

FERRY PLAZA WINE MERCHANT & WINE BAR

FEBRUARY 2018 WINE CLUB



2016 La Bicicleta Voladora Rioja, Rioja, Spain

Germán Roble Bianco did not grow up in a wine family; his mother was an art teacher and his father manufactured clothes. Nor was he raised in a wine region; in fact, Asturias, in the north of Spain, is more well-known for cider than wine. However, it was likely the influence of his mother who piqued his interest in wine since he views “grapes as art material to be molded.” Germán followed that curiosity to Madrid where he worked in a high end wine store while studying enology and viticulture. Once he learned all he could there, he found jobs at wineries in La Mancha, Bierzo and Ribera del Duero. While in Ribera del Duero, he partnered with a family who owns 10 hectares of 36-year-old vines and now they all work together under the Quinta Milú micro-winery, named after Germán's son, Lucas, whom his family refers to as 'Mi Lu' or 'Milú.' In 2015, Germán started another project in nearby Rioja with his friend and enologist, Javier Collio. As is the case with every wine he produces, Germán only sources local Spanish varietals, mainly Tempranillo and Viura, from organically farmed, old vine vineyards. His winemaking style in the cellar is minimal interventionist with native yeast fermentation and very little use of new oak for aging.

This 2016 is the second vintage of Germán's Rioja project he calls ‘Bicicleta Voladora’ or Flying Bicycle. It is 100% Tempranillo sourced from the certified organic vineyards, ‘Los Riscos’ and ‘La Hoya’ in Rioja Baja with vines ranging in age between 18-49 years old. Germán fermented and aged the wine for seven months in concrete egg-shaped vessels and tanks. The nose is vibrant with aromas of freshly crushed berries, ripe cherry and a dash of pepper. The medium-bodied palate is fruity and juicy but not at all overly ripe. The finish is clean and dry with a real sense of freshness that almost makes it feel like a crisp white wine. We know a well-priced Rioja can be very popular so we can almost guarantee this will be a huge hit with all of you. It absolutely delivers on Germán's mission to make “fresh, fluid and lively wines” and proves his theory that “happy wines are made from happy grapes!”

Suggested Recipe: Sauteed Pork Chops with Grape, Rosemary & Red Wine Pan Sauce

Mixed and Red Selection

\$18.00

\$15.30

Wine Club Member reorder price



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2016 Château Argadens Blanc, Bordeaux, France

The Sichel family has enjoyed an important presence in the Bordeaux wine industry for six generations. With roots in Germany and branches across Europe, it was the British arm that smartly moved to Bordeaux in 1883 to establish Maison Sichel. What began as a “simple wine buying office” expanded into a “fully-fledged wine trading company” which eventually transformed into also becoming a producer with the construction of a winemaking facility in downtown Bordeaux. Along the way, Maison Sichel acquired a few key Bordeaux Châteaux, including Château Palmer and Château Angludet in Margaux and Château Argadens in the Entre-Deux-Mers appellation in 2002. Formerly known as La Salle d'Arche, the Sichels re-named it, Château Argadens after the noble family who originally built the feudal castle in the 12th century, and set about restructuring the vineyards, modernizing the winery and building a cellar for aging the wines. The family manages everything with respect for the environment and the property was one of the first in Bordeaux to achieve certification for integrated farming practices. Château Argadens only produces two wines: a Bordeaux Supérieur Rouge and this nicely refined Bordeaux Blanc.

The estate covers 45 hectares of vineyards which are situated at an altitude of 110 meters on one of the highest points of the rolling hills of Entre-Deux-Mers. The vines are planted primarily to the red Bordeaux varietals of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc while only 3 hectares are planted to the white grapes, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. This 2016 Blanc is 65% Sauvignon Blanc and 35% Semillon. Each varietal was fermented separately in medium-toast new barrels, followed by aging on the lees for four months before the two wines were blended together in vat and then bottled a month later. It is the Semillon which leads on the nose with aromas of pineapple, under-ripe mango, roasted Meyer lemon, a touch of beeswax and a very faint hint of vanilla. Those tropical fruit flavors continue on the medium-bodied palate along with elements of yellow apple and Bartlett pear. The finish is dry and balanced with medium plus acidity and the wine ends with that distinctive white Bordeaux feeling of appealing texture, weight and citrus fruit without any grassy undertones.

