

KERMIT LYNCH
WINE MERCHANT

1605 SAN PABLO AVE.

BERKELEY, CA 94702-1317

510 • 524-1524

FAX 510 • 528-7026

WWW.KERMITLYNCH.COM

- 2007 PALLIÈRES
- SPRING SAMPLER
- OYSTER BLISS XIX
- BRUNELLO PRE-ARRIVAL

OPEN • TUESDAY-SATURDAY 11 A.M. TO 6 P.M. CLOSED • SUNDAY & MONDAY

APRIL 2010

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SPRING SAMPLER

by Mark Congero

SPRING IS A SEASON of blossoming abundance. What a pleasure it is, strolling through the farmers' markets from mid-March through May. The colors and aromas have changed and, best of all, the slim pickings of winter have given way to overflowing tables of beautiful produce. The farmers and everyone working the market seem happier—the weather is warming up, memories of winter have faded, and Mother Earth is growing more generous. Bright green asparagus and sweet peas are at their peak while juicy, red strawberries and fragrant cherries begin to appear and sweeten the market stalls. I start thinking about fava beans with fresh ricotta and mint, or beautiful little purple artichokes fried or pickled, tossed in a salad. With all the new flavors to play with, spring cooking is a treat, but I wonder, maybe the true reason I enjoy spring cooking so much is because winter is past and summer isn't far off!

Spring is a fun time for choosing wines to drink as well. It could be chilled rosé and backyard grilling one night and braised lamb with a vigorous young Bandol *rouge* the next. With that in mind, here is a variety of KLWM imports to match the fickle weather of spring. A selection of appropriate recipes will be in each sampler box. Both my wife and I are alumni of Chez Panisse, so hopefully we learned something worth passing on to home cooks.

PER BOTTLE

2005 BANDOL <i>ROUGE</i> • DOMAINE DE TERREBRUNE	\$30.00
2008 BROUILLY • CHÂTEAU THIVIN	22.00
2007 COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC "TRADITION" • SAINT MARTIN	14.95
2007 CHINON "CUVÉE TERROIR" • CHARLES JOGUET	17.95
2006 BEAUMES-DE-VENISE <i>ROUGE</i> • DOMAINE DE DURBAN	19.95
2007 BOURGOGNE <i>BLANC</i> • LA SOEUR CADETTE	14.95
2006 PATRIMONIO <i>BLANC</i> • YVES LECCIA	22.00
2008 SAUVIGNON <i>BLANC</i> "UNIQUE" • DOMAINE DU SALVARD	13.95
2008 PINOT GRIGIO • LA VIARTE	16.00
2008 MUSCADET • ÉRIC CHEVALIER	14.95
2008 CORBIÈRES GRIS DE GRIS ROSÉ • DOMAINE DE FONTSAINTE	13.95
NV GRANGIA • ELVIO TINTEIRO	8.00

Normally \$208.65

SPECIAL SAMPLER PRICE **\$157**

(a 25% discount)

VALUES OF THE MONTH

by Dixon Brooke

2008 BIANCO DI CUSTOZA “MAEL” CORTE GARDONI

The Piccoli family in the Veneto is well known throughout Italy for their fine wines, wines that are traditional in style, *terroir*-driven, and reasonably priced. Mael is a relatively new wine for them, first made in 2006, a blend of their best Garganega and Trebbianello grapes with a touch of Trebbiano Toscano and Riesling. It is more Soave-like in character than their classic Bianco di Custoza, with a bit more weight and intensity of flavor, and it is well built for aging. I predict it will drink beautifully for ten years and plan to test that theory. The Piccolis were rightly proud to be awarded Italy’s coveted “Tre Bicchieri” award from the Gambero Rosso guide for this jewel.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE \$172.80 PER CASE

2008 CÔTES DU RHÔNE • SELECTED BY KERMIT LYNCH



CÔTES DU RHÔNE

Kermit and I were full of oohs and ahhs when we showed up to taste through all the various cuvées of the new vintage of our Côtes du Rhône last summer. Our partners in this collaboration, a group of growers near Avignon, made some great wine in 2008, and the consistency and complexity across the *terroirs* were impressive. The blend proceeded with relative ease this year, and we walked away with a Côtes du Rhône that will give a lot of immediate pleasure but which doesn’t lack the concentration, structure, spice, and interest that the great Grenache-based wines of the South can provide. Moreover, if you have enjoyed past vintages, the 2008 is true to its school. We are confident you’ll agree that this wine offers superlative value for your money.

