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## Newsletter: April 2016

# Put Some Spring in Your Step

### Newsletter Features

#### Tyrus Evan Claret Ciel du Cheval 2012

**\$17.99/\$14.40 by case   Normally \$36**

Deal Alert! Ken Wright Cellars is no longer getting fruit from Ciel du Cheval vineyard so they are sending recent vintages into the dustbin of history - with a 50% price reduction! Tyrus Evan is Ken's label for non-Pinot reds, made at his Carlton winery with the same attention to detail as the single vineyard Pinot Noir. He only trusted two of the best Washington vineyards for his red varietals: Seven Hills in Walla Walla and Ciel du Cheval in Yakima's Red Mountain AVA. Red Mountain is usually Washington's warmest growing area, and wines from here are usually dark, richly flavored and full-bodied. The unique soil also gives the wines a distinct minerality.

2012 was a great vintage in Washington and this is just singing right now. Cabernet Sauvignon-dominant followed by Merlot, Cab Franc and Petit Verdot, it opens with caressing aromatics of roses, cassis, black cherry and a camphor graphite earthiness. On the palate there is a flash of tangy red fruit that quickly turns darker,

shading through cherry to blackberry. The texture is smooth and flowing with an intensity that drives sappy echoes of blue fruit that linger on the finish.

For a fun comparison (and another great value), also try the 2013 which is Merlot-dominant; it is a clear and delicious study in distinguishing which varietals contribute what flavors to a final blend.

## **Château Margüi Provence Red 2011**

**\$23.99/\$19.20 by the case**

Provençal wines are a curious anomaly. Whereas so many wine regions are associated primarily with their red wines (followed by white and/or rosé) Provence is the opposite. For many wine drinkers Provence is synonymous with rosé, while the reds - even really good ones - seem an afterthought. The very popular Margüi (for rosé that is) is a perfect example. Their pink sells out early every summer but the red, not so much...

"Whenever I take out a bottle, all the buyers love it, they think it's great but it's just not on people's radar" says our local rep who imports it. Well, let's try to change that.

This 2011 (75% Syrah, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon) covers a lot of bases. It's rich, sappy and long yet fine-boned and structured, and the flavors and aromas are detailed yet expansive. The nose offers sun-warmed wild herb, violets and appealing toasted graham cracker. The ripe raspberry and black cherry fruit is rolling and elastic across the palate with a give-and-take tension that keeps it interesting before settling into a chewy peppery heartiness on the finish.

## **Cameron Giovanni 2015**

**\$14.99/\$11.99 by the case**

Although famous for his Pinot Noir, John Paul's whites are also delicious and full of personality. The 2014 Giovanni was a favorite here for months and after tasting this, I'd expect more of the same. This year it's a blend of 60% Pinot Blanc, the rest a mix of Chardonnay and Pinot Gris, and the quality of the fruit is ridiculous given the price- 100% old vines in Abbey Ridge vineyard - and it shows. Round and fleshy yet crackling with lively acidity, the flavors of grilled pear are spicy and zesty, detouring into a salt-water taffy playfulness before finishing with a more serious leesy grapeskin bite. This has been consistent for many years but the last few vintages have seen a noticeable jump in quality making this one of the best values in Oregon white wine.

## **Amalaya Malbec 2014**

**\$15.99/\$12.80 by the case**

Argentine Malbec can be super versatile and rightfully so. But playing off the norm, we'd like to reintroduce this blend of 85% Malbec, 10% Cab Sauv and 5% Syrah harvested from 5,500 feet above sea level in the Salta region 600 miles north of Mendoza. Yes, grapes do grow there! Embodying both the rich and lush sensibilities with cooler mineral-driven traits, there's a fine line in the Southern Hemisphere and this one straddles it perfectly. Which is probably why customers loved the Amalaya when it was last featured two years ago. Like an orchestra you'll get all the bass and back beat: pan-seared bacon fat and blueberries. Quickly lifted by a refined overlay of horns and cymbals: marionberry, pumice minerality and crushed autumn leaf. All along the conductor provides structure and poise: pure and rich, high-toned joy and a beat you just can't ignore!

