

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

FEBRUARY 2014



© Gail Skoff

Abbatucci shows how dynamic his biodynamic vines really are

CUVÉE SPÉCIALE ROSÉ! ■ THE LOST GRAPES OF CORSICA
2012 VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE PRE-ARRIVAL

CHAMPAGNE J. LASSALLE

CUVÉE SPÉCIALE ROSÉ!

by Dixon Brooke

IT HAS BEEN a long time since the Lassalles have released a new cuvée. And there is a reason for that. When the Lassalle family chooses to release a new wine, it is not taken lightly. They don't release new wines just because they can. Every new release they've come out with over the past several decades has become a long-term classic. Their standards are as high as anybody's in Champagne.



This new rosé was a joint project with KLWM. Kermit pulled out an old bottle of 1959 Cuvée Spéciale to show off at a party last year with an old rose-covered label (the domaine is in the village of Chigny-les-Roses on the Montagne de Reims) that Jules Lassalle had used for his *cuvée spéciale* back in his day. (Unfortunately, the bottle was empty, but we did enjoy a pristine magnum of their 1979 Blanc de Blancs.) We contacted the Lassalles about reviving the label, and as luck would have it, they had a batch of reserve wine that they had been considering using for a special new release. The label was revived, the wine was disgorged, *et voilà!*

Uncommon elegance, winery complexity, pale color, a silky bead, and a flavor profile only possible with base wines all *at least* five years old: this is a fitting tribute to the Lassalle legacy and a must for your cellar and table.

\$89.00 PER BOTTLE

\$961.20 PER CASE

ABBATUCCI'S "COLLECTION" WINES

THE LOST GRAPES OF CORSICA

by Chris Santini

2012 "BR" *BLANC*

"BR" here is short for Barbarossa, a pink-skinned grape, which Abbattucci ferments without skin contact to make a clear juice. The result is an extraordinary mix of smoke, peat, and a hop-like bouquet, with a sharp and fresh crystalline purity on the palate.

\$68.00 PER BOTTLE

\$734.40 PER CASE

2012 "GÉNÉRAL DE LA RÉVOLUTION" *BLANC*

Abbattucci likes to say that this one is so taut and tense you can cut it with scissors. A blend of six different, wildly exotic grapes (see our website for the list), this puts forward the finesse of the intricate and complex granite element of Corsica. Firm and self-assured as a general should be.

\$98.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,058.40 PER CASE

2012 "DIPLOMATE D'EMPIRE" *BLANC*

Rich and exuberant, long and persistent, here's an instantly gratifying wine that is bound to raise eyebrows. Abbattucci recommends drinking this with a grilled lobster that has been given nothing but a fine trickle of olive oil.

\$98.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,058.40 PER CASE

2012 "MINISTRE IMPÉRIAL" *ROUGE*

If you need to sum up Corsica in one wine, this is it. Start at the sea with the saline notes, then move up to the hard rock which juts dramatically out of that sea, to the wild brush of myrtle and *immortelle de Corse* which grows on that rock, to the untamed animal side of the boars and game which roam the brush. Corsica is known as *l'Île de Beauté*, and that goes for its wines, too.

\$98.00 PER BOTTLE

\$1,058.40 PER CASE

VINTAGE BORDEAUX

by Dixon Brooke

WE DON'T OFFER something like this every day. When we do, we do our homework. If you ever find yourself near Fronsac, a few miles directly west of Pomerol and just above the Dordogne River on Bordeaux's right bank, I encourage you to seek out Château Moulin Pey-Labrie and call on Grégoire and Bénédicte Hubau. It is refreshing to see hillsides planted to the vine here—the exception rather than the rule in this part of France. When you view their vineyards from their home (château) at the top of the hill, you will understand immediately that this is a *terroir* for great wine. The Hubaus are passionate about the land and work it organically. They make wines with unique character, nonconformist wines, intellectual wines, and, above all, exciting wines.



2005 FRONSAC • CHÂTEAU HAUT LARIVEAU

Here is a Bordeaux you can crack into right now or lay down for many years of drinking pleasure. Haut Lariveau combines gravelly terrain with hillside limestone for an exercise in finesse and noblesse. Have fun.

\$37.00 PER BOTTLE

\$399.60 PER CASE

2004 CANON FRONSAC CHÂTEAU MOULIN PEY-LABRIE

This wine is the biggest and baddest of the Hubau lineup. We recently sold out of the 2005, which was just starting to enter its drinking window but was still a very young buck. I would not touch the 2009s and 2010s from this property yet. This 2004 is beautifully mature, with fine, silky tannins and heavenly perfume. Merlot from these limestone hillsides is a thing of great beauty.



