Wine Selections By Club

AMPHORA WINERY

2018 GSM
Gold | Platinum

2017 Tempranillo
Gold

2016 Mourvèdre
Gold | Platinum

2017 Grenache
Platinum | Concierge

2015 Merlot
Gold

2016 Merlot
Platinum | Concierge

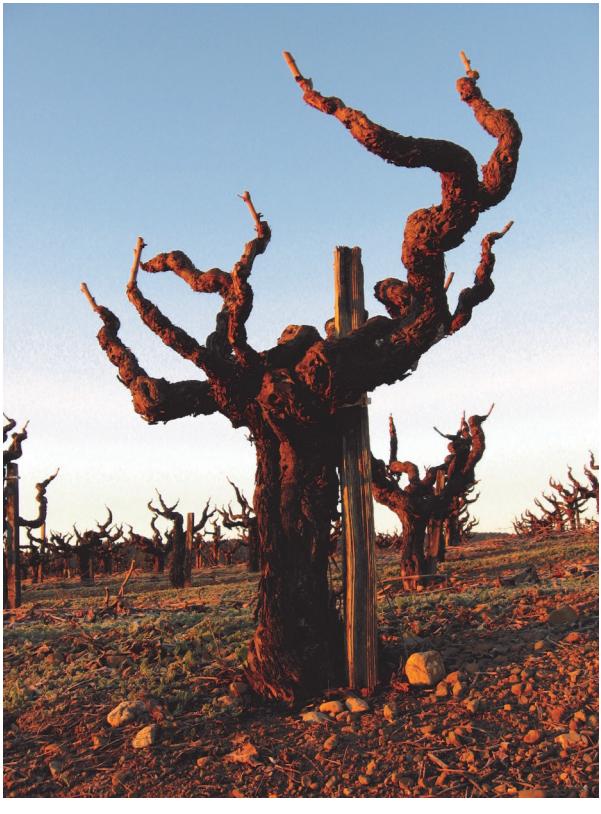
2018 Nebbiolo
Platinum

2019 Sagrantino
Concierge

2017 Syrah
Gold | Platinum

2018 Cabernet Franc
Concierge

2018 Grenache
Gold



Another vintage cycle is about to begin...

As this goes to print in early March, there's a pause in the annual cycle of the vines. After harvest is complete, the vines begin to send the energy and nutrients from the leaves to their roots, in preparation for a long dormancy. While they're dormant, the vines are mostly immune to the cold and wet weather of winter. Which is a good thing, since this winter has featured enough rain to leave standing ponds in a number of vineyards, and even snow (which fell almost to sea level in late February!)

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2018 GSM | Sonoma County

294 cases produced | enjoy now through 2032

41% Grenache, 45% Syrah, 14% Mourvèdre

The incomparable wines of France's Rhône River valley are among winemaker Rick's very favorite wines, and his benchmark for the art of crafting blends that are greater than the sum of their parts. Since Rick's first GSM (in 2012), this delicious blend has proven to be both a staff and guest favorite every vintage. In the 2018 vintage Grenache contributes a lovely strawberry and easygoing texture. Syrah anchors the blend, with tannic structure, dark fruit flavors, and weight. Mourvèdre adds spice and mineral All together, they create a wine that is a pleasure to sip by itself, but that shines with a good meal. The flavors of the south of France come to mind: garlic, lemon, rosemary, and olive...

Double Gold, 97 points , *North Coast Wine Challenge 2022*

List Price 42

2017 Tempranillo | Clarksburg

288 cases produced | enjoy now through 2028

If you had reduce a description of our Tempranillo to one word, perhaps the best one would be "sensual". It's easy to see why this varietal is one of our most universally popular: juicy dark berry fruit, lush texture, and sweet aromas enhanced by aging in American oak barrels (which is traditional in the finest Spanish renditions of their most famous grape). The flavors in this wine bring to mind ripe blackberry and dark cherry, and the mouth-feel is smooth and plush. The 2017 vintage was partially fermented in *amphorae*, and that dialed-in just enough tannin to lend weight, and to work well with food. Overall, this is a satisfying and enjoyable red that would play equally with homemade burgers, or a traditional *paella*.

