

HIGHLAND FINE WINE APRIL 2014 HALF CASE CLUB - WHITE

Marchetti Verdicchio del Castelli Classico – Marche, Italy (Mixed and White Club) \$14.99

Who doesn't enjoy refreshing citrus fruits, playful acidity, and complex minerality!? This white has it all, and if you enjoy a Pinot Grigio, you will love this Verdicchio. The varietal is known for being briskly intense with bright citrus and floral notes. Hailing from Italy and grown primarily in the Marche region, the name *Verdicchio* derives from "verde" (green) and refers to the slight green/yellow hue that the grape can produce. Considered one of the best whites in the Mediterranean world, this wine is all free-run juice (no pressing!) and is a Classico from the DOC region. One might pick up on flavors of lemon and slight almond notes that are present along with the classic minerality of wines grown in clay and limestone. Enjoy with steamed clams and mussels with fennel, fried chicken, or pasta scampi!

Domaine San de Guilham Vin de Pays de Gascogne – Gascony, France (White Club) \$11.99

The 50-hectare Domaine de San de Guilhem is in the village of Ramouzens in the eastern portion of Bas-Armagnac, a region of sloping green hills, an oceanic climate, and sandy soils. Originally the winemaker only made wine to distill into Armagnac, but in the 1970s after a progressive and lasting decline in the global market for Amagnac, the winemaker and other growers were faced with the need to sell the region's white wine as wine rather than as spirits. They imported the grape variety Gros Manseng to get the ball rolling. This zesty, lively white with a nose of white fruits and a clean, crisp finish is the product blending Colombard (40%), Gros Manseng (30%) and Ugni Blanc (30%). Pair with crab cakes!

Tresolmos Verdejo Lias – Rueda, Spain (Mixed & White Club) \$16.99

Verdejo is the aromatic grape variety behind the crisp white wines in northwestern Spain. Here, Verdejo is blended with Macabeo (Viura), and increasingly Sauvignon Blanc. Under appellation law, Verdejo must make up at least 50% of any Rueda wine and at least 85% of any Rueda Superior wine. This wine is 100% Verdejo and is produced with sustainable farming practices. Aged on the lees and fermented in stainless steel, this wine has fresh, clean acidity and a palate that is quite versatile for pairing any Spring dish. Try trout or a radish salad to start!

Zolo (unoaked) Chardonnay – Mendoza, Argentina (Mixed & White Club) \$12.99

Looking for a fruit-focused Chardonnay with great tropical fruit and pear aromas? Looking for a Chardonnay with a clean, crisp balance? Look no more because this 100% sustainably farmed, hand-harvested, 100% Chardonnay is all that and more. These grapes are from estate vineyards in Agrelo and Tupungato, and after double manual selection and cooling, they enter pneumatic press with a nitrogen blanketing system (the only press of its kind in Argentina). Before and during the gentle pressing of the grapes, nitrogen is introduced which eliminates all contact with oxygen during the whole process. This process creates greater aromatic intensity and prolongs the flavor's force. Pair with chicken or tuna salad!

Sylvaine and Alain Normand Macon La Roche Vineuse – Burgundy, France (White Club) \$19.99

Alain Normand's ancestral home is Normandy, but he hails from the Loire Valley (hence his name). In a wine school in Beaune, he met Sylvaine. With a *métayage* contract (a common agricultural practice in France whereby the landlord is paid in wine), they began their careers and took over an abandoned vineyard in La Roche-Vineuse. A typical family *domaine* operation now, Alain works the vineyards, makes the wine, and sells off the landlord's portion to *négociants* while Sylvaine handles office work and children. This Chablis (Chardonnay in English) comes from four hectares of vines planted in the late 1940s. It's made in a combination of old and new barrels and normally bottled without fining or filtration. Intense and attractive on the nose, the wine is rich and round with a smooth, fresh palate. Enjoy as an aperitif or with a Spring salad.

Poggio Anima Greco – Basilicata, Italy (White Club) \$12.99

Greco is arguably the most important grape in all of Italy due to its use in various liqueurs as well as in fine wines. Often better known by its mutation moniker of Trebbiano, it's a delicious, exciting, food-friendly wine and a descendent of an ancient grape. Because of its subtle fruit and herbaceous aromatics, this wine is often compared to Viognier. Greco originated in Greece but came to Southern Italy more than 2,500 years ago. So toast and enjoy this slightly round, appealing wine. Notice its hints of pineapple, nectarine, passion fruit, and lemon custard notes finished with nicely balanced acidity. Pair with roasted brussel sprouts over grilled fish and asparagus!

