



K&L Wine Merchants
3005 El Camino Real
Redwood City, CA 94061
Orders: (800) 247-5987
Wine Club Extension: 2744
wineclubs@klwines.com

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Dear Wine Club Member,

Happy New Year! We're honored to kick off 2024 with you. If you are new to the Club, perhaps thanks to a gift from a friend or family member (or yourself!), we'd like to welcome you! If you've been around for awhile, we'd like you to know how much we appreciate being part of your wine journey.

This year, we'll continue our monthly Wine Club tastings at each store, as they've been a great success. Save the first Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 PM to pick up your wine, taste the Club selections, and hang with other members. These events are complimentary for Wine Club members and their guests, so feel free to bring your friends and make an evening of it. We have a host of weekly events—stay in the loop by signing up for our Local Events newsletter at klwines.com/Account/EmailPreferences.

As always, each selection in our Wine Clubs is available to you at a discounted price, no matter which specific Club you belong to. We hope you find some new favorites!

We're looking forward to a year of wine discoveries with you.



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Best Buy Wine Club

2022 Montmassot Picpoul de Pinet Retail \$11.99 / Club \$8.99

by *Keith Mabry, French Regional Buyer*



There is an old adage in wine: "Whatever grows together, goes together." This refers to the idea of local foods pairing best with the wines from the same region. There are fewer places in France that nail this as well as Picpoul de Pinet. In the Languedoc, just southwest of the city of Montpellier, this scenic seaside area has a view of the Mediterranean, with lagoons dotting the coastline where they farm and harvest oysters and mussels. The classic way to spend an afternoon in Picpoul de Pinet is to visit an oyster shack, order a dozen (or more) oysters and drink a bottle of this light, crisp wine. The flavors are citrus driven, with notes of lime zest, Meyer lemon, and fresh-cut melon. The wine has lip-smacking acidity; it cleanses the palate and makes you hungry for that next oyster.

Montmassot comes from one of the best local cooperatives; we have been working with them for almost a decade and every vintage is fresh and vibrant. Picpoul de Pinet is not exclusively for seafood; it is actually quite versatile. This is delightful with chicken or light pork dishes or any host of Asian-inspired cuisines.

2021 Block Nine "Caiden's Vineyards" California Cabernet Sauvignon Retail \$12.99 / Club \$10.99

by *Trey Beffa, Head Buyer*

It has never been easy finding a Cabernet from California for the Best Buy Wine Club. Lately, it has been nearly impossible. Prices have been going up everywhere, and a few of the recent vintages have been short, creating less supply. But we never give up! After searching and digging through many samples and price lists, we finally found one that totally fits the bill! Block Nine Wines is a California-based winery renowned for its exceptional, affordable Pinot Noir. This Cabernet marks their inaugural release of Cabernet onto the market. Block Nine's winemaker, Larry Levin, boasts decades of experience in the industry, having worked with notable wine brands Mt. Veeder, Robert Mondavi, Ravenswood, and Quintessa. His expertise shines through in the wines' complexity and consistency. The winery's dedication to quality and affordability positions it favorably among wine enthusiasts and casual drinkers alike.

This Cabernet offers a deep ruby color and a bouquet filled with dark fruits, hinting at the complexity within. On the palate, it reveals layers of ripe blackberries, plums, and subtle notes of oak, balanced by soft tannins and a pleasing acidity. The finish is long and lingering. A good buy at twice the price!

Signature Red Collection

2019 Cardano "1913" Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Retail \$34.99 / Club \$24.99

by *Trey Beffa, Head Buyer*

Edward Lewis Snider has a deep rooted history of winemaking in the Napa Valley. His grandfather moved to Napa California from Cardano Al Campo, Italy, in 1913 to work as a winemaker and farmer. In 1999 Edward began his own project, "Beau Vigne," which focused on Cabernet Sauvignon from the Atlas Peak appellation in Napa Valley. Atlas Peak's unique geography, situated at high elevations with volcanic soils, provides ideal conditions for grape growing. The cooler temperatures and abundant sunshine at these heights allow grapes to ripen slowly, developing complexity and preserving acidity. The wines from Beau Vigne were consistently rated in the high 90s by many wine writers, even scoring a perfect 100 points on his Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon in 2013. He sold the label in 2018 and set off on this new venture of Cardano Estates with his son Nicholas.



