

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

JUNE 2017



© Gail Skoff

ITALIAN CHARM FOR SALE • QUINTARELLI • SERIOUS ROSÉS

QUINTARELLI

by Dixon Brooke

AT A CERTAIN POINT, words really aren't sufficient or appropriate to describe what the Quintarellis have achieved in wine. When one's name becomes synonymous with the very best, the ultimate in quality and craftsmanship, every bottle that carries the signature is living proof of the legend, and tasting is believing. We offer you below our in-stock list of the latest arrivals from the maestro, shipped directly under the strictest temperature-controlled conditions from the Quintarelli cellars in Negrar to our Berkeley warehouse. Make a few of your meals this year truly memorable by pairing them with a bottle of Quintarelli.

	PER BOTTLE	PER CASE
2013 PRIMOFIORE	\$60.00	\$648.00
2009 ROSSO "CÀ DEL MERLO".90.00	972.00
2009 ROSSO "CÀ DEL MERLO" MAGNUM	230.00	1,242.00
2009 ROSSO "CÀ DEL MERLO" JEROBOAM	470.00	
2009 VALPOLICELLA CLASSICO SUPERIORE.90.00	972.00
2009 VALPOLICELLA CLASSICO SUPERIORE MAGNUM	230.00	1,242.00
2009 VALPOLICELLA CLASSICO SUPERIORE JEROBOAM	470.00	
2007 ALZERO CABERNET (6-BOTTLE CASE)	400.00	2,160.00
2007 ALZERO CABERNET MAGNUM	1,000.00	5,400.00
2007 ALZERO CABERNET JEROBOAM	2,000.00	



CHARM FOR SALE

by Kermit Lynch

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, but at times I'm in the mood for black cherries, even though they may not be in season. So, what to do? Take, for example, these two 2015 Dolcettos. Take one, it's yours! However, it will cost you a few bucks. A few, not many. The best things in life are not always free.

I see on Amazon that one can still purchase Victor Hazan's very special, very handy book, *Italian Wines*. Here are some excerpts about Dolcetto:

Those who recognize in Dolcetto's name the Latin root it shares with Italian, Spanish, French, and English words for sweet—*dolce*, *dulce*, *douce*, *dulcet*—may be puzzled to find it is a totally dry wine. Sweetness, however, is an appropriate term to describe the character, if not the taste, of Dolcetto. It is an intensely fruity, soft-bodied wine, low in acid, high in charm, one whose easy drinking qualities make it the most instantly attractive of Piedmont's red wines.

The locals say that if you analyze a sample of their blood, half of it will turn out to be Dolcetto.

That Dolcetto should be paramount in the affections of people whose region produces Italy's most important red wines is testimony to its substantial charms.

Parts of Dolcetto country are also in Barolo country, but when you sit down to eat with the family of a man who makes both wines, if you are more a friend than guest, it will be Dolcetto rather than Barolo that you'll find on the table.

Welcome to 2015 and two Dolcettos as good as I've ever tasted. Enter the world of delicious, ripe, black cherry intensity. Breathe in deeply the amazing aroma. The flavors coat your taste buds! You who share my hunger for black cherries, don't miss it. All the rest of you, you're welcome to enjoy it, too.

Diano d'Alba, by the way, is a very special *terroir* in Piedmont expressly devoted to Dolcetto. It produces Piedmont's most charming red wine. My advice: a little charm won't do you no harm.

IL PALAZZOTTO

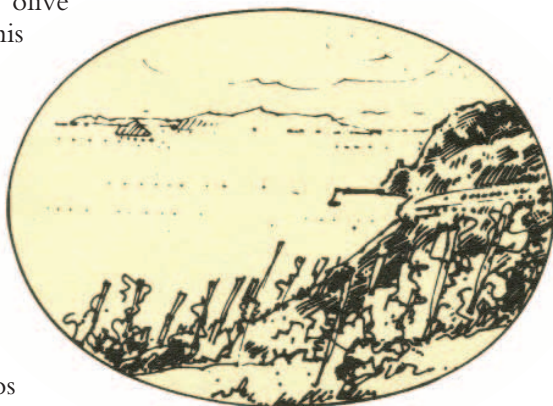
	PER BOTTLE	PER CASE
2015 DOLCETTO DI DIANO D'ALBA "SÖRÌ CRISTINA"	\$16.95	\$183.06
2015 DOLCETTO DI DIANO D'ALBA		
"SÖRÌ SANTA LUCIA"	19.00	205.20

