

🌀 Celebrating 50 Years of Fine Wine 🌀

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

FEBRUARY 2022



Kermit with Henri and Frédéric Brunier of Vieux Télégraphe, 1986



© Gail Skoff

COOKING WITH WINE ■ SIX DECADES 12-BOTTLE SAMPLER

2019 VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE ■ THREE CABERNET FRANCS ■ CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

SIX DECADES OF KLWM

12-BOTTLE SAMPLER

by *Tom Wolf*

HOW MANY fashion or musical trends have emerged since 1972, the year Kermit opened his shop? There have surely been as many in fine wine. But, having a strong sense of what he likes—and how he likes it made—Kermit has never followed the latest fashion. Who, for example, was knocking down the doors for Chinon rosé or high-quality Aligoté in the 1970s? Old-vine Corbières and Custoza weren't exactly on everyone's lips in the '80s. By the '90s, excellent Chablis—like the Savary family's—had arrived, but low-intervention Morgon like Guy Breton's? Nope. In the 2000s, Kermit was thrilled to introduce readers to Porro's Dolcetto and Gallety's classy, off-the-beaten-path Côtes du Vivarais. In the last two decades, we have tracked down an outstanding, value-driven sparkling wine from Seyssel in Savoie, a beautiful Calabrese from a rising talent in Sicily, a classic Crozes-Hermitage from an old partner in the northern Rhône, and a crisp and distinctive white wine from the southern Italian region of Puglia. Our standard now, as in 1972, is Kermit's love of singular and delicious terroir-driven wines from France and Italy.

		PER BOTTLE
1970s	2020 CHINON ROSÉ • CHARLES JOGUET	\$25.00
	2019 BOUZERON • DOMAINE DE VILLAINÉ	44.00
1980s	2019 CORBIÈRES “RÉSERVE LA DEMOISELLE” • FONTSAINTE	21.00
	2020 CUSTOZA “MAEL” • CORTE GARDONI	21.00
1990s	2020 CHABLIS • FAMILLE SAVARY	30.00
	2020 MORGON “VIEILLES VIGNES” • GUY BRETON	41.00
2000s	2020 DOLCETTO D'ALBA “VIGNA PARI” • GUIDO PORRO	24.00
	2016 CÔTES DU VIVARAIS ROUGE • DOMAINE GALLEY	29.00
2010s	2019 VITTORIA CALABRESE • PORTELLI	22.00
	VIN DE FRANCE BRUT “PETIT ROYAL” • LAMBERT DE SEYSSSEL	22.00
2020s	2020 LOCOROTONDO BIANCO “ANTICO” • I PÀSTINI	18.00
	2018 CROZES-HERMITAGE • JEAN-CLAUDE MARSANNE	42.00

Normally \$339.00

SPECIAL SAMPLER PRICE **\$271**
(a 20% discount)

CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

by Anthony Lynch

Today I had the Clos Saint-Joseph blanc. I imagine if François Raveneau had made wine there, his blanc would have tasted like Roch's. What a pure expression of that fabulous terroir. Filtered by the stones.

Never did I expect my father would liken a humble Provençal white to what is probably his favorite white wine of all time, Raveneau's Chablis. But this is no ordinary Provençal white, Villars-sur-Var is no ordinary terroir, and Roch Sassi has proven, in the few years since we began working with him, his capacities as a truly extraordinary vigneron.

Our story begins in 2017, when we exited the *autoroute* at Nice and followed the Var River due north through a narrow canyon cut through layer upon layer of limestone. These veritable walls of rock had been folded into mesmerizing patterns, attesting to millions of years of geological activity as tectonic plates crunched together and birthed the mighty Alps. After thirty minutes or so, an opening in the valley revealed stony riverbanks covered in vineyard rows, signaling our arrival in Villars.

Surrounded by towering peaks, this isolated medieval village is home to a modest thirty hectares of vines, of which five belong to Roch. Besides being made from the same grape varieties, his wines share little in common with anything else you'll encounter from the vast Côtes de Provence AOC. First, the Alps exercise a decisive influence on soil and climate, manifested by the abundance of limestone scree and cold air currents tempering the Mediterranean warmth. Second, his methods reflect a winemaking philosophy diametrically opposed to the commercial direction much of Provence has been guilty of taking in recent times.

