

FERRY PLAZA WINE MERCHANT & WINE BAR
DECEMBER 2017 SPARKLING WINE CLUB



N.V. Jean Vesselle Brut Réserve, Champagne, France

The Vesselles have been cultivating vines on the chalky soils of the Grand Cru village of Bouzy for generations, since the early 1700s. In 1880, Jean Vesselle's grandfather established the domaine as a Récoltant-Manipulant when he began making Champagne from his own fruit. The lovely and sweet Delphine Vesselle now runs the estate with her husband, David, after her father Jean's passing in 1996. She takes great pride in her family's 300 year history in Champagne and strives to honor her father's memory and the wonderful domaine he established. It covers 15 hectares of vines, mostly Pinot Noir, with a little Chardonnay, which are farmed sustainably using organic practices. They produce 12 different cuvées including a still, Bouzy Rouge (100% Pinot Noir from Bouzy) for a total of 10,000 cases, which is minuscule compared to the big houses and Grands Marques of the region. Jean Vesselle is considered to be one of the premier grower-producers in Champagne and a top maker of Blanc de Noir wines. As our loyal clientele can attest, we are longtime fans of their rosé bottlings, particularly, the Oeil de Perdrix, Rosé de Saignée and Cuvée Friandise Demi-Sec, which have had permanent spots on our Champagne shelves practically since we opened our doors. We are especially proud to feature their white, Brut Réserve in our Sparkling Club and know it will be just as popular as the rosés!

This charming Champagne is a blend of 80% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay that was fermented in stainless steel tanks and aged in bottle for three years before disgorgement with a dosage of 11 grams per liter. Even though that sounds like a higher dosage, this is still a very dry wine. It's not quite as dry of course as the Bonnet-Ponson Non-Dosé and is thus a nice contrast to that wine, with a softer, rounder mouthfeel. The nose is very expressive with aromas of dried jasmine, fragrant white strawberries, lemon blossom and Braeburn apple. The palate is at once light-bodied yet full of flavor and creamy yet light on its feet. Notes of more white berries and sweet apple are joined by Anjou pear, white almond and honeysuckle, which is especially apparent on the crisp finish. This is a deceptively complex yet very easy to drink wine that doesn't really need food to be enjoyed to its fullest although it wouldn't hurt to be paired with a decadent appetizer such as Salmon or Tuna Tartare.

Sparkling Wine Club

\$46.00

\$39.10

Wine Club Member reorder price



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N.V. Bonnet-Ponson Non-Dosé Premier Cru, Champagne, France

We featured the Bonnet-Ponson Brut Premier Cru in the Sparkling Club earlier this year to great success. As a reminder, following the traditions of his family who had been tending vines since the 1600s, Grégoire Bonnet founded his Champagne house in 1862 in the Marne Valley village of Chamery. Since then, six generations of Bonnets have continued the traditions Grégoire established over 150 years ago. Bonnet-Ponson has been a Récoltant-Manipulant from the very beginning, meaning they only make Champagne from their own estate vineyards. This helps keep the total production manageable for a small domaine and more importantly, makes it easier to maintain the overall quality. Thierry Bonnet and his son, Cyril run things today, farming their 10.5 hectares of vineyards biodynamically in the Premier Cru villages of Chamery, Vrigny and Coulommès la Montagne and the Grand Cru villages of Verzy and Verzenay. The vines are planted fairly evenly between Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay across 60 different parcels which are all fermented separately in a combination of stainless steel tanks and oak barrels. Once the final blend is achieved with a percentage of reserve wine, the bottles rest in the cellar aging for four to ten years depending on the cuvée.

When Cyril visited the San Francisco market last year, he enjoyed many low dosage Extra Brut and Brut Nature Champagnes which inspired him to have a go at producing his own version. Thus, he took a small lot of his aging Brut Premier Cru bottles and released this 'Non-Dosé' (non-dosed, or zero dosage) wine. In homage of his time here, this special, limited cuvée is only available in San Francisco and Paris. It is a blend of 40% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay and 30% Pinot Meunier based on the 2011 vintage with 40% of reserve wine from 2010, 2009 and 2008. The first fermentation took place in 80% stainless steel tanks, 10% concrete vats and 10% neutral French oak barrels followed by nine months of resting on the lees before being bottled for secondary fermentation. It was then aged for five years and disgorged in July this year. It is absolutely a very dry Champagne yet given the somewhat riper style of Bonnet-Ponson, it is by no means austere. The nose offers pronounced aromas of Red Delicious apple, roasted almond, white pepper, baking spice and a yeasty quality that recalls the crust of toasted Levain bread. The light-bodied palate feels lean and clean while the finish is quite crisp with chalky minerality and a lingering yeasty note. This is a Champagne to go with food, especially something rich like Oysters Rockefeller or creamy seafood risotto.

Sparkling Wine Club

\$54.00

\$45.90

Wine Club Member reorder price



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**N.V. Paltrinieri 'Leclisse' Lambrusco Di Sorbara D.O.C.,
Emilia-Romagna, Italy**

When our Ferry Godmother, Debbie Zachareas and our Assistant General Manager, Sarah Knoefler were in Emilia-Romagna earlier this year, they discovered this outstanding Lambrusco producer. We all tasted the wines back here in San Francisco and were so smitten that we booked two of them for our Sparkling Club! Achilles Paltrinieri was a pharmaceutical chemist in the countryside of Modena who also had a taste for the vine and founded Cantina Paltrinieri in 1926. He was smart to establish his estate in the village of Sorbara where the highest quality of the main Lambrusco varieties, 'Lambrusco di Sorbara' is planted across the five appellations of Emilia-Romagna. Achilles' son, Gianfranco expanded the vineyard holdings and passed the 15 hectare estate to his son, Alberto who runs things today with his wife, Barbara. With the guidance of enologists, Leonardo Conti and Attilio Pagli, Alberto produces six distinct Lambruscos of exceptional quality at relatively low production levels, especially for the region. While many may not hold Lambrusco in high esteem due to the oceans of sweet, low quality options that flooded the market in the past, Alberto Paltrinieri is part of the new renaissance of winemakers who are changing our perception of what the wine can achieve with his sharp, elegantly crafted wines.

Whereas the 'Radice' we featured last time was made via the Ancestral Method, this 'Leclisse' (or 'Eclipse'), which is also 100% Lambrusco di Sorbara, is produced in the more traditional style for Lambrusco with the Charmat Method, meaning the secondary fermentation took place in stainless steel tanks instead of in bottle. Thus, the appearance of the wine is clear, not cloudy as with the Radice, and the color of this Leclisse is a beautiful pale pink/orange hue that looks really cheerful and inviting. The nose offers aromas of dried violets, rhubarb and Rainier white/yellow cherry which follow onto the light-bodied palate to join flavors of red, pink and yellow pluot. At the end, the wine finishes on a note of blood orange peel, a good deal of tangy acidity, a dash of minerality and a lot of panache. There is enough fruit to balance the acid which makes this wine totally drinkable on its own as an aperitivo or paired with an array of salumi as is the tradition in Modena. It will also delight your guests and look really pretty on any holiday table!

Sparkling Wine Club

\$25.00

\$21.25

Wine Club Member reorder price



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