

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

APRIL 2023



Simon Chotard of Sancerre

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NEW PRODUCER, NEW REGION
THE EXUBERANCE PACK • THREE SANCERRES
A TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND TROLLAT

INTRODUCING DOMAINE LES HAUTS LIEUX

by *Anthony Lynch*

IT'S ALWAYS A THRILL when we get to introduce wines from a new producer. But an entirely new region?

The Hautes-Alpes boasts just 130 hectares under vine, or less vineyard area than the hill of Hermitage. Its tiny plots sit perched at high elevation, scattered across Alpine slopes between the mountain city of Gap and the French-Italian border. If the wine appellations of nearby Savoie, which climb the foothills of the Alps and are often noted for their steep grade, are considered home to extreme viticulture, then growing grapes in the Hautes-Alpes—seventy miles

to the southeast, nestled beneath some of France's highest summits—is nothing short of mad.

Loire Valley native Mickaël Olivon often traveled to the southern Alps in his youth to go rock climbing, but little did he know he would eventually make his home in the shadows of these dramatic peaks to become a vigneron. Despite having no family ties to the wine world, Mickaël always had a



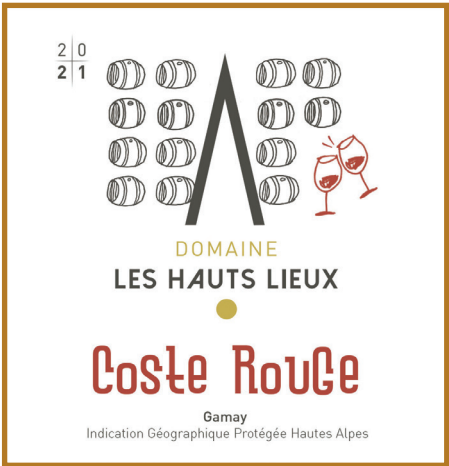
Mickaël Olivon

© Vincent Verrier

fascination with viticulture. After completing studies in Burgundy, numerous gigs in cellars in France and abroad, and a ten-year stint as an agronomic consultant in the northern Rhône, Mickaël returned in 2019 to settle amid the mountains that had captured his imagination as a child.

His minuscule cellar sits above the Hautes-Alpes town of Embrun, with its combined two hectares of garden-like vineyard plots flanking the upper Durance River valley on rocky soils of glacial moraine and dolomitic scree at dizzying elevations of 900 to 1,000 meters. Just south of the border between Provence and Savoie, the Hautes-Alpes shares little in common with its neighbors, in terms of terroir as well as winemaking traditions. “You need a pioneering spirit to make wine here,” says Mickaël, pointing out that local wines have seldom been produced on a commercial scale. The Alpine conditions present a number of unique viticultural challenges: vintage effects are amplified due to the unpredictable and at times violent weather, and accordingly, conventional vigneron wisdom does not always apply.

Mickaël produces two whites and two reds from a motley crew of grape varieties, including the native Mollard and a host of rare *cépages* more or less adapted to the extreme climate. With little winemaking precedent in this uncharted region, he is free to follow his instincts, adapting his methods to create something completely novel in a beautiful, but challenging environment. Mickaël’s cuvées—three of which are named for summits he has climbed in the breathtaking Massif des Écrins—are wines of great purity and class, characterized by floral aromatics, bright, fresh fruit, and stony reminders of the Alpine slopes from which they spawn. Born from the most unlikely of places, the wines of Les Hauts Lieux illustrate heroic viticulture at its very finest.

