

Pickering Mixed Case

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WINE CLUB MANAGER

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This month's case takes us on an international tour with classic and more unusual wines equally well represented. For traditionalists, there is a fresh, citrus led St Romain from Burgundy and a decently priced Cru Bourgeois that may challenge your assumptions about 'value' in Bordeaux. Further afield, Purcari's Freedom Blend from Moldova celebrates the 20th anniversary of independence, the three grape varieties used representing three neighbouring countries; and then we end up with an antipodean Pinot Noir that will grace your Easter table elegantly with its concentration of silky red fruits.

2011 ST ROMAIN, VIEILLES VIGNES, DOMAINE DE BELLENE



Famed Burgundian winemaker Nicolas Potel created his Domaine de Bellene in 2007. The vineyards have been converted to organic farming, with some biodynamic elements and the winery is housed in marvellous old cellars, renovated to an ecologically admirable standard. His St Romain vineyards come from six plots of vines, averaging 50 years old. The wine is raised in large barrels.

The 2011 St Romain displays a lovely, fresh nose and a touch of lime blossom. Lemon notes and richer fruit follow on the palate which has good weight and substance. A little waxiness is beginning to develop while the wine's natural acidity keeps it fresh. Now-2017.

Food matches	Roast chicken or scallops
Price	£22.00 per bottle
How to serve	Chilled to 12°C
Region	Burgundy, France
Grape variety	Chardonnay
Product code	96225B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied white wine
Terroir	Clay-limestone
Buyer	Jasper Morris MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
ST AUBIN OR ST VÉРАН

2013 ETNA BIANCO, GRACI



Alberto Aiello Graci has been making wine on Sicily's Mount Etna since 2004 when he picked up the baton with five hectares of family land, two hectares of which is vineyards. The Carricante grape is in its element here, coping well with the heat and cooler winters on Etna. It ripens late and produces crisp, aromatic wines.

Pale yellow in colour, the nose reminds one of Sicilian fruit groves, of their zesty lemons, and in particular of the unique *cedro* fruit – an oversized savoury lemon that's prized when candied. Dry and minerally yet with a fleshy citrus character, it is grown up and refined whilst being very true and full of character. Now-2021.

Food matches	Apéritif
Price	£18.50 per bottle
How to serve	Chilled to 11°C
Region	Sicily, Italy
Grape variety	Carricante 70%, Catarratto 30%
Product code	Z2798B
Style	Dry, light to medium-bodied white wine
Terroir	Volcanic lava and ash
Buyer	David Berry Green

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
GAVI DI GAVI

2013 LOURO DO BOLO, BODEGAS RAFAEL PALACIOS



Rafael is the brother of Alvaro Palacios, who, over two decades ago, helped to put Priorat on the map. This impressive feat has now been copied by the younger sibling, who is making fascinating and highly praised wines in Galicia, in the hitherto little known DO of Valdeorras, to be precise.

Fermented and matured in 660 litre *foudre*, with eight percent of the local grape Treixadura added to the Godello, this is a plump, charismatic wine. The nose betrays lees stirring with notes of oatmeal and fennel evidenced; the palate is textured yet taut, rich yet poised. Saline minerality from the granitic soil gives the wine an impressive backbone. Now-2025.

Food matches	Ceviche, hake, langoustine
Price	£16.95 per bottle
How to serve	Remove from fridge half an hour before serving
Region	DO Bolo, Valdeorras, Spain
Grape variety	Godello 92%, Treixadura 8%
Product code	Z2788B
Style	Dry, full-bodied aromatic white wine
Terroir	Granite
Buyer	Simon Field MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
ALBARIÑO OR VERDEJO

2010 CH. DE PANIGON, CRU BOURGEOIS



I have been desperate to find the right spot in Wine Club for this award-winning Claret. From a beautiful, family owned estate in the northern Médoc, heavily influenced by its Atlantic climate, this is made with real love and care. The name Panigon comes from a Rabelaisian tale about an “intrepid drinker in search of the Divine bottle”. I’d say he found it.

Intense garnet in colour, with good legs. Fruit laden and aromatic on the nose, with notes of blackcurrant and mint. The palate is dense and rich, but with a lightness of touch in terms of tannic structure. There is power here, but power wrapped in a velvet glove. Now-2018.

Food matches	Rib eye steak with ceps, in heaps of garlic
Price	£14.95 per bottle
How to serve	Open, pour, enjoy. Large glasses preferably
Region	Médoc, Bordeaux, France
Grape variety	Cabernet Sauvignon 45%, Merlot 45%, Petit Verdot 10%
Product code	Z3199B
Style	Dry, full-bodied red wine
Terroir	Sand and gravel, over clay and limestone
Buyer	Philip Moulin

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
ARGENTINIAN CABERNET

2011 PURCARI FREEDOM BLEND



This wine was created to celebrate the 20th anniversary of three neighbouring countries’ declaration of independence by incorporating the most significant red grape from each country. The Purcari Estate was founded in the early 19th century and had established a reputation for making Moldova’s greatest wines by the early 20th century. Now in international ownership, it is reclaiming that position.

This wine has a bright, medium crimson colour and a nose of red fruits intermingled with savoury herbs and spices. The mid-weight palate has an unmistakably Old World restraint, savoury character and vibrant acidity, making this a very food friendly wine. Now-2018.

Food matches	Lighter meat based dishes, pasta, non-oily fish and hard cows’ milk cheeses
Price	£13.95 per bottle
How to serve	Serve at 16-18°C after decanting an hour in advance
Region	South Eastern Moldova
Grape variety	Equal amounts of Bastardo, Saperavi and Rara Neagra
Product code	Z4789B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Warm climate moderated by the nearby Black Sea
Buyer	Martin Hudson MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
AGLIANICO

2014 TE MATA GAMAY NOIR



Te Mata Estate is New Zealand’s oldest winery; vines were first planted there in 1892. It is family owned, specialising in grape-growing and winemaking from its ten Hawke’s Bay vineyards, and is acknowledged as one of only five icon wineries in the whole of New Zealand.

Gamay is the grape of Beaujolais and it is incredibly rare to find it anywhere else in the world, let alone in New Zealand. Fresh and crisp, brimming with crunchy raspberry and blackberry fruit, this is a delicious Beaujolais-style wine but with extra power and intensity, and a cleansing finish. Now-2017.

Food matches	Roast chicken, charcuterie, Cantonese duck
Price	£16.95 per bottle
How to serve	Serve cool from the cellar (or even after 30 minutes chilling)
Region	Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand
Grape variety	Gamay Noir
Product code	Z4360B
Style	Fresh, light-bodied red wine
Terroir	North-facing with free-draining soil of sandy loam and ‘red metal’ (gravel composed of greywacke)
Buyer	Catriona Felstead MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
MORGON OR MOULIN-À-VENT (FULLER BEAUJOLAIS)