vigneron smelled so bad that he could no longer stand to visit him every year for a tasting. Talk about being guided by his nose.

On that note, let us raise a glass together to celebrate six of the most consistent, talented, neutral-smelling vignerons we have the fortune to represent.

—ANTHONY LYNCH



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## N.V. BRUT RÉSERVE GRAND CRU PAUL BARA

The village of Bouzy and Champagne Paul Bara are practically synonymous: this house boasts more than 170 years of history, throughout which generation after generation of Bara has crafted celebrated Champagnes from the village's south-facing slopes. Bouzy's vineyards enjoy *grand cru* status thanks to an exposure that favors excellent ripeness and chalky soils that provide stimulating freshness, in addition to housing the deep, cool cellars essential to aging Champagne. Pinot Noir reigns, and the Bara house style is honest to its exceptional *terroir*. The Brut Réserve features the rich, ripe fruit we have come to expect from Bouzy—seductive, mouth-filling, dry, and focused; a class act all around.

**\$60.00 PER BOTTLE**



## 2017 CASSIS BLANC • CLOS STE. MAGDELEINE

Forty years after Kermit brought in that fateful first shipment of Cassis *blanc* from the 1976 vintage, Clos Sainte Magdeleine is still crafting Mediterranean whites of charm and inimitable local character. Vigneron Jonathan Sack has had an immediate impact since stepping into his father's shoes at the helm of the domaine, going organic in the vineyards and championing low-intervention methods such as fermenting with natural yeasts in order to capture an authentic expression of this stunning seaside *terroir*. The abundant white limestone and perennial marine influence bring nerve and a coastal salinity, while lovely aromas—anise, flowers, citrus, peach—are delivered with newfound focus and precision. The pinpoint, sea-breeze finish and total finesse throughout are truly exceptional among Provençal whites. You'll want to try the 2017 to see how the dazzling *terroir* of the tiny Cassis appellation is glimmering like never before.

**\$35.00 PER BOTTLE**

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2011 MUSCADET SÈVRE ET MAINE “RÉSERVE”  
DOMAINE MICHEL BRÉGEON

Michel Brégeon is a hard-core *terroirist*, always eager to expound about the gabbro, his notorious stony soil. Michel’s vines are planted above a sea of gigantic blue-green volcanic boulders (formed when magma cooled beneath the ocean floor) in the heart of the famed Sèvre et Maine portion of Muscadet. All his parcels are located exclusively in this island of profound bedrock, producing a Muscadet of incredible longevity. His cellar tastings are the stuff of lore here at KLWM; ten-year verticals are the norm, and there is never a tired wine in the bunch. In fact, Michel is convinced that his Muscadet, with its sturdy backbone of acidity and intense minerality (gabbro is loaded with a complex array of minerals), only improves with age. His 1999 is a real marvel of a wine today, so he can back up his claims. The proof is right there, in the glass.

Michel unofficially retired after the 2010 vintage, but all that really means is that he found someone younger with better knees to watch over his grapes, harvest them, and bring them to his cellar, where he continues to oversee the winemaking process. Michel’s unique *terroir*, his practice of keeping yields low, and his insistence on harvesting by hand—a rare feat in the region—probably set him apart more than anything he does in the cellar, but still, this is no typical winery. This 2011 spent forty months on its lees in underground, glass-lined tanks beneath Michel’s *cave*. When you smell it, keep in mind that no other wine—besides a Melon de Bourgogne grown in the gabbro soil of Gorges—could possibly smell like this one does. Could this be the greatest *terroir* on Earth for Melon?

**\$35.00 PER BOTTLE**



2016 GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN  
DOMAINE LUCIEN BOILLOT & FILS

With each passing year, the “globalization” of Burgundy makes the wines of Pierre Boillot increasingly rare birds. Pierre has successfully resisted every trend that has swept through Burgundy over the past several decades. Rather than hiring a manager for his land and focusing on sales and marketing, he continues to work his vineyards by hand himself, understanding that this is where great wine is made. Rather than jumping on the new oak bandwagon, Pierre shows restraint in this critical area of cellar management, allowing his myriad *terroirs* to showcase their personality.

Blessed with several small holdings in both the Côte de Beaune and the Côtes de Nuits, Pierre has been able to keep the domaine in his family’s hands and make an honest living. The style of Burgundy he makes is



widely misunderstood in today's world: he specializes in dense, sometimes even chewy red Burgundies for those willing and able to make an investment in something grand for the future. In this case, patience pays. His methods, which include gently bottling by gravity without fining or filtration, yield wines of great finesse with depth, body, and heart. This cuvée combines fruit from various sites around Gevrey-Chambertin, and makes for a grandiose introduction to the appellation that can be enjoyed now with some aeration, but will truly blossom after several years of cellaring.

