



Arlequin Wine Merchant
Three Bottle Monthly Club: May 2018
\$69.00 (tax & shipping not included)

LANG & REED CABERNET FRANC NORTH COAST, CALIFORNIA 2014

List Price \$28/ Arlequin Regular Price \$26/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$24

Lang & Reed is arguably California's foremost name in Cabernet Franc. Founders John and Tracey Skupny have been obsessed with the grape for decades. Originally in the restaurant trade in Kansas City, John and Tracey moved to Napa Valley in 1984, where John held executive positions at Caymus and Clos du Val. The Skupnys wondered why so much Napa Cabernet Franc got blended away into Bordeaux-style blends, when the region was clearly capable of yielding standalone versions of character and distinctiveness. Inspired by the great Cabernet Francs of the Loire Valley, as well as by the sun-drenched terroir of Napa, the Skupnys set out to produce a Cabernet Franc that was 'true to type', redolent in aroma, and pure in flavor. In 1993, a prototype was crafted, Lang & Reed Wine Company was born, and the rest is history. After a few vintages that got a bit ripe for our taste, the 2014 North Coast cuvée represents a return to form for this bottling. Violet-tinged aromas lead to a palate spangled with the herbaceous notes that are essential to varietally correct expression of Cabernet Franc. The soft, generous palate delivers smooth tannins and ample kirsch and raspberry flavors. We suggest serving it with a meal from the grill of garlic-and-herb-marinated lamb skewers, bell peppers, zucchini and halloumi.

JEAN- FRANCOIS QUENARD CHIGNIN-BERGERON "LES DAMOISELLES" SAVOIE, FRANCE 2016

List Price \$26/ Arlequin Regular Price \$24/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$22

The white wines of France's remote Savoie region, tucked in the county's remote Alpine foothills, are known for their light body, delicate flavors and Alpine freshness. Chignin, a mountain village where the Quénard family has made its home since the 1644, is one of 16 *crus* in the Savoie, and the only one in which the Roussanne variety is allowed. Unlike wines made from Jacquère and Chasselas—two widely planted Savoie varieties—Roussanne yields textured, lush whites of substance. Chignin's steep, south-facing slopes soak up sunshine and make it uniquely suited to this variety, which is known locally as Bergeron. This Chignin-Bergeron example comes from the estate of Jean-François Quénard. Unusually for Savoie, Jean-François has worked well-known wineries both in the United States and France, including a formative period apprenticing under Jules Chauvet, the "godfather" of Beaujolais' natural wine movement. He has applied his ambition, talent and respect for nature to the 37 acres of vines he tends in one of the most stunning corners of Chignin, in the shadow of crumbling, ivy-covered stone towers that date to early medieval times. Named after Jean-François' four daughters, "Les Damoiselles" comes from hand-harvested grapes that he vinifies in stainless steel. It offers silky, medium-bodied apricot and green peach flavors on a fresh, bright palate. It's terrific with mild seafood dishes, such as baked halibut or salmon with a fruity salsa.

GRIFALCO AGLIANICO DE VULTURE DOC BASILICATA, ITALY 2014

List Price \$26/ Arlequin Regular Price \$24/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$22

Aglianico is the signature grape of Basilicata, the mountainous region in the instep of the Italian 'boot'. This minerally, tannic red comes from a vineyard in Aglianico del Vulture, Basilicata's premier winegrowing zone that's located around Mount Vulture, a (fortunately) extinct volcano. Eons of violent eruptions coated the surrounding countryside in layers of ash and lava; today this porous, minerally rock creates the perfect soil for grape-growing. Grifalco is a winery that represent a labor of love by spouses Cecelia and Fabrizio Piccin. Some 20 years ago, the couple sold their vineyards in Montepulciano and, thrilled by Basilicata's potential, they purchased an estate lying at an altitude of 1,500 feet. The name Grifalco is a tribute to the gryphon, symbol of Montepulciano, and the 'falco' or hawk, symbol of Monte Vulture. Farming organically, they craft Aglianicos of unusual refinement. Their wines tame the grape's fierce tannins without sacrificing an iota of minerality or tension. He attributes this to the quality of the fruit, rather than any magic in the cellar. This introductory cuvée ages chiefly in stainless steel, with 20 percent in oak. The cellar itself is a recently constructed marvel of 'green' design and architecture. Serve it with well-marbled meat (steak, pork belly, lamb shank) or dishes enriched with lots of cheese. This makes a great Saturday night pour with your best lasagna or rich pasta.