



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

**JEAN-PHILLIPE FICHET ALIGOTÉ BURGUNDY, FRANCE 2016**

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

Jean-Philippe Fichet is renowned for his masterful Meursaults-- his wines, taken together, offer a pointillist illumination of the many micro-terroirs of this famous Burgundy village, as reflected through the Chardonnay grape. This wine flies under the radar in Fichet's Meursault-centric lineup, because it's made from Aligoté – the almost-forgotten third grape of Burgundy (after Pinot Noir and Chardonnay). As New York Times critic Eric Asimov put it, many of Burgundy's best producers believe that Aligoté "is every bit as capable as chardonnay of showing the intricacies of Burgundian terroir." Higher in acidity and less fruit-driven, Aligoté wines are marked by their fresh acidity, and mouthwatering citrus, mineral and herb notes. And it's exactly these qualities that make Aligoté a terrific go-to wine for those of us who can't afford to drink Meursault every night of the week. Fichet's 2016 Aligoté is lip-smackingly delicious, with crisp green apple, tarragon and tangerine notes, backed by firm acidity and a chalky, almost saline edge. Chill it well and pair with poultry, shellfish and other seafood dressed in a zesty wine, herb citrus sauce (for a complementary pairing) or a light cream sauce, for contrasting match.

**LE VIGNE DE ELI ETNA ROSSO DOC SICILY, ITALY 2015**

*List Price \$28/ Arlequin Regular Price \$25/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$23*

Marco de Grazia, an Italian American living in Florence, exports Italian wine for a living. But he and his wife became so enamored of wines from the lava-covered slopes of Sicily's Mount Etna that they started a winery there, naming it after the winery's black earth (*terre nere*). Their estate, Tenuta delle Terre Nere, has since gained a reputation for producing some of Etna's best wines. In 2006, the de Grazias were offered an opportunity to buy two exceptional vineyards on Etna: Feudo di Mezzo and Moganazzi-Voltasciara. As Marco recounts, "I bought them, and since the parcels were so small and fine, I was somehow reminded of (my daughter) Elena. Thus, Le Vigne di Eli was born." ("Eli" is Elena's nickname.) The labels for the wines, naturally, feature images of Eli's drawings. And, we were delighted that part of the profits from these wines go to a children's hospital in Florence, though we would have selected this wine regardless. Like all Etna Rosso, this wine is made chiefly from the Nerello Mascalese grape, fleshed out with Nerello Cappuccio. This vintage shows why Etna's reds are often compared to Nebbiolo—there's a similar transparency and weightlessness to the wine's lithe, high-toned red fruit flavors, as well as taut acidity and refined tannins. It smells and tastes like fresh red cherries, star anise and oregano, and drinks beautifully with all tomato-based pastas. For meatier fare, try citrus-marinated pork or poultry. Our favorite pairing with entry-level Etna Rosso, though, is a pasta or pizza with charred broccoli rabe, black olives and fresh mozzarella.

**CHATEAU LA ROQUE "CUVEE LES VIELLIES VIGNES DE MOURVEDRE" PIC SAINT LOUP LANGUEDOC, FRANCE 2016**

*List Price \$26/ Arlequin Regular Price \$23/ Wine Club Exclusive Reorder \$20*

Our importer, Kermit Lynch, has this to say about Château La Roque: "The picturesque landscape surrounding the historic Château La Roque appears largely unchanged from how it must have been two thousand years ago. Ownership has changed hands many times since the Romans were first here, yet the soul of this special place remains intact. Romans were said to have planted the first vines, and Benedictine Monks created the sturdy vaulted-ceiling cellars that still house the bottles today. Winegrowing resumed in the thirteenth century when the de la Roque brothers planted new vines. By the 15th century, another branch of the de la Roque family added glass blowing to the farm's production. Today, Château La Roque is in the capable hands of Cyriaque Rozier, who converted the domaine to organic (certified in 2004) and now biodynamic (certified in 2011) viticulture, as planned by his mentor, previous owner, and Languedoc legend, Jack Boutin." This cuvée red comes from the oldest vines on the estate, and shows all the sultry charms of Mourvèdre, with deep, plummy, spicy purple fruit wrapped in velvety tannins and warm spice notes. This is a wine to uncork on a dark, chilly night, maybe over a rich braise of beef or rabbit, or some rosemary- and garlic-rubbed lamb chops and a side of duck fat potatoes. You get the idea: this burly red calls for hearty food with lots of fat and umami. For vegetarian pairings, try a butternut squash and mushroom lasagna, or porcini risotto cakes with lots of Parmigiano-Reggiano.