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WINE MERCHANT

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

- **BEATLES MEDLEY**
- **LOTS OF NEW WHITES**
- **2001 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE**

OPEN • TUESDAY-SATURDAY 11 A.M. to 6 P.M. CLOSED • SUNDAY & MONDAY

APRIL 2004

— PRE-ARRIVAL OFFER —

2001 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

2001 DOMAINE DE LA CHARBONNIÈRE

Recently I uncorked a 1995 from Charbonnière and found it intensely Châteauneuf-du-Pape, rich in body, and stony to the limit. The domaine's 2001s are a must. Gloriously flavored, as round and ample on the palate as I have seen from them, the wines make a big statement without going too far. Grand, deep, powerful, filled to the brim, so to speak. No one could remain unmoved before a glass of a 2001.

PER CASE

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE "CUVÉE MOURRE DES PERDRIX"\$459.00

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE "LES HAUTES BRUSQUIÈRES" 519.00

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE "VIEILLES VIGNES" 519.00

2001 DOMAINE LES CLEFS D'OR



And at our staff Christmas party at Chez Panisse in December we enjoyed magnums of 1995 Les Clefs d'Or with Provençal-style rabbit. Wow! My mouth waters just thinking about it. From a Maguey Brunier recipe, the sauce had rabbit giblets, garlic, thyme, and vinegar in it. As I had hoped, the Clefs d'Or stood right up to it and flowed tastefully and abundantly.

For our 2001 Clefs d'Or, I tasted through a dozen different casks of 2001 and ended up blending three for our unfiltered bottling. The nose shows black pepper, *garrigue*, cinnamon, spice, and everything nice. It is ample, suave, and full-bodied. The tannins are wonderfully ripe and supple in 2001. Drink over the next ten to fifteen years.

\$285.00 PER CASE

*Pre-arrival terms: Half-payment due with order,
balance due upon arrival.*



SAVOIE

(pronounced *sav-wah*)

2002 CHIGNIN • A. & M. QUENARD

Chignin is the name of the village, and the wine is a dry white with what is for the village an unusually expressive aroma: floral, peachy, pearish. This bottle is also notable for its delicacy and freshness, and it will make you feel fresh, too. It will not, however, make you feel more delicate. How about a new category: ideal first-sip-of-the-day wine. Or, ideal take-to-Tahoe beverage.

\$12.50 PER BOTTLE **\$135.00** PER CASE

2003 BUGEY-CERDON “LA CUEILLE” PATRICK BOTTEX

Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas spent the Occupation at Bugey. When the region was liberated, they sent the Allied general a “Liberation Fruitcake” and, I would hope, a bottle of Bugey-Cerdon.

Let’s say that our Leader has just announced with a sexy [*sic*] smirk that he is yet again going to do something to us for our own good, and you feel like leaving the planet for a change. Here is our nominee for the and-now-for-something-totally-different award, something so delicious it will distract you from the reality show called *Current Events*. It is red, it sparkles, it’s a sweetie, it seems to hover and glow in the dark, and it goes with Liberation Fruitcake.

For serious tasting notes, well, there are none.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE **\$172.80** PER CASE

2002 CHIGNIN-BERGERON “LES TERRASSES” A. & M. QUENARD

In the Savoie region, east of Lyon up where the Alps begin and the lakes are so inviting during the summer, the Roussanne grape is called the Bergeron. According to my palate, the Savoie is capable of making the world’s loveliest Roussanne because of the microclimate (figs, of all things, ripen there) and the stony soil at the base of those steep Alpine slopes.

Here is the gold medal winner for 2002. The nose suggests honeysuckle and stones. The lush, weightless finish is miraculous. You might as well throw a bottle of this in the car for Tahoe, too. In fact, drinking any other whites at Tahoe, while not unpatriotic, is sort of like failing to be true to your school. Mountain lakes need mountain wines.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE **\$215.46** PER CASE

LANGUEDOC

2002 PIC SAINT LOUP ROUGE ERMITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP

People have been making wine from these vineyards since the Middle Ages. I tend toward the idea that they persisted because the results were appreciated.

There is a cool synergy going on here between the intense, wild black currant fruit in the bouquet and the austere Protestant palate that follows. It finishes firm, dry, and tannic, which comes as a surprise after the showy fruit.

