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Madeiras**

OCTOBER 28, 2003

PIEDMONT

# The Scent of Seduction

## *Piedmont's Finest White Truffle Purée*

Unlike other famous wine regions, the best time to visit Piedmont is not in the summer, when the weather is glorious and the vines are in their full, luxurious leaf. In fact, getting a table at Guido or a room at the Felicin is relatively easy in July or August.

Instead, the time that most wine lovers make their pilgrimage to Piedmont is in November or December, when the weather is miserable and the region's fabulous wines play second fiddle to a gnarled fungus dug up from tree roots in the dead of night: the *tuber magnatum pico*, otherwise known as the white truffle of Alba.

### **Gold from the Earth**

Since the dawn of culinary history, Alba's white truffles have been revered by royalty, chefs and gourmets as possibly the greatest of all foods. It may also be the most expensive, with only caviar and saffron giving it any real competition.

The intense, pungent perfume of white truffles has long been considered erotic; it is the same aromatic component that attracts female boars to males but in an even greater concentration. Yet, the glory is fleeting; a truffle's scent begins to fade within hours of being unearthed and is largely gone within a few days.

So, to experience Alba's white truffles at their most

intense you must be in Piedmont in the fall when the freshly unearthed truffles are rushed to the best local restaurants. Food importers and restaurateurs send them by air around the world, and the experience can be wonderful, but it is rarely as great as the one you'll have at one of Piedmont's top restaurants in November or December.



### **Recreating the Magic**

Many of us who have done the fall Piedmont white truffle tour return home aching to recreate the experience. For nearly a decade we have searched for the closest approximation to fresh white truffles and have been greatly disappointed by white truffle oils and other imitation white truffle products—which rely on chemicals to recreate the ethereal smell of truffles.

We have, however, had good experiences with a handful of white truffle purées. And the very best we've found are the purées of TartufLanghe, a firm founded in 1980 by the owners of that bastion of classic Langhe cuisine, Alba's Da Beppe. Today, TartufLanghe is the only Alba white truffle producer whose truffles are *all* found on their own land.

While TartufLanghe is a major supplier of fresh white truffles to top restaurants throughout Europe, they put aside part of each autumn's harvest to produce white truffle purée. Containing a minimum of

# Alba's Finest White Truffle Purée

*Continued from Page 1*

85% white truffle, with an olive oil base, TartufLanghe's purée is considered the best of the genre not just by us, but by Peck in Milan, Dallmyer in Munich and Harrods in London. It is extremely difficult to find in the U.S.

## 2002's Gift

With its record-breaking hot dry weather, 2003 promises to be a bleak year for white truffle lovers.

Fortunately, 2002 was the opposite: autumn rains resulted in the best truffle crop since the late 1980's—both abundant and intensely perfumed. This allowed TartufLanghe to make their best white truffle purée yet. And with a shelf life of four years, we bought all we could of their December 2002 purée.

TartufLanghe's white truffle purée is a godsend for truffle lovers—providing a moderately priced and versatile means of incorporating truffle in a wide variety of dishes. A pantry essential ... and a great holiday gift.

**TartufLanghe**  
**White Truffle Purée**  
**\$35.50 30-gram jar**



## *Unlock the Magic*

The flavor of white truffle enhances a diversity of dishes. Use TartufLanghe's purée as you would fresh white truffles—adding it to warm foods just before serving. (Cooking destroys white truffle's aroma). It excels in dishes containing fats and is least at home in acidic foods (such as with tomato sauces). Here are some classic uses:

