**WINTER 2022 WINE CLUB RELEASE**

***Featuring Two Northern Italian All-Stars: Beni di Batasiolo & Corte Sant’Alda***

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The barrel room at Beni di Batasiolo. Photo courtesy of Batasiolo Vini.

Quick Links: [Tier 1](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OtZkBG2qWS9Ogt6MGNsNrrFy0Ucfdkx8_MQPkvKyDz8/edit#bookmark=id.y5y71wpz7qth), [Tier II](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OtZkBG2qWS9Ogt6MGNsNrrFy0Ucfdkx8_MQPkvKyDz8/edit#bookmark=id.55l6cagr3xgm), [Tier III](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OtZkBG2qWS9Ogt6MGNsNrrFy0Ucfdkx8_MQPkvKyDz8/edit#bookmark=id.5tefyebd82br), [Tier IV,](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OtZkBG2qWS9Ogt6MGNsNrrFy0Ucfdkx8_MQPkvKyDz8/edit#bookmark=id.hz9t9xhmp2r2) [Tier V](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OtZkBG2qWS9Ogt6MGNsNrrFy0Ucfdkx8_MQPkvKyDz8/edit#bookmark=id.sxnys6ae4ias)

At Blanc & Rouge we take great care to tell the stories of farmers. Mina will be the first to remind you that wine is an agricultural product, and its charm is the way it expresses the character of its vintage year and vineyards. While we have thousands of wines available via our distribution partners, we pride ourselves in selecting wines that are crafted by people whose stories we want to share. As we faced shipping delays and wine stuck in ports, we decided to step away from our traditional wine club themes and to celebrate two Italian families whose wines have brightened these chilly, winter months.

We are excited to present five wines from Beni di Batasiolo. It’s not often we find a family-owned winery whose portfolio spans the full spectrum from a Tuesday-night Barbera to three showstopper single-vineyard Barolos. The Dogliani family has lived in Italy’s Langhe region for three generations, and they are the largest family-owned producer in the area. They manage nine *beni* (estates) which include more than 320 acres of vineyards. The winery is named after the Batasiolo vineyard, the home of their production facilities and wine cellar. Each of these wines presents an earnest sense of place as well as meticulous winemaking technique. Just a sip of the Batasiolo Gavi transported us to warmer weather as we bundled up during the recent snow storm.

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Marinella Camerani of Corte Sant’Alda in Veneto. Photo courtesy of Corte Sant’Alda.

Each quarter, we showcase around sixty bottles via our Wine Club offerings; however, this February we have the unique opportunity to focus on one particular wine for which we are absolutely smitten. Corte Sant’Alda is Veneto’s original natural wine producer. When Marinella Camerani took over her family’s vineyards in the 1980s, she shocked her neighbors by converting to organic farming and production practices. To this day, she continues to be one of the only certified-Biodynamic producers making DOCG-standard (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) wines in Veneto. During a recent visit with her importer, we tasted Marinella’s Valpolicella ‘Ca’Fui.’ This unique, nuanced wine challenged our understanding of the natural wine movement and of reds from the Veneto DOCG in general. As the planet warms, this ethereal, elegant, and complex bottle gives us hope that sustainable production practices in hot growing regions can beget beautiful wines.

Our Classic Wine Club presents a thoughtfully-curated collection of bottles that are unique, sustainably-produced, and food-friendly. We hope our selections offer you an opportunity to expand your palate, learn about wine grapes and regions, and discover new favorite bottles. The tasting notes below represent the core wine selections for the February 2022 club release. We may have included a special selection in your bag, so please contact Ally at wineclub@blancandrougewine.com if you would like any additional information about your club wines.  Saluti!

**TIER I**

**REDS**

**Batasiolo Barbera d’Alba (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Beni di Batasiolo is the largest family-owned wine producer in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1978, the winery has grown to encompass over 320 acres of vineyards. The Dogliani family works with the land and allows nature to ensure their wines' quality comes first. Batasiolo's vines prosper across nine beni - or estates - in Piedmont. The color is ruby red with violet hues. The palate is dry, with good acidity and tannins very delicate and almost imperceptible. The wine is medium-bodied with fresh berry and plum flavors and a lovely, soft finish. Perfect with appetizers, ham, game and pasta with red sauce.

**Abbazia di Novacella Lagrein (Alto Adige, Italy)**

Located in NE Italy’s sleepy little burg of Novacella, in the Isarco River Valley, Abbazia was founded in 1142 by the Augustinian Order of Canons Regular. The Augustians are not monks in the sense that you may be familiar with: they have taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to their superiors; but they also work to support themselves as a part of their community. To this end, the Abbey not only grows grapes for winemaking, but also farms apples and vegetables, and there is a small school devoted primarily to studies of viticulture. The abbey’s reputation as a winery is stellar and international. This Lagrein is dark and savory from the first tilt of the glass. It boasts a gorgeous bouquet of black cherry and blueberry, offset by hints of brown spice, sage and peppery florals. Then suddenly, the expression changes, with a much juicier personality than expected, further complicated by a mix of tart wild berry with a twist of citrus. The textures are light and feminine, but with authoritative grip. Fine tannins and minerals create further tension with a lip-smacking finale that urges you to take another sip.

