

*“Why don’t you call me sometime when you have no class?”
~Thornton Melon, Back to School*

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BACK TO SCHOOL

‘BUBBLE NIGHT’ AT WEBSTERS

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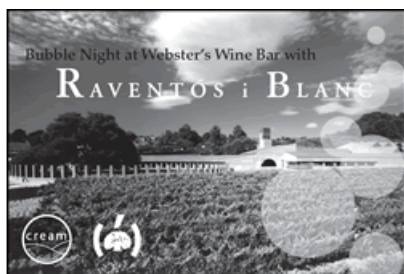
DON’T MISS OUR ‘WORLD GLASS’ TASTING

*Cream’s Fall Import Tasting
Seminars
Special Pricing for Attendees*

CREAMWINE.COM ENHANCEMENTS

A TOAST TO OUR IMPORTERS

As summer draws to a close we at Cream are ecstatic gearing up for fall and such a wonderful (crazy busy) time of year for the wine business. Is there a better time of the year than harvest? So sorry our newsletter went “Euro” in August and took the entire month off. Most of our time was spent enhancing our web site (<http://www.creamwine.com>) with a searchable content rich wine database and more detailed producer/wine info. But don’t feel too sorry for the Cream Team, as there was still a little time in August for some R&R (mostly rosé and riesling). Rest assured its back to school and business with the September issue of Fresh Cream! ‘Lot’s to teach and preach so let’s get to it. Less than a week ‘til two, fabulous back to back Cream events. The RSVP’s are literally pouring in. If you have not yet RSVP’d for **Bubble Night, World Glass** or any of its **Seminars**, please do so with Vanessa Davis at (312) 421-1900 or vanessa@creamwine.com as soon as possible to reserve a spot. Please know that World Glass attendees will receive special pricing on new arrivals, promotions and offerings. Don’t miss your chance to preview the fall releases.



Bubble Night with Raventos i Blanc
@ Webster’s Wine Bar with DJ Frank Orrell
(fresh off touring with Thievery Corporation!)
1480 W. Webster, Chicago
Monday, September 18th 7:30-10:30pm

World Glass
Cream’s Fall Import Portfolio Tasting (& Sale!)
@ Brasserie Jo
59 W. Hubbard, Chicago
Tuesday, September 19th 12-3pm

More details & invites can be found at: http://www.creamwine.com/site_media/bubblenight_invite.pdf
and http://www.creamwine.com/site_media/world_glass_invite2006.pdf



As the humidity tapers off and shorts and sweatshirts become the transitional norm for weekend tailgating loungewear, thoughts of seasonal wine list and menu changes come to mind for the students at Wine Geek University. Fall Releases (core, limited and allocated) are already starting to ship (and sell out) with many more opportunities on the way. For a quick and easy way to view new offerings and releases, visit <http://www.creamwine.com/offerings.php> or simply ask your rep, "What's new?" You can also, search online on our virtual cherry tree for estimated release dates. Type in a brand name in the General Search and click the details. Make your requests for limited and allocated wines known and we'll do our best to accommodate you. In the mean time, there are plenty of top global wines in stock and ready to rock. Currently we have over 600 wines, sprits and sake from over 150 producers from 13 countries available to choose from.

Some new features of our website include - search by producer, country, region, appellation, type, grape, format, special attributes, press, etc. Members of the trade will eventually be given an opportunity to login, provide account information such as requested delivery times, marketing preferences, etc. Users will be able to see pricing and availability, download POS, etc. In the mean time, we will be providing a temporary username and password to access this info. Simply send an email request to andy@creamwine.com and we will forward it to you. Take some time, try and break it and send us feedback.

We will also be adding an importer reference and search over the coming weeks. With our 'World Glass' Fall Import Portfolio Tasting approaching, we thought this September 'Back to School' Newsletter would best serve you by featuring our importers. This fine collection of wine specialists and industry leaders needs to be showcased. All will be coming in for our tasting and bringing with them, their best wines and some of their top producers. Here they are in alphabetical order. Please note September's featured wines and the special newsletter net (thanks for taking the time to read). To download a comprehensive list of what will be shown next week, visit http://www.creamwine.com/site_media/WorldGlassWineList.pdf. Get excited!

ADVENTURES IN WINE – Daley City, CA

People: Merrick Dowson, Owner | Robert Morrison, National Sales

Website: <http://www.adventuresinwine.com>

Focus: Global quality, niche, value and selection

Brands Represented by Cream: Isabel Estate, Akarua

One of Cream's first suppliers and wine sold (December 2001! Thank you very much Brian Duncan & BIN 36!!). Over the years, Isabel Estate Sauvignon Blanc has been our tried and true go to Kiwi Savvy and the winery continues to be the benchmark for Estate wine from New Zealand. Recent newcomer Akarua has been turning heads with its unabashed Otago Pinot. As their name indicates, they enjoy the "adventure" of wine – traveling and tasting wines from all regions and ultimately bringing them here for you to enjoy. Selections are carefully chosen, and represent the highest quality, value, and reflection of the earth from which they are grown. Whether old world or new world, you can expect Adventures in Wine to offer an outstanding variety of quality wines to be enjoyed at any occasion. We are so glad they chose Cream back in the day. It's been a fantastic adventure.

