

AW|FUTURES

AUGUST 2013



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As you browse the August 2013 Futures offering, some words and phrases may seem out of place. Trocken? Spätlese? Feinherb? If you didn't know better you might think we had wandered into Germany. In fact, it's true: almost seven decades after Patton, Ansonia has crossed the Rhine. Not that it should be all that surprising. We (well, half of us) first discovered the delights of German Riesling during a post-law school boondoggle in the seventies. Our focus has been on French wines because we have come to know them best. But the Alsace is awfully close to Germany, which is home to some of the world's greatest terroir; so it was really just a matter of time until we turned a bit further to the east.

There's a reason we have a map near the front of every futures offering: it's because the wines that most interest us bear the stamp of the place they are from. Geography underlies both the vocabulary of French wine and the nature of great wines everywhere. And nowhere does it so thoroughly mark their essential character as in the best vineyards of Germany. In the greatest stretches of the Mosel, the river meanders through mountains, hemmed in by steep, stony slopes that call to mind the steepest of Côte Rôtie. But this place is hardly the "roasted slope" of the Rhône. Indeed, as Johnson and Robinson put it in the seminal World Atlas of Wine, these vineyards lie "as far north as grapes can be persuaded to ripen."

The critical difference in latitude makes for wines of unique character. Here, where ripening is a challenge, the wines find a wider range between the yin and yang of ripening fruit: acidity, which falls steadily as grapes ripen, and sugar levels, which rise. There are excellent dry wines here, of course, but here there are also beautiful wines that are not. German wine suffers in the American market because American wine drinkers

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order deadline: 8.25
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cling to the dry end of the spectrum. But we shortchange ourselves when we do so. The-Ansonia team needed reminding about the charm of off-dry wines, and to encourage the Ansonia Wines buyers to make their own evaluation, we are offering a sampler of four wines that range across this spectrum.

We haven't abandoned France, of course. In fact, this brochure's Sauternes offering is a bookend of sorts to the magical wine of the Mosel. There a different river casts a different spell over the grapes, as moisture and the fog create the conditions for the botrytis to do its work. Like truffles and porcini mushrooms, these are all special products that resist cultivation and industrial scale. Between the bookends we have more suggestions for wines that are true to their homes: white and red Burgundies from Chablis and the Côte d'Or; sparkling wine from Burgundy; elegant red Rhône wine from the roasted slope itself; and something simpler from further down the river. As usual, we're excited about the wines. We hope you will find a few that excite you too.