List Price 36

2016 Mourvèdre | Clarksburg

121 cases produced | enjoy now through 2027

Of the major Rhône varietals, Mourvèdre often presents the wildest range of flavors and aromas, with meaty and animalistic notes nestled amidst spicy, sagey aspects, and dark fruit underlying it all. Our 2016 presents less of the meaty side of things, and features more sweet and spicy side of the spectrum. It greets you with typically Rhône aromas of cherry jam, crossed with a sage and sassafras spice. The wine is medium in weight, with just enough tannic structure to carry it for a few more years, and to play well with food.

List Price 35

2017 Grenache | Clarksburg

97 cases produced | enjoy now through 2026

One singular and consistent trait in the Grenache from this vineyard is a delightful strawberry jam character. In the 2017, that easy-going fruit is spiced with a little licorice, and held together with a bit more tannic structure than in most of the previous vintages. As always, be sure to serve this one at a cool cellar temperature, and enjoy with simple and lightly –spiced fare. Some options might include roasted butternut squash soup with a drizzle of fruity olive oil on top, grilled cheese sandwiches with tomato soup, or roasted salmon with new potatoes.

List Price 35

2015 Merlot | Dry Creek Valley

115 cases produced | enjoy now through 2029

A consistent aromatic complexity characterizes this vineyard (which is directly across Dry Creek Road from the winery). In 2015, the wine is redolent of raspberry, sandalwood, and a note which reminds us of a dusty hay field in late summer. The mouthfeel is solid, and the flavors of raspberry and dark cocoa are held nicely in a frame of medium-weight tannins. The finish lingers with a touch of vanilla and baking spice. This could be nice accompaniment to roast ham with a fruit glaze, or grilled Portobello mushrooms brushed with a fruity olive oil.

List Price 55

2018 Nebbiolo | Clarksburg

99 cases produced | enjoy now through 2027

This latest addition to our lineup of Italian varietals (joining Aglianico, Barbera, Sangiovese, Sagrantino, Teroldego, and Vermentino) reflects winemaker Rick's quest to craft balanced and food-friendly wines in the Italian tradition. This Nebbiolo is still evolving, and at this point is more fully "open" the *second* day after uncorking. It is light and lively on the palate, with Bing cherry, a woodsy spice note, and a hint of green leaf. This wine positively demands to enjoyed with a meal, and recent "research" confirms that it pairs well with grilled Italian sausage served with sautéed peppers and sweet onions.

List Price 42

2017 Syrah

111 cases produced | enjoy now through 2029

We're pleased to welcome Syrah back to our lineup after a hiatus of several vintages. Our first stand-alone Syrah since the 2014 vintage, our 2017 is true to the spirit of this Rhône varietal: it is blue-black in color, with deep-noted aromas of blackberry, menthol and sweet spices embraced in a substantial core of black fruit flavors and firm tannins. This wine definitely has the heft and depth to age beautifully for years. For more immediate enjoyment, decant or aerate a bottle, and have it with smoked sausages, Duck *Confit, Cassoulet*, or braised shortribs. We invite you to dive deeply into our latest rendition of this noble Rhône varietal, and renew your enchantment with this most enigmatic of wines.

Double Gold, *SF Chronicle Wine Competition 2022*

List Price 45

2018 Cabernet Franc | Dry Creek Valley

96 cases produced | enjoy now through 2032

It's back! We're very pleased to introduce our first vintage of Cabernet Franc since 2012. This one is made from fruit grown on the heights of Bradford Mountain, on the west side of Dry Creek Valley. The wine showcases the intensity of mountain-grown grapes with concentrated dark fruit character, spiced with characteristic Cabernet Franc notes of cedar and chaparral. The overall impression is rich and chocolatey, with the riper aspects and dark blackcurrant/blackberry fruit taking center stage, with the greener aspects typical of this variety woven in seamlessly.