**Tajarin** — Homemade narrow egg pasta, dressed with butter, truffle purée and freshly grated parmesan.

**Fonduta** — Classic Piemontese fondue, made with cheese, eggs, milk and butter, adding purée at the end.

**Crostini** — A layer of truffle purée topped with foie gras.

**Ravioli filling** — Sautéed butter, sea salt and wild mushrooms, adding the purée at the end.

**Roasted meats** — Spread the purée just before serving.

**Eggs** — Add truffle purée to scrambled eggs, frittatas or omelettes.

## Astonishing New Releases from Zind-Humbrecht

*Three Legends-in-the-Making*

**2000 Riesling**  
**Clos Windsbuhl**  
**Vendange Tardive\***  
**97+ Rovani**  
**\$69.95**

Pierre Rovani: "This spectacular wine combines exceptional power and richness with magnificent detail and balance. Medium to full-bodied, plump, exuberant, and intense, its feminine flavor profile is dominated with spiced red berries."

**2000 Tokay**  
**Rangen-Clos St. Urbain\***  
**97 Rovani**  
**\$67.50**

Pierre Rovani: "A blockbuster of epic proportions ... has the breadth, body, and depth of a great red wine. This opulently structured offering is full-bodied, velvety-textured, and jam-packed with layers of minerals, smoke, and spice ...."

**1998 Tokay**  
**Rangen-Clos St. Urbain**  
**Selection des Grains Nobles\***  
**98 Rovani**  
**\$79.95 half bottle**

Pierre Rovani: "... 160 grams of residual sugar ... This is a raspberry, apricot, peach, spice, and toast-flavored wine with magnificent breadth and an unbelievably long finish ... it possesses brilliant focus ... an extraordinary wine."

# Dalla Valle Cabernet

*A Rare Opening Offer of a Napa Valley Cult Star*

*Dalla Valle's mystique* transcends its membership in California's cult elite. Robert Parker once called its Cabernet a "pure, unbridled expression of this varietal" and its proprietary blend, Maya, a wine of "immense stature and richness." Yet, even among serious collectors, few people know much about this legendary producer, and even fewer have had a chance to taste either of its great wines.



*Dalla Valle*

In fact, Dalla Valle's aura is rooted in reality. Production is small, and the winery's mailing list has been closed for years, leaving collectors to battle it out in the marketplace.\* But the real measure of Dalla Valle's stature is the wines, among the most extraordinary ever to come out of California.

## History

Founded by Gustav and Naoko Dalla Valle in 1981, Dalla Valle is one of those vineyards that—when you first see it—you *know* it has the capability of producing great wines. Planted to Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, it occupies a spectacular site on the eastern flank of Napa Valley, towering above the vineyards on the valley floor.

By the end of the 'eighties, Dalla Valle began to get noticed, and it reached the stars when Robert Parker gave 1992 Dalla Valle Maya a 100-point rating.

However, in 1995 Gustav Dalla Valle passed away. Naoko was faced not only with the loss of her husband and partner; her vineyards were showing signs of disease and would need gradual replanting. To secure Dalla Valle's future, she went in search of the perfect winemaker. Naoko found her in Mia Klein.

While continuing to make great wines from Dalla Valles' original vineyards, Mia has guided the estate through the difficult replanting process. But the

replanting has reduced production by 20%, making Dalla Valle's two wines scarcer than ever.

## This Offer

With demand far exceeding Dalla Valle's tiny production, few merchants in recent years have been added to the list of those receiving direct allocations at the opening price. We were delighted to be accorded that honor last month, with our first allocation of the marvelous 2000 Cabernet. Needless to say: hurry.

**2000 Dalla Valle  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
\$100.00**



A classic Dalla Valle Cabernet, combining Western Hemisphere richness with an Old World sense of balance and finesse. The bouquet is stunning, featuring ripe blue- and blackberries, chocolate, cedar and cocoa. Wonderfully concentrated, the palate is sensually textured and long. The abundant, yet soft, tannins argue for a window of drinkability spanning a decade or more.

## *1990 Bollinger R.D.*

The 1990 *têtes du cuvée* are some of the greatest Champagnes of our lifetimes. Because of their quality, most producers set them aside for their Millennium campaigns, selling virtually everything during 1999. As a result, most of these wines are rapidly disappearing from the market.

