

AW|FUTURES

APRIL 2013



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Our March tasting trip to Burgundy and the Alsace (with a brief jaunt across the Maginot line to the Mosel) reminded us just how much wine producers live with the vagaries of weather. Burgundy is a continental climate, subject to sudden storms, temperature swings, frosts and other climatic events. The caprice of such weather was on full display during our visit. We saw showers and patches of sun march up the Côte d'Or, moving us in and out of our car half a dozen times as we picnicked among the vines of Corton-Charlemagne; we crossed the Rhine on a ferry obscured in driving sleet; and we found ourselves fighting a white-out blizzard in the Rheingau, pushing the rental car up an icy German exit ramp.

The growing seasons of 2011 and 2012 produced plenty of weather challenges for the vignerons of Burgundy. As usual, troubles were localized – hail would hammer Pommard while sparing Volnay, mildiou would arrive in the Côte de Beaune but not the Côte de Nuits. Not all such problems detract from the quality of the wine – indeed, frost in the flowering period often reduces yield and promotes millerandage, which makes better wine but less of it. In years like these, the winemakers' skill (and luck) matters, and the results can be variable. Some producers make wonderful wine; others don't.

Careful selection is the watchword in vintages such as 2011 and 2012, though there are fine choices to be had in each. This where we earn our keep, and for these vintages it will be better to buy on good advice than to browse through a shop looking for bargains.

This offering covers more ground than the March trip. We return to Chateauneuf du Pape, where a producer we discovered last fall has just released their bottling from ninety-year-old vines. And bearing in mind your upcoming need for warm-weather wines, we have stops in the upper Loire for wine from sauvignon blanc, and the lower Loire for Muscadet.