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

2004 Isabel Estate Pinot Noir

12/750ml - \$240 regular net / \$228 newsletter net

First thoughts were....like sipping cherry-cola out of a cigar box. Voluptuous wine with integrated tannins, spicy nose, rich and elegant, a dark ruby colour, with chocolate nose and concentrated fruit flavours of plum and ripe blackberries with a subtle spiciness, pepper and smoke notes. A luscious length palate, full-bodied with an outstanding depth of fruit, drinking well now, we believe this wine has the structure of a long-lived wine.



CHAMPAGNE DUVAL-LEROY – Vertus, France

People: Carol Duval-Leroy, Owner | Michel Brismonnier, Export Manager | Catherine Graf, US Manager

Website: <http://www.duval-leroy.com>

Focus: Duval-Leroy 24/7

Brands Represented by Cream: Champagne Duval-Leroy

Duval-Leroy is a large family-owned Champagne house headquartered in Vertus in the Cote de Blancs. Since 1991 it has been headed by a strong lady of Champagne, Carol Duval-Leroy. A common and very distinctive feature of the house style in comparison to other larger Champagne houses is the high proportion of Chardonnay used in the various cuvees, which is a factor of the company's extensive holdings of Premier and Grand Cru Chardonnay vineyards. The key word is freshness, which is a theme running through the range and is very much an expression of the terroir associated with Chardonnay grown in chalky soils in the Cotes de Blancs. The Brut NV blend is typically 75% Pinot Noir and 25% Chardonnay and has a biscuity, yeasty character and a palate livened with apple and citrus notes. This label has made dramatic strides in the U.S. market in recent years. Deeper in color, breadier and richer on the palate is the outstanding Cuvée Paris NV Brut packaged in its distinctive etched Leroy Neiman designed bottle. Both of these wines have received rave reviews from the Wine Spectator in recent years. The extensive Duval range also features a rich Vintage Brut and a range of outstanding special Cuvees such as Brut Rosé de Saignée, Blanc des Chardonnay and the très, très feminine Cuvée de Femme (introduced by Carole Duval-Leroy).

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Brut NV 'Rosé de Saignée

12/750ml - \$408 regular net / \$384 newsletter net or 24/375ml - \$408 regular net / \$384 newsletter net

Salmon pink, many light bubbles with delicate red fruits aromas. Supple, round, well-structured palate. A genuinely fruity rosé that will appeal to sweet-toothed gourmets, perfect as an aperitif or with less sweet puddings of red fruits, such as clafoutis (fruit baked in batter) or fruit gratin. Also good with a small poultry prepared with cherries or perhaps, more interestingly still, with sushi or sashimi.

MAISON COGNAC PARK – Partners Wine Marketing, New Orleans, LA

People: Dominic Park, Owner | Jack Jelenko, U.S. Agent

Website: <http://www.cognacpark.com>

Focus: Cognac

Brands Represented by Cream: Cognac Park

"Cognac in July?! Are you out of your freakin' mind?" That was my response when Jack asked Cream to get the Park party started this summer. As usual, he was right. Park was a big hit launching in one of the hottest months of recent memory. Just imagine what will sell when the weather cools off. Maison Cognac Park, a producer of small-batch artisanal cognac, was founded by Englishman Dominic Park in the early 1990s to make straightforward, unadulterated, and well-aged cognacs presented in simple packaging. In essence, the idea was to offer an alternative to the stereotype of over caramelized brown cognacs sold in flamboyant crystal decanters or frosted glass bottles. From his extensive aged stock Dominic Park makes his own blends in a very recognizable house style which is simple and clean. He adds neither caramel nor boisé (a concentrate of tannin often used to imitate barrel ageing). This small operation ships fewer than 1000 cases of all labels to the United States, about a third of the total production. All Park Cognac blends are significantly older than the norm: VSOP 8-12 years; XO 20-30 years; Family Reserve 25-35 years; 1er Cru Grand Champagne 40-60 years.

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Cognac Park 'Traditional' XO

\$65 per bottle

Mature dissolved oak. Strong, forceful structure - opposite to the delicate style of Vieille Grande Champagne - rich fruit cake flavours. Long finish on the palate. Ideal after dinner drink. Supplied in the traditional cognac bottle.



