$40 Wine Club Selections

**Domaine De Cristia, Grenache Vin de Pays de Mediterranee, France, 2018**

About Domaine de Cristia . . .

Domaine de Cristia was established in 1942, with only two hectares of vines; at that time, all grapes were sold to négociants. When Baptiste Grangeon inherited the vineyards from his father in 1999, he was the first to bottle as Domaine de Cristia. Today, Baptiste manages the winery with his sister, Dominique, and they have gradually added vineyards over the years, to a total of 20 hectares of vines in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Ninety percent of their holdings are in the lieu-dit Cristia, with the remaining ten percent spread over three different areas. These parcels are comprised of varying soil-types, including sand, clay, limestone, and galets, and benefit from a cool, fresh north-easterly exposition which allows the grapes and wines to develop supple, elegant tannins. Their Syrah and Mourvèdre vines average 55 years old and the oldest Grenache is over 100 years old.

The domaine follows organic agriculture for all work in the vineyards and has been certified from the 2008 vintage. No chemical fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides are used to treat the soils or the vines. Ploughing and weeding are practiced according to the blocks and the yields desired. Vines are treated with copper sulphate and sulphur occasionally blended with a nettle infusion/tea (four to five times a year). Only organic fertilizer (i.e., sheep manure) is used.

The grapes are selected in the vineyard and then destemmed before being put into vats. Three weeks of fermentation and maceration in concrete vats follow, with the use of indigenous yeasts. Temperatures are kept low in order to produce aromatic wines. They do not insist on any massive extraction, but prefer the ‘matière’ to express itself. Due to the work in the vineyards, the grapes possess enough concentration. The pressed juice and free-run juice are blended together according to the vintage. Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines are aged in concrete vats and barrels for a minimum of 18 months, while Côtes-du-Rhône and Vin de Pays are aged only in concrete vats for eight to 12 months.  All of their wines are noteworthy for their finesse and elegance.

Top of Form

# THE WINEMAKER

* Winemaker Baptiste Grangeon has been on a roll over the past decade with these wines from his family estate. These are ripe, powerful wines that never lose their Southern Rhône soul, and if anything, these latest 2016s and 2017s are more reserved and elegant than past vintages.- Jeb Dunnuck, [www.jebdunnuck.com](http://www.jebdunnuck.com/)
* Baptiste Grangeon makes a more progressive/modern style of Châteauneuf du Pape with his Domaine de Cristia releases, primarily with his Cuvée Renaissance, which sees some new oak, but both his Traditional cuvée and the Vieilles Vignes releases lean towards the richer, more fruit driven style as well. Nevertheless, all these wines ooze Provencal charm and character. The one change is with his white, which was made in a crisp style in the past, and starting in 2017 is now brought up in plenty of new oak and is a rich, opulent, powerful white.” —Jeb Dunnuck
* Cristia Grenache Vin de Pays de Mediterranee More than 70 years ago, Etienne Grangeon founded his family’s firm in Chateauneuf du Pape. He had the good fortune to purchase vineyard land in the famous designated vineyard of “la Cristia”, after which the estate is named. Over the decades Etienne’s son and grandsons have added piece by piece to the estate. In 2008 they made the decision to pursue organic certification, after having already practiced largely organic farming for decades. In the mean time Cristia has become one of the most respected names in Chateauneuf du Pape and their wines regularly score well over 90 points from the major critics (in the last vintage the wines scored 99, 97, 93 and 92 points!). In addition to their significant holdings in Chateauneuf, Cristia also owns a number of hectares of old vine Grenache (average age 35 years) that don’t fall into any of the “big name” appellations. From these holdings they produce a wine from 100% Grenache based wine that comes in at a terrific price.

## *The Wine*

100% Grenache from Cristia Haut, a vineyard which faces east and north; the soils are a mix of sand and clay.

## *Vineyard Notes*

The grapes for this wine are predominately sourced from the oldest vines on our Estate property, planted on a gentle North East facing slope on loose decomposed volcanic rocks at 2,700ft nearly 40 years ago. These old head trained vines are rarely irrigated and are the last grapes we harvest every year. The remainder of the grapes are grown across the American River, on granite soil at a similar elevation, around 2400 ft, on granitic soil.