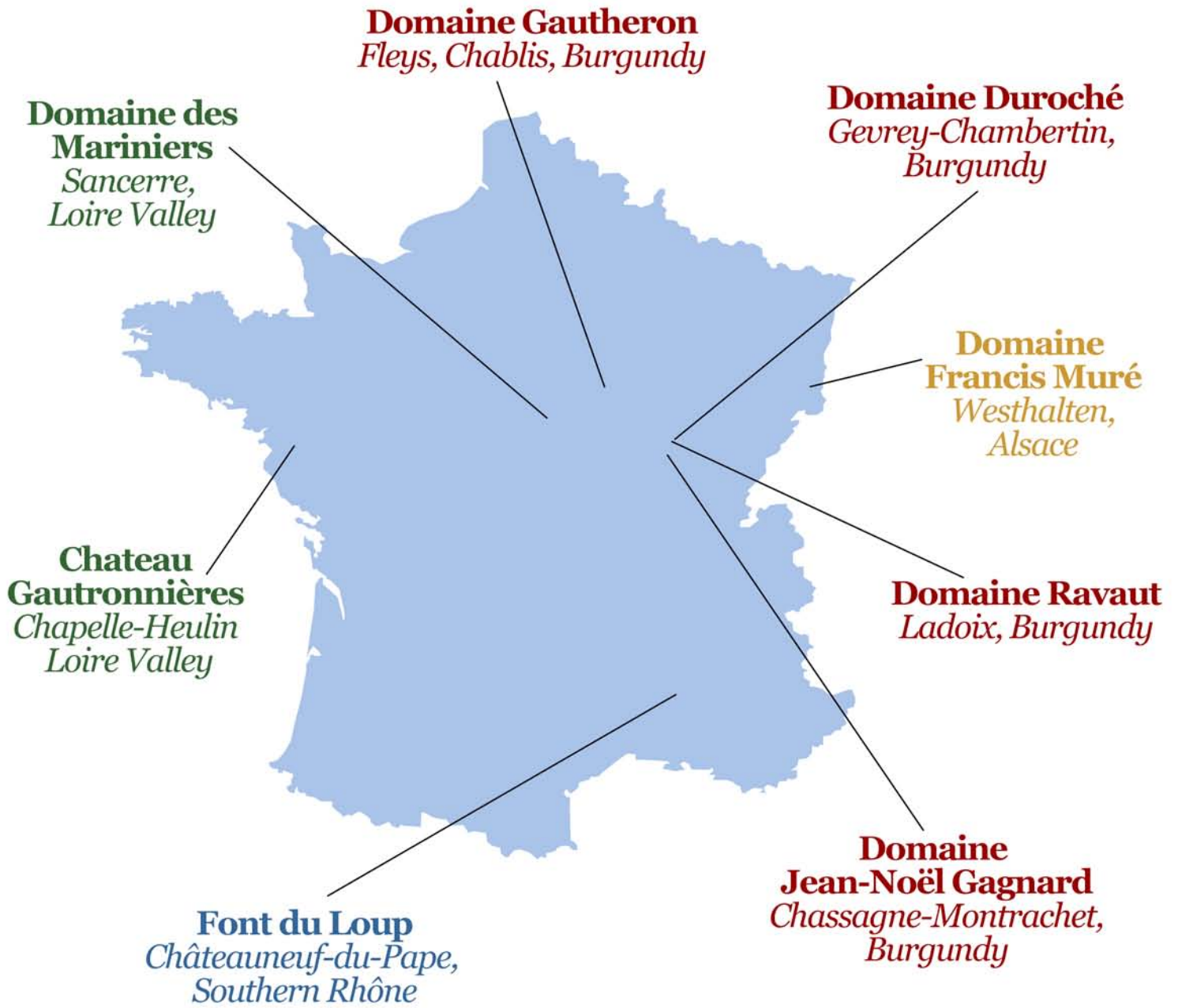
Mark and Tom Wilcox
Ansonia Wines

THE ORDER DEADLINE FOR THIS OFFER IS SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2013.

HOW THE FUTURES PROGRAM WORKS. Futures, we remind you, provides the best pricing we can arrange. In exchange for pre-orders, pre-payment, and a bit of patience, you get direct-from-the-producer wine at remarkably good prices. Orders are in case and half-case lots (prices in the offer are per 12 bottle case unless otherwise described), and we send out invoices and collect advance payment only after confirming availability with the producers. To order, please fill out and send us the Excel spreadsheet whose link is included with the link for this brochure. Shipping, pickup, and delivery options vary, as the practice in different jurisdictions varies (and changes with some regularity). There is more detail at the end of these notes on the subject, and we invite inquiries by phone, email, or chat for those unsure about what works in their area.

order deadline: 4.21
AW|FUTURES

M A P



order deadline: 4.21

La FONT DU LOUP

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Southern Rhône

Châteauneuf-du-Pape is the great wine of the Southern Rhône, with many devoted fans in this buying group. We have long imported wine from the appellation, but for most wines our distribution is limited in one way or another, so we have continued to poke around for new ideas. Last fall had great luck, finding both Nalys (which some of you bought in the last futures round), and our latest suggestion, the Font du Loup.



A view of Mont Ventoux from the Font du Loup vineyard.

Chateau de la Font du Loup is a bit off the beaten path of the appellation, tucked away just below the plain of Crau with its huge collection of galets roulés. But the reward for taking the trouble to find it is great: twenty hectares of ancient vines on well-drained soils facing north and east, tended with great care by the family of Anne-Charlotte Mélia since the 1950s. We were much taken with the wines, particularly with the 2011s, whose reds are both finally available this month.

The **Cuvée Tradition** is dominated by its sixty year-old Grenache vines, with equal parts of Mourvedre (also 60 years old) and Syrah (a bit younger) completing the blend. The North and East exposure

of the vines means that Font du Loup begins its harvest later than just about anyone else. We found the wine delicious, an elegant rather than enormous wine with both ripeness and excellent freshness (the benefits of that exposure). It is very long on the palate, and over the next few years the fruit will blossom more and more.

If sixty years isn't old enough for you, try the truly old-vine "**Puy Rolland.**" This terrific wine comes from a single parcel of ninety-

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The cellar master explaining the property's terroir.

La FONT DU LOUP

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Southern Rhône

year-old Grenache. It seems to offer the best of everything: beautiful spice, intense fruit, a touch of leather, and plenty of power. Lovers of the Mas Foulaquier's all-grenache "Le Petit Duc" should pay special attention: Le Puy Rolland is like the Petit Duc's grandfather – perhaps the Grand Duc.