DOMAINE SELECT WINE ESTATES – New York, NY

People: Paolo and Allison Domeneghetti, Owners | Brad Groper, National Sales Manager | Samantha Dickinson, Midwest Regional Representative | Greg Smolik, Chicago Metro Representative

Website: <http://www.domaineselect.com>

Focus: Wines of diversity, character, tradition and expression from Italy, Austria, France, Spain, Portugal, Chile and Argentina

Brands Carried by Cream: ITALY – Adanti, Alois, Anselma, Borgo Maddelena, Castell In Villa, Contini, COS, Fantinel, Hofstatter, Il Molino di Grace, Il Palazzone, Le Pupille, Les Cretes, Luccarelli, Massolino, Mirabile, Quattro Mani, Sartarelli, Solo Maremma, Velenosi, Villa Sparina, AUSTRIA – Brandl, Fruenirth, Leth, Lagler, Lackner-Tinnacher, Wimmer-Czerny

We were first introduced to Domaine Select Wine Estates and Paolo Domeneghetti through good friend, Joe Kotnik of World Wide Cellars. We were immediately taken with Domaine Select's thoughtful selection of regional Italian wines from top artisans and mavericks. Cream had been looking for the right fit for Italian wine for a very long time, meeting with many importers and tasting hundreds of wines. It was Domaine Select's emphasis on a comprehensive regional portfolio of real Italian wines, many made from naturally farmed grapes, with an uncompromising style and attitude that sealed the deal. Paolo and Allison Domeneghetti and their fine team have assembled one of the nation's premier Italian wine books. Their recent expansion into Austria, France and South America rounds out the portfolio and selection with some amazing world class wines. Their recent addition of Midwest and Chicago reps Samantha Dickinson and Italian wine savant, Greg Smolik show their commitment to building brands and offering extra support and service in Illinois.

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Quattro Mani Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2005

12/750ml - \$80 regular net / \$72 newsletter net

The Montepulciano variety originated in the Valle Paligna in the Abruzzo. It was developed by growers over time and soon displayed significant capacity for adapting to different environments, which quickly facilitated its spread throughout neighboring territories. Almost half of Abruzzo is planted to this resilient rock star grape. Quattro Mani comes from vineyards in the Abruzzo hills surrounding Chieti. The vines are trained in the traditional Abruzzo pergola. Winemaker Atillio Pagli has consulted in Montalcino, Chianti

Classico, Scansano, Montefalco, Conero, and Romanga for wineries such as Caprai, Colle Santa Mustiola, Le Terrazze, Moris Farms and San Giusto a Rentannano. Today he is recognized for his work throughout Italy as well as Argentina, Chile and France. Following the destemming of the grapes, a long, cool fermentation takes about 20 days to complete in stainless steel tanks. After fermentation, the wine is racked and bottled. This wine is stunning for the price. A "wow ship me" wine if we've ever tasted one. Ruby red with purple hues. On the nose it is fresh with aromas of currant, strawberry and raspberry. On the palate the wine is fresh, fruity, well balanced and smooth. Marvelous concentration, spice and palate attack for such an inexpensive wine. Bravo Domaine Select!

EPIC WINES – Santa Cruz, CA

People: Rob Prough, Owner | Kent Smith, National Sales | Michele Burger, National Customer Service

Website: <http://www.epic-wines.com>

Focus: Cooler climate Australian Estates, New Zealand Icons, Value Spanish, Argentina

Brands Represented by Cream: AUSTRALIA – Angus the Bull, Four Sisters, Indis, Larrikin, Moss Wood, Mt. Langi Ghiran, Stanton & Killeen, Yering Station, NEW ZEALAND – Ata Rangī, Nendorf, SPAIN - Valcantara

Over the years, Kent Smith of Epic Wines has been one of our favorite and most reliable supplier reps. His experience, product knowledge, passion, customer relationships and time regularly spent in the market, have been invaluable. Illinois is his baby and he takes good care of it with great service, large allocations and creative promotions. Epic was founded in 1995 by Robert Prough after careful consideration as to what a new fine wine importation and distribution company could bring to the California and National wine market. The company is comprised of industry professionals with extensive backgrounds in premium wine sales and distribution. Prough's background in owning and managing distribution and marketing companies started in 1979. The people of Epic Wines share a serious sense of responsibility to providing excellence in service to both our customers and our suppliers. In addi-



tion to Spain and Argentina, Epic imports two of New Zealand's top wineries (Neudorf and Ata Rangi) as well as a thoughtful selection of cooler climate estates from Australia, hitting the jackpot with a partnership with the Rathbone Wine Group for Yering Station and Mt. Langi Ghiran.

SEPTEMBER FEATURES

Stanton & Killeen NV Muscat

12/500ml - \$324 regular net / \$276 newsletter net

Muscat is a unique Australian fortified wine. Rutherglen in particular is renowned for its powerful, rich muscats, which typically display a brisk finish that is not as cloying as the mid palate would suggest. Muscat tends to be richer and sweeter in fruit compared with the more elegant Tokay. Awarded 92 points by Robert M. Parker Jnr. and described as "stunning", the Stanton & Killeen Classic Rutherglen Muscat is bursting with rich aromas and flavours of toffee, grilled nuts, raisins and spice. This aged Muscat is a rich, brown colour rimmed with olive green hues. Serve with sweet desserts, cheese and nuts or enjoy with fine cigars. This muscat can match the richness of chocolate and the power of English Stilton.

