

FEBRUARY 2010

WINES Evaluated: 250

WINES Rejected: 230

WINES Approved: 20

WINES Selected: 4

The Vintners Series

WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB®

This month features the hottest of the hot wines. The clonal selection of Merlot is now important to us as our Frosted Cake proves. Soft, supple and featuring everything you want in the grape. It was great fun to reunite with old friend Louis Lucas of Lucas & Lewellen. Dad featured wines with his grapes back in the 70s and it's nice to see he's still got it. Nero d'Avola is not just the hottest red grape in Sicily, it may be one of the hottest on the planet. Our Pinot Grigio is also a very sought-after grape here in California.

MERLOT, 2007. FROSTED CAKE, NAPA VALLEY, CA

Does Merlot get any better than this? Maybe if you spend two to three times more money. Classy fare made to go with classy food.

RIESLING, 2008. LUCAS & LEWELLEN, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CA

We love Riesling from almost everywhere. Tasting a

particularly great one from our own state makes us love it even more. Lots of peach and nectarine with great acidity to match up against any food you want to try with it. Or, best of all, drink it all by itself.

NERO D'AVOLA, 2008. LAMURA, SICILY ITALY

This grape may not be a household word yet, but it will be soon. It is in our house. So much flavor for such little money makes you wonder why it hasn't taken over the world of wine. We're sure it's just a matter of time.

PINOT GRIGIO, 2008. VILLA SAN MAURICE, CALIFORNIA

This wine is perfect math. Take one winery owner who has a penchant for quality and the resources to realize them. Add one winemaker who has made wine all over the world and knows what great wine tastes like. Finally add heavenly grapes and you have the formula for great wine. One sip will do ya.

INSIDE THIS MONTH

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Join us on the Web: www.WineoftheMonthClub.com

A NOTE FROM YOUR CELLARMASTER



Paul Kalemkarian

Is it two thousand ten or twenty ten? Regardless, I can't believe it's here. We were so blessed with a successful Christmas season and we look forward to providing "raving fan" customer service. To all our new members and gift recipients, that is my new buzz phrase, "raving fans." In other words, I want you so excited to be part of our organization that you tell your friends about us, that you become "raving fans!" And if that is ever not the case, I want to personally hear about it. My email address is PaulK@womclub.com.

Please let me know when I can help you in any way in the wine world!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Kalemkarian".

Paul Kalemkarian

WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH?

I just learned that the contraction for Web Log. is BLOG! Here I am talking about our blog and all the fun stuff we are doing with the web and my father (he's 81) asks, "What does BLOG mean?" I must have looked dumbfounded because I replied, "Blah, blog ahhh, I think... umm... I really don't know!"

So I asked...and I am excited to say that we have our own BLOG, and I invite you to participate in some fun, interesting, maybe even obnoxious dialogue. You can present your views, check the calendar, watch Tuesday's wine tasting on the web, exchange ideas, complain, laugh, criticize or glorify my wines (they are all guaranteed regardless) and maybe actually pick up a point or two.

I want to hear from you. My mother says I'll talk to anyone that will listen to me, and I do! So let's rap... It's like I tell my friends and family, "Don't tell me you couldn't get a hold of me. I've got every source of communication known to man. If you can't get a hold me then you didn't try."

I am not sure what lies ahead with Twitter, Facebook and the other social media outlets...I can tell you that it is the mode of communication for every generation behind me...I am 51. One of my best friends was clipping WSJ articles for his USC Finance Major son. Finally, after about two weeks of this paper transfer, his son says, "Dad, please stop clipping these articles for me, I have already read them on my phone." You see; this generation has its news sent to them, and only the news they want to read about.

I love the medium as well, and am looking forward to sharing ideas, recipes, articles and whatever is on your mind with the rest of our BLOG members.

Our BLOG address:

www.wineofthemonthclub.ning.com

Membership in *THE VINTNERS 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:

WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB

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Online: www.WineoftheMonthClub.com

Newsletter written by: Ed Masciana, Wine Author

THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #1



We tend to think of wineries planting grapes; watering them on occasion and then, when the time is ripe (notice the play on words?) picking them and making wine. Well, as true as that may be, there is so much more that goes on here that's worth discussing.