PUNTA CRENA'S SUMMER MARKET

by Dixon Brooke

2016 EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

Continuing our theme of farm-to-table olive oils from our wine and olive growers in France and Italy, this month we bring you one of the true gems of the Mediterranean basin: Punta Crena's extra virgin oil, produced by the Ruffino family since 1500! The family's *olio* is produced from the same olive trees as always, literally, as these ancient trees are now more than one thousand years old. The Ruffinos farm Liguria's storied Taggiasca variety, which many insist is the world's greatest culinary olive. Their venerable trees grow on stony terraces high above the Mediterranean along the Via Aurelia, an ancient Roman road that hugs the rugged Ligurian cliffs. This oil is light, aromatic, and flavorful—perfect for fish, salads, and the other Mediterranean cuisine you are likely to enjoy in the spring and summer months.



\$24.00 PER 500-ML BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER 12-BOTTLE CASE

IN STOCK FROM PUNTA CRENA

	PER BOTTLE	PER CASE
2015 LUMASSINA BIANCO	\$19.95	\$215.46
2015 BARBAROSSA ROSATO	22.00	237.60
2015 LUMASSINA FRIZZANTE	19.95	215.46
2015 PETTIROSSO ALLEGRO	19.95	215.46
2013 SPUMANTE BRUT (MATAÒSSU)	28.00	302.40
2015 ROSSESE "VIGNETO ISASCO"	27.00	291.60
2014 CRUVIN ROSSO	34.00	367.20



Homegrown produce for sale at Punta Crena

© Clark Z. Terry

SALUMI WHITES

by Anthony Lynch

2015 MÜLLER THURGAU “SASS RIGAI” MANNI NÖSSING

It is rather frightening to watch a robustly built, full-grown mountain man approach you brandishing a razor-sharp, foot-long blade. Only when you realize that the knife is destined for the large hunk of speck he wields in his other hand can you turn off your fight-or-flight instincts, settle down, and begin sniffing the crisp white wine that has appeared in front of you. Manni Nössing has served you his latest vintage of Müller Thurgau, an exotically perfumed elixir with tropical nuances that races across the palate like meltwater rushing down a stony mountainside. This is exactly what you need to complement tender, savory, delicately smoky cuts of artisanally carved local ham.

\$30.00 PER BOTTLE **\$324.00** PER CASE

2016 PIGNOLETTO FRIZZANTE FATTORIA MORETTO

Emilia—the western part of the Emilia-Romagna region—specializes in fizzy wines. Whether they are white, red, or some shade in between, made from any number of intriguing indigenous grape varieties, they all tend to bubble. As it turns out, crisp, quaffable *frizzanti* are the perfect match for the notoriously rich local culinary specialties. Thin slices of cured pig, pastas coated in slow-cooked, meaty *ragù*, and cheeses ranging from creamy to intensely savory all have their place on the Emilian table. This dry sparkler from the white Pignoletto grape—a breezy blast of flowers, citrus, and fresh herbs—is just the ticket to cleanse the palate and quench your thirst when a heaping pile of locally produced cheeses and salty cured meats appears before you.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE

2015 RIBOLLA GIALLA • LA VIARTE

The crystalline freshness of this native Friulian white makes it a godsend at table: consider this the ultimate wine for your *aperitivi* and antipasti when you desire a mouthwatering, mineral-driven *bianco*. The variety's trademark is a subtle bitter-almond finish that lends itself to some of the more divine prosciutto pairings achievable in fine wine. Until then, it's all bright, lively, citrus and floral notes that simultaneously allay thirst and inspire much more of it.

\$23.00 PER BOTTLE **\$248.40** PER CASE

VINI ROSSI DA VITIGNI VECCHI

by *Dustin Soiseth*

ITALY HAS A LOT OF DIFFERENT WINE GRAPES, and I mean a lot. Some counts put it at more than sixteen hundred different varietals, many with deep roots in the historical record. Here are three unique grapes grown almost exclusively in their own corners of Italy, each one a piece of living history.