Stanton & Killeen NV Tokay

12/500ml - \$324 regular net / \$276 newsletter net

Rutherglen in particular, is renowned for its Tokay, which typically displays intense aromas often described as cold tea, malt, toffee and butterscotch. It differs from the other great Rutherglen fortified wine, Muscat, in that it is more elegant and less fleshy. Awarded 90 points by Robert M. Parker Jnr., the Stanton & Killeen Classic Rutherglen Tokay has a bouquet overflowing with toffee, tea leaf and malty aromas. It has a decadent palate of sweet fruit and luscious honey-like characteristics, and a dry spirit finish. Serve with sweet desserts, cheese and nuts, or enjoy with fine cigars.

GRAPE MOMENTS – New Bedford, MA

People: Anthony Cruz, CEO | Jack Couto, President | Mark Cruz, COO

Website: <http://www.grapemoments.com>

Focus: Regional Portugal, Spain and Chile.

Brands Represented by Cream: PORTUGAL – *Andreza, Quinta do Alorna, Burmester Port, Quinta dos Grilos, Quinta da Murta, Quinta do Melgaco (Terra Antiga)*

Because every drop is a moment. Grape Moments has built a solid core of exciting regional Portuguese wines, many of which are new to the Illinois market and represent incredible values. Jack Couto, the passionate "Prince of Portugal" has over 20 years experience in the wine and spirits business, starting as a salesperson in Boston and working for several national importers of Iberian wine before starting his own business. It is important to note the Grape Moments is also a Massachusetts distributor with first hand knowledge of what a small niche distributor and its customer needs are. "It is our mission to import wine and spirits from various countries with an emphasis in brand building. Specifically, the company focus will be to introduce wines and spirits of an old history while adding a new wave touch. The countries from which we will import from have a long history and great story in the production of wine and spirits. The relationships we have built with the various producers allow us to import directly from their operation to our market. We believe that these strong relationships will allow us to personalize our company mission and allow us to be price conscious. Our concentration will be in the countries of Portugal, Spain, and Chile." ~ Grape Moments.

SEPTEMBER FEATURES

Quinta do Alorna Red

12/750ml - \$90 regular net / \$80 newsletter net

A rich blend of Tinta Roriz, Catelao, Syrah and Alicante Bouschet. This wine has a deep crimson colour with lush ripe fruit aromas. In the mouth it is a juicy, full-bodied wine with soft tannins. Aged for 4 months in 3 year old American Oak. Another incredible value from Grape Moments.



JON-DAVID HEADRICK SELECTIONS – Charlotte, NC

People: *Jon-David Headrick*

Website: <http://www.jondavidwines.com>

Focus: *Naturally farmed Loire and Grower Champagne*

Brands Represented by Cream: *Champagne Françoise Bedel et Fils, Champagne Franck Pascal, Champagne Tarlant, Domaine Benedicte de Rycke, Domaine Damien Laureau, Domaine de la Noblaie, Domaine des Huardes, Domaine des Roches Neuves, Domaine Frederic Mabileau, Domaine Laurent Chatenay, Domaine Vincent Ogereau, Domaine Saint Nicolas, Domaine du Viking, Jean-Francois Merieau, La Craie, La Tour St. Martin, Le Paradou*

Cream Wine Company is thrilled to represent the properties of Jon-David Headrick Selections. When we asked Jon-David contribute some portfolio ‘kick off text’, he wrote: “Standing in a rocky, chalk-covered vineyard in Sancerre a few years ago, I listened as a winegrower friend talked about the current state of wine. “Fruit in a wine is easy”, he said. “Purity is elusive. Purity comes from the struggle of the vine through the rocks it is planted on, the fight against every other plant in the vineyard vying for the same water and nutrients, and no interference from man. Leave fruit for beginners. You should look for purity.”

As an American who was also wine drinker, it took some time for this concept to sink in. We are used to drinking-wine that is described by writers as “gobs of juicy raspberry fruit” or “dense spicy blackberry”. These appeal to our opulent, hedonistic side. But after a while, I wanted something more and started seeking out wines that matched the description of my winemaker friend. What I found was that this is more easily achieved in areas where the vine has to struggle with climatic conditions that are not ideal (less sun, for starters) and made by people who allow the vine to grow naturally with little or no intervention. In creating this portfolio, I was looking for these kinds of wines, and I found them planted on a massive swath of chalk and slate that runs from the Atlantic ocean through the Loire river valley and into Champagne. I call this rocky band that stretches for about 600 kilometers “The Chalk Line”. Started in 2003, my portfolio of small wineries from Northern France focuses on this chalk line and currently includes 15 properties from the Loire and 5 growers from Champagne. In Champagne, I work only with growers, never negociants. I’m only interested in people who grow and bottle their own wines. This approach allows for more place specificity. The purity that I mentioned earlier is completely obliterated by blending various parcels from vastly different winegrowing areas, so I look for growers who vinify and bottle by parcel and who use extremely low dosages. Many of the Champagnes I work with have no dosage added (called in French “Brut Zero”). No dosage simply means that you taste only what is in the vineyard.

