The Wine and Cheese Cask

407 Washington Street • Somerville, Massachusetts 02143

(617) 623-8656

January 15, 2017 – February 14, 2017
2015 A Most Beautiful Dolcetto Vintage

It began last April when Isabella Oddero told us that their 2015 Dolcetto grapes were "the most beautiful Dolcetto grapes" she had ever seen. Now that we have tasted more 2015 Dolcetti, we have concluded that we now have the best collection of Dolcetto wines we have ever had in the store. This group shows off the effortless food-matching potential of this underrated, underpriced red from Piedmont.

Ballarin

2015 Langhe Rosso 'Cino' (Ballarin)
Sale Price $10.99 – $112.10 case of twelve
We start the Dolcetto parade with Ballarin's gorgeous gulper. This blend of Dolcetto (40%), Barbera (40%), and Nebbiolo has ripe berry fruit, a hint of spice, and a round, soft finish.

Einaudi

2015 Dogliani (Einaudi)
Sale Price $17.99 – $183.50 case of twelve
Dogliani is a village devoted to Dolcetto, which is why its name stands alone as a super cru for the grape. The 2015 Einaudi is a deliciously rich Dogliani with layer upon layer of ripe fruit to go with its fascinating aromas of raw beef and dried rose petal. Pair this with lamb chops and a gratin of root vegetables for a wonderful winter meal.

Pira

2015 Dolcetto d'Alba (Luigi Pira)
Sale Price $13.99 – $142.70 case of twelve
Luigi Pira's vines are located in Serralunga within the Barolo zone. Their Dolcetto is a beefy purple bruiser with a lovely depth of mulberry and black cherry fruit. Great with a long-braised brisket and polenta.

Marengo

2015 Dolcetto d'Alba (Mario Marengo)
Sale Price $14.99 – $152.90 case of twelve
Mario Marengo is a mainly Barolo producer from La Morra. Their very small production wines are elegant and generous. This 2015 Dolcetto is a violet-scented delight, with gentle tannins and an expansive finish. Fine for a mushroom risotto.

Azelia

2015 Dolcetto d'Alba 'Bricco dell'Oriolo' (Azelia)
Sale Price $15.99 – $163.10 case of twelve
Azelia's Dolcetto comes from a single vineyard at high elevation in the village of Montelupo Albese. The Bricco dell'Oriolo is a seductive, refined Dolcetto with gentle tannins, keen mineral focus, and a superbly long finish.

Roagna

2015 Dolcetto d'Alba (Roagna)
Sale Price $17.99 – $183.50 case of twelve
The Roagnas are a Barbaresco family. Their small quantity of Dolcetto from vines within Barbaresco is cask aged for a year. This results in a mellow, smoky Dolcetto with deep aromas and a persistent finish.

Listed prices are honored through February 14th. We will not honor mistyped prices. Vol. 41, No. 2

Romorantin

2014 Cour-Cheverny (Le Petit Chambord/François Cazin)
Sale Price $14.99 – $152.90 case of twelve

Our love of the Loire extends into the tiny appellation of Cour-Cheverny and the rare white grape variety known as Romorantin. It is uncertain how the little acreage left of this grape ended up in the eastern Loire, but wine made from old vine Romorantin is well worth saving. François Cazin has the patience to wait until late in the harvest season when the grapes' acidity aligns with the sugar. The 2014 has a honey and mineral aroma and a beeswax texture along with zesty peach and apricot fruit. Try this with a broiled haddock and a butter and chive sauce.