Bollinger held back its 1990 R.D. even longer, not releasing it until 2001. It, too, will soon vanish, but for now you can buy it at a *great* price.

**1990 Bollinger R.D.  
98 Parker  
\$115.00 bt. \$1,295 cs.**



*\*Or in charity auctions. At New York-Prebyterian Hospital's October 14th charity wine & food auction, a spot on Dalla Valle's mailing list sold for \$10,000.*

## SOUTHERN RHONE

# Sainte-Anne Shines

*The New Releases are the Finest Wines Since 1990*

We began importing Domaine Sainte-Anne more than a decade ago and have marveled at the amazing level of quality it sustains vintage after vintage. But that said, we have been swept away by the quality of its newest releases, easily the finest since 1989 and 1990.

Three of the releases are from 2001, and the fourth from 2000—both near-perfect years in the Southern Rhône. But no one revelled in the sunshine more than Sainte-Anne. Its *terroir* is virtually unique in the region, with little clay and cobblestones, its windswept, limestone-based plateau always a good 2 to 3 degrees cooler than the plain below.

In normal years, this produces wines of superb structure and great purity of fruit, with the potential for a decade's aging. But in the greatest years like 2000 and 2001, Sainte-Anne's reds possess a dimension of richness that begs comparison with top Northern Rhône appellations.

### A Serious Hand

However, Sainte-Anne's quality is not just due to site and microclimate. It is also the result of the perfection-



*Ste. Anne's old Mourvèdre vines.*

ist viticulture and winemaking of Jean Steinmaier, who has now taken over from his legendary father, Guy. Jean's yields are low, and despite the modest prices of his wines, he hand-harvests and does a strict selection at the cellar door. Once in the cellar, a full 15% of each year's harvest is demoted to *vin de pays*.

The top red wine cuvées are the St. Gervais (35-50 year old vines, half of which are Mourvèdre); Notre Dame des Cellettes (30-50 year old vines, mostly Grenache), and the rare Les Mourillons—considered with Fonsalette Syrah to be the finest Syrah of the Southern Rhône.

But Sainte-Anne is also famous for its remarkable Viognier; in the 1980's, it was the first to demonstrate the variety's potential outside of Condrieu. Today, it remains one of the best Viogniers in France, thanks not only to the soil and microclimate, but the winemaking. To conserve acidity and freshness, the wine is aged in vat, not barrique, and malolactic fermentation is blocked. The wine combines Viognier's classic tropical

*Continued next page*

## Incredible Buy on 2000 "Dead Arm"

*Made from 100+ year old head-pruned vines, D'Arenberg's "Dead Arm" has emerged as one of the elite Shirazes of Australia. We have just picked up a few cases of the superb 2000 vintage at an unbelievably low price. (It should sell for \$60+). Quantities at this price are very limited.*

### 2000 D'Arenberg Shiraz "The Dead Arm"\*

**94 Parker**  
**\$39.95**

"The unfinned/unfiltered 2000 The Dead Arm Shiraz is one of South Australia's finest wines of the vintage. A perfume of grilled steak intermixed with blackberries, new saddle leather, earth, pepper and melted licorice rises from this awesome red. With great power, richness and no hard edges, it is still young and primary, but should hit its peak in 3-7 years and last for two decades or more."



# SOUTHERN RHONE

fruit aromas with a firm, refreshing minerality.

## This Offer

From Sainte-Anne's great 2001 vintage, we are pleased to offer the Notre Dame des Cellettes, St. Gervais and Viognier—and from the equally outstanding 2000 vintage, the Les Mourillons Syrah. (Steinmaier releases his Syrah at least one year later than the other reds.)

This is the finest group of wines from Sainte-Anne since the 1990's were released 11 years ago. And their low prices make them stunning bargains. Don't miss them.

