

ADVENTURES CLUB

by Anthony Lynch • APRIL 2017

2015 GAMBELLARA “COL MOENIA”

DAVIDE VIGNATO

Gambellara is a tiny white wine appellation in Italy’s Veneto, situated roughly midway between the city of Vicenza and the more renowned Soave zone. Like Soave, Gambellara wines spotlight the local Garganega grape; however, differences in soil type yield very distinct expressions of this same variety. Whereas the limestone of Soave gives fine, elegant wines with generous fruit, the volcanic basalt that makes up most of Gambellara’s vineyards produces a much more steely, mineral-driven, almost gritty white. When young Davide Vignato took over the family vineyards, he set out to craft whites that would genuinely reflect this fascinating, unheralded *terroir*. Col Moenia represents a selection of the estate’s highest-quality organically grown grapes, fermented with a starter culture from wild yeasts and aged in tank with regular lees stirring. It brilliantly balances a delicate, slightly creamy, floral side with the saline minerality conferred from these volcanic soils. It pairs perfectly with any number of *cicchetti* (Venetian snacks).

\$20.00 PER BOTTLE **\$216.00** PER CASE

2015 BEAUMES-DE-VENISE ROUGE

DOMAINE DE DURBAN

The town of Beaumes-de-Venise, in the heart of the southern Rhône, is best known for its ravishing dessert Muscat, a local specialty famously praised by Pliny the Elder. But this is Grenache territory, and Beaumes-de-Venise also produces delicious reds from these gentle, sunbaked slopes covered with *garrigue*. Although the town enjoys *cru* status in the same way as Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Gigondas, its red wines are generally softer and more approachable in their youth, with surprising aging potential thanks to the significantly concentrated fruit and structure. Priced far below its prestigious neighbors, Beaumes-de-Venise also represents a fabulous value. At Domaine de Durban, an ancient farm now run by the Leydier family, Grenache is joined by Syrah and a drop of Mourvèdre to create this delightful everyday red scented with *herbes de Provence* and ripe black cherry. Aged in neutral oak, it is deep and robust with soft and fuzzy tannins—the perfect companion to burgers, pizza, or grilled meats.

\$19.00 PER BOTTLE **\$205.20** PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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ITALIAN-STYLE CURED STEELHEAD TROUT

by Christopher Lee

Steelhead, the sea-run form of rainbow trout, is in season now, making many of us happy and letting us anticipate salmon season just a few months away. Steelhead, deeply delicious in its own way, is a leaner, more delicately flavored fish than king salmon. Its pale, translucent roe is favored for curing into caviar. Its fillets are wonderful for curing as well. This version for preparing it is unusual because of the wine in the brine. The cured fish can be served in many ways. I prefer it presented simply, drizzled with olive oil, on thinly sliced pumpernickel rye bread, with a few capers.

- 1 pound steelhead, preferably cut from the center of the fish, skin on
- ¼ cup Soave or other delicate white wine
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced shallots
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley
- 1 teaspoon chopped wild fennel fronds
- 6 tablespoons sea salt
- 3 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon coarsely crushed black peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon coarsely crushed fennel seed
- 1 teaspoon coarsely crushed coriander seed
- ¼ teaspoon chili flakes

Make three diagonal slashes with a sharp knife in the skin of the fish, but do not cut deeply into the flesh—cut just deep enough to allow the marinade to penetrate easily. Place fish in a shallow ceramic dish. Sprinkle fish with white wine and turn over in the wine to coat. Sprinkle shallots, parsley, and fennel on all sides of fish. Mix salt and spices together and rub fish on all sides with salt mixture. Place fish skin side down in dish, cover dish with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 12 hours or overnight, turning once. To serve, remove fish from ceramic dish and discard liquid. Do not remove herbs and spices. Slice fish very thinly with a sharp, thin-bladed knife. Lay slices on a cold plate, drizzle with good olive oil, and sprinkle with sea salt. Serve with thinly sliced, untoasted pumpernickel rye bread.

Makes 6–8 servings