Anjou Chenin

2015 Anjou Blanc 'Chauvigné' (Domaine Richou)
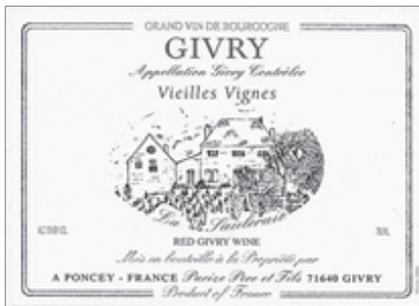**Sale Price $15.99 – $163.10 case of twelve**

Has Anjou Chenin Blanc ever been trendy? Probably several times. The rich and incredibly long lived sweet wines from the Loire tributary, the Layon, can rival the best Sauternes, though they are little discussed these days. Savennières has been around forever and makes stellar, rare dry whites. Recent trips to the Loire have shown us that some of the best values in minerally, dry Chenin Blanc come from producers who have scaled back their sweet wine production. Richou's Chauvigné is as delicious as many Savennières without the price or the wait. The 2015 has lively stone fruit aroma along with a zesty, almost severe minerality. This is a great match with seared salmon on a bed of lentils.

Givry

2015 Givry 'Vieilles Vignes' (Domaine Parize)
Sale Price $19.99 – $203.90 case of twelve

If you know of a better value in pure Burgundian Pinot Noir, please let us know. Domaine Parize in Givry makes a lusciously plummy old-vine bottling that drinks well right out of the chute. This is the kind of red that we adore with a roast chicken along with an enormous potato gratin.

Olga

2012 Chinon 'Les Picasses' (Olga Raffault)
Sale Price $21.99 – $224.30 case of twelve

The 'new' vintage of Chinon 'Picasses' from Olga Raffault is, as always, a few years older than the current release of other Chinon producers. Their old-fashioned way with Cabernet Franc is to age it in barrel and bottle until its fruit and tannins merge into a harmonious whole. The 2012 is still dark with fruit and suffused with good, grippingly dry flavor, but has a rich round-ness. This wine is a perfect match with pulled pork and braised cabbage.

Coteaux Bourguignons

2013 Coteaux Bourguignons 'Cuvée Terroir' (Maison Roche de Bellene)
Sale Price $14.99 – $152.90 case of twelve

In an attempt to do away with confusing and contradictory appellations the French wine authorities decided to retire Bourgogne Grand Ordinaire and Bourgogne Ordinaire and create the catchall Coteaux Bourguignons. In effect this allows growers all over Burgundy to make an affordable blend of Gamay and Pinot Noir. Maison Roche de Bellene makes one that surpasses their own pure Pinot Noir. The 2013 is a smooth, mature red with fine berry aromas and a ripe, round middle palate. At a modest 12.5%, it is an easy match with a simple fish dish or a robust chowder.

Pinot Bianco

2015 Pinot Bianco (Colterenzio)
Sale Price $11.99 – $122.30 case of twelve

Pinot Grigio may slake the thirst of the export masses, but Pinot Bianco is the much more important local white grape in Alto Adige. This versatile wine has long been a favorite of ours with shellfish. The rather rich body and pronounced crispness of the 2015 from Colterenzio provides the perfect foil for rich foods, while not being too heavy on its own.

Fèlsina Classico

2013 Chianti Classico (Fèlsina)
Sale Price $24.99 – $254.90
case of twelve
Fèlsina is located at the southern border of Chianti Classico and has a reputation for full ripeness in all of their wines. The 2013 is pure Sangiovese and has all the fine qualities of the grape, with lovely cherry fruit, cedar aromas, and bitingly dry finish. Allow this wine to breathe for an hour and then serve with a rare porterhouse steak.

Montefalco

2010 Montefalco Riserva (Perticaia)
Sale Price $21.99 – $224.30 case of twelve
Analysis of the Sagrantino grape variety has revealed that it has more tannin and flesh than virtually any other red grape. A young, pure Sagrantino can be a ferociously bitter, dry red. But with age a rich elegance emerges. Perticaia makes a beautiful Montefalco Sagrantino, but we also appreciate their Montefalco Riserva, a blend of Sangiovese and Sagarantino. This mature red is packed with dark cherry fruit and spicy tannins. Have this with a spicy lamb stew with white beans.