2015 CORVINA VERONESE “BECCO ROSSO” CORTE GARDONI

I’m often surprised when I sample, on its own, a grape that is more often encountered in a blend. Corvina Veronese is one of three grapes used in the famously rich Amarone, but Corte Gardoni’s *rosso* is an entirely different expression. A lovely pale ruby color with a candied cherry and fresh piney note, it’s the perfect substitute for your usual weekday red.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE

2015 VALLE D’AOSTA “FUMIN” CHÂTEAU FEUILLET

My first thought was, “This smells fantastic!” My second thought was, “Wait, Fumin?” A recent survey put the total worldwide production of dark-skinned Fumin at less than two hundred acres, mostly confined to the steep Alpine vineyards of the Valle d’Aosta. With a nose like this—ripe blackberries, earthiness, and smoke—wine drinkers and vintners alike are sure to take notice.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE **\$388.80** PER CASE

2014 GARDA MARZEMINO “LE MORENE” LA BASIA

Opera buffs may recognize Marzemino as Don Giovanni’s drink of choice in the great Mozart opera. It’s a very old varietal with roots in the Veneto, where, probably not coincidentally, *Don Giovanni* librettist Lorenzo da Ponte lived and worked. From there it spread to other nearby regions, including Lake Garda. You need not share the full range of the randy don’s appetites to enjoy this dark-fruited red. A hankering for *salumi*, olives, and a hard sheep milk cheese will do.

\$18.00 PER BOTTLE **\$194.40** PER CASE

SESTI

by Anthony Lynch

IN 1975, WHEN GIUSEPPE SESTI purchased the hilltop ruins of the Castello di Argiano in the southern part of the Brunello di Montalcino zone, the local wine had yet to achieve the international prestige it enjoys today. Production methods tended toward the rustic, and very few estates bottled the deeply colored, rich red wine we now associate with the area. In fact, these Tuscan slopes remained so wild that Giugi was able to acquire the roughly 250 acres of woodland—crumbling Etruscan stone tower included—at a nominal fee.

Well-educated and well-traveled, Giugi took advantage of his language skills to translate for foreign journalists and merchants looking to capitalize on Brunello's rising status, as the wine earned a worldwide reputation as one of Italy's rarest and most sumptuous wines. Touring the cellars gave him firsthand exposure to pioneering producers, and, ever the scholar, he was keen to take note of the factors in the vineyards and cellars that led to superior wine. Ultimately, this Venetian-born astronomer became a Brunello specialist.

Eager to put what he had learned to good use, Giugi planted nine hectares of vines on the slopes around the old *castello* in 1991. Pampered by marine breezes channeled from the Mediterranean, the site is prone to yielding wines that ally luxurious Tuscan sunshine with a fresh elegance from the unique microclimate. Giugi's background in astronomy plays a role in viticulture and winemaking, as lunar cycles dictate the timing of vineyard and cellar operations like pruning, racking, and bottling. Aging only in traditional Slavonian oak casks allows him to preserve the inherent qualities Sangiovese draws from his meticulously farmed vineyards. Now joined by his daughter, Elisa, Giugi continues to craft wines of exceptional purity—a combination of great *terroir*, a brilliant mind, and flawless execution that yields some of Tuscany's most exquisite reds.



2015 TOSCANA ROSSO “MONTELECCIO”

A selection in the cellar isolates the least structured of the year's crop, which is bottled after just a year in cask. The result is plush and refined, with abundant young Sangiovese fruit that is particularly dark and toothsome this vintage. Mediterranean herbs, a hint of spice, and extremely fine tannins make this the quintessential red for the Tuscan table.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

2015 ROSSO DI MONTALCINO

It greets the palate like velvet, then unleashes a wild side: black cherry, spices, a bloody note, and finally a gutsy finish that leaves something to ponder long after it's gone. This Rosso does not mess around.

\$39.00 PER BOTTLE

\$421.20 PER CASE

2012 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

The perfume is truly regal: rich, fragrant, and balmy, exuding suggestions of earth, sweet spices, and pine forest. Dense, deep, and imposing on the palate, it is concentrated and fleshy, with tannins as thick and chewy as a well-seasoned *bistecca*. In fact, serve with said *bistecca*, or—alternatively—stash away for a long, long time.