In the Loire, I have taken a Burgundian approach and am assembling a portfolio that represents a comprehensive look at the valley, not just the known categories such as Sancerre and Muscadet. Growing regions such as the Fiefs Vendéens and Jasnieres, seldom seen here in the United States, figure prominently in my book. With Chenin Blanc, in particular, I have sought out examples of the varietal planted on a variety of soil types from chalk, slate, sand, gravel, silex, etc. in an attempt to show what an amazing varietal the grape is. The same grape, harvested in the same vintage, tastes completely different depending on what side of the river it is on. The properties with which I work are consumed with making “true” wines, wines which are true to where they come from, true to the earth, and true to the winemaker’s obsession with quality. The wines are harvested by hand and the grapes are grown according to either organic or biodynamic practices. Many of the properties are certified organic or biodynamic. All are leaders in their appellations and harvest lower yields than their neighbors to ensure a premium product. Above anything else, they are farmers, and they understand that wine is made in the vineyard, not the winery. In selecting properties for the portfolio, I seek purity first, eschewing heavy-handed usage of oak and opting instead for wines of excellent ripeness, minerality, and above all, balance. The presence of balanced acidity is absolutely crucial in my view to world-class wine, and I’m not afraid to represent wines that have startling acidity if there is fruit to support it.” ~Jon-David Headrick



Currently Jon-David represents growers in the Loire appellations of Muscadet Sevre et Maine, Fiefs Vendéen, Anjou, Coteaux du Layon (including Bonnes Blancs), Savennieres, Chinon, Bourgueil, St. Nicolas de Bourgueil, Vouvray, and Quincy. The company also works with one property in the Cotes du Luberon and is beginning to import grower Champagnes. The goal of Jon-David Headrick Selections is to be able to present the most complete, comprehensive, and quality-oriented portfolio from the Loire Valley that is imported into the United States. With both Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc, the company seeks to present a Burgundian approach to terroir, offering both varietals from various soils and exposures from along the riverside. The company prefers to work with young growers who are using more progressive techniques with older vines and gives preference to organic and biodynamic farming. More than half of the properties in the portfolio are organic and all are harvested by hand in small baskets.

SEPTEMBER FEATURES

Domaine de la Noblaie

Twenty-four year-old Jerome Billard doesn't make your father's Chinon. He worked at Petrus and Dominus, now he stretches the potential of Cabernet Franc in the area. One of the oldest family estates in the Chinon appellation with 22 hectares of holdings on hillside vineyards in Ligre, the hillside has been producing fruit for almost 500 years. The Chinon rouge is a case study in the balance between power and elegance, spice and softness, and fat and acidity. 2002 was his first vintage.

'Les Chiens-Chien' Chinon Rouge

12/750ml - \$156 regular net / \$144 newsletter net

All hand harvested, old vine, single parcel Cabernet Franc. Sensational texture and purity of fruit.

'Les Chiens-Chiens' Chinon Blanc

12/750ml - \$216 regular net / \$204 newsletter net

Yes, White Chinon. Do you believe us? Do you?? Very rare, pure Chenin Blanc. Minerality personified.

MISCHIEF AND MAYHEM – Aloxe-Corton, France

People: Michael Ragg and Michael Twelftree, Owners

Website: <http://www.mischiefandmayhem.com>

Focus: Progressive Uber Negotiant hell bent on demystifying Burgundy – Overdelivering on Village Wine and 'Special Cuvées'

Brands Represented by Cream: Mischief and Mayhem

Finally! A way to market Burgundy that demystifies the region, removes elitism and intimidation, and provides thoughtful information for the end consumer. It's pretty simple, offer quality for a fair price and explain yourself. Never mind the fact that the two men behind the project—Michael Ragg and Michael Twelftree—have vast combined experiences selling top wines from all over the world and have worked in virtually every level of the wine business.

