

## ORDINAIRE CLUB

2018 Julien Delrieu "Le Jeu" Chenin Blanc

Julien Delrieu is a jack of all trades, having studied bee-keeping, Trappist brewing, Italian cheesemaking, and Sake koji in Japan. In 2010, he moved to the Loire Valley, having been struck by the savage beauty of old-vine Chenin Blanc grown on the schist soils of Coteaux du Layon. With two friends, he started Les Roches Sèches, producing lovely Chenin Blancs reminiscent of their neighbor Richard Leroy—though more wild and less polished. In 2017, Julien went solo, starting up his own operation in a tiny garage/barn on the outskirts of a local farm. Luckily, Julien is still working with his prized Chenin Blanc vineyard, Le Jeu, where the vines were planted in 1973 and 1955. He harvests at maximum ripeness, macerates the grapes for three days, and then slowly presses. The result is a wine with lovely stone fruit and rocky aromatics, and a body that pairs slightly oxidative lushness with a surprising acidic tension—in other words, this is Chenin Blanc doing what it does best. I'd pair with a roast chicken and wild mushrooms sautéed with garlic and lemon—then save some for a cheese course comprised of gooey chèvre and fresh peaches.



2019 Domaine Ozil "Barry"

I was happy to see an article on Domaine Ozil in *Le Progrès*, a regional newspaper based in nearby Lyon. The article opens with a warning to readers, as if they are about to encounter some kind of extremely spicy chili pepper, or a dish composed of cow offal:

"Suspend your disbelief! Forget your prejudices! Let the wine recall the land and the people who make it. Welcome to Domaine Ozil." It's puzzling to consider why someone would be prejudiced against letting wine recall land and people. Anyway, the wines in fact do just that. Jean Daniel & Thomas Ozil took over the family domaine in Ardèche in 2013 and soon decided to stop selling wine to the influential co-op nearby. With the help of Gilles Azzoni, they slowly eschewed all chemicals in the cellar, and now make a beautiful range of juicy, affordable, totally slammable table wines—an increasing rarity, I'm afraid to say. "Barry" is mostly Grenache, with a bit of Syrah and Grenache Blanc. It's table wine. Drink it sitting around a table!



## EXTRAORDINAIRE CLUB

2018 Bergkloster Chardonnay

Four years ago we didn't carry any German wine—there just wasn't a lot of additive-free wine being produced in that country. But so much has changed. Now we eagerly await the arrivals of Martin Worner, the Brand Brothers and Schmitts. Add to that list Jason Bergkloster from the Rheinessen, whose story follows a narrative we are seeing all over Germany: parents have historic domaine with lovely vines > child goes off to winemaking school in the city and comes back with progressive ideas > they taste natural wine at the European fairs > they start experimenting with a small portion of the domaine > the new chemical-free wines totally rock > the whole domaine begins conversion to natural winemaking. Jason is currently in this final stage. While he continues to help his parents produce their more traditional wines, he has 4 hectares (out of a total of 7) to do with as he pleases. All of the farming is biodynamic, and as of 2018, all of his wines are produced completely without filtration or additions. The Chardonnay is macerated just enough to call it orange wine, but I'd treat it like a white wine: it has a zippy mineral quality that speaks to its limestone origins. Hard to explain, but I keep thinking this wine would play nicely with a bowl of Pho and a big pile of Chả giò.



2019 Sylvain Martinez "Onis"

Whenever I hear that someone has worked and trained with Olivier Cousin, I impulsively like the wines, even before I taste them. And Sylvain didn't just work a harvest and clean some tanks for Olivier—he worked with him for ten years, becoming an integral part of the family and the domaine. The picture to the right is Sylvain holding one of his first solo vintages, back in 2010. Over the past decade he has spread his wings, fulfilling a lifelong dream by purchasing the majestic cellars of l'Abbaye de Saint-Maur in Thoureil, on the right bank of the Loire between Saumur and Angers. He carries on Olivier's methods of farming with horses, harvesting in small crates, slow-pressing in a large ancestral press, and vinifying and bottling without additives. "Onis" is Pineau d'Aunis in all of its spicy, floral beauty. I love drinking this kind of wine whenever Syrah might be more traditional—with a steak or some BBQ ribs. Give it the tiniest chill for maximum freshness.

