



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

April 2022

## Dear Wine Club Member,

Happy April! If you celebrate Easter (or if you celebrate brunch), we've got some great brunch wines for you: Crémant de Limoux Rosé, Buehler Russian River Chardonnay, Villamont Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc, and the Champagnes! I don't personally celebrate Easter, but every year, I love thinking about the craziest wine pairing I've ever heard of: Peeps and the Italian sparkler Franciacorta (according to *Big Macs & Burgundy*). I've yet to try it, but perhaps some of you can tell me about it!

My favorite thing about the spring is the produce at the farmers' markets. In my previous life as a professional cook, I always looked forward to menu changes in the spring. There is just so much more produce to play with than winter root vegetables. Everything is fresher, brighter, and more eye-catching. In spring of 2020, I found myself furloughed from my restaurant job. To channel my pent-up chef energy, I shelled pounds of fresh peas and used them in some simple handmade pasta... mmm...plus a glass of my favorite white. Perfection!

I hope you get a chance to check out your local farmers' market this month and are inspired to make something delicious to go with your club wines. Tag us @klwines on social media!

Tchin-Tchin,  
Jin Zhang | Wine Club Director & Head Sommelier



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## Best Buy Wine Club



### 2020 Domaine de l'Ermitage "Victor" Costières de Nîmes Rouge \$9.99

Jerome and Tanguy Catillon are father-and-son winemakers stewarding Domaine de l'Ermitage's 80 hectares on the right bank of the Rhône River. Now in the hands of the third and fourth generation, the estate follows an organic and biodynamic philosophy, aiming to preserve the land for the future. The "Victor" is named for the first member of the Catillon family to own the property. The blend consists of 40% Syrah, 30% Grenache, and 30% Mourvèdre. On the nose and palate, you'll find blackberry, black olive, dried herbs, and licorice. This is a perfect weekday dinner wine.

### 2018 Buehler Russian River Valley Chardonnay \$9.99

From two complementary sites in the Russian River Valley, one of Sonoma Valley's cool appellations only 10 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Fruit from the River Vineyard shows minerality, citrus, and floral notes; fruit from the Wood Vineyard introduces stone fruit aromas to the blend. A match made in heaven! Buehler's minimalist winemaking relies on traditional sur-lie aging, lees stirring, and malolactic fermentation. 2018 is a great vintage with full flavor development in the fruit before harvest. You can expect a classic California Chard with toasty vanilla aromas, intense floral and stone fruit on the nose and a creamy texture. The full-bodied finish is balanced beautifully by refreshing natural acidity.

## Signature Red Collection



### 2016 Farella Coombsville Merlot \$27.99

Frank Farella founded Farella-Park Vineyards in 1985 in a small, 400-square-foot winery next to his house in Napa. His son, Tom, graduated from UC Davis in 1983 with a degree in viticulture and enology and helped his father produce the first five vintages. Tom took over in 1991 before passing the responsibilities on to Ryan Pass, a fellow UC Davis graduate. In 2009, Tom petitioned the government to establish Coombsville as an American Viticultural Area, and it became Napa Valley's 16th sub-AVA in 2011. Upon opening, don't expect a fruit bomb. This Merlot is closer to a bottle from St-Émilion in that the fruit notes come after time or decanting. Earth, soil, chocolate, and spice will unfold on the palate first. Give it some time, and the black fruits and plum will reveal themselves. A wine like this takes

patience to appreciate, so why not decant it while cooking up some beef ribs in a red wine shallot sauce? By the time the ribs become tender, the wine will be ready to enjoy!

### 2017 O'Leary Walker "Polish Hill" Shiraz Clare Valley South Australia \$24.99

O'Leary Walker was established in 2000 by long-time friends and winemakers David O'Leary and Nick Walker. After 35-plus years in the industry, they decided to try their hands at small-batch, handcrafted wines from some of the best vineyard sites in South Australia, the wine destination of Australia. This juicy, elegant Shiraz is made with fruit from Polish Hill River and Armagh, located north of Clare Valley. It shows aromas of black plum, black olive, star anise, and a hint of oak. The vibrant acidity and super approachable tannin structure are calling for some seared spam over rice, or that 45-day dry-aged burger served on a rosemary bun from the Morris that you can pick up if you're in San Francisco. Drink or hold for up to 10 years.