When we first tasted the Frosted Cake Merlot, we were knocked out by the integration of flavors, the fullness of those flavors without being overdone and the long, beautifully balanced finish. We innocently asked how the wine was made and instead of the usual grapes to wine diatribe, we got a lesson in clonal selection.

All grapevines are not created equal. Some of them are more resistant to certain diseases. Some can stand hotter or cooler weather during the growing season and some can make the same quality of wine with larger yields than others. Whew! We had no idea how important this was.

The young winemaking team at Frosted Cake obviously does. They chose to plant Merlot clone 181 (our new favorite number!). Instead of choosing a clone that would produce more grapes, thus increasing yield

and getting more grapes for your money, they chose a clone that would actually produce less grapes per vine so that each grape would have more flavor and intensity. They also chose to plant it on the most expensive vineyard land in the United States, the Napa Valley. Most wineries plant a variety of clones. Many have 181 for flavor and intensity but also plant clones that produce more grapes per vine so that they can have higher yields. Frosted Cake is one of the few wineries that go for the best they can without regard for quantity.

As if that isn't enough, they also use exclusively Bordeaux yeast for slower fermentation and lower alcohol levels. They use the most expensive grape crusher made, which very gently presses the grapes to extract flavor without extracting bitter tannins from crushed stems and seeds. And finally, they age the wine in the most expensive French oak barrels, half of which are new at a cost of over \$1,000 a piece. Makes you wonder how they make any money when they can deliver a wine like this at this price.

No more questions. Just enjoy this gem.



Merlot
(Mare-low)

2007

**FROSTED
CAKE**
Napa, California

Color:
Deep purple

Nose:
Currant, black
cherry and chocolate

Palate:
Very clean cranberry
and soft tannins

Finish
Long and
foreboding with
cherry and vanilla

WOMC Rating
91 Points

CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now
through 2012

V210E	Retail Price:	\$22.99/each
	Special Member Price:	\$16.99/each
	Reorder Price:	\$13.99/each
	39% Discount	\$167.88/case

THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #2

The Vintners Series

WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB

Judge Royce Lewellen first met Louis Lucas shortly after he moved from Solvang to Santa Maria in 1975. Both were members of the Santa Maria Wine & Food Society and the Rotary Club of Santa Maria. Louis was growing wine grapes in the Santa Maria Valley and selling them primarily to wineries in Napa and Sonoma Counties. Louis and Royce became friends, especially enjoying the Wine and Food Society events together. In 1989, as a Superior Court Judge, Royce performed the ceremony when Louis and his wife, Jill, were married.

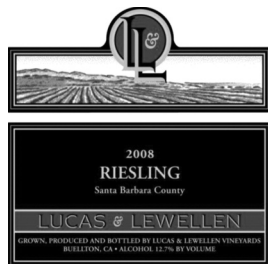
In January of 1996, Louis called Royce and told him he was considering selling one or the other of his two vineyards. Royce bought half the vineyard and by the end of that conversation, Lucas and Lewellen Vineyards was in business! They soon started planting Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling in the prime Goodchild Vineyard, a project that continues to this day as wine grapes are replacing kiwis and the old orchard.

In 1997, after a long negotiation, they bought Valley View Vineyard near Solvang. The Lucases moved into the home on that site overlooking the vineyard,

and Louis went to work improving the pruning and trellising, increasing the vine density, and planting every available corner to more vines. By 1998, they had bought their neighbor's vineyard in Los Alamos, already planted to 19 different varieties, and again Louis went to work improving the vineyard and planting the last available acreage.

Growing and selling premium wine grapes was a challenging business, but the lure was irresistible to see how well they could make their own wine from grapes they knew were world class. In 1998, after first making wine in other people's wineries, they saw the need to gain complete control of the process with their own state-of-the-art facility. Dan Gehrs came aboard as a consulting winemaker and they built their winery in Buellton. The tasting rooms in Solvang soon followed and today it is not just a wonderful vineyard and winery but a lovely place to visit as well.

