

Napoleon Mixed Case



Katie Cooper
WINE CLUB MANAGER

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Named after our largest cellar, the Napoleon Mixed Case features wines from classic areas such as Bordeaux and Burgundy in addition to fine wines from around the world. Highlights from March's selection include: an intensely smoky and orange peel scented Pinot Gris from Alsace; an exemplary Volnay that is opening up brilliantly now; and a silky, spice laden single vineyard Rioja from Contino to complement rack of lamb or roast pork perhaps.

2008 PINOT GRIS, ROTLEIBEL DE RORSCHWIHR, ROLLY GASSMANN



The family domaine of Rolly-Gassmann dates back to 1661. The 51 hectare estate is owned and run by Marie-Thérèse, Louis and their son Pierre Gassmann. They work to the principles of biodynamic viticulture yet curiously also apply weed killers. The 250 hectare commune of Rorschwihr, first noted for its wine in 742AD, lies on one of Alsace's many faultlines, giving rise to a complex tapestry of 21 different soil types.

Such was the almost tropical vintage (heat and humidity) that Pierre Gassmann's 2008 Pinot Gris was blessed with some noble rot, lending added intensity to the flavours of the wine. It's got 6.6 grams of total acidity, leaving the wine fresh and almost tasting dry. The nose is roasted and smoky, the palate bursting with sumptuous ripe fruit. Boudin blanc, frogs' thighs, Munster (cooked)

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

£23.50 per bottle

Chilled to 12°C. Drink now-2022

Alsace, France

Pinot Gris

99117B

Off-dry, medium to full-bodied white wine

Brown clay/marl/silt and loess

David Berry Green

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

OTHER AROMATIC VARIETIES SUCH AS MUSCAT OR RIESLING

2011 CHURTON SAUVIGNON BLANC



Sam and Mandy Weaver established their Churton vineyard on the ridge between the southern Marlborough valleys of the Omaka and Waihopai rivers, a site which brings greater depth of fruit rather than the immediate aromatic explosion which comes from the riverbed soils. Sam farms his vines biodynamically and brings a European philosophy to his winemaking.

This is great Sauvignon: pale yellow in colour, with Churton's usual fuller bodied style. It is full of fruit with just enough in the way of tropical notes, yet the perfect degree of acidity behind makes this a lovely fresh wine that needs food.

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

Tasting notes

Seafood linguine or baked goats' cheese

£15.95 per bottle

Serve at 11°C. Drink now-2016

Marlborough, New Zealand

Sauvignon Blanc

90285B

Dry, light to medium-bodied white wine

A thick layer of wind blown loess with up to 17% clay, layered over alluvial gravel

Jasper Morris MW

If you like this, you might like:

POUILLY-FUMÉ OR SOUTH AFRICAN SAUVIGNON BLANC

2010 LE SOULA BLANC, VIN DE PAYS DES CÔTES CATALANES



Deep in the rugged Côtes Catalanes of Roussillon, the village of St Martin de Fenouillet is home to this outstanding winery, created a decade ago by local legend Gerald Gauby and farmed on organic principles. A healthy cocktail of altitude and old vines underwrite quality here.

The blend is complex and the yields are exceptionally low (15 hl/hectare). Traditional vinification is completed by 18 month ageing on fine lees in 500 litre barrels, half of which are new.

Spanish gold in colour, or should that be Catalan gold. The wine has distinctive aromatics of honey, beeswax, quince, lanolin and even fine white Burgundy (that must be the 0.5 % of Chardonnay in the blend!).

The palate is fresh with nutty notes added to the orchard fruit and the flinty foundations; the famously fresh *agrumé* finish ties it up seamlessly.

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

Tasting notes

Unusually for a white this may well benefit from decanting. It should in any event come out of the fridge an hour before serving. Drink now-2016

Roussillon, France

Sauvignon 38%, Macabeu 35% and Vermentino (aka Rolle) 19% with small quantities of Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris Marsanne, Roussanne, Malvoisie du Roussillon and Chardonnay

96380B

Dry, medium to full-bodied rich white wine

Poor, decomposed granite

Simon Field MW

If you like this, you might like:

TRY VERDEJO OR CHENIN BLANC

2010 VOLNAY, RÉSERVE SPÉCIALE, MAISON ROCHE DE BELLENE



Nicolas Potel's merchant business, Maison Roche de Bellene, has made a speciality out of Volnay. The Réserve Spéciale is so called because a good proportion of premier cru fruit is included in the blend. The village of Volnay is perched on the limestone hill in the middle of Burgundy's Côte de Beaune.

Brilliant, vibrant mid-purple colour. The nose is a touch subdued at first before dense dark fruit begins to show. Certainly the palate demonstrates a palette of vivid red fruit, a mixture of currants and cherries, all with the elegance of classic Volnay.

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

Tasting notes

Try with poached salmon or smoked duck starters

£29.00 per bottle

Decant an hour in advance and serve at 13°C.

Drink now-2018

Burgundy, France

Pinot Noir

90367B

Dry, medium-bodied red wine

Clay limestone

Jasper Morris MW

If you like this, you might like: POMMARD OR HAUTES CÔTES DE BEAUNE FOR A MORE AFFORDABLE CHOICE

2008 NEGRU DE PURCARI, PURCARI ESTATE



Bessarabia, as Moldova was known in the 19th century, quickly acquired a reputation for its wine, particularly from the south eastern region where Purcari was founded in 1827. The estate came under new ownership in 2003, and investment both in the vineyards and the winery has re-established the estate's reputation for making fine wines from both native and international varieties.

The wine is ruby in colour with hints of garnet at the rim. It has an expressive nose of red and black fruits overlaid with sweet oak tones. The palate is full, complex and rich, with a noticeable tannic structure and a balancing freshness. The oak flavours are well integrated in the palate.

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

Tasting notes

An excellent match to all red meat dishes

£22.50 per bottle

Decant at least an hour before serving at room temperature. Drink now-2017

Dniester, Moldova

Cabernet Sauvignon 70%, Saperavi 20%, Rara Neagră 10%

99251B

Dry, full-bodied, oak-aged red wine

The Purcari area benefits from the moderating effects of the nearby Black Sea on its warm climate

Martin Hudson MW

If you like this, you might like:

CABERNET BLENDS FROM SOUTHERN FRANCE

2007 CONTINO, RIOJA RESERVA



C.V.N.E, otherwise known as la Compañía Vinícola del Norte de España, is one of the greatest names in Rioja, still owned and run by the Real de Asua family whose forebears established it back in 1879. Contino, unlike larger siblings Imperial and Real, is a single vineyard, located in the Alavesa commune of Rioja and looked after with near paternal diligence by acclaimed winemaker Jesus Madrazo.

An upbringing in both French and American oak has engendered complexity in addition to a rich and indulgent mid-palate. A typical nose of cassis, balsam and sweet raspberry cedes to a fulsome palate which marries ripe fruit, silky tannins and a persuasive spicy finish.

Food matches

Price

How to serve

Region

Grape variety

Product code

Style

Terroir

Buyer

Tasting notes

Roast lamb or pork

£21.95 per bottle

Will benefit from aeration and decanting an hour before serving. Drink now-2018

Rioja, Spain

Tempranillo 85%, Graciano 10%, Mazuelo 3%, Garnacha Tinta 2%

93757B

Dry medium-full bodied red wine

Mainly clay and sand, with a little more limestone than is usual in Rioja

Simon Field MW

If you like this, you might like:

MURRIETA RIOJAS OR PRIORAT REDS