

## HIGHLAND FINE WINE JUNE 2016 HALF CASE - RED

### **Domaine Landron Chartier 'Clair Mont' – Loire Vin de Pays, France (Mixed & Red Club) \$17.99**

The 'Clair Mont' is made up of mostly Cabernet Franc with a bit of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. Cabernet Franc is grown all over the Loire Valley and is a parent of its more famous progeny, Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Franc in the Loire Valley is much lighter and fresh. The grape is early ripening and as a result has typically lower sugar levels at harvest, which produces lower alcohol wines. This wine is perfect for Cabernet Sauvignon drinkers who want lighter wines during the summer. It has all of the flavor components of Cabernet Sauvignon without the full tannins. This wine is great for grilling burgers and hotdogs or with Flank steak.

### **Ryan Patrick Red – Columbia Valley, Washington (Mixed & Red Club) \$11.99**

This red is a blend of 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 4% Malbec, and 1% Syrah. It is a blend typical of Columbia Valley which is known more for Bordeaux varietals such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. In fact Columbia Valley and Bordeaux are on roughly the same longitude, which means they have some similar climactic traits. Like Bordeaux, Columbia Valley is known for a more rounded style of red wine compared to the sun drenched wines of Napa Valley. This blend has a smooth texture with raspberry and dark cherry flavors, and has a dry, fruity finish. I like this wine with a slight chill to bring out the fruit.

### **Calina Carmenere Reserva – Valle del Maule, Chile (Mixed & Red Club) \$10.99**

Carmenere has become the varietal of choice from Chile. It is beginning to have as much recognition as its Argentinian neighbor's best known varietal, Malbec. Carmenere was thought to be the varietal Merlot when it was first planted in Chile. In the 90's, it was discovered that what was originally thought of as Merlot was actually Carmenere. Carmenere has similar flavors to Merlot but has much more green bell pepper notes in the flavor profile. The wine also has dense red fruit with oak spices and a smooth, velvety finish. This is a great BBQ wine or will go with any steak you choose.

### **Odipus Old Vines Grenache – Navarra, Spain (Red Club) \$15.99**

When reading a wine label the phrase 'Old Vines' appears more often now. The older the vine, the more concentrated the juice in the grape which is made into more concentrated wine. It is important to know that when you see Old Vines, Vieilles Vignes in French, on a wine label, the meaning can be dubious. There is no legal definition for the phrase old vines on a wine label so it can mean 20 year old vines, which is young or 50 year old vines which is old. Less common is the word pre phylloxera, which means the vines were planted before the aphid phylloxera killed almost all of the vines in France in the 1860's and 1870's. This is old and rare. Navarra is one of the regions that has a large of pre phylloxera vines. This Grenache has dense, dried red fruit flavors with savory herbs and spices on the finish. Taste what true old vines taste like.

### **Fantinel Cabernet Sauvignon, Friuli, Italy (Red Club) \$14.99**

Friuli is a lesser known region of typically Italian cuisine. Much like most of Italy, the region is hyper seasonal with respect to all foods but the area borders Slovenia and has much Slovenian influence. This traditional seasonality also begs for wines to match the lighter fare of the summer. Friuli is known for producing red wines that are uniquely delicious with light foods during the summer months. Fantinel Cabernet Sauvignon is fruity, fresh and inviting with flavors of bright cherry and raspberry and a fresh clean finish with minimal tannins. Try this wine with Prosciutto di San Daniele or Frico, savory, crispy cheese, omelets or dumpling soups that are so traditional in this area.

### **Cantine Menhir Salento Negroamaro – Puglia, Italy (Red Club) \$13.99**

Cantine Menhir is an outlier in Salento. Most property owners can trace their land to their family back at least 500 years, where as Cantine Menhir is a newcomer, beginning their winemaking venture in 2000. They have succeeded in making Negroamaro and Aglianico that are focused on single vineyard plots that express the unique volcanic terroir of southern Italy. Puglia is on the heel of the boot and is an historic area for all things including wine. Negroamaro has dried red berry fruits with a gentle herb and spice finish.