**Nathan Gray Syrah (Columbia Valley, WA, USA)**

Single vineyard fruit from the famed Den Hoed Vineyard at this price is unheard of. This 100% Syrah was crafted by Kerloo Cellars Winemaker Ryan Crane. Rich purple in color, great fruit, fantastic structure finishes with finesse on the palate. This wine over-delivers for the price.

**Walla Walla Vintners Red Wine (Columbia Valley, WA, USA)**

42% Syrah, 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc

Produced by the iconic Walla Walla Vintners, the blend of grapes in this wine vary from vintage to vintage, but the wine is always an incredible value for Washington State wine. Aromas of black fruits, woodsmoke, hints of black plum, anise. There is an unusual freshness and brightness to the fruit, supple tannins give the wine structure, taming the silky, lush ribbons of flavor.

**Josep Grau Viticultor Volador (Montsant, Spain)**

Made from Garnacha, Samsó (Cariñena), Syrah and a small amount of Cabernet Sauvignon. This has plenty of bright and juicy, ripe-fruit appeal on the nose with ripe dark berries in abundance. The palate has a very polished and attractively fruity feel with dark peaches and blood oranges, as well as red cherries.

**Domaine Vetriccie Ile de Beaute (Corsica, France)**

Located in the town of Aghione, on the Costa Serena, the Vetriccie estate bought by the Barcelo family in 1966 expresses all the attributes of a premium Corsican wine. It spreads over 120 hectares in the heart of the appellation AOP Vin de Corse. The well-orientated soils are located between sea and mountain. The harmonious blend of continental and native varietals on this recognized terroir give elegant and flavoured wines with strong potential. 40% Niellucciu (aka Sangiovese), 30% Sciaccerellu, 20% Merlot and 10% Syrah. It “behaves” very much like a good Cotes du Rhone with a solid core of ripe berry fruit complimented by spicy, peppery and herbal notes. With soft tannin and refreshing acidity, this is a great pairing with beef stroganoff, hearty seafood dishes, and tapenade.

**Zazou Minervois (Languedoc-Roussillon, France)**

60% Syrah, 20% Mourvedre and 20% Grenache. Minerve, a village in the Languedoc of southern France, has an ancient history.  Named for the Roman goddess Minerva, a stronghold of the Cathars during the Middle Ages, and today a sleepy village of some 125 souls and capital of the Minervois wine appellation, nearly a thousand years after its first round as a capital of nonconformism. The Zazous were part of a subculture in France during and after World War Two. They were young people who expressed their individuality by wearing garish clothing and listening to Jazz music. They rebelled against the conformity and conservatism imposed by the Nazis occupying France during the Second World War.  A major aspect of this subculture was the embracing of Black American jazz music.  The Zazous probably took their name from a line in a song ‘ Zah Zuh Zah’ by the American jazz musician Cab Calloway.  Zazou, the wine, is a take on originality and non conformity to explore wine outside common boundaries.Rich in fresh red berries, elegant and subtle aromas. Well balanced with rich red fruits and silky tannins. A great wine to pair with grilled meat especially lamb cutlets.

**WHITES**

**Batasiolo Gavi (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Beni di Batasiolo is the largest family-owned wine producer in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1978, the winery has grown to encompass over 320 acres of vineyards. The Dogliani family works with the land and allows nature to ensure their wines' quality comes first. Batasiolo's vines prosper across nine beni - or estates - in Piedmont. Pale straw yellow in color, clear and bright, with greenish tinges. Fresh and floral nose, good intensity and persistence. In the mouth, it is dry and pleasantly fresh with a typical final sensation reminiscent of almonds. Perfect accompaniment for appetizers, pasta and delicate risottos, fish andwhite meat main courses. Pairs pleasantly with vegetable-based recipes. Excellent as an aperitif.

**Kiki & Juan Blanco (Valencia, Spain)**

Kiki & Juan are fun, organic wines in 1 Liter bottles that are all about supporting farmers throughout the Iberian peninsula.``Kiki” uses her long standing relationships with grape growers in Spain to find the organic vineyards that will go into the Kiki & Juan wines. With his low-intervention winemaking background at Oregon’s cult-favorite OVUM Wines, John House aka “Juan,” focuses on making Kiki & Juan a true reflection of its vineyards and vintage. A blend of Macabeu and Sauvignon Blanc. Ripe Barlett pear and starfruit jump from the glass, followed by a wallop of salty sea air. Racy, fresh and bright - the skin contact gives the wine grip on the mid-palate. Perfect for tapas night!

**Pascal Jolivet “Attitude” Sauvignon Blanc (Loire Valley, France)**

The house of Pascal Jolivet was founded in 1987 and is one of the most dynamic domaines in France’s Loire Valley. Based in Sancerre, the domaine now owns over 120 acres of prime vineyards spread across the appellations of Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé. Complex, cultured Loire Sauvignon with notes of roasted citrus, candle wax and fresh peas. The generous texture, gentle hints of raw butter and spicy finish give it character and intrigue. A serious, mineral style with plenty of wine for the price.

**Lovely Creatures Chardonnay (Western Cape, South Africa)**

While South Africa may be better known for its Chenin Blanc, this Chardonnay is a lovely, value-oriented white. From vineyards in the Stellenbosch area, this wine offers notes of ripe citrus and spicy stone fruit. Aged in 90% stainless steel and 10% used oak barriques (large barrels), this wine is not the buttery Chardonnay you find on many shelves. Pair with shellfish or simple pork dishes.