List Price 50

BEST OF CLASS

-2022 East Meets West Wine Challenge

Double Gold, *Sunset International Wine Competition 2022*

Double Gold, *SF Chronicle Wine Competition 2023*

2016 Merlot | Dry Creek Valley

143 cases produced | enjoy now through 2033

A consistent aromatic complexity characterizes this vineyard (which is directly across Dry Creek Road from the winery). In tune with previous vintages, the wine is redolent of raspberry, with a certain leafiness. In the mouth, this wine is round, full and the dark fruit lingers long after a sip. Ditto food recommendations from the 2015 vintage: roast ham with a fruit glaze, or grilled Portobello mushrooms brushed with a fruity olive oil.

List Price 55

2019 Sagrantino | Sonoma County

117 cases produced | enjoy now through 2040

This is Amphora's first vintage of this rare and mysterious Italian varietal. Sagrantino originates in central Italy's Umbria region, and while there are small plantings elsewhere throughout the winemaking world, nowhere is it common. Even in its homeland, there are probably less than 500 acres of it planted. For comparison, consider that there are 95,000 acres of Cabernet Sauvigon planted... just in California! This is a big, deep wine: blue-black in color, with a concentrated blackberry fruit character with dark chocolate hints, and a very sturdy tannic structure. In fact, Sagrantino is inherently one of the most tannic red varietals. Rick's decades of experience crafting another inherently tannic varietal (Petite Sirah) with balance and finesse served well in nurturing his first Sagrantino. If you open this wine now, it will benefit from some aeration, and will shine with hearty fare. It will undoubtedly reward aging!

List Price 58

2018 GRENACHE | DRY CREEK VALLEY

97 CASES PRODUCED | ENJOY NOW THROUGH 2026

While Amphora has been producing Grenache for some years, we are excited to release our inaugural vintage of that lovely varietal sourced from here in Dry Creek Valley. This wine was fermented in amphorae, with a significant percentage of whole-clusters included. That regimen yields a wine that greets you with a perfumed, sweet violet nose that carries through to classic Grenache strawberry fruit, and finishes with a flourish of black pepper "stemmy" character. All in all, it has a very Rhônish profile. This Grenache is substantial enough to stand up to hearty fare such as *cassoulet,* yet pleasant to sip on all by itself, or with a handful of toasted almonds or wedge of a mild cheese.

LIST PRICE 36

Another vintage cycle..., continued

The soggy vineyards *have* slowed down the pace of pruning, a vitally important operation that affects the fruitfulness of the vines in the coming year. There will be a lot of "catch-up" necessary in the next month, as the vines typically wake up with 'bud-break' by the last week of March. The timing of bud-break varies by varietal, site, and microclimate...and of course weather! Once the vines break dormancy, they become vulnerable to the effects of weather, particularly spring frosts that can kill the tender green shoots just emerging from the buds. The vines also become more sensitive to prolonged flooding, as actively growing vines have a distinct aversion to "wet feet". The next critical marker in the vinous year is bloom, which typically occurs around Memorial Day. Prolonged cool and damp weather at that point can interfere with pollination, and result in fewer and more irregular clusters. Fortunately, vines are really resilient!

SPRING 2023 CLUB WINES

	Retail	Concierge	Platinum	Gold
2018 GSM	42	31.50	33.60	35.70
2017 Tempranillo	36	26.25	28.00	29.75
2016 Mourvèdre	35	26.25	28.00	29.75
2017 Grenache	35	26.25	28.00	29.75
2015 Merlot	55	41.25	44	46.75
2016 Merlot	55	41.25	44	46.75
2018 Nebbiolo	42	31.50	33.60	35.70
2019 Sagrantino	58	43.50	46.40	49.30
2017 Syrah	45	33.75	36.00	38.25
2018 Cabernet Franc	50	37.50	40	42.50
2018 Grenache	36	27.00	28.80	30.60

To re-order, please call us at 707.431.7767 or email us at jim@amphorawines.com as many of these wines are exclusive to our club members and do not appear on our website. Remember, Concierge and Platinum members receive shipping discounts of 50% and 25% respectively.

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