Mischief and Mayhem is the creation of Michael Twelftree and Michael Ragg, two great friends whose passion for wine, and for Burgundy in particular, caused them to team up and form the company in autumn 2004. Michael Twelftree is the co-founder and driving force behind Two Hands Wines, formed in 1999 yet now producing some of the world's greatest Shiraz based wines from the Barossa Valley, Clare Valley and McLaren Vale. Michael Ragg spent nearly ten years working with leading UK fine wine merchant Berry Bros. & Rudd before moving to Burgundy in spring 2003 and setting up his own wine consultancy and broking business in Aloxe-Corton. With Ragg's experience and contacts on the ground in Burgundy itself and Twelftree's knowledge of the world's emerging markets, the two set out on a mission to uncover, and de-mystify, some of the outstanding wines from arguably the world's most fabled, yet complex region. Their mission is to endeavour to bring you some of the finest wines that Burgundy can produce, sourced from outstanding small domaines and offered at fair prices. They are not the place



to source ultra-rare premium Grand Cru cuvées, but work on the ground in Burgundy with local producers who offer well made, elegant, individual wines that epitomise all that is fine about this great region.

“The concept of Mischief and Mayhem is for Michael and I to revolutionise and simplify the way the wines of Burgundy are marketed, by offering you the consumer, detailed and relevant back-label notes in English, on both the vineyard site and the producer. Michael and I are continually frustrated that the responsibility and risk of purchasing a bottle of Burgundy is always born by the consumer, as the packaging invariably offers very little detail on the style of the wine and the producer. We believe that Burgundy is a superb region but like consumers throughout the world, find it very hard to pick and choose between the thousand of producers in the Côte d'Or. We would therefore like to help both existing lovers of Burgundy and those who are new to the region's wines, by sourcing small parcels of great wine from good producers and offering these wines to you, at a fair price and with as much useful information as possible to help you make an informed choice.

Michael will work throughout the whole of the Côte d'Or to track down well made, individual wines. We will taste and select together three times a year and then offer our selections to you once the wines have been bottled, labelled and distributed within Europe or exported to the United States. We thank you for your patronage and look forward to sharing our love of this great region with you.” ~Michael Ragg

One of our picks for 2006 Portfolio Rookie of the Year, Mischief and Mayhem announced their presence to the wine world with authority in late spring with the release of their 2004 White Burgundies. For those that missed out on Puligny-Montrachet, Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru La Garenne and Meursault, we have good news: A second and final shipment of these wines is due into our warehouse shortly, along with more great supplies of 2005 baby White Burgs for by the glass, a complimentary line priced Red Burg made with a fair amount of Gevrey-Chambertin and a new 2005 Chablis Village (the could be a Cru?) on the way. These guys are slightly off the dish and God love ‘em for it. For an upstart, M&M has made amazing strides and received incredible, well-deserved press from Tanzer and Wine Spectator. And, don't get us started on ‘Crazy Love’. Come taste their top wine at Brasserie Jo on Tuesday September 19th.

SEPTEMBER FEATURES

Mischief and Mayhem Meursault Village 2004

12/750ml – \$360 regular net / \$324 newsletter net

Light gold in colour. Full, deep nose of creamy lemon and lime fruit with butterscotch, cinnamon and hazelnuts. Ample, weighty fruit on the palate but well intergrated, firm and beautifully balanced. This is soft and well rounded with lovely mouth feel and texture - a really delicious drinking wine. - Michael Ragg

Deep golden in colour, interesting notes of banana peel, cinnamon, dried apricots, menthol with hints of citrus freshness. The palate is soft and juicy with a lovely core of fruit which shows nice finesse and purity, it runs along the palate soft and effortlessly. A real "drink now" bottle that will go perfectly with a long summer lunch. - Michael Twelftree

Mischief and Mayhem Bourgogne Blanc 2004

12/750ml - \$204 regular net / \$180 newsletter net

Lively, fresh nose of medium intensity with notes of green apple, lemon zest, toffee and oatmeal. A burst of lovely fresh acidity on the palate which continues both fine and long. Really pure, stony, lemon and lime fruit with notes of hazelnut and cream on the finish. Excellent.



THE RARE WINE CO. – Sonoma, CA

People: Mannie Berk, Owner | Blake Murdock, National Sales

Website: <http://www.rarewineco.com/import.html>

Focus: Concentrated portfolio of high quality, world renowned, small production estates from Spain, Italy, France and Portugal (including extensive vintage Madeira)

Brands Represented by Cream: SPAIN – Alvaro Palacios, Descendientes de Jose Palacios, Palacios Remondo, Olivares, Atalayas de Golban, Dominio de Atauta, ITALY – Elio Perrone, Montepeloso, Enzo Boglietti, Agostina Pieri, Tommaso Bussola, PORTUGAL – Quinta do Feital, Barbiato, D'Oliveira and Rare Wine Company Historic Series

Does the Rare Wine Co. have any wines in their portfolio that are not exceptional? We haven't tasted one yet. Owned by Mannie Berk and run by Blake Murdock, RWC's national import business is a wonderful compliment to a fantastically layered wine business model. Representing RWC is like flying to London for a U2 concert with a butler. You experience hit after hit after smash hit and there's no baggage to carry. Alvaro Palacios, Pingus, Atauta, Rostaing, Boglietti, Bussola, Dorado, etc. Are you kidding me? Not a dog in the bunch, people. This is arguably the tightest, most concentrated portfolio of European wine superstars available in the U.S. today. If you have not tasted through wines available in RWC's exceptional portfolio, contact your Cream salesperson and schedule the concert, sorry, we mean tasting.