We were fans of the **white Chateauneuf-du-Pape** as well. It is raised 30 % in barrels, the rest in vat. We tasted the 2011, and found it full, fresh and expressive. It was nicely round in the mouth, with intense aromas of exotic fruit and white peach flowers, like a fine Condrieu. The 2011 disappeared while we were waiting for the reds to be released, but we think the 2012 will not be different. White Chateauneuf-du-Pape is not served everywhere or all the time, but it is truly delicious, providing a balanced alternative to today's sometimes ponderous Viognier.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Chateau Font du Loup	
<i>Châteauneuf-du-Pape rouge Cuvée Tradition 2011</i>	\$350
<i>Châteauneuf-du-Pape rouge Cuvée Puy Rolland 2011</i>	\$405
<i>Châteauneuf-du-Pape blanc 2012</i>	\$445



Domaine RAVAUT

Ladoix, Burgundy

The Ravaut family was perhaps the very best discovery at last year's *Grands Jours de Bourgogne*. This understated domaine lies in hamlet of Buisson, part of the lesser-known appellation of Ladoix, ten minutes north of Beaune. There the Domaine Gaston et Pierre Ravaut serves a largely private clientele of longtime customers, a tradition that began more than a generation ago when the first Gaston (or Pierre) began to supply wine to workers at the nearby quarry.

We were pleased to find 2010 reds still available. This excellent vintage continues to show very well, and we think it will ultimately be ranked as a great one. The Ravauts' **Bourgogne rouge 2010** is very appealing, with plenty of sweet cherry pinot fruit in both nose and mouth. It's priced well enough to make it an everyday wine. For a few dollars more per bottle, the **Côte de Nuits Village 2010** adds body and length; it shows the same attractive fruit. Both wines offer excellent value, and will find a welcome place on our backyard patio this summer.

Though Ladoix is little-known, the hill of Corton is famous; the Ravaut's vineyards, from Grand Cru to Bourgogne, all lie along or below its slopes. As the name suggests, the **Ladoix "Les Carrières"** vineyard is on the site of an old quarry. Surrounded by premier crus, the disturbance of soils from its former activity kept Carrières classified as village level wine. In the glass, though, the 2010 could easily be taken for a premier cru; it is smooth and elegant, with excellent freshness and very good length. The good price here reflects classification level rather than quality.

The Ravauts have a particularly nice plot of old vines in Aloxe-Corton. The **2010 Aloxe-Corton Vieilles Vignes** won a gold medal at the Concours Agricole de Paris in 2013. We found it elegant and pure, with precise flavors and excellent intensity and depth from the old vines. This wine should age beautifully, gaining complexity as it matures.

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Vincent tasting us through 2010 reds.

Domaine RAVAUT

Ladoix, Burgundy

Older wines are always difficult to find, but we keep an eye out for them; Burgundies in particular often show better after a few years in the cellar. Chez Ravaut, we found a bit of **Ladoix 1er cru “La Corvée”** from the 2006 vintage. Ladoix is the northern-most appellation in the Côte de Beaune, but the soils in this vineyard are those of the Côte de Nuits. With more than 6 years since the harvest, the 2006 is beginning to show the sort of magical development in the nose that only happens with age. In the mouth this is more a wine of finesse than power, but the aromatics are gorgeous, offering that lovely combination of fruit and minerals that is the soul of fine red Burgundy.

Finally, anyone looking for Grand Cru red Burgundy to put in the recesses of the cellar for a few years should consider the **Corton Grand Cru “Bressandes” 2010**. This is beautiful ageworthy Burgundy from a great year at a very attractive price. It’s dense, full, and rich, the product of a vintage with much *millerandage* (under-sized berries that provide extra material). We will be hiding some of this wine in our own cellars, and collectors should give this wine serious consideration as well.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Pierre et Gaston Ravaut	
<i>Bourgogne 2010</i>	\$175
<i>Côte de Nuits Villages 2010</i>	\$225
<i>Ladoix “Les Carrières” 2010</i>	\$295
<i>Aloxe-Corton Vieilles Vignes 2010</i>	\$365
<i>Ladoix 1er Cru “La Corvée” 2006</i>	\$395
<i>Corton Grand Cru “Bressandes” 2010</i>	\$735





Gilles Duroché showing his 2010 Champ.

vintage. The wine has very good density, and shows more energy than the very good 2011. It's a wine that probably needs a year or so to begin showing really well, but we are confident that it will acquit itself well as it matures.

Domaine DUROCHÉ

Gevrey-Chambertin, Burgundy

We discovered this small domaine last year, and started with two wines from opposite ends of the price spectrum (a Bourgogne and a Grand Cru Charmes-Chambertin). Both made many friends in this group. Others seem to have discovered Duroché too (Burghound has just added them to his coverage and Master of Wine Tim Atkins has written nice things); so by the time we reached the Domaine in March, there was very little wine unsold.

