



FALL 2021

CORTI BROTHERS

To Our Customers:

One season has come and gone and another awaits. Here are some interesting items which you might enjoy. Please remember that with current situations with shipping and such, it may be awhile before we see some calm business. But it will return.

Darrell Corti

I would like to offer some Corti Brothers labeled wines from different regions and areas. They are interesting, fine wines, and very well priced. These wines remind us wine is a drink, not an art object.

CORTI BROTHERS LABELED WINES

RIME ROSSO 2018 IGT VENETO and RIME BIANCO 2019 IGT VENETO

The **RIME ROSSO** is a soft wine composed of merlot and cabernet sauvignon from the Colli Euganei, just outside of Venice in Italy's Veneto region. This blend was then enhanced with about 10% of the press wine of the two varieties with the addition of 10% carm`ènère. (In this part of Italy, carménère is sometimes called cabernet franc, but it is carménère.) The wine we offer is "grosso modo" 75% merlot, 17% cabernet sauvignon, and 8% carménère, all said and done. It is a pretty wine that should give great satisfaction and more delight with bottle age. It was bottled this past spring.

The **RIME BIANCO** is the same wine as the first lot bottling except that it had a year's more aging in stainless steel while waiting for bottling. Still all 2019 vintage, just bottled, it is rounder and fleshier than the first bottling and is comprised of the same varieties as previous which are: chardonnay, pinot blanc, sauvignon blanc, Incrocio Manzoni (a cross of schiava and white riesling), and moscato bianco. These are all varieties cultivated in the estate vineyards. It is also a white wine which will take several more years of bottle age. That is, if you can keep your hands off it.

CORTI BROTHERS RIME ROSSO 2018 IgtVeneto 13.5 % \$10.99 750ml (#5300) \$59.00 case/6 (#5300C)

CORTI BROTHERS RIME BIANCO 2019 IgtVeneto 12.5% \$9.99 750ml (#5301) \$53.00 case/6 (#5301C)

CORTI BROTHERS RUSSIAN RIVER PINOT NOIR 2019, Baker Family Wines

This is a pinot noir produced at Dusty Baker's West Sacramento winery. (Yes, that Dusty Baker!) The winemaker is the now retired winemaker of the UC Davis winery. The vineyard is in the Russian River Valley, on Mark West Station Road, and the Moorehead Reserve refers to a couple--friends of Dusty Baker and Hank Aaron--who originally bought the grapes for this wine.

Chik Brenneman, the winemaker, brought a sample for me to taste. Finding it a very good example of Russian River fruit, I immediately said "yes" to his offer. There is not a lot of it, so don't dawdle!

CORTI BROTHERS RUSSIAN RIVER PINOT NOIR 2019 14.5% \$29.99 750ml (#5302)
\$323.00 cs/12 (#5302C)

RAMBLE Billy D. Wines taglio b barbera 2020

This is a new bottling from a winery with longtime ties to Corti Brothers. It is owned by Bill Davies, the eldest son of Jack and Jamie Davies of Schramsberg. I have known Bill since he was a child, and Corti Brothers was the first customer of his parent's winery. In keeping with this tradition, we are the first customer to have a private labeled wine bottled by Bill Davies' Ramble winery.

The name "**taglio b barbera**" is a 2020 vintage, old vine, dry farmed Barbera from Mendocino County. Bill had brought me all of his 2020 wines to taste, and in the series of wines there was a delicious Barbera. Alongside it was an equally delicious, though fuller in body, Carignan press wine. I asked if they could be blended. They were. Hence, the word "taglio" or blend in Italian. The b is for Barbera. The Barbera gained weight and the Carignan fruitiness. I think it is a lovely example of Barbera, meant to be a juicy, flavorful, fruity example.

The label, which is the **RAMBLE** label, has two vine leaves on it. One for barbera, the other carignan. Can you tell which one is which? No prizes are given, It's just an interesting exercise!