\$92.00 PER BOTTLE

\$993.60 PER CASE



Castello di Argiano

© Steve Waters



Yves Canarelli's vines

© Gail Skoff

SERIOUS ROSÉS

by Anthony Lynch

YES, SERIOUS ROSÉ—it's not an oxymoron. Given pink wine's stratospheric rise in popularity in recent years, it is important to note that not all rosé is created equal. As with fine whites and reds, factors like *terroir*, grape, and winemaking make all the difference in the final product. Here we highlight two of our “serious” rosés—wines that express a certain level of complexity, while clearly showing where and by whom they were made. More than simple summer refreshers, they shine at table and will drink well over the next two years.

2016 CORSE FIGARI ROSÉ CLOS CANARELLI

Figari is a small wine zone in the southern extremity of Corsica, sandwiched between the Mediterranean Sea and imposing granite mountains. The harsh conditions here—rugged terrain, baking heat, and powerful winds—do not exactly bring to mind traits like elegance and nuance in the local wines. Yet at Clos Canarelli, brilliant execution of biodynamic viticulture paired with an ever-evolving quest for finesse and precision in the cellar makes this rosé a class act through and through. A blend of Sciaccarellu, Niellucciu, and Grenache, the 2016 evokes tangerine and wild herbs, finishing with a tangy sea-salt minerality.

\$37.00 PER BOTTLE

\$399.60 PER CASE

2016 BANDOL ROSÉ DOMAINE DU GROS 'NORÉ

Carried by the strong personality of the noble Mourvèdre grape, Bandol arguably lies at the top of the world's rosé hierarchy. In Alain Pascal's 2016, you'll find an almost sassy character, its perky aromatic charm just barely foiling the audaciously fleshy texture on the palate. With hints of peach, thyme, and anise, this is textbook Bandol, while the tightly knit structure ensures thirst-slaking pleasure throughout the warm months and beyond. Remember, “serious” doesn't mean you can't smile and giggle as you gulp it down!

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE



RHÔNE REDS

NORTH AND SOUTH

by Anthony Lynch

2015 SAINT JOSEPH ROUGE • LIONEL FAURY



Vintage 2015 in the northern Rhône gave a generous, full-throttle style of Syrah loaded with dense, ripe tannins. Lionel Faury beautifully captured the exceptional conditions: the pungent aroma of this inky-dark Saint Joseph betrays its deep, concentrated flavors—the product of low yields of ripe Syrah in granite soils. Black olive, black fruit, and roasted spices soar from the glass, and yet the wine somehow

graces the palate with a featherweight touch—that’s the Faury signature. The hedonistic richness of flavor flows seamlessly into an elegant, silky finish, perfect for smoky summer barbecues as well as warming comfort on a cool, foggy night.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE

\$345.60 PER CASE

2014 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE “TÉLÉGRAMME” DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE

Wonderfully perfumed—seductive, yet cerebral. Rich and muscular with suave, handsome features; radiantly bright with a long, tender, caressing finish. Good for a Tuesday night, but don’t doubt the long-term potential.

In addition to being a word-for-word copy of my online dating profile, these are also my notes for the 2014 Télégramme. Produced from the “young” vines at Vieux Télégraphe—thirty-five years young, that is—this red is all about the sweet fragrance of Grenache from a world-class *terroir*: blackberry, raspberry, lavender, plus a delicate spiciness. If you’re looking for guaranteed pleasure and satisfaction in a dapper young Châteauneuf-du-Pape, swipe right on the 2014 Télégramme.



\$46.00 PER BOTTLE

\$496.80 PER CASE

BEAUJOLAIS

by Chris Santini

2015 MOULIN-À-VENT

“VIEILLES VIGNES” • DOMAINE DIOCHON

This vintage may put the whole “I don’t drink Beaujolais” thing to rest once and for all. Try the 2015 on your most recalcitrant anti-Beaujolais acquaintance. It’s got guts and brawn, deep, dark color and layers of flavor, with a fruit profile bordering on Pinot. As the price of land in Burgundy shoots through the roof, Burgundians are buying up acreage at a record pace in the Beaujolais—and, nine out of ten times, in Moulin-à-Vent in particular. No surprise that they call this the most “Burgundian” of the Cru Beaujolais.