\$12.95 PER BOTTLE \$139.86 PER CASE

ALSACE

by Dixon Brooke

CRÉMANT D'ALSACE • MEYER-FONNÉ

Félix Meyer is making waves from his native village of Katzenthal, albeit in his quiet, humble way. We are paying attention. The consistency, quality, precision, and character across every single one of his vast range of wines is nothing short of remarkable. Here's a simple Crémant, a blend of Pinot Auxerrois, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay. In Meyer's hands, it exudes class and finesse. Those looking for another interesting, inexpensive sparkling wine to vary your pre-meal routine, look no further. At our staff tasting upon this Crémant's arrival, the enthusiasm was downright boisterous.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE **\$259.20** PER CASE

2008 RIESLING RÉSERVE • MEYER-FONNÉ

Meyer's Riesling "Reserve" is a proprietary blend, but it issues mostly from his home *terroir* of Katzenthal and its granitic soil. That is the secret behind his nervy, flinty style. Another useful technique—the addition of some young vines harvested from Meyer's *grand cru* sites. Aged in *foudre* on fine lees and bottled at peak maturity, this is a high-toned thoroughbred Riesling with an explosive, cornucopia-of-fruit bouquet and a bracing, granite-infused finish. Tasting any of Meyer-Fonné's exquisite wines is quite an experience—a must for lovers of fine wine.

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE **\$237.60** PER CASE

2008 RIESLING "VIGNOBLE D'E" DOMAINE OSTERTAG

One could say that André Ostertag has been at the top of his game for quite a while, but there is no doubt in my mind that he is making some of the greatest wines of his career before our very eyes right now, so lucky us. This Riesling is from his village, Epfig, and the family has been making it for decades. André is a longtime champion of dry Riesling, by the way—not a recent convert—and his 2008 sings out with a nose of incredible purity and a palate that perfectly balances roundness and fresh minerality. Most importantly, it is delicious.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE **\$259.20** PER CASE



LOIRE VALLEY

by Dixon Brooke

2009 CHEVERNY • DOMAINE DU SALVARD

This is the first shipment of the 2009 vintage from the Loire Valley, and you will soon discover a different animal. To generalize, it is a throwback to the wines of 2005 and 2006 after the classic, nervy 2007s and 2008s. The 2009s are ripe and plump but with just enough acidity to keep them balanced. Harvest date was critical in 2009, and the Delaille brothers of Domaine du Salvard hit the nail on the head, giving us the fresh, vibrant Cheverny we've come to expect year in and year out, but with more flesh and depth.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE **\$172.80** PER CASE

2008 POUILLY-FUMÉ • RÉGIS MINET

Our longtime partner in wine, Régis Minet of Pouilly-sur-Loire, has stunned us with his grandiose 2008. It has everything you could ask for in a great Sauvignon Blanc. I put it up against the best from anywhere around the world. Flintier and less herbaceous than most Sancerres, it has more depth and complexity than the Sauvignons from New Zealand and better balance and freshness than the wines of Friuli, not to mention its take-me-I'm-yours aromatics. Sauvignon Blanc has found itself quite a home here on the banks of the river at Pouilly-sur-Loire.

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE **\$237.60** PER CASE

2008 BOURGUEIL "BEAUVAIS" DOMAINE DE LA CHANTELEUSERIE

Bourgueil = pure Cabernet Franc, and if it's well made in a good vintage, this is Cabernet Franc built to age. Beauvais is from the domaine's best parcel of vines, planted in hillside *tuffeau*. After just the right aging in oak *foudres*, it was bottled for us, unfiltered. It is a wow-inspiring wine, starting with the dark, dense color and finishing with a meaty, chewy palate that is balanced by a fresh, chalky streak imparted by the underlying limestone. A grand vintage of Beauvais, one that will keep giving for many years to come. I swear, if you put some down for ten years, you are going to be happy with the results, with the bargain aspect, and with yourself. Not to be missed!