Suggested Recipe: Cod with Clams and White Wine

Mixed and White Selection

\$20.00

\$17.00

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2015 Fableist Merlot, Paso Robles, CA

Curt Schalchlin first discovered wine working part time at Trader Joe's while majoring in business at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. It was there where he discovered bottles from all over the world and his casual interest in wine tasting turned into an eventual fascination and ultimately, his vocation. One of Curt's friends, McPrice Myers, was starting his own winery so Curt took the opportunity to help out whenever he could while not working or studying. Meanwhile, Andrew Jones was playing football at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo when he started working in a vineyard nursery. After graduating with a major in Ag Business and a minor in Viticulture, Andrew started working for a grapevine nursery based in Bakersfield. His job as a vine nursery fieldman takes him all over California planning and planting vineyards in concert with grape growers and winemakers. Independently, both Curt and Andrew each started their first wine labels, 'Sans Liege' and 'Field Recordings' respectively, and in addition to their other projects, have teamed up to create a collaborative label they call 'Fableist'. As you all know, we featured a Fableist Sauvignon Blanc and many other great wines in the club from these two talented friends, and we continue to support their ever awesome creations!

Now we have another great bottle of wine with this 2015 Merlot. Thanks to Andrew's intimate and vast knowledge of Central Coast vineyards, he knew exactly where to find just the right grapes for this 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon blend. He was smart to pull from a good diversity of warmer sites like Hinterland Vineyard in Paso Robles and cooler sites like Old Potrero in Arroyo Grande Valley and especially the high altitude Santa Barbara Highlands Vineyard which ranges in elevation between 2,800-3,200 feet above sea level. Once Curt and Andrew settled on the blend, they aged the wine for 15 months in 40% new French barrique oak barrels. The guys are proud to 'bring Merlot back from the dead' with this deeply flavored and full-bodied wine. The nose is all about black plum, wild berry, dried herb, cedar and warm, just ground spices. Those aromas gush onto the palate as significantly concentrated flavors, rife with juicy, plummy, tasty fruit. The wine ends on a slightly sweet note of dark chocolate and spice yet the tannins and medium acidity prevent it from being a ripe, sweet wine. As was their intention, Andrew and Curt have indeed brought Merlot back with this easy-drinking, impossible-not-to-like wine and are reminding us all why it was such a big deal in the first place!

Suggested Recipe: 'Argentinian' Burgers with Seared Provolone and Chimichurri

Red Selection

\$21.00

\$17.85

Wine Club Member reorder price



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2017 Bonny Doon Picpoul, Beeswax Vineyard, Arroyo Seco, CA

After completing his Liberal Arts degree from University of California at Santa Cruz, Randall Graham had his first introduction to the wine world while sweeping floors at the Wine Merchant of Beverly Hills. There, he had the opportunity to taste “an ungodly number of great French wines and this singular experience turned him into a complete and insufferable wine fanatic.” He was hooked and knew he was destined to become a winemaker so he obtained another degree, this time from University of California at Davis, in Plant Sciences. With the help of his family, Randall purchased property in the Santa Cruz Mountains in a “quaint hamlet” called Bonny Doon. His mission was to produce the “Great American Pinot Noir” to prove the grape could succeed as well in California as it does in Burgundy. Unfortunately, the ever elusive Pinot had other ideas and wouldn’t cooperate with him. Undeterred, he soon discovered the wonderful world of Rhône varietals and turned his efforts towards grapes like Grenache and Mourvèdre at a time when hardly anyone even knew how to pronounce them. In 1986, Bonny Doon released its inaugural vintage of the 1984 ‘Le Cigare Volant’, in homage to the great red blends of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. A few years later, Wine Spectator featured him on their cover calling him “The Rhône Ranger” and the rest, as they say, is history.

Given Randall's love of all things Rhône, it only makes sense that he makes a ‘Picpoul’, a wonderful white grape which was one of the original 13 varietals allowed in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. It has even more fame as the featured grape in the always refreshing Picpoul de Pinet from the coast of Languedoc-Roussillon. Or, maybe Randall just likes it because it means 'lip stinger' in French! Any way you slice it, this is a super tasty, tangy, incredibly refreshing wine that will surely be a big hit with anyone who tries it. Randall is especially proud of this sixth vintage he's been sourcing from the organically farmed Beeswax Vineyard in Arroyo Seco and confidently says “it is, far and away, our best effort to date.” The nose is bright and shiny with clean, fresh aromas of lemon citrus and salty sea air along with, as Randall notes, a subtle “suggestion of stone fruits and the ubiquitous fragrance of beeswax.” The palate is light and breezy yet still has good concentration and the finish is dry, crisp and snappy, er, we mean lip-stinging!

Suggested Recipe: Scallops Adobo

White Selection

\$19.50

\$16.58

Wine Club Member reorder price



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