The family has a number of plots in Gevrey-Chambertin, both premier cru and village. These show their terroir clearly, and all have the classic, briary dark fruit of the appellation. Ultimately we chose to suggest some of the few remaining bottles of the “**Champ**” lieu dit from the 2010



WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Duroché Gevrey-Chambertin “Champ” 2010	\$395

Domaine Jean-Noël GAGNARD *Chassagne-Montrachet, Burgundy*

Jean-Noël Gagnard is one of the most celebrated producers of white Burgundy. In her book on the wines of Burgundy, Master of Wine Serena Sutcliffe said he had opened her eyes to the greatness of white Burgundy. Though Jean-Noël can still be found about the property, his daughter Caroline Lestimé has led the winemaking there for almost two decades.

Caroline always seems to get the most from any vintage, and her 2011s are no exception. **The Chassagne-Montrachet “Les Chaumes”** from 2011 shows its usual excellent balance of richness and energy. It is nice and round in the mouth, but with good freshness as well. And for a Gagnard wine, Chaumes is very well priced.

Philadelphia’s most celebrated restaurant chose this wine for its grand pairing menu a few months ago, and has now gone through our entire stock of 2010 “Chaumes.” They anxiously await the 2011, so those interested should act quickly. Little (if any) will make it to the states unspoken for.

Those prepared to pay the price for Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru will find a wine with everything needed for a long and illustrious life in Caroline’s **2011 “Les Caillerets”**: freshness, length, and complexity woven together in one of the more impressive glasses of wine made anywhere. This is the wine with which Jean-Noël made his reputation, and as usual, it is hard to find words to do it justice.

For those fans of premier cru Chassagne whose wine budgets don’t extend to Caillerets, we were pleased to have found the **2008 Clos de la Maltroye**. This is a fine vintage that will age well, and we think the 2008 still has plenty of years

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Caroline pours her lineup of 2011 Chassagnes.



Domaine Jean-Noël GAGNARD

Chassagne-Montrachet, Burgundy

ahead. There's a more pronounced minerality in this wine than in the Chaumes, and the wine has good length and finish.

Good news for red Chassagne drinkers: the **Clos St. Jean** is back in production. Early members of this group will recall the old-vine reds that so charmed us from the vineyard; but yields had dropped so low that the Gagnards ripped them up and replanted early in the last decade. We like the 2011 edition very much. It's young-vine wine, of course, but we found the sweet cherry fruit very attractive. It's a red of medium body that will be a good choice for the summer, matching up well with, say, a simply grilled piece of chicken.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Jean-Noël Gagnard	
<i>Chassagne-Montrachet "Chaumes" 2011</i>	\$465
<i>Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru "Clos de la Maltroye" 2008</i>	\$675
<i>Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru "Les Caillerets" 2011</i>	\$975
<i>Chassagne-Montrachet rouge "Clos St. Jean" 2011</i>	\$350



Burning clippings in the Clos St. Jean

Domaine GAUTHERON

Chablis, Burgundy

The Domaine Gautheron is on a roll. Classic Chablis is chardonnay in its cleanest, purest, steeliest form, and Alain and Cyril Gautheron have mastered this style like few others. We tasted through the 2012s in tank, and the terroir shines clearly through in every one. Those wines won't be in bottle until much later in the year, so we're going back for the last of the highly successful 2011s.

Chablis Vieilles Vignes found a place in a number of top restaurants in Philadelphia and Washington. The precise, lemony fruit is there, but the old vines deliver an extra measure of body, and for this wine the Gautherons raise about 10% of the wine in barrels, delivering just a faint touch of oak.

Their **Fourneaux 1er cru Vieilles Vignes** is also from old vines, and like the Chablis Vieilles Vignes has just the slightest hint of oak. This wine has more intensity and depth, as well as long persistence in the mouth. Though it is raised entirely in tank, **Vaucoupin 1er cru** is the richest and roundest of the three, with a mouthfeel more like its cousins from the Côte d'Or. Smooth and elegant, it will show well alongside any dish calling for white Burgundy.

If you have noted that these prices seem strikingly good, you are correct. "California Chablis," an execrable concoction of Central Valley plonk, ruined the brand name in the 1960s. Real Chablis has always been fine white Burgundy, and it is our good fortune that it comes so cheap.



