



PLUMPJACK
WINES

PlumpJack Wine Club

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The use of oak in wine plays a significant role in winemaking and can have a profound effect on the resulting wine, affecting the color, flavor, tannin profile and texture of the wine. Oak can come into contact with wine in the form of a barrel during the fermentation or aging periods. It can be introduced to the wine in the form of free-floating oak chips or as wood staves (or sticks) added to wine in a fermentation vessel like stainless-steel. Oak introduced in the form of a wine barrel can impart other qualities to the wine through the process of evaporation and low-level exposure to oxygen. Our

wines this month give us an opportunity to explore how oak influences wine. The use of oak has been prevalent in winemaking for at least two millennia, first coming into widespread use during the Roman Empire. In time, winemakers discovered that beyond just storage convenience, wine kept in oak barrels took on properties that improved the wine by making it softer, and in some cases, better-tasting. The use of oak in this month's white wine is used primarily for enhancing the texture of the wine, without influencing its flavor. The use of oak is much more obvious in the red wine, where new French oak barrels are used to not only provide tannins and structure, but to add a flavor component. Let your organoleptic sensors guide you through this study on the use of oak, and its effect on wine.



The Loire Valley is an exceptional cultural landscape of great beauty, comprised of historic cities and villages, great architectural monuments - the Châteaux - and lands that have been cultivated and shaped by centuries of interaction between local populations and their physical environment, in particular the Loire River itself. Val de Loire wines stand among the treasures of this beautiful area. The vineyards of the Loire flank its namesake river, which flows for approximately 600 miles, from the center of France to the Atlantic Ocean near the city of Nantes. There are a great variety of terroirs and wines, thanks to the diversity of the soils and climates. The climate in the Loire valley is oceanic, and becomes more continental as you travel inland. Touraine, a sprawling area located in the center of the Loire Valley, which encompasses such well-known appellations as Chinon, Vouvray and Montlouis, and a number of sub-appellations that include Touraine Amboise, Touraine Azay-le-Rideau, Touraine Mesland and Touraine Noble-Joué, has seen a remarkable increase in quality standards in recent years. The area covered by the Touraine appellation stretches from the outer limits of the Anjou region to the gateways of the Sologne, in an area of confluence formed by the Loire River and its tributaries. It extends across 104 communes in the Indre-et-Loire department and 42 in the Loire-et-Cher. The main part of Touraine's vineyards is found to the south-east of Tours, on the hillsides overlooking the Cher, and between the Cher and the Loire. The soils in the Touraine are very varied, with "perruches" (clay mixed with flint), "aubuis" (argilo-calcareous on a chalky subsoil) and sand on clay in the East, as well as light gravel and shelly sand. Xavier Frissant is the energetic and articulate director of his family's estate in Touraine. Situated near Amboise, best known for its fabled château and as the one-time home of Leonardo

2007 Xavier Frissant
"Les Roses du Clos"
Vin du Val de Loire
Mosnes, France



2005 Luigi Baudana
"Donatella"
Barbera d'Alba
Serralunga d'Alba, Italy

da Vinci, Xavier makes a range of original and unusual wines. His 44 acres are situated in the village of Mosnes, where he is one of only two vigneron making it their home! He employs *viticulture raisonnée* in his vineyards, limiting the use of pesticides and chemicals. In France, he has a particular following for his unique white wine "Les Roses du Clos", made from the almost extinct Fie Gris. This rare clone of Sauvignon, also known as Surin Gris, Sauvignon Gris, or Sauvignon Rose, is tinted like Gewurztraminer when ripe, and becomes, in Frissant's hands, a wine of surprising substance and character. It lends itself to oak fermentation much better than Loire Sauvignon Blanc. The 2007 "Les Roses du Clos" is composed of 100% Fie Gris from Clos du Verger, a single vineyard. The grapes were hand-harvested and then lightly pressed in a pneumatic press. Fermentation took place in old 400 liter barrels at cool temperatures, and once fermentation was complete, the wine was aged sur-lie before bottling. "Les Roses du Clos" smells of gooseberries and flint, with hints of citrus and orange zest. In the mouth it has bright acidity and a combination of citrus, mineral and a light floral quality. The wine pairs beautifully with scallop dishes, such as the traditional coquilles St. Jacques, or another regional favorite, quiche Lorraine.

The 2007 Xavier Frissant "Les Roses du Clos" is \$16.99/bottle, \$183.50/case.



Tucked away in northwest Italy and bordered by the Alps and Liguria, Piemonte is best known – among wine lovers at least – for its wonderful red wines, and in particular Barolo. Despite the fame of the king, Barolo, and its queen, Barbaresco, the nebbiolo grape is not the most planted grape in the Langhe Valley. That honor goes to Barbera, an excellent grape in its own right. These wines are produced in the gently rolling hills of the Langhe in the southern part of the region, where medieval castles stand guard over the vineyards. 'Langhe' literally means 'strips of land'. The wild, rugged scenery of the Upper Langhe, whose oak woods shelter wild boar and nearly fifty species of wild orchid, give way to the hazelnut groves of the Middle Langhe, and then to the vineyards of the Lower Langhe. The hills of the Lower Langhe are unusually shaped: with one steep slope and another much gentler slope, they are not unlike waves, and were in fact shaped by wave movement many thousands of years ago when the area was covered by the Tethys Ocean. The Luigi Baudana winery is located in the small village of Baudana, just a mile before climbing the winding road heading to the hilltop town of Serralunga d'Alba, one of the most celebrated Barolo cru, close to the town of Alba, in the Cuneo province. The history of this winery starts around the turn of the XIX century, when Luigi's grandfather planted the first small vineyard in the Cerretta area. Luigi's father Lorenzo, took over the property and continued to sell the grapes to larger, more established producers. The real resurgence of the winery took place in 1975 when Luigi and his wife Fiorina took over the winery and purchased additional small parcels of vineyards. From 1980 to 1991 Luigi and Fiorina worked at the Enoteca Regionale in Grinzane, but then decided to devote themselves full time to the family estate of about 10 acres. Their vineyards are primarily planted to Nebbiolo, Barbera, and Dolcetto, with an additional tiny vineyard planted to Chardonnay. Baudana's Barbera comes from a one-acre vineyard at 1,000 feet above sea level with southwestern exposure that was planted in 1975. The grapes were hand-harvested and fermentation initially took place in stainless-steel tanks for about 8 days. After racking, the wine was placed in 250 and 500-liter French oak barrels for about one year where the malolactic fermentation took place. It was then blended and rested for an additional 5 months in stainless-steel tanks to stabilize it. The wine then aged an additional 6 months in the bottle, and the total production was 230 cases. The 2005 Barbera "Donatella" shows generous ripe dark fruit and sweet, toasted oak on an ample frame. It has excellent vibrancy in its aromas and flavors, as well as fine overall balance. There is plenty of plum, toasted oak and berry character with crushed raspberries. It is medium- to full-bodied, with wonderful fruit intensity and a bright, exciting finish. Try this wine with meat-filled ravioli, risotto with porcini mushrooms, or braised rabbit with a Dijon mustard sauce.

The 2005 Luigi Baudana Barbera "Donatella" is \$22.99/bottle, \$248.30/case.