



# The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

(617) 623-8656

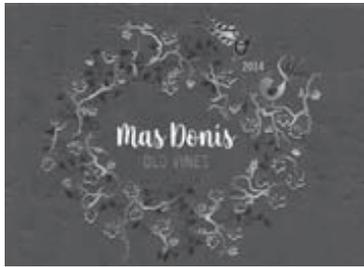
## February 15, 2017 – March 14, 2017 Villages of the Rhone and a Detour into Catalonia

As this is being written snow is swirling outside and our thoughts are of hearty, wintry dishes and full bodied red wines. This month our focus is on wines produced mainly from the Grenache grape. This almost always means the Rhone Valley, but Spain actually has more Grenache in its vineyards than any other country.

### Montsant

#### 2014 Montsant (Mas Donis)

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



Importer Eric Solomon has an impressive portfolio of Rhone wines (see Domaine la Garrigue below). He likes to joke that Mas Donis is his best Côtes-du-Rhône. It certainly is a great value. Mas Donis is a selection of old vine Grenache and Syrah from the Catalan

village of Capçanes. We like the aromatic intensity of the herbal scrubland, the cherry scented fruit, and the stony dry finish.

### Mistral

#### 2015 Côtes du Rhône 'Mistral' (Domaine de Ferrand)

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



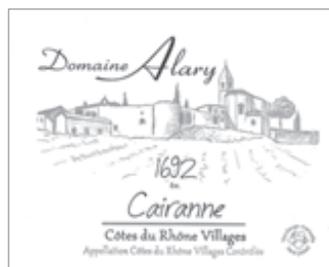
Mistral is Domaine de Ferrand's charming entry-level Côtes-du-Rhône. The 2015 is a lively fresh red with raspberry fruit and an iron-like earthiness. Instead of a hot wind, this wine is more like a cool breeze and not too heavy to serve with a broiled salmon and a bowl of steaming lentils.

### Cairanne

#### 2014 Côtes du Rhône Villages '1692' (Domaine Alary)

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

Cairanne has long been considered one of the better Côtes du Rhône Villages and the Alary family has for a long time, since 1692, been living proof of this premise. This 2014 is a seriously structured wine that chews up the Rhone scenery and deposits all its sun-soaked, olive-inflected, dark fruit nature into a generous red. This demands a full flavored lamb stew seasoned with herbs, olives, and citrus.



### Cuvée Romaine

#### 2014 Côtes du Rhône 'Cuvée Romaine' (Domaine la Garrigue)

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

Essentially, the Cuvée Romaine is importer Eric Solomon's selection of declassified Vacqueyras from Domaine la Garrigue.

He asks the producer to bottle this wine early to preserve its primary fruit, spice, and tannin. This 2014 again succeeds in capturing a powerful yet gorgeously balanced, quintessential Southern Rhone experience. A terrific red for hotly spiced curries.

### Mourre du Tendre

#### 2014 Côtes du Rhône 'Cuvée Paul' (Château du Mourre du Tendre)

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

Château du Mourre du Tendre is a tiny, 'lost in time' Châteauneuf-du-Pape producer who also makes a couple of Côtes-du-Rhône. Their 'Cuvée Paul' is a peppery red blend of Grenache, Carignan, and Cinsault. We adore it for its old-fashioned, unadorned flavors of Provence. Great for a cassoulet.



### Gigondas

#### 2012 Gigondas 'Cuvée Tradition' (Domaine du Gour de Chaulé)

Sale Price \$29.99 – \$305.90 case of twelve

Tradition is a key word at Domaine du Gour de Chaulé. They do not rush their Gigondas to market, indeed they keep some vintages back because they are not ready. After a long fermentation they add some of the tannic press wine back into the blend to allow it to evolve for eighteen months in large oak barrels. This is always an impressive wine with peppery aromatics followed by exotic berry fruit and ever-present superb tannins. Their 2012 is a vintage of rustic excellence. Superb with a rack of lamb.



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## Is Primitivo a Zin?

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### 2015 Primitivo (I Muri)

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



Apparently Primitivo is indeed Zinfandel, but before that it was Tribidrag, an old Croatian variety. There is a lot less Primitivo in Puglia now than there was late in the last century, and today's vines are more often prized as a pure varietal rather than a booster blend ingredient. I Muri captures the ripe spirit of the Mediterranean with this full-bodied yet nicely

structured Primitivo. This is the type of wine that pairs well with the sweet, spicy, and bitter flavors of the fabulous Puglian dish of sausage, broccoli rabe, and orecchietti.