**Bouche Blanquette de Limoux (Languedoc-Roussillon, France)**

While Champagne may carry more prestige, the Limoux region in SW France is the birthplace of sparkling wine. This Blanquette de Limoux, like most wines from that region, are some of the best values in sparkling wine. Toasty, flinty with a touch of preserved lemon. This wine has great depth of flavour and plenty of flesh on its finely-laced bones — juicy with notes of golden apples, and yellow pear held on a medium body with a broad mouthfeel. That perfect balance of elegance and richness with a sultry seashell mineral finish.

**Adaras Almansa Lluvia Blanco (Almansa, Spain)**

Bodegas Venta la Vega is located in the mountainous area of Almansa and includes more than 850 hectares of ecological farmland. Jose Angel Martinez is the talented winemaker behind these wines, who proudly champions the native grape varieties. Stone fruit, lime, kiwi, and passionfruit flavours are backed up by great minerality. Sauvignon Blanc gives the wine freshness and acidity, while the Verdejo provides great aromatics and length. This is a refreshing crowd-pleaser.

**TIER II**

**REDS**

**Batasiolo Barbera d'Alba Sovrana (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Beni di Batasiolo is the largest family-owned wine producer in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1978, the winery has grown to encompass over 320 acres of vineyards. The Dogliani family works with the land and allows nature to ensure their wines' quality comes first. Batasiolo's vines prosper across nine beni - or estates - in Piedmont. Batasiolo Sovrana Barbera d'Alba begins with a very pleasant aroma featuring cherry pie, a little cedar and a little chocolate. Tasting the medium-bodied wine reveals silky smooth flavors of plum, cedar, cherry, cranberry and other oaky notes. It ends dry with slightly chewy tannins and long lasting notes of sour fruit.

**Corte Sant'Alda Valpolicella "Ca' Fiui" (Veneto, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Corte Sant’Alda is Veneto’s original natural wine producer. When Marinella Camerani took over her family’s vineyards in the 1980s, she shocked her neighbors by converting to organic farming and production practices. To this day, she continues to be one of the only certified-Biodynamic producers making DOCG-standard (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) wines in Veneto. Ca’ Fiui is a sunny hillside zone in the Val di Mezzane where Corte Sant’ Alda has set up their cellar.The wine is produced from Marinella’s youngest vineyard sites at approximately 15 years old, farmed organically from the initial planting and now using biodynamic principles and philosophies.  This wines great expression of fresh intense wild fruit and deep cherry tobacco notes are buoyed with racy acidity and minerality combining to be at once both elegant and exciting.

**Nieuwe Haarlem Pinotage (Paarl, South Africa)**

Cape Wine Company created the Nieuwe Haarlem label based on a story too good not to share. On 25 March 1647, the Dutch Indiaman named Nieuwe Haerlem was wrecked in a storm in the Cape’s Table Bay. This shipwreck was destined to change the course of history, leading to the creation of a new state on the southern part of the African continent. Thanks to the brave decisions of Captain Leendert Janszen, the crew stayed behind with him to look after the shipwrecked cargo. During this time, the sailors grew vegetables, planted the Cape’s first vines and bartered fresh meat with the locals – slowly paving the first stone for what would be the path to establishing the Cape as the halfway refreshment station along the spice route. Today, the Cape is still rich with vines, some of which were first planted by Janszen and his crew. Ultimately, the Nieuwe Haarlem planted a legacy that is as significant as it is celebrated. The bouquet is led by roasted banana, cherry and cassis, followed by subtle notes of chocolate and cedar wood. The palate has a complex, velvety coating with hints of plum and fruity sweetness on the finish.

**Luigi Bosca Malbec (Mendoza, Argentina)**

With deep historical roots in Argentina’s Mendoza wine region, Bodega Luigi Bosca has a longstanding commitment to innovation and quality. Founded in 1901 by Don Leoncio Arizu, Bodega Luigi Bosca is the country’s oldest family-owned winery. Today, Alberto Jr. and Alberto Sr., who represent the third and fourth generations of the Arizu family, jointly manage this venerable enterprise. With wide temperature swings between cold nights and hot days, the Arizu family have come to appreciate that Mendoza’s desert climate and terroir offer unique benefits to the wines they produce: it amplifies the aromatics and color and keeps the acidity balanced, while the alluvial deposits in the soil add minerality and depth. Aromas of blackberries, brambleberries, tobacco, oyster shell and black olive. It’s medium-to full-bodied with sleek, fine tannins. Succulent and juicy with layers of fresh, ripe fruit.

**Bennett Valley Cellars Bin 6410 Pinot Noir (Sonoma County, California, USA)**

Pietro Zanin was born in 1881 in Rivamonte, Italy. He always believed that wine was an essential part of a meal so at an early age he bought a vineyard in the Soave (Verona) area to make sure wine would always be available at the dinner table. Emilio Zanin was born in 1939 in the small alpine village of Agordo, nestled in the Italian Alps. As a young child, he was fortunate enough to spend enjoyable times working and playing in his grandfather Pietro’s vineyards. Years after Emilio immigrated to the US, his fond childhood memories led him to the vineyards of Sonoma County. In 2006 he purchased a Pinot Noir vineyard renaming it “Marina's Estate”, in honor of his wife. In 2010, they proudly launched their inaugural 2008 Vintage Pinot Noir. The Zanin family have been highly-respected farmers who have sold fruit to some of the best Pinot producers in Sonoma. Bennett Valley Cellars is an opportunity for the family to produce wines that they feel represent the best characteristics of their vines. The Bin 6410 Pinot Noir exudes roasted hazelnut tones on the nose closely followed by the signature aromas of blackberry, cherry, and raspberry fruit for which this wine is known. On the palate, the spice tones and tannins from the wood are supported with the rich fruit and a clean crisp finish. This medium-bodied Pinot Noir pairs well with fowl, smoked meats, hard cheeses, and most any food from the backyard grill.

