

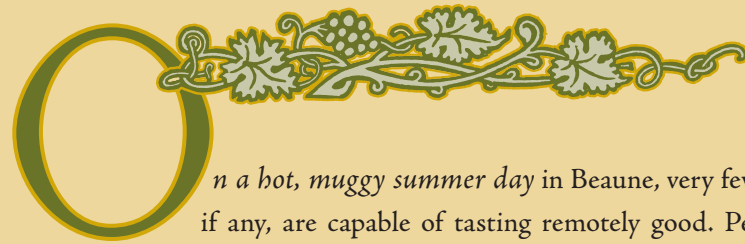
CHEVALIER

NEW
PRODUCERS

NOVEMBER
2019



NEW PRODUCERS



*O*n a hot, muggy summer day in Beaune, very few wines, if any, are capable of tasting remotely good. Perhaps a crisp glass of Aligoté would go down, or (more likely) a cold beer or a Kir sipped on a shaded terrace might pass. But business is business, and it was on one of the more disgusting days of the Burgundian year—gray, sultry, stagnant—that our office staff convened to taste through a selection of sample bottles, hoping to come across the next big thing.

Tasting samples from new domaines is always an adventure, as you never know what you'll come across. The process is exciting given the knowledge that the next cork pulled could reveal something truly special. On the flip side, there are generally far more bad surprises than good ones. In fact, the odds of a great discovery are relatively slim compared to the chances of having one's taste buds violated.

Droplets of sweat materializing on my forehead, I jotted some notes as we worked our way through the roughly twenty-five bottles before us. A white from the Roussillon was "reduced, stinky, sulfury, harsh," while a rosé from the Rhône received an emotionless "generic, technical; no great interest." Moving into reds, a rich Bordeaux blend elicited an immediate "no thanks" while another tasted overwhelmingly "oaky . . . and not good oak." On this sweltering day, our delicate palates were receiving a battering, assaulted with hard tannins, strange off-flavors, and rampant oakiness when all we really wanted was a glass of ice water. Entering the final stretch of the tasting, the remaining bottles—four young Barolos from a producer none of us had ever heard of—felt like a death sentence.

And sure enough, under those conditions, a flight of relatively tannic, high-acid, high-alcohol reds did not have any of us jumping for joy. But, crucially, the wines were in balance, and they tasted like real Barolo. A sweet hint of rose petal even managed to escape the glass, trudge through

the heavy air, and give my nose a bit of a thrill. There was something there—something worth investigating. "Not bad," I scribbled, circling the name *Giulia Negri* on my pad.

Investigating led us to the door of an ambitious young Piemontese woman keen on finding the right partner for her burgeoning business. Tasting her striking 2015 Barolos from *botte*, it became clear: we would have that honor. More than two years after that sticky afternoon in Beaune, we are now able to present Giulia and her wines to you. In this month's shipment, you'll also meet five other new additions to our book, hailing from different regions, discovered under different circumstances, but making equally compelling wines. I am delighted to facilitate the introduction.

—ANTHONY LYNCH



"Barologirl" Giulia Negri. © Giulia Negri

2017 COLLI TREVIGIANI MANZONI BIANCO

◆ GREGOLETTO \$18

ON VACATION IN VENICE a few years ago, Kermit enjoyed a particularly tasty glass of Prosecco: a bone-dry, slightly cloudy brew that elicited an elemental pleasure few wines are capable of conveying. Upon further inquiry, he found out Gregoletto was the producer of this old-fashioned style of *col fondo* Prosecco. While the estate in the hills of the Veneto has been family-run since 1600, they sell most of their production to local markets such as Venice's thriving restaurant scene, and they also have a loyal customer base of old friends and villagers, ensuring that little wine makes it out of the region.

Having now introduced Gregoletto's Prosecco to the United States, we are thrilled to propose other wines the family produces. Manzoni Bianco is a cross of Pinot Blanc and Riesling found exclusively in northern Italy, yielding clean, crisp whites characterized by fresh fruit and abundant minerality. Gregoletto also makes a stone-ground polenta from local heirloom corn varieties—keep this in mind as you consider the pairing possibilities with their immensely refreshing wines.