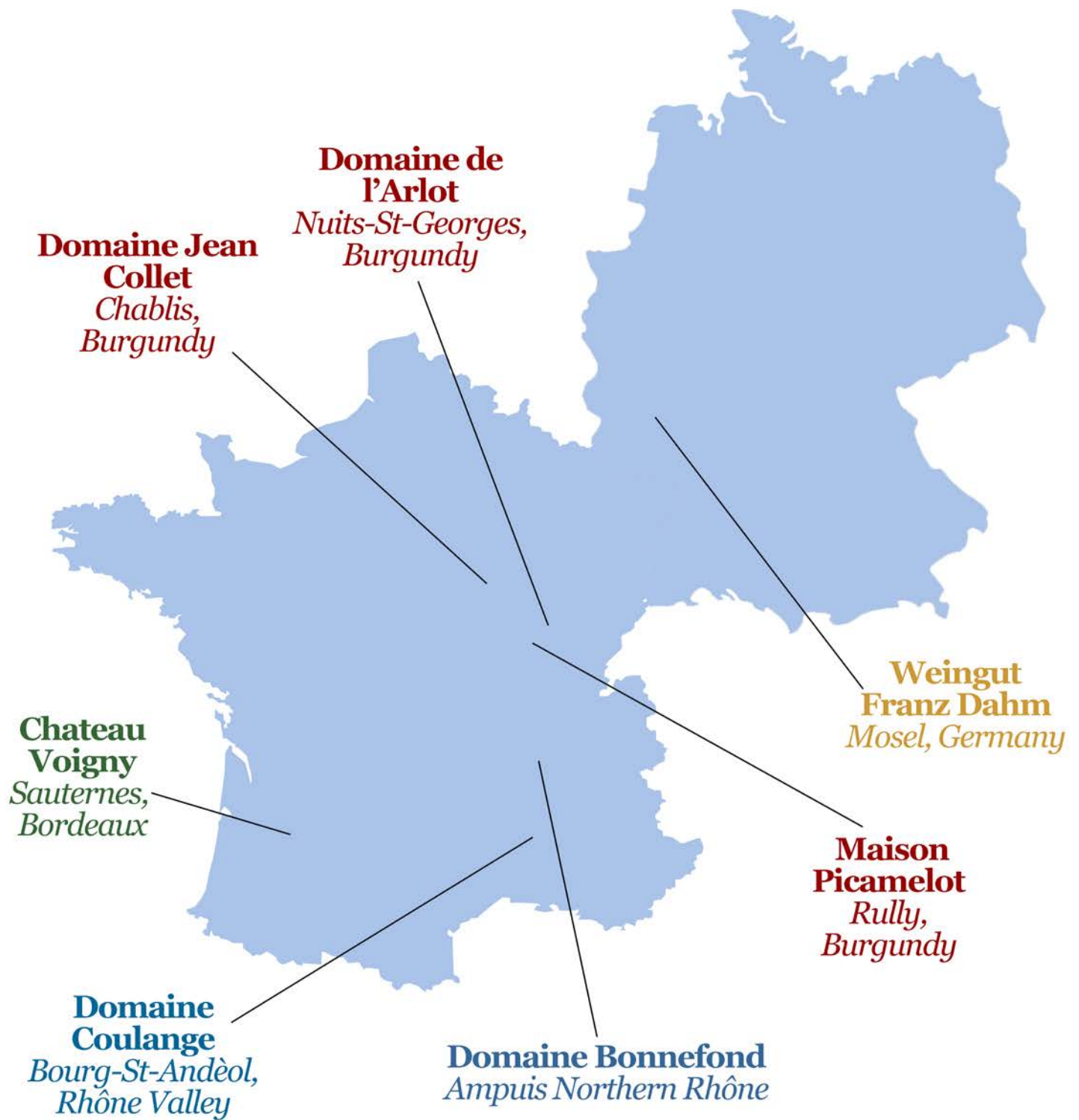
Mark and Tom Wilcox
Ansonia Wines

THE ORDER DEADLINE FOR THIS OFFER IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2013.

HOW FUTURES WORKS. Orders are in case and half-case lots (prices in the offer are per 12 bottle case unless otherwise described), and we send out invoices and collect advance payment only after confirming availability with the producers. To order, please fill out and send us the Excel spreadsheet [linked here](#); (the link is also included at AnsoniaWines.com/Futures). Shipping, pickup, and delivery options vary, as the practice in different jurisdiction varies (and changes with some regularity). There is more detail at the end of these notes on the subject, and we invite inquiries by phone, email, or chat for those unsure about what works in their area.

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order deadline: 8.25



Domaine Jean COLLET

Chablis, Burgundy

We have two Chablis producers, and though either one could probably supply our needs alone, we like them both too much to give either up. Our visit to the Domaine Collet in March only solidified this opinion – it was hard to pare the list of wines down to five. And as usual we are struck by the value in Chablis prices. Here are fine white Burgundies with premier cru wines priced at the level of village, and village wines priced like Bourgogne. Like the Gauthérons, the Collets make clean, delicious Chardonnay. Collet has a wider range (that includes a Grand Cru), but like Gautheron their spectrum runs from steely and vibrant to rich and smooth.

The Chablis **Vieilles Vignes** shows good energy and a nice mineral core. It's a wonderful foil for shellfish, whether paired classically with raw oysters, cutting into a broth of curried mussels, or complementing the sweetness of grilled diver scallops. There's enough to this wine to serve it all year round.

The Collets' **Montmains 1er cru** is raised *en cuve* (no oak), so it is Chablis in its traditional form. And like traditional Chablis, this wine begins to come into its own after a bit of time in the bottle. One of our all-time favorite Chablis was the Collets' Montmains 2001, which we imported in 2007 and which provided wonderful drinking for five years thereafter. That's why we are particularly pleased to find that a few bottles still on hand from the excellent 2008 vintage. We're a bit earlier with the 2008, relatively speaking, but if it develops with even a bit of the class and elegance of the 2001 we will all very lucky.

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Domaine Jean COLLET

Chablis, Burgundy

With the exception perhaps of the Grand Cru, the **Montée de Tonnerre 2011** is the wine most like a white Burgundy from the Côte d'Or; which is to say that there is *élevage* in small oak barrels and the marriage of fruit and oak that is the mark of white Burgundy. The 2011 vintage is one with good freshness and the prospect of relatively early maturity, so the Montée de Tonnerre is a wine for drinking over the next four years or so.

