



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

TIRE BOUCHON BOURGONE BLANC BURGUNDY, FRANCE 2016

List Price \$29/ Arlequin Regular Price \$27/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$24

There's a lot of indifferently made, generic Bourgogne Blanc out there, so our expectations for this new cuvée from a tiny negociant label were low. After a skeptical sniff, our eyes widened: This white's aromas are pure class, with fresh, minerally, very pure notes of ripe pears and white almonds, and that unsalted butter note that takes us straight to the Côte d'Or. On the palate it's even better, with generous orchard fruit flavors beautifully balanced by a chalky minerality and freshness. Tasted blind, we would have guessed a village-level bottling from the Côte de Beaune--which, it turns out, is where much of the fruit for this wine comes from. It's made by Adrien Rousen, a young, preternaturally talented vigneron who's based not in Burgundy but Vacqueyras, in the Rhône Valley. How he got his lucky, well-connected hands on the grapes for this wine is a secret--as is the super-famous, superstar Meursault estate from which the fruit comes. Our reaction was to ask no questions, but to just snap up as many cases of this ridiculous value as we could. If you would like to reorder additional bottles, we suggest you do so quickly, as we expect to sell out of our limited stock at a brisk clip. Pair with simple chicken dishes, poached salmon with fresh corn, or cheesy polenta cakes.

PIQUENTUM REFOSK ISTRIA, CROATIA 2015

List Price \$30/ Arlequin Regular Price \$27/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$24

News of Croatia's wine renaissance is spreading to the U.S., thanks in part to the exploding tourist scene in this Adriatic country. With a long history of winemaking, whose origins pre-date the Roman empire, and more than 300 native grape varieties, the county draws on an impressive vinous pedigree. More recently, its wine industry is emerging from a century of challenges: Under communist rule by Yugoslavia after World War II, and then the brutal Serbian war of 1991-1995, vineyards were taken over or abandoned, and small-scale commercial winemaking all but disappeared. Today, the Republic of Croatia has become a treasure trove of distinctive wines made with modern finesse by small family estates. This red from Piquentum is a case in point. Winemaker Dimitri Brečević--the son of a French mother and Croatian father--studied oenology in France and then worked harvests in Australia, New Zealand, Bordeaux, and Burgundy. In 2004, he settled in the beautiful hilltop village of Buzet, on Croatia's Istrian peninsula, and founded Piquentum. Working out of a winery housed inside a huge, Mussolini-era water tank, whose concrete walls provide ideal insulation, Brečević focuses on native grapes like Malvazija Istarska, Teran and Refošk. Often confused with Teran, Refošk produces light-bodied, low alcohol wines whose crispness make them fantastic warm-weather reds. Although its aromas are sweet and intense, the wine is remarkably buoyant on the palate, with juicy red cherry flavors that beg for a platter of salumi or grilled sausages. Herb-rubbed lamb chops and cheesy eggplant dishes also work well.

LIMERICK LANE ZINFANDEL RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 2015

List Price \$45/ Arlequin Regular Price \$40/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$32

It's pretty rare for us to fall head over heels for a Zinfandel here at Arlequin--too many examples of this hedonistically-inclined grape are too sweet and soft for our taste. Not coincidentally, most of them come from warm regions where Zinfandel ripens fast. This example, in contrast, comes from Sonoma's Russian River Valley-- a prestigious zone whose marquee Pinot Noir and Chardonnay wines command top dollar. The coastal climate is one reason that Limerick Lane's Zinfandel retains a rare elegance and balance. Another is ancient vines: the historic Limerick Lane estate was originally planted in 1910 by Italian immigrants, the Del Fava family. In addition to Zinfandel, this wine contains small amounts of other varieties traditionally interplanted with Zinfandel, including Peloursin, Negrette and Petite Sirah. These grapes bolster the wine with additional structure and acidity. The result is a seamless red that offers Zinfandel's trademark ripeness, color and deep, brambly blackberry and raspberry flavors, along with hints of cracked pepper and cocoa. It makes a terrific pairing for hoisin ribs, pulled pork and chicken wings.