**Orr Grenache (Royal Slope AVA, Washington State, USA)**

Erica Orr honed her craft working at some of the best wineries in the world: Rudd Estate, Cain Vineyard, Domaine Dujac and Yering Station. In 2005, she moved to Washington State and founded an independent winemaking consulting and enology business in Woodinville, where she helped wineries like Baer, Mark Ryan, Guardian, Sparkman and others rack up 90+ point scores and now two Spectator Top 100 wines. In 2013, Erica decided the time had come to create her own namesake label. This Grenache has continued to be a favorite on our Northwest shelves. The 2020 Grenache is 100% Grenache all from Stillwater Creek Vineyard in the newly named Royal Slope AVA. The aromas are full of bright red fruit like cran-raspberry and pomegranate. It’s vibrant and lively in the mouth.

**WHITES**

**Batasiolo Gavi (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Beni di Batasiolo is the largest family-owned wine producer in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1978, the winery has grown to encompass over 320 acres of vineyards. The Dogliani family works with the land and allows nature to ensure their wines' quality comes first. Batasiolo's vines prosper across nine beni - or estates - in Piedmont. Pale straw yellow in color, clear and bright, with greenish tinges. Fresh and floral nose, good intensity and persistence. In the mouth, it is dry and pleasantly fresh with typical final sensation reminiscent of almonds. Perfect accompaniment for appetizers, pasta and delicate risottos, fish andwhite meat main courses. Pairs pleasantly with vegetable-based recipes. Excellent as an aperitif.

**Cantina Valle Isarco Kerner (Alto Adige, Italy)**

In the northern, alpine region of Trentino-Alto Adige Italy, German and Italian mix not only in place names, but also grape varieties. Kerner is a relatively new grape (developed in the 1960s) that is a cross between Riesling and the local red grape Schiava. Cantina Valle Isarco is known as Kellerei Eisacktaler in German, and you see both brand names printed on the front label. The winery boasts some of the northern-most vineyards in Italy; they are planted along the valley where the charming city of Bolzano is located and continue until the Austrian border. Though something of a mongrel in terms of ancestry, in the right hands, such as those of the very capable people at Cantina Valle Isarco, it produces a full-bodied, un-oaked wine full of vibrant fruits, ethereal floral highlights and aging potential. A strong, spicy wine to enjoy with charcuterie and sausages or sashimi.

**Cantina Valle Isarco Grüner Veltliner (Alto Adige, Italy)**

In the northern, alpine region of Trentino-Alto Adige Italy, German and Italian mix not only in place names, but also grape varieties. Cantina Valle Isarco is known as Kellerei Eisacktaler in German, and you see both brand names printed on the front label. The winery boasts some of the northern-most vineyards in Italy; they are planted along the valley where the charming city of Bolzano is located and continue until the Austrian border. In the Alto Adige, the GrunerVeltliner variety of Austrian origin is grown almost exclusively in the Valle Isarco. Veltliner the perfect summer sipper - it's fruity yet light, and is a pleasingly spiced white wine with vivacious acidity that is brilliantly refreshing. This food-friendly wine has a characteristic white pepper note and hints of green apple. It's always good to step away from the Grigio for a minute and explore something new!

**Weingut Lackner-Tinnacher Gamlitz Sauvignon Blanc (Südsteiermark, Austria)**

Yes, we know we just did the Austrian-themed club release in November, but Blanc & Rouge is proud to be the first Washington State ambassador for Weingut Lackner-Tinnacher’s stunning Sauvignon Blancs. The delicateness of the South Styrian landscape and the almost Mediterranean gentleness of the climate make this region one of Austria’s most beautiful places. Small-scale agriculture and century-old tradition have created two culinary specialties for which this area has become famous beyond its borders: pumpkin seed oil and, above all, South Styrian wine, which is highly regarded throughout the world. The Lackner family has been producing wine in Austria since 1770. In 1976, Wilma Lackner took ownership of the winery from her uncle, and following her marriage to Fritz Tinnacher, the winery was renamed to honor their partnership. Since 2010, Wilma and Fritz’s daughter, Katharina, entered the family business and became the winery’s head winemaker. This multi-layered Sauvignon Blanc shows a lot of fruit and spicy flavors in the nose, containing ripe berries like gooseberry and cassis, peppers and passion fruit highlighted with delicate flavors of lime and lemon grass. On the palate papaya and avocado accompanied by green pepper and verbena. An animating wine with elegant acidity structure, multifaceted flavors and good freshness.

