

MARCH 2006

Wines Evaluated: 103

Wines Rejected: 70

Wines Approved: 29

Wines Selected: 4



# The Vintners Series

WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB®

**M**arch is the month of expectation," wrote Emily Dickinson. The holidays are over; we can fully relax. We wonder, "What will March bring?" Each month the Wine of the Month Club searches for special wines from around the world. We travel to Australia, New Zealand, France, and California for this month's selections. We're confident that we'll truly surpass your expectations with these wines.

**LAKE BREEZE, 2001  
BERNOOTA  
LANGORNE CREEK,  
AUSTRALIA**

Australia has yet to disappoint us with one of their Shiraz wines. "Bernoota" is a blend of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon rich in history and flavor. The wine is produced from old vines tended by one of Australia's first wine-making families. Their past ten vintages have been awarded six trophies and 24 gold medals. We're thrilled to share this special wine with you.

**DASHWOOD, 2005  
SAUVIGNON BLANC  
MARLBOROUGH,  
NEW ZEALAND**

We were so impressed with the Dashwood Pinot Noir that we decided to try another wine from them. Wow! This Sauvignon Blanc is a classic New Zealand

style, packed with intense tropical fruit and gooseberry. The packaging is exciting and the price is unbelievable. We'll keep several bottles of this versatile wine on hand—most for drinking and some for our favorite recipes.

**CHATEAU MOURGUES  
DU GRES, 2003  
GRENACHE  
TERRE DU FEU  
COSTIERES DE NIMES,  
FRANCE**

Grenache is the grape of this fabulous tasting wine from the south of France. The area's micro-climate and stony soil produce a very special wine. Chateau Morgues du Gres is known for making the best tasting and best value wines in southern France. Invite this wine to your table; it's an elegant dinner partner.

**POMELO, 2005  
SAUVIGNON BLANC  
LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

California winemaker Randy Mason is renown for his mastery with Sauvignon Blanc. He's created a new wine label, Pomelo, made with grapes from Lake County, California. It's a full, smooth, refreshing wine with subtle hints of grapefruit and honeysuckle. The bottle easily opens and stores with a screw-top cap. This is certainly a delightful wine for all occasions.

## INSIDE THIS MONTH

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## A NOTE FROM YOUR CELLARMASTER



Paul Kalemkiarian

I am so energized. I can't say that it has always been true, but I get up in the morning and look forward to coming to work. Of course, you're going to say, "...but you taste wine for a living. How hard is that?" And you are right, at least one day a week. You see Tuesday is tasting day and that can be a good day. However, we only approve 15% of what we taste and only buy 2%. Or in other words, 85% of the wines we taste we don't care for. 85%! Thank goodness for the 15%! And so, my enthusiasm to come here everyday is based on 15% of my work once a week, and you know what? I think that is pretty good!

Paul Kalemkiarian

## WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH?

In Europe there is the notion (and organization) that promotes "slow food." That's right, "slow food!" Getting my drift...the antithesis of fast food, America's favorite meal. For our family, we just started softball season. All three of my girls, Sara 16, Lisa 14, and Lena 12, play. It isn't hard to guess that we have softball virtually everyday and sometimes twice a day. Dinnertime during the next few months gets hectic and the usual fallback position is to eat out, eat quickly and get to homework or whatever.

Last week Sandra, my wife, tells me "This year we are going to do it different, we're going to eat at home and work at making it happen." So for the last two weeks, Sandra has prepared dinner that we have enjoyed as a family. Here is the funny rub; we are currently in a house that we are getting ready to remodel. And instead of using the oversized dining room, we have gathered around the family room coffee table for dinner. The typical low coffee table that you need to slide your knees under to eat from (kinda like a Japanese restaurant.) Can I tell you something? This informal setting (the TV off, of course) has stimulated so much conversation that Sandra and I have rethought the remodel in order to make sure we can continue this mode.