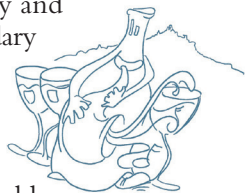


	PER BOTTLE	PER CASE
2020 HAUTES ALPES <i>BLANC</i>		
“GRAINS DE CLOTINAILLE”	\$49.00	\$529.20
<i>A blend of Chasan, a crossing of Pinot Noir and Spanish Palomino, with Chardonnay. Aged in barrel, it is creamy yet lively, with the clean finish of a dry sake.</i>		
2020 HAUTES ALPES <i>BLANC</i> “GRAND PIC”	\$9.00	637.20
<i>Marsanne, Jacquère, Altesse, and Müller Thurgau are the protagonists in this stylish white that is greater than the sum of its parts. Crystalline purity, mouthwatering salinity, and complexity without weight make this akin to an Alpine premier cru.</i>		
2021 HAUTES ALPES <i>GAMAY</i>		
“COSTE ROUGE”	49.00	\$529.20
<i>Pure Gamay from high in the mountains—bright, floral, and deliciously fruit-driven, with a satisfying crunch.</i>		
2020 HAUTES ALPES <i>MOLLARD</i>		
“HORS PISTE”	\$9.00	637.20
<i>Planted more than seventy years ago, this field blend of unusual reds features Mollard, Portugais Bleu, Gouais, Aubun, Hibou Noir, and who knows what else. Bottled unfiltered, it is both juicy and wildly herbaceous, with a flavor profile corresponding perfectly to its name—off-trail.</i>		

CHOTARD SANCERRE

by Chris Santini, KLWM BEAUNE

DANIEL CHOTARD, with whom we've now been working for a few good decades, steered his old family estate away from polyculture (grapes, livestock, and grains) to concentrate solely on making great Sancerre. And make great Sancerre he did, each year sending us a lively and delicious Sancerre *blanc*, a fruity rosé, and a light and earthy *rouge*. These wines embodied the “bistro” style of the day, meant for easy sipping by day and boisterous drinking by night, tailor-made for Daniel's legendary accordion playing, which was guaranteed to have the room singing and dancing in no time. Since 2011, Daniel's son Simon has come on board, and while they maintain the classic *blanc-rosé-rouge*, Simon has been exploring what else their terroir may have to offer and adapting to changes, notably a warming climate and waning bistro culture. With a focus on microclimates, organic farming, native yeasts, low- to no-sulfur winemaking, and fermentations in large casks (to name just the tip of the iceberg), Simon has created a spectacular and colorful range of Sancerre 2.0, if you will: single-parcel *crus* that are evocative, transcendent wines with strong character and identity showcasing just how serious Sancerre can be.



2020 SANCERRE ROUGE

Lovely Pinot Noir fruit, dark purple color, fully versatile, and ready to drink now.

\$35.00 PER BOTTLE

\$378.00 PER CASE

2021 SANCERRE BLANC

Wonderfully expressive, crisp, lip-smacking, give-me-more, fill-up-the-cup Sancerre! True to its roots.

\$39.00 PER BOTTLE

\$421.20 PER CASE

2020 SANCERRE BLANC “LES COUTONES”

Grandiose, lavish Sauvignon Blanc from a small *monopole* holding that faces the rising sun, with a clay soil so dense and sticky the old-timers called it *terre amoureuse* (loving earth), for the way it clings to one's boots. If the classic Sancerre above is a great blast from the past, the Coutones here is a glimpse of a great future.

\$50.00 PER BOTTLE

\$540.00 PER CASE

ONE-LITER BOTTLES

THE MORE THE MERRIER

by *Dustin Soiseth*

SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED A BIT MORE WINE. Maybe you're enjoying a particularly leisurely meal or a few extra guests at the table, or maybe the cook wants a cup for the pot (or a glass for themselves!). If a standard bottle simply won't cut it, these two easygoing wines, both in liter bottles, have you covered.

2021 EDELZWICKER • MEYER-FONNÉ

The Edelzwicker, which translates to “noble blend,” is sort of a wine free-for-all. It can be a blend of any of the officially permitted Alsatian white varieties, in any proportion. Producers with a little bit of this, that, and the other blend them into a fresh table white for everyday enjoyment. Meyer-Fonné's 2021 has a floral, perfumed nose—perhaps from a splash of Muscat?—and a soft mid-palate with green apple and pear—surely a sign of Pinot Blanc in there. The finish is slightly spicy—maybe Gewurztraminer?—with crisp acidity and a hint of nuttiness—that's definitely the Riesling talking. You can look up the exact blend on our website if you're curious, but sometimes not knowing is more fun. What can you taste?