The very first whiff of his graceful, vibrant rosé illustrated this in mouthwatering fashion. A rosé defined by terroir, and not by technique?! With similar precision and that filtered-through-stones finish, Roch's *blanc* echoes what we loved about the rosé, while the purity and restraint of his old-vine *rouge* personify the generosity of Provence viewed through an Alpine lens. Lastly, with its dense wild fruit and suave floral nuances, the Syrah stands tall among the great cool-climate expressions of the grape. Don't sleep on Clos Saint-Joseph—it's a side of Provence rarely seen.

PER BOTTLE

2020 CÔTES DE PROVENCE ROSÉ	\$42.00
2020 CÔTES DE PROVENCE "BLANC DE BLANCS"	55.00
2018 CÔTES DE PROVENCE ROUGE	55.00
2019 CÔTES DE PROVENCE SYRAH	76.00

FROM GREAT TO GREATER THREE CABERNET FRANCS

by Dustin Soiseth

2019 CHINON “CUVÉE TERROIR” CHARLES JOGUET

The Cuvée Terroir is one of the great everyday reds in our portfolio, right up there with the Dupeuble Beaujolais, the Fontaine Corbières, and our Côtes du Rhône. I get that Cabernet Franc isn't everyone's cup of tea, and that's fine, but the telltale combination of tart red fruit, herbaceousness, and graphite earthiness makes this wine the perfect accompaniment for just about any meal, the more casual the better.

\$28.00 PER BOTTLE \$302.40 PER CASE

2018 CHINON “LE CLOS GUILLOT” BERNARD BAUDRY

With a glance at the dark purple color—the hue of a Kalamata olive—and a sniff of the nose heavy on dark ripe fruit and black tea, I get a little giddy. I can tell I'm going to enjoy this. The first taste knocks me off my feet. I need to be careful or my prose is going to be as purple as my teeth, because Le Clos Guillot is a powerhouse, an earthy, feral wine that throws sediment like it's been aging for thirty years. Powerful and tannic, this vintage needs rich food now, or a few years in the cellar.

\$43.00 PER BOTTLE \$464.40 PER CASE

2017 BOURGUEIL “LES PERRIÈRES” CATHERINE & PIERRE BRETON

I have had some amazing Les Perrières over the years—the 1997 and 1989 stand out—and I think that in time this 2017 will rank among them, but greatness was not my first impression. The first pour was surprisingly stingy, the wine closed off. The night was young, however, so I left the bottle alone while I prepared dinner. When I returned to the glass an hour later, the wine had begun, almost imperceptibly, to open up: the tannins softening, the greenness giving way to red fruit, beautiful earthy, spicy aromas rising from the glass. The change was remarkable. This continued over the course of the evening as the wine blossomed like a fragrant, kaleidoscopic tropical flower.

\$59.00 PER BOTTLE \$637.20 PER CASE

ALTO ADIGE

by Tom Wolf

2020 SÜDTIROL EISACKTALER GRÜNER VELTLINER • MANNI NÖSSING

Of our three producers from Alto Adige, Manni Nössing's vines lie the farthest north and the closest to Austria. Manni dabbled in red wine a few decades ago but ultimately realized that this particular slice of Alto Adige—*Eisacktaler* in German, *Valle Isarco* in Italian—is ideal for white wine grapes, including many you'll find across the border. Using the altitude and relatively cool climate to his advantage, Nössing is able to deliver a Grüner Veltliner that evokes jasmine and peach and is as chiseled and beautiful as the Dolomite peaks in the distance.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

2018 ALTO ADIGE LAGREIN RISERVA “DI ORA IN ORA” • FERRUCCIO CARLOTTO

We had been searching for a Lagrein like this for years before we came across Carlotto's gorgeous rendition almost a decade ago. Michela Carlotto had taken the Lagrein (la-GRINE) grape—known for producing rustic, dense, and tannic reds—and eked an incredible beauty from it through earlier harvests and shorter macerations. This cuvée is dark-fruited velvet in a bottle.