## HIGHLAND FINE WINE JUNE 2016 HALF CASE - WHITE

### **Delhommeau Cuvee Harmonie – Muscadet Sevre et Maine, France (Mixed and White Club) \$14.99**

Muscadet Sevre et Maine is the name of the appellation where 80% of all Muscadet. The area is known for volcanic soils that have good drainage, which is a necessity for all wine grapes in this damp region. Muscadet is actually made out of the grape Melon de Bourgogne. The grape is native to Burgundy and was imported to the region by Dutch traders in the early 18th century after a harsh freeze wiped out the wine industry in the western Loire Valley. The Dutch were looking for a grape that was easily distilled for their popular eau de vie. Classic Muscadet literally tastes like the sea, with typical briney, sea salt flavors combined with light lemon lime on the finish. This wine is perfect with oysters.

### **Fatum White Blend – La Mancha, Spain (Mixed & White Club) \$14.99**

Fatum is a blend of mostly Airen grapes, with some Sauvignon Blanc and Muscatel. Airen has the seemingly dubious distinction of being the most planted wine grape in the world. It is planted all over La Mancha and southern Spain and is typically used as a distillation grape. Recently, new importers of Spanish wine decided to make the grape into a varietal wine. The blend is fresh and clean with a crisp finish and flavors of bright citrus and fresh cut grass. Most of the flavors come from the Sauvignon Blanc and Moscatel. The Airen brings a very light and fresh body that is perfect for hot summer days. You can drink this wine with any appetizer or on its own, for a palate cleanser.

### **Menade Verdejo – Rueda, Spain (Mixed & White Club) \$12.99**

Bodegas Menade makes all of their wine out of organic grapes and is one of the few wineries in Rueda that concentrate solely on the Verdejo grape. They make a study of the grape and produce flavors that are not typically associated with Verdejo. Verdejo is usually a pleasant sipping wine with clean lemon/lime and floral flavors. Through skin contact during fermentation, Bodegas Menade adds a depth and texture to their Verdejo wine that is refreshing and adds an extra layer of paring options to their wines. This Verdejo has ripe lemon/lime flavors with ripe peaches and green apple flavors. The florality is still present, but is nuanced. Instead of grandmas soap, you get fresh herb and flower garden aromas. This is interesting white wine that will pair with any grilled vegetables or light meat dishes for the summer.

### **Monte Del Fra Soave Classico – Veneto, Italy (White Club) \$19.99**

Soave was made famous in the 50's and 60's by Bolla winery and Frank Sinatra. Frank only drank Bolla Soave when he drank white wine and Bolla used that fact to market their brand. Bolla, much like many Italian wineries before the 90's, concentrated on quantity and quality began to suffer. Along with most Italian wines in the 90's and 00's, Soave began a quality resurgence with single vineyard bottlings that produced interesting wines that could stand alone at the dinner table. Monte del Fra winery was founded in 1958 with the express goal of developing local grape varieties like Garganega, which is what Soave mostly consists of. This Soave has flavors of deeply ripe citrus, blood orange, and bright melon with a crisp finish that is easily paired with any summer fare. I enjoy it most with charcuterie.

### **Domaine de la Motte Chardonnay – Languedoc, France (White Club) \$11.99**

Like much of the rest of France, Languedoc is in the mid stages of a quality renaissance when comes to their wine. In most of the 20th century, the region was dominated by large coops that concentrated on quantity of wine produced. This made for very light, less flavorful wines that had much less varietal character. With the help of the EU, the Languedoc is going through a quality resurgence. Producers are being paid by the EU to pull up grape vines and concentrate on higher quality grape growing. The result of this vine pulling policy is better tasting grapes that can support higher prices and better wines. Domaine de la Motte makes a Chardonnay that tastes uniquely like the south of France. Flavors of light flowers and exotic fruit come from some skin contact during fermentation. Honeyed spices and green apple flavors dominate the finish. This wine is perfect for summer food like grilled vegetables or simple pasta with light sauces.

### **Illuminati Costalupo Trebbiano d' Abruzzo– Abruzzo, Italy (White Club) \$10.99**

Abruzzo is better known for one of the largest nature preserves in France than they are for their wine. Trebbiano d' Abruzzo, like many wines in Europe, is making great headway on quality. Trebbiano is the most planted white grape in Italy and is usually used in distillation or in sweet wines like Vin Santo. The region of Abruzzo has begun to make Trebbiano their white wine of choice. The has clean and crisp textures with bright citrus and tropical fruit notes. This wine is very different than most whites from Abruzzo. It is crisp rather than flabby and is accessible with many paring options, such as olives and cheese, or a roasted chicken.