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## Radikon

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### 2009 Ribolla Gialla (Radikon)

Sale Price \$34.99 per 500ml

### 2009 Jakot (Radikon)

Sale Price \$34.99 per 500ml

There is almost too much to tell about these wines from the Radikon family in Italy's far northeast district of Friuli. Firstly, these two technically white (but actually orange) wines are made in the old Slovenian style which leaves the white grapes to macerate on the skins for thirty days. After fermentation the wine is aged in large oak barrels for three years. No sulfur is used at any stage of production because the Radikons' experience is that the long maceration eliminates the need for it. The two wines here are made from the ancient Ribolla Gialla, which is native to Italy and Slovenia, and the Tokaj or Jakot, what was once called Tocai Friulano. The 2009 vintage is the current release of these marvels. The Ribolla Gialla is wildly scented with an ever-changing fresh tropical fruitiness and an incredible finish. The Jakot is the



thicker, more intense, less fruity, more nutty wine, with depth that spans fathoms. When we tasted these wines our thoughts led to pairing them with oily, flavorful fish

like boquerones or sardines or something involving bacalao. Of course cheese would be an extremely good match. A note on the size: these 500 ml bottles are a design of the Radikon family. Amusingly, they suggest that one bottle is intended for one person per meal. We suggest buying both, gathering six to eight people, and sampling with a variety of delicious tapas-style dishes. If you need a larger size and are as avid as we hope you will be, we have a small quantity of liters.



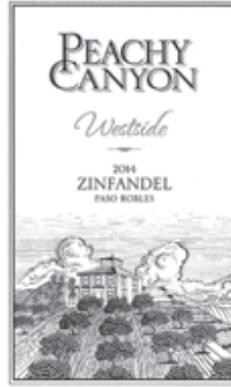
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## Wild Westside

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### 2014 Paso Robles Zinfandel 'Westside' (Peachy Canyon)

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



This newsletter is packed with big, bold red wines (it is winter after all), but this Paso Robles Zinfandel is the biggest, boldest of them all. Yet the folks at Peachy Canyon succeed in creating big Zinfandel that is nimble and lively. The 2014 has a nice layer of oaky flavor strapped to the ripe blueberry and blackberry fruit, with just enough tannin and a splash of crispness to maintain the balance. This is an excellent red for a spicy rice and beans

dish or with a long-braised brisket.

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## Erath Gris

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### 2015 Pinot Gris (Erath)

Sale Price \$13.99 – \$142.70 case of twelve

One of our favorite West Coast white wines is Oregon Pinot Gris. And one of the best values comes from Erath. Their 2015 is an unoaked white with pristine aromas of apple blossom, good fruit and body on the palate, and a smooth, clean finish. It's easy to recommend with salmon, but does equally well with challengingly spiced Thai food.



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## Rhone Nord

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### 2015 Saint-Joseph 'Les Côtes' (Domaine Vincent Paris)

Sale Price \$24.99 – \$254.90 case of twelve

This did not go on the Front Page because we couldn't get a lot of it and it's insanely good. The Northern Rhone is where the Syrah grape is stern and serious in the appellations of Hermitage and Côte-Rôtie, but gets frisky and playful in places

like Crozes-Hermitage, Cornas, and Saint-Joseph. Vincent Paris makes mostly Cornas, but his 2015 Saint-Joseph Les Côtes is a violet-scented beauty with inky dark fruit and a finish that combines tannins and minerality in a wild and original way. Got game (as in boar, venison...)?

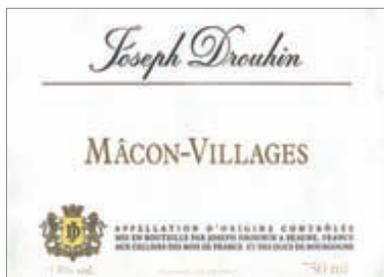


## Mâcon Rising

### 2015 Mâcon-Villages (Drouhin)

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

For several vintages this has been a staple French Chardonnay at the Wine Cask. The 2015 vintage is a strikingly good version at a gentle price. Ripe aromatic fruit of peaches and pears combines with toasty grains and a minerally finish.



## South Pacific Pinot Noir

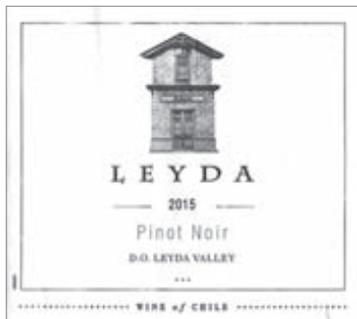
### 2015 Leyda Valley Pinot Noir (Leyda)

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

Sandwiched between the Pacific Ocean to the west and the

Andes mountain range to the east, Chile has a temperate climate suited for making fresh, vibrant wines. The good folks at Leyda were the first to plant vines in the Leyda Valley, a coastal region west of Santiago. Their experience comes to life in this Pinot Noir, a fragrant, floral version

showcasing raspberry and cranberry notes and energetic acidity. Serve with grilled salmon.