It works well next to unadorned grilled or roasted meats. No sauce; let the wine play that role. I know because I grilled Niman steaks in my fireplace, prepared a potato gratin, and drank this red.

\$12.50 PER BOTTLE **\$135.00** PER CASE

2002 LOU MASET • DOMAINE D'AUPILHAC

According to the Beatles, happiness is a warm gun. Is that Freudian? Happiness is a fine wine, too, which is not Freudian. No, it is simply true in two ways. A fine wine can make you happy. And being happy can produce fine wine. To prove it, let's peek into winemaker Sylvain Fadat's private life. He meets a beautiful—and I do mean dazzling—Spanish mama mia, they fall in love, and now their second kid is on the way. Sylvain is soaring! And here's the point. He hasn't made such great wines since his 1989, 1990, and 1991. Happiness is indeed a fine wine, a red one in this particular instance.

\$13.95 PER BOTTLE **\$150.66** PER CASE

2003 GRIS DE GRIS DOMAINE DE FONTSAINTE

From the Beatles, let's go to Eddie Cochran:

*Well c'mon everybody and let's get together tonight,
I got some money in my jeans and I'm really gonna spend it right.*

Yes, Fontsaïnte's Gris, newly minted, is here again, and one thing I know so far about 2003: Fontsaïnte and Tempier have never made such aromatic rosés.

This is not the tight, austere style. It is aromatic, luscious, flavorful.

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

ALSACE

2002 PINOT BLANC • KUENTZ-BAS

A pure expression of the varietal, Alsatian style. Of all the vintages I have imported, never has KB's Pinot Blanc offered such lovely fruit. Nothing is over or underdone, and that perfume zooms directly into one's pleasure zone. The palate is round, fullish, with perfect freshness and acidity. Raised in *cuve*.

\$13.95 PER BOTTLE **\$150.66** PER CASE

2002 PINOT BLANC "BARRIQUES" ANDRÉ OSTERTAG

André's 2002 leads me to wonder: how do you make something that seems subtle and generous at the same time? That is not easy to pull off, you know?

This Pinot Blanc has all the good things barrel aging brings to a wine and none of the drawbacks. No, it does not have the absolute freshness of the Kuentz-Bas, but it has something else. Compare the two side by side and you will enjoy and learn from the contrast. Research and development! To boise or not to boise?

\$16.50 PER BOTTLE **\$178.20** PER CASE

2002 GEWURZTRAMINER • KUENTZ-BAS

What a price for a knockout Spicetraminer. The impeccable perfume sends me.

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE **\$237.60** PER CASE

2001 RIESLING "HEISSENBERG" ANDRÉ OSTERTAG

Introducing one of the finest wines I tasted during my recent buying trip. This one is *loaded*. It has an introverted personality, a seriousness to it (in the sense that it is not a gay little quaffer), and it shows aspects both sensuous and intellectual. For one thing, dig that spiciness on the palate. When have you ever gotten anything like that from a Riesling? In terms of the satisfaction it provides to the connoisseur, it compares to our great white Burgundies.

\$30.00 PER BOTTLE **\$324.00** PER CASE

BURGUNDY

2000 MEURSAULT “EN LA BARRE” • FRANÇOIS JOBARD

If you cellared Raveneau’s 1995 Valmur, pull the cork on one soon. Isn’t that amazing? It is at a beautiful stage right now.

One of the joys of my life is my wine collection. Cellaring wines might be rewarding for you, too. It does not have to be a super-expensive proposition. A bottle of 1998 Rully *blanc* opened recently with de Villaine (who made the wine) and Alice Waters (who made the lunch) was a steely, stony perfection at five years of age, and Rully does not cost an arm and a leg.

I prize nothing in my cellar more than its white Burgundies. Some age as well as any red wine. The idea is to put down several bottles so you get to know the wine and can witness its character change with age.

From our stable, to use a horse metaphor, this is the one I’d ride for the long run in terms of its price/aging potential/quality ratio. Because of an advantageous buyback from a distributor, we can offer it at an unusually low price.

