

— Celebrating 50 Years of Fine Wine —

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

JULY 2022



Céline Champalou

© Gail Skoff

LOIRE BOUNTY • 2020 KL CÔTES DU RHÔNE
LAVANTUREUX CHABLIS • SUMMER REDS SAMPLER

From the Archives

VALUE OF THE MONTH

PETIT CHABLIS

by Kermit Lynch

IN TERMS OF QUALITY, a well-vinified Petit Chablis is preferable to a poorly made Chablis. Don't let the *petit* scare you away from this little lovely. The difference between Chablis and Petit Chablis in terms of geographical placement can be a matter of meters—the space between two rows of vines—and they are produced from the same grape.

Petit is not necessarily a derogatory word in France. However, it does indeed announce that the wine is not a grand one—this Petit Chablis, for example, does not have the depth or aging potential, the magnificence of the Raveneau wines offered on the next page, nor does it have the price of the Raveneau wines. Nor is it intended to be served when a great bottle is required. It is a *little* wine, but little wines can be full of charm and deliciousness. Above all, they should be fun to drink.

The small, rustic *cave* of Monsieur Lavantureux is outside the village of Chablis off the beaten path in Lignorelles where every house seems to boast a *chien méchant* and everyone stops and stares at a stranger's car as it passes.

His 1982 Petit Chablis is all Chardonnay with an impeccably fresh, pretty Chablis nose. It is bone-dry, of course, with a lively, supple character. It is a wine to drink now, this summer, and over the next two years. Aging will not improve it. You want it for its freshness, its nervosity and charm.

If it were shipped to California under normal conditions, I could not recommend a little wine like this Petit Chablis—its delicate perfume and vitality would vanish in the heat of the passage through Panama. But shipped at a controlled temperature, you have the wine in perfect condition. Enjoy!

—June 1983



LAVANTUREUX

by Anthony Lynch

WHEN I FIRST JOINED the squad at the Berkeley retail shop more than ten years ago, we had only two Lavantureux cuvées to offer: Chablis and Petit Chablis—benchmarks of our Burgundy portfolio since the mid-’80s. Staff and clients alike adored the wines for their reliable consistency from bottle to bottle and year to year, as well as for the unmistakable Chablis character they expressed so vividly.

Soon thereafter—coinciding with founder Roland Lavantureux’s sons, Arnaud and David, joining the domaine—we began to receive new offerings: a few cases of the dense and steely *grand cru* Vaudésir, then a shipment of charming, perfectly balanced *premier cru* Fourchaume. The new wines showed off the family’s hunger to fill out their lineup with a diverse collection of more serious and long-lived bottlings, and they also took on levels of depth, complexity, and flavor intensity we had not yet tasted from Lavantureux, without ever losing their Chablisien typicity.

My subsequent tastings at the domaine with Arnaud and David confirmed that they, like their close friends Isabelle and Maxime Raveneau, represent the future of Chablis. Beyond the brilliance of each release—you’ll find layers of elegant fruit, pristine transparency from site to site, and Kimmeridgian minerality in spades in each bottle—it is their humble, studied approach to the craft that is most striking. Their judicious hand with oak aging, or the composed way in which they have dealt with an increasingly capricious climate, sets them apart in Chablis and beyond. The brothers’ new venture with Pinot Noir, which has resulted in a luminous, stony *rouge* from vines planted by their grandfather in nearby Epineuil, is simply the cherry on top.

The following Lavantureux cuvées have just landed in Berkeley:

PER BOTTLE

2020 PETIT CHABLIS	\$31.00
2020 CHABLIS.	36.00
2020 CHABLIS “VIEILLES VIGNES”	41.00
2020 CHABLIS “VAUPRIN”	48.00
2020 CHABLIS 1ER CRU “VAU DE VEY”.	60.00
2020 CHABLIS 1ER CRU “FOURCHAUME”	60.00
2020 CHABLIS GRAND CRU “BOUGROS”	120.00
2020 CHABLIS GRAND CRU “VAUDÉSIR”	120.00
2020 BOURGOGNE EPINEUIL “LES FAUCONNIERS”.	55.00

— VALUE OF THE MONTH —

2020 CÔTES DU RHÔNE

SELECTED BY KERMIT LYNCH

by Tom Wolf

THIS EMBLEMATIC southern Rhône red originates half an hour east of Avignon, just outside a town whose name begins with Châteauneuf and whose vineyards are littered with the Rhône's most quintessential terroir feature: the rounded river stones called *galets roulés*. No, this is not *the* Châteauneuf—Châteauneuf-du-Pape—that brought the region fame through its history of papal schism and legendary wines, but Châteauneuf-de-Gadagne, a charming medieval village worthy of a stop the next time you find yourself near Avignon.