Mont de Milieu is a beautifully situated vineyard on the same slope where all the Grand Crus are found, and from time to time one reads that someone is campaigning to have it elevated from 1er cru. Tasting the Collets' 2010, one can understand. The wine seems to have an extra measure of density, and the finish is exceptionally long. At the outset the

intensity translates into *sucrosité* ("sweetness," though only in the metaphorical sense), later the backbone becomes apparent, and then there is a persistence in the mouth. As the wine ages, these elements will blend with one another. This is a wine with some great promise after some time in the cellar.



WINE

CASE PRICE

Domaine Jean Collet

<i>Chablis Vieilles Vignes 2011</i>	\$190
<i>Chablis 1er Cru "Montmains" 2008</i>	\$240
<i>Chablis 1er Cru "Montée de Tonnerre" 2011</i>	\$270
<i>Chablis 1er Cru "Mont de Milieu" 2010</i>	\$270
<i>Chablis Grand Cru "Valmur" 2011</i>	\$525

Finally, the Collets' small parcel in **"Valmur,"** highly rated Grand Cru vineyard, has yielded another impressive result. It's like the Mont de Milieu, but more so. This is a big, intense wine with much going on. And where else in Burgundy can one find a beautifully made Grand Cru for less than \$45?

Domaine de l'ARLOT

Nuits-St-Georges, Burgundy

Allen Meadows ("Burghound") called the 2011 vintage in the Côte de Nuits "an irregular but singularly seductive vintage." By this he meant that the year presented challenges that some vigneron met well and some did not; but that those who got it right made delicious wine. In fact, comparing 09, 10, and 11, Burghound placed 2011 in the middle, behind the stellar 2010 but above the highly regarded 2009. Jacques Devaiges, Olivier Leriche's replacement at Arlot, got it right in his first vintage at the helm of this excellent property, and Burghound's scores reflect that success.

The **Clos du Chapeau 2011**, from a hat-shaped parcel in the area just south of Nuits St. Georges, is a delicious bottle of Pinot Noir that Burghound expects to drink well "almost immediately." It shows good precision but enough material to fill the mouth well too. The fruits are classic Pinot: ripe dark cherries with a touch of clove and maybe cocoa.

The premier cru Clos des Forêts St. Georges is a huge vineyard by Burgundy standards (over 15 acres), and a monopole (just one owner) to boot. This gives Arlot much flexibility in selection, and they make excellent use of it. The **Cuvée "Les Petits Plets"** was created as a blend from the

youngest vines in the vineyard, but its vines were planted in the late 1980s, and so by now are all more than 20 years old. Coming from terroir of this quality and vines that are mature by any standard, the use of the "petit" in the name seems more misplaced every year. Our top restaurant customers learned long ago to ignore the name when thinking about the powerful, elegant wine contained in these bottles.

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Domaine de l'ARLOT

Nuits-St-Georges, Burgundy

If the vines of the “young vine” cuvée are more than 20 years old, what about the vines of **Clos des Forets St Georges** (pictured), the flagship bottling? Those vines date to the 1950s. The 2011 is an excellent example of this dense and eminently age-worthy wine, which Meadows calls “strikingly rich and tautly muscular.” The extra decades of age make for even greater complexity, with currant and blackberry fruit surrounded by notes of licorice and leather. This wine needs a few years to knit together in order to deliver the silky richness that will turn heads for many decades. But the reward will without doubt be worth the effort.

White Nuits St. Georges 1er cru is definitely a rarity, but this wine is far more than a novelty. **Clos de l'Arlot blanc** is a superb white Burgundy in its own right, and the tiny dose of Pinot Beurot (Pinot Gris) adds a rich honeyed note to the suppleness and elegance of the Chardonnay. We are down to our last bottle of the 2004, which has consistently proven that it belongs on a table with premier cru from Chassagne, Puligny, and Meursault. This wine shows a bit more exotic fruit, like apricot and white peaches.

WINE

CASE PRICE

Domaine de l'Arlot

<i>Côte de Nuits Village 2011</i> “Clos du Chapeau”	\$325
<i>Nuits St. Georges 1er cru 2011</i> “Les Petits Plets”	\$430
<i>Nuits St. Georges 1er cru 2011</i> “Clos des Forets St. Georges”	\$750
<i>Nuits St. Georges 1er cru 2011</i> “Clos de l'Arlot” blanc	\$750



Domaine BONNEFOND

Ampuis, Northern Rhône Valley

Our list of wines at the Domaine P&C Bonnefond in the Northern Rhône is short, but the quality is about as long as it gets.