As I sat down to write this column, I reflected on our trip to Italy two years ago where we had a home and shared many homemade dinners in the part of the world where "slow food" is the norm and not the exception. I say let's make it the norm here in America, let's slow down and enjoy our meals and our time together. Let's make "fast food" obsolete. A funny note; the other day I set out to find some corned beef. Our local market didn't have any and Whole Foods (which has the best) was also sold out as well. In my mind, I was visualizing markets where they might have it, and do you know that I visualized myself standing in line at the meat market in Lago de Garda, Italy. Do you think I have fond memories of that place? Anyway, slow down, enjoy your food and wine. Live life!

Membership in *THE VINTERS SERIES* is open to anyone with an interest in and an appreciation for superb wines... and excellent wine values. Membership is FREE. For more info write:

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
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| FAX:                          | (626) 303-2597   |
| Online:                       | <a href="http://www.WineoftheMonthClub.com">www.WineoftheMonthClub.com</a> |
| Newsletter written by:        | Elizabeth Schweitzer, Master Sommelier                                     |

## THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #1



**L**ake Breeze Winery is located on the banks of the Bremer River in South Australia. It's surrounded by huge red gum trees and overlooks the Follett Family Vineyard. In 1890 Arthur John Follett settled on the property and planted the first vineyards. Early in its history the farm was known for its superior Illawarra dairy herds, as well as its vineyards. Today the vineyards are still prosperous and still carefully tended by the family. Winemaker Greg Follett was raised on the property, along with his two brothers and two sisters. After graduating with a degree in Wine-making, Greg worked in California, France, and other areas of Australia before returning to the family vineyard in 1992. Greg relies on his brothers, Roger and Tim, to manage the vineyards and to provide him with consistently outstanding fruit. The majority of the fruit used is carefully selected from vines which are between 25 and 35 years old. Greg believes that Lake Breeze Winery's greatest assets are these old vines and the concentrated fruit that they produce. We believe that the winery's greatest asset is the skill of

four generations of grape-growers and winemakers bottled in their quality wine.

The vineyards are located in Langhorne Creek, one of Australia's oldest and fastest growing wine regions. The afternoon breezes from Lake Alexandria create a cool climate, which allows for a longer, more evening-ripening period. This climate, along with the deep, rich, alluvial soil produces award-winning wines year after year. Lake Breeze is one of Australia's most celebrated boutique wineries. Since 1994 the winery has captured 13 trophies and 47 gold medals in Australian wine shows. "Bernoota," named for the family homestead, is a blend of Shiraz (60%) and Cabernet Sauvignon (40%). After open fermentation, the wine is aged 20 months in American and French oak barrels. The result is a deep crimson color. This elegant, fruit-driven wine has aromas of blackberry, plums, currants, and black cherries. The palate is smooth, round, and full of fruit with hints of spice and soft tannins. The finish is long with a touch of bitter chocolate. Try it with our Seared Beef recipe on page 5. Delicious!



### 2001 LAKE BREEZE BERNOOTA

**Shiraz  
Cabernet  
Sauvignon**  
(shear- ahz,  
ka-bur-nay saw-  
veehn-yawn)

### Langhorne Creek Australia

#### Color:

Deep crimson

#### Nose:

Blackberry, plums,  
currants, black  
cherry

#### Palate:

Smooth, round,  
spice, soft tannins

#### Finish

Long with bitter  
chocolate

#### CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now, or cellar  
for 4 to 5 years

|       |                       |               |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|
| V306E | Retail Price:         | \$21.99/each  |
|       | Special Member Price: | \$15.99/each  |
|       | Reorder Price:        | \$13.99/each  |
|       | 37% Discount          | \$167.88/case |

## THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #2



**D**ashwood brings us another outstanding choice for our ABC (Anything But Chardonnay) white wine selection. This 2005 Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand's Marlborough region is nothing short of delicious. The Marlborough region, situated at the top of the South Island, is blessed with more sunshine hours than any other region in New Zealand. This wine was produced from fruit grown in the Wairau and Awatere Valleys. Blending grapes from these two fabulous growing regions has created a wine with both the aromatics from Wairau and the mineral notes from the Awatere. The 2005 Dashwood Sauvignon Blanc comes from the Vavasour Winery. Over 100 years ago the Vavasour family settled in the Awatere Valley of New Zealand. In 1985 they planted their first 30-acre vineyard on their "home block," and established the Vavasour Winery. They are dedicated to the region, and believe that "all great wine is made in the vineyard." They've capitalized on their vineyard's exceptional

location by making every effort to match their grapes and their viticultural techniques to the local conditions.

The 2005 growing season produced small yields because of cool, wet weather during late 2004 when the vines were flowering. This smaller crop still had ample time to fully ripen during the warm summer and autumn months. As a result, the 2005 Dashwood Sauvignon Blanc has good concentration and flavor. It's a classic Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc. It has lush, ripe fruit without any excessive herb or grassy characteristics. It has a very pale lime, yellow color. The nose is very engaging with notes of lime, pepper, melon, mango, kiwi, and is there a hint of coconut as well? The mouth feel is round and almost creamy with passion fruit, lime and a tingly, stony flavor. It is all you could want in kiwi Sauvignon Blanc. It has the Vavasour "golden touch." Unscrew its convenient cap, and pair it with smoked chicken, goat cheese or salmon. See our salmon recipe on page 5. Cheers!



**2005**

**DASHWOOD**

**Sauvignon  
Blanc**

(saw-veehn-yawn  
blahn)

**Marlborough  
New Zealand**

**Color:**

Pale, lime yellow

**Nose:**

Lime, pepper,  
melon, kiwi

**Palate:**

Round, creamy,  
passion fruit, lime

**Finish**

Crisp, clean

### CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now or within  
the next 18 months

|       |                       |               |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|
| V306F | Retail Price:         | \$16.99/each  |
|       | Special Member Price: | \$13.99/each  |
|       | Reorder Price:        | \$10.00/each  |
|       | 41% Discount          | \$120.00/case |

## ADVENTURES IN GOOD FOOD



Australians love eating good beef with good red wines. Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon have a great affinity for beef. A glass (or two) of Bernoota Lake Breeze with this recipe will make a perfect meal.

### **SEARED BEEF WITH MUSHROOMS, GARLIC, AND BASIL POLENTA**

Serves 6.

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

1/4 cup porcini mushrooms, dried  
1/4 cup olive oil  
2-1/2 pounds rump or filet steak, cut into 6 slices  
1 brown onion, minced  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
5 oz. fresh shitake mushrooms, sliced  
5 oz. button mushrooms, sliced  
3 oz. Bernoota  
1 cup beef broth  
2 Tbs. parsley, minced  
Extra parsley for garnish  
2 cups basil and garlic polenta  
(or you may use wild brown rice instead)  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

#### **PREPARATION:**

Soak the porcini mushrooms in boiling water for 20 minutes. Drain and chop. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a sauté pan, and cook the beef for a few minutes of each side. Remove from pan.

Sauté the onion and garlic for a few minutes. Combine the chopped porcini with the sliced shitake and button mushrooms. Cook over high heat until they are soft. Add the wine and broth, bring to a boil, and then simmer, about 10 minutes.

Remove from heat, add parsley, and season with salt and pepper. Serve the beef over the polenta or wild rice with a glass of Bernoota. Enjoy!

Cucumbers and horseradish are so complementary to the flavors in the Dashwood Sauvignon Blanc. This easy recipe is sure to become a favorite.

### **SALMON WITH CUCUMBER- HORSERADISH SAUCE**

Serves 4.