HIGHLAND FINE WINE APRIL 2014 HALF CASE CLUB - RED

La Quercia Aglianico – Puglia, Italy (Mixed & Red Club) \$15.99

We love this wine so much that it's time we featured it in Wine Club! Yes, it's definitely because it tastes *so* good, but it's also fun to say! Ali-anico! Say it three times fast, and you'll get the drift. From the master of Montepulciano, Antonio Lamona delivers his signature combination of power and finesse with one of the most difficult varietals of all. That's right. Aglianico. The La Quercia estate an organic one, and this wine, harvested from a single cru, really delivers. It's classic ripe plum and white pepper notes. It's the soft notes that are so deftly managed alongside the fresh, immediate style that this noble varietal is known for. Seared Ahi tuna with plum sauce, grilled polenta cakes, and Cioppino are fantastic pairings.

Bonny Doon “A Proper Claret” – Santa Cruz, California (Mixed & Red Club) \$18.99

As some California winemakers are climbing towards high-alcohol heights, some are aiming to keep it clean (so to speak). Winemaker Randall Grahm says of ‘A Proper Claret,’ “Bonny Doon Vineyard is, as we all know, a strictly ‘Cabernet-Free Zone’... if ever I were to drink a Cabernet-based blend, this would be one that would serve quite well. It is lean, neither overly alcoholic (13%), nor overly extracted; it is precisely as one would imagine a proper Claret to be.” 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Petite Verdot, with a little Tannat, Syrah, and a touch of Petite Sirah to round it out, this blend has textural elegance, silky notes, and a precise firmness of which the palate begs for more. Pairings are a-plenty, but pizza is a great start!

O’Fournier Malbec – Mendoza, Argentina (Mixed & Red Club) \$12.99

Grown at 1,100 meters and aged in French oak barrels for just three months, this wine has an undeniable purity and exciting fruit that reminds one of the savory tobacco-leaf scent that comes with Tempranillo. But this is 100% Malbec, and is a refined one, at that! Robust and striking and “admirably dry,” this Malbec makes its appearance with exuberance and graceful impact. This red is a perfect pairing for bbq or roasted eggplant.

Camino de Navaherreros Garnacha – San Martin de Valeiglesias, Spain (Red Club) \$16.99

San Martin de Valdeiglesias lies just over an hour from Madrid, yet the terrain and occupancy are vastly different. With vineyards more than a half mile above sea level whose sandy soil experiences warm days and cool nights, the resulting wines have ample ripeness, but also astounding buoyancy and freshness. The winemakers are devoted to demanding viticulture and to non-interventionist winemaking have served the vision of making wines with purity and expressiveness quite well. The regime emphasizes long fermentations and minimal handling. The Navaherreros is the essence of San Martin Garnacha. There's something memorable, striking, even, about this wine. No doubt, this is Garnacha at its sweet spot of expression. Lasagna is a fun pairing.

Estampana Estate Cabernet /Petite Verdo – Colchagua Valley, Chile (Red Club) \$12.99

Combining Cabernet Sauvignon with Petit Verdot enhances its complexity and balance in a beautiful way. The resulting wine reflects Vina Estampa's philosophy of “working to perfect the art of ‘assemblage,’ the method of blending noble varieties to offer a new range of exceptional flavors and aromas. The ripe black fruits with notes of strawberry and butterscotch aroma marry well with the complex berry flavors on the palate. Good concentration, ripe tannins, and a long finish are pleasing to the palate. A veggie burger would be a great pairing.

Monte del Fra Bardolino – Veneto, Italy (Red Club) \$12.99

This wine is a blend of wine varietals found in Amarone and Valpolicella. 65% Corvina and 30% Rondinella (with 5% Sangiovese for good measure), the vineyards are in Sommacampagna, a commune situated to the southeast of Lake Garda. This dry, red wine is delicately fruity and fragrant on the nose with notes of cherries, strawberries, raspberries and redcurrants. On the palate there's the sensation of crunchy red fruits and berries with light spice and a well-balanced, fresh appeal. Enjoy with cold cuts and cheese!