Our selection is an exciting Riesling reminiscent of the great wines of Germany. That it is grown on chalky soils in a cool climate accounts for the presence that can amplify any food it is paired with.



Riesling
(Rees ling)

2008

**LUCAS &
LEWELLEN**
Santa Barbara
County,
California

Color:
Golden straw

Nose:
White peach

Palate:
Lovely peach,
lemon peel and
nectarine

Finish
Crisp and clean
with a peach jam
component

WOMC Rating
91 Points

CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now
through 2012

V210F	Retail Price:	\$17.99/each
	Special Member Price:	\$12.99/each
	Reorder Price:	\$10.99/each
	39% Discount	\$131.88/case

PASTA WITH CHEESE AND SHRIMP

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp. butter
3 tbsp. flour
1 cup half & half, room temperature
1/2 cup grated Jarlesberg cheese
1/4 grated Parmesan cheese
Small red pepper, cored,
seeded & sliced
Small green pepper, cored,
seeded & sliced
1/4 cup olive oil
1-2 cloves garlic, grated
8-10 shrimp, peeled & deveined
10-20 bay scallops
1/4 cup Lucas & Lewellen Riesling
1/2 tsp. basil
1/4 tsp. tarragon
Salt & pepper to taste
8 oz. fresh linguine

PREPARATION:

Heat 1/2 the olive oil in a large frying pan. Sauté the garlic, shrimp and scallops for 2-3 minutes and reserve. Add the rest of the olive oil; sauté the peppers 2-3 minutes. Add the wine, reduce heat to a simmer, cook for 1-2 minutes and return the shrimp and scallops to the pan. In a saucepan, melt the butter. Add the flour and whisk to make a roux 1-2 minutes. Add the half & half in a steady stream while stirring constantly with whisk. When thickened add cheeses and spices. Salt and pepper to taste. Boil 4 quarts water and cook pasta al dente, drain and put in a large bowl. Add the seafood and vegetables to the white sauce. Pour over the pasta and mix well. Serves 4. Pair with *Lucas & Lewellen Riesling*.

STEAMED CABBAGE-BEEF ROLLS

INGREDIENTS:

1 cabbage head
1 pound lean ground beef
1 onion chopped
1 1/2 cups cooked rice

3 tablespoons butter melted
1/2 cup soft bread crumbs
1/4 teaspoon ground sage
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 dash ground nutmeg optional

Tomato Sauce:

4 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 cups tomato juice

PREPARATION:

Cut the core from cabbage. Under running water, carefully remove about 15 leaves to use for the recipe. Have about 2 quarts water boiling; add 1 teaspoon of salt. Dip the cabbage leaves in boiling water, 3 at a time, for about 3 minutes. Remove with tongs, drain and set aside.

Mix the meat, onion, cooked rice, butter, bread crumbs, sage, pepper, nutmeg and salt. Lay a cabbage leaf on a flat surface. Put 2-4 tablespoons of the mixture on each leaf, depending on the leaf size. Put the meat near the base of the leaf, fold leaf up and over the meat, turning under the sides. This will make about 15 rolls.

Place the rolls, seam side down, in a greased 2-quart casserole dish. Make two layers of the rolls. Place this dish on rack over 2 inches of simmering water in wok or large heavy pan with rack. Cover pan or wok and steam for 35-40 minutes. Serves: 6.

Tomato Sauce:

Melt 4 tablespoons butter in a skillet. Add the salt, chili powder and the flour. Mix to a smooth paste. Cook over high heat, stirring constantly, until mixture comes to a boil. Remove from heat and slowly stir in the tomato juice. Return to heat and cook until it boils and thickens pour over rolls and serve. Pair with *Lamura Nero d'Avola*.

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.

February 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2005. Kiara. Ready.
Pinot Grigio, 2006. Bargetto. Drink now.

February 2009 Zinfandel, 2006. Paso Creek. Still awesome.
Sauvignon Blanc, 2007, Slipstream. Drink up.