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

4 6-ounce salmon steaks, cut 1" thick.  
1/3 cup finely chopped cucumber  
2 Tbs. mayonnaise  
2 Tbs. plain yogurt  
1 tsp. prepared horseradish  
1 Tbs. butter, melted  
1 tsp. snipped fresh dill  
1 small cucumber, sliced  
8 sprigs fresh dill for garnish

#### **PREPARATION:**

##### *For sauce:*

In a small bowl combine cucumber, mayonnaise, yogurt, and horseradish. Cover and chill until serving time.

##### *For salmon:*

Combine butter and dill, set aside.

Grill salmon on the greased rack on an uncovered grill directly over medium coals for 8 to 12 minutes or just until fish begins to flake easily when tested with a fork. Turn once and brush occasionally with butter mixture.

Serve salmon with sauce, garnished with cucumber slices and fresh dill sprigs. Enjoy with a chilled glass of Dashwood Sauvignon Blanc.

## TASTING NOTES



**WINE:**

Date Tested \_\_\_\_\_

Color \_\_\_\_\_

Nose \_\_\_\_\_

Tasted \_\_\_\_\_

### Tracking Notes

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**WINE:**

Date Tested \_\_\_\_\_

Color \_\_\_\_\_

Nose \_\_\_\_\_

Tasted \_\_\_\_\_

### Tracking Notes

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

## THE VINTNERS SERIES CELLAR NOTES







*A report on how previous VINTNERS SERIES Selections are faring with age.*

March 2005 Cabernet/Merlot, 2000. Brookland Verse 1. Drink or cellar for 3 years.  
Sauvignon Blanc, 2002. White Oak. Drink now.

**Need Another Binder?** When your binders bulge with newsletters,  
just call us and we'll send you additional binders.

## EARLIER SELECTIONS



| ITEM # & DESCRIPTION  | QTY | MEMBER<br>REORDER<br>PRICE      | TOTAL |
|---|-----|---------------------------------|-------|
|  <b>#V306E</b> - Shiraz/Cab, 2001. <i>Lake Breeze</i><br><i>"Blackberry, currants and black cherry"</i><br>Retail Price \$21.99 <b>37% Discount</b>  |     | \$13.99/Each<br>\$167.88/Case   |       |
|  <b>#V306F</b> - Sauvignon Blanc, 2005. <i>Dashwood</i><br><i>"Lime, kiwi, passion fruit"</i><br>Retail Price \$16.99 <b>41% Discount</b>  |     | \$10.00/Each<br>\$120.00/Case   |       |
|  <b>#V306G</b> - Grenache, 2003. <i>Chat Mourgues du Gres</i><br><i>"Earth, pepper and herbs"</i><br>Retail Price \$15.99 <b>19% Discount</b>  |     | \$12.99/Each<br>\$155.88/Case   |       |
|  <b>#V306H</b> - Sauvignon Blanc, 2005. <i>Pomelo</i><br><i>"Grapefruit, floral, lemon grass"</i><br>Retail Price \$12.99 <b>16% Discount</b>  |     | \$10.99/Each<br>\$131.88/Case   |       |
|  <b>#V206E</b> - Pinot Noir, 2004. <i>Dashwood</i><br><i>"Plums, currants, licorice"</i><br>Retail Price \$17.99 <b>22% Discount</b>   |     | \$13.99/Each<br>\$167.88/Case   |       |
|  <b>#V206F</b> - Vermentino, 2005. <i>Uvaggio</i><br><i>"Nectarine, cantaloupe, guava"</i><br>Retail Price \$15.99 <b>31% Discount</b>  |     | \$10.99/Each<br>\$131.88/Case   |       |
| To order by phone call TOLL FREE <b>1-800-949-WINE</b> (1-800-949-9463)<br>Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm (Pacific Time)<br>To order by mail or fax please complete this order form.<br>Fax <b>626-303-2597</b> (24 hours a day)<br>Or mail to: <b>WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB</b> P.O. Box 660220, Arcadia, CA 91066<br>Or shop online at: <b>www.WineoftheMonthClub.com</b> |     | Sub-Total                       |       |
|   |     | 8.25% CA Sales Tax              |       |
|   |     | S & H*                          |       |
|   |     | <b>EARLIER SELECTIONS TOTAL</b> |       |

\*For shipping and handling charges, see other side.