### 2001 Notre Dame des Cellettes

From a single vineyard, Notre Dame des Cellettes this year is simply stunning. Made from vines ranging in age from 30 to 50 years, it is composed of 60% Grenache, 30% Syrah and 10% Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Always a hedonistic wine, the 2001 sets a new standard for richness.

**2001 Sainte-Anne**  
**"Notre Dame des Cellettes"**  
**\$15.95 bottle \$179.95 case**



We can't remember tasting a Notre Dame des Cellettes with quite the ripeness of the 2001. The Grenache expresses itself in an avalanche of ripe, luscious, velvety raspberry fruit, accented by hints of earth and truffle. The palate's texture is sensuously thick. While it's hard to resist drinking it now, it should age for a decade or more with ease. In 2001, this is an even more amazing value than usual.

### 2001 Viognier

*"Should you find a bottle of Ste. Anne's Viognier ... it is stunning, not only the most successful Viognier made in the southern Rhône, but similar to a very fine Condrieu." Robert Parker*

Jean Steinmaier's Viognier is made from some of the oldest Viognier vines outside of the Northern Rhône. The domaine's very fine soil and cool microclimate make for a rich wine, highly perfumed, and with terrific length. The 2001 is superb.

**2001 Domaine Sainte-Anne Viognier .....15.95**

This Viognier is ripe and luscious, sharing Condrieu's rich fruit and perfume, but with a firmer texture and the kind of acidity missing from all but the finest Condrieus.

"One of the best estates in the entire Rhône Valley. Domaine Ste. Anne ... is superbly located on a hilltop with a vast view of the southern Rhône River basin. The thin, balding Steinmaier is an innovative as well as serious winemaker; his description of his wine as 'an intermediary wine between Gigondas and Châteauneuf-du-Pape' hardly does it justice." **Robert Parker**

### 2000 Cuvée Syrah

Steinmaier's 100% Syrah Cuvée Les Morillons is legendary. Made from old vines, the wine offers both the style and the nuance of Northern Rhône Syrah, with up to two decades aging potential.

**2000 Les Mourillons**  
**(100% Syrah)**  
**\$21.95 Limited**



This is the greatest Steinmaier Syrah since 1990, with incredible richness, length and complexity. We've seldom tasted a Syrah-based wine made outside of Hermitage and Côte Rôtie with the depth of this 2000. The most limited of Steinmaier's cuvées—we only get a few cases. So, hurry.

### 2001 Cuvée St. Gervais

St. Gervais is also made from a single vineyard, this one planted half to Mourvèdre and the other half to Grenache and Syrah. The soil in this vineyard is considered by Steinmaier to be his best. Is this Sainte-Anne's greatest wine, or is it the Cuvée Syrah? One of the unique wines of the Southern Rhône.

**2001 Sainte-Anne**  
**"Cuvée St. Gervais"**  
**\$18.95 Limited**



Owing to the predominance of old-vine Mourvèdre in the blend, the 2001 St. Gervais is brooding yet bursting with potential. Packed with dark fruits, with elements of mineral, tar, violets, truffle and Mediterranean herbs, there is no doubt that the '01 will travel the same path as the great 1989 and 1990, which are drinking sublimely today.

## WINE ANTIQUES

# Antique Wine Decanters

Each holiday season since 1993, we have offered a range of antique English and Irish wine decanters from the 18th and 19th centuries. As a direct result of this tradition, beautiful and rare decanters now grace the tables of many of our customers and their friends, enhancing their enjoyment of fine food and wine.

As always, each item is an original antique, representing one of the classic styles of the 18th or 19th centuries.

Each decanter is accompanied by a letter of authentication signed by Andrew Burne, one of England's foremost experts on early English and Irish glass.

The ten decanters shown here were chosen from more than 30 decanters (or sets) that are available for delivery by the first week in December. Photographs of the others are available on our website [www.rarewineco.com](http://www.rarewineco.com), or by fax or e-mail upon request.