## *Winemaker Notes*

Bright violet. Fresh red and blue fruits on the fragrant, spice-accented nose and in the mouth. Juicy and open-knit, taking on a hint of jamminess with air. Closes sweet and tannin-free, showing good cling and a touch of bitter cherry. T

**Markus, Molitar Riesling Brut Sparkling, Mosel Germany NV**

**Weingut Markus Molitor** is a leading wine estate in the [Mosel](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-mosel) region of [Germany](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-germany), best known for its [Rieslings](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-407-riesling). The estate and its eponymous proprietor gained worldwide attention in 2015 – and the nickname "Herr 300 Punkte" (Mr 300 Points) – when three Auslese Rieslings from the 2013 vintage received [100-point ratings](https://www.wine-searcher.com/robertparker.lml) from Robert Parker's Wine Advocate.

The estate cultivates vineyards in 15 different sites in the Mosel and [Saar](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-saar), including plots in the famous winemaking villages of [Wehlen](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-wehlen%22%20%5Co%20%22Wehlen%20Wine%20Region), [Zeltingen-Rachtig](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-zeltingen-rachtig%22%20%5Co%20%22Zeltingen-Rachtig%20Wine%20Region) and [Bernkastel](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-bernkastel%22%20%5Co%20%22Bernkastel%20Wine%20Region). Some 94 percent of plantings are Riesling, with [Pinot Blanc](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-380-pinot-blanc) and some rare [Pinot Noir](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-384-pinot-noir) accounting for the rest – historically there had been considerable plantings of the latter in the Mosel.

The winery is based at the centre of Wehlener Klosterberg. It was purpose built at the end of the 19th Century and acquired by Markus Molitor in 1984, who carried out extensive renovations between 2009 and 2012. It features an old three-storey cellar cut out of the slate, giving permanently cool conditions with high humidity for the aging wines. The grapes are fermented slowly using indigenous yeasts in large barrels at low temperatures, pausing in winter then finishing off in the spring. Wines are then aged either in wooden or stainless steel tanks.

Markus Molitor uses color-coded packaging according to the style of the wine. White capsules denote dry wines, while off-dry wines have a gray-green capsule. Naturally sweet and [botrytis](https://www.wine-searcher.com/technical-wine-terms-a-b.lml#botrytized) wines have a gold capsule.

The region:

**Mosel** is the most famous of [Germany](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-germany)'s 13 official wine regions, and also the third largest in terms of production. As with many German regions, it is most aasociated with a range of wine styles made from the [Riesling](https://www.wine-searcher.com/find/fritz%2Bhaag%2Bbrauneberger%2Bjuffer%2Bsonnenuhr%2Briesling%2Btrockenbeerenauslese%2Bgoldkapsel%2Bmosel) grape variety, but [Müller-Thurgau](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-299-muller-thurgau) is also widely planted.

The best Mosel Riesling wines are some of the finest whites in the world. Light and low in alcohol, they can be intensely fragrant with beguiling floral and mineral notes, and a wonderful balance of sweetness and acidity.

The Romans planted the first vineyards along the Mosel river and the city of Trier around the second century. Today, this region is known for its steep slopes overlooking the rivers, on which the vineyards are planted.

Bremmer Calmont, located in the town of Bremm, has an incline of up to 68°. It has often been cited as the steepest vineyard site in the world, though the Engelsfelden vineyard in the Bühler Valley (Bühlertal) in the Baden region is documented at 75°.

The Mosel has a very cool, northern [continental climate](https://www.wine-searcher.com/technical-wine-terms-c-d.lml#continentalclimate), and such slopes are very effective in optimizing the vines' exposure to sun, facilitating the ripening of the grapes. The best sites also take advantage of the solar radiation reflecting off the rivers' surface and onto the vines, and the dark slate soil's ability to absorb heat during the day and radiate it back to the vines at night.

In summer the weather is warm, but certainly not hot, with an average July temperature of around 65ºF (18ºC). A long growing season helps develop the intense flavors in the Riesling grapes while keeping potential alcohol levels low.

One disadvantage of such steep vineyard sites is that they are inaccessible to machinery, meaning as much as seven times the amount of manual labor is required to tend them, compared to level vineyards.