RAMBLE Billy D Wines taglio b barbera 2020 12.5% \$24.99 750ml (#5303) \$269.00 cs/12 (#5303C)

Corti Brothers AMADOR Red and Yellow Barrel GIN

This gin is a newly discovered lost lot of a bottling of a **London Dry Gin** that had been aged in one of the freshly dumped **Misson del Sol** barrels which we bought from the now closed Harbor Winery. For unknown reasons, the head of the barrel had been painted at some time with red and yellow paint, hence its name. When the gin was bottled and sent to the distributor--we sold out of the bottling--the distributor "lost" some cases in his warehouse. When they showed up on a recent inventory, I saw them listed and purchased them. What was lost has been found! There are only 30-6 bottle cases of this gin, which is not a gin--and--tonic gin, but a gin you could make a lovely riff of a Manhattan using it instead of whisky. It is particularly good with Cocchi Vermouth di Torino. You should try it with the Cocchi Riserva Reale bottling. It would also be perfect for making a Martinez cocktail instead of using Old Tom gin. Or if you really enjoy gin, try some served cold from the freezer with a squeeze of lime and some rocks rather than the normal Martini. It takes to bitters very well, and is a gin you can play with.

Bottled at 90 proof, **Amador Gin** has an amber color with a light russet tone. There is a light juniper scent, a hint of coriander seed and wood nuttiness. The light wood nuttiness, with the soft juniper attack, gives a delicate creamy character with a mouth filling flavor and a soft end. Complexity is given by a delicate sweetness that rounds out the gin's flavor. We will never be able to make this gin again.

Corti Brothers AMADOR Red and Yellow Barrel GIN 45% \$39.99 750ml (#5304)
\$215.00 cs/6 (#5304C)

Corti Brothers Selection Extra Virgin Olive Oil: Two from Italy and Two from Spain

Again in 2021, we have selected **Early Harvest** oils from MillPress, an importer/bottler of very high quality oil in Pennsylvania. Two are from Italy, and two from Spain. We buy these oils because they are very high quality and can be bottled upon demand, giving them a longer shelf life for our customers. (Shelf life in oil is from bottling, not production.)

The two Spanish oils **Hojiblanca** and **Arbequina**, are produced--one grown and produced--under the care of Marino Uceda and his daughter Mercedes. Marino Uceda is probably the most important oil technician in Spain. The Hojiblanca oil we offer is from a grove created, planted, and harvested at Antequera, near Málaga, and milled under his direct supervision. The property belongs to his wife and her brothers. Not much more needs to be said about its provenance.

The variety **Hojiblanca** (oh-he-blanka) is very famous in Spain's central area, not widely planted in the south. It gives a splendid oil, with a delicate flavor and balanced bitterness and pungency. It is a very classy cultivar, especially when harvested early as is ours. Under Marino Uceda's watchful eye, everything is done properly and with care, producing a wonderful oil for all uses. Having it properly stored and bottled upon demand, provides another quality parameter and allows us to sell this oil at a reasonable price to the consumer, assuring its maximum quality. It also helps that the owner/miller of the mill that works the olives is the brother-in-law of the man who owns MillPress.

The second Spanish oil is a pure **Arbequina**, from a grove selected by Mercedes Uceda Maza, from Ecija, near Sevilla. It is a new grove, with medium intensive spacing and produces under the watchful eye of Mercedes, a very typical, fruity, yet light style oil, typical of the variety. (Arbequina, in its intensive planting, is probably the most cultivated variety now in California.) This is not an intensive planting, and the production is more like that of traditional Arbequina in northern Spain. The fruit is milled at the same facility as the Hojiblanca. Early Harvest is important for Arbequina, since it maintains variety fruitiness which tends to become flat when riper.

(Full disclosure: Both Marino Uceda and his daughter Mercedes are tasters at the Los Angeles International Olive Oil Competition of which I am the Chairman.)

Our two Italian oils come from Puglia. They are from two different varieties: **Peranzana** and **Ogliarola garganica**, both typical of the area of Canossa di Puglia and the Tavoliere, and are from the **Sabino Leone** mill.

The **Ogliarola** (oh-lee-ah-roll-a) is from trees that are 450 years old. Technically, it is **Ogliarola garganica**, since it comes from the Gargano and is a landrace of that variety.