F1. George III taper Decanter with faceted lozenge stopper, flat finger flutes to shoulder & base, central band of single stars. English c.1780. \$875.00



F2. George III Decanter with bulls-eye stopper, 3 neck rings, classic plain. English c. 1790. \$695.00



F3. George III Decanter with mushroom stopper, 3 triple neck rings, flat finger flutes to shoulder and to base. Irish c.1800. \$670.00



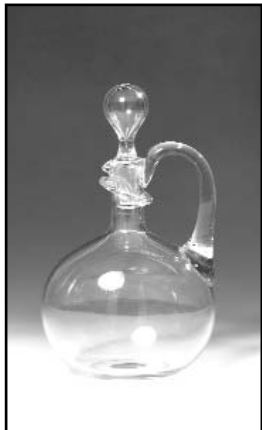
F4. George III Decanter with mushroom stopper, 3 flat neck rings, flat flutes to shoulder, band of broad diamonds above fine finger flutes English c. 1810. \$645.00



F20. Regency Decanter with mushroom stopper, 3 neck rings, flat flutes to shoulder, band of diamonds above panels of same, fine finger flutes at base. English c. 1810. \$595.00



F6. Victorian Claret Jug with hollow ball stopper, footed amphora, engraved palm tree spray. English c. 1890. \$570.00



F7. Victorian Claret Jug with hollow ball stopper, return drip ring, plain bun body, loop handle. English c. 1870. \$560.00



F28. George III-style Ship's Decanter with mushroom stopper, 3 plain neck rings, plain swept body. English early/mid 20th century. \$450.00



F9. **Pair** of George III Decanters with diamond cut stoppers, diamond cut neck rings, bodies wholly diamond cut. English/Irish c. 1800. \$1850.00 pr.



F10. **Pair** of Victorian Serving bottles and mounted corks, engraved 'Claret' & 'Burgundy' in cartouche with Union emblems: thistle, rose, shamrock & fruiting vine. English/Irish c. 1890. \$750.00 pr.

Attention California residents. Proposition 65 WARNING: Consuming foods or beverages that have been kept or served in leaded crystal products will expose you to lead, a chemical known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm.

# The Last Madeiras

## *The Special Buals in Noel Cossart's Life*

A towering figure in the Madeira wine trade, Noel Cossart joined the family firm, Cossart-Gordon, in 1926 and remained with it until he retired in the 1970's and turned the reins over to his son David and nephew Anthony. In 1976, Noel moved to England, where he wrote his famous book, *Madeira: The Island Vineyard*, part memoir and part history of Madeira and its wine. He died in England in 1987.

Noel's book made him deservedly famous. He was the last person in a position to write with great authority about Madeira the way it was in the early twentieth century. It is also possible that he tasted more 18th and 19th century Madeiras than anyone alive today. Sadly, his book has been nearly impossible to find for more than a decade.

### Two Special Wines

In reading *Madeira: The Island Vineyard*, it becomes clear that of all the Madeiras in Noel's life, those dearest to him were his 1926 Bual and 1941 Bual. These also seem to have been the two finest wines made under his tenure.

**1926 Bual** — When Noel joined the firm in 1926, his great-uncle made a pipe (about 500 bottles) of this wine as a gift to him. Noel always said that this was the finest Bual of the twentieth century (surpassing such legendary vintages as 1907 and 1920). Apart from a few odd bottles of other Madeiras of special meaning, this was the only Madeira that he brought with him to England when he retired. After his death, his widow Patricia kept the few remaining bottles in her cellar.

**1941 Bual** — Noel made this wine to commemorate the birth of his son David in 1941. The wine's extraordinary quality comes not just from the quality of the harvest; it also stems from the fact that it was aged in the same barrel as one of the greatest Madeiras ever made: Cossart-Gordon's 1862 Terrantez. When

Noel bottled the Terrantez in 1949—after 87 years in wood—he put David's '41 into the same cask, where it remained for 27 years. It is a wine of profound complexity and, like the 1926 Bual, only about 500 bottles were made.