## **Grosjean Gamay Valle d'Aosta**

**2013 \$22.99/\$18.40 by the case**

Now for something geared toward your delicate side. Think old world wine...actually, think Gamay! Situated on the west side of the Italian Alps and boasting the highest wine-making region in Europe, the Valle d'Aosta is certainly off the beaten path. We recently sampled a fantastic example of what can be produced there. Aromatically you're transported to the summit of the mountains... breathing in an herbal volcanic breeze laced with ripe strawberry, bing cherry and savory citrus freshness... sultry elegance. One taste and it all falls into place: a complex interplay of mushroom, sour cherry, strawberry and lingering lemon zest that fades into the sunset. Grosjean really embodies what organic hands-off winemaking is all about. Plus it's hard to stop thinking about all the charcuterie, cheese and classic ragù plates this will complement.

## **Walter Scott's 2014s Are Killer**

The 2014 Vintage spring release lineup from Ken Pahlow and Erica Landon's Walter Scott Wines is superb and the wines go from strength to strength. In short: buy them. 2014 in Oregon was a warm and ripe vintage, where the fruit could overrun vineyard character, but by picking early to retain purity and freshness, Ken's wines remain elegant and showcase *terroir*, which is his obsession.

"There's no ego on how I make wine, we just want to remain true to the vintage and the character of the vineyards." His trick: never make wine the same way

every vintage and utilize what he's learned from talented winemakers here and in Burgundy. "You have to be curious and realize you'll never know everything," says the guy heading into his 21st Willamette Valley harvest.

Case quantities are small and demand is quickly growing thanks to good press and word of mouth, so grab the wines soon. We'll stock several selections in the shop and will take orders for the rest. **And to sweeten the deal, Take 20% Off a mixed case of any Walter Scott wine.** See the list below for the other available wines. There are magnums of everything too (double the regular bottle price and add \$5).

Here are two highlights:

### **Cuvée Anne Chardonnay 2014**

**\$39.99 or \$31.99 by the case**

Wow, taste this blind and you'd swear it was 1er Cru white Burgundy. Take in the lemon cream, lime zest, spicy floral notes, touches of honey, sweet vanilla and savory green herbs. Experience the pure, laser-like focus that delivers incredible depth of flavor, laced with bright acidity and hints of minerality that keep everything balanced. The fruit is a selection from four of Walter Scott's single-vineyard sources, sees native fermentation and is aged in large 500-liter puncheons with moderate new oak. Full of personality but intriguing and complex, this is simply oh so fine.

### **Clos des Oiseaux Pinot Noir 2014**

**\$44.99 or \$35.99 by the case**

One of our favorite Eola-Amity Hills-based Pinots that Walter Scott makes, this is always exotically perfumed and on the elegant side of the style spectrum. From a small vineyard next to Cristom's Jessie, three soil types,

rocky exposure and three clones of Pinot deliver a distinctive complexity. Dark strawberry to medium cherry/raspberry fruit, ample citrus zest, Asian brown spices, white pepper, savory herbs and turned earth notes pour forth both in the nose and as you sip. Juicy tannins and crisp acidity keep things lively and perfectly in tune. Drinks well now but will age beautifully, so set some away for later.

**Other new 2014 releases available:  
Dumb Ox, Sojourner and Freedom Hill Vineyards  
Pinot Noir**

\$44.99 a bottle or \$35.99 by the case

**Freedom Hill and X Novo Vineyards Chardonnay**  
\$44.99 a bottle or \$35.99 by the case

Still here but gone soon: **Cuvée Ruth 2014 Pinot Noir**  
\$39.99 a bottle or \$31.99 by the case

## **April Tastings**

### **Multi-Vintage Bordeaux Tasting With The Wine Trust's Zachary Pearson**

Presented by VH1's Where Are They Now?, we offer you a trip back in time to a cool vintage that was saved by a glorious Indian summer. Thanks to the long mild growing season most wines aged very gracefully for years but where are they now? Come taste for yourself as we pour Oregon history from the last century including Domaine Drouhin Willamette Valley, St. Innocent Seven Springs, Evesham Wood Cuvée J, Cristom Jessie Vineyard,

Chehalem Ridgecrest Vineyard, with Cameron Abbey Ridge Vineyard as bonus. Limited wine available.