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## Premium Club

### 2013 Terre Rouge "Garrigue" Sierra Foothills Red Blend \$14.99

Terre Rouge was founded in the late '80s by husband-and-wife team Bill Easton and Jane O'Riordan. Bill is one of the original Rhône Rangers and a strong advocate for Rhône varietals in the Sierra Foothills. Jane is the chef who plans a seasonal menu each week to match the wines Bill offers for tasting. Terre Rouge means "Red Earth," referring to the red soil that characterizes the growing region. "Garrigue" is a nod to the wild shrubs and herbs of Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence, reflected in the aromatic profile of the wines (think: notes of wild thyme, rosemary, and lavender). This bottle is inspired by southern coastal France and grown in similar conditions—though the shrubs are native Californian resinous varieties such as manzanita, toyon, and chamise. The wine is Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon with notes of dried red fruits, red licorice, and pleasant dusty tannins—a great weekday dinner wine and excellent for unwinding. Inspired to cook up a hearty pairing for this wine? Check out Jane's recipe for beef stew on their website among many other delicious recipes!



### 2019 Antech "Emotion" Brut Crémant de Limoux Rosé \$14.99

Antech is currently run by three siblings who are the sixth generation of the family. Françoise is an advocate of social and cultural events in her community, sponsoring musical activities. Brothers Georges and Roger are inseparable. They get along so well that they claim to have not had an argument in the last 50 years. Roger makes the wines; Georges oversees the business side of things. This is the perfect wine for Easter Sunday brunch. It's low in alcohol, with delicate bubbles that release beautiful notes of white flowers and strawberries. Elegant and refreshing!

The region of Limoux belongs to the westernmost, inland region of the Languedoc, the southern coast of France facing the Mediterranean Sea. Made in the same method as Champagne but in other regions of France, Crémant is often referred to as the traditional method or “Méthode Traditionnelle.” This is a labor-intensive process and involves two rounds of fermentation. This bottle is a blend of Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Mauzac (native to the region), and Pinot Noir, all fermented separately in the first round. At the beginning of winter, before the second fermentation, blending happens—the determining factor in Antech’s style. The whole family participates here to ensure that the houses’ signature style comes together at the end of its 18-month aging journey.

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## Le Club Français

**2020 Henri de Villamont Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc “Le Village” \$35.99**

Last September, we featured the Domaine Jean-Michel Giboulot Savigny-lès-Beaune red in Le Club Français and it left quite the impression on me. The appellation does not get a lot of love in comparison to its neighbors Corton and Corton-Charlemagne but it has consistently exceeded my expectations and is definitely a good value. Located just north of the Côte de Beaune, this village produces more reds than whites, and this white Burgundy will certainly turn some heads and reinforce Savigny-lès-Beaune as the region to look for when shopping for wallet-friendly Burgundy in the future. Its beauty is all about the balance of flavors, and it is not shy. Fresh citrus peel, sweet lemon curd, orange peel, warm vanilla, smoke, apricot, and balanced acidity. It’s a great value, and drinks like it’s more expensive. I recommend saving this for the weekend, while relaxing with a book or just chilling.

**2019 Domaine Belle “Les Pierrelles” Crozes-Hermitage \$23.99**

Albert Belle inherited this Northern Rhône domaine in the 1970s from his father Louis, who loved grape growing but was not interested in producing his own wine. It was Albert who started making wine from their grapes, and, by 1990, had built a modern and functional winery on the property with his son Philippe. Philippe studied enology and further expanded the family’s winemaking business by purchasing neighboring vineyards and upgrading the winery. Today, Domaine Belle stretches over three appellations (Crozes-Hermitage, Hermitage, St-Joseph) and covers an area of 61 acres of vines. Philippe’s son Guillaume is looking to follow in his forefather’s footsteps.