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 REORDER PRICE	TOTAL
 #V210E – Merlot, 2007. Frosted Cake <i>"Currant, black cherry and chocolate"</i> Retail Price \$22.99 39% Discount		\$13.99/Each \$167.88/Case	
 #V210F – Riesling, 2008. Lucas & Lewellen <i>"Lovely peach, lemon peel and nectarine"</i> Retail Price \$17.99 39% Discount		\$10.99/Each \$131.88/Case	
 #V210G – Nero d'Avola, 2008. Lamura <i>"Earth, licorice and tart cherry"</i> Retail Price \$15.99 31% Discount		\$10.99/Each \$131.88/Case	
 #V210H – Pinot Grigio, 2008. Villa San Maurice <i>"Guava, pear and roasted almonds"</i> Retail Price \$15.99 25% Discount		\$11.99/Each \$143.88/Case	
 #V110E – Cabernet Sauvignon, 2007. Sophenia <i>"Black berry, black cherry, chocolate"</i> Retail Price \$18.99 21% Discount		\$14.99/Each \$179.88/Case	
 #V110F – Grenache Blanc/Viognier, 2008. Infinity <i>"White peach and honeysuckle"</i> Retail Price \$15.99 25% Discount		\$11.99/Each \$143.88/Case	
To order by phone call TOLL FREE 1-800-949-WINE (1-800-949-9463) Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm (Pacific Time) To order by mail or fax please complete this order form. Fax 826-303-2397 (24 hours a day) Or mail to: WINE OF THE MONTH CLUB P.O. Box 660220, Arcadia, CA 91066 Or shop online at: www.WineoftheMonthClub.com		Sub-Total	
		CA Sales Tax	
		S & H*	
		EARLIER SELECTIONS TOTAL	

*For shipping and handling charges, see other side.

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MONTH YEAR

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 () ()

Phone (day) _____ Phone (evening) _____ E-Mail Address _____

IMPORTANT DELIVERY INFORMATION: We can ship to CA, CO, ID, IA, IL, MO, ND, NE, NH, NM, NV, OH, OR, TX, WI, WV, WY. Shipments cannot be made to a Post Office box. If an adult is not regularly at this address during normal UPS/Federal Express delivery hours, please specify a neighbor's, or office address, for the shipments.

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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		\$44.99*	
20V	6 Bottles Assortment of recent selections		\$114.99*	
30V	12 Bottles (1 Case) Assortment of recent selections		\$215.99*	
4VQGP	4 Month Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES Subscription: 2 Bottles every quarter for one year (8 bottles total)		\$164.99*	
5VGP	6 Month Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES Subscription: 2 Bottles every other month for one year (12 bottles total)		\$244.99*	
6VGP	1 Year Membership in THE VINTNERS SERIES Subscription: 2 Bottles each month for the next 12 months (24 bottles total)		\$484.99*	
SHIPPING AND HANDLING				
FOR EARLIER SELECTION ORDERS				
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	1 - 2	\$9.05	\$10.53	
	3 - 4	\$10.46	\$13.81	
	5 - 6	\$12.46	\$18.41	
	7 - 8	\$14.36	\$22.66	
	9 - 10	\$15.71	\$25.76	
	11 - 12	\$17.16	\$29.11	
				Sub-Total
				CA Sales Tax
				S & H
				GIFT ORDERS TOTAL

*Gift wrapping included.

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

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MONTH YEAR

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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.

THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #3



Italy's growing reputation with wine is due not only to the fact that it produces and exports more than any other country except occasionally France, but it offers the greatest diversity of wines, ranging through every color, flavor and style imaginable. Italy accounts for a mere 650,000,000 cases of wine per year, more than 20% of the world production.

Experts have increasingly proclaimed Italy's wines among the world's finest. Many of the noblest originate in the 250 officially classified zones, but a number of individualistic wines go proudly under their own titles. Many consumers abroad, perhaps unaware of the wealth of types (or perhaps overwhelmed by the numbers) have not always taken advantage of the unmatched variety of Italian wines.

