

**2016 CROZES HERMITAGE “TIERCEROLLES”
BARRUOL / LYNCH**

Wines from the fabled hill of Hermitage undoubtedly represent the pinnacle of Syrah worldwide. However, these bottles are extremely limited in quantity, and they tend to be priced accordingly. Enter Crozes Hermitage: akin to an extension of Hermitage on the left bank of the Rhône, Crozes produces wines that are capable of hinting at Syrah greatness at bargain cost. That being said, quality varies tremendously here, as the appellation features both stony slopes ideal for producing wines of character and richer soils on flatter land—not nearly as noble a *terroir*. Louis Barruol has intimate knowledge of the northern Rhône’s vineyards, so he sources this Crozes from granite hillside plots that yield deep, chewy reds with concentrated aromas of smoke, black fruit, and graphite. Vinified traditionally (with stems) and aged in barrels without filtration, this is real-deal Syrah that demonstrates the strong personality—and value—to be found in Crozes.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE \$388.80 PER CASE

**2015 BANDOL ROUGE
DOMAINE DE LA TOUR DU BON**

Made predominantly from the noble Mourvèdre grape, Bandol reds perfectly translate the sun-kissed landscape of Provence. At once profound and generous, they flaunt a somewhat rustic, earthy side while expressing the jovial personality of the Provençal people. At Tour du Bon, vigneronne Agnès Henry crafts dense, potent reds from clay and limestone soils tucked beneath the medieval village of Le Castellet. This part of the appellation is shielded from cooling sea breezes, so her wines show a full-throttle ripeness and almost bloody, animal character that shines alongside lamb and game dishes, rich tomato sauces, and other hearty Mediterranean cuisine featuring plenty of garlic and herbs. Delicious today, this Provençal beast will have no problem aging and evolving in bottle for twenty more years.

\$36.00 PER BOTTLE \$388.80 PER CASE

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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PAN-FRIED LAMB CHOPS WITH BREAD CRUMBS AND DRIED OREGANO

by Christopher Lee

Lamb with Bandol rouge is a no-brainer. I adore lamb chops—loin, rack, or, especially, shoulder chops, also called blade chops—particularly when dusted with bread crumbs and herbs and then pan-fried to crisp edges. I used to cook lamb quite rare; once, as a young, eager, but inexperienced cook, I served a nearly raw leg of lamb to an employer and his friends at my home. Over time, I've come to prefer lamb more toward what I might call almost medium—past rare and just shy of medium—when the delicious, earthy gaminess of the meat comes out and mixes with the fragrant exoticism of the herb. All of that is embellished by the seductive, deep beauty of an excellent wine such as the 2015 Bandol rouge from Tour du Bon. Sicilian oregano is especially nice and can be found in many gourmet markets nowadays. A great chef I worked with long ago said oregano should be used only in its dried form. I understand, finally, what he meant.

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| 2 eight-bone racks of lamb,
frenched, cut into individual
chops, with bones attached | 2 tablespoons chopped
Italian parsley |
| ½ cup fine, dried, white
bread crumbs | 2 teaspoons sea salt |
| 2 tablespoons dried oregano,
crumbled with your fingers | 2 ounces olive oil |
| | 8 lemon wedges, seeds
removed |

Flatten chops with a meat pounder or other heavy, flat tool, improvised or purpose-designed. Mix together bread crumbs, dried oregano, and parsley. Season chops with 1½ teaspoons sea salt and dredge in bread-crumbs mixture. Press the bread crumbs so they cling to the chops; some will fall off, and some will stick. Dredge the chops again, and press the crumbs again. Lay chops on a baking tray lined with parchment. Heat a fry pan to medium-high, pour in oil, and add chops. Lower heat to medium. Fry until crisp on one side, about 5 minutes. Check for browning, and when browned, turn chops over. Fry on second side for 4–5 minutes, until bread crumbs are browned and meat is beginning to ooze its juices. Cook 1 minute longer and touch chops against a piece of absorbent paper or a clean towel to wick away fat. Place chops on a warm platter and sprinkle with remaining sea salt. Serve with lemon wedges. *Serves 4*