

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME “Kermit Lynch, Wine Merchant”
Thursday, April 24, 2008

Bread from Carriage House Café, 305 Stewart Ave.
www.carriagehouse.com

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES (Mixing is OK!)

Dom. Maestracci E Prove 2006 (Corsica, France)
Vermentino

\$17 each - \$15.30 (6) - \$14.45 (12)

Floral, lemon, and minerals on the nose; almond and apple join in on the palate; weight without heaviness in this summer-bright wine.

Champalou Vouvray “Fondraux” 2006 (Loire, France)

Chenin Blanc

\$21 each - \$18.90 (6) - \$17.85 (12)

This off-dry wine is rich, smelling of flowers and honey, tasting of peaches, stone, and sweet apple. Intense now and will become richer with time.

Les Traverses de Fontanès 2005 (VdP d’Oc, France)
Cabernet Sauvignon

\$12 each - \$10.80 (6) - \$10.20 (12)

The nose offers smoke, horses, and black raspberries. Light for a Cab, this smooth wine tastes of cherry and earth. Perfect for a hot summer night, burgers, pizza, lasagna.

Dom. de Fontaine “La Demoiselle” 2006 (Corbières, France)

70% Carignan, 20% Grenache, 10% Mourvedre

\$14 each - \$12.60 (6) - \$11.90 (12)

Notes of boysenberry, spice, grilled tomato on the nose; pepper and red fruit on the palate of this bistro charmer.

Ch. Thivin Brouilly 2006 (Beaujolais-Villages, France)

Gamay

\$22 each - \$19.80 (6) - \$18.70 (12)

Pull the cork and strawberry juice jumps out of this feminine wine. The palate is strawberry and raspberry with soft tannin and a medium length finish.

Kermit Lynch Côtes du Rhône 2006 (Southern Rhône, France) Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Mourvedre

\$14 each - \$12.60 (6) - \$11.90 (12)

Spicy scents of berry compote and violets; flavors of fruits and stone are perfectly balanced—so drinkable! Chocolate emerges after some aeration time.

Next week’s HANG TIME will be “Alsace vs. Germany”

EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.

Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant/ Wine Importer Role

Today’s wines were all brought into the country by a wine importer named Kermit Lynch. He is based in Berkeley, California and he began importing wines from France over thirty years ago. He also has a very successful wine shop that features only these imports. Today, he is one of the most respected personalities in wine and has been honored by the French government with the Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur award for his work promoting French wine and culture in the U.S.

There are many other conscientious, passionate wine importers like Kermit Lynch. So, to understand what Kermit does, let’s look at the significant role that the wine importer plays in bringing high quality wine into the market. A wine importer assembles a portfolio of wineries that he decides to work with. He finds new wineries through his contacts within a region (like-minded producers recommend their friends). He forms long-term relationships with the wineries, visiting and tasting several times each year to familiarize himself with that year’s vintage and to conduct business. He then markets and sells these wines either directly to restaurants and shops or he sells his portfolio through a wholesaler.

Tasting a portfolio of these wines together, we see that the wines often share commonalities. Based on the importer’s palate (her likes and dislikes), the wines will have a distinct personality and quality level. For instance, Kermit likes traditionally made, non-interventionist, authentic, “terroir-driven” wines that are lower in alcohol, natural-tasting, unfiltered, and excellent at the table. The wine importer deals with producers who share the same philosophies as she does. For example, Kermit imports wine from small family wineries (not mass-produced wine) who are focused on growing high quality fruit through using lower yields, indigenous grapes and environmentally-friendly methods. He is partial to wines that use less new oak and require less “winemaking” in general, and he prefers wines of purity that taste like the place they come from, whether that character be earthy, minerally, high acid, stony or light bodied. He doesn’t go for the saturated, extracted, big, modern, international-style wines.

Thus, we have come to depend on the wines of Kermit Lynch to reflect his particular taste and to offer high quality, unadulterated fruit and finesse, no matter what region they’re from, and despite vintage variation. We know that almost every one of his imports is made from estate-grown grapes rather than purchased fruit, and that these grapes are grown by a husband-and-wife or parent-child team.

You can find Kermit Lynch’s name and logo on the back of every bottle he brings into the country. If you like his style in the wines you taste today, you should probably look for others from his portfolio. That’s why it’s important to take note of the importer’s name on the BACK of the bottle. Some importers specialize in wine from one country and others import a range from around the world. But you’ll usually find the same quality level within an importer’s portfolio.

Other top importers whose wines we sell include Marc de Grazia (Italy), VIAS Imports (Italy), Leonardo Loscascio Selections (Italy), Weygandt-Metzler (France), Louis Dressner (France), Rosenthal Wine Merchant (France), Vineyard Brands (France), Robert Kacher Selections (France), Vine Connections (Argentina), Epicurean (Australia), Grateful Palate (Australia), Tempranillo Imports/Jorge Ordonez Selections (Spain), Terry These (Austria/Germany), and Rudi Wiest (Germany). Following a good importer is a sure-fire way to find more wines you like. Taste through these portfolios and you’ll see what we mean.