This wine has quite a complex nose and great structure. It is one that can stand up to some grilled red meats. Otherwise, I would recommend cellaring it a couple of years and even up to a decade. It is on the younger side, but already showing much potential. Notes of chicory coffee, campfire, a mixture of dried roots and herbs, and dark cherries can already be detected now. I can only imagine how much complexity this wine will develop with time!

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## Il Club Italiano

*by Greg St. Clair, Italian Buyer*

**2018 Garlider Grüner Veltliner Alto Adige \$21.99**

This wine encapsulates two of my most favorite things in life: the Alto Adige (Südtirol in German) and Grüner Veltliner. The Alto Adige is one of the most physically beautiful regions in Italy, where the Alps and the Dolomites meet. It would seem too cold to grow grapes in this Alpine region, but its river valley is actually one of the warmest areas in Italy during the summer. Grüner Veltliner, mostly grown in Austria, is an extraordinary grape, one that ages exceptionally well but can also make everyday, quaffable wines. This wine is sensational—a full saline, crystalline feeling on your palate, with pea sprout and white pepper aromatics. The wine has outstanding richness and a long, long finish. I would suggest grilled Halibut as the perfect match for this!





### 2020 San Salvatore “Vetere” Aglianico Rosato Paestum \$17.99

So often when I write about the wines on our Italian shelves, I can say the winery was founded in the 15th century or some similarly ancient date, because Italy has such an incredible history of winemaking. But the producers of this bottle, San Salvatore, had their first harvest in 2009—mere babies by Italian standards. Giuseppe Pagano, a hotel magnate, decided it was time to make wine in his region. The winery is in Paestum in Campania, which is about an hour and a half south of Naples, in one of the richest archaeological sites in all of Italy. Major temples abound! Most of his wines are made from grapes you would imagine in Campania: Fiano, Greco, Falanghina, Piediroso, and of

course Aglianico, which is the powerful red grape behind the Taurasi appellation wines.

One doesn't often find rosé made from Aglianico but I found this wine to really portray some extra texture and aromatics thanks to the powerful Aglianico grape. It is made from all organic grapes grown inside the Cilento National Park. A brief six hours of skin contact and then it spends six months on the lees in stainless steel to add texture and aromas to the wine. I would pair this with sauteed salmon or a Fettucine Alfredo!

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## Champagne Club

by Gary Westby, Champagne Buyer

You might have noticed that this month, your Champagne Club was \$10 less than usual. Since we had an opportunity to make this month a super deal we could not resist; especially since we could do it while providing you with bottles from two of the most classic growers that we work with. In this climate of inflation, Champagne has been hard hit with increases—but not this month in the club! Champagne J. Lassalle might have been the very first grower–producer imported into the U.S. and paved the way for many that came later. Champagne Aspasié was our very first direct import from Champagne, and we have been importing them now for 22 years. I hope that you will enjoy this pair of classics as much as I have.

### J. Lassalle “Cachet d’Or” Premier Cru Brut Champagne \$29.99

This is usually \$35, and unfortunately in order to get you this price on anything you rebuy, you will have to call or come in the store. We were asked to keep this hot deal off the web! The wine is composed of one-third each Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Meunier from the 1er Cru of Chigny–les–Roses on the Mountain of Reims. It is aged for three years or more on the lees, and this batch is a blend of 2016 and 2017 vintages. Even though the dosage is just 9 grams per liter, this wine comes across as rich to me, with very nice, toasted brioche aromas and a silky texture. I love this on its own, but it would also pair very well with a simple starter such as nuts or even smoked salmon.



### Ariston Aspasié “Réserve” Brut Champagne \$29.99

We have a great price for you on this bottle as well—but only while supplies last! Our next shipment will return to the regular price. Entirely estate grown in the village of Brouillet in the northwestern corner of Champagne, it is composed of 40% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, and 30% Meunier. It is aged an incredible five years on the lees before disgorgement—twice the time of Veuve Clicquot! Many of you have visited Paul and Caroline Ariston, and many more have met them when they have visited here for the tent event and other tastings. Not only is this a great wine, but they are some of the best people in the wine world. I love this cuvée with gougères!