The young nose is already lovely. The wine shows purity, discretion, and excellent Meursault character. The finish is firm, Chablis-like, built to last. How long will it evolve? Ask me again in ten to twelve years.

\$39.95 PER BOTTLE **\$431.46** PER CASE

2002 BOURGOGNE ROUGE DOMAINE COLIN-DELÉGER

Ultra-pretty, ultra-swallowable. I remember Clive Coates, the English wine critic, using the phrase “comfort level” or something like that to describe the 2002 Burgundies, and I know exactly what he means.

\$18.50 PER BOTTLE **\$199.80** PER CASE

2002 AUXEY DURESSSES *BLANC* DOMAINE VINCENT

Auxey Duresse is not an appellation I order blind in restaurants unless I really trust the sommelier. Now I am advising you to buy one. It is a gorgeous white Burgundy. And it breaks another prejudice I hold. You know how I am always yapping about new oak? Well, here is some, and I like it.

\$24.50 PER BOTTLE **\$264.60** PER CASE

**2001 SAINT AUBIN BLANC “LES COMBES”
DOMAINE COLIN-DELÉGER**

This *premier cru* does something that attracts my interest, something that the wines of Jobard and Raveneau usually do, too: the surface is full of charm, and then a serious structure emerges from underneath. It's like you are enjoying one quality when another sneaks up and surprises you. There is an opulence to the aroma here, quite lovely, immediately pleasurable. The structure is not only aesthetically satisfying, but it also serves to give length to your pleasure and will allow the wine to age a few years.

\$39.00 PER BOTTLE **\$421.20** PER CASE

**2001 NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES PREMIER CRU
“LES CHAIGNOTS” • ROBERT CHEVILLON**

When I tasted this with the staff, there was a sour cherry (*griottes*) fruit in the perfume that we approved unanimously. Complex, impressive, it has a laserlike intensity. It is what the French call *sauvage*, meaning wild, untamed. And it changes in the glass, so you are really getting more than one wine for your money. With age, it may calm down. It can be enjoyed now or later.

\$58.00 PER BOTTLE **\$626.40** PER CASE

**2001 SAVIGNY-LES-BEAUNE
PREMIER CRU “LES SERPENTIÈRES”
PIERRE GUILLEMOT**

I don't know why, but there is a propensity in me to like a wine called Serpentières. Maybe because my dad is a preacher? Or because I like serpentine wines?

I saw Aubert de Villaine quoted about the 2001 red Burgundies: “It is a great dense vintage, classic and seductive. The 2001s have been an extraordinary surprise.”

I suppose ideally one would hold off starting in drinking it for another three to four years, let it open up more, but it sure hit the spot the other day with lentils and grilled sausages. Guillemot's Savigny tastes good with country fare like that. It has a rustic side, and so does he.

\$27.50 PER BOTTLE **\$297.00** PER CASE



OYSTER BLISS XIII

OKAY, HERE WE GO. Rev up your oyster appetite because Monterey Fish has decided that the best oysters of the year are upon us. We will come up with an appropriate wine selection, by the glass or the bottle, and some down-home music to fit the scene. Bread by Acme. Hot, smoky sausages from Christopher Lee (who is just now opening his restaurant, *Eccolo*, down on Fourth Street).

WHERE? Well, why don't we do it in the road? No? Okay, then let's do it in our parking lot. WHO? Why not you and yours? WHEN? Note the date.

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.

The event is presented by Café Fanny.

HELP!

I need some brochures. Help! Not just any brochures. Help! I need my own KLWM brochures, some old ones, because Ten Speed Press is going to publish an anthology of them for release in September. I seem to be missing the following:

- 1988 March, July, September
- 1987 March
- 1979 February, July, December
- 1978 January, March, May, July
- 1977 January, September, November, December

I don't need the actual brochures. A copy will do just fine. My fax number is 510-528-7026, or mail will work, too.

While digging through the archives, I found this offering from 1976:

1962 **ROMANÉE SAINT VIVANT** **H. AUDIFFRED**

Cloudy, browning garnet. Nothing to the nose but oxidation. Flat and empty on the palate. No character or depth. Way past its prime.

\$21.50 PER BOTTLE **\$232.00** PER CASE

Hmm. I think you'll agree that I've honed my sales pitch technique since then.