We just love Christophe Bonnefond's regular **Côte Rôtie** cuvée "**Colline de Couzou.**" When we tasted the 2011 *en cuve* before bottling, we immediately placed a reservation. The highly touted 2010 vintage was still available, but to our palates the 2011 showed a balance and elegance that is perfectly suited to Syrah in the Northern Rhône (the place of its greatest expression). In fact, the Bonnefonds make two luxury cuvées that sell for more and generally score higher in Parker world; but we prefer this less extracted, less oaked cuvée. And it's not as if this wine lacks staying power – at home we have a dwindling cache from the 2001 vintage, and that wine is hard to match for sheer elegance right now.

We don't always buy the Bonnefonds' Condrieu, but it's never for lack of trying – famous restaurants in Lyon buy it in prodigious quantities, and often as not it's all gone when we place our orders. But we checked with Christophe just before



sending these notes around, and there is still some of the 2012 vintage on hand. Condrieu, you will recall, is from the Viognier grape, which has been more widely planted around the world in recent years. Nowhere does Viognier achieve the heights it reaches in Condrieu.

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WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Bonnefond	
<i>Côte Rotie 2011</i>	\$460
<i>Condrieu 2012</i>	\$460

Domaine BONNEFOND

Ampuis, Northern Rhône Valley

Like the Bonnefonds' Côte Rôtie, their **Condrieu** shows its elements in sublime balance. Beautiful floral aromas blend with exotic fruits –lychees and white peaches -- in a gorgeous nose best appreciated in a large balloon glass usually reserved for red Burgundy. And while the wine makes a wonderful apéritif, it is also food friendly. Our friends at Philadelphia's Vetri, a favorite restaurant customer, have been pairing our other Condrieu with seafood: roasted Turbot with squid and Sorano beans, and stuffed shell with Lobster dumplings. We think lobster is a particularly nice match.

In a sense, this wine is perfectly suited to the impatient American: though a luxury wine for special occasions, it is at its best young. In fact, it's meant to be drunk up by, say, five years after the vintage.



Maison PICAMELOT

Rully, Burgundy

We're still having fun with Crémant, and we're still pleased with last year's discovery of the Crémant producer Louis Picamelot. These are sparkling wines made by the same method and with the same care as grower Champagne, but they sell for a fraction of the price. They are remarkably versatile, working well before, during, and after the meal.

The **Crémant de Bourgogne Blanc Brut** is a particularly good value. Though it's labeled a Brut, it doesn't have that lip-smacking dryness that characterizes many such wines. There's no noticeable sweetness, but you wouldn't mistake it for seltzer. And there's a mellowness here that makes it a ready accompaniment to a simple nibble – say, a few cheese sticks before the meal. It also marries well with Crème de Cassis or Crème de Pêche to make a Kir Royale. The **Rosé Brut** is softer still, and recommended for those who prefer roundness in their sparkling wines.

The **“Terroir de Chazot”** is a more serious wine, from 100% Pinot Noir grown on a single plot in the heights above St. Aubin. It is very precise and dry, with good energy and the fine mousse that is a

marker of top sparkling wine. And if you're noticing that its price has increased since last year's offering, blame Alain Ducasse, the nine-star (three restaurants with three stars) chef. He started buying it for his namesake restaurant since we discovered it, and the increased demand has pushed the price up. But in our opinion (and in Alain's), it's still a good buy.



WINE

CASE PRICE

Maison Picamelot

<i>Crémant de Bourgogne Brut</i>	<i>\$185</i>
<i>Crémant de Bourgogne Rosé</i>	<i>\$190</i>
<i>Crémant de Bourgogne “Terroir de Chazot”</i>	<i>\$240</i>

Domaine COULANGE

Bourg-St-Andéol, Rhône Valley

There's a lot of Côtes du Rhône around, and we are shown a lot. But we never do better for quality at the price than with Christelle Coulange's **Cuvée Mistral**. The Coulange vineyards are in Bourg St. Andéol, at the northernmost end of the appellation, along the border with the Ardèche. Christelle is a young winemaker whose family has long owned vineyards, but who always sold their fruit to the cooperative. When she completed her training, she returned to the family vines on the condition that she could make and sell wine under her name. She began winning awards almost immediately, and has really hit her stride in recent years.

