

# AUGUST 2020 CLUB SELECTIONS



## 2017 DOMAINE LA FLORANE 'A FLEUR DE PAMPRE' CÔTES DU RHÔNE VILLAGES VISAN, FRANCE

Domaine la Florane produces wines from vineyards in the village of Visan on land handed down through the family of Marie-Pierre Fabré, while the vines in Saint-Maurice bear the name of Domaine de l'Échevin. The latter domaine was created by François Fabré in the 1990's on land owned by Guillaume de Rouville, a family ancestor who was mayor of Lyon in 1586. In 2001, the family's two estates began using the same, specially-built wine cellar although each estate kept its name. Then, in 2019, they were united at last—though the cuvée names remain unchanged.

Visan belonged to the Knights Templar before passing into papal ownership in 1344, and was part of the Papal Enclave for nearly five centuries. In Notre-Dame-des-Vines chapel, one of the arches of the choir bears the inscription *proserunt me custodem in vinea*: “here they placed me, the custodian of their vines”. After lengthy negotiations, Pope Clement VI traded Visan to the Dauphin (French heir apparent) Humbert II for a debt write-off. Visan became part of France permanently by decree in 1793, in the department of Vaucluse and the canton of Valréas. In 1966, Visan was granted Côtes-du-Rhône Villages status. The original village wall built by the popes, and a multitude of Renaissance et Baroque townhouses, have all been preserved. This charming historical district in the old village is not to be missed if you are fortunate enough to visit!

Domaine la Florane is a distinctive estate consisting of 38.5 hectares of vines nestled amid an additional 37 hectares of luxuriant broom, truffle oaks, olive trees and lavender. Demeter certified (Organic & Biodynamic), the Visan parcels are planted in the south-facing valley—called a *coste chaude*, or “sunny hillside” in Provençal. François and Adrien (the third generation to cultivate this land) tend the vines with meticulous precision, while Peggy Rambault, the oenologist, conducts the orchestra in the cellar!

This wine is a blend from 30-year-old Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault and Carignan vines hand-harvested just a few minutes from the cellar. Each lot was vinified separately in stainless steel vats before being aged on fine lees in concrete—highlighting both the varietal and terroir traits and lending to the wines' inherent freshness.

Deep garnet in color, with sultry aromas of dark fruit, red plum and a hint of smoked meat. The palate is fresh and juicy with red and blue fruits, fresh red plum, wet stone and a smooth tannin on the spicy finish.

## MIXED AND RED SELECTIONS

■ SUGGESTED RECIPE: Rack of Lamb with Roasted Grapes, Fennel & Olive Butter

■ RETAIL: \$20.00  
■ WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$17.00

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## 2019 FRANCIS BLANCHET 'KRIOTINE' POUILLY-FUMÉ AOC LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE

Since the early 1990s, winemaker Francis Blanchet has crafted a special selection of pure Sauvignon Blanc from fruit selected from flint-rich vineyards. This unique terroir announces itself explosively: knock two vineyard stones together and you can't help but be bowled over by the aroma of firecracker smoke. Indeed, fumé means “smoked” in French, which gives you more than a hint of why Sauvignon Blanc from Blanchet in this charmed appellation across the river from Sancerre is so energetic and mineral-driven.

Now that Francis' son, Mathieu, has joined the winery, the Blanchet family can count eight generations of winemakers among its ranks. This centuries-plus dedication to the soul of the Loire and the character of Sauvignon Blanc make the Blanchet clan a reliable source for the true voice of this expressive wine grape. In addition to the special flint-soil, Francis has identified unique plots of land—whether with older, Massal selection vines or Kriotine, from chalky limestone soils—and bottled them separately. Attention to terroir is what sets Blanchet Sauvignon Blanc apart from more basic regional bottlings. Their wines offer a pure, unadulterated taste of Sauvignon Blanc. 'Kriotine' is a fanciful name inspired by the word 'criot,' which in local dialect describes a vineyard terroir with many white stones.

Blanchet cares for the vines sustainably, avoiding chemicals. The estate regularly plows vineyard rows, and plants beneficial herbs to control weed growth and stimulate vines' roots to dig deeper into the soil. Interestingly, estate vines, following DNA testing, have proved to be some of the oldest existing clones of Sauvignon Blanc—the true “mother” rootstock of Loire Sauvignon. Many of these vines are plantings from original rootstock planted by Francis Blanchet's grandparents.

For this wine, 100% Sauvignon Blanc grapes from 20-year-old vines were hand harvested and gently whole-cluster pressed in a horizontal, pneumatic press, with the juice fed to tanks via gravity. The must was fermented by indigenous yeasts and aged on the fine lees in temperature-controlled, stainless-steel tanks, the goal being to preserve Sauvignon Blanc's naturally vibrant aromas and flavors.