Peranzana is a dual purpose variety, making both a fine oil and lovely olives for eating. (It should be planted in California since it has a constant production, not cyclical, as most olive varieties.) The variety is said to have been imported to Puglia by the Prince Raimondo Sangro di San Severo (1710-1771) who brought it from Provence in France, hence its distorted name--Provenzana > Peranzana. The Prince, himself, is worth looking up in Wikipedia! The Peranzana is from a new planting from 1999.

Both oils have noted flavor characteristics and personalities. They are both medium fruity oils: the **Peranzana**, with an artichoke leaf/tomato leaf scent and a fresh artichoke heart flavor. Its bitterness and pungency are balanced. The **Ogliarola** has an herbal character, with a yellow apple tone, followed through in its flavor. Very well balanced, it is not your typical Pugliese style, such as Coratina.

Our Corti Brothers oils are all \$19.99 the 750ml bottle. They will hold well through this fall and winter and even further, and should give great satisfaction. A mixed case or 3 bottles each of the four varieties will give you a fine lesson in what high quality extra virgin olive oil is. **MIXED CASE: \$215.00 (#5305)**

**CORTI BROTHERS HOJIBLANCA \$19.99 (#5306) ARBEQUINA \$19.99 (#5307)
PERANZANA \$19.99 (#5308) OGLIAROLA \$19.99 (#5309)**

GREEN SALT—A new healthy salt alternative from a plant

In the food world there are lots of different salts. Salt is a necessary element for life. But too much salt is a problem. Perhaps **GREEN SALT**, may change the equation. **GREEN SALT** is not a salt infused with things. It is the real thing dehydrated.

GREEN SALT is not colored with another product or the addition of something to basic salt. It is made from the naturally dehydrated halophyte plant called **SALICORNIA** or **SAMPHIRE**, which grows in salty water. It is a maritime plant of which there are several types and families, some belonging to the amaranth family, which includes beets, sugar beets, spinach and chard. Salicornia grows well at twice the salinity of sea water.

Organically grown Salicornia is produced in Ensenada, Baja California, and sun dehydrated by the Noriega family who have grown Salicornia for some 20 years. The plant looks very similar to a succulent and is historically eaten in Europe and Asia. There is a great tradition of samphire in Britain, where the plant was eaten both as a vegetable and as a pickle. **GREEN SALT** is salty enough to use in place of table salt, though substantially lower in sodium. It has 50% less sodium than salt. It does contain iodine, found in sea salt. This is not your pasta water cooking salt, but a salt to be added to what you have cooked to give it a salt flavor. Salt makes food tasty. Green Salt also gives a green color to food to which it is added.

The history of Salicornia is interesting. Also called **Glasswort**, due to its use in early soda glass production, it is used in bread and biscuit making, traditional in parts of English speaking lands, and around the Mediterranean. As a halophyte plant, it is also important in reclaiming marshy, salt water tidal lands producing a plant that is good for eating raw in salads, cooked as a vegetable, and now dehydrated as “**SALT**.”

If you use a **salt cellar** at table as I do, an interesting use is to have two: one for regular white salt of the type you like and another for **GREEN SALT**. You need a salt spoon to sprinkle it on dishes, and the combination of the green color and the salt taste is very unusual. It is to be used as a “finishing” salt on dishes rather than using it for salting a cooking dish. The green color of the salt lends a greenish tinge to whatever is salted with **GREEN SALT**. If used as a condiment and for reasons where you want to lower your salt intake, yet have the flavor force, you should try **GREEN SALT**. It is not a salt substitute like others which contain potassium, but is just regular salt, with lower salinity. It is green in color and powdery, not granular. Once one becomes accustomed to this fact, your dishes will taste the same, but might look slightly different. Store cool, dry, and at room temperature.

GREEN SALT, The healthy salt alternative from Salicornia \$21.99 8.8oz bag (#5316)

MARIO FONGO GRISSINI from Rocchetta Tanaro in Italy's Piemonte

Yes, I know, I wrote about grissini in the Spring newsletter. These are different from the Spring ones. They are from the town where Giacomo Bologna created his Barbera, Rocchetta Tanaro. Mario Fongo uses the name of "**Il Panatè**" which in Piemontese dialect means "the baker." The firm started in 1945.

