



The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

(617) 623-8656

October 15, 2016 – November 13, 2016

Autumn Reds

Now that light is becoming scarce, red wine from sunny regions becomes more attractive. This month we puddle jump from Languedoc to Rioja to Mendoza to Alto Adige to Piedmont to the Loire. The grapes change but the wines are packed with the essence of their regions and will dance late into the dark autumn night with delicious harvest season meals.

Keepin' on with Carignan

2015 Minervois 'Plaisir d'Eulalie' (Chateau Sainte Eulalie)

Sale Price \$12.99 – \$132.30 case of twelve

While the Plaisir d'Eulalie Minervois is a mixture of Grenache (45%), Carignan (40%), and Syrah, we believe it is the Carignan that gives the wine character. Carignan came to prominence in Languedoc due to its high yields, but not until the vines reach maturity is Carignan recognized as a quality wine grape. Old vines like those at Chateau Sainte Eulalie prove Carignan's worth by adding gorgeous berry fruit to considerable ripe tannins and proper acidity. The 2015 is rich and round, spicy and long. Have this with a lamb curry and spicy carrots.

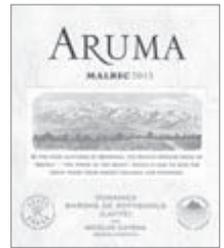


More than Aruma

2015 Malbec (Aruma)

Sale Price \$12.99 – \$132.50 case of twelve

We are not claiming that this wine equals the pricier efforts of the Lafite Rothschild and Catena clans that collaborate to make Aruma, but this is exceptional value. The 2015 vintage in Mendoza started out rainy and cold but ended dry and adequately warm, so the high-elevation Malbec grapes were harvested with an excellent balance of sugar and acidity. This wine's dark blackberry fruit is bright and refreshingly balanced by nuanced tannins and a crisp, lively finish.



Earthy Rioja

2012 Rioja Crianza (Finca San Martin)

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve

Finca San Martin's Rioja Crianza does not conform to the usual Rioja playbook. Despite being 100% Tempranillo and aged for 16 months in oak, it is neither fruity nor oaky. Instead it has an earthy dryness and gripping tannins that expand as the wine breathes. This dry Tempranillo is suited for a paprika- and garlic-laced pork stew.



2015 Lagrein (Colterenzio)

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve



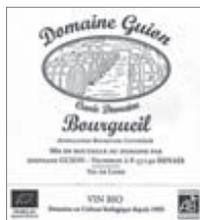
Cooperative wineries make some of Alto Adige's finest wines. Interestingly, in a region more often associated with white wines, it is the red wines of Colterenzio that we favor. Earlier this year we featured their Kalterer See and Pinot Nero. This month we have their 2015 Lagrein, an intensely berry-scented red with low tannins and a long, mellow finish.

Bourgueil

2015 Bourgueil 'Cuvée Domaine' (Domaine Guion)

Sale Price \$15.99 – \$163.10 case of twelve

Although delicious in any season, there's something about Cabernet Franc from the Loire Valley that combines perfectly with the leafy aromas and savory, earthy flavors of autumn. Indeed, the Cuvée Domaine has the smell of freshly fallen leaves, along with crushed pepper. This is a warm and supple Bourgueil tasting of ripe raspberries, black cherries, dark chocolate, and a hint of licorice. Only wild ambient yeasts are used for this certified organic wine, leading to the fragrance and flavors specific to the region. No additives such as sulfites are used, except for an extremely low dose of sulphur at bottling so that the wine can survive its transatlantic journey. This is as transparent as wine-making gets, creating a wine that can only come from Bourgueil. Particularly delicious with a seared duck breast or pork rillettes.



Pelaverga, A Rare Treat

2015 Pelaverga Verduno (Fratelli Alessandria)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

In the 1970s Pelaverga was nearly extinct when a few dedicated growers spearheaded by two branches of the Alessandria family began a revival. The grape is interestingly described by one grower as "having no deep color, no deep structure, not too much tannins" and that "it seems lighter than it is," which appears to be no praise at all. But he goes on to say that "at a young age you have a complex aroma." We agree, and adore the herbal, strawberry, and rose petal aromas and the wine's lovely transparency of color and beguiling palate presence. This member of the Alessandria family concludes by saying that with mushrooms "this is something special." Not bad at all with salmon either.



Sant () rini

2015 Santorini 'Assyrtiko' (Santo Winery)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

Santorini is an island 120 miles southeast of mainland Greece. 3600 years ago an enormous volcanic eruption created the caldera that the island nearly surrounds. The fall of the Minoan civilization on the island of Crete is attributed to this explosion.