\$42.00 PER BOTTLE

\$453.60 PER CASE

SOUTHERN RHÔNE RED SAMPLER

by Clark Z. Terry

THE VARIETY OF RED wine produced in the southern Rhône is a story of slopes and stones, with one common denominator—Grenache. The Rhône Valley is so wide it takes nearly an hour in the car to traverse. You'll notice when driving across that there are many hills and plateaus located in the valley—great vineyards aren't only planted on the sides, but nearly everywhere. The stones? You can hardly take a step in a vineyard without finding stones littering the soil or the *galets roulés*—large, rounded riverbed stones made famous by Châteauneuf but also found in Lirac and elsewhere. It's a challenge to walk, let alone work, in the midst of these vines. But the vines no doubt work harder than anyone, and the vineyards are planted predominantly to Grenache with a handful of other grapes, like Syrah, Mourvèdre, Cinsault, and Carignan.



© Clark Z. Terry

The proof, as we like to say, is in the bottle. The various combinations of slopes, stones, and grapes create nearly unlimited diversity. Unlimited is a lot of wine, so we've selected just six to present to you this month. They hail from the various corners of the southern Rhône, all represent different appellations, and some are to drink now (Beaumes-de-Venise, Mégaphone, Il Fait Soif) and some to drink in a few years (Lirac, Côtes du Vivarais). If you stash one away for a number of years, let it be Les Pallières, from Gigondas.

PER BOTTLE

2012 BEAUMES-DE-VENISE • DOMAINE DE DURBAN	\$18.00
2012 VENTOUX <i>ROUGE</i> "MÉGAPHONE" • BRUNIER	22.00
2011 LIRAC "LE CLASSIQUE" • DOMAINE DU JONCIER	24.00
2011 CÔTES DU RHÔNE "IL FAIT SOIF" • MAXIME LAURENT . . .	27.00
2010 CÔTES DU VIVARAIS • DOMAINE GALLETY	32.00
2010 GIGONDAS "TERRASSE DU DIABLE" • LES PALLIÈRES	49.00

Normally \$172.00

SPECIAL SAMPLER PRICE **\$129**
(a 25% discount)

—PRE-ARRIVAL OFFER—

2012 VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE

by Dixon Brooke

THERE IS PROBABLY no wine more identifiable to our company than VT, as most of us call it around here. Kermit calls it Vieux Télec. The quality and longevity of this noble Rhône red is so incredibly consistent that we almost take it for granted (stress on the almost). As the number of offers hitting your inbox and mailbox climbs to unprecedented highs, it is important to step back and remember the tried and true, the old reliables that remain the best and surest investments in fine wine today. It is also important to remember the heights that old-vine Grenache can reach when planted on these arid, stony plateaus in the shadows of Mount Ventoux. Brothers Daniel and Frédéric Brunier own one of the most enviable sites in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, the magical moonscape of La Crau. Their *terroir*, their *savoir-faire*, and their steadfast adherence to tradition have kept these wines among the world's best, and also among its greatest price-to-quality ratios when you consider their proven track record for aging and developing into marvels. Thirty-plus vintages with KLWM and still going strong, VT remains a pride and a joy to sell and to enjoy.

\$780.00 PER CASE FIFTHS

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METHUSELAHS, SALMANAZARS, AND NEBUCHADNEZZARS

*Pre-arrival terms: Half-payment due with order;
balance due upon arrival.*





La Crau

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WORKING WOMAN'S BURGUNDY

by Jane Berg

2012 PETIT CHABLIS DOMAINE ROLAND LAVANTUREUX

Steely, mineral, electric—wines from Chablis really ought to be cellared for years. What a shame to open a *premier* or *grand cru* before its time. Here is a tip: Don't! Drink Lavantureux's Petit Chablis now. Their vines in the village of Lignorelles are perched on slopes (better sun exposure) and, unlike the lesser versions from the plains, lie elbow to elbow with parcels of Chablis. Allow this wine to serve as a sneak peak into the great 2012 vintage without committing *vinocide*, the geeky but very real term for opening a bottle of wine before it's ready.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE

2012 MÂCON-VILLAGES • HENRI PERRUSSET

This past summer I had the privilege of blending our 2012 Mâcon-Villages with Henri and Dixon. We gathered around a lineup of sample bottles displayed atop a retired oak barrel and waited patiently while Henri fetched a graduated cylinder, three clean glasses, and, for precision's sake, his bifocals. After tasting each sample individually, we began the process: 5 ml from one bottle added to 5 ml from another and so on. We sniffed, swished, and spat blend after blend, taking notes like avid chemistry students. The 2012 yields were so low in Burgundy you'd think we'd be inclined to just take it all. But that's not the KLWM way. Only the best made it into our blend that day.

\$17.95 PER BOTTLE

\$193.86 PER CASE

2011 BOURGOGNE PASSETOUTGRAIN DOMAINE ROBERT CHEVILLON

Because I live in Burgundy, people think that all I drink is *premier cru* this and *grand cru* that. Well, that would be nice, but my rich tastes surpass my means, and the reality is you'll find me rummaging through the bargain bin like the rest of 'em. The best bargain in the Côte de Nuits? We have a few in our portfolio, but today I'll spotlight Cheillon's Passetoutgrain, a blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay, made by one of the most celebrated producers north of the South Pole. Here is your opportunity to discover—or revisit—the unique Cheillon style without requiring a bid on their pricier *premier crus*.