**Friday March 18, 5-7:30 pm, \$25 (+\$5 bonus)**

## **Friday Evening Tastings:**

**Flights From 5-7:30pm - just come on by!**

### **February 19 - Rioja Reserva Time Warp, 2001-2010**

2010 Muga Seleccion Especial, 2009 Olabarri, 2006 La Antigua, 2003 Lopez y Heredia Tondonia and the 96 point 2001 Gran Reserva 904 from La Rioja Alta. Nice! \$18

### **February 26 - Valpolicella's Amarone and Ripasso**

Quick, before winter is over let's warm our palates with the luscious richness of thee Italian beauties. Allegrini, Tommaso Bussola, Accordini and more. \$16

### **March 4 - No Tasting**

### **March 11 - Weinbach and other Alsatian favorites**

New 2014 arrivals from Weinbach and older vintages from Ostertag, Deiss, Kientzler and more. \$15

### **March 18 - 1999 Oregon Pinot Noir.**

Let's take a trip back in time to a great vintage. \$25. See info above for details.

### **March 25 - No Tasting**

### **April 1 - New Washington Reds from Walla Walla and Beyond**

Spring sees many new releases, so let's catch up on recent arrivals and other fun stuff. Cabernet Sauvignon and Cab-based blends. \$17

# **Saturday Afternoon Tastings:**

**FREE Tastings From 2-5pm - Drop on in!**

Come by and try new arrivals and old favorites from visiting winemakers, local distributors or our favorites off the shelves.

## **February 20 - 2014 White Burgundy**

From Chablis in the north to the Maconnais in the south, 2014 was a happy vintage. Come check out new arrivals from Clotilde Davenne, Bernard Defaix, Drouhin, and the deliciously unique flavors of Domaine Michel Viré-Clessé.

## **February 27 - A Trip Around Tuscany**

Theresa Hannam schools us in the different sub-regions of Tuscany: Chianti Classico vs. Rufina, Maremma and more. FREE (and educational!)

## **March 5 - Eclectic Wines from Europe**

PDX Wines' John Soares will pour a fun mix from Europe including Chimères Languedoc, Fino Sherry, Cerdon de Bugey sparkling rosé and more. FREE

## **March 12 - El Corazon with Spencer Sievers**

The man flies in from Walla Walla to pour new releases including First Crush Cab Franc, Mourvedre and other tricks. Always a slightly wild visit, the question is how wild? Come find out! FREE

## **March 19 - Zancanella Italian Favorites**

Longtime local importer Greg Zancanella has a great Italian book. Join us as Mike DeMarte pours recent favorites including Reverdito Barolo, Montaribaldi Barbera, and more. FREE

**March 26 - Easter-friendly wines for early (in the day) drinking**

Rosé, sparkling, Pinot Noir and more. FREE

**April Case of the Month**  
**\$112**

FYI: The case contains 1 bottle each of our 12 selections at a discounted price. You are also welcome to purchase the wines individually, as part of a custom mixed case (receive a 10% discount), or by the whole case (receive a 20% discount)

**Chateau La Roque Pic Saint Loup 2013**

Here's a great deal on a Kermit Lynch closeout from one of the Languedoc's more prestigious appellations. Multi-layered and deeply flavored, the black plum and just-ripe blackberry fruit is topped by floral lavender, garrigue-y wild herb and citrus zest highlights. The small percentage of old vine Mourvedre shows an outsized influence lending a deep briary guttural intensity. Despite its power, it remains balanced as the mouthcoating tannins fade gently across the long finish. \$11.99

**Viña Ijalba Rioja 2014**

Although the label is eerily reminiscent of wallpaper in a David Lynch film, this 100% Tempranillo leans old world in style and offers no further flashy tricks. Medium to full-bodied, the fruit runs reddish cherry to blue, with botanical sage/mint aromatics and a dusty leathery finish. \$9.99

## **Réserve de la Saurine Blanc 2014**

100% Grenache blanc from the southern French region famous for its towering Roman aqueduct (the Pont du Gard), this is deceptively delicious and versatile, its simple charms sneaking up on the palate. Plush, round and creamy yet gently so, the lemon crème and brown spice aromatics lead to melon and light pear on the palate. One sip, it's ample and fullish-flavored, another seems airy and bright with a leemony persistence. \$8.50

