

Napoleon Mixed Case

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WINE CLUB MANAGER

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This month's Napoleon Mixed Case, the last of the year, delivers some real treats for festive enjoyment. Chablis and shellfish are a classic match so if you're indulging in scallops at Christmas, then the fresh and delicate Vieilles Vignes Chablis from Bessin would make a great match. The full-bodied Negroamaro and rich Argentinian Malbec are perfect for warming up cold, wintry evenings and will work well with hearty stews and casseroles for when the turkey has run its course!

2011 TOOLANGI CHARDONNAY



Gary and Julie Hounsell bought Toolangi Estate as a weekend retreat in 1995 and since then Gary has gradually planted most of the land to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, with some Syrah, Pinot Gris and Viognier. The grapes are vinified by a number of 'guest' winemakers, giving a range of styles.

The beautifully clear lemon green colour, and fresh apple and quince nose with hints of sweet baking spice all signpost the way to the refreshing palate whose weight, oak and tropical fruit ripeness is counterbalanced by a Granny Smith apple liveliness. Now-2015.

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| Food matches | Scallops, white rind cheeses, light meats |
| Price | £21.50 per bottle |
| How to serve | Chilled to 12°C |
| Region | Yarra Valley, Victoria, Australia |
| Grape variety | Chardonnay |
| Product code | Z1967B |
| Style | Dry, medium-bodied white wine |
| Terroir | Varied topography and geology ranging from sand to iron rich volcanic soils |
| Buyer | Catriona Felstead MW |

Tasting notes

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If you like this, you might like: NEW ZEALAND OR CALIFORNIAN CHARDONNAY

2012 CHABLIS, VIEILLES VIGNES, JEAN-CLAUDE BESSIN



Jean-Claude Bessin has been making wine in La Chapelle Vaupelteigne, north of Chablis itself, since 1992. The grapes are hand harvested and fermented with natural yeasts, both techniques relatively rare in Chablis today. The tiny production of 2012 has delivered an exceptionally concentrated wine.

Fresh bright and clear in colour, with a pale primrose touch, this Chablis shows perfectly the piercing marine notes of the appellation. Exceptionally concentrated on the palate, yet with marvellous detail, some yellow fruits and impressive backbone. Still youthful, it will develop well in the glass. Now-2016.

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| Food matches | As an aperitif or with shellfish |
| Price | £18.95 per bottle |
| How to serve | Chilled to 11°C |
| Region | Burgundy, France |
| Grape variety | Chardonnay |
| Product code | 99308B |
| Style | Dry, light-bodied white wine |
| Terroir | Kimmeridgian clay on limestone |
| Buyer | Jasper Morris MW |

Tasting notes

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If you like this, you might like: BOURGOGNE BLANC OR UNOAKED NEW WORLD CHARDONNAY

2013 DOMAINE DE L'HORTUS, GRANDE CUVÉE BLANC



The dramatic cliff of the famous eponymous 'Pic', located in the foothills of the Cévennes, provides a fitting backdrop to the wine Domaine de L'Hortus, which is made, under the tutelage of *paterfamilias* Jean Orliac, by one of the most honest, likeable and talented wine-making teams that one could hope to meet.

The majority shareholder, Chardonnay, is fermented in wood, clearly evidenced with by a deep, luminous colour. Eight months of lees stirring in *tonneau* for the Chardonnay imparts rich mealy notes with hints of honeydew melon and lime in support. The ensemble is happily integrated with an impressive, gently spicy finish. Now-2017.

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| Food matches | <i>Coquilles St Jacques</i> |
| Price | £23.00 per bottle |
| How to serve | Remove from the fridge half an hour before serving |
| Region | Languedoc, France |
| Grape variety | Chardonnay 70%, Viognier 30% |
| Product code | Z2672B |
| Style | Dry, full-bodied white wine |
| Terroir | Calcerous terraces, quartz-rich escarpments |
| Buyer | Simon Field MW |

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
CONDRIEU OR ST VÉRAN

2010 PULENTA GRAN MALBEC



This 135 hectare Mendoza estate is owned and run by brothers Hugo and Eduardo Puleta, who are also responsible for importing Porsches in Argentina. They built the winery in 2002, but have access to some old vines. This wine is aged for 18 months in new French oak, is drinking well now, and will continue to do so for at least four years.

The ruby appearance with some garnet notes at the rim point to the wine's maturity. The nose still has a richness of black hedgerow fruit, but is developing some evolved aromas of undergrowth and leather. The concentrated palate starts with damson and bramble fruit, and ends with sweet oak spice and a pleasing savoury note. Now-2018.

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| Food matches | Argentine steak or other flavoursome red meat dish |
| Price | £28.00 per bottle |
| How to serve | Serve at room temperature after decanting at least one hour in advance |
| Region | Mendoza, Argentina |
| Grape variety | Malbec |
| Product code | 86661B |
| Style | Dry, full-bodied red wine |
| Terroir | High altitude and mature vines on alluvial soils and gravel |
| Buyer | Catriona Felstead MW |

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
RED BORDEAUX OR CAHORS

2011 NEGROAMARO PRIMITIVO, TARANTINO, MORELLA



While studying at Australia's Roseworthy College, Lisa Gilbee was inspired by a Super Tuscan tasting, then in 2000 she met Gaetano, the passionate son of a grape grower in Puglia. Project Morella began in 2001; the primary drive was to preserve a unique heritage, that of the irreplaceable Old Bush Vine Primitivo, found around Manduria.

Lisa likens the blend of Puglia's Negroamaro and Primitivo grapes to that of Cabernet/Shiraz back home: in both cases, the former provides the perfume, the latter the stuffing. There's some strawberry notes along with darker cherry and cream aromas. Full, succulent, gorgeously opulent, a benchmark Puglian red, hot blooded yet sleek. Now-2018.

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| Food matches | Sausages with rich sauces |
| Price | £21.95 per bottle |
| How to serve | At 22°C |
| Region | Puglia, Italy |
| Grape variety | Negroamaro and Primitivo |
| Product code | Z2467B |
| Style | Dry, full-bodied red wine |
| Terroir | 'Terra rossa' red loam over limestone |
| Buyer | David Berry Green |

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like: AUSTRALIAN CABERNET/SHIRAZ BLENDS OR SOUTHERN RHÔNE REDS

2012 LA ROSINE SYRAH, VIN DE PAYS, DOMAINE MICHÉL ET STÉPHANE OGIER



The pin-up boy of the Rhône Valley, Stéphane Ogier is also the finest winemaker of his generation. Barrel tasting of the individual parcels to be assembled in his Côte-Rôtie is an annual highlight of our November Rhône buying trip and his Rosine *cuvée* is one of the most regular of Berry Bros. and Rudd staff purchases, a most reliable barometer of quality methinks!

Twelve months of *barrique* ageing have added gravitas and depth to the wonderfully high-toned Syrah fruit. Classic descriptors of black cherry, tapenade, bacon fat, green olive and blackberry flow from the pen of the enchanted taster. The palate is rich, silky and delicious. Now-2023.

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| Food matches | Veal escalope, venison, partridge, hard cheeses |
| Price | £19.95 per bottle |
| How to serve | Breathe for an hour, does not need decanting |
| Region | Rhône Valley, France |
| Grape variety | Syrah |
| Product code | 99359B |
| Style | Dry, medium to full-bodied red wine |
| Terroir | Decomposed granite |
| Buyer | Simon Field MW |

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:
ST JOSEPH OR CROZES-HERMITAGE