**Nieuwe Haarlem Chenin Blanc (Paarl, South Africa)**

Cape Wine Company created the Nieuwe Haarlem label based on a story too good not to share. On 25 March 1647, the Dutch lndiaman named the Nieuwe Haerlem was wrecked in a storm in the Cape’s Table Bay. This shipwreck was destined to change the course of history, leading to the creation of a new state on the southern part of the African continent. Thanks to the brave decisions of Captain Leendert Janszen, the crew stayed behind with him to look after the shipwrecked cargo. During this time, the sailors grew vegetables, planted the Cape’s first vines and bartered fresh meat with the locals – slowly paving the first stone for what would be the path to establishing the Cape as the halfway refreshment station along the spice route. Today, the Cape is still rich with vines, some of which were first planted by Janszen and his crew. Ultimately, the Nieuwe Haarlem planted a legacy that is as significant as it is celebrated. This wine has a nose of white pear, melon and apricot layered with mineral notes. It has an interesting viscosity that coats the palate. Well integrated oak provides spicy complexity and depth of flavour.

**Charles Gonnet Chignin (Savoie, France)**

This organically grown bottling is comprised of 100% Jacquere and hails from the appellation of Chignin in the French Alpine region of Savoie. This is a stunning expression of this indigenous variety, yielding a crisp, honeyed palate showing floral ruby red grapefruit and honeysuckle blossom notes. Elegant and full of finesse, this is the perfect pairing for fresh seafood and spicy Asian fare.

**Abbazia di Novacella Pinot Grigio (Alto Adige, Italy)**

Located in NE Italy’s sleepy little burg of Novacella, in the Isarco River Valley, Abbazia was founded in 1142 by the Augustinian Order of Canons Regular. The Augustians are not monks in the sense that you may be familiar with: they have taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to their superiors; but they also work to support themselves as a part of their community. To this end, the Abbey not only grows grapes for winemaking, but also farms apples and vegetables, and there is a small school devoted primarily to studies of viticulture. The abbey’s reputation as a winery is stellar and international. This Lagrein is dark and savory from the first tilt of the glass. A full-bodied, elegant white wine. Yellowish-green to straw yellow in color. A soft scent of honey, pears, and bananas. Powerful and nutty on the palate with a balanced finish.

**TIER III**

**REDS**

**Corte Sant'Alda Valpolicella "Ca' Fiui" (Veneto, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Corte Sant’Alda is Veneto’s original natural wine producer. When Marinella Camerani took over her family’s vineyards in the 1980s, she shocked her neighbors by converting to organic farming and production practices. To this day, she continues to be one of the only certified-Biodynamic producers making DOCG-standard (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) wines in Veneto. Ca’ Fiui is a sunny hillside zone in the Val di Mezzane where Corte Sant’ Alda has set up their cellar.The wine is produced from Marinella’s youngest vineyard sites at approximately 15 years old, farmed organically from the initial planting and now using biodynamic principles and philosophies.  This wine's a great expression of fresh intense wild fruit and deep cherry tobacco notes are buoyed with racy acidity and minerality combining to be at once both elegant and exciting.

**Fidelitas “m100” Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley, WA, USA)**

Crafted by father-son winemaking duo, Charlie and Will Hoppes, this is a fantastic, young WA red from one of our favorite Red Mountain producers. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from three Columbia Valley vineyards. The aromas are brooding out of the gate, with notes of black cherry, licorice, clove and barrel spice. Velvety flavors follow, mixing fruit and barrel.

**Delas “Les Launes” Crozes-Hermitage (Rhone Valley, France)**

100% Syrah from an iconic producer in the Northern Rhone Valley. This wine is a charming, silky style, with pretty cassis and plum fruit flavors sweeping through, followed by light herb, tobacco and chalk accents on the fresh finish. It's super plush and richly ripe with fleshy red plums and blackberries. Compare this wine side-by-side with the Prospice “Aprica” or WT Vintners Syrahs for a New World-Old World Syrah smackdown!

**Prospice “Aprica” Syrah (Walla Walla Valley, WA, USA)**

Prospice is the creation of two friends with a shared vision for wines and winemaking. Each changed course from a prior professional career, drawn to winemaking by the impulse to craft an artisanal product. "Aprica" is from the Latin for "warmed by the sun,” is an approachable, well-made example of entry-level Walla Walla Syrah. 97% Syrah co-fermented with 3% Viognier. The aromas are more brooding initially but well delineated, with notes of black cherry, dried orange peel and cassis. A mineral note lingers on the lip-smacking finish.

**VIE Winery Grenache (Lake County, CA, USA)**

Beautiful Grenache from San Francisco’s oldest urban winery. In the nose, this wine exhibits dark raspberry and cranberry fruit with perfumed aromas of potpourri, savory spices, and a subtle hint of licorice. The light and elegant, yet focused, palate carries several layers of red berry and dark cherry fruit integrated with notes of black pepper, smoked meat, and ash, reminiscent of a summer campfire. This multi-layered palate continues on to a focused, concentrated finish which continues to evolve in the mouth with lingering red and black fruit with a hint of tobacco. This wine can be enjoyed with fish, chicken or duck over the next 5-7 years.

**Elephant Seven “Cosmic Reflection” Red Blend (Walla Walla Valley, WA, USA)**

Elephant Seven is a family-owned, boutique winery focusing on Rhone Varietals from the Walla Walla Valley. 50% Mourvèdre, 50% Syrah, all from Yellow Bird Vineyard. Classic Mourvedre characteristics of gaminess and meatiness accented with red fruit and licorice. A dense bouquet of dried flowers, garrigue, and white pepper with an iodine driven minerality. The finish is pure and lively with nice acidity and supple tannins. Ally had the pleasure of attending a private tasting at their downtown Walla Walla tasting room a few years ago, and all of their wines were distinctively ethereal and nuanced expressions of Rhone varietals grown in the Walla Walla Valley. Pay them a visit the next time you are in Walla Walla.

