



The Cellar d'Or

Wine, Cider & Spirits

Wine Club • January & February 2024



JL Chave Selections (Rhône Valley, France)

Spanning 16 generations, Domaine Chave is an icon of the Rhône Valley in France. Jean-Louis Chave (current generation) began his JL Selections project back in 1995. The young Chave diversified his family's holdings by purchasing plots in Saint Joseph and Crozes Hermitage before buying the vineyards comprising the Cotes-du-Rhône we packed in the club. The Domaine wines garner more than \$300/bottle and I imagine this is part of the reasoning of Chave's JL Selections line of wine -- to ensure everyone gets to enjoy the wines of Chave! In the hands of the astute Jean-Louis, this 50/50 Syrah-Grenache blend wears the thumping, dark fruit we expect from these Rhône Valley varietals with poise. Brambly fruit, deep macerated plums, and wafts of dank cellar resonate with a persistent tension on the palate that will cut through hearty winter dishes!



Marco Gatti (Le Marche, Italy)

Italy produces an expansive diversity of wine from predominantly indigenous varieties. Rather than plant internationally recognized grape varieties, Italians continue to cultivate historically grown varieties that best suit their local climate and cuisine. If Italian wine feels rather foreign, this is why. Verdicchio belongs to the handful of need-to-know Italian white varieties, not because it shows a particular quality in an outsize proportion, but because it encapsulates the finesse, elegance and candid nature of Italian white wine so well. My favorite Verdicchio is sourced from the hills of Matelica (DOC) in Le Marche where Verdicchio attains a bit more crunchy acid structure. Marco Gatti's 2022 Verdicchio is absolutely stunning with notes of shaved apple, white flowers, lemon pith, flecks of herbs and incredible texture. Pair with oily or creamy pasta!

Our goal with the wine club is to provide you with a wide diversity of wine to showcase the many styles of the world. Included are 3 wines from the Rhône Valley, France - a spotlight on the region and its proclivity to produce wines with palpable fruit broad likeability. Plus, a 'perfect' Italian white I had to share!



Domaine Feraud (Southern Rhône, France)

When you need a wine to hit with an abundance of fruit, place your faith in Grenache! It's bursting red fruit reminds of cherries, raspberries, strawberries and plums. In more serious styles its texture reminds of velvet and chocolate, and in more restrained, lifted styles we find kirsch-ey cherry and wild strawberry. It's the grape I lean on to bridge folks away from ripe, extracted wines of California and it's what I recommend Eurocentric wine folks when they need wine with upfront red fruit without the rugged earth or structure of grapes like Syrah, Bordeaux varieties like Merlot, or Spain's Tempranillo. Part of understanding wine is appreciating when and where to apply specific varieties. Feraud's Grenache shows off classic ripe strawberry-red fruit and just a little bit of grip! It gives you that yummy lushness without going overboard!



Domaine Florane (Southern Rhône Valley, France)

For those in the know, Rhône white wines provide incredible value. The Rhône Valley in France is warm with a robust array of grapes and regions contributing to a wide range of styles. Grapes like *Marsanne* and *Roussanne* create broad-palate, textural wines that range in expression from mineral & chiseled in the north to oily, supple, and rich in the south. *Viognier* stands out for its pillowey-floral, fruit-basket expressiveness. And, grapes like *Grenache Blanc*, *Picpoul*, and *Clairette* deliver wines with candid, apple, thirst-quenching freshness. The Southern Rhône Valley white we've packed is a blend of organic (and Demeter-certified biodynamic) Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Viognier, Bourboulenc, Clairette, and Picpoul and balances the profiles of all of these grapes... an immediate hit of peachy orchard fruit and papaya is carried with poise and lift.