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Agostina Pieri Rosso di Montalcino 2004

12/750ml – \$204 regular net / \$192 newsletter net

Truly amazing wine. This is the benchmark for Rosso di Montalcino. Pieri remains the only producer to ever earn Gambero Rosso's tre bicchieri for a Rosso. The 2004 bright, fresh and juicy. Packed with fruit, but balanced and well structured with great nerve that bodes well with the long, layered somewhat spicy finish. Walks the traditional and modern line to perfection. But ultimately and gracefully falls on tradition's side. This wine could very easily sell for over twice the price.

MICHAEL SKURNIK WINES – Syosset, NY

People: Michael and Harmon Skurnik, Owners | Kevin Pike, National Sales

Website: <http://www.skurnikwines.com>

Focus: Spain, Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Chile, Argentina

Brands Represented by Cream: SPAIN – Raventos i Blanc, FRANCE – Domaine Paul Blanck, NEW ZEALAND – Mud House Wines

Michael Skurnik Wines is an importer and distributor of fine wines based in Syosset, New York. They taste, select and offer for sale an excellent portfolio of wines from around the world. The local distribution company for New York, New Jersey and Connecticut began with just a handful of relatively unknown estates in 1987 and has since grown to represent over 450 estates, from the traditional to the cutting edge, including a very successful national import company.

The goal of Michael Skurnik Wines is to search the globe and assemble the finest portfolio of estate-bottled wines available at all price points. Wines selected to be included in the portfolio must represent the highest quality and meet exacting standards as regards character and winemaking. Michael Skurnik Wines is very proactive in searching out quality first and will do everything in our power to insure that the wines tasted make it into the bottle. Over the past 16 years, they have developed an excellent reputation and it is their goal to insure that if a wine says "Imported by Michael Skurnik Wines" it is as close to a guarantee of quality as possible.



SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Domaine Paul Blanck Gewurztraminer Fustentum Grand Cru 'Vielles Vignes' 2001

12/750ml – \$360 regular net / \$336 newsletter net

In addition to the entire line up, Philippe Blanck will also be pouring (and selling out of) this wine at next week's tasting. Please find separate tasting notes, detailing the evolution of one of Blanck's top wines. Marvelous!

1st tasting: Softly fragrant, it has a floral character (fresia, rose), a honeyed touch, over crystallized pineapple, lychee and spice (pepper, ginger). Robust, quite opulent, round and harmonious, with no roughness. Attractive return of the lychee and ginger. Quintessential grand cru classicism. Best 2005/2007. (Tasted in December 2003 by Jean-Louis Sampoux and Stéphane Dechevis - Alsace-Terroir, website specializing in Alsace wine.)

2nd tasting: Very pale to the eye, and very bright. Has a fragrant, quite complex nose, honeyed with a touch of gunflint. Round in the mouth, very mellow and soft, still bearing traces of carbonic gas, with good acidity giving an impression of tonus. Rose scents are revealed on the finish. A wine which is good to drink in the fruit of its youth, yet can be kept just a few more years to coax out the personality of its vineyard. Very good. (Visite to Domaine Paul Blanck in Kientzheim – 12th November 2005, during the "24 Heures du Riesling Alsacien". Thierry MEYER - degustateurs.com)

VIA PACIFICA – Sebastopol, CA

People: Michelle and David Duckhorn, Howard and Shelly Kalmer, Owners | Liz Ball, Regional Sales

Website: <http://www.viapacifica.com>

Focus: Comprehensive Regional New Zealand Portfolio of Top Estates and Winemakers

Brands Represented by Cream: Alpha Domus, Bird, Huia, Lawson's Dry Hills & Mt. Vernon

"Our mission is to be the best importer of premium New Zealand wines by carefully hand selecting the brands and wines we represent and by providing outstanding customer service." ~ Via Pacifica

Via Pacifica epitomizes the type of importer we like to do business with. Small, family-owned business, run by good people - such as our regional representative Liz Ball, a focused niche selection of top wines, estates and winemakers and a high level of communication and detailed marketing support. Via Pacifica is a relatively new supplier for Cream and we look forward to a bright future together.

SEPTEMBER FEATURE

Lawson's Dry Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2005

12/750ml – \$144 regular net / \$132 newsletter net

Sourced from 13 different sites in Marlborough's Wairau, Waibopai, Omaka and Brancott Valleys, ranging from steep hillside to river flats. They encompass a diverse range of soils, aspects and microclimates, which in turn provide us with parcels of grapes that have a range of flavours and characters. 2005 was another cool season and poor weather over flowering meant that crop levels were low and the grapes were harvested later than is normally the case. Most of the blend (just over 93%) was cool fermented in stainless steel. Barrel fermentation of 6.4% in older French barriques, followed by partial malolactic fermentation, has increased palate weight and complexity. Contains 2% Semillon, which adds some subtle grassy notes.