## **Altes Herencia Garnatxa 2014**

Grenache from Spain (aka Garnacha or Garnatxa) is a funny thing; it is the second most planted varietal after Tempranillo but unlike the many styles we see of Tempranillo, mostly what we get is either fruity and simple (and cheap) or serious, dry and tannic with a price to match. True, lots of Grenache shows up in tasty blends, but it would be nice to see more varied single varietal bottlings. Happily, this one deftly straddles the divide, offering dark smooth black cherry fruit in a dusty grippy package. Molasses on the finish offers a hint of candied fruitiness but in a brooding manner. \$11.50

## **Barbi Streppaticcio 2014**

Mostly Sangiovese with 25% Montepulciano, this Umbrian red splits the country neatly in half regarding flavors and texture: it has high tone floral red notes typical of northern reds but plenty of soft juicy fruit that is more common in the south. Medium-bodied with cranberry, licorice and light tobacco aromatics and a clean fresh fruit finish. A nice shoulder-season red to perk up the palate. \$9.99

## **Charles and Charles Cab-Syrah 2014**

The new vintage of this usually strapping northwest standby is quite tasty and nuanced, delivering clean juicy

tangy flavors unencumbered by heavy-handed oak or sticky sweet fruitiness. That said, there's plenty of sappy fruit riding along the darker spectrum from black raspberry to currant and plum, while lightly gripping tannins pull it together on the finish. \$11.50

### **Beyond Sauvignon Blanc 2015**

The full name of this South African winery is Buitenverwachting; maybe Beyond is a better name for the international market...and in a way, this does go beyond the expected. Combining the racy fruitiness of New Zealand with the restrained elegance of France's Loire Valley this succeeds in being a distinctive style. Kiwi, light mango with lemongrass and lemon verbena on the finish. \$10.99

### **Don Rodolfo Tannat 2015**

Relatively obscure, Tannat is best known for making long-lived monster reds in southwestern France although Uruguay is building a reputation. This bottling from Argentina is typical enough to recognize it as Tannat but juicier and more accessible than most French versions. The nose suggests old world with dark woodsy, almost mineral notes surrounding sweet red plum, but the palate offers a rich blast of thickly-textured new world fruit - dark blackberry and vivid blues - before landing in a mossy briar patch on the finish. \$9.99

### **Christopher Michael Pinot Gris 2014**

Fresh and zesty, this bargain local Gris is fleshy yet crisp with just enough soft white fruit to sink your teeth into, backed by a tight grapeskin snappiness that brings the flavors into focus. \$9.99

### **Tintero Rosso 2014**

The new vintage of this always-popular Piedmont blend is

one of the best yet. Full of darker spicy red plum and cherry fruit, it's bolder, brighter and richer than usual and delivers plenty of pizzazz straight out of the gate. Hints of lightly turned earth, savory black tea and roasted sage add complexity, while vibrant acidity and gobs of granite minerality add liveliness all the way through a long and complex finish. 40% Barbera, 40% Dolcetto, % Nebbiolo, % Cabernet Franc - and 100% delicious. \$9.99

### **Corte Gardoni Custoza 2014**

Like a leisurely springtime stroll, this northern Italian white unfurls its charms slowly, delivering gentle flavors that collectively amplify one another. Creamy yet elegant, the fruit is lemony but soft-edged, hinting at tropical with white peach, Meyer lemon and ripe honeydew. Almond blossom aromas lend an airy touch while what seems like pulverized SweeTarts keep the taste receptors firing before fading into a dry stony finish. \$11.99

### **Nicola's Red Mark 2011**

Italy meets Washington in this medium-bodied fresh tasting red from the Columbia Valley. A blend of Merlot, Sangiovese, Barbera, Nebbiolo and more, this opens with cinnamon oaky spice notes that nicely complement the red licorice-tinged ripe cherry fruit. A short foray into tangy brambly-ness on the finish adds a hint of old world rusticity but overall this remains clean, vibrant and smooth. \$9.99