*Noel Cossart and his son David in the 1970's.*

### This Offer

Because the 1926 Bual was Noel's personal wine, and the 1941 Bual was David's, the two Madeiras have lived apart for the past quarter-century, rarely sharing the same cellar, let alone the same table.

But this summer, we proposed to Patricia and David, as a tribute to Noel, a reunion of his two favorite Madeiras—the first time to our knowledge that the wines had been offered for sale together. They loved the idea and agreed to provide a dozen bottles of each wine.

These wines offer a rare window through which to glimpse Madeira history—and by which to remember Noel Cossart. A strict one-bottle limit for each.

### **1926 Cossart-Gordon Bual\* .....450.00**

The finest 20th-century Bual, according to Noel Cossart, for whom the wine was vintaged. Largely consumed by Noel in his lifetime, just a few bottles remained in his cellar when he passed away.

### **1941 Cossart-Gordon Bual\* .....425.00**

Michael Broadbent: "★★★★★. A rare, straight, unblended vintage made by Noel Cossart to celebrate the birth of his son David ... An exquisite wine ... soft yet ethereal bouquet; flavor reminded me of delicate violet cachous. Great wine."

### ***Madeira: The Island Vineyard***

This wonderful book was never reprinted after its original 1984 edition and has since become very rare. But we are always looking for copies. We have four of these treasures to offer—hardbound with dust jacket. One-copy limit.

### **Noel Cossart, *Madeira: The Island Vineyard* (Christies, 1984) .....175.00**

## TUSCANY

# An Important New Super Tuscan

## *Sette Ponti's 2001 Oreno*

*Tuscany's Sette Ponti estate* lies in the beautiful Arno River Valley, midway between Florence and Arezzo. The estate takes its name from the seven bridges that cross the Arno between these two cities. This ancient property is large, 750 acres, but only 150 acres are planted to vines.



*Sette Ponti*

Sette Ponti's owner, Antonio Moretti, made his fortune in fashion, but he was seduced by the romance of vineyards. At first, he sold his grapes to other producers, but then in 1997, with the advice of Piero Antinori, he decided to make his own wine. He put together a team led by respected enologist Carlo Ferrini and quickly began to make his mark as an up-and-coming producer of rich, stylish Super Tuscans.

### Two Wines

Moretti's regular wine, Crognolo, is delicious, but what is really interesting here is Oreno, made from 50% Sangiovese, 25% Cabernet and 25% Merlot. For Oreno, Moretti is able to draw on some very old vines,

including a 5-acre plot planted in 1935. He also has more than 80 acres of Sangiovese planted 40 years ago.

The viticulture and winemaking is state-of-the-art: crop-thinning in May; hand-harvesting with the grapes broken rather than crushed, and aging in Allier barriques. The finished wine is bottled unfiltered and rests in bottle for a year prior to release.

The 2001 Oreno is the breakthrough wine for Sette Ponti. We are delighted to offer it at a well-below-market price.

**2001 Oreno\***  
**95 Wine Spectator**  
**\$45.00**



*Wine Spectator*: "Owner Antonio Moretti is better-known in the fashion world for making driving shoes, but his real passion is for producing fine wine, and his 2001 Oreno is his best ever. This is one of the new hot wines of Tuscany to watch. Dark color, with fantastic aromas of currants, blackberries, spices and lightly toasted oak. Full-bodied, with super well-integrated tannins and a texture as fine as the best cashmere from Scotland. This is superb. **\$70**"

**Wines may be sold and delivered only to persons who are at least 21 years old.** All wines are sold in California and title passes to the buyer in California. We make no representation to the legal rights of anyone to ship or import wines into any state outside of California. We are not responsible for typographical errors. All items and prices subject to availability. An \* indicates pre-arrival. Issued 16 times yearly. Copyright 2003 The Rare Wine Co.

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