



Wines of the Month Club

How the club works

- Two bottles of specially selected wine each month
 - Free Delivery to your home or office
(within our delivery radius)
 - Tasting Notes and Food Pairing suggestions
- Members only discount on reorders of monthly selections

Our wine buyer Colin Southcombe, searches the international market place for wines that are new, different or highly rated. They are then evaluated by our tasting panel. The wines come from all over the world and the selections range from lesser known native grapes from the Old World to block buster varieties from the New World. They are always wines that are new to the store and are offered to members before they are put on the shelves. They are wines that you will not find in regular liquor stores.

Members can choose to receive one white wine and one red, or two reds. We even have some members who choose to have all three. The monthly charge is \$50 or \$75. The wines will fluctuate in individual price, however they will average out over a year to more than \$25 per bottle, so membership represents a distinct saving. Membership is normally for six months or one year and paid monthly by pre-authorized credit card.

It also makes a fabulous gift that provides the recipient with an ongoing experience of distinctive and hard to find wines delivered every month. You can give that special someone a trial membership of three months for only \$150!

July 2010

Welcome to the Wines of the Month for July.

For this month I have returned to the Old World and Italy. Most members will be familiar with the famous wine names that I have picked. What makes these wines interesting and different, is that they are all made using native Italian grapes. So we leave behind our familiar Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, etc, and take an intimate look at grapes that express the terroir, the culture and the tradition of one of Europe's oldest wine making countries.

Italian wines are traditionally perceived as food wines, because that's how Italians drink their wine – with food. In North America we often drink wine pre dinner or as a delicious social drink. So each of the wines I picked from Italy are ones that will pair well with food or also can be enjoyed on their own. They are young wines, crafted for drinking now, but we found at our tasting panel that with the reds, it definitely pays to open the wine well ahead or even decant it.

People are sometimes stuck in the belief that decanting is purely for relieving wine of some unwanted sediment, but so many wines, mostly reds, can be quite "tight" when they are first opened and definitely benefit from some aeration. I have mentioned before that at the store we sell the Vinturi wine aerator which we have found time and time again to have opened the wine up and greatly enhanced the nose, palate and flavour.

I really appreciate getting feedback from our members on the wines we present each month. Please let me know what you think of them and also if you have suggestions for wines, styles, countries, etc that you would like me to explore in the upcoming months. I have to plan these several months in advance, as I spend a considerable time to research them and it can take the LDB a month or more to get the wines to me here in Victoria.

We are always keen to encourage new members and there is a nice reward if you introduce another person to our Wines of the Month Club.

Cheers,
Colin Southcombe
colin.southcombe@strathconahotel.com



Coltibuono - Chianti Cetamura 2008, Tuscany Italy

Vinyard:

This vineyard of 70 hectares is part of an historic estate in the heart of Tuscany. Vines have been cultivated here for centuries, but in 1985 the owners took on the long and challenging goal to convert to organic methods, concluding in 2000. The vineyard is now fertilized with compost and manure and the soil is managed by maintaining the native ground cover between the vines to preserve and rebuild the organic substance.

Background:

In 1051 a Tuscan branch of Benedictine monks established the "Abbey of Good Harvest" (Badia a Coltibuono) and planted the first vineyards. Over the centuries they developed a flourishing wine commerce, until 1810 when they were forced out by Napoleon's secularization. In 1846 the beautiful Romanesque structure and surrounding farms were bought by a Florentine banker named Guido Giuntini, whose sixth generation descendants operate the winery today.

Grape:

DOCG wine blended of 90% Sangiovese and 10% Canaiolo Nero. Sangiovese is believed to predate Roman times and the name is said to derive from 'Sanguis Jovis' meaning the blood of Jove (Jupiter). It is one of the top two native red wine grapes in Italy, the other being Nebbiolo. Canaiolo is a native Tuscan grape traditionally used to blend with Sangiovese for Chianti, but in the last 2 or 3 decades in much smaller proportion.