You can drink this delicious Grenache and Syrah blend (80% Grenache) the year round, served a bit cooler in summer and a bit warmer in winter. We often talk about a wine for hamburgers on the grill, but this one is truly an inspired choice for washing down such fare. And when the weather turns cold and your Cassoulet dish displaces your barbeque platter, this wine will be just as attractive. It's an entirely agreeable combination of dark fruit and Provençale spice that is delicious year in and year



out. The 2012 is no exception. We have restaurants that have been offering this wine by the glass for years, and we have households where it has served as the house red for just as long. It really is a wine to drink early and often.

WINE

CASE PRICE

Domaine Coulange

Cuvée Mistral 2012

\$115



Chateau VOIGNY

Sauternes, Bordeaux

Chateau Voigny lies not too far from Chateau Léhoull (our very popular Graves producer), but unlike Léhoull, Voigny's vineyards nestle in the low land along the left bank of the Garonne, which works its magic on the grapes through the botrytis cinerea, the famous "noble rot."

Like Chablis, Sauternes is another appellation whose name was borrowed and sullied by high-volume, barely drinkable jug wine in the early days of California

winemaking. Yet real Sauternes is one of the world's great dessert wines. It can live for centuries and can command prices at the very highest levels. The key to the wine is letting the grapes hang for weeks after they ripen, until mold covers the bunches, making them look well and truly ruined. But this special mold has the effect of concentrating the juice within the grapes, at the same time infusing it with an exotic, honeyed character. When the moldy grapes are finally brought in, they are immediately pressed, separating the concentrated juice from the moldy skins. The juice is then slowly fermented into a very special wine.

We went looking for a Sauternes that was both well made and affordable, and Voigny was the happy result. The 2009 vintage found its way onto a number of restaurant lists in Philadelphia and Washington, and the 2010 is a worthy successor. There are two classic pairings for Sauternes, and we recommend both heartily. First, with foie gras. Though these wines are sweet, they also have plenty of acidity, which provides an excellent foil for the fat of the liver. Second, with blue cheese. Here the interplay is between the sweetness of the wine and the saltiness of the cheese. Whether it's Roquefort, Fourme d'Ambert, or Gorgonzola, there's hardly a better way to finish a

meal. These wines tend not to be drunk every day, but each time we open one we resolve to do so more often. And because they age so well, they are a great resource to keep in the cellar for just the right moment.

WINE	CASE PRICE
Domaine Voigny <i>Sauternes 2010</i>	\$260

Weingut FRANZ DAHM

Mosel Valley, Germany

We begin our German project with what may be our best find in some time: a family producer with a tiny production in the most storied town on the Mosel – Bernkastel – and prices that are themselves reminders of the seventies. All of Dahm’s wines, like nearly all of the finest Mosels, are pure Riesling. While the grape gets little respect in the US, most sommeliers choosing their desert island case would include a few bottles of Riesling. The grape is among the most honest agents of terroir in existence. No other grape could express the precipitous, stony Mosel hillsides, as cold and harsh as they are bursting with life. These wines are ripe but low in alcohol; with acidity to carry them through decades of aging and to accommodate a wide range of sugar levels without becoming heavy or cloying; and an esthetic that may take a bit of getting used to but that will pay persistence with some of the most memorable glasses of wine you will ever sip.

(A quick note on labeling: Historically, German labeling and the classification has been singularly unhelpful for learning what’s in the bottle – a system based only on sugar levels. Sugar levels are a bit

like blood pressure levels: a single number tells you something, but not enough. As we regularly see in the Alsace, whether a wine tastes sweet or dry depends not just on the level of residual sugar, but also on the levels of acidity and alcohol. The higher the acidity, the dryer a wine will seem, and the higher the alcohol, the sweeter. Were we setting the standards, the labels would show all

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Weingut FRANZ DAHM

Mosel Valley, Germany

three elements. Where we can provide such information, we will.)

The four wines we recommend here sample the wide spectrum of styles that Riesling produces. There is a “dry” wine (trocken in German), an off-dry wine (halbtrocken, or half-dry), and two wines with considerably more sugar (spätlese, literally “late-picked”). Be sure to look at sugar/acid/alcohol levels as you consider your purchases, and as you drink them. With such information, the mysteries of the German labels fall away quite quickly.

The **Riesling Kabinett Trocken 2011 (1)** from the Badstube vineyard (residual sugar (rs) 6.9, acid (a) 6.6, alcohol (alc) 10.5%) is the easiest wine to sell in the US market. It is a food-friendly wine that tastes dry, briskly fresh, clean and precise. The fruit is joined by a mineral stoniness that calls to mind the rocky slopes along the river, and the wine is nicely mouth-filling. This is a fine choice for seafood, of course, but would also pair well with a stir-fry.

