



## 2009 LALANDE DE POMEROL CHÂTEAU BELLES-GRAVES

Château Belles-Graves cannot help but leave a lasting impression. The vineyards here date back to the 16th century, the château itself from the 18th century, and the gardens are something out of a French fairytale. What's more, the wines are impressive, too! Xavier Piton's family has been farming this land since 1938, and the silky smooth texture the wines exhibit year after year consistently make them a pleasure to drink. Lalande de Pomerol is located in the heart of Bordeaux's right bank, home to some of the world's finest Merlots, and Xavier's are sourced from forty-year-old vines. While many of the region's producers strive for overly-oaked, tannin bombs to earn high scores, Xavier strives for a harmonious blend of fruit, minerals, acidity, soft tannins, and understated oak, making this bottling the embodiment of charm and grace. Better yet, it's able to stand a diverse range of food pairings, while still being an excellent candidate for pop-and-pour gratification on its own. Try it with a good book in front of a raging fire, for example.

\$32.00 PER BOTTLE      \$345.60 PER CASE

## 2009 CHINON "LES VARENNES DU GRAND CLOS" CHARLES JOGUET

Charles Joguet built his reputation in the Loire Valley by being the first to isolate and vinify the best parcels of Cabernet Franc in A.O.C. Chinon, many of which are now considered unofficial *premier crus* and *grand crus* of the region. Though Charles has since retired, he has passed his savoir-faire on to the young and capable Kevin Fontaine, who is leaving his own gentle footprint on the domaine through experimentation with organic and biodynamic viticulture. "Les Varennes du Grand Clos" is one of the domaine's finest parcels, situated at the foot of a gravelly terrace of siliceous chalk and limestone on the left bank of the Vienne River. The beauty of the Varennes is in its complexity when drunk young. Older bottles have emerged from time to time, but much pleasure is to be had now. After a few hours in a decanter, the shyness of its youth dissipates and seductive notes of velvety black fruit and soft tannins emerge.

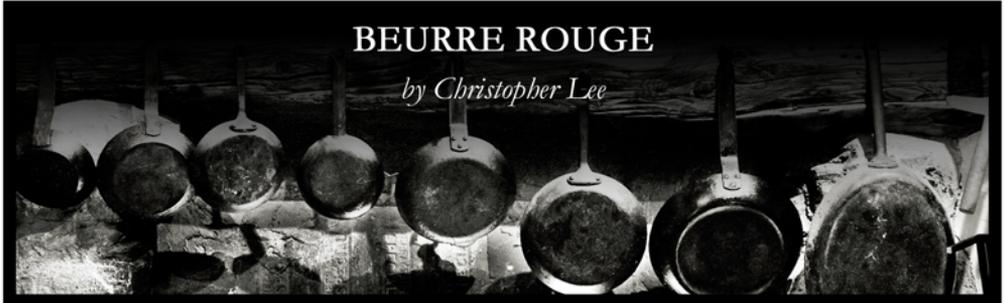
\$37.00 PER BOTTLE      \$399.60 PER CASE

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# BEURRE ROUGE

by Christopher Lee



*Beurre blanc, generally associated with the Loire Valley, is a standard sauce you should have in your repertoire. A wonderful red wine version appeared some years ago. It was quite popular in the dark days of Nouvelle Cuisine, and may have originated then. Despite its association with that style of cooking, it is not to be dismissed. Beurre rouge is fantastic with flavorful white fish such as cod, sable, and flounder, and terrific with King salmon. The red wine sauce is a deeper flavor than the white one, and it gives a fish dish an unexpected earthiness. In a fancy kitchen, the shallots would be strained out, but I love the flavor of shallots and I like to leave them in. Reduced in the red wine, they take on a beautiful red opalescence. Sometimes you hear that a butter sauce is hard to make, but really, it's not—you'll see. A final sprinkle of chopped parsley over the sauced fish is a nice brightener, visually and on the palate. The sauce is perfect with the Chinon. If you're feeling flush, use that in the reduction. This recipe will make about 1-1/2 cups of sauce, enough for four servings.*

8 ounces young, fruity red wine  
3 tablespoons minced shallots  
12 ounces nice unsalted butter,  
cut in 1/2-inch slices, well chilled  
A pinch of white pepper

Combine wine and shallots in a shallow stainless pan and reduce over medium heat to about 2 ounces. Off heat, whisk in 1 pat of butter. Turn the flame as low as possible. Return the pan to the burner and whisk in butter one piece at a time. Be sure not to boil the sauce or it will break. You can move on and off the heat as needed to regulate the temperature. One of my cooks said it takes immense restraint not to go too fast with a butter sauce; he was not one who showed a lot of restraint, generally speaking. When finished, add a pinch of white pepper. Hold the sauce in a warm spot or in a double boiler (off the heat) until needed.



Charles Joguet

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*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>.*