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE

\$280.80 PER CASE

VALUES FROM ITALY

by Dixon Brooke

2009 PAESAN • GUIDO PORRO

Nebbiolo and Barbera, the two very different yet wonderfully complementary grapes of the Langhe, combine forces here. Playful Barbera fruit and mouth-watering acidity support the spicy, floral tones and structure of the Nebbiolo to give you an ultra-traditional *piemontese* table wine from Serralunga d'Alba.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2011 BANDINELLO • VILLA DI GEGGIANO

Now it is Sangiovese's turn to impress in this always friendly, easygoing wine from the Chianti Classico zone. Smooth, fruit-driven, with plenty of Tuscan charm, this is fun to drink.

\$20.00 PER BOTTLE

\$216.00 PER CASE

2012 VINO ROSSO • TINTERO

Over the years our customers have become accustomed to filling up their trunks with Marco Tintero's frightfully tasty, insanely inexpensive Moscato d'Asti. Then came Marco's slightly sparkling dry white, Grangia. Now we can experience the too-good-to-be-true Tintero value and deliciousness through red-colored lenses.

\$9.95 PER BOTTLE

\$107.46 PER CASE

2012 LUMASSINA FRIZZANTE • PUNTA CRENA

We've been dancing a jig like the couple on the label ever since we discovered this Ligurian gem. Made from the indigenous Lumassina grape, planted on terraces above the Mediterranean, naturally and gently sparkling, it knows no enemy!

\$18.00 PER BOTTLE

\$194.40 PER CASE

2012 BIANCO DI CUSTOZA • CORTE GARDONI

My house pour since I moved to San Francisco in 1999. The price has barely increased on this little beauty, but the quality has only gone up. A delightful blend of mostly Garganega and Trebbiano, this is a dry Venetian white that I never tire of. Go ahead, spend more on a bottle of Soave, if you like to.

\$12.95 PER BOTTLE

\$139.86 PER CASE

TOP CRUS OF THE LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON

by Dixon Brooke

I LOVE THIS OFFER because it is equally adapted to those who know nothing about the Languedoc-Roussillon and those who are experts. This list is a who's who of the great winemakers in the region today and their top cuvées, but that doesn't mean the wines are inaccessible to anyone (both in price and in style). No, this will read as an all-star must-have list for aficionados, and for those who are just discovering the incredible value, diversity, and quality that the region has to offer, it is the ultimate way to cut your teeth.

2011 SAINT-CHINIAN ROUGE "CAUSSE DU BOUSQUET" • MAS CHAMPART

This Syrah-dominated blend from a high-altitude limestone plateau always makes me think of "bouquet" because the aromas are so intriguing and bewitching.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

2011 MONTPEYROUX DOMAINE D'AUPILHAC

Sylvain Fadat's flagship bottling comes from a hillside of fossilized blue marl behind his home that gives one of the most unique (and incredibly long-lived) reds of the south, and an amazing value.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE



2011 PIC SAINT LOUP ROUGE "CUVÉE SAINTE AGNÈS" ERMITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP

The Ravaille brothers farm this parcel on the slopes of the famous Pic Saint Loup. White limestone, wild herbs, and blue sky produce this energetic, complex red.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2012 CORBIÈRES “ROZETA” MAXIME MAGNON



From grapes planted in both the schist of Fitou and the limestone of the Hautes-Corbières, this Carignan-dominated blend is from one of the region's most talented young stars.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

2012 COLLIOURE “LA PINÈDE” DOMAINE LA TOUR VIEILLE

A *pinède* is a pine forest. Take one whiff and you'll see why they called it that. One of the most beautiful ports on the Mediterranean is also the home to intriguing and delicious red wine.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

2010 FAUGÈRES “JADIS” DOMAINE LÉON BARRAL

Didier Barral and his brother Jean-Luc are champions of the biodynamic viticulture movement in France. There is no more intense way to experience the wild and rugged landscape of the Languedoc than through their old-vine bottlings from the schist capital of the south. Be prepared for a voyage of discovery with each taste of this transformative wine.



\$42.00 PER BOTTLE

\$453.60 PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT—TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All wines purchased from Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant are deemed sold in California and title passes to the buyer in California. We make no representation relative to the customer's right to import wine into his/her state. In placing an order, the customer represents to Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant that he/she is at least 21 years of age and the person to whom delivery will be made is at least 21 years old.

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2010 CÔTE ROTIE “LES ROSES”

BLENDED BY KERMIT LYNCH

by Clark Z. Terry

THE MAGIC OF GREAT Côte Rôtie does not come from its reputation for being a big, bombastic wine. In fact, what you’re looking for is a balance of the wild, meaty, earthy characteristics, with the graceful aromas of—like the name of this particular wine—roses. Do not be fooled. Syrah with restraint gives the most depth, complexity, and aging potential.

We are now in our third vintage of Les Roses, sourced this year from the *lieux-dits* Buffin, Brosse-Champin, and Fongeant. For those of you who have cellared a few, you’re in for a treat, as the 2008, though still young, is evolving beautifully. Add the 2010 to your collection—a true classic such as this is a rarity these days.



\$70.00 PER BOTTLE

\$756.00 PER CASE