



KERMIT LYNCH
WINE MERCHANT

1605 SAN PABLO AVE.
BERKELEY, CA 94702-1317
510 • 524-1524
FAX 510 • 528-7026
WWW.KERMITLYNCH.COM

PRESORTED FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
PERMIT NO. 11882

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

- **FIÉ GRIS**
- **LA TRUFFIÈRE**
- **GRANGE DES PÈRES**

OPEN • TUESDAY–SATURDAY 11 A.M. TO 6 P.M. CLOSED • SUNDAY & MONDAY

FEBRUARY 2008

PRICING CHANGE?

HOW MANY TIMES have I warned you, price is not a score? For thirty-five years I have worked to bring you excellent wines at excellent prices. Imagine my surprise upon reading the following article from the Associated Press. Evidently a lot of people prefer costly wines.

TASTE TEST SEEMS TO CONFIRM THAT DRINKERS DO ENJOY COSTLY WINE MORE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—Apparently, raising the price really does make the wine taste better.

At least that seems to be the result of a taste test. The part of the brain that reacts to a pleasant experience responded more strongly to pricey wines than cheap ones—even when tasters were given the same vintage in disguise.

Antonio Rangel and colleagues at California Institute of Technology thought the perception that higher price means higher quality could influence people, so they decided to test the idea.

They asked 20 people to sample wine while undergoing functional MRIs of their brain activity. The subjects were told they were tasting five different Cabernet Sauvignons sold at different prices.

However, there were actually only three

wines sampled, two being offered twice, marked with different prices.

A \$90 wine was provided marked with its real price and again marked \$10, while another was presented at its real price of \$5 and also marked \$45.

The testers' brains showed more pleasure at the higher price than the lower one, even for the same wine, Rangel reports in this week's online edition of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

In other words, changes in the price of the wine changed the actual pleasure the drinkers experienced, the researchers reported. By manipulating prices, "We can change how wine tastes without changing the wine," Rangel said. "It's mind blowing."

On the other hand, when tasters didn't know any price comparisons, they rated the \$5 wine as better than any of the others sampled. . . .

I had to wonder, maybe you would like my wines better if they cost more. Then it occurred to me that if I raise prices, I would also make a higher profit than I do now, and my accountant agreed. Hmm. That all sounds pretty tempting. However, talking to accountants always makes me think about taxes. Higher profits, higher taxes. Then I thought about how the current crew in Washington uses my money and decided to leave my prices as low as they are whether you like it or not.

VALENTINE'S DAY BUBBLY

VOUVRAY PÉTILLANT BRUT DOMAINE CHAMPALOU

For our customers who want to drink celebratory sparkling wine from a Champagne glass but without a Champagne price tag, we generally recommend this Vouvray Brut from Champalou. It is still made the old-fashioned way, all the way down to the hand-riddled bottles in their troglodyte cave dug out of the limestone under their domaine. The Chenin Blanc grape has a natural tendency to *pétille* or sparkle, and the locals long ago harnessed this ability and developed a technique to make outstanding sparkling wine. Guaranteed to impress even those expecting Champagne.

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

PROSECCO DI CONEGLIANO • SOMMARIVA

This is an apéritif you should always have on hand—it is perfectly suited for making mimosas and other such concoctions when you don't want to “waste” a bottle of good Champagne by giving it that treatment, but it is so good alone that it seems almost a shame to serve it any other way than straight up. Super classy and complex for a Prosecco, this is floral, elegant, and bone dry. It also works really well with most Italian antipasti.

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

CHAMPAGNE BRUT GRAND ROSÉ PAUL BARA

One of my friends remarked to me the other day when browsing wine labels in a store in Paris that he had heard there remains only one independent Champagne house. He was probably thinking of the *grande marque* houses, because there are still a number of independent growers in Champagne (we import three of them), although you won't have heard of most of their names and you might have to hunt to find them. Paul Bara is one of these names, and their vineyards are located in the town of Bouzy. Their Pinot Noir is 100% *grand cru*. This blend of various vintages of their Pinot is aged to perfection in their vast underground chalk cellars before release. Our allocation is never big enough for the demand.