\$38.00 PER BOTTLE

\$410.40 PER CASE

2016 ALTO ADIGE MERLOT-CABERNET SAUVIGNON “IUGUM” • PETER DIPOLI

Do not miss this Merlot-Cabernet Sauvignon blend in all its mountain-made glory. From Peter Dipoli's stunning, high-altitude slopes amid the Dolomites, this Iugum has a lot to say, but it doesn't shout at you with overripeness, oak, or extraction. It sings to you with subtlety and refinement. Notes of Cassis, black cherries, and espresso draw you into the glass and keep you coming back to decipher what makes this cuvée and terroir so special. Open a bottle now alongside your favorite cut of beef, and stash a few away in a cool place to watch its beautiful evolution over the next five, ten, and fifteen years.

\$68.00 PER BOTTLE

\$734.40 PER CASE



VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE 2019

by Dixon Brooke

THE ROUNDED riverbed stones, or *galets roulés*, of Vieux Télégraphe are an image indelibly etched into the mind of every member of the KLWM team. It is such a striking landscape, and Gail Skoff has snapped many iconic images of the famed terroir over the years. I couldn't believe our good fortune when she unearthed from her extensive archives the roll of film gracing the cover of our brochure this month: Kermit, Henri Brunier, and Henri's son Frédéric, circa 1986, proudly and merrily posing among the vines on the plateau of La Crau in Châteauneuf-du-Pape that produces one of the most quintessential wines we import.

This special plot of land has delivered us many unforgettable "VTs" over the years, and the recently arrived 2019 vintage is showing itself to be not only a distinguished and confident ambassador of its storied lineage, but also a tour de force with the panache to stand among the all-time greats. The domaine's old vines in the terroir of La Crau produce some of the most exciting Grenache in the world, and the select blending of their other native grapes, along with a long, patient aging process in large, oval *foudre* casks, produces the magic of Vieux Télégraphe. The Brunier family created one of the most memorable VTs of my career in the 1989 vintage, and thirty years later the 2019 seems poised to follow a similar arc of development.

2019 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE "LA CRAU"

\$105.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,134.00 PER CASE

— KERMIT'S NOTES —
ON THE 1989 VINTAGE
OF VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE, FROM JULY 1991

BURSTING AT THE SEAMS.

That is the phrase that kept coming to mind as I tasted the 1989 Vieux Télégraphe.

This is one of the larger wines produced by Vieux Télégraphe. It is built to last and built to please with a solid framework of tannin and alcohol. Yet as impressive as that foundation is, there is something that grabs your attention even more, a huge perfume that you can really feel trying to break free. Even that mighty 1989 structure can barely contain it, and with the passage of time that stoney, ripe perfume is going to intensify and swell until it does burst out to our grateful applause.

TYPICITY

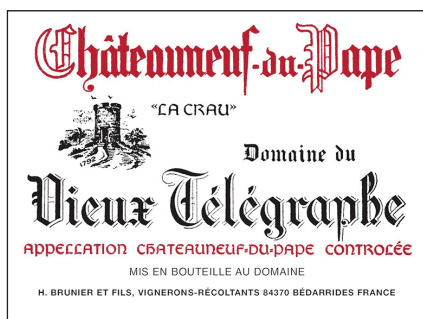
by Kermit Lynch

IF THE WORD typicity does not exist, it should. Imagine, you want a baguette with dinner so you buy one, carry it home, and when you tear into it you find it full of cinnamon and dried apricots. Tasty or not, you are stuck with a baguette that lacks typicity. When I want a Châteauneuf-du-Pape, that means something; when I uncork it, I want it to taste like Châteauneuf-du-Pape, to express Châteauneuf-du-Papeness. Or Châteauneuf-du-Papicity?