For this cuvée—our house blend—we use mostly Grenache, along with some Syrah, Mourvèdre, Carignan, and a splash of Marselan planted in a *galet*-strewn terroir, which reflects the southern sun into the forty-year-old vines and yields an expressive *rouge* full of beautiful aromas and flavors of black cherries, stones, and a hint of black olive. Year in and year out, we are amazed to find this much southern French character and deliciousness for the price of a movie ticket.

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE

\$161.46 PER CASE

UPCOMING

Classics Sale!

Visit our retail shop or
shop.kermitlynch.com between
Tuesday, July 19 and Saturday, July 30
for our annual Classics Sale.

Dozens of selections from regions we've traveled to
and imported for decades will be on sale:

*Burgundy, the Loire, Piedmont,
Tuscany, and more!*

A TASTE OF PIEDMONT

by Jane Berg, KLWM NEW YORK

2019 ROSSO DEI DARDI ALESSANDRO E GIAN NATALE FANTINO

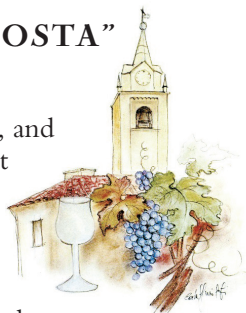
Brothers Alessandro and Gian Natale must spend a lot of quality time in their quiet *cantina* in Monforte. They're men of few words, soft-spoken and reserved, and their wines show a similar restraint. Never showy, but full of charm, their Rosso dei Dardi delivers all the classic black fruit you'd expect from Piedmont, including that fragrant, perfumed note of peony so quintessential to Italian reds. This *rosso* is worthy of slow-cooked tomato dishes, roasted red meats with branches of fresh herbs, or—even more simply—pizza night for two.

\$23.00 PER BOTTLE

\$248.40 PER CASE

2020 DOLCETTO D'ALBA "LA COSTA" PIERO BENEVELLI

I have always had a soft spot for Massimo Benevelli's wines, and when it comes to his Dolcetto, I don't believe a more perfect one exists. I love how bone-dry and tangy it is, not in a tannic or astringent way but in a bright, bitter way, like an invigorating herbal tonic. It's savory and classic, with brambly black fruit and a bold, old-school Italian bite. A case of this will become my summer red; I am hopelessly hooked.



\$19.00 PER BOTTLE

\$205.20 PER CASE

2014 BAROLO "VIGNA LAZZAIRASCO" GUIDO PORRO

We often refer to Porro as our "value" Barolo producer, which makes sense considering the price, but the term is misleading if you assume higher-end Baroli must be more remarkable. With nearly a decade of age on it, this vintage of Lazzairasco embodies the Barolo paradox—it's full-bodied and structured, intense and mouth-filling, and yet impossibly delicate and easy to drink. Exuding violet, smoke, and leathery notes, it has me craving Judy Rodgers's unbeatable Zuni chicken with warm bread salad and dried currants (look up the recipe!).

\$56.00 PER BOTTLE

\$604.80 PER CASE

LOIRE BOUNTY

by Dixon Brooke

2021 BOURGUEIL ROSÉ DOMAINE DE LACHANTELEUSERIE

The Boucard family produces this lovely Cabernet Franc rosé from the sandy soils around their home and winery in the central Loire. Pretty and elegant, with a taste of fresh peaches and nectarines, it is perfect for your summer table.



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

2021 SANCERRE ROSÉ “LE COLOMBIER” DOMAINE ROGER NEVEU

Sancerre Rosé is made from Pinot Noir grown in Kimmeridgian limestone soil—that great soil of Chablis fame—and the Neveu family’s interpretation is fine, floral, crisp, and bone-dry. It serves the *apéritif* role quite well.

\$31.00 PER BOTTLE **\$334.80** PER CASE

VOUVRAY BRUT • CHAMPALOU

The Champalous make the finest sparkling wine in France outside of Champagne. Their secret? Pampered Chenin Blanc vines farmed in high-quality limestone soils and hand-riddled in their small family cellar. The talented Céline Champalou is pictured on the cover of this brochure, surveying and sharing her latest vinous exploits.

\$27.00 PER BOTTLE **\$291.60** PER CASE

2019 VAL DE LOIRE BLANC “FIÉ GRIS” ÉRIC CHEVALIER



An unusual find here, made from the rare Sauvignon Gris grape and grown in Muscadet country near the Atlantic Ocean, this savory, spicy, dry white is a great accompaniment to herby and citrusy salads and dishes. Our sales whiz in San Diego, Kate MacWilliamson, recommends her local fish tacos with fresh radishes, cabbage, cilantro, and lime as the ultimate pairing, and she gets no argument from me!