Sicily is taking the lead in the production of original wines. The harsh Sicilian sun is tempered by gentle, cooling Mediterranean breezes giving perfect conditions, ideal for making wines of character, which also offer exceptional value. The three standout grapes that are indigenous to Sicily are Grillo, Nero d'Avola and Negro Amaro. Each grape has its own unique fruit

flavors and is overflowing with Sicilian character.

The major estate of Lamura recently joined forces with one of Sicily's leading cooperatives, Baglio Chitarra, in order to ensure a continuous supply of top quality grapes in one of the best winegrowing areas of Sicily. Lamura Nero d'Avola is made from Sicily's classic red grape variety grown on hillside slopes in the Marsala and Salemi areas of western Sicily.

Grapes are fermented immediately after picking in order to obtain the best possible balance of fruit, tannins and acidity. The wine is then aged in large oak tanks to give further complexity, yet not to overtake the lively fruit characteristics of this incredible grape.

Today Sicily is alive with development and innovation, resulting in a plethora of great wines. The whites are better than ever and the reds are taking their place in the world of great wines and are still a fantastic bargain.

Our selection is a fruit-driven red wine of character, which is soft, approachable and very easy to drink. Packed with red berry fruit flavors, this is a wine to evoke images of the beautiful Mediterranean island of Sicily.



Nero d'Avola
(Neh-roe Dah-vole-lah)

2008

LAMURA
Sicily, Italy

Color:
Dark purple

Nose:
Earth, licorice and
tart cherry

Palate:
Leather and earth
mixed with lots of
berries

Finish
Concentrated,
tannic with
blackberry fruit

WOMC Rating
89 Points

CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now
through 2012

V210G	Retail Price:	\$15.99/each
	Special Member Price:	\$13.99/each
	Reorder Price:	\$10.99/each
	31% Discount	\$131.88/case

THIS MONTH'S SELECTION #4



Philip Zorn has been associated with Villa San Maurice since 1991 as the consulting winemaker and head of production. Following his training in Germany at the nation's top school of enology he served in various wine making capacities at a number of premium North Coast facilities and operates his own brands under two wine companies from Napa.

The winery itself has been at the top of the curve by making Pinot Grigio for 20 years. Kevin Shannon has been the owner and founder of Villa San Maurice for 30 years. He founded Villa San Maurice as one of California's first negociant wineries. The negociant, a concept first popularized in the Burgundy and Bordeaux regions of France, blends, ages and bottles a unique brand from its own managed and selected outsourced vineyards.

From its inception, Villa San Maurice has forged strong relationships with growers in order to produce reasonably priced wines of superior quality. Their growers are located in regions that offer strong varietal character and exceptional value, including Monterey, Amador, Carneros, Lake County and the Central Coast.

Over thirty years later, Villa San Maurice wines continue to offer some of the finest California values on the market. Their premium quality, moderately priced wines are favored by premium wine retailers and, in particular, the hotel and restaurant trade. Villa San Maurice wines have built a reputation as a preferred supplier for premium restaurants around the country.

Pinot Grigio, also known as Pinot Gris, is a relative newcomer to California. Yet, in a very short time of 10 years, it has become the most sought-after white grape according to supply and demand statistics for the California grape industry. This is probably due to the fact that it is one of the most food-friendly wines on the planet. With clean fruit flavors and no oak, it matches well with fish or fowl, white meats, salads and the like.

Our selection offers a cornucopia of ripe fruit flavors and a snappy acidity that drives the flavors to a lush and long lasting finish. This is flat out one of the best Pinot Grigios we've tasted and rivals many of the best from Italy and best of all at a considerably lower price



Pinot Grigio
(Peeno Greegio)

2008

**VILLA SAN
MAURICE**
California

Color:
Light golden

Nose:
Guava, pear and
roasted almonds

Palate:
Lovely pear nuance
with honeysuckle

Finish
Very crisp with a
touch of guava

WOMC Rating
89 Points

CELLARING SUGGESTIONS

Drink now
through 2010

V210H	Retail Price:	\$15.99/each
	Special Member Price:	\$14.99/each
	Reorder Price:	\$11.99/each
	25% Discount	\$143.88/case