**Bennett Valley Cellars Estate Pinot Noir (Sonoma County, California, USA)**

Pietro Zanin was born in 1881 in Rivamonte, Italy. He always believed that wine was an essential part of a meal so at an early age he bought a vineyard in the Soave (Verona) area to make sure wine would always be available at the dinner table. Emilio Zanin was born in 1939 in the small alpine village of Agordo, nestled in the Italian Alps. As a young child, he was fortunate enough to spend enjoyable times working and playing in his grandfather Pietro’s vineyards. Years after Emilio immigrated to the US, his fond childhood memories led him to the vineyards of Sonoma County. In 2006 he purchased a Pinot Noir vineyard renaming it “Marina's Estate”, in honor of his wife. In 2010, they proudly launched their inaugural 2008 Vintage Pinot Noir. The Zanin family have been highly-respected farmers who have sold fruit to some of the best Pinot producers in Sonoma. Bennett Valley Cellars is an opportunity for the family to produce wines that they feel represent the best characteristics of their vines. This wine is deep garnet in color and has a brilliant clarity. The fruit aromas are distinctly of violets along with some blackberry, allspice and vanilla notes. On the palate, the same dark fruits mingle with flavors of pomegranate and mocha. Soft acidity allows the fruit characters to shine through, while the soft tannins linger on the palate. Versatility with food is a hallmark of all of our wines. Enjoy the Estate Pinot Noir with a variety of poultry, beef, pork and game, as well as vegetables, cheeses, olives, and savory dishes.

**WT Vintners Syrah Columbia Valley (Columbia Valley, WA, USA)**

W.T. Vintners is short for the White and Thorsen Family Vintners. Jeff Lindsay-Thorsen and George White founded the company in 2007 with a focus on Syrah and Rhône varieties – the project was born one evening, after a long discussion over a particularly tasty scotch. The first release was the 2010 vintage. Total production is around 2000 cases. Winemaker Jeff Lindsay-Thorsen is passionate about wine and indefatigable in his pursuit of knowledge (he is studying for the prestigious Master Sommelier credential). Jeff also worked several vintages in Burgundy, New Zealand, and of course, the lovely Pacific Northwest. The old adage “great wine is made in the vineyard” is at the root of his winemaking philosophy. He sources fruit from some of the most esteemed vineyards in Washington – including the Stoney Vine Vineyard and the Destiny Ridge Vineyard – for the limited production wines he crafts at his facility in Woodinville. This has just a touch of Mourvedre and Grenache blended in. The wine opens with smoked meats dusted with white pepper, alongside violets and black tea. The palate is salty and savory with good freshness.

**WHITES**

**Weingut Lackner-Tinnacher Gamlitz Sauvignon Blanc (Südsteiermark, Austria)**

Yes, we know we just did the Austrian-themed club release in November, but Blanc & Rouge is proud to be the first Washington State ambassador for Weingut Lackner-Tinnacher’s stunning Sauvignon Blancs. The delicateness of the South Styrian landscape and the almost Mediterranean gentleness of the climate make this region one of Austria’s most beautiful places. Small-scale agriculture and century-old tradition have created two culinary specialties for which this area has become famous beyond its borders: pumpkin seed oil and, above all, South Styrian wine, which is highly regarded throughout the world. The Lackner family has been producing wine in Austria since 1770. In 1976, Wilma Lackner took ownership of the winery from her uncle, and following her marriage to Fritz Tinnacher, the winery was renamed to honor their partnership. Since 2010, Wilma and Fritz’s daughter, Katharina, entered the family business and became the winery’s head winemaker. This multi-layered Sauvignon Blanc shows a lot of fruit and spicy flavors in the nose, containing ripe berries like gooseberry and cassis, peppers and passion fruit highlighted with delicate flavors of lime and lemon grass. On the palate papaya and avocado accompanied by green pepper and verbena. An animating wine with elegant acidity structure, multifaceted flavors and good freshness.

**Charles Gonnet Chignin (Savoie, France)**

This organically grown bottling is 100% Jacquere and hails from the appellation of Chignin in the French Alpine region of Savoie. This is a stunning expression of this indigenous variety, yielding a crisp, honeyed palate showing floral ruby red grapefruit and honeysuckle blossom notes. Elegant and full of finesse, this is the perfect pairing for fresh seafood and spicy Asian fare.

**Domaine Fouassier Sancerre (Loire Valley, France)**

Established in 1749 in the heart of Sancerre, Domaine Fouassier is one of the oldest wine growing families in the Loire Valley with a history that spans several generations. For centuries they have dedicated themselves to preserving and capturing the terroir and the noble Sauvignon grape varietal through an extensive range of appellation wines. Produced from only estate-grown vineyards, this distinctive Sancerre is bright and fresh, with a ripe grapefruit and lime zest bouquet up front that gives way to a subtler hint of lemon pound cake. Very approachable in style, with flavors of fennel, star fruit, and lightly mulled peach mingling through the soft, lively, almond-tinged finish. Consume within 2-3 years alongside shellfish, salads, and soft cheeses.