## Gran Chilean

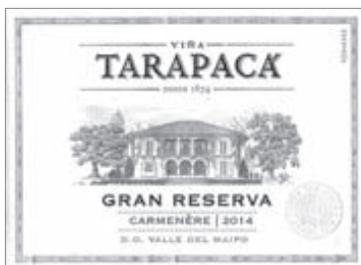
### 2014 Valle del Maipo

Carmenere 'Gran Reserva' (Vina Tarapaca)

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

For a long time Carmenere in Chile was mistaken for Merlot. However, it's actually more closely related to

Cabernet Franc, as perfectly evidenced in this expression with its cracked black pepper aromas opening into a wave of ripe blackberry, plum, and cherry fruit. Soft, round tannins provide the backbone. Sublime with creamy and spicy pasta dishes.



#### Sale Dates

**The First Quarterly Sale of the Year begins  
Friday February 24th and runs through  
Sunday March 5th.**

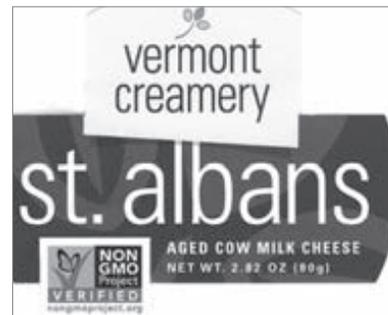
Details: 10% off six bottles; 20% off twelve bottles.

Wines of the Month (back page), fortified wines (Port, Sherry, Vermouth, etc.) and sparkling wines may be included for a 10% discount. Blue tagged (NET) wines and jug wines (1.5L and 3L) are excluded.

## Specialty Foods

### St Albans \$6.29 per piece (Regular price \$6.99)

This creamy concoction in the style of the French St. Marcellin is the first 100 percent pasteurized cow's milk and Non-GMO certified cheese from Vermont Creamery. Named after the St. Albans Cooperative Creamery in northern Vermont, which supplies all of their cow's milk. Each cheese is hand-shaped and aged for eleven days and packaged in tiny ceramic crocks which you can bake and serve fondue style. The wrinkled rind continues to age after packing, becoming softer and more full bodied.



### SPRING BROOK FARM



### Ashbrook \$16.99 per lb. (Regular price \$18.99)

From Springbrook Farm in Reading, Vermont comes this washed-rind raw cow's milk cheese in the style of Morbier, with the signature layer of vegetable ash through the center. Aged 3-4 months, this is a semi-firm and pungent cheese.

### Montagne de Bethmale Chèvre \$21.99 per lb. (Regular price \$23.99)

An aromatic earthy rind encases the semi-firm, dense, tangy, and milky paste of this Pyrenees goat's milk cheese. From Fromagerie Jean Faup, originally founded in 1904 by its namesake to produce and export Camembert to the French colonies of northern Africa, the family business has passed through generations. Bethmale came into play in 1977 when Jean's nephew Didier Lemasson took over the dairy with a vision to revive this traditional local cheese.

### Balsamic BellaVitano \$15.99 per lb. (Regular price \$16.99)

Sartori Cheese is a fourth-generation cheese company based in Plymouth, Wisconsin founded in 1939 by an Italian immigrant, Paolo Sartori, and his business partner Louis Rossini. Inspired by traditional Italian farmstead cheese, their rich and creamy Bella-Vitano, a firm cow's milk cheese with sweet, nutty, and fruity flavors, has been enhanced with a bath of Modena balsamic vinegar.



**The Wine and Cheese Cask**  
407 Washington Street  
Somerville, Massachusetts 02143  
email: [wine@thewineandcheesecask.com](mailto:wine@thewineandcheesecask.com)  
phone: (617) 623-8656  
fax: (617) 628-2075  
[www.thewineandcheesecask.com](http://www.thewineandcheesecask.com)

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## Wines of the Month — February 15, 2017 through March 14, 2017

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### 2015 Côtes de Gascogne (Domaine de Millet)

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

Domaine de Millet's zesty blend of Colombard and Ugni Blanc combines citrusy fruit and a crisp dry finish. Great with pan fried fish or a spicy curry.

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### 2014 Coteaux du Pont du Gard Merlot (Domaine de la Patience)

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

This organic southern French Merlot caught us off guard with its rich, plummy fruit and long, smooth finish. Try this with steak tacos or a fancy burger.

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### 2015 Ventoux (Grange des Dames)

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

Grenache, Carignan, and Syrah make up this fine red from the slopes of Mont Ventoux. Its earthy, herbal, dry flavors are ideal for a lamb stew along with spicy chick peas and lentils.

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### 2014 Red Blend (Los Cardos)

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

Los Cardos' Red Blend is a Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah mix that is ripe and fruity with fine moderating tannins. Have this with a dried fruit-stuffed pork loin.