**\$82.00 PER BOTTLE**



**2016 CAHORS • CLOS LA COUTALE**

A stronghold of ancient Rome, the town of Cahors consequently has a long history of viticulture, dating back to around 50 BC. Over the centuries, its notoriously inky red wine enjoyed significant success thanks to its ability to withstand long shipping journeys to distant markets across Europe. Composed primarily of the Côt, or Malbec, grape, Cahors lives up to its reputation as the “Black Wine.” At Clos La Coutale, one of the appellation’s flagship estates, vigneron Philippe Bernède has honed the final blend to include 20% Merlot, which significantly softens Côt’s hard tannins and allows for immediate drinkability. While the resulting wine is very approachable—on the palate and the wallet—that does not preclude it from aging: five or ten years tucked away is no problem, making this a superb choice for anyone looking to start a cellar on a budget. Serve it young or old with cassoulet, duck confit, or other hearty dishes from France’s southwest.

**\$16.00 PER BOTTLE**

**2016 PIC SAINT LOUP ROUGE**  
**“CUPA NUMISMAE” • CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE**

Château La Roque does everything right, from certified biodynamics to horse plowing to natural winemaking, all without making any noise about it. The Cupa Numismæ is the estate’s top wine, its cream-of-the-crop, limited-production Syrah and Mourvèdre blend from their oldest vines on Roman-built terraces. It’s dense, noble, with grip and grit, the kind of cuvée that could generate a lot of awe and attention . . . and also a much higher price tag. That is not, however, La Roque’s style; it’s about the wine, not the marketing. You’ll be glad to find this beauty in your glass today, and old bottles have a track record of pleasantly surprising lucky collectors—there is certainly no hurry to pull the cork on this one.

**\$28.00 PER BOTTLE**





<b>N.V. Brut Réserve</b> <i>Grand Cru</i> <i>Paul Bara</i> <b>CHAMPAGNE</b>	80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay	35-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>cold</i> 46–52° F Do not decant	Yellow peaches, mirabelle plums, bergamot, brioche Elegant, creamy, full, plush, lively	Drink now
<b>2017 Cassis Blanc</b> <i>Clos Ste. Magdeleine</i> <b>PROVENCE</b>	40% Marsanne, 30% Ugni Blanc, 25% Clairette, 5% Bourboulenc	20- to 30-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Yellow flowers, Provençal herbs, white peaches, acacia Bright, perfumy, saline	Drink now
<b>2011 Muscadet</b> Sèvre et Maine “Réserve” <i>Domaine Michel Brégeon</i> <b>LOIRE</b>	Melon de Bourgogne	40-year-old vines Gabbro	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–54° F Decant optional	Lime zest, grapefruit, quince, sea spray Zingy, earthy, stony	Drink now through 2025
<b>2016 Gevrey-Chambertin</b> <i>Domaine Lucien Boillot &amp; Fils</i> <b>BURGUNDY</b>	Pinot Noir	Vines planted in 1957 Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant 2–3 hours	Blackberry, sour cherry, damp earth Rich, pure, precise, fine-grained	Drink now through 2030
<b>2016 Cahors</b> <i>Clos La Coutale</i> <b>SOUTHWEST</b>	80% Malbec, 20% Merlot	25-year-old vines Gravel, limestone, clay	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Smoke, tobacco, plum, cedar Bold, deep, smooth, polished	Drink now through 2025
<b>2016 Pic Saint Loup Rouge</b> “Cupa Numismæ” <i>Château La Roque</i> <b>LANGUEDOC</b>	65% Syrah, 35% Mourvèdre	40-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant 1–2 hours	Wild berries, <i>garrigue</i> , graphite, roasted spices Chewy, dense, grippy, powerful	Drink now through 2030

## KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

To reorder any of our Wine Club selections, please give us a call at 510.524.1524 to speak to a salesperson, or send us an email at [wineclub@kermityllynch.com](mailto:wineclub@kermityllynch.com).





## 1986 CASSIS BLANC • CLOS STE. MAGDELEINE

by Kermit Lynch

Back in 1969 before Bacchus waved his magic wand and made me into a wine importer, I was banging about Europe on a penny-pinching holiday. Needing a rest *en route* from Barcelona to Salzburg, I pulled off the highway to find a hotel. The nearest village was Cassis, proving that accidents are not always tragic. I did not know that the beauty of the place had attracted painters such as Vlaminck, Matisse, and Dufy, or that there were literary connections with Marcel Pagnol and M. F. K. Fisher. I simply needed a bed.

And stayed a week. I ate in the cheap backstreet restaurants: fish soup, fish stew, grilled fish, *fruits de mer*, always with a bottle of the local sun-drenched white wine. All the vintners produce red and rosé, but those don't matter. It is its unique dry white that puts Cassis on the wine map.

The 1986 will convert cynics who say the incomparable beauty of the site makes the wine taste good. The vintage plays a role; conditions were perfect. The aroma is ripe and grapey, and all the flavors are intact because the Clos Ste. Magdeleine has agreed to forgo a filtration at the *mise en bouteille*. A blend of Ugni blanc, Clairette, Marsanne, and Sauvignon blanc, here is the wine to enhance seafood and shellfish. On a warm evening it serves as an appropriate apéritif. It goes particularly well with Roquefort and goat cheese. And you sailors, here is the wine for your boat's ice chest. It tastes as good on the Pacific as it does on the Mediterranean.