\$28.00 PER BOTTLE **\$302.40** PER CASE

2020 POUILLY FUMÉ “VIEILLES VIGNES” RÉGIS MINET

Minet, now joined by his daughter Lucia, makes a pitch-perfect, pure Sauvignon Blanc from their chalky vineyards along the banks of the Loire River at Pouilly-sur-Loire. Chill it well, and serve it with a fresh baguette and goat cheese for the type of blissful local pairing that is still going strong hundreds of years on.

\$30.00 PER BOTTLE

\$324.00 PER CASE

2018 SAUMUR BLANC “L’ÉCHELIER” THIERRY GERMAIN

Chalky and citrusy, with lemon verbena and ripe *oro blanco* grapefruit, this racy, zesty Chenin Blanc from Saumur master Thierry Germain is a truly stunning example of the heights this grape can achieve. Aged to perfection in oval *foudres* in his cool limestone cellars then for several more years in bottle, this beauty is ready for prime time. Spectacular!



\$94.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,015.20 PER CASE

2021 VAL DE LOIRE GROLLEAU CATHERINE & PIERRE BRETON

Catherine and Pierre Breton have handed the keys of their cellar in Bourgueil to their daughter France and her husband, Baptiste, who have made the entire family proud with this light-bodied, whole-cluster vinified, luscious Grolleau made for drinking cool. *Épaulé-Jeté* lives on!

\$31.00 PER BOTTLE

\$334.80 PER CASE

2020 SAUMUR CHAMPIGNY “TERRES CHAUDES” THIERRY GERMAIN

The appellation of Saumur Champigny, like some of its easterly neighbors in the Touraine, is famed for its white *tuffeau* limestone along the banks of the Loire—dazzling cellars, châteaux built from their excavation, and, of course, wines. Its wines are red and made from Cabernet Franc, and Thierry has perfected the art of coaxing this grape’s soulfulness and elusive finesse into bottle. This most recently arrived vintage of his signature red is generous, thickly textured, and ready to impress at table.



\$51.00 PER BOTTLE

\$550.80 PER CASE



A map of Corsica in Giovanni Montisci's cellar in Mamoiada, Sardinia

© Gail Skoff

THREE ISLANDS

by Anthony Lynch

2019 VINO BIANCO “MODESTU” GIOVANNI MONTISCI

To best enjoy this skin-contact dry Moscato from Sardinia, start by throwing out all your preconceptions about skin-contact wines, Moscato, and Sardinia. Made from old vines in sandy granitic soils at high elevation in the heart of the Gennargentu Massif, not far from the island’s four ski resorts, it speaks more to its extreme terroir than to technique or varietal character. The ever-changing aromas and textures recall a juicy cocktail of citrus, apricot, dried herbs, and wildflowers, while the savory finish saturates the senses with salinity, spice, and stony grit. Sea urchin pasta is the ultimate pairing, but it works surprisingly well with chips and guac.

\$62.00 PER BOTTLE

\$669.60 PER CASE

2018 CERASUOLO DI VITTORIA • PORTELLI

Calabrese (a local synonym for Nero d’Avola) and Frappato were meant for each other. In southern Sicily’s Cerasuolo di Vittoria appellation, they combine to create a *vino rosso* scented of lavender blossoms and scorched earth, allying the strength and dark, almost rustic side of Calabrese with Frappato’s gentle, pillowy texture and bright floral perfume. The lively acidity and savory pungency make this red an ideal match for cooked tomatoes in all their iterations.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

2019 VIN DE FRANCE ROUGE “MONTE BIANCO” DOMAINE COMTE ABBATUCCI

If Corsican Sciaccarellu has proven its ability to make fresh, fragrant, crunchy wines that provide immediate pleasure, the island’s principal autochthonous red grape can aspire to even grander things under the right conditions. Produced from a steep, north-facing slope of thin, whitish granite that gives the cuvée its name, Monte Bianco is Jean-Charles AbbattuCCI’s *grand cru*-level Sciaccarellu. Suave and refined, it is a luxurious expression of this most Corsican grape, bearing an opulent bouquet of wild berries, roses, and Mediterranean vegetation baking under a hot sun. Drink it now and over the next few years with dishes featuring abundant earthy spice, such as Persian lamb shanks, eggplant tagine, or chicken biryani.