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

WHITE BURGUNDY

2005 MEURSAULT-BLAGNY PREMIER CRU “LA GENELOTTE” COMTESSE BERNARD DE CHERISEY

I wrote about the 2004 vintage of de Cherisey’s La Genelotte, which was our first purchase from this domaine, in the September brochure. The 2005 version, recently arrived from France, seems richer and more opulent than the 2004. Maybe. You can’t help but be excited about both of them, yet at the same time, with a glass of this 2005 in hand, I cannot imagine how it could be improved. Both vintages should be drunk over several years, starting now. They dazzle already. Pay attention to that dry finish, that classic Meursault filtered-over-the-stones phenomenon. Lovers of Meursault, be prepared—this is the stuff of legend.

\$82.00 PER BOTTLE

\$885.60 PER CASE

2006 BOURGOGNE VÉZELAY BLANC DOMAINE DE LA CADETTE

Bernard Raveneau turned us on to the wines of his pal Jean Montanet of La Cadette. Thank you, Bernard! The two taste together often, and Bernard’s influence is alive in this little Chardonnay gem from Jean. There is a polished, honeyed roundness and ripeness of fruit that enrobes the minerally profile of this Chablis-like Vézelay. If you follow Jim Harrison’s superb pieces in this brochure from time to time, you might have noticed in December that this is his house white wine. And, by the way, dig this price!

\$22.00 PER BOTTLE

\$237.60 PER CASE

2006 CHABLIS “VIEILLES VIGNES” DOMAINE SAVARY

Olivier Savary is making some of the best wine in Chablis. Period. His AOC Chablis at \$23.00 is classic while at the same time a pleasure to drink—no hard edges. This old-vines bottling is particularly round and suave, the older vines producing smaller and fewer grapes that in turn produce a more concentrated juice. This is one of the staff’s Old Reliables, and we encourage you to try it if you don’t already know it well.

\$27.00 PER BOTTLE

\$291.60 PER CASE

2006 PETIT CHABLIS • ROLAND LAVANTUREUX

Lavantureux makes Chablis with a little more nerve than those of Savary. Maybe that explains why they age so effortlessly—his 1997 in magnum last year was simply superb, and his older vintages tend to develop a nose of white truffle, which is never a bad quality in my book, *au contraire*. His Petit Chablis, far from being *petit*, is from vineyards right next to his Chablis vineyards with the same type of soil. Look at it as sort of a discount created by France's *appellation contrôlée* system.

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

2005 SAINT-VÉРАН “LES POMMARDS” DOMAINE ROBERT-DENOGENT

Saint-Véran is among the southernmost white Burgundy appellations—it is located in the same region as Mâcon and Pouilly-Fuissé, the region in France known as the Mâconnais. Jean-Jacques Robert of Domaine Robert-Denogent has succeeded in taking his wines from these appellations to heights that rival many bottlings from the highly reputed appellations of the Côte d'Or. I recently had the owner of a wine shop here in Beaune tell me that the Pouilly-Fuissés from Jean-Jacques are better than many a Puligny-Montrachet. You might enjoy proving or disproving that claim by lining up some bottles. As for Saint-Véran, take a look at page 214 in *Adventures on the Wine Route* for an explanation. This 2005 is pure and crystalline, fine and stony, round and aromatic.

\$34.00 PER BOTTLE **\$367.20** PER CASE

2005 PULIGNY-MONTRACHET “LA TRUFFIÈRE” • BRUNO COLIN

A few vineyard names are magically evocative. Les Amoureuses, for example, and certainly La Truffière. *Truffe* means truffle. Why did the name stick to this particular parcel up on the Puligny-Montrachet slope? One vigneron told me that there are oaks there, the kind of oaks that are conducive, perhaps even necessary to the growth of black truffles, but I am convinced that the Chardonnay produced from that site can remind you aromatically of the sublime perfume of black truffles, too. Is it just my imagination? That's fine, I'll take it.

I visited the six-acre *premier cru* this summer. Gazing north, I saw Blagny and Les Perrières of Meursault fame. A little to the south, Le Montrachet.

Whenever I see a bottle of Truffière, I order it with the hope that the vigneron realized the potential of the *terroir*. Bruno Colin fulfills my hopes. His 2005 is elegant and subtle, and the taste of black truffle lingers for minutes.