\$23.00 PER LITER BOTTLE

\$248.40 PER CASE

2021 VINO ROSATO “PASSATELLA” STEIGER-KALENA

Giulio and Margarita Steiger are true believers in the potential of Molise, Italy's second-smallest region. Giulio is a native of the area, and in 2014 he and Margarita moved from Paris to the *comune* of Casacalenda, building their winery from scratch and planting twelve hectares of vineyards—now certified organic—to the region's traditional red varieties. Their rosé has a sun-baked quality, with dusty red fruit, a fair bit of grip, and a distinct herbal note. Mostly Montepulciano with dashes of Aglianico and Tintilia, this is a meal-time rosé for slaking thirst and washing down a brimming bowl of herby *cicerchie* (pea soup) or a savory hunk of *cacio-cavallo*, a traditional cheese from the Apennine Mountains. Invite some friends over for a spirited game of *passatella*, a centuries-old card game still played in Molise. After all, the more the merrier!

\$32.00 PER LITER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

DOMINIQUE HAUVETTE

by Dixon Brooke

OF ALL THE TALENTED, driven, unique, and visionary winegrowers we work with in our portfolio, Dominique Hauvette stands out. The area of Provence where she plies her trade is magical, particularly the allure of its climate in the summertime, which generally produces very high-quality grapes. It would be easy—much easier than in most wine regions—to not be maniacal about quality and simply let nature take its course, earning a fine living and enjoying a fine life. That is not the course Dominique chose for herself! No, her standards are far, far loftier, and she takes everything to its extreme, starting with the best terroir in the region, in the foothills of the gorgeous Alpilles. There is nothing like her gems anywhere else in the world, and the way in which she polishes them in her cellar until release is equally unmatched. She is unquestionably one of the *grandes dames* of French wine today.



2021 ALPILLES ROSÉ “PETRA”

Beautiful color, fresh-squeezed citrus and stone-fruit nose, luminous and invigorating while round and luscious at the same time. Raised in concrete eggs, *sur lie*.

\$50.00 PER BOTTLE

\$540.00 PER CASE

2016 ALPILLES BLANC “DOLIA”

A masterpiece of Roussanne, Marsanne, and Clairette, aged extensively in concrete, stainless steel, and glass bottle, Dolia is an incredibly complex time capsule of Dominique’s terroir in Les Alpilles. Honey, herbs, ripe Provençal fruit, firm limestone, beeswax, and wildflowers.

\$79.00 PER BOTTLE

\$853.20 PER CASE

2018 ALPILLES ROUGE “AMETHYSTE”

Amethyste is Dominique’s ode to Cinsault, a wonderful grape that gives a fresh, low-alcohol wine and is increasingly in vogue down south. Buoyant and juicy like great Beaujolais, with a Provençal flair and the touch of a masterful wine-maker, this southern beauty is France’s best example of pure Cinsault.

\$95.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,026.00 PER CASE

2016 LES BAUX DE PROVENCE ROUGE “CORNALINE”

The most serious and structured of the Hauvette reds, Cornaline is a blend of Grenache, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon that is patiently aged in large wooden casks until release. It combines the best qualities of all three grapes in a soulful package that exudes “classic” and “old-school.” Slip this quintessential southern French red into your cellar alongside bottles of Tempier, Clape, and Vieux Télégraphe (or your old clarets) for the next few decades of enjoyment.

\$69.00 PER BOTTLE

\$745.20 PER CASE



Dominique Hauvette

© Gail Skoff

THE EXUBERANCE PACK

12-BOTTLE SAMPLER

by Tom Wolf

IMAGINE YOU'VE JUST WRAPPED UP harvest at Corte Gardoni, along the shores of Lake Garda, or at Catherine and Pierre Breton, right above the Loire River. Few experiences in your life have been as physically challenging as the past couple of weeks, and as you watch the last of the buckets brimming with pristine grapes start their journey to becoming beautiful wines, you begin to feel thirsty. To commemorate this moment, you don't want anything too heavy, high in alcohol, or tannic. What you crave, rather, is a glass of something festive and fresh. It doesn't matter if it's sparkling, white, rosé, or red as long as it's lively and fills you with the energy to celebrate and feast around the table with your fellow harvesters.

