

Your Mediterranean Collection

from the Bonner
Private Wine Partnership



BONNER
PRIVATE WINE
PARTNERSHIP





Sing Goddess,

Of the long-lived Sardinians and their black grenache;

Of the Corsicans and their 50-year-old vines.

Sing to us of volcanoes and sea breezes;

Of lost empires and sunken islands;

Of labyrinths, lions, and wings of wax.

Sing to us of the wines of the Mediterranean;

And their story, four thousand years in the telling.

Dear Member,

In this collection we invite you to ignore current events. And come with us on a journey to clear blue waters, red ochre sunsets, and the white stone ruins of a world long gone, but not forgotten.

We call this our “Mediterranean Collection” but you’ll find no wines from the French, Italian, Spanish, or Greek mainland here. Instead, we have opted to explore the seas – Adriatic, Aegean, Ionian, and Tyrrhenian.

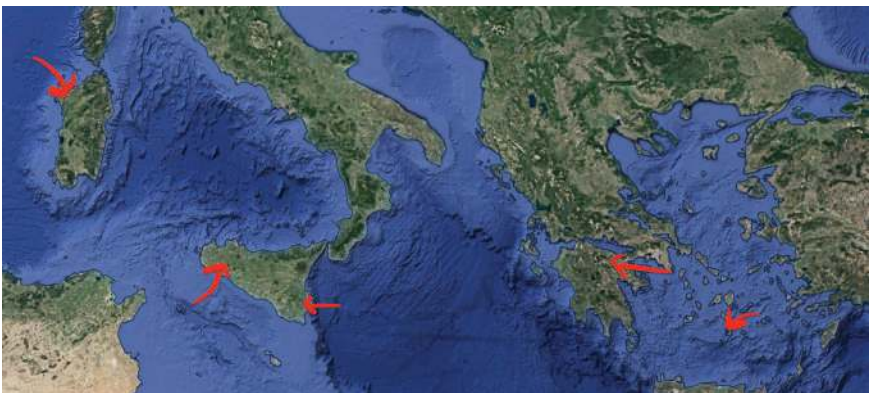
On Santorini, we found vines that grow like baskets in a soil covered in ancient volcanic deposits (the product of an eruption that likely ended the Minoan civilization and gave birth to the legend of Atlantis).

On Sicily, we found vines growing like little trees in the 3,000-year-old “albarello” style; and a wine that Homer described as being as “fragrant as ambrosia and nectar.”

On Corsica we found *petra bianca*, a type of limestone soil so antagonistic to pests that vintners there don’t need chemicals of any kind.

On Sardinia, we found the longest-lived population on earth, and their daily drink, *cannonau*, a rare wine grown at high elevations.

And we’ve but scratched the surface...



In this box, you will find six bottles:

- ① Vinicola Cherchi Cannonau di Sardegna 2018
- ② Zisola Doppiozetta 2016
- ③ Planeta Maroccoli Sicilia Menfi DOC 2015
- ④ Clos Alivu Patrimonio 2018
- ⑤ Gaiannikos Agiorgitiko "Lion" 2017
- ⑥ Artemis Karamolegos Assyrtiko 2018

From notes of flint, to lingering sea salt, to bouquets of lavender and dark cherry, our hope is that in these six bottles you'll find dreams of distant shores and another world.

To your health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Bonner', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Will Bonner

A Quick Note on Wine Tasting

On the next few pages, we've included tasting notes. Here's a quick tip on how to approach them.

What makes a "wine expert" is not just his depth of knowledge – which anyone can achieve – but his sensitivity to taste and smell. A great wine expert will find a hundred little aromas that most ordinary noses will never be able to detect.

Now. If you don't pick-up on the same flavors, does that mean you're doing it wrong?

No. Tasting is subjective. Pronounced flavors on my palate may present themselves as secondary or tertiary notes for you. Remember, wines are always evolving in the bottle. That hint of cherry from a few months ago might present itself differently now. So, if you detect a flavor or aroma you don't see on the tasting sheet, add it. See what your friends say. Better yet, if you have a tasting that differs markedly from what's written here, send us your notes. We'd love to compare them!

2018 Vinicola Cherchi Cannonau di Sardegna (Sardinia)



Limited supply
Low intervention
Cannonau

There are more centenarians in northern Sardinia than anywhere else in the world. Their secret, according to researchers, is diet, which includes daily consumption of a red wine known as *cannonau*.

A type of “black” grenache, cannonau grapes grow at relatively higher altitudes, which may explain antioxidant levels at two to three times other wines. Those of Cherchi, in the town of Usini, grow at 200 meters. Sea breezes aerate the soil – a type of natural pest control.

After a late September harvest, this cannonau was left to macerate on its skins for 10 days, sucking up nutrients and tannins. The result is a dry, spicy wine with lots of ripe fruit (blackberry, quince, plum) and *chaparral* (an herbaceous element unique to wines from the Mediterranean islands – similar to *garrigue* seen in southern French wines). Pair with well-seasoned meats and cheeses. Uncork half-hour before serving.

Drink 2020 to 2024.



2016 Zisola Doppiozetta (Sicily)



Albarello style vines

91 pts (Suckling – 2016);

91 pts (Galloni – 2016)

Nero d'Avola (indigenous)

After crossing the Ionian Sea on wings of wax, Daedalus (father of Icarus and designer of the Minotaur's Labyrinth) is said to have landed at the town of Noto, on the island of Sicily.

If he needed a drink by that point, preferably a full-bodied red, he was in luck. In Noto, an indigenous grape called *nero d'Avola* makes wines with an aging potential of 20 years.