\$115.00 PER BOTTLE **\$1242.00** PER CASE

LOIRE VALLEY

2006 REUILLY “LES PIERRES PLATES” DOMAINE DE REUILLY

Reuilly is an appellation practically unknown in the world of Sauvignon Blanc. Roughly 5% of the size of the appellation of Sancerre, it is located just west of the appellation of Quincy, which is west of Sancerre, Pouilly-Fumé, and Menetou-Salon. This has become a very successful wine for us, thanks to the quality/price ratio and the impeccable vineyard care and vinification overseen by proprietor Denis Jamain. Les Pierres Plates is much stonier than most vineyards at Reuilly and produces a wine with more complexity and minerality. The 2006 is supple and fine, with none of the herbal, grassy, or sharp flavors of many a Sauvignon.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE

2005 SAVENNIÈRES SEC CHÂTEAU D'ÉPIRÉ

Vintage 2005 was a classic for d'Épiré, ripe and beautifully built. There are aromas of acacia and honey on the uncharacteristically (for its age) generous nose. The palate is fleshy and loaded with concentrated Chenin Blanc fruit. The schist of Savennières makes its presence felt, as usual, and elevates it from an average Savennières to a great one. Welcome to a vintage that shows off right from the start.

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE **\$161.46** PER CASE

2006 SANCERRE “VIEILLES VIGNES” DOMAINE DES GRANDES PERRIÈRES

A recent visit through Sauvignon Blanc country in the Loire Valley confirmed for me what Loire aficionados already know—the *terroir* in Sancerre was made for wine, and there are few if any examples of Sauvignon Blanc in the world that show the same complexity and finesse on the palate. This is a racy wine—fine, elegant, perfumed, with high-toned fruit and incredible filtered-over-stones minerality. *Perrières* comes from *pierre*, which means stone. It is to Sancerre what the Meursault-Blagny from de Chérisy is to Meursault.

\$26.00 PER BOTTLE **\$280.80** PER CASE

2005 CHINON • BERNARD BAUDRY

When I tasted with Bernard last year at the domaine, we discussed the general trend of global warming that has been affecting France's vineyards of late. You won't hear a vigneron deny that something is changing—and more quickly than usual, as they see firsthand how harvest begins three to four weeks earlier these days than it did in their fathers' day. Bernard put a positive spin on the phenomenon, observing that the hotter temperatures enable him to make wine without chaptalizing while at the same time he is able to preserve the characteristic freshness and acidity of his wines thanks to his *terroir*. So you have natural ripeness and freshness, the best of all possible worlds. His domaine bottling in 2005 is a case in point, showing an awesome combination of concentrated, dark, spicy fruit and fresh limestone-influenced structure.

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

2005 CHINON “CLOS DE LA DIOTERIE” DOMAINE CHARLES JOGUET

Speaking of limestone, this vineyard is planted into pure white limestone, so white it looks like chalk. Also, speaking of global warming, this vineyard is north-facing, which helps it keep cool on hotter days. Maybe former generations in this region really knew how to plan ahead for the long term? The 2005 incarnation of the domaine's *tête de cuvée* does not disappoint. The palate is truly loaded with dense cassis fruit, but maybe you will remember the *terroir* when you arrive at the enlivening afterglow, so fresh and long.

\$43.00 PER BOTTLE **\$464.40** PER CASE

2006 FIÉ GRIS • ÉRIC CHEVALIER

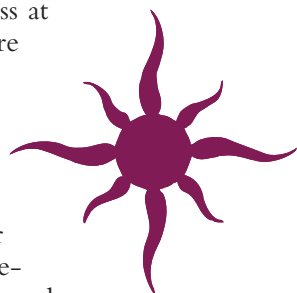
This is a brand-new wine at KLWM, and a must-try example of the rarely seen Sauvignon Gris varietal, once widely planted in the Loire Valley. Éric resurrected an old vineyard abandoned by a retired vigneron to work with the varietal, best known for its stunning aromatic possibilities. The exotic nose delivers, with prickly pear, quince, and white pepper. The spicy sensation continues on the beautifully balanced palate that manages to show roundness and crisp acidity in tandem. There is peach and apricot fruit with green apple skin and lime zest perfectly completing the complex flavor profile.

