



CLUB ROUGE *by Anthony Lynch* SEPTEMBER 2013

2011 MORGON “CUVÉE MMXI” • MARCEL LAPIERRE

No wine region embodies the spirit of festiveness and merriment as much as Beaujolais does. At Domaine Lapierre, it seems that life is one long party, a party that revolves around full glasses of fresh, juicy, vivid purple Morgon. In the 1970s, Marcel Lapierre was one of the first to redefine the image of Beaujolais, as he promoted traditional, natural methods to combat the surge of lifeless technological wines that gave the region a bad reputation. His philosophy focused on harvesting ripe fruit from old vines worked without the use of chemical additives. In the cellar, Marcel championed indigenous yeasts and low doses of sulfur dioxide, often opting to add none at all. This special cuvée is the product of one-hundred-year-old vines and resembles the normal Morgon bottling with an injection of testosterone. Drink it now to see how jam-packed it is with goodness, or let it rest in your cellar for a few years and start your Beaujolais party later.

\$42.00 PER BOTTLE \$453.60 PER CASE

2010 CANON FRONSAC • CHÂTEAU MOULIN

Continuing with the theme of revolutionary and natural, we travel to Bordeaux to pay a visit to Bénédicte and Grégoire Hubau. In the land of châteaux, enologists, and pressed suits, this couple offers a refreshing glimpse at the potential the right bank has to offer when the goal is not to score a hundred points and gobs of euros, but to make honest, *terroir*-driven wines. The Hubaus had never studied winemaking, but one day—call it a midlife crisis—they spontaneously dropped everything and purchased a château in Bordeaux, with the idea of making a living as vignerons. Bénédicte and Grégoire possess an enthusiasm and thirst for understanding that well made up for their inexperience in the field. By asking advice from neighbors and hiring a team of experts to learn from, the Hubaus hit the ground running with the 1988 vintage. The 2010 marks another achievement in their remarkable success story. This elegant, supple Canon Fronsac—featuring organically grown Merlot—was fermented with natural yeasts and is unfinned and unfiltered. Allow it time to open up to reveal the beauty hiding behind its dusty tannins.

\$28.00 PER BOTTLE \$302.40 PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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STEAK À LA BORDELAISE

by Christopher Lee

Steak à la bordelaise began in the French vineyard. After a day's work among the vines, the crew enjoyed a beautiful, thick-cut entrecôte cooked by the vigneron or one of his assistants. A blazing fire was built from the aromatic staves of old wine barrels. Vine- or fruitwood cuttings gave the fire a hot spike and created a decadent crust on the steaks, along with their subtle addition of flavor.

Typical ingredients from Bordeaux make up the dish: superb beef from the southwest; diced gray shallots grown nearby; red wine, naturally, for the sauce, which is then finished with bright, unsalted French butter; and the region's ubiquitous parsley. If lees are on hand from racking the wine, the sauce is deepened by mixing in this flavorful slurry, and of course a sturdy regional wine is drunk alongside.

I am reminded of a moment when I offended a well-known French chef. I won't say I didn't take some delight in it, but the offense was inadvertent. Truly.

A conversation had arisen in the kitchen about the dish's history, about which I'd read a great deal. I had discovered that at times of particular impoverishment, vineyard rats were grilled instead of a more expensive—and perhaps unobtainable at the time—piece of beef. The rodents ran the vineyard in search of sustenance from the sugary grapes. The fattened creatures were summarily dispatched by the cook and grilled on the burning pyre. A richly flavored wine sauce enhanced with butter was made à la minute to accompany the beasts. Once again, necessity is the mother of invention!

Well, the indignant chef insisted my story was spurious. I cited my sources and made my case, but he remained unconvinced. The cooks, however, were firmly convinced that it was indeed true!

4 eight-ounce rib-eye or entrecôte steaks, 1½ inches thick	½ cup shallots, finely chopped
2 ounces clarified butter or grape seed oil	1 cup young, fruity red wine
Sea salt	4 ounces meat sauce or stock
	3 ounces unsalted butter
	½ cup chopped parsley

Bring steaks to room temperature. Grill steaks over hot coals or sear in a cast-iron pan in clarified butter or grape seed oil to desired temperature. Sprinkle both sides of steaks with salt and place on a warm platter. Tip off most of the fat. Add shallots over low heat and cook for one minute. Raise heat, add wine and stock, and reduce to 6 ounces, and sauce is thickened. Add butter and swirl until incorporated. Pour over steaks, and sprinkle with parsley.

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>.