Wine Making:

Hot weather and adequate summer rain produced a good quality harvest. The grapes were selected and fermented in the traditional way in stainless steel tanks. The wine was then bottle aged for several months before release. 25,000 cases were produced.

Appearance:

Bright red with intense clarity.

Nose:

Essence of cherries and ripe berries on the nose with herbaceous notes and a hint of oregano.

Palate:

Full and well balanced, soft but tasty, with elements of cherry, flowers, tobacco and earthiness, with good structure. Well balanced acidity accompanied by a long clean finish. A young but very approachable and drinkable wine. If you have a Vinturi aerator, you will enjoy even more.

Ratings and Awards:

Consistently high ratings for every vintage over the years, including Wine Spectator, Wine Advocate, Wine Enthusiast, Gambero Rosso, Italian Wine Review, Almanacco, etc.

Food pairing:

Try with first courses, meats with sauces, cheeses.

Wine Buyer's Comment:

The whole world knows the name Chianti, but Chianti has changed over the past two or three decades due to revised regulations on the classifications for DOC and DOCG. This wine comes with the respected and highly prestigious DOCG classification, evidenced by the red seal on the neck. There are Chiantis and there are Chiantis, but this is the real McCoy. CS



Marion - Valpolicella Borgomarcellise 2008, Veneto Italy

Vinyard:

Azienda Agricola Marion lies to the east of Verona, 100 m. above sea level in the valley of Marcellise, where vines were planted in 1990 in six hectares of the property. This is the heart of renowned Veneto. The vines are situated in a foothills area with plenty of sunshine and a pruning method known as Guyot has been used to achieve higher quality grape yield.

Background:

The estate and splendid fifteenth century villa once belonged to the Counts Marioni. The Campedelli family purchased the property in 1988, renovated the villa, cleared the land and planted the vines. Initially the harvest went to a cooperative, but in 1999 Stefano Campedelli released his first wine under the name Marion, taken from the name of the original owners of the noble estate. This is a small, family run winery operated by Stefano with his wife Nicoletta and brother Marco, producing just 2000 cases a year.

Grape:

This DOC Valpolicella is a blend of estate grown native grapes; 60% Corvina Grossa, 20% Rondinella, 10% Corvina Gentile and 10% Croatina.

Wine Making:

Assisting Stefano is Celestino Gaspari former winemaker at Quintarelli and consultant at Dal Forno. The wine is aged in second fill demi-muids, which are 400L French oak barrels made of thick staves. Then 20% spends 10 months in large bottis and 80% rests in stainless steel. A botti is the traditional large wooden cask of Slovenian oak that has been used for centuries in Italy. The Italian approach is to make wines that truly express the native grapes and terroir without the distraction of too much oak.

Appearance:

Ruby red colour with a hint of violet.

Nose:

Rich cherry nose with woodland notes, herbs, alfalfa and a hint of spices.

Palate:

Full mouth feel with supple texture on the palate, soft round and complex. There is red fruit at the front with just the right touch of dryness, followed by a hint of oak and very soft tannins. Plumy and persistent finish. This is a young wine and very drinkable now, but you will enhance your enjoyment by opening up or decanting well ahead of time.

Ratings and Awards:

Numerous awards in Italy including Duemilavini and Gambero Rosso. Rave reviews by Antonio Galloni in Wine Advocate.

Food pairing:

Pairs well with spicy foods or even thick spicy soups, also poultry, soft and slightly sweet cheeses.

Wine Buyer's Comment:

Stefano Campedelli of Marion is considered Veneto's next star producer in Valpolicella to join Romano dal Forno and Giuseppe Quintarelli at the pinnacle of quality. His vines are still young and he presents this wine at a very affordable level compared to his peers. But make no mistake; he makes wines of exceptional quality. This is a name to watch in Veneto wines. CS