\$98.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,058.40 PER CASE

NORTHERN RHÔNE

by Chris Santini, KLWM BEAUNE

2019 CROZES HERMITAGE “TIERCEROLLES” BARRUOL / LYNCH

If one were to author a book called “The Great Wines of Crozes Hermitage,” it would be a quick read. It is the northern Rhône’s largest appellation, and yet historically there hasn’t been much to write home about. When Kermit first started poking around there in the ’70s, Gérard Chave told him only one grower was making wines of any note (whom, sure enough, Kermit was importing soon thereafter). Thankfully, things look brighter today. The best terroirs are better treated, and some lovely wines are coming from the area. Louis Barruol vinifies several of the finest parcels the appellation has to offer, and the result is exactly what a Crozes should be—a gateway wine, serious but a bit more approachable than its bigger sibling, the grand old Hermitage. This juicy, blueberry-and-leather-infused Syrah with a long finish is ready to drink tonight.

\$40.00 PER BOTTLE

\$432.00 PER CASE

2019 SAINT JOSEPH ROUGE “VIEILLES VIGNES” LIONEL FAURY

What I love most about Faury’s old-vine Saint Joe are the lively, peppery aromatics offered right at the first pour. The roots of these vines run deep, and deep is what you get in the glass, too—a rich mix of black olive, fennel, and raspberry. This cuvée is a longtime personal favorite, solid and dependable year in and year out, from the domaine’s oldest vines, situated in the famed “Le Blanchard” parcel on the northern tip of the Saint Joseph appellation.

\$50.00 PER BOTTLE

\$540.00 PER CASE

2018 CÔTE RÔTIE “LA BOISSELÉE” BARRUOL / LYNCH

Sure, it has the violets and spice of great Côte Rôtie, but also a dense and delicious Syrah luxuriance you want to bite off and chew. After a recent tasting, I tried to order a few bottles from the estate for my personal cellar and was sadly denied. Very few bottles of this wine were made, and with demand so high, every last one has now shipped off to the USA. I envy all who can still find a few for the cellar!

\$90.00 PER BOTTLE

\$972.00 PER CASE

PIQUE-NIQUE REDS

6-BOTTLE SAMPLER

by Tom Wolf

FROM THE STONY, structured *rouges* of the southern Rhône to the dense, *appassimento*-style *rossi* of the foothills of the Italian Alps, I love many of the bigger red wines that we import. But when I'm packing a red for a lazy afternoon in the park or a mid-hike lunch break to recharge and take in the views, what I want, first and foremost, is a bottle that's refreshing, invigorating, and relatively light on its feet, like the six cuvées below from France and Italy. Take Edi Kante's Ludvik, for example. A blend of mostly Pinot Nero and Terrano (and a blend of the 2015 and 2016 vintages!) from Italy's northeastern coast, this perfumed *rosso* delivers a lot of flavor—red berries and spice—while retaining its silky, lithe, cool-climate profile. Consider Alex Foillard's gorgeous Brouilly, an ambrosial *rouge* with the perfect frame to pair with *saucisson*, pâté, or whatever else might be tucked away in your picnic basket or cooler. Or, from the slopes of Saint-Pierre, in the shadow of Mont Blanc (where I wish I could take my picnic), there's Château Feuillet's exuberant, floral, and peppery Torrette, perfect with any semi-firm and mild cheese such as the local cow's milk cheese called Fontina. But even without a grand view of the Alps, these reds will have you covered. Keep them chilled if you can, and don't forget your corkscrew!



PER BOTTLE

2020 MONFERRATO ROSSO • TENUTA LA PERGOLA	\$16.00
2020 VALLE D'AOSTA TORRETTE • CHÂTEAU FEUILLET	28.00
2019 BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR • RÉGIS BOUVIER	29.00
2021 BOURGUEIL "AVIS DE VIN FORT"	
CATHERINE & PIERRE BRETON	31.00
NV VENEZIA GIULIA ROSSO "LUDVIK" • KANTE	35.00
2019 BROUILLY • ALEX FOILLARD	48.00

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AFTER FIFTY YEARS of bringing you our hand-selected imports from the wine regions of France and Italy, we are still not done. We continue to find new gems, giving you plenty to look forward to in the coming months and years. But the future of KLWM is not only about the fascinating little domaines we've just discovered in Sicily, Southwest France, or the Provençal Alps: some of our longtime partners are undergoing exciting changes that have us all wide-eyed and mouth watering with anticipation. This month, we look at a rock-star Chablis grower whom we have represented for nearly forty years—no, not the one you're thinking of—where a generational transition has just taken place. Look inside to read about how it all started (p. 2) and where things are at today (p. 3). We millennials aren't so bad after all, are we?

—Kermit, Dixon, but mostly Anthony

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