**TIER IV**

**REDS**

**Batasiolo Barolo (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

Beni di Batasiolo is the largest family-owned wine producer in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1978, the winery has grown to encompass over 320 acres of vineyards. The Dogliani family works with the land and allows nature to ensure their wines' quality comes first. Batasiolo's vines prosper across nine beni - or estates - in Piedmont. 100% Nebbiolo from Batasiolo’s best vineyards. This is a solid Barolo with strawberry, meat, walnut and tar aromas and flavors. It’s full-bodied with rich fruit and tannins. Muscular, yet there’s elegance and polish to it at the same time.

**VIE L'Intruse Mourvèdre (Santa Barbara County, CA, USA)**

From San Francisco’s oldest urban winery. On the nose, blackberry fruit dominates with hints of truffles, tobacco, and underlying herbal notes. Black raspberry, currant, and charcoal unfold in layers of fruit and Asian spice on the palate with subtle tannins and firm acid which creates movement on the palate. The tannins carry this medium bodied, yet focused and aggressive wine into a finish with notes of red raspberry fruit, black pepper spice, and hints of toasted oak. This wine is meant to be paired with food and should be enjoyed within the next 6 to 8 years.

**Fidelitas Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon (Red Mountain AVA, WA, USA)**

Crafted by father-son winemaking duo, Charlie and Will Hoppes, the wines of Fidelitas are some of our favorites on Red Mountain. This is 100% varietal with almost three-quarters of the fruit coming from Quintessence and the rest from the winery's estate vineyard. Aromas of vanilla, dark chocolate and barrel spice are followed by full feeling flavors that show mid palate density. Fruit and barrel play equal parts. There's a lot to like out of the gate, but some time in the cellar will serve it well.

**Vatan Tinto de Toro (Toro, Spain)**

Vatan is the pure representation of the oldest clone of Tempranillo in Spain, from some of the oldest ungrafted vines in the country, located in the only Spanish D.O. that completely resisted the phylloxera plague. During the Middle Ages, Toro was Spain’s most famous winemaking region. Mentioned in literature by Alfonso IX (King of León, 12th c.), Juan Ruiz the Archpriest of Hita, Quevedo, Luis de Góngora, and Miguel de Cervantes. In 14th Century Sevilla, the sale of any foreign wine was prohibited, save the wines of Toro. These wines accompanied Spanish explorers to the New World. D.O. Toro was rediscovered in the 1990's by the Numanthia project, masterminded by Jorge Ordóñez and the Eguren family. Firm and dense, this red delivers rich flavors of blackberry, fig, cocoa, licorice and mineral, set in a thick texture, supported by well-integrated tannins and kept lively by balsamic acidity. Savory, even austere, yet harmonious and complete.

**Baron de Montfaucon Châteauneuf du Pape (Rhône Valley, France)**

From a single hectare of 80-year-old vines in the lieu-dit of les Escondudes, this Châteauneuf du Pape from Château du Montfaucon is 92% Grenache and the rest Mourvèdre. Bright, with cherry, damson plum and raspberry coulis flavors streaming through, flanked by floral and rooibos tea hints and carrying through a racy, sanguine-tinged finish that is sneakily long. Well done. Best from now through 2035.

**WHITES**

**Andre Jacquart Vertus Experience Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs (Champagne, France)**

For four generations, the parents and grandparents of André Jacquart only produced Champagne grapes. In 1958 André Jacquart introduced a new spirit in the family, producing his own estate-bottled Champagne in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger (Champagne Village classified Grand Cru). Brilliant pale gold, with a tight bead and persistent mousse. The chardonnay provides green pear apple and toasted bread on the nose, with distinct wet stone minerality. Lush creamy mousse upon entry, rich full and crisp, with warm toasty elements. Explosive aged Chardonnay elements, intense minerality and great depth of flavor. Length and persistence of Burgundian style Chardonnay in the finish. Regardless of whether a festive occasion, aperitif high class, or with dinner, this wine deserves to be enjoyed with delicate dishes such as a Sole “Meuniere,” steamed lobster, or halibut.

**Berlucchi Franciacorta (Franciacorta, Italy)**

If you are a classic Champagne lover, we are so excited to introduce you to the wines from Franciacorta, a sparkling wine region nestled in the northern reaches of Italy, just east of Milan. Franciacorta is producing world-class sparkling wine to rival grower-producer Champagne. Set upon 500 hectares of vineyards, Guido Berlucchi is Franciacorta’s largest winery and produces over 4 million bottles per year. Their story begins in the mid-1950s when Mr. Berlucchi, a wealthy landowner, hired the talented young enologist Franco Ziliani to improve the quality of his "Pinot del Castello", a table wine that left much to be desired. Ziliani had traveled extensively in Champagne and noted that the Franciacorta region had a very similar climate and growing conditions, so he took a chance at producing a sparkling wine in the Metodo Classico, or traditional style. After some experimentation, the first suitable batch of Franciacorta bottles were produced in 1961 (This wine is named in honor of their inaugural vintage.) Franciacorta was later granted DOC status in 1967 (Controlled Designation of Origin) spurring a larger enological movement that continues to this day. Brut '61 is made with 90% Chardonnay and 10% Pinot Nero (or Italian Pinot Noir). This wine is creamy with notes of apple and crisp pear. It displays fresh zesty acidity to compliment a velvety mousse. Pair this wine with traditional foods of the area-- freshwater perch or ravioli. It would also compliment lobster, crab, white meat, medium-hard cheeses, and of course, caviar!