The wine world's grandest achievement (which will never be matched by the upcoming "United Nations of Oaky Cabernets and Chardonnays") remains France's system of *appellation contrôlée*, which was constructed to define and preserve the work of centuries of trial and error that resulted in the right grape varieties and vinification for each region's soil and climate. In my cellar you will not find any Pinot Noir from Bandol or Cabernet from Tuscany.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape boasts a very special *terroir*. You have now seen photos of those amazing stones, called *galets*, those rounded, colorful stones that you can smell and taste in a Vieux Télégraphe. There is also that blessed climate. The summer air is warm, fecund, and intoxicating, and there is the mistral, Provence's supernatural grape dryer, which prevents mildew and rot.

Traditional vinification also contributes to the typicity of Vieux Télégraphe. No Châteauneuf-du-Pape tastes as much like Châteauneuf-du-Pape as Vieux Télégraphe, and that is its reputation *in Châteauneuf-du-Pape*! You can make a good wine by departing from traditional vinification, by carbonic maceration, by heating this or cooling that, by buying Bordeaux barrels or whatever your little heart desires, but your Châteauneuf-du-Pape will lack typicity.



CHARDONNAY

by Anthony Lynch

2020 BEAUJOLAIS BLANC DOMAINE DUPEUBLE

The Beaujolais is not necessarily the first place you'd look to find great Chardonnay, but who could resist the combination of old vines, limestone soil, and a beckoning price tag? Certainly not us. In the 510 years since founding their family domaine, the Dupeubles have selected the sites less favorable to Gamay, the region's main cash crop, and planted Chardonnay for a Beaujolais *blanc*. Plump, juicy fruit dominates the nose, with an inviting abundance of citrus and peach, the whole upheld by a lively acidity. Like a delicious Burgundy but less fussy, Dupeuble's white is just as reliable as their hedonistic *rouge*.

\$20.00 PER BOTTLE

\$216.00 PER CASE

2019 CÔTES DU JURA CHARDONNAY "LA CHAUX" • FRANÇOIS ROUSSET-MARTIN

Jura native François Rousset-Martin is a proud ambassador of local wine tradition but also loves to tinker, and his cellar is full of experiments with both oxidative and so-called "Burgundian" whites. But there is nothing Burgundian about this topped-up Chardonnay: aromas of fleshy pineapple and salted butter let you know immediately where you are. The interplay of laser focus with a deep exoticism could only come from the Jura, and not just anyone's cellar. François bottles his entire production by hand, straight from the barrel without fining or filtration, and you can certainly taste this bold commitment to quality.

\$64.00 PER BOTTLE

\$691.20 PER CASE

2019 MEURSAULT-BLAGNY 1ER CRU "LA GENELOTTE" • COMTESSE DE CHÉRISEY

La Genelotte is one of the great underrated sites of the Côte de Beaune. Perched over the communes of Meursault and Puligny beneath thick woodland, it is a *monopole* farmed exclusively by Domaine de Chérissey. Old Chardonnay vines give a deeply concentrated, yet finely chiseled Meursault with toasty notes of gunflint and hazelnuts, culminating in a tonic finish characterized by biting mineral extract. This is truly electric Chardonnay whose track record of aging makes it a great cellar candidate, but it can be savored today, too, especially if given some time in a decanter.

\$144.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,555.20 PER CASE

PINOT NOIR

by *Chris Santini*, KLWM BEAUNE

2018 PINOT NOIR • KUENTZ-BAS

When the first confinement hit France, my wife and I soon realized that our cellar was being emptied at an alarming rate. If we didn't act soon, we might just end up in the proverbial "wine jail." First thing I did was call Olivier Raffin, the winemaker at Kuentz-Bas, and order a couple cases of their "Tradition" range, including their basic Riesling, Pinot Blanc, and this very Pinot Noir. Given that no guests were coming around those days, we wanted bottles we could open for ourselves anytime—not too expensive, definitely not fancy, but comforting and fun. With its peppery notes and earthy feel, this bottling proved to be perfect for sharing with a loved one on many a quiet night.