Aromas of crushed oyster shells, white flowers, tallow fruit and citrus. Wonderful texture with bright flavors of stone fruit, underripe guava, Mirabelle plum, grapefruit pith and cantaloupe rind. The long, juicy finish is supported by a slightly chalky minerality and a hint of flint.

## MIXED AND WHITE SELECTIONS

■ SUGGESTED RECIPE: Striped Bass with Capers & Hazelnut Brown Butter

■ RETAIL: \$20.00  
WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$17.00

# AUGUST 2020 CLUB SELECTIONS



## 2017 MAZZONI COLLINE NOVARESI NEBBIOLO DEL MONTEREGIO DOC PIEDMONT, ITALY

The Mazzone family has traced its history in the Ghemme area back to the 1300s, and in their town archives of Cavaglio d'Agogna where the cantina is located to this day, there are documents that attest to a Matteo Mazzone renting a house with a wine cellar and a shop in 1502. With the advent of industrialization after WW2 in this part of northern Italy, Tiziano Mazzone's father abandoned life as a farmer. At the time it was a question of economic survival, and he did not feel that he had a choice. Fortunately, things have come full circle for Tiziano—it was his generation to rediscover a passion for the countryside and its wines.

Inspired by his passion for Barolo, one of the icons of Italian red wines, Tiziano Mazzone returned to his family's roots in Ghemme in 1999, hoping to prove that the Langhe wasn't the only source of world-class Nebbiolo in Piedmont. Ghemme's volcanic, clay-rich soils translate into wines with ample body, structure and character, and Mazzone's non-interventionist methods allow the grapes to express themselves fully. Current production of the estate is only 1250 cases from 4.5 hectares; all farming practices are organic, the wines produced benefit from longer fermentations and see no new oak. Nebbiolo is known locally as Spanna.

This charming red is 100% Nebbiolo sourced from 10-20-year-old vines, and all the fruit is grown in estate vineyards in Ghemme and Cavaglio d'Agogna. The grapes were hand-harvested, destemmed and fermented on indigenous yeasts in temperature-controlled, stainless steel tanks. The resulting wine was aged for one year in older 500L French oak tonneaux, and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Bright red with a garnet rim. Aromas of strawberry and dusty red fruits. On the palate the wine is suave and silky, loaded with fresh berry fruit, cherry, red plum and a fine-grained tannin that suggests black tea. Very approachable, a delightful starter Nebbiolo and perfect for summer sipping.

## RED SELECTION

■ SUGGESTED RECIPE: Spinach and Mushroom-Stuffed Beef Tenderloin

■ RETAIL: \$20.00  
■ WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$17.00

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## TENUTE DETTORI RENOSU BIANCO, ROMANGIA IGT, SARDINIA, ITALY

Tenute Dettori is a historic winery tied to its territory, Badde Nigosolu within the IGT subzone of Romangi, Sardinia. Here, wine has been made for centuries, and many of Dettori's vines are over 100-years-old. Winemaker Alessandro Dettori is one of the most passionate and influential figures in the Italian wine community, committed to producing authentic and expressive wines from his plot of Badde Nigosolu. Fanatical about biodynamics and natural practices, Alessandro's estate was one of the first to receive the prestigious Demeter certification in Italy, an award that very few in the country have achieved.



The property encompasses 26 hectares located in Sorso and Sennori, known for sandy soils with gravel, limestone, sandstone, clay and alluvial deposits. Only indigenous varieties are grown: Vermentino, Pascale, Moscato di Sennori, Monica, and of course, Cannonau (AKA Grenache). Alessandro takes as natural of an approach as possible and is a mentor and icon for many in the region. He takes risks but never compromises his beliefs in natural winemaking. The cellar, built underground, follows the same principles. Only stainless-steel and concrete tanks are used, where spontaneous fermentation takes place with wild yeasts and no temperature control nor use of sulfites except, and only if absolutely necessary, at bottling. No filtration or cold stabilization are utilized.



The blend for the Renosu (meaning "sand") Bianco is 95% Vermentino and 5% Moscato. The fruit was left to macerate on the skins for one day, and although labeled as a non-vintage wine, the blend is based on the 2018 harvest. The grape must underwent spontaneous fermentation and 3 months of aging in cement tanks before bottling.



Pale golden hue, tropical aromatics with banana peel, and dried fig. The palate is fleshy, showing complex flavors of plantain chips, yellow dragon fruit, starfruit and passionfruit; ripe and fleshy with mouthwatering acidity and a hint of saline minerality on the finish.



## W H I T E   S E L E C T I O N

- SUGGESTED RECIPE: Whole Sardines with Parsley
- RETAIL: \$20.00  
WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$17.00