Today, Santorini survives with a combination of tourism and agriculture. Assyrtiko is an amazing white grape that has adapted to the arid weather with the help of a time-honed system of training the vine itself into a basket with the grapes protected in the center. Called Kouloures, these baskets, along with the volcanic soil and arid climate, yield only 10% to 20% of normal production compared with other wine-

growing areas' averages. The resulting wine is intensely aromatic, crisp, and dry, and an incredible value given the history, labor, and the distance it travels. Packed with salty minerals, citrus, earth, and honey, the 2015 from the Santo winery has, as the back label eloquently states, a food-begging finish.

Riesling Spätlese

2015 Oppenheimer Sackträger Riesling Spätlese

(Dr. Heyden)

Sale Price \$11.99 – \$122.30 case of twelve

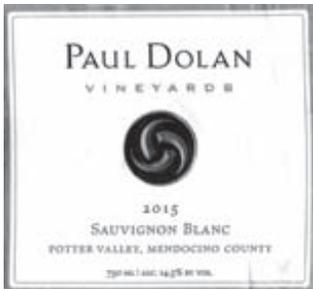
Dr. Heyden has had two very impressive vintages in 2014 and 2015. His drier wines have been crisp, minerally successes, and this Spätlese is a minor miracle for the price. Starting with pristine ripe peach and pear aromas, continuing into wonderful peppery spice, and concluding with a long, palate-soaking finish, this gorgeous Riesling is ideal for spicy foods and especially good with sushi.



Mendocino Organic

2015 Sauvignon Blanc (Paul Dolan)

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$152.90 case of twelve



Paul Dolan was the winemaker at Fetzer when they began their turn to organic viticulture. That project became Bonterra, and Paul moved on to start his namesake winery. To this day all of his wines are made with organically grown grapes, and he has perhaps more experience than anyone in California

doing this. The 2015 Mendocino Sauvignon Blanc is a beauty. It has a ripe, round Californian fruit profile, plus a mellow, dry, gentle finish. Great with spicy fish tacos.

Advanced String Theory

Manzanilla en Rama 'Tesoros de Sanlucar' (La Guita)

Sale Price \$14.99 per 375ml – \$161.90 case of twelve



A few months ago we featured La Guita's lovely regular Manzanilla. This month we have the first ever release of their "en Rama." The idea behind an "en Rama" version is to seek out the most expressive casks in the solera to show how a Manzanilla or Fino might taste right out of the barrel. We hope that La Guita takes a cue from Barbadillo and bottles one per season as the flor or layer of yeast performs differently from season to season. This October 2015 bottling is out of this world, intensely dry, with aromas and flavors of sea air,

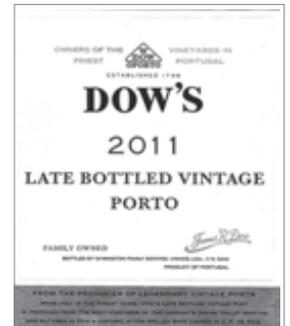
celery leaves, olives, and seaweed. The finish is totally loopy and outrageous. This shows what amazing raw materials exist in the great Sherry bodegas of Andalucia.

Late Bottled Dow's

2011 Late Bottled Vintage Porto (Dow's)

Sale Price \$19.99 – \$215.90 case of twelve

Dow's has really amped up their Late Bottled Vintage program. After producing one of the best Ports from the celebrated 2011 vintage they had enough fine Porto to further age and release a terrific LBV. It should be noted that Dow's makes a dry-style Port, which means that the sweetness is mostly in the aroma and on the palate. And the 2011 expresses ripeness right off the bat. It is in the finish that the spicy tannins and dryness leave their mark in an intriguing fashion. Great Porto and great value.



Dry Vintage Willamette

2014 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Stafford Hill)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve



In Oregon they get two kinds of vintages. Wet and Dry. The wetter ones like 2013 are a challenge to winemakers, and those who succeed end up making lighter, drier wines with a more earthy profile. In a drier and warmer vintage like 2014 you get wines that

are more fruit forward, with darker color and more pronounced tannin. Both have their appeal, but we honestly prefer a vintage like 2014. The Stafford Hill is a ripe, full Pinot Noir with admirable structure and a beautifully balanced mix of fruit and oak. A lovely red for a roast duck or a broiled salmon.

San Boldo Prosecco

Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore 'San Boldo' (Marsuret)

Sale Price \$14.99 – \$161.90 case of twelve

At first we smirked at the notion of single vineyard Prosecco, but after a few comprehensive tastings we see that the lovely and voluminous Italian sparkling has much more to offer. Marsuret's San Boldo is a decidedly dry Prosecco with charming, peachy aroma and persistent, lively bubbles.