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE

\$237.60 PER CASE

2018 SANCERRE ROUGE "LE CHANT DE L'ARCHET" • DANIEL CHOTARD

Red might not be the first color that comes to mind when one thinks of Sancerre, but that may well change as we see more spectacular, terroir-driven *rouges* from the region. The Chotards are some of the lucky few who have parcels that are ideal for growing Pinot Noir, and theirs have been planted to Pinot for well over fifty years, so the vines are at full maturity. From this south-facing, Kimmeridgian limestone terroir, the family makes a serious wine—dark, juicy, and delicious, ready to drink now after a long *élevage* on its lees of nearly two years in old wood. A glimpse of great things to come.



\$39.00 PER BOTTLE

\$421.20 PER CASE

2019 SAVIGNY AUX SERPENTIÈRES 1ER CRU DOMAINE PIERRE GUILLEMOT

Guillemot's Serpentières strikes me as the ultimate "comfort wine." There is something timeless, traditional, and reassuring each time a bottle is opened. Whatever is missing in flash and dazzle is made up for in understated elegance. This light, perfumed subtlety defined Savigny-les-Beaune's reputation long ago, a style and tradition that remains in sure hands with the Guillemot family.

\$55.00 PER BOTTLE

\$594.00 PER CASE

COOKING WITH WINE

by Emily Spillmann, KLWM BEAUNE

ONE HAND pouring a glass, the other adding a splash to the sauce: this is our double-fisted translation of “cooking with wine.” Following are three dishes from our producers to accompany this month’s value whites. Email recipes@kermitylch.com for full details. To your kitchens!

2020 EDELZWICKER • MEYER-FONNÉ

Félix Meyer’s mother, Nicole, proposes her *tarte à l’oignon* as a fine complement to this Edelzwicker because its richness accentuates the crisp, floral nature of the wine and because it is easy and delightful to prepare. Her twist is a flan, rather than the typical béchamel, using a cup of milk, two tablespoons of flour, three eggs, a bit of *crème fraîche*, salt, pepper, and nutmeg, to create a thicker but more aerated tart. A base of sautéed onions, followed by the flan, and topped with chopped pancetta should be baked in a pie crust until golden and served “very hot,” with a green salad and a generous glass of Edelzwicker.

\$20.00 PER BOTTLE

\$216.00 PER CASE



2020 VERDISO • GREGOLETTO

Luigi Gregoletto lived ninety-three years, never retiring and spending his last days close to the vines. He was particularly attached to his Verdiso, a striking, multifaceted, somewhat mysterious wine that is at once bone-dry and bursting with vibrant peachy notes followed by an almost curt, stony finish. His daughter Antonella shared the secret of Luigi’s wife’s meatball recipe, *polpette della nonna*, which requires equal parts baked ham, mortadella, and turkey in addition to minced beef. The Gregoletto family serves them with the classic Venetian dish *risi e bisi* and, of course, this Verdiso.

\$20.00 PER BOTTLE

\$216.00 PER CASE

2020 ROERO ARNEIS • TENUTA LA PERGOLA

Winemaker Alessandra Bodda’s daughter Martina recommends a regional anti-pasto, *vitello tonnato*, with her family’s lemony and refreshing Arneis. Thinly slice a chilled slow-cooked veal shoulder and top with the magic sauce of 200 grams tuna in oil, three cured anchovy fillets, two tablespoons of capers, two hard-boiled egg yolks, olive oil, and the juice of one lemon, blitzed until smooth. Like the wine, it’s a good starter for parties or a lazy Sunday lunch.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE

\$172.80 PER CASE



Provençal Kitchen

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TO HONOR our fiftieth year in business, each month we're looking back through our archives at some of the incredible domaines we've had the pleasure to work with. In this issue, we reminisce about a legendary vintage of Vieux Télégraphe, while celebrating an equally compelling new release. In our "Looking Forward" segment, we highlight a newer import from a remote, mountainous pocket of Provence—a great example of serious terroir meeting judicious winemaking. And when it happens, WOW! We think you'll share our zing of excitement upon tasting these recently unearthed beauties. Thanks for staying thirsty these past fifty years, and stay tuned for more to come! —*Kermit, Anthony, and Dixon*

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