**Wafflart Antoniolli Premier Cru Brut Tradition Champagne**

We are always on the hunt for amazing grower-producer Champagne, and we stumbled across the stunning Wafflart Antoniolli 1er Cru Brut Tradition (Pinot Meunier/Pinot Noir) from the hamlet of Sacy. There are hundreds of villages in the Champagne region, but only 42 have been awarded Premier Cru status. These wines are rare in the sub- $60 range, and we are fortunate to partner with a small importer-distributor who is able to offer these wines to our club members at an excellent value. Fleshy and rich with notes of apple blossom, strawberry, orange rind, and a touch of French pastry. This wine will shine with just about any meal.

**TIER V**

**Batasiolo Barolo Brunate Vineyard (Piedmont, Italy)**

Featured Winery

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**Peju Cabernet Franc (Napa Valley, CA, USA)**

In 1983, Tony and Herta (HB) Peju purchased thirty acres of vines in the famed Rutherford district of the Napa Valley. They worked hard to build a winery, plant estate vineyards and raise their family. They remain family-owned, with their two daughters, Ariana and Lisa guiding the business today. Ariana and Lisa are bringing fresh innovation while maintaining the meticulous focus on quality that began over 35 years ago. With its landmark tower and warm hospitality, PEJU Winery is an integral part of the Napa Valley landscape. This gorgeous Cabernet Franc begins with enticing aromas of dark berries, chocolate covered cherries, and baking spices. Bold and balanced this wine showcases both sweet and savory notes. The wine opens with notes of fresh herbs and soft hints of caramel that are complemented by plush, well structured tannins.

**Domaine Grand Veneur Chateauneuf du Pape (Rhône Valley, France)**

Saturated ruby. Smoky, expansive cherry cola, cassis, succulent herb and floral qualities on the expansive nose. Broad and fleshy on entry, offering plush dark fruit, floral pastille and mocha flavors that become firmer and spicier as the wine opens up. The long, youthfully chewy finish strong echoes the cherry and floral notes and is firmed by steadily building tannins. In the 14th century, during their stay in Avignon, the popes built a papal castle in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Impressed by the area’s exceptional terroir surrounding the castle, Pope Jean XXII planted the first vines of Châteauneuf-du-Pape in 1320. Interestingly, the wine that gave Châteauneuf-du-Pape its original reputation was the white and not the red. The white wine was a favorite of Pope Innocent VI. Today the castle is now a historic monument in Avignon, and the papacy is based in Rome’s Vatican City. But still today, the pope’s coat of arms remains on the bottles of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and the wines are still produced in a similar manner as when the popes first pressed their juice. Established in the northern part of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, in the commune of Orange, the Jaume family has been dedicated to the art of wine growing since 1826. Founded by Mathieu Jaume, the Domaine is now run by the 5th and 6th generations of Jaumes: Alain Jaume & his children Christophe, Sébastien, and Hélène.

**Hirsch San Andreas Fault Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast, CA, USA)**

Perched on a ridge overlooking the Pacific Ocean at Fort Ross, Hirsch Vineyards is the birth ground of great pinot noir on the extreme Sonoma Coast. David Hirsch founded the vineyard in 1980 to grow fruit and make site-specific wine. From the start all efforts have been on the growing of fruit that makes wines profoundly characteristic of the site vintage after vintage. The wines from Hirsch Vineyards give the passionate drinker an experience of the clash of opposites meeting in Nature and Life: the edge of the continent washed by the sea; the eviternal grinding of the North American and Pacific plates along the San Andreas Fault; the wet winters and dry summers caused by the ocean and desert climates; the dripping rainforest and parched pastures; the contact and intermingling of cultures: Native American, Mexican, Russian, European; the change in rural economy from logging and ranching to winegrowing. In the wines of Hirsch Vineyards you find a natural balance and consistency in the harmonious resolution of these opposites. This complex, unique site produces fruit and wines of unusual acidity and balance with a vintage specific concentration of pinot noir or chardonnay fruit. These are wines to be enjoyed now or laid down for future consumption.The San Andreas Fault Estate Pinot Noir is the flagship wine from Hirsch, and the wine that represents the summation of our complex vineyard. David Hirsch says that if you drink only one Hirsch wine let it be this one. Powerful and refined, with a concentrated blend of spiced cherry, red currant and dried berry flavors that are backed by crisp acidity and firm tannins. The finish is propelled by intense minerality and savory spice notes.

**Grasso Fratelli Barbaresco Vallegrande 2006 (Piedmont, Italy)**

Alfredo and Luigi truly love what they do. A simple way of life, they spend the majority of their waking hours in the vineyards or in the winery doing everything together by hand. Of course, they want you to enjoy their wine, but their passion isn’t for selling but for making. This is why they hold wine to release when the wine is truly ready. The opportunity to taste older vintages of Nebbiolo released from the winery at affordable prices is a rare one indeed. For fifty years the brothers have been working together and making only small improvements to a very traditional way of thinking. With four generations of experience with the land, they nurture a classic, rustic style that expresses fully the terroir of their vineyards and the positive energy of their approach. A wine full of character with rose petal, cherry, and cassis balanced by savory elements of cedar, forest-floor, and espresso bean. The 2006 vintage shows the subtlety and nuance that makes the Nebbiolo grape one of the most noble and age-worthy grapes in the world. Great with mushrooms and pasta, wild game like boar or pheasant. Try it with a steak served with roasted mushroom gravy over mashed potatoes seasoned with rosemary and thyme.