

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

Wine Club Bulletin

MARCH 2011

2009 MATAÒSSU • PUNTA CRENA

In the sleepy village of Varigotti in Liguria, time moves a little bit slower. Since 1500, the Ruffino family has been raising animals, growing fruits and vegetables, making oil from their own olives, and wine from their own grapes. They are as old-school as it gets. With breathtaking views of the Mediterranean Sea from their hillside vineyards, it wouldn't be a stretch at all to call their farm paradise. The Ruffinos have been resuscitating heirloom varietals that are on the edge of extinction because they are either difficult to grow or less commercially viable than more ubiquitous grapes. The family claims to be the only one to bottle the true native Mataòssu grape in Liguria, and this has happily allowed us access to one of Italy's last hidden gems. Ethereal aromas of jasmine and honeysuckle open to a succulent and creamy mid-palate with a long, zesty finish—perfect for the coming of Spring. If tasting off the beaten track appeals to you, consider their Pigato, another beautifully aromatic white, or their delicious and unusual rosé and red, Barbarossa and Cravin!



Punta Crena winemaker, Paolo Ruffino among his Mataòssu vines

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE

\$237.60 PER CASE

2008 CHINON • BERNARD BAUDRY

Bernard Baudry is unquestionably one of Chinon's most outstanding producers. It is rare to find talent that expresses itself so distinctly and consistently, vintage to vintage. Since 1975 Bernard has been farming in Cravant-les-Coteaux, a village within the appellation of Chinon. He and his son Mathieu work vineyards composed of gravel, sand, limestone, silica, and clay. They are staunch traditionalists and stay true to the old methods, crafting five different cuvées of Chinon all aged in their incredible cellars (which have been chiseled out of tuffeau behind the winery). Their *lieux-dit* Chinons take the single-vineyard bottlings of the appellation to a new level, in the tradition of another master of the Touraine, Charles Joguet. This month's selection is the Baudrys' "domaine" bottling, a blend of several parcels. This is classic Chinon in all its glory with a spice box nose, hints of raspberries, a brambly finish, and dusty tannins. It's an easy fit with everything from vegetarian and meat stews to roasted birds of all kinds.

\$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@kermitylynch.com.

FISH AND SHELL BEAN STEW WITH GREEN GARLIC AND SAFFRON

By Christopher Lee

Green garlic, a harbinger of spring, has appeared in our markets. It's a sheer delight in soups and stews, and its gentleness embraces so many things, but for me, it's especially seductive with fish. Here's a soupy stew we made last night for this in-between season we find ourselves in. Punta Crena's unusual, enchanting Mataòssu was a sheer delight along with it.

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| 1/2 lb shell beans, fresh or dried
(flageolet or cannellini) | 1/3 cup white wine |
| 1 bay leaf | 1/4 tsp fennel seed, coarsely pounded |
| Sea salt | 1/4 tsp coriander seed, coarsely pounded |
| 1 red onion, peeled and diced | 1 spike clove, whole |
| 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
(preferably Ligurian) | A pinch of cayenne or espalette pepper |
| 1 bunch green garlic, about 1/2 cup
(white portion, cleaned and thinly sliced) | A big pinch of saffron |
| 1 small can Italian plum tomatoes
(about 6 tomatoes, drained, diced) | Six 3-ounce pieces of halibut, rockfish, or
black cod |
| | 1 bunch small white turnips, about 6 each
(with perfect greens; turnips sliced,
greens rinsed and chopped) |

Soak beans overnight in cool water. On the following day, tip off soaking liquid, cover with fresh water, add one bay leaf, and simmer beans until very tender. When done, discard bay leaf and cooking liquid (or save it for another soup). Salt beans and coat with 2 tablespoons olive oil.

Cook onion and green garlic gently in olive oil until soft. Add diced tomatoes and concentrate over low heat. Add wine, increase heat to medium, and cook for 3 minutes. Add beans, turnips, greens, spices, 3 cups bean liquid, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Add fish, cover while leaving lid ajar, and simmer for 6 or 7 minutes, until fish is cooked through and starting to flake. Adjust seasoning. Serve with toasted country bread drizzled with olive oil.

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>.