Zisola's *nero d'Avola* grow in the 3,000-year-old "albarello" style: small, tree-like shapes that maximize aeration and sunlight while keeping the grapes low enough for a tempering influence from the earth. The point is to pummel the vines with sun, while still getting a slow, even maturation.

Add to that a dry, calcareous soil and you get this "muscular" wine, with notes of tobacco and deep fruit. That muscle should turn to wisdom with age – more Socrates, less Achilles. Pair with stew, aged cheese, or the traditional oxtail soup. Decant for one hour.

Drink 2020 to 2035.



2015 Planeta Maroccoli Sicilia Menfi DOC (Sicily)



Sustainable

**93 pts (Suckling),
90 pts (Wine Enthusiast)**

Syrah

In the Odyssey, Homer describes Sicilian wine as being as “fragrant as ambrosia and nectar.” Close your eyes for your first whiff of Planeta. See if you don’t imagine yourself walking among the vines on a soil of marine fossils and marl, looking out over a baby blue sea, immersed in scents of pepper, rosemary, and lavender (overachievers may detect a bit of tar).

We had news, as we sat down to write this, that Planeta’s founder, Diego Planeta, has passed away at the age of 80. As one of his final vintages, this 2015 is as fitting a tribute as any winemaker could ask for. The experts will tell you that there’s no more intense syrah than an Aussie shiraz. Pop open this bottle and see if you agree once the minty finish hits.

Pair with smoked Sicilian provola, parmigiana, and lamb cutlets with mint. Decant one hour.

Drink 2020 to 2030.



2018 Clos Alivu Patrimonio (Corsica)



Non-Certified Organic
90 pts (Wine Enthusiast)
Nielluccio (50+ years)

The Genoese take credit for introducing the grape nielluccio, a sangiovese relative, to Corsica in the 14th century (others maintain it's indigenous). The name comes from the Corsican for "black and dry," a good descriptor for this robust, Rhône-like red with black cherry on the nose, and firm tannins on the palate.

Nielluccio is a finicky grape. Yet, at the island's northern tip, in Corsica's oldest appellation, Patrimonio, Eric Poli's 50-year-old vines thrive on terraces of *petra bianca* soil – so-called because of the heavy limestone content, which negates the need for chemical herbicides or fertilizers. Clos d'Alivu is technically organic, though Eric – a proud Corsican – doesn't bother getting it certified by the European authorities.

With many thanks to Julien Miquel, who worked his magic to get us this rare wine. Pair with pizza, cured meats, and hard cheese.

Drink 2020-2023.



2017 Gainnikos Agiorgitiko “Lion” (The Peloponnese)



Organic
Silver Medal
(AWC Vienna –
6 years running)
Agiorgitiko
(indigenous)

In Homer’s day, the Peloponnesian peninsula was known as “Ampeloessa” or “full of vines.”

There, as the legend goes, Hercules wrestled with the Nemean lion and bled onto nearby vines, turning the grapes dark red and creating the indigenous *agiorgitiko* variety. (Later, this “blood of Hercules” wine would be favored by another legendary figure: *The Iliad*’s King Agamemnon.)

Today, the Peloponnese is home to Gainnikos, the oldest winery in this collection (founded in 1896 and still family owned). Their 2017 agiorgitiko tastes like something an ancient king would like. Rustic. Rugged. Yet there’s plum and cherry here too (common for hot, dry terroirs). A bit of oak softens things, with a lingering nutmeg finish.

Winner of the Silver Medal from AWC Vienna (the “OSCARS” of wine) six years in a row. Handpicked, organic grapes. Pair with grilled sausage, fresh tomatoes, and pasta.

Drink 2020 to 2030.



2018 Artemis Karamolegos Assyrtiko (Santorini)



**Natural Yeast,
Minimalist**

**90 pts (Parker 2014),
Gold Medal (TEXSOM
2016)**

Assyrtiko (indigenous)

The crescent island of Santorini is, in fact, the crater of an underwater volcano. Four thousand years ago it erupted, extinguishing the Minoan civilization and creating the legend of Atlantis, as parts of Santorini sank into the sea.

What remains is coated with volcanic rock, which may explain the immunity of the island's native *assyrtiko* to phylloxera. Today, it is one of the few European vines not grafted onto American root stocks.

The assyrtiko for this 2018 vintage comes from vines that grow in tight basket shapes to protect the grapes from strong sea winds. Following harvest, winemaker Artemis Karamolegos focused on terroir – using natural yeast and keeping the wine on its lees (dead yeast and sediment) for a whole 5 months to draw out the salt, flint, peach, and chamomile.

This is a rare white that you can age and decant. Pair with fish, lamb, a tomato and feta salad, or, if you're feeling bold, Chinese or Thai take-out.

Drink 2020 to 2030.





Our Mission

At the Bonner Private Wine Partnership, our mission is to bring you unique bottles from all over the world. We seek wines that are bursting with life and character – wines with an adventure in every bottle.

Your Next Quarterly Shipment

As you read this, we are already selecting and arranging to import wines for next quarter's shipment. We will be in touch to share what we've found with you when we get closer to the shipping date. Until then, enjoy your wine! (And let us know what you think!)

Problem with Your Shipment?

Please call our customer service, 9-5 Monday through Friday. We want everyone to get the most out of this club and these wines. So if there's a problem, we'll do our best to make it right.

...Can We Ask A Small Favor?

Can we "compare notes" with you on these wines?

Maybe you picked up on aromas that we didn't. Maybe you just fell in love with a particular bottle. Or maybe the exact opposite. Whatever the case, we want to hear from you. Because you're part of this. And we can only keep this mission going if you're onboard.

Shoot us an email at feedback@bonnerprivatewines.com