Sourced from a four-acre vineyard at 1,200 feet elevation in Atlas Peak, the 2019 Cardano 1913 Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits a beautiful balance between fruit, oak, acidity and tannin. It shows lots of power while still maintaining elegance. A very versatile Cabernet that will elegantly accompany your food, especially if you pair with hearty meat dishes.

2020 Domaine de Fontbonau Côtes-du-Rhône Retail \$29.99 / Club \$24.99

by *Keith Mabry, Rhône Buyer*

In 2008, two childhood friends, Frédéric Engerer (President of Bordeaux's famous First Growth Château Latour) and Jérôme Malet (winemaker from the Roussillon), fell in love with the historic Fontbonau estate in the heart of Drôme Provençale near the village of Montbrison-sur-Lez and decided to create rehabilitate it and start making wine there. From the beginning, they've been committed to farming organically and biodynamically and have achieved Demeter certification. Their 70+-year-old Grenache and 30+-year-old Syrah vines are nestled in an idyllic environment of scrubs, oaks, pines, olive trees, and rolling lavender fields at 350 meters above sea level—and you can taste this terroir in the glass! This Grenache-based wine shows deliciously concentrated, ripe fruits underlined by notes of incense and garrigue. Take a sip and you'll be happily transported to the lavender fields of Provence.



Premium Club

2022 Union Sacre Monterey Muscat Ottonel Retail \$17.99 / Club \$14.99

by Trey Beffa, Head Buyer



Union Sacre is a boutique winery located in Paso Robles on California's Central Coast. Founded by Xavier Arnaudin and Philip Muzzy in 2012, the winery is a fusion of Old World traditions and New World audacity, marrying the elegance of French winemaking with the boldness of Californian viticulture. They specialize in crafting small batches of varietal wines with a nod to Alsace, primarily focusing on Riesling, but also producing many other varietals, including this Muscat Ottonel, a white grape variety that is part of the extensive family of Muscat grapes. Originating from France in the mid-19th century, it's a cross between Chasselas and Muscat de Saumur. Muscat Ottonel is widely grown in Eastern European countries like Romania, Hungary, and Austria, where it's often used to produce sweet wines. The grape ripens early, yielding wines with lower acidity and alcohol content.

This 2022 vintage is aromatic and lively, offering a bouquet of rose petals, fresh lavender, and exotic fruits. The palate reveals flavors of peach, apricot, and honey, making it a delightfully fragrant and refreshing wine with a very clean finish. This is an excellent food wine and can be served with light appetizers and shellfish.

2021 Iaconis Petaluma Gap Syrah Retail \$19.99 / Club \$14.99

Husband-and-wife team Matt and Alexis Iaconis both jumped from other career paths when they fell in love with wine (Matt wanted to be an astronaut; Alexis an artist and a chef). They fell in love with each other while bonding over their mutual appreciation of Champagne. They met while working at the three-Michelin-star the Restaurant at Meadowood, where they honed their palates on some of the finest wines in the world.

This Syrah comes from the chilly Petaluma Gap appellation in the Sonoma Coast region, and reflects its long, cool growing season with a juicy, lighter-weight, elegant expression. Matt, the winemaker of the operation, ferments and ages this Syrah in neutral French oak. His winemaking is guided by principals of minimal intervention, cold sites, early harvests, and an affinity to the precise cool-climate winemaking in the great wines of Champagne and Burgundy.

Le Club Français

Kuentz-Bas Cremant d'Alsace Brut Retail \$23.99 / Club \$21.99

by Trey Beffa, Head Buyer

We love the long storied history of the Keuntz-Baz winery, which dates all the way back to 1795 in Alsace with the Keuntz family. In 1895, it became Kuentz-Bas through marriage of the Kuentz and Bas families. In 2004 the domaine was sold to vigneron Jean-Baptiste Adam, who is a fourteenth-generation winemaker also at the helm of his own family domaine. Jean-Baptiste Adam and current winemaker Olivier Raffin have moved the domaine toward lower yields and certified organic/biodynamic farming. They are crafting exciting, terroir-driven wines from classical Alsatian appellations.