2018 TERRE SICILIANE CARRICANTE "SCIARE VIVE"

◆ VIGNETI VECCHIO \$40

CARMELO VECCHIO and his wife, Rosa La Guzza, did not come from afar to make wine on Etna: they are true locals, raised in the heart of the vineyards in Solicchiata. Carmelo began working at the nearby Passopisciaro winery at a young age, and after fifteen years of hands-on experience, the time came to strike out on his own. From tiny parcels of ancient vines inherited from Rosa's family, the couple took matters into their own hands: sustainable farming by hand, with the goal of achieving an elegant balance in the grapes; micro-vinifications in the tiny cellar beneath their home, with respect for tradition and *terroir*; aging the wines in used barrels before bottling without fining or filtration.

The white Sciare Vive—named for the numerous lava flows that ruthlessly bisect the Etnean landscape—is a field blend of mainly Carricante along with other local varieties such as Minnella, Grecanico, and Catarratto. The voluptuous texture is a result of a five-day skin maceration, an ancient tradition here for whites, while its aroma is purely Mediterranean: smoke, resin, wild herbs, fennel, flowers, a tender touch of honey . . .

2018 BEAUJOLAIS-VILLAGES “LES GRANDES TERRES”

◆ QUENTIN HAREL \$22

AFTER FIRST TASTING Quentin Harel’s wines, we learned this young vigneron had recently taken the reins of the family domaine in the town of Saint-Étienne-des-Oullières, just south of the Côte de Brouilly. Quentin’s parents began to farm organically long before the revival of sustainable viticulture that is sweeping through the Beaujolais today: their Beaujolais-Villages vineyards have been certified organic since 1990, a time when neighbors looked down on the Harels as radical outliers to the standard of conventional farming.

One of the region’s rising stars, Quentin perfectly epitomizes the Beaujolais’s explosion of young talent. He makes Gamay just the way we like it: farmed organically, vinified naturally with whole clusters, and bottled unfiltered with minimal added sulfur. The nose, the palate, and the price encourage unbridled quaffing.

2017 MÉDITERRANÉE ROUGE “CUVÉE SPÉCIALE”

◆ CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH \$49

VILLARS-SUR-VAR, a thirty-minute drive north of Nice, has a long tradition of winemaking, but today Roch Sassi of Clos Saint-Joseph is the only grower to bottle wine eked from these incredibly rocky slopes. His wines fall under the Côtes de Provence appellation, even though the much cooler, mountainous *terroir* here has little relation to the rest of the AOC. Villars is like a cross between Provence and Savoie, with Mediterranean and Alpine influences combining to allow for full ripening at low alcohol levels, maintaining bright acidity and lively fruit.

Tragically, the village suffered a violent summer hailstorm in 2017 that decimated virtually the whole crop. Roch nonetheless achieved normal production numbers, thanks to generous donations of grapes from Provençal vignerons from appellations such as Côtes de Provence, Coteaux d’Aix, Bandol, and Les Baux, including fruit from Domaine Tempier, La Tour du Bon, and other top producers. The wine is thus classified as an IGP Méditerranée.

Much of the donated fruit comes from less-exposed or less-ripe parcels in order to maintain consistency with the cool-climate character of Villars. You might, however, notice slightly plumper, riper flavors than in other vintages, as this red is a prototypical summary of Provençal red wine across all the region’s top *terroirs*.



2016 PATRIMONIO ROUGE ♦ DOMAINE GIUDICELLI \$52

MURIEL GIUDICELLI was always enthralled by Corsica. Though she grew up elsewhere, she traveled back often to stay with family during vacations. When the wine bug bit, Muriel knew that Corsica was where she wanted to settle.

After university courses in agricultural and soil studies, she trained with small domaines all over France, while waiting for a good opportunity to arise in Patrimonio, in northern Corsica. She had befriended Antoine Arena, who, one day in 1996, called to tell her about a retiring vigneron looking to sell his five hectares of vines in a great part of Patrimonio. Muriel did not hesitate for a moment, and in 1997 she began making wine. From day one, she farmed organically, and at this point is certified biodynamic as well.

