



2009 VIN DE SAVOIE CHIGNIN MONDEUSE “VIEILLES VIGNES” • A. & M. QUENARD

In the Savoie, nestled in the foothills of the French Alps, Michel Quenard is making exquisite wines. While he is perhaps best known for his juicy and stony whites, Michel makes a delicious red from the Mondeuse grape, as it is known in these parts. (You might also know it as Refosco in wines from northern Italy.) Sourced from more than 70-year-old vines planted in steep, glacial limestone scree, his Chignin Mondeuse has great texture and depth—talk about *terroir*! He plays with partial whole cluster fermentation and he ages the wine for an entire year in old, neutral oak *foudres* to harmonize the texture. So how does it taste? Lively notes of plums, cherries, and raspberries that seem to be infused with ground pepper, crushed stone, and balanced tannins. Fine, multi-dimensional bottlings such as this are rarely as delightfully easy and fun to drink, making it as tasty with grilled sausages as it is with a feta and baby arugula salad. Now that’s range.

\$28.00 PER BOTTLE \$302.40 PER CASE

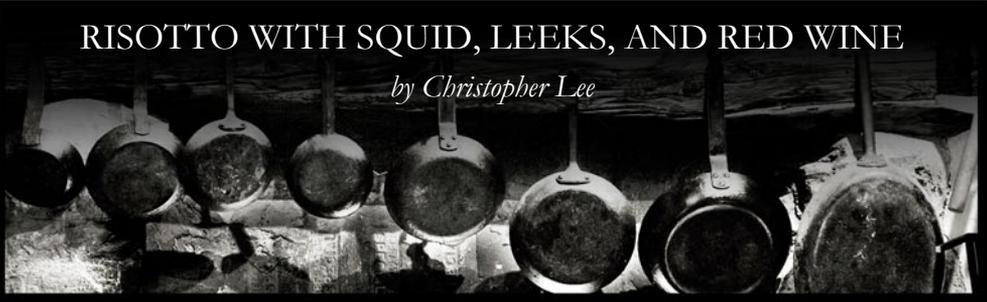
2009 GIGONDAS “LES RACINES” DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES

In 1998, Kermit and the Brunier brothers of Vieux Télégraphe teamed up to revive the fading jewel of Les Pallières in Gigondas, one of the greatest domaines and *crus* of the southern Rhône. Taking the time to properly acquaint themselves with the domaine, this trio discovered a distinct difference among the parcels, which for years had been blended into the same cuvée. When they divided them up, they discovered the terrific power and diverse personalities of their *terroir*: Les Racines (“roots”) showcases the domaine’s oldest vines, and the sister bottling, Terrace du Diable (“Devil’s Terrace”), encompasses some of the estate’s higher altitude parcels. The 2009 vintage of Les Racines is nothing short of stunning. Exhibiting extravagant aromas of cornucopian fruit (notably blackberries) with pronounced notes of spicy *réglisse*, this cuvée was absolutely meant to seduce. Putting some aside for the decades to come would only prove how much better it gets with age—that is, if it wasn’t already so darn charming right now!

\$48.00 PER BOTTLE \$518.40 PER CASE

RISOTTO WITH SQUID, LEEKS, AND RED WINE

by Christopher Lee



This dish contrasts the richness of risotto with the tang and swagger of fresh squid, cooked in red wine. Squid, leeks, and garlic melt together in the wine until the whole becomes something far beyond its parts. Sometimes I place a little cap of aioli on top—unconventional for a dish of Italian rice—but wildly delicious. What an accompaniment to the deep, ancient fruit of the Gigondas!

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| 2 pounds fresh calamari bodies and arms (tentacles), purple skin left on | 4 cloves fresh garlic, slivered into long shards |
| ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil | 2 teaspoons tomato paste |
| 2 teaspoons plain flour | 2 pinches cayenne |
| 1 tablespoon Cognac | 1 sprig of thyme |
| 16 ounces young, fruity red wine | 1 small bay leaf |
| 1 pound white of leek, finely diced | |

Squid: Slice squid bodies into 1/2-inch rings. Leave arms whole. Season squid with sea salt and brown in medium hot oil until it just begins to color; be careful, it may splatter. Sprinkle squid with flour and toss gently. Off heat, pour in Cognac, then deglaze with red wine. Scrape all the bits from bottom of pan. Soften leeks and garlic for 3 or 4 minutes in a little more oil, add tomato paste, squid and pan liquid, cayenne, thyme, and bay. Simmer squid until tender, stirring occasionally, about one hour, until wine is reduced to a thick sauce. Give squid a splash of fresh wine.

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| 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil | 2 pints chicken stock + 2 pints water together at simmer |
| 2 tablespoons unsalted butter | Sea salt |
| ½ large onion, finely diced | 2 tablespoons unsalted butter |
| 2 cups carnaroli (risotto) rice | 4 tablespoons chopped parsley |
| 3 ounces dry white wine | |

Risotto: Warm butter and oil together, add onions, cover, and cook over low heat until soft, with no color. Purée onions in blender. A slight coarseness is ok. In a clean saucepan, warm butter and oil together over medium heat, add rice and stir without browning for two minutes. Deglaze with white wine and cook until rice is dry. Add stock to cover rice by 1/4 inch, add salt, and keep at robust simmer, scraping bottom of pan often, and stirring rice to help release its starch. Cook, stirring with wooden spoon until liquid drops below surface of rice, then add more stock to cover by 1/4 inch. Continue in this way till rice is tender and cooked through, just a tiny bit of bite. Rice should be emulsified and creamy. Adjust salt. Off heat, add 2 tablespoons butter and whip with wooden spoon to further develop creaminess. Spoon risotto onto concave plates, put large dollops of warm squid on top, and sprinkle with fresh parsley. Go for the aioli if you dare!

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>.