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☐ Please charge total to my: ☐ Discover ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

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MONTH YEAR

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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State \_\_\_\_\_

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## GIFT ORDERS



It's the Perfect Gift for a... *Thank You, Housewarming, Wedding, Anniversary, Congratulations, Holiday, Father's & Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Christmas & New Year's. Business Thank You, Bon Voyage... or just to say "I Love You!"*

| GIFT #                | THE VINTNERS SERIES GIFT MEMBERSHIPS   | QTY                          | PRICE                             | TOTAL              |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 10V                   | 2 Bottles Current club selections  |                              | \$33.50*                          |                    |
| 20V                   | 6 Bottles Assortment of recent selections  |                              | \$94.00*                          |                    |
| 30V                   | 12 Bottles (1 Case) Assortment of recent selections  |                              | \$185.00*                         |                    |
| 4VQGP                 | 4 Month Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES<br>Subscription: 2 Bottles every quarter for one year (8 bottles total)        |                              | \$123.50*                         |                    |
| 5VGP                  | 6 Month Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES<br>Subscription: 2 Bottles every other month for one year (12 bottles total)   |                              | \$183.50*                         |                    |
| VGP                   | 1 Year Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES<br>Subscription: 2 Bottles each month for the next 12 months (24 bottles total) |                              | \$363.50*                         |                    |
| SHIPPING AND HANDLING |  |                              |                                   |                    |
| FOR GIFT ORDERS       |  | FOR EARLIER SELECTION ORDERS |                                   |                    |
| Gift Number           | CA Shipping Out-of-State Shipping  | Number of Bottles            | CA Shipping Out-of-State Shipping |                    |
| Gift #10V             | \$ 6.97 \$ 9.02  | 1 - 2                        | \$ 6.97 \$ 9.02                   | Sub-Total          |
| Gift #20V             | \$10.95 \$16.90  | 3 - 4                        | \$ 7.95 \$11.30                   | 8.25% CA Sales Tax |
| Gift #30V             | \$15.65 \$27.60  | 5 - 6                        | \$10.95 \$16.90                   | S & H              |
| Gift #4QGP            | \$27.88 \$36.08  | 7 - 8                        | \$12.85 \$21.15                   |                    |
| Gift #5VGP            | \$41.82 \$54.12  | 9 - 10                       | \$14.20 \$24.25                   | GIFT ORDERS TOTAL  |
| Gift #VGP             | \$83.64 \$108.29   | 11 - 12                      | \$15.65 \$27.60                   |                    |

Please call for shipping prices outside CA in states where permissible.

\*Gift wrapping included.

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MONTH YEAR

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Phone (evening)

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1. All wine assortments, as well as the first month of WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB membership, will be handsomely gift boxed. A card will be attached with your greeting.
2. Shipments are made by United Parcel Service and are guaranteed to arrive in perfect condition.
3. All recipients must be 21 years or older.
4. If any of the items to be included is out of inventory, we guarantee that we will substitute a product of equal or superior quality. Call us for weekend delivery.



## INSERT FRONT

THIS MONTH'S  
SELECTION #3

France's Rhône Valley is blessed with a Mediterranean climate; it's warm and sunny with seasonal rain. A strong wind, the Mistral wind, blows across the vineyards, keeping the region dry and the grapes disease-resistant. The unique terroir of the region gives Côtes du Rhône wines their unique characteristics, with the mistral wind distinguishing the northern and southern Rhône. (In general, a vineyard's terroir is the combined effect of the climate, soil and grape variety.) Costières de Nîmes (cos-t' yair duh neem) is an appellation in a delta region of southern France. (It was previously called Costières du Gard before changing its name in 1989.) The vineyards cover the area between Nîmes and the Petit Rhône, one of the rivers of the delta rim in Camargue, where the Languedoc meets Rhône. The area is sometimes affectionately called Châteaunuef du Pape South. Costières de Nîmes is different from other appellations in the Rhône because of its soil. The soil is made of round pebbles carried by the Rhone River

during the Mesozoic period. This unique terroir is called grès, and it gives the wines from this area their unique personality.