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

SOUTHERN FRANCE

2005 PODIO ALTO • DOMAINE DU POUJOL

Kim and Robert Cripps have made enormous progress at their domaine in the Languedoc over the years, and are now making wines among the best in the region. Robert summed it up by saying, “We have finally gotten to know our *terroir*.” By that he means that through trial and error and many vintages, they have discovered the critical do’s and don’ts with their vinification in order to harness what nature gives them each year. Their 2005 Podio Alto, their top cuvée, has received rave reviews in the French press. It is a very big, ripe, dense red with sumptuous, chewy tannins.



\$20.00 PER BOTTLE **\$216.00** PER CASE

2005 TERAS BLANC • DOMAINE DU POUJOL

A blend of Roussanne and Vermentino (or Rolle, as the French call the grape variety), vinified with the wild yeasts and no sulfur added, this is a fleshy, ripe white wine with white peach and nectarine flavors on the palate and a finish of lingering, stony pit fruit. It also happens to sport refreshingly low alcohol. In our experience with whites from the deep south of France, it is not at all common or easy to make such a delicious example.

\$24.00 PER BOTTLE **\$259.20** PER CASE

2006 COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC ROSÉ CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE

Kermit’s good friend and collaborator Jack Boutin has retired, leaving his vines and wines in the capable hands of Cyriaque Rozier. Jack and Kermit always worked on this rosé together, and Cyriaque has picked up in the same direction with the same goal in mind. This is a dry rosé, with plenty of flavor, and works well at table. It is 50% Syrah and 50% Mourvèdre, pressed directly and bottled unfiltered. It is deeply colored, with a crisp, fleshy texture. Crisp and fleshy might seem to be contradictory, but you will see what I mean.

\$15.00 PER BOTTLE **\$162.00** PER CASE

2006 COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC BLANC
CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE

What a vibrant, luscious dry white, and proof of what an unfiltered white can offer. But an unfiltered white requires experience and just the right touch. It contains all the best southern varietals—Marsanne, Roussanne, Rolle, Viognier, and Grenache Blanc. The texture says it all, like biting into a ripe peach. Unfiltered whites and rosés. You may not know how rare that is.

\$16.95 PER BOTTLE **\$183.06** PER CASE

2005 LES PIERRES D'ARGENT
CHÂTEAU DE LASCAUX

This is Lascaux's *cuvée spéciale*. Their regular Coteaux du Languedoc bottling makes a great apéritif. However, richer and more complex, aged in barrel rather than stainless steel, a blend dominated by Marsanne and Roussanne, Pierres d'Argent is better drunk with food. Winemaker Jean-Benoît Cavalier mentioned his favorite pairings—scallops, roast chicken, and cheeses—but the wine is as versatile as a white Burgundy.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE **\$270.00** PER CASE

2004 FAUGÈRES • MAS GABINÈLE

Faugères comes from schist soil and is therefore often quite stony and hard in its youth. Mas Gabinèle, through meticulous vineyard work and very small yields, crafts a concentrated red loaded with ripe fruit and silky tannins. Dominated by old-vine Carignan and Grenache, this one opens up in the glass and gets better and better as it breathes.

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

2006 CORBIÈRES "ROZETA" • MAXIME MAGNON

Maxime is of the school of Yvon Métras, Gramenon, Didier Barral, and Thierry Allernand, which is to say hard work of the biodynamic school in the vineyard that nurtures a natural ecosystem to support the vines. The fruit is then treated minimally to a vinification with no sulfur. This Corbières is the polar opposite of the Gabinèle Faugères, more tender and fruit driven, dominated by old-vine Carignan worked by hand on steep hillside vineyards in the Hautes-Corbières. A bottle of it empties way too soon.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE

BEAUJOLAIS

2006 MORGON • MARCEL LAPIERRE

Marcel is generally acknowledged in France as one of the masters of minimal sulfur vinification. His methods take a lot of precision and *savoir faire*, and one of the tricks of the trade is a longer *élevage*. Of our four Morgons, this one is always the last to be bottled. Lapierre believes that the extended barrel aging gives the wine additional complexity and resistance to oxidation. Even the bottling is done without the addition of sulfur. The result is one of the purest expressions of Gamay fruit you can find—and one of the easiest to drink. It is for this reason that all Marcel's friends and neighbors seem to find their way to his back porch most evenings to enjoy a glass of Morgon after a hard day's work. Then the baguette and homemade sausages appear, people come and go, and the subject of conversation is . . . fine wine! As for the 2006, our staff considers it the best Lapierre of the decade, so far.

