

BERGAMOT BACK ALLEY WINE CLUB

Thoughtful and Delicious. Every Time.

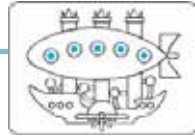
JUNE 2017

MANOIR TETE DE LA ROUGE

It's been quite a while since we've done a 'producer focus' for Back Alley Wine Club, for no particular reason really, just that there is so much to cover and to play with sometimes we get caught up in the big picture. Every so often, however, we drink three wines from one winery and just have to share the experience. Guillaume Reynouard from Manoir Tête de la Rouge is a shining example of the Loire cool factor that is sought after in the market today by we the super geeks. Champion of both biodynamics and biodiversity, making wines that are honest and pure, and oh yeah, he makes Pineau d'Aunis. And we're sold. Le Manoir de la Tete Rouge itself is an old self-sustaining farm and fortress dating back to 1649 that Guillaume took over in '96. He grows just these three grapes and produces a range of small lots wines from each, each one as delicious as the last. Wines like this that are vibrant and truly alive are what I want to be drinking in summertime. Check that, all the time. Be sure to toss all three of these wines on some ice, and be sure to drink the Cremant last!

-Kevin Wardell, June 2017



**'Bagatelle' Cabernet Franc, Saumur 2015**

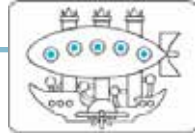
RETAIL: \$23

15% OFF REORDERS THIS MONTH: \$19.55

IN THE GLASS:

By now you may know my love for Cab Franc and it's natural mashup savory earth tones and ripe fruits. First dig your nose into all that gratuitous roasted red pepper and dark chocolate cocoa. Then the tongue experiences some altogether different flavors as black cherry cola, strawberry rhubarb jam and tobacco take center stage. This is a wonderful rendition of all those distinct treats combined together that just makes me jump for joy. Guillaumes decision to age this wine in stainless steel is an important one, as too often Cab Franc tends to really absorb the flavors of a barrel and lose the natural layers that are on display here. Not to mention how tragic it would be to impart wood tannins on to this lovely wine.

"Too much tannin pisses me off." -Guillaume ReynouardRight on Guillaume. Right on.

**'K' Sa Tête' Pineau d'Aunis**

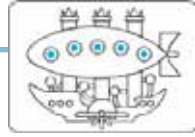
RETAIL: \$29

15% OFF REORDERS THIS MONTH: \$24.65

IN THE GLASS:

Step 1. Get out those obnoxiously big wine stems that you bought on a whim but are too afraid to break.
Step 2. Remove dust. You really should use these more often you know.
Step 3. Inhale and immerse yourself with the intoxicating world of of Pineau d'Aunis!

This is as out there as a grape variety gets in France, and wouldn't you know it, it has a zealous if not downright maniacal following. White pepper, a sharp #2 pencil and do you remember those raspberry candies 'Les Framboises' in the round metal tins? Now although those aren't exactly the everyday descriptors you might throw out there to describe what you'd like in a wine, but when combined together, the result is fabulously delightful. Compared with so many grapes in Italy that have been replaced due to difficulty in growing and yields, or a lack of concentration in flavor or structure, we are all very fortunate when there becomes a demand for wines like Pineau d'Aunis and for those like Guillaume that work extra hard to make sure they do not get forgotten.



'Tête en l'air' Crémant de Loire Non Dosé, Chenin Blanc

RETAIL: \$31

15% OFF THIS MONTH: \$26.35

IN THE GLASS:

The scent of yeast, or more specifically of fermentation is something that can be debated endlessly with regards to it's value in assessing positive or negative attributes to a wine. Often this is done over a backgammon board just before sunrise between two feral Sommeliers armed with keys to the cellar. Regardless, there is no other way to explain those first aromas on this wine. With it's clean and lively mousse, I feel like the palate is much more expressive than what is given away on the nose.

As expected from a sparkling Chenin with no added sugar, the acidity is ripping, but the mix of dried apples and marcona almonds and touch of pickled ginger sweetness on the tongue are all wonderful surprises mixed in. Complex for sure, as there is a bitter edge that comes with the perceived sweetness, a great wine for anyone who shares the knowledge that quality bubbles are just as good for contemplation for as they are for celebration. By now I sure hope that is all of you.