\$17.95 PER BOTTLE **\$193.86** PER CASE



The Sesti estate

© Gail Skoff

—PRE-ARRIVAL—

2005 BRUNELLO • SESTI

by Dixon Brooke

HOPEFULLY YOU JUMPED ABOARD last year with our first pre-arrival offer of Sesti Brunello di Montalcino from the 2004 vintage. It seems like only yesterday. And good luck today should you try finding a bottle of that 2004 for sale. Now we are offering the beautiful 2005 vintage Brunello, aged to perfection in large oak casks and just recently bottled unfiltered.

The Sestis work their land organically and strive to be as eco-friendly as possible in all their endeavors on their property, Castello di Argiano. I can't help but notice the efforts paying off in the vibrancy, freshness, and transparency of their wines. There is a stunning property, built around the Castello dating from 1200 A.D., atop a promontory with 360-degree views of the surrounding countryside. This is Sangiovese country, and we believe any great cellar should include this noble grape.

What we have here is a classic, dark, brooding, phenomenal Brunello, loaded with truffles, cocoa, and some of the most perfect tannins you will ever experience. The wine is tightly wound, compact, deep, and profound, demanding another few years in bottle to round out and shake off its extended wood aging.

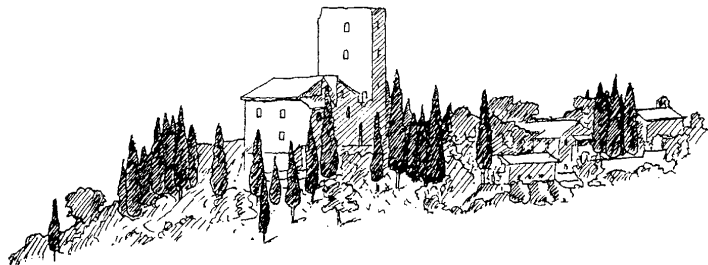
The Sesti domaine is a great addition to our portfolio. Even the labels show us a rare aesthetic sensibility. Here is one of Italy's greatest wines in a top vintage, perfectly vinified. Our staff tasted samples just after the bottling and will be happy to share their comments with you.

Reserving pre-arrival assures you an allocation of the 2005 at a special price.

\$846.00 PER CASE

(ALSO AVAILABLE IN MAGNUMS, JEROBOAMS, AND 5-LITER BOTTLES)

*Pre-arrival terms: Half-payment due with order;
balance due upon arrival.*



SOUTHERN FRANCE

by Dixon Brooke

2008 COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC BLANC “LES COCALIÈRES” • DOMAINE D’AUPILHAC

Well, seeing it was believing it. I’ve heard stories for several years from Kermit, from proprietor Sylvain Fadat, and seen pictures (including shots from our client Andy Abramson’s wedding—bride and groom arriving, landing!, by helicopter) at the site of this remarkable *terroir*, but I did not personally set foot there until this December. Awaiting me was a giant, volcanic amphitheater composed of marine fossil-infused limestone and completely covered with wild aromatic herbs like thyme and rosemary. Sylvain cleared the site and planted vines. If there were places put on our planet specifically for the production of great wine, this has to be one of them. Particularly with today’s climatic tendencies (although this winter in France was not exactly proof of global warming), the high altitude and northern exposure of Cocalières make it ideal for producing balanced wines—southern sun-soaked wines with finesse. Sylvain’s dry white is a blend of Marsanne, Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, and Vermentino. In his own words, he finds “scents of linden tree, almonds, pistachios, white peaches, and honey.”

