

ADVENTURES CLUB

by Anthony Lynch • JUNE 2015

2014 LANGHE ARNEIS • ELVIO TINTERO

Marco Tintero's easygoing disposition may come as a surprise when one considers the strength and rigor required to farm the steep slopes of the Langhe hills. This dramatic landscape, iconic of northern Italy's Piedmont, would stress and fatigue many growers, yet a visit to the Tintero estate always finds Marco in fine form, beaming a contagious grin. Tasting through the lineup—local specialties such as Moscato d'Asti, Dolcetto, Favorita, and some lively *frizzanti*—is not profound and meditative, as is tasting with certain growers. Rather, laughter abounds, and a delicious *salame* made by Marco's father, Elvio, may appear on the table as spitting becomes the exception rather than the rule. This delightful Arneis features a heady perfume of apricot and flowers, with a luscious texture balanced by crisp acidity and mineral notes. Like all Tintero bottlings, it is easy on the palate and the wallet—a Piemontese classic at bargain cost.

\$12.00 PER BOTTLE **\$129.60** PER CASE

2011 FRONSAC "CUVÉE PIVERTS" CHÂTEAU MOULIN

This cuvée isn't what comes to mind when most people think of Bordeaux. Stuffy men in suits, *haute cuisine*, tannic reds requiring sickly new oak treatment or absurd bottle age to be approachable . . . forget all that. Bénédicte and Grégoire Hubau of Château Moulin are part of a new school of winemaking in the Bordelais, emphasizing sustainable viticulture and minimal intervention in the cellar. In this sense, the cuvée Piverts represents their most revolutionary bottling: made without added sulfur, it is a transparent reflection of Merlot grown in the limestone and clay of Fronsac, in the heart of Bordeaux's right bank. We suggest decanting this youthful "natural wine" to best appreciate its purity of fruit and the honest expression of *terroir* it provides. Fun, gulpability, deliciousness—no, these are not words typically associated with Bordeaux.



\$28.00 PER BOTTLE **\$302.40** PER CASE

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ASPARAGUS WITH POACHED EGG AND SHAVED BOTTARGA

by Christopher Lee

Bottarga is salted, pressed, dried fish roe that is produced in many countries around the Mediterranean, from either tuna or mullet roe. I suggest you try mullet—bottarga di mugine—for its briny, deep flavor. Bottarga comes in lobes of roughly 100 grams. Bold and sharply intense, it complements the clean freshness of Tintero's Langhe Arneis. Fresh farm eggs are a must for this recipe; they're available at farmers' markets, usually from small producers. Look for Araucanas, with the beautiful blue-green shells. Asparagus must be fresh and newly picked, too. I like meaty, thumb-sized spears, but any size will work well. If you don't fancy the bottarga, shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano is delicious in this dish, too!

1½ pounds fresh asparagus, about 20 spears,
green or white
Sea salt
4 fresh farm eggs
4 tablespoons best extra-virgin olive oil
1 lobe mullet bottarga

Holding each asparagus in your fingers, gently bend spear and snap where it naturally breaks. Peel stems with vegetable peeler as lightly as possible. Poach spears in a wide, shallow pan in 3 or 4 inches of gently boiling water salted with 2 teaspoons sea salt for 2 to 3 minutes, until you can pierce them easily with a paring knife. Drain asparagus on a paper or cloth towel on a flat plate. Do not stack asparagus. When drained, place asparagus on individual plates and sprinkle with sea salt.

Crack eggs individually into small bowls or ramekins without breaking yolks, one egg per container. Fill a wide, medium-size saucepan with 3 inches of water, bring to simmer, then turn heat low; hold at 180° F. Stir water with a slotted spoon to create a circular flow. Drop eggs one by one away from center into circulating water and set timer for 3½ minutes. When done, gently remove each egg with the slotted spoon, and wick water from back of spoon with a folded paper towel. Gently place an egg on top of asparagus on each plate. Drizzle eggs and asparagus with olive oil, then sprinkle with sea salt. Shave bottarga generously on top with a Japanese mandolin, or shave as thinly as possible with a sharp knife.

Serves 4

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>.