This wine shows great varietal expression and flavour intensity. The cool season and low crop levels have lead to crisp concentrated flavours. This wine exhibits a complex array of aromas that include passionfruit, lemon blossom and gooseberry. Concentrated lime zest and passionfruit flavours are balanced with good palate weight and a clean crisp finish. This wine is delicious with all seafood especially, New Zealand greenlip mussels. Try it with chargrilled Hapuka (grouper) drizzled with lime juice on mushroom and truffle oil risotto.



VINE CONNECTIONS – Sausalito, CA

People: Ed Lehrman and Nick Ramkowsky, Partners | Melanie Malosky, National Sales | Chad Beverlin, Regional Sales

Website: <http://www.vineconnections.com>

Focus: Leading Argentine wine artisan collection, the best ginjo Sake portfolio in the US and small batch California Estates

Brands Represented by Cream: ARGENTINA - BenMarco, Budini, Crios, La Posta, Luca, Mapema, Mendel, Susana Balbo, Tikal, JAPAN – Ama no To, Chiyonosono, Fukucho, Ginga/Takasago, Kanbara, Mantensei, Mukune, Nanbu Bijin, Rihaku, Sato no Homare, Takatenjin, Tentaka Kuni, Tozai, CALIFORNIA – Davis Family Vineyards, Lewelling

Nick Ramkowsky called me in the Spring of 2002 when I was going through a Culver's drive through in Kenosha, Wisconsin on a Friday evening on my way to my Sister-in-law's Birthday party. I distinctly remember asking him to hold and pressing the cell phone mute button while I upgraded my Butter Burger into a value basket and asked if a chocolate malt could be substituted as the drink (Pretty embarrassing, but damn that food is good! I would say better than IN-N-OUT for your Left Coasters.) Anyway, we immediately hit it off, shared a similar passion for wine and business philosophy. Soon after, we tasted through Nick and partner Ed Lehrman's inspirational, comprehensive portfolio of Argentine All-Stars and immediately decided to do some business. Now I've certainly made my fair share of mistakes in this wonderfully wacky business. But partnering with Vine Connections in the Summer of 2002 turned out to be one of the best decisions Cream has ever made. They are one of the most thoughtful, proactive and best run wine importer/marketers in the nation. Great people and a pleasure to do business with. ~ Andy Pates

Founded by Ed Lehrman and Nick Ramkowsky, Vine Connections is a Sausalito, California-based importer and exclusive U.S. representative of some of the world's most unique and exciting wines and Japanese sake. They import and market the world's finest portfolio of boutique wines from Argentina. Vine Connections is also the leading U.S. importer of fine Argentinean wines retailing above \$10. They explore other regions of the world, including New Zealand (Marlborough) and Mexico (Guadalupe Valley) for producers doing exciting things on the cutting edge of today's viticultural and wine production practices. They represent 13 of Japan's finest ginjo sake producers and proudly carry more than 20 premium sake brands in the portfolio. These small, ancient (*youngest* is 86 years old!), and traditional family brewers make some of the world's most delicious premium chilled sake.

Vine Connections also represents two incredible boutique California wineries: Lewelling Vineyards, one of Napa Valley's oldest grape growing families (138 years to be exact) and a producer of limited quantities of excellent Cabernet Sauvignon, and starting in April 2003, they represent nationally the wines of Guy Davis' Russian River Valley-based Davis Family Vineyards. Incredible wines from an incredibly talented individual.

SEPTEMBER FEATURES

Mendel 'Unus'

6/750ml - \$204 regular net / \$192 newsletter net

A blend of Malbec and Cabernet from an 80 year-old vineyard in Lujan de Cuyo in Mendoza. Incredible dark purple color. The aromas of dark cherries, plums and roasted cocoa come leaping out of the glass. This is a big but very suave wine with layers of ripe cherry and berry fruits, and the cocoa and vanilla flavors simply make this wine's finish go on and on. There are loads of ripe, soft tannins, so this wine will certainly age beautifully for a decade or longer, but the temptation to drink it right away may be too much to resist. Serve with absolutely any red-wine friendly food and you will have a ball.

Mantensei Star Filled Sky (Junmai Ginjo)

12/300ml – \$132 regular net / \$120 newsletter net or 6/720ml - \$144 regular net / \$132 newsletter net

Made by Master Toji Suwa Shuzo in the Tottori Prefecture. Technical Info: Nibonshu-do +3, Alcohol 15.5%, Seimaibuai 50% to 55%, Acidity 1.4, Rice Yamada Nishiki & Tamakasae, Yeast #9. Soft, honey-laced nose with just a tad of fruitiness. Dry overall, but with a sweet element creeping out of the background. Good richness and overall balance in a slightly dry profile.