\$28.00 PER BOTTLE \$302.40 PER CASE

2007 COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC ROUGE “LES COCALIÈRES” • DOMAINE D’AUPILHAC

Cocalières seen through a red-colored lens is an equally captivating experience. This is a wine entirely different from Sylvain’s other reds, which are from lower-elevation, southerly exposed parcels. It is a blend of Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre, so it is not the grape varieties that set it apart. Less powerful than Sylvain’s classic Montpeyroux bottling, Cocalières offers more finesse, more freshness. The wonderful 2007 summer gave us a red with even more flesh and sweetness of fruit than usual. To top it all off, the label and bottle are as unique as the wine itself—very tasteful!

Drink now, maybe with another Languedoc red alongside to provide contrast.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE \$259.20 PER CASE

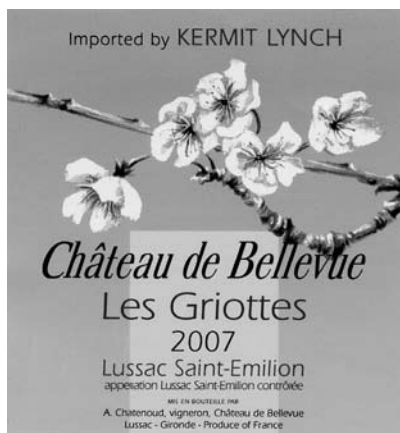


BORDEAUX

by Dixon Brooke

2007 LUSSAC SAINT-ÉMILION “LES GRIOTTES” CHÂTEAU DE BELLEVUE

Check out the blossoming cherry tree on the label (pictured below). A *griotte* is a small, sour cherry, commonly used to make preserves and tarts in France. You always smell a hint of ripe cherry and a floral, cherry blossom component in this young-vine blend from vigneron André Chatenoud in Saint-Émilion. André is certified organic, and believes in eating and drinking well. Recognizing that mature Bordeaux wasn't always the perfect match with whatever he had on his table, he began bottling this second wine that provides immediate drinking pleasure. Dark color, ripe nose, chewy texture, bright, crisp fruit, 12.5% alcohol, and a liveliness, a stimulating freshness that you never find in New World, hot-climate wines. This is a perfect everyday drink-me-down red Bordeaux, something we love and always look for but rarely find.



\$19.95 PER BOTTLE

\$215.46 PER CASE

1999 HAUT-MÉDOC • CHÂTEAU ANEY

Wait just a minute—this Bordeaux is also ready to down, BUT IT IS ELEVEN YEARS OLD!, thanks to the patient cellaring of the Raimond family at Château Aney. The tannins have melted away and this is now pure silk on the palate. Aney makes an old-fashioned claret—never exaggerated, never overly oaky, never boasting gargantuan concentration. Imagine good ol' Cabernet grown in the gravelly soil of the Médoc, raised in French oak *barriques* that are not all brand-new.

Château Aney keeps a stock of older vintages on hand, and whenever the hankering for mature Bordeaux strikes, we, in turn, try to get away with a few cases. To see this 1999 at its best, serve it with a simple, well-aged cut of beef.

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE

\$280.80 PER CASE

CORSICA

by Kermit Lynch

MOST OF CORSICA IS GRANITE—the island is part of the Alpine chain, raw young mountains thrusting up out of the blue Mediterranean. The soil of the small appellation of Patrimonio, however, is seashell limestone and is responsible for the quality of the reds and whites of the two finest domaines there, Leccia and Arena.

2008 PATRIMONIO BLANC “HAUT DE CARCO” ANTOINE ARENA

Go to www.antoine-arena.fr to see Carco’s bleached white stony hillside soil, full of fossilized oyster shell remains. *Haut de Carco* means “the heights of Carco.” The name Carco comes from *calcaire*, which means chalk or limestone. (See Sylvain Fadat’s Cocalières in this newsletter for another linguistic variation.) This is a rare gem in the world of dry whites. The Vermentino juice fermented dry, completed its malo, and was bottled unfiltered.

The perfume has citrus fruit and a stony purity. The palate has volume and depth. It is crisp, fleshy, and long. A memorable bottle.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE \$388.80 PER CASE

2008 VIN DE PAYS ROUGE • YVES LECCIA

This lovely blend of Nielluccio and Grenache will remind you of Tuscan, Corsican, and Rhône red wines, all in one bottle. Now, is there a KLWM reader out there who can resist such an appealing combo?