Napa Cab

2012 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 'Twenty Bench' (Nine North)

Sale Price \$17.99 – \$183.50 case of twelve

Things get lost and forgotten, even wine. Rediscovered in a distributor's inventory, (usually because a new vintage has arrived), superior wines have been known to emerge from an accidental obscurity. This is one of those wines. Although the current vintage is 2014, we like the 2012, which has had a chance to sleep undisturbed for the past few years. Time has melded the components into a pleasurable Cabernet with

aromas and flavors of roasted meats, cocoa, plums, blackberries, and vanilla. Its rich and balanced body and smooth tannins summon thoughts of pot roast, juicy rib-eye steaks, and hard aged cheeses. But the best part may be the price. A Napa Valley Cabernet under \$20 worth drinking has become nearly impossible to find. With the Twenty Bench, we finally found one.

Rueda Verdejo

2015 Rueda (Nisia)

Sale Price \$16.99 – \$173.30 case of twelve

Rueda is the land of the Verdejo grape variety and a white wine house pour all over Madrid. The 2015 Verdejo from Nisia is packed with ripe pear and guava fruit and a crisp, zesty finish. This is a sneakily intense dry white made from the fruit of 100-year-old pre-phylloxera vines. Wonderful with hake and clams.



Specialty Foods

Bluebird \$28.99 per lb. (Regular price \$32.99)

From Grey Barn in Chilmark, Massachusetts, this cheese shows the aesthetic influence of its island environment with a hazy gray textured crust which looks as if it had tumbled in the ocean and washed ashore. The paste is yellow hued with jewel-tone green and blue veining. This is how I prefer my blues: a bit sweet, a bit salty, and a bit punchy, with just the right amount of creaminess. Certified organic raw cow's milk, aged at least 60 days.



Cabot Clothbound Cheddar \$19.99 per lb. (Regular price \$22.99)

This Cheddar is aged at the Cellars at Jasper Hill, a collaboration with Cabot creamery that started in 2003. The young cheeses arrive at Jasper Hill and are coated in lard and an additional layer of cloth, then ripened in a specially calibrated vault in which they are constantly brushed, turned, and monitored for quality. Crumbly in texture with a nutty aroma, approachable yet complex. Flavors are savory and tangy with a touch of caramel sweetness. It's the season for cheddar, and this is one of the best New England has to offer!

Middlebury Blue \$15.99 per lb. (Regular price \$17.99)

A raw blue cheese made with milk from the Ayrshire cows next door. Named after the college town of Middlebury, Vermont, this cheese is described by Blue Ledge Farm as “‘town meets gown,’ that unique experience when good earthy Vermont grit meets smooth high-brow academia with nothing short of poetic results.” Creamy and crumbly, mild at first, but with lingering hay and earth flavors. Increasingly popular amongst chefs, this is a great blue cheese for cooking or to toss in a salad.



Beemster Vlaskaas \$12.99 per lb. (Regular price \$16.99)

Vlaskaas, which means Flax in Dutch, is the newest addition to Beemster's line, but it is their oldest recipe! Vlaskaas was historically a cheese made only during the harvest festival for the flax workers to eat with bread and porridge while they worked and celebrated. On the occasion of a harvest festival revival in 2004 the old recipe for Vlaskaas was rediscovered and Beemster was asked to recreate it. Since then it has gone on to become an award-winning cheese and is still being made over a decade later. A creamy cow's milk similar to a Gouda with sweet and nutty flavors.

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407 Washington Street
Somerville, Massachusetts 02143
email: wine@thewineandcheesecask.com
phone: (617) 623-8656
fax: (617) 628-2075
www.thewineandcheesecask.com

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Wines of the Month — October 15, 2016 through November 13, 2016

2014 Castillon-Côtes de Bordeaux (Château Lartigue)

Sale Price \$7.99 – \$86.29 case of twelve

Château Lartigue is an impressively full bodied, mostly Merlot Bordeaux. The 2014 delivers ripe plummy fruit and a firmly dry finish.

2014 Jumilla 'Organic' (Honoro Vera)

Sale Price \$7.99 – \$86.29 case of twelve

The 2014 Honoro Vera is an extremely graceful Monastrell from Jumilla. Dark rich fruit and smooth tannins make this a fine red for a spicy eggplant and pasta dish.

2015 Bierzo Blanco 'Armas de Guerra' (Vinos Guerra)

Sale Price \$9.99 – \$107.89 case of twelve

This wine's weapon of war, the hoe, is used in the organic vineyards of Vinos Guerra in Bierzo, Spain. Composed of 50-year-old vines of Doña Blanca (85%) and Godello, this dry white smells and tastes of peaches and stones. Splash a little onto your steamed mussels or clam linguine while cooking, and enjoy the rest.

2015 Cabernet Sauvignon (Tilia)

Sale Price \$8.99 – \$97.09 case of twelve

The land of Malbec also makes very good Cabernet Sauvignon, as evidenced by Tilia. This big, brawny Cab also features a smooth, dry finish. Great with burgers.