Château Mourgues du Grès is owned by Anne and François Collard. François produces what many feel are the best-valued and best tasting wines found in the southern Rhône region. François aims to produce wines that are true to their terroir, with balance and fruitiness. This month's selection, "Terre de Feu" (i.e., ground of fire), is accessible, charming, and easy to drink. The 2003 vintage was produced from one of the hottest and driest summers in years. The resulting wines have great concentration and heat. The color is medium purplish black. The nose is assertive yet friendly with elegant berries, earth, pepper, and some herbs. On the palate, the wine is light, charming, soft, and full of warm fruit and spices with a soft and elegant finish. This is a wine that will be best consumed over the next two to three years. It's a great pairing with meat stew or bacon quiche.



2003

CHATEAU  
MOURGUES  
DU GRESGrenache  
(gren-naush)Costieres De  
Nîmes  
FranceColor:  
Purplish blackNose:  
Berries, earth,  
pepper, herbsPalate:  
Light, charming,  
warm fruitFinish  
Soft, elegant

## CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now or over the  
next two to three years

|       |                       |               |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|
| V306G | Retail Price:         | \$15.99/each  |
|       | Special Member Price: | \$14.99/each  |
|       | Reorder Price:        | \$12.99/each  |
|       | 19% Discount          | \$155.88/case |

## INSERT BACK

THIS MONTH'S  
SELECTION #4

"Our Pomelo Sauvignon Blanc reminds us of the coral-pink tangy juice from a pomelo," says winemaker Randy Mason. "Plus, it's just fun to say!" A pomelo, sometimes called the Chinese grapefruit, is a giant citrus fruit native to Malaysia. Fortunately, the Pomelo Sauvignon Blanc is made with 100% Sauvignon Blanc from Lake County, California. Lake County is emerging as a premium wine growing region. Lake County's clean air (the cleanest in California); its clear, cool nights with limited fog; and its rich, red soils are very attractive to winegrowers. As one of the leading Sauvignon Blanc winemakers in the United States, Randy Mason recognizes the excellence of Lake County grapes. His vino vita includes over twenty years experience making wines for distinguished wineries such as Lakespring and Chappallet. In 1993 he and his wife Megan established Mason Cellars in Napa. Pomelo is the name of a new

and separate wine label. Pomelo's vision is to create high quality wine that is consumer friendly because it's reasonably priced and ready to drink now.

Good grapes in the hands of a craftsman can create a wine of great value. Randy is hands-on during the complete winemaking process. He sets the time for harvest, tastes the juice every day during fermentation, and decides when the wine is ready for bottling. Each bottle of Pomelo Sauvignon Blanc is made with loving care for our enjoyment. The wine's color is a clear, silvery straw. The nose is bright, fresh and lively. There is subtle grapefruit, floral, lemon grass, and star anise flavors. The palate is very snappy and clean with grapefruit and green herbs. There are no signs of oak. The finish is long and full. Sauvignon Blanc is the quintessential white wine that is an ideal friend for white meat, olives, fennel, watercress, feta cheese and sharp cheddar.



2005

POMELO

Sauvignon Blanc

(saw-veehn-yawn-  
blahn)Lake County  
California

Color:

Clear, silvery straw

Nose:

Grapefruit, floral,  
lemon grass,  
star anise

Palate:

Snappy, clean, no  
oak, grapefruit

Finish

Long, full

## CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now or within the  
next 18 months

|                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| V306H Retail Price:   | \$12.99/each  |
| Special Member Price: | \$11.99/each  |
| Reorder Price:        | \$10.99/each  |
| 16% Discount          | \$131.88/case |