Cyril Gautheron tastes through his 2011 Chablis.



Classic Chablisien terroir.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Gautheron	
<i>Chablis Vieilles Vignes 2011</i>	\$180
<i>Chablis 1er cru 2011</i> <i>"Fourneaux" Vieilles Vignes</i>	\$240
<i>Chablis 1er cru 2011</i> <i>"Vaucoupin"</i>	\$225



Francis pouring his 2011 whites and 2012 reds and rosé.

Domaine Francis MURÉ

Westhalten, Alsace

We arrived at the Domaine Francis Muré earlier than planned, having fled a spring blizzard in the German wine country a few hours to the north. The welcome was even warmer than the better weather. Francis and Josiane not only lent us their gîte, they stocked it with cheese, butter and coffee; and in the morning croissants and warm bread magically appeared at the front door.

The winemaking shows the same care and sense of style. One thing we like about the Alsace is the variety available from nearly every producer. This is a place where a number of varietals do well, so the wine lists are long and the harvest stretches out over nearly a month, as the different vines reach their maturities at different times.

We always love the **Riesling**, which may be the most versatile wine in our portfolio. This wine should not be confused with the half-dry Rieslings of Germany, which form many wine drinkers' base impression of the grape. (We'd love to have a dollar for every fan of this wine who said, before they tried it, "I don't like Riesling.") Muré's Riesling is bone dry, and though round in the mouth rests on a lively acidity. It's a wonderful match for Asian food, but you can pour it with nearly any dish that calls for a white.

"**Anémones**," named for the wild-flower on the label, makes a great apéritif. It's a blend of Riesling, Pinot Gris, and Muscat, with a nose of flowers and spice and an easy, pleasant mouthfeel. The wine is a great choice for sipping in the shade as the weather warms up.

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Francis in his vines above the town of Westhalten.

Domaine Francis MURÉ

Westhalten, Alsace

Another good choice for an opening wine is their **Crémant**, made in the classic style (fermentation in the bottle) from a blend of Riesling, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Gris. This wine shows the fine bubbles characteristic of good champagne, but at a much better price.

This year we were particularly impressed with Muré's **2012 Pinot Noir** – bottled since our March visit. We usually think of this wine as uncomplicated and fruit-driven; it's one we like to serve a bit cool in the summertime. But Muré's 2012 is more serious. Francis was fortunate in the timing of the harvest for the 2012 Pinot Noir – the grapes reached maturity during a period of excellent weather, and he managed to get all of them in before there was any rain. As a result the wine is unusually and full, with an almost Burgundian character. (It reminds us of the 2005 Alsatian Pinot Noirs). It will still do well served a bit cool, but with this one there's much more to like as it warms up. We plan to drink it often and you should too.

Another happy product of the extraordinary crop of Pinot Noir is the **2012 Rosé**, also just in the bottle. This is some of the best rosé we have seen. It's all pinot noir, half by way of saignée (bled from the tank of red after just one night on the skins) and half from grapes crushed and kept for just a few hours. The former portion adds complexity and substance; the latter, roundness. The result is an altogether delightful *vin de soif*, a wine to relax with on a warm summer afternoon as the sun gets low in the sky. By the pool or at table, this is a wine to drink all summer.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Francis Muré	
<i>Riesling 2011</i>	\$165
<i>Anémones 2011</i>	\$150
<i>Crémant d'Alsace</i>	\$175
<i>Pinot Noir 2012</i>	\$180
<i>Rosé 2012</i>	\$140



A snapshot en route from Germany to the Murés in March.

order deadline: 4.21

Chateau GAUTRONNIÈRES

La Chapelle Heulin, Loire Valley

Muscadet is that wonderful wine of the lower Loire that seems to have been created for a marriage with fish. The grape here is Melon de Bourgogne, whose fruit does have hints of melon, but nothing to do with Burgundy. Chablis with oysters may be the classic pairing, but Muscadet with oysters comes in a very close second. Its briny notes echo the ocean freshness found in a plate of oysters on the half shell, and it slides down just as smoothly as the oysters themselves. Muscadet is abundant and inexpensive, a universal summer pleasure that's hard to beat.