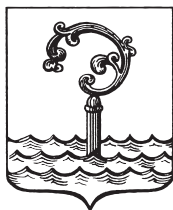
\$22.00 PER BOTTLE **\$237.60** PER CASE

2006 BEAUJOLAIS • CÉDRIC VINCENT

Cédric is a bit of a renegade in Beaujolais because his yields are so small—giving his wines a concentration of fruit rarely seen in most non-*cru* Beaujolais. He also has old vines, and even has an old wooden press in his garage-sized cellar that he uses to crush his tiny harvest. We get about 100 cases a year, and the 2005 was a big hit. Beaujolais is a misunderstood wine thanks to all the plonk produced and what a shame, because it is one of the most fun wines to drink on the planet. Pure pleasure!

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

NOTE: I wrote page one, *Pricing Change?*, all by my lonesome, but this time the rest of the brochure is a collaboration between our man in Beaune, Dixon Brooke, and me. I enjoy this collaboration so much, I'm sure it will continue. Dixon tastes well; he is on the spot in France and Italy for us year-round; and his notes on the wines are useful to me when I put together our monthly newsletters.



—PRE-ARRIVAL OFFER—

2005 GRANGE DES PÈRES

LAURENT VAILLÉ HAS DONE IT AGAIN with two masterpieces in 2005. When I visited him to taste the wines in late October, the three grape varieties that make up the red blend were still separated in barrel. He was planning to blend them together soon so that he could leave them to integrate for a few months before bottling. First up we tasted the Syrah, which showed an incredible purity of fruit on the nose followed by a palate that was pure finesse—a truly gorgeous tannin. Then followed the Cabernet Sauvignon, which is unlike any other in the world and never ceases to amaze me every time I taste it. There are no hard edges, no touches of vegetal aromas or flavors, no rough tannins, just pure, soft, decadent fruit. A 2000 magnum that we drank at lunch afterwards showed exactly the same character. The fruit in these wines is always ripe but never overripe, the wood is never dominant, and the wines are never aggressive—they are impeccably balanced and approachable when young, even better when older. The red blend is completed by Mourvèdre, and again, his Mourvèdre is unlike any other I’ve tasted anywhere. It is less rustic than, say, the wines of Bandol and shows a very polished, fruit-driven character. The 2005 was truly something—the palate was a glittering jewel with multiple facets.

Laurent’s impossibly rare white wine, produced in minuscule quantities, is a blend of Roussanne, Marsanne, and Chardonnay. Incredibly unctuously textured, it rivals Hermitage as one of the great whites of southern France. The 2005 is not to be missed.

PER CASE

GRANGE DES PÈRES <i>ROUGE</i>	\$837.00
GRANGE DES PÈRES <i>BLANC</i>837.00

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

CLAIRETTE DE DIE DOMAINE ACHARD-VINCENT

DIE IS PRONOUNCED dee, not dye.
From *The Oxford Companion to Wine*: “Clairette de Die is a sparkling white appellation centered on the town of DIE on the Drôme tributary east of the Rhône between Valence and Montélimar. According to PLINY, wine has been made here since Roman times. DIE’s gently fizzing wines may pre-date those of Champagne.”

A sample bottle of Achard’s Brut, which is made in the Champagne method, inspired me to head off into the hills about an hour’s drive east of the Rhône River. They are fifth-generation winemakers and the domaine has been completely organic since their grandparents were in charge. In fact, they visibly cringe at the idea of consuming anything that is not grown organically, and served me lunch from their very own thriving organic vegetable garden and fruit trees.

Compared to most sparkling wines, these show a touch of what I’ll call southern French rusticity.

CLAIRETTE DE DIE BRUT

You might expect a Rhône wine to be heavy, but the Achards harvest the grapes for their Brut at only 11° potential alcohol, so the result is light, lively, and elegant. Lovely discreet aroma, pretty fruit on the nose, extremely long and fine. This was fermented completely dry and makes a crisp, fresh apéritif, and it works to continue with it at table.

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

CLAIRETTE DE DIE “TRADITION”

At seven degrees alcohol, the Tradition is made with Muscat and Clairette grapes. It is vinified following the ancient local tradition. It is a festive wine. You coulda watched the Super Bowl with it, some popcorn (tossed with olive oil, salt, and dried thyme), and your pals.

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE **\$270.00** PER CASE