The **Halbtrocken Qualitätswein (2)** (a lower classification than the Kabinett, not specific to a vineyard) takes a step beyond the usual. With residual sugar levels almost double the Kabinett and similar levels of acidity (rs 13.7, a 7.2, alc 11%), this wine feels softer and rounder. While nice by itself, this is a good wine to try out with food as well – spicy Asian is a good match, as would be lobster or scallops. This smells much sweeter than it tastes.

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WINE	CASE PRICE
Weingut Franz Dahm	
(1) <i>Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Kabinett Trocken 2011</i>	\$180
(2) <i>Mosel Riesling Qualitätswein Halbtrocken 2011</i>	\$145
(3) <i>Bernkasteler Graben Riesling Spätlese feinherb 2007</i>	\$185
(4) <i>Bernkasteler Graben Riesling Spätlese 2002</i>	\$195
<i>Dahm Sampler (3 of each)</i>	\$180



Weingut FRANZ DAHM

Mosel Valley, Germany

The Spätlese Feinherb (3) nearly doubles the sugar level of the Halbtrocken, (2) and the second Spätlese (4) more than doubles that; so it's clear that each has moved out along the dry/sweet spectrum. In fact, each wine is noticeably sweeter than the one before it. But if you look at acidity and alcohol you'll see factors pushing back toward a sense of dryness. The **2007 Graben Spätlese feinherb (3)** (rs 22, a 6.9, alc 10.5%) is a very elegant wine, whose acidity and relatively low alcohol make it taste more off-dry than sweet. (The term feinherb, literally "delicately bitter," means off-dry and signals much the same idea as halbtrocken). Here's a wine to try out with or before a meal rather than for dessert (most Sauternes, for example, will clock in at five times the residual sugar of this wine). While it's definitely not dry, it's a far better match for food than we Americans tend to think. We just paired it with Marcella Hazan's Linguine with White Clam sauce, and the match was

strikingly good.

The **2002 Graben Spätlese (4)** has a lot more sweetness (rs 47, a 8.6%, alc 8.5%), but acidity is much higher and alcohol much lower. The net result is a wine that pairs beautifully with your fruit and cheese course at the end of the meal, and can carry on into the study afterwards. It won't seem cloying and it won't put you to sleep. And with more a decade in the bottle you will see some of the character that develops only over time.

The more we drink these wines, the more we enjoy moving beyond the world of "dry." We think you might, too, and to encourage experimentation, we're offering a Dahm Sampler – a case with three bottles of each of these wines. Buy them, try them, and let us know what you think.



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August 2013

HOW THE FUTURES PROGRAM WORKS

District of Columbia. Those who request DC delivery will be able to pick up the wine at our DC storage facility; our DC delivery point Smucker Farms Market at 2118 14th St. NW; or they can arrange with us directly for delivery. For wines delivered in the District, we collect DC's sales tax.

Pick-up in Delaware. Many of those who aren't near DC will choose to collect their wine in Delaware, the original US arrival point for this importing-services exercise. For such people, we set times for pickup at a temporary storage location and the owners pick their wine up there over the course of the two or three weeks after it arrives.

Massachusetts. We're now licensed to sell wine in Massachusetts. We store our inventory in a basement in Newton (437 Newtonville Ave), and open it up to customers by appointment. Futures customers can pick up their orders here, or we offer home delivery for orders of two or more cases.

Shipping and delivery elsewhere. In some states – so far at least New Jersey, Delaware, Florida, California, Minnesota, New York, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, Connecticut Washington, Washington DC, Vermont and Virginia – we can arrange for shipping at an additional cost that varies by location (\$3.50 per bottle to the west coast; \$2.50 per bottle everywhere else). Some states require us to collect sales and/or excise tax. If shipping interests you, let us know the place and we will figure out if it can be done.

Submitting orders. Our order form is an [Excel spreadsheet](#). Please fill it out and return it by email to info@ansonawines.com. If spreadsheets pose a problem for you, you can list the wines you want in a regular e-mail; call us at 215-498-4001; or print the form out and mail it to Mark at home: Mark M. Wilcox, 431 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Finally, in almost every importation some orders fail to reach us, so we will plan to acknowledge all the orders. If you send an order and don't hear back in a day or two, try again or telephone us.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE DEADLINE OF **SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2012**. WE WILL TRY TO ARRANGE THE PURCHASES IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.

Many thanks for your interest,



order deadline: 8.25
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