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE \$280.80 PER CASE

2007 PATRIMONIO ROUGE “MORTA MAIO” ANTOINE ARENA

Antoine’s intention here was to make a cuvée of pure Nielluccio (a descendant of the Sangiovese) that we could enjoy right off the bat, or, uh, boat. He succeeded. Immediate Corsican gratification! The Stones should write a song about it. But, ready to down? *Yes!* Does it lack mucho macho? *No!* You would be underestimating our talented vigneron.

Morta Maio is hearty, rustic, and *terroir*-driven—oh, it’ll stain your palate—but the balance, the all-important balance, makes it a treat to swallow young.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE \$388.80 PER CASE



OYSTER BLISS XIX

THE VIBES WERE GOOD, it can be said, borrowing a sixties phrase to describe last year's Oyster Bliss. Even though the event took place during some of the darkest days of the recession, those of us present enjoyed the live music, the gorgeous day, and managed to down 6000 oysters, 700 sausages, and a confidential number of glasses of fermented grape juices.

One of the highlights was the presence of Denis Jamain, whose Reuilly *blanc* hit the spot quite precisely. We've planned this year's event to coincide with the visit of two favorite French vigneron. Jean Montanet makes our Chablis-like oyster-friendly Vézelay *blanc*—the world's finest Chardonnay value, by the way. He is traveling with Catherine Breton, who produces great Loire reds from Bourgueil and petite quantities of dry, crisp Vouvray, and whose good looks and sparkling personality have no place in this context. Right? They'll help pour and tell you whatever you might want to know about their wines.

I was just realizing, Oyster Bliss has become my favorite holiday, and it is not even an official one. But what a party!

We close the parking lot to cars, set up tables and tents and a big barbecue for Chris Lee's sausages; we'll have some foot-tapping music, and of course Monterey Fish has been assigned the task of locating and shucking the best oysters money can buy.

Note the date. It's a gas, gas, gas.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.

This event is presented by Café Fanny.

MY PALLIÈRES

by Kermit Lynch

MINE, I SHOULD SAY, in partnership with Daniel and Frédéric Brunier. We enjoyed one hell of a vintage at Pallières in 2007. I'd even say that the quality blows down the borders of how Gigondas is perceived. I mean, hasn't it always been treated like little brother to Châteauneuf-du-Pape? Our 2007 has qualities that invite no comparison with anything else. It is gloriously what it is.

It is, however, two of what it is, because we made two cuvées in 2007. Now that the vintage is bottled and available, I take great interest in the reaction of critics and clients, especially in the fact that almost everyone has flipped over our cuvée Les Racines. I hope the other cuvée, Terrasse du Diable, doesn't feel like a wallflower, because Les Racines is attracting all the attention so far.

Well, Les Racines is truly gushing with aroma, flavor, and deliciousness. I have never experienced anything like it. If Racines were a woman, other women would probably be whispering "Slut" behind her back. Les Racines is ample, sensuous, and generous with her favors.

When the Bruniers and I created the two cuvées, we wanted to amplify the two qualities we find most remarkable at Pallières. Let's call the qualities Dionysian for Les Racines, and more Apollonian for Terrasse. One is more immediately seductive; the other, more discreet at first, is a dark, classic beauty that takes more time to fathom.

I love the irony here. We considered charging more for Terrasse, then decided that we did not want either to be considered a *cuvée spéciale*, so they are the same price.

One last comment: over the decades, an additional matter of interest can be enjoyed—comparing Les Racines and Terrasse to see what each is really made of, what they contain within to be revealed with aging.

Both cuvées have now arrived. Let the tasting begin.

2007 GIGONDAS "LES RACINES"

2007 GIGONDAS "TERRASSE DU DIABLE"

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE

\$388.80 PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT—TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All wines purchased from Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant are deemed sold in California and title passes to the buyer in California. We make no representation relative to the customer's right to import wine into his/her state. In placing an order, the customer represents to Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant that he/she is at least 21 years of age and the person to whom delivery will be made is at least 21 years old.