Muriel now owns ten hectares in the highly regarded Grotte di Sole and Campo Gallo subzones of Patrimonio, which she works with her husband, Stéphane, and one other employee. Aged for eighteen months in *foudres*, her Patrimonio rouge is vivid, youthful, and aromatically potent. It is soft and juicy, with perfectly ripe black fruit notes, while the tannins are quite present yet harnessed just right.

2015 BAROLO “SERRADENARI” ♦ GIULIA NEGRI \$85

THE FIRST WINES Giulia Negri ever made were a pair of Barolos from the 2011 vintage, harvested not long before her twentieth birthday. Today, Giulia—the latest in a 150-year line of grape growers—has taken over full management of the family vineyards and winery.

In Serradenari—the highest *cru* in Barolo, culminating at 536 meters elevation—Giulia passionately pursues her goal of crafting elegant Nebbiolo. The altitude, along with a complex mosaic of soils, allows her to create wines marrying delicate floral aromas and seductive fruit with a deep mineral foundation.

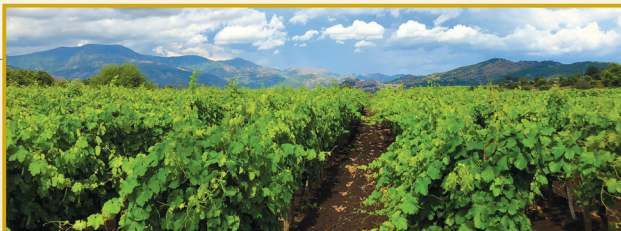
Her artisanal approach and espousal of old-school methods include sustainable viticulture, eschewing commercial yeasts and other additives, aging in large casks (*botti grandi*), minimizing filtration, and long but gentle macerations. Barologirl, as she has been dubbed, may still be the new kid on the block in La Morra, but tasting her wines reveals a fine touch and devout respect for tradition that already places them among the region’s classics.

From sandy parcels in Serradenari, this is textbook La Morra: an exquisitely fragrant, rose petal–tinged nose with fine-grained, tightly knit tannins. This beauty will drink fabulously for many years to come.