\$24.00 PER BOTTLE

\$259.20 PER CASE

2016 RAISINS GAULOIS M. & C. LAPIERRE

I recall many years ago when Marcel Lapierre pulled me aside and asked if I thought Kermit and our clients would like his new “*petit vin*.” When I asked him what it was, he told me, “It’s a wine . . . that you drink like a beer . . . when you don’t really want to drink a beer.” What’s not to like about that? To this day, I continue to follow his advice, buy it by the case, and drink it cold, out of a simple glass cup. Like a beer, sure, but much better.



\$16.00 PER BOTTLE

\$172.80 PER CASE

BURGUNDY REDS

by Emily Spillmann

2015 GIVRY ROUGE PREMIER CRU “CLOS DU CRAS LONG” DOMAINE FRANÇOIS LUMPP

Along with his *premier cru* A Vigne Rouge vines, Clos du Cras Long is François Lumpp’s favorite *terroir*. Something about the (oxymoronic?) airiness of the clay in this *lieu-dit* makes for consistently interesting wines. In 2015, despite a small yield due to the drought, Lumpp harvested such healthy grapes that the sorting process was a breeze. This purity of fruit materializes in the wine, and for those of you who tried the 2014 on Dixon’s advice that it was “pure pleasure,” take note: François says the density and structure are even better this vintage.

\$58.00 PER BOTTLE **\$626.40** PER CASE

2015 MARANGES PREMIER CRU “LA FUSSIÈRE” DOMAINE JEAN-CLAUDE REGNAUDOT

It’s best to let the Regnaudot wines speak for themselves. When Didier Regnaudot recently stopped by the Beaune office, I asked what he thought of his 2015 Fussièrre. Now, I knew the man was reserved, but as he searched for words (and, seemingly, the nearest exit), I was reminded that in the producer-importer relationship it’s *our* job to talk about the wine. Didier is not one to sing his own praises, but thankfully, his wines aren’t as shy as he is. Open this bottle and Didier’s gregarious alter ego emerges, big and powerful with surprisingly smooth edges. Expect mouth-filling ripe blackberry fruit and delightfully silky tannins.

\$34.00 PER BOTTLE **\$367.20** PER CASE

2015 AUXEY-DURESSES BLANC “LES HAUTÉS” JEAN-MARC VINCENT

As the story goes, this was the wine that led Kermit to Jean-Marc Vincent. Appropriate, because it seems to me just the kind of wine Kermit likes to have up his sleeve to surprise his most discerning customers. “See if you can guess where this one’s from,” he might say. As you would marvel over the explosive roundness balanced by the stony, mineral freshness, he’d nod and tell you it’s an Auxey *blanc*. And just like that, your paradigm would shift, and you’d have a taste of the satisfaction he gets from sharing such rare pearls.

\$62.00 PER BOTTLE **\$669.60** PER CASE

VALUE OF THE MONTH

by Dixon Brooke

2015 ALSACE PINOT NOIR • KUENTZ-BAS

Kuentz-Bas regularly charms me with the consistent quality they produce using artisanal methods at a price point that can compete with anything on the market. But they have truly outdone themselves with this one: a Pinot Noir for under \$20 that is hand-harvested, fermented with 60% whole clusters, wild yeasts, and no sulfur, raised in old *foudres*, and bottled unfiltered?? Eureka! On top of all that, the wine hails from the beautiful 2015 vintage and is made in a style that tastes reminiscent of Foillard's Morgon. The result is one of the most delicious red wines in our portfolio and the greatest bargain that Pinot Noir has seen this decade.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE



© Kuentz-Bas

Samuel Tottoli, vigneron at Kuentz-Bas

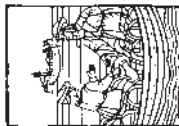
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THE SPRIGHTLY SPUMANTE

by Jennifer Oakes

2016 ROSATO SPUMANTE BRUT “IL ROSA” • SOMMARIVA

The first gourmand to eat an oyster or an artichoke must have been truly brave, but imagine the delight of discovering the deliciousness of a wine with effervescence. I often hear of some folks’ trepidation about needing an “occasion” to serve a sparkling wine, but my feeling is that we owe it to those adventurous souls who paved the way for us, especially with a joyous Rosato like this one. With delicate bubbles skipping across the surface, fresh aromas of strawberries and golden raspberries bursting forth, and a lively sweet-tart finish, we must have no qualms about celebrating the existence of the sparkle itself!

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE

\$161.46 PER CASE