The wine is produced in a wide swath of the southern Loire upstream from Nantes, but the highest rated Muscadet comes from the area called Sèvre et Maine. **Chateau Gautronnières** is organically farmed (AB Demeter certified), and we think it is a notch above the other wines from Sèvre et Maine. It's more substantial in the mouth, with more fruit and more roundness than usual. It remains the perfect complement to a platter of shaved ice bearing clams, mussels, oysters, crab and boulots in a Paris brasserie, but its greater complexity lets it show well alongside, say, grilled grouper in a garlic and soy marinade. And when the weather gets hot, it's the perfect thirst quencher to put out with some simple cheese and crackers.



Jean Jaques Bonnet discusses vine spacing.

WINE

CASE PRICE

Chateau Gautronnières

Muscadet Sur Lie

Sèvre et Maine 2011

\$125

order deadline: 4.21

Joseph MELLOT

Sancerre, Loire Valley

Meanwhile, farther up the Loire they continue to make the sauvignon blancs that enthusiasts use as the reference point for the grape. **Domaine de Bellecours Sancerre** comes from classic soils: limestone and clay with an abundance of *silex* (flint). This is pure, clean sauvignon fruit with so much grapefruit in the nose you might look around for a piece of the fruit itself (there is none of the grassiness that sometimes shows up in Sauvignon). The perfect match for this wine is fresh goat cheese. We love to sip a glass along with crackers slathered with goat cheese and a spread of red peppers, sun-dried tomatoes and garlic slow-cooked in balsamic vinegar. ([Recipe.](#))



A silex-filled vineyard in Sancerre.

Just about a mile upstream (and south) from Sancerre is the hamlet of Pouilly-Fumé (not to be confused with Pouilly-Fuissé), whose sauvignon is generally rounder and softer than that from Sancerre. The word fumé (“smoked”) comes from the distinctive smell of gunflint struck against steel (think of the sparks from a lighter). There is a bit of that sense in the aroma of the **Domaine des Mariniers Pouilly-Fumé**, which we love to pair with simple grilled fish. We also like to match this with moules marinières.

Finally, here’s another rosé. Like Muré’s Alsatian rosé, **Sincerité** is made from Pinot Noir and completely dry. But this Loire rosé is simpler, lighter, less complex wine that’s priced to serve early and often. Pull it out on the summer’s hottest days to wash down a salad or grilled cheese, or put it next to a pasta on the screened-in porch.



WINE

CASE PRICE

Domaine Bellecours

Sancerre 2012 \$245

Domaine des Mariniers

Pouilly-Fumé 2011 \$225

Sincerité

Rosé Pinot Noir 2012 \$105

order deadline: 4.21

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April 2013

HOW THE FUTURES PROGRAM WORKS

District of Columbia. Those who request DC delivery will be able to pick up the wine at our DC storage facility; our DC delivery point Smucker Farms Market at 2118 14th St. NW; or they can arrange with us directly for delivery. For wines delivered in the District, we collect DC's sales tax.

Pick-up in Delaware. Many of those who aren't near DC will choose to collect their wine in Delaware, the original US arrival point for this importing-services exercise. For such people, we set times for pickup at a temporary storage location and the owners pick their wine up there over the course of the two or three weeks after it arrives.

Massachusetts. We're now licensed to sell wine in Massachusetts. We store our inventory in a basement in Newton (437 Newtonville Ave), and open it up to customers twice a week and by appointment. Futures customers can pick up their orders here, or we offer home delivery for orders of two or more cases.

Shipping and delivery elsewhere. In some states – so far at least New Jersey, Delaware, Florida, California, Minnesota, New York, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, Connecticut Washington, Washington DC, Vermont and Virginia – we can arrange for shipping at an additional cost that varies by location (\$3.50 per bottle to the west coast; \$2.50 per bottle everywhere else). Some states require us to collect sales and/or excise tax. If shipping interests you, let us know the place and we will figure out if it can be done.

Submitting orders. Our order form is an [Excel spreadsheet](#). Please fill it out and return it by email to info@ansonwines.com. If spreadsheets pose a problem for you, you can list the wines you want in a regular e-mail; call us at 215-498-4001; or print the form out and mail it to Mark at home: Mark M. Wilcox, 431 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Finally, in almost every importation some orders fail to reach us, so we will plan to acknowledge all the orders. If you send an order and don't hear back in a day or two, try again or telephone us.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE DEADLINE OF **SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2012**. WE WILL TRY TO ARRANGE THE PURCHASES IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.

Many thanks for your interest,



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