Of course, *les vendanges* aren't the only occasions when a wine's exuberance is its most important quality. Weddings, barbecues, family reunions, and other gatherings held under the sun and spread out across many hours call for wines that, above all, match their joyousness. Here are twelve bottles that rank among our most exuberant selections.

PER BOTTLE

ROSATO SPUMANTE BRUT "IL ROSA" • SOMMARIVA	\$18.00
2021 LAMBRUSCO GRASPAROSSA DI CASTELVETRO	
FATTORIA MORETTO	25.00
2021 CHIARETTO DI BARDOLINO ROSÉ "NICHESOLE"	
CORTE GARDONI	19.00
2021 SAINT-CHINIAN ROSÉ • MAS CHAMPART	22.00
2021 ALSACE BLANC • KUENTZ-BAS	18.00
2021 MÂCON-VILLAGES • HENRI PERRUSSET	25.00
2021 COLLINE SAVONESI LUMASSINA • PUNTA CRENA	25.00
2020 MONFERRATO ROSSO • TENUTA LA PERGOLA	16.00
2021 LACRIMA DI MORRO D'ALBA • COLLELEVA	25.00
2020 PATRIMONIO ROUGE "CRU DES AGRIATE"	
DOMAINE GIACOMETTI	26.00
2020 VAUCLUSE ROUGE "LE PIGEOULET"	
FRÉDÉRIC & DANIEL BRUNIER	23.00
2021 BOURGUEIL "TRINCH!" • CATHERINE ET PIERRE BRETON . . .	31.00

Normally \$273.00

SPECIAL SAMPLER PRICE **\$205**

(a 25% discount)

BEAUJOLAIS

by Jane Augustine, KLWM NEW YORK

IT'S FUNNY HOW THE BEAUJOLAIS can be a gateway region for those who are just beginning to take their wine selections more seriously. It makes sense: in the realm of age-worthy, terroir-driven, and food-friendly wines, Beaujolais created by the greatest producers not only are well-priced for their value, but also they come with an underdog story—an endearing parable on the virtues of artisanship and perseverance in a region that few believed could amount to anything. What's not to love? Witnessing a curious consumer evolve into a full-blown collector, spreading the gospel of Gamay, *crus*, and *sans soufre*, will never get old! Once Beaujolais enters the picture, the world of fine wine awaits.

2021 BEAUJOLAIS ROSÉ DOMAINE DUPEUBLE

Domaine Dupeuble is one of a handful of producers who manage to execute all three shades of wine with aplomb. Many people are familiar with their *rouge*, but their rosé is equally inspiring, and as enjoyable a rosé as you can find at this price point. It's tart and silky, bursting with cherry and blood orange, yet never too fruity. With Dupeuble's rosé in your glass, you'll always be amenable to a top-up.

\$19.00 PER BOTTLE **\$205.20** PER CASE

2021 FLEURIE • GUY BRETON

Long, cold macerations are just one of the signature techniques that stylistically set Max Breton's Beaujolais apart from those of his peers. And while I'm loath to always compare his wines to the others in the Gang of Four, I'm forever drawn to understanding what makes each unique. His Fleurie is delicate, with buffed tannins and juicy fruit; it will leave your thirst slaked and your heart feeling light.

\$49.00 PER BOTTLE **\$529.20** PER CASE

2021 MORGON “VIEILLES VIGNES” JEAN PAUL & CHARLY THÉVENET

This vintage from Jean Paul and Charly Thévenet tastes as classic as any I can recall recently. Earthy and old-school, it excels in the role of the quintessential, naturally made Morgon of our dreams. For devotees, this might be the vintage you buy in bulk to cellar a few for later.

\$42.00 PER BOTTLE **\$453.60** PER CASE

SARDINIA: FOOD AND WINE

by Tom Wolf

2021 VERMENTINO DI SARDEGNA “STRIA” VIGNE RADA

In her book *Cucina*, Marcella Hazan adapted a soup of mussels, cranberry beans, celery, and basil she had once enjoyed in a restaurant in the northeastern Sardinian port town of Olbia. “When I was working on seafood recipes one summer,” she wrote, “it was the one dish that, once tasted, my friends asked me to make again and again.” Across the island, along Sardinia’s northwestern coast, Vigne Rada makes this *bianco* that serves as a perfect accompaniment to Hazan’s rendition of the dish. The Vermentino’s crispness and saline notes marry beautifully with the plump mussels, while the supporting flavors of ripe and freshly picked orchard fruit wonderfully complement the soup’s flavorful, hearty beans and spice.