In winter, rain washes slate from high on the hillsides down to the rivers, and vineyard workers must gather it and carry it back up to the vineyards, where its heat-retaining properties are required. Occupational safety is a major issue on the very steep sites, and fatalities among vineyard workers have been known.

Markus Molitor has been producing sparkling wines since 1982 and is one of the pioneers in the tradition of sparkling wine in this region. The grapes for this wine come from a variety of Molitor's vineyards along the river Mosel. The slate soil imparts minerality and focus to the finished wine.
Vinification: The grapes are carefully selected, crushed, and then the must is fermented in large wooden barrels. A second fermentation follows in tank.

##### **Grape varieties :**

Riesling

##### **Alcohol :**

12.5%

##### **Tasting notes :**

Aromas reminscent of ripe pear, red apple, grapefruit, nectarine, and white peach. Notes of brioche, stone, and white pepper on the palate. Clear, lively, refreshing with a fine bubble and refreshing mineral finish.

**SR 262, Merlot, Columbia Valley WA, 2016**

**About the region:** Encompassing more than a third of the state, the Columbia Valley is by far Washington’s largest growing region at over 11 million acres. The appellation is located in central, south-central, and south-eastern Washington with part of the appellation spilling across the border into Oregon.

The Columbia Valley is home to over 99% of all of Washington’s vinifera acreage. Cabernet Sauvignon is the most planted grape followed by Merlot, Chardonnay, Riesling, and Syrah. However, over 30 vinifera varieties are currently planted in this region.

Variety typicity and pure fruit aromas and flavors are the hallmarks of wine from the Columbia Valley. For Cabernet Sauvignon, black cherry, cassis, and light, high-toned herbal notes are often the hallmarks. Merlots are redolent with red fruit aromas and flavors, such as sweet cherries, red currants, and raspberries, along with chocolate and, occasionally, mint. Chardonnays are mildly aromatic with aromas and flavors ranging from fresh green apple to stone fruit and tropical fruit depending on the warmth of the site. In terms of Riesling, cooler sites tend to produce aromas and flavors of lime, lemon, and green apple. In warmer regions this turns to stone fruit, particularly peach. Aromas and flavors for Syrah range from dark fruit, such as blackberries, to blueberries and cranberries. However, many are notable for being less fruit forward and more dominated by savory notes.

The relationship to the Missoula Floods, a series of cataclysmic events, defines the soil types of the vineyards in Washington. Most vineyards lie below the floodwaters with soils of loess—wind blown deposits of sand and silt—overlying gravel and slackwater sediment with basalt forming the bedrock. This provides a diversity of soil types that are well drained and ideal for viticulture.

The Columbia Valley lies in the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountain range. The region has an arid and semi-arid, continental climate, receiving an average of 6–8 inches (15–20 cm) of precipitation annually. Irrigation is therefore required to grow vinifera grapes.

This irrigation, along with consistently warm, dry temperatures during the growing season, provides growers with a large amount of control over grape development compared to many other regions of the world. This leads to minimal vintage variation and consistently high-quality wines.

Early and late season frosts along with hard winter freezes are the main environmental threats. Due to dry temperatures and sandy soils, phyloxera has not as of yet established itself in the area, so most vines are grown on their own rootstock in contrast to many other areas of the world.

## SR262 IS THE ALCHEMY OF ADVENTURE

SR262, for those who want the perfect wine to compliment life’s perfect moments. SR262 brings a new perspective to the perfect bottle of wine. Just as the right wine can transform and elevate a meal or a moment, so can a memento of those open-sky moments. First sampled over a conversation about life and the road ahead, with SR262 we wanted to bottle and share that moment of discovery and friendship with experiences everywhere.

There are days where life offers a surprising adventure. SR 262 was born on one of those days. A team trip, a short but beautiful stretch of road in Washington’s Columbia Valley Wine Country, a day spent tasting and blending wines from wonderful vineyards and the thought that we could put something great in a bottle. The confluence of ideas, excitement and fantastic wine inspired us to create this Merlot.
Merlot the way it should be, from the place it grows best.
Black Cherry - Chocolate – Spice

Tasting Notes:

Primarily Merlot with touches of Syrah and Cabernet, this Merlot shows blackberry with hints of bright cherry and spice alongside richness and depth with every sip.

Food Pairing: Best paired with braised meats, roasted duck, or wild caught salmon.