

# KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

## *Wine Club Bulletin*

DECEMBER 2011

### NV CLAIRETTE DE DIE BRUT DOMAINE ACHARD-VINCENT

Contrary to popular belief, sparkling wine does not need a special occasion in order to be enjoyed. The good news is that it is nevertheless the quintessential beverage of the holiday season for a reason. This dry, fruity, low-alcohol sparkler hails from the Drôme Valley around Die (pronounced “Dee”), east of the Rhône. The wines made from the Clairette and Muscat grapes here have been praised since ancient times for their *pétillance* and freshness—from a method widely believed to predate that of Champagne. Among the most well-known producers today is the tiny Domaine Achard-Vincent. Jean-Pierre Achard, and his son, Thomas, descend from five generations of growers. The domaine has farmed organically since Thomas’s grandparents were directing it, although it is now officially certified as both organic and biodynamic. This is a wine to be enjoyed in shameless abundance. It is as natural as an aperitif, but it also is a surprising match for spicy or salty foods of all kinds.

**\$24.00 PER BOTTLE**

**\$259.20 PER CASE**



### 2008 ELORO “SPACCAFORNO” • RIOFAVARA

In southeastern Sicily, along the Ionian Sea, the Noto Valley looks as if it was picked out of Homer’s *Odyssey*—ruins of an ancient Greek colony, crystal clear waters, pristine sandy beaches, and beautiful stretches of vineyard land, all with pastoral, Italianate charm. The Padova family has been farming here since 1920. Massimo Padova’s careful study of the best soils of Sicily eventually led this modern-day Odysseus back home to Riofava in the 1990’s to specialize in the rich and aromatic Nero d’Avola. With the help of his sister, cousin, and wife, Massimo has taken the *cantina* to new heights, honing in on the best techniques and practices for their vineyards and cellar (including organic farming), and consequently raising the bar in the Eoro D.O.C. Given the great richness of texture, spiciness, and aromatic complexity, consider trying it with braised lamb, or spaghetti and meatballs for the ultimate comfort food experience. We are thrilled to give our wine club members a first taste of this new addition to the KLWM portfolio.



**\$19.95 PER BOTTLE**

**\$215.46 PER CASE**

*To re-order any of our Wine Club selections, please give us a call at 510.524.1524 to speak to a salesperson or send us an email at [wineclub@kermitynch.com](mailto:wineclub@kermitynch.com).*

# BRAISED LAMB SHANK WITH PECORINO AND BREADCRUMBS

by Christopher Lee

*Recently, a cook with whom I worked years ago reminded me of this delicious Sicilian dish. We cooked it a lot and loved it. The crisp breadcrumbs and sharp Pecorino poignantly contrast the lamb's lush tenderness. The shanks are delicious with saffron rice, a nod to Sicily's Saracen past. You'll need to salt the shanks one day ahead.*

*4 servings*

4 lamb shanks, large tendon removed

Sea salt

1/4 cup olive oil

12 or 13 shallots, peeled, left whole

8 or 10 garlic cloves, peeled, left whole

1 bay leaf

2 strips lemon zest,

cut with vegetable peeler

2 rosemary sprigs

2 cups light, fruity red wine

1 cup breadcrumbs,

toasted very pale but thoroughly dry

1 cup grated Pecorino Sardo  
(or Pecorino Romano)

1 tablespoon rosemary, chopped

1 tablespoon good olive oil

Season lamb shanks liberally with sea salt and refrigerate overnight. Next day, sear the shanks in a wide casserole in olive oil over medium heat. Reduce heat, add shallots and garlic, and brown lightly. Add bay leaf, rosemary sprigs, lemon zest, and wine. Bring to a simmer, cover, and braise at 350°F for about 3 hours, until lamb is tender. (Don't let the casserole go dry; if you need more liquid, add water.) Remove shanks from casserole and tip out sauce. Return shanks to pan. Make a mixture of breadcrumbs, Pecorino, chopped rosemary, and olive oil. Sprinkle shanks liberally with breadcrumb mixture and bake uncovered for about 15 minutes at 375°F, or until crumbs are golden. Break the crust a couple of times if you wish to ensure perfect breadcrumbs. If sauce needs further reducing for proper thickness, use a small saucepan, but don't take sauce too far. Finish sauce with a splash of Nero d'Avola for brightness.



*The seaside of Sicily, near Riofavara*

*Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo in Berkeley and co-founder of the Pop-Up General Store in Oakland, California. Read his blog at <http://oldfashionedbutcher.blogspot.com>.*