Bugey-Cerdon

Bugey-Cerdon (Lingot-Martin)
Sale Price $17.99 – $194.30 case of twelve
Over the last couple of years we have seen an uptick in sales of sparkling red and rosé wines. We are on board with this trend because we find the wines to be light, refreshing, and delicious. The Bugey-Cerdon region is best known for its fizzy demi-sec ruby-colored wine. The folks at Lingot-Martin make a wine like that, but this one is a drier style of wine. This sparkling Gamay is delightful on its own, but could also be enjoyed with a meal of saucisson sec and alpine cheeses and then extended to go with a fresh fruit dessert.

Specialty Foods

Melinda Mae $18.99 per lb. (Regular price $21.99)

Inspired by Italian Robiola, Melinda Mae is a soft-ripened bloomy-rind cheese made with pasteurized cow's milk by Mystic Cheese Company in Connecticut. This cheese has a luscious pudgy texture when young which becomes runny when fully ripe. Mild mannered with notes of cultured cream and mushrooms.

Grossetano $17.99 per lb. (Regular price $19.99)

Produced by La Maremmana in Tuscany, Grossetano is a pasteurized farmstead buffalo milk cheese in the style of Pecorino Toscano. The buffalo are raised free-range on the grazing land and woods of a farm in the Capalbio hills. The farm grows 80% of the animals' feed and they maintain strict control of the supply chain for the other 20%. The ample space and premium nutrition allow for the production of high quality milk, which they exclusively use in their cheeses. Grossetano is firm and flakey with a distinctive buffalo milk tang.

Valle D'Aosta Fontina $13.99 per lb. (Regular price $15.99)

A classic Italian D.O.P. raw cow's milk cheese made in the Aosta valley since the 12th century. Aged for 3-4 months, this batch is a little younger than the last one we had. Right now it is rich and creamy; it will get nuttier with age. Great for melting!

Persillé de Chèvre $21.99 per lb. (Regular price $25.99)

A gorgeous little cheese with an ashen gray rind, creamy white paste, and striking blue marbling. Lots of body for a blue cheese. This is a farmstead cheese made with pasteurized goat's milk at Tremblaye farm in La Boissière-École near Yvelines in north-central France.

Bonne Bouche $8.99 per piece (Regular price $9.99)

This goat's milk cheese from Vermont Creamery is inspired by cheeses from the Loire River Valley in France, such as Selles-sur-Cher. The pasteurized curd is hand ladled, sprinkled with tree ash, and aged just enough (about 10 days) to develop a wrinkly edible rind. Each 4 oz cheese is individually packaged in a tiny wooden crate and can age up to 80 days. Bonne Bouche, French for "good mouthful," is creamy from the start, becoming softer and more piquant with time.

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Wines of the Month — January 15, 2017 through February 14, 2017

2015 Saumur Blanc 'Epinats' (Cave de Saumur)
Sale Price $9.99 – $107.89 case of twelve
The Cave de Saumur makes great value dry Chenin Blanc. The Les Epinats vineyard creates a minerally dry white with hints of pear and quince fruit. Great for sautéed sole and wilted garlicky greens.

2015 Barbera d'Asti 'Villa della Rosa' (Pico Maccario)
Sale Price $9.99 – $107.89 case of twelve
We are big fans of the 2015 vintage in Piedmont. This Barbera has lively fruit and a ripe, polished finish. Great for all things pizza, pasta, and spicy.

2015 Nero d'Avola (Tenuta Ibidini)
Sale Price $8.99 – $97.09 case of twelve
One of our favorite Sicilian wines just became an even better value. The 2015 Nero d'Avola from Tenuta Ibidini is wonderfully balanced between plummy fruit and earthy dryness. A great match for a roast chicken with Middle Eastern spices.

2015 Minervois (Les Chemins de Félines)
Sale Price $7.99 – $86.29 case of twelve
Minervois is one of our favorite Languedoc wines. Les Chemins de Félines is a deep, dark, spicy red based on the Syrah grape. Terrific with charcuterie and strong cheeses.