\$29.00 PER BOTTLE **\$313.20** PER CASE

2020 ISOLA DEI NURAGHI BIANCO “PRAMA DORADA” • DEPERU HOLLER

A field blend of mostly Vermentino along with other indigenous grapes from the windswept mountains of northern Sardinia, this *bianco* tastes like a throwback to when everything was done by hand and with minimal intervention. A weeklong cold soak and a barely oxidative vinification bring out layers of texture and bone-dry flavors of almonds, orchard fruit, and salinity. Throw your favorite fish on the grill and pour a glass of this Prama Dorada for an ideal pairing.

\$52.00 PER BOTTLE **\$561.60** PER CASE

2020 CANNONAU DI SARDEGNA “BARROSU” GIOVANNI MONTISCI

At the biggest Sardinian celebrations, you’re likely to be greeted with a plate of slow-cooked pork—specifically, suckling pig—and a glass of flavor-packed and full-bodied red wine made from Cannonau, Sardinian Grenache. The island’s quintessential red grape, it yields one of Italy’s grandest *rossi*. In the center of the island, Giovanni Montisci makes robust and regal Cannonau, which gives the best Châteauneufs a run for their money. With intense flavors of blood orange, brambly fruit, licorice, and herbs, Barrosu is perfectly suited to a wide range of meat slow-cooked over coals.

\$76.00 PER BOTTLE **\$820.80** PER CASE

ITALY OFF THE BEATEN PATH

by Jane Augustine, KLWM NEW YORK

2015 AGLIANICO “MARRÀ” TERRE DEL VESCOVO

Unlike other wines you'll find in our values section, this Aglianico from Campania has the added appeal of bottle age. Typical of the grape—though not likely your typical wine experience—it delivers heady notes of smoky oolong tea, rosemary, and fig. Both the finish, which is as stony as slate, and the mature aromas will wow you.

\$21.00 PER BOTTLE

\$226.80 PER CASE

2020 CORVINA VERONESE “BECCO ROSSO” CORTE GARDONI

The star of this spry and punchy red, and surely the unsung hero of the region, is the Corvina grape. The Piccoli brothers farm their vines in the *grand cru* area of Bardolino, just southeast of Lake Garda, giving us an absolutely lip-smacking *rosso*. It's vibrant, fresh, and fun.

\$23.00 PER BOTTLE

\$248.40 PER CASE

2021 VALLE D'ITRIA BIANCO “FARAONE” I PÁSTINI

You'll recognize the root *verde* in Verdeca, the grape variety in this snappy and slightly aromatic Italian white, and the reason won't be lost on you. I Pástini is the only property we represent from the southern heel of Italy, which alone makes it intriguing to discover, but even more so for its notes of fresh ginger, lime blossom, and lemongrass.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2018 GRIGNOLINO DEL MONFERRATO CASALESE “EULI” • CANTINE VALPANE

The first thing that will surprise you is this Grignolino's pale garnet color, and then, despite that autumnal hue, its rather summery nose of peach and blueberry. With notes of mushroom and forest floor, it's more complex than the price would suggest.

\$19.00 PER BOTTLE

\$205.20 PER CASE

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🍷 A TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND TROLLAT (1931–2023) 🍷

WHEN I LOOKED OUT at how the wine world was composed, I liked that Raymond Trollat was there, so I was especially touched by his recent decease. That his small, off-the-beaten-path production became an object of international desire only enhanced Raymond's sense of wonder and sense of humor. Without taking it too seriously, he made remarkable Saint-Josephs. A huge thank-you to Gérard Chave, who invited me to visit Trollat's cellar back in 1979 and helped blend several early vintages of our unfiltered bottling.

—Kermit Lynch

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