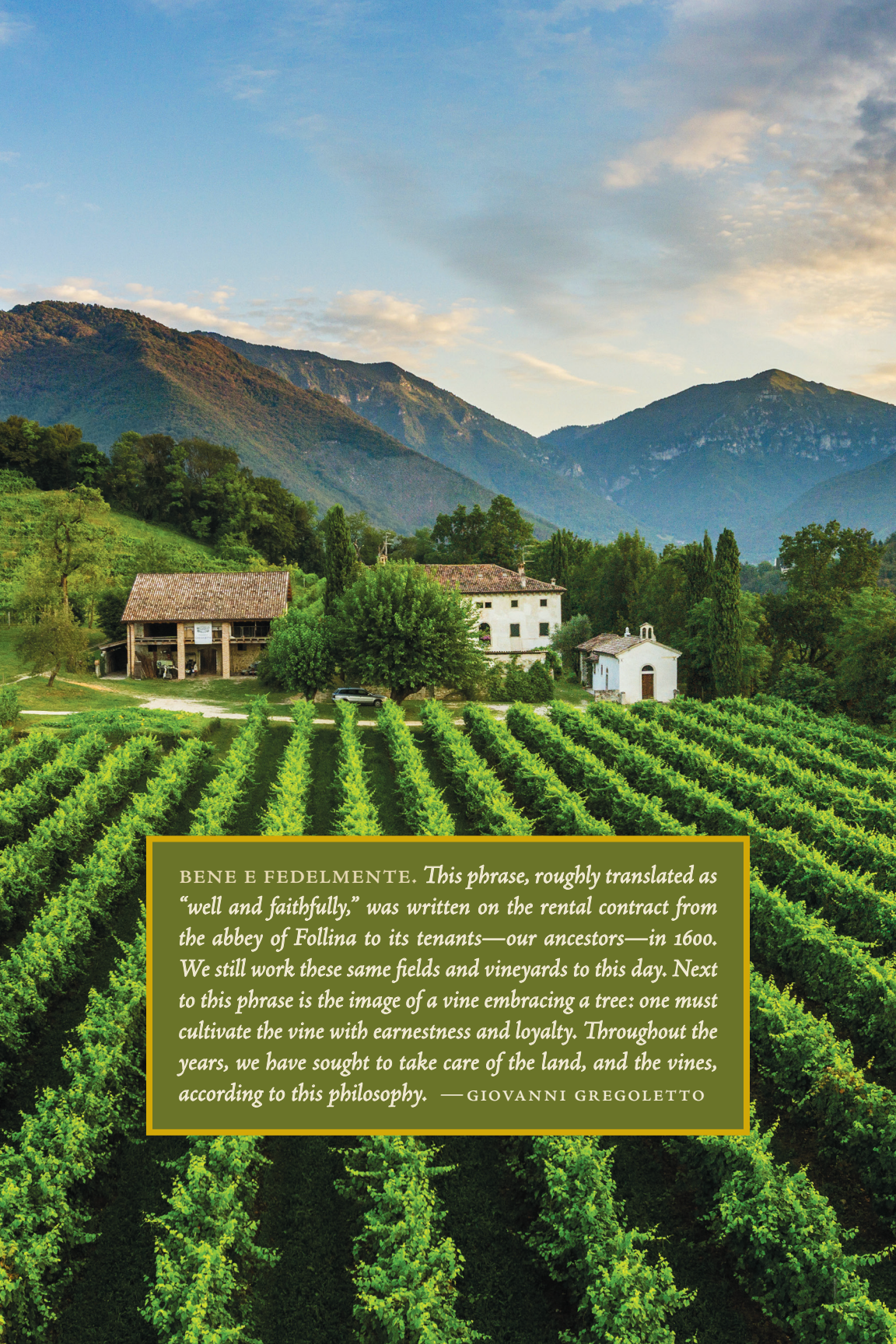




2017 Colli Trevigiani Manzoni Bianco <i>Gregoletto</i> VENETO	Manzoni Bianco	25-year-old vines Sandstone, marl	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F	White flowers, citrus, pear, stone Crisp, clean, mineral	Drink now
2018 Terre Siciliane Carricante “Sciare Vive” <i>Vigneti Vecchio</i> SICILY	90% Carricante, 10% Indigenous varieties	40- to 100- year-old vines Volcanic, clay- limestone	Serve <i>cold</i> 50–54° F	Saffron, fennel, honey, <i>ginestra</i> (wild broom) Fleshy, textured, subtle, restrained	Drink now
2018 Beaujolais- Villages “Les Grandes Terres” <i>Quentin Harel</i> BEAUJOLAIS	Gamay	7- to 70-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 54–58° F	Cranberry, flowers, turned earth Juicy, bright, high-toned, crunchy	Drink now
2017 Méditerranée Rouge “Cuvée Spéciale” <i>Clos Saint-Joseph</i> PROVENCE	50% Syrah, 30% Mourvèdre, 10% Grenache, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon	N/A Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F	<i>Garrigue</i> herbs, blackberry, licorice Generous, plump, ripe, chewy	Drink now through 2025
2016 Patrimonio Rouge <i>Domaine Giudicelli</i> CORSICA	Niellucciu	25-year-old vines Clay, limestone, granite, schist	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F	Wild cherry, baked earth, spice, game Firm, deep, elegant, long	Drink now through 2030
2015 Barolo “Serradenari” <i>Giulia Negri</i> PIEMONTE	Nebbiolo	Vines planted in 2003 Sand, clay, marl	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F	Rose petals, strawberry, raspberry, underbrush Precise, delicate, chiseled, fine- grained	Drink now through 2035



Vineyards at Vigneti Vecchio.
 © Dixon Brooke



BENE E FEDELMENTE. *This phrase, roughly translated as “well and faithfully,” was written on the rental contract from the abbey of Follina to its tenants—our ancestors—in 1600. We still work these same fields and vineyards to this day. Next to this phrase is the image of a vine embracing a tree: one must cultivate the vine with earnestness and loyalty. Throughout the years, we have sought to take care of the land, and the vines, according to this philosophy.* — GIOVANNI GREGOLETTO