The grissini which we offer are of two types: one for eating with fatty cold meats, since they are made with less oil (1%) and accompany richly flavored meats like salame, coppa, prosciutto. These are the **FONGO Grissini stirati a mano H2O**. They are equally good by themselves, but serve this purpose as an accompaniment to other things. Having less oil than the other style and due to the dough's lengthy rising, they have a delicate, crunchy body. Both styles of grissini are 13-13 ½ inches long, the length of the baker's forearm, which is the measure of stretching them. Both are made with "00" Italian flour and extra virgin olive oil.

The other grissini are the **FONGO Grissini Classici stirati a mano** with extra virgin olive oil (5%) and the addition of some fresh lard to give them a slightly lighter body and more friability. These can be eaten alone, just as a snack. But they do contain some lard, which is traditional. It renders them more crispy and lighter in texture.

The terms "**Stirati a mano**" simply means that they have been hand pulled or hand worked to give the grissini their characteristic long, pointed shape. Both styles of grissini come in a clear plastic tray that is about 15 inches long. Both are dusted with fine semolina which gives a slightly dusty character to each piece and prevents them from sticking together when baking.

Due to their length, shipping is a question. Please recognize that there may be breakage in shipping. We will try our utmost to avoid breakage, but please remember that some may occur, It only means that the pieces may be a bit smaller, but equally tasty.

Both are delicious. It is up to you to chose which you prefer. But, I bet you cannot eat just one!

MARIO FONGO GRISSINI H2O (1% oil) 7 oz tray \$7.99 each (#5317)

MARIO FONGO GRISSINI CLASSICI (5% oil and some lard) 7oz. tray \$7.99 each (#5318)

TERMS OF SALE: This list supersedes all others. All taxable items, such as wine, beer, spirits, books will be taxed at the rate of 8.75%. This is for all sales since we sell in California. Foodstuffs are not taxable. Shipping will be charged at prevailing rates. **PLEASE NOTE:** In extreme weather, either hot or cold, please give us a shipping address where your order may be properly received and stored. Corti Brothers cannot be responsible for items left without protection.

LATE BOTTLED VINTAGE PORT: COCKBURN 2012 LBV (Preparing for Fall)

COCKBURN, (Pronounced Coh-burn) is a noted Port shipper whose fame made it an almost household name in Britain and which celebrated its bi-centenary as a Port shipper in 2015. It also declared a vintage in 2015. But it is also a house which has been battered from pillar to post and is now in the safe harbor of the Symington group of shipping firms, and the wines are back in the noted Cockburn style.

We made a purchase a while ago of **Cockburn LATE BOTTLED VINTAGE (LBV) 2012** and can offer it at a **spectacular price** now for your drinking this fall and winter and for keeping a few bottles just to see how they develop. 2012 was not declared as a vintage as was 2011, but there is always some very good wine that gets made in every vintage and this lot of 2012 represents just this: a lovely wine made as an **LBV**, which is the term used for wines that are from a single vintage, aged six years in wood before bottling, which date must be on the label, and are shipped, mainly ready to drink, but with keeping power.

Cockburn has been famous as a house for their delicate, yet fragrant body, and drier finish to its wines, than some other houses. This is called the "House Style." It is also what represents a port shipper's stock in trade. The house style is what gives a customer of the that house, or brand if you like, security that the wines will have a certain flavor profile and style that, when you are accustomed to them, become very recognizable. (This is also how you become a tasting expert: being able to remember taste characteristics.)

Port shippers and Champagne houses are probably the greatest examples of how to make a flavor. The tasters in both instances work hard to find wines that they have produced that exhibit the characteristics that they want in the finished blend. After being battered in the market place with perhaps the wrong partners, it is wonderful to see this noble house back in form again. Port Season is a-coming!

It was Ernest Cockburn, the last Cockburn in the firm, who famously wrote the line: "The first duty of Port is to be red."

COCKBURN LATE BOTTLED VINTAGE (LBV) 2012 \$21.99 750 ml (#5319) \$118.00 cs/6 (#5319C)