Quite possibly one of the most exciting wines they make is this Cremant d'Alsace Brut. It comes from vines aged 25-40 years of age that grow on loose silt and limestone soil. It is a blend of 60% Pinot Blanc and 40% Auxerrois. Besides being a fantastic wine the Kuentz-Bas Cremant d'Alsace is an amazing value that easily competes with any Champagne or sparkling wine we have in the store at its price point. This fresh, bright, and lively sparkler displays notes of stone fruits and wildflowers with hints of brioche and citrus zest. It's made in the traditional Champenoise style, but with a character that's all Alsace—a vibrant, fragrant elixir that is lovely on its own as an aperitif or with something scrumptious like a savory tart.

2020 Baron de Montfaucon Châteauneuf-du-Pape Retail \$42.99 / Club \$37.99

by Keith Mabry, Rhône Buyer

Our relationship with Rudi de Pins of Château Montfaucon stretches back almost three decades now. He is best known for making some of our favorite Côtes du Rhône and Lirac wines and recently acquired land in the Cru of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, one of the most storied regions in the Rhône Valley. The 14th-Century pope loved it so much that he had his castle built there when the papacy relocated to Avignon during the schism in the Catholic church. It still stands as a ruin today. The region is famed for its bold red wines, with the large pebbles covering the vineyards absorbing the day's heat and radiating it back up the grapevines in the evening. The Baron CDP is from a single parcel composed mostly of Grenache with a little bit of Mourvèdre. The 2020 vintage is excellent and has all the fruit and character we have come to expect in a great Châteauneuf vintage. We have also seen Rudi's prowess with this wine grow since he began making it in 2014. The wine is medium- to full-bodied with rich flavors of cherry, blackberry, tobacco, anise, bay leaf, and peppery spice. The tannins are sweet and harmonious. This is good near-term drinking Châteauneuf but should continue to evolve with grace for at least a decade.

Il Club Italiano

by Greg St. Clair, Italy Buyer

2020 Casa d'Ambra "Mille Anni" Ischia Rosso Retail \$29.99 / Club \$24.99

Last year a very good friend of mine and local importer decided to retire. One of the wineries in his portfolio was Casa d'Ambra. Casa d'Ambra has been one of my favorite producers and the opportunity to import was too good to pass up! We've imported some of everything they've had available, and this is their top red wine. Casa d'Ambra is on the island of Ischia just off the coast of Naples and not too far from its famous cousin, Capri. It's much bigger than Capri but no Blue Grotto or songs have been written about them, so it has languished, at least here in America, relatively unknown. The wines, however, are decidedly better! Some dramatically steep vineyards on cliffs overlooking the sea make harvesting here an heroic effort, and, riddled with sulfur hot springs, the island is truly unique. This month's wine is made from a grape that they refer to the grape as O Per e'Palummo, but it is more commonly called Piediroso in Campania. It is made from a vineyard of 100-year-old vines, and they only produce a little over 500 cases a year. Fermented in stainless steel, it is aged for a year and a half in large, traditional oak barrels. The nose of this wine is full of wild brush and berry aromatics, in the glass it is a deeply saturated color, dark, brooding and impenetrable. I suggest decanting this wine, roughly... shake it around, for an hour or more ahead of time and serve it with your favorite wintry casserole.



2022 Einaudi "Donna Ida" Roero Arneis Retail \$17.99 / Club \$14.99

A few years ago, Matteo Sardagna, a direct descendant of founder Luigi Einaudi and current proprietor, decided to add a white wine to his all-red portfolio of Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera, and Dolcetto. Piedmont and especially the Langhe Hills has never been famous for white wine, and although there are several producers who make white—a lot of it—and started doing so because they wanted white to drink! Not many producers are willing to give up their Barolo or Barbaresco vineyard land to plant white grapes, the profitability just isn't there. So to produce white wines they generally have to go outside of the Langhe and across the Tanaro River to the Roero. Roero is where Arneis is grown, this variety had been grown for years interplanted 10% to Barbera vineyards to make the Barbera a little easier to drink. Both Alfredo Currado of Vietti and Bruno Giacosa have claimed to be the first to make a single-varietal Arneis, I like Alfredo's story a little more, so I'll go with him. He had the local parish priest tell his parishioners that he would be there the following Sunday to buy any Arneis they would bring to church. He drove his truck to church and picked up all the grapes that were brought in and so began the history of Arneis as a single-varietal wine. The Einaudi venture is fairly new but made classically in stainless steel. Arneis itself is a fairly low acid variety that makes it fresh and easy to drink.