$60 Wine Club Selections

**Domaine de la Terre Rouge, Tête-à-Tête Sierra Foothills, 2014**

43% Grenache, 43% Mourvedre, 14% Syrah

## *Behind the name*

A Tête-à-Tête is a private intimate conversation between two people (literally head to head).

## *The Wine*

Tête-à-Tête is a fun easy drinking assemblage of Mediterranean varietals (Syrah, Grenache, Mourvèdre). They blend it with current drinkability in mind, for drinking both at home and as a restaurant pour. They generally put it together from younger vines and more forward tasting barrel lots. 2014 was a year where most of our Rhône varietal lots had brightness and ripe fruit. It was more of an average growing season, but this was the second year of a three-year drought. The fruit developed nicely all summer, with no surprises, and received good flavor development. This wine drinks like wines from solid Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages vintage: sappy, spicy, mouth-filling, and nuanced. It is an eminently enjoyable everyday bottle. The 2014 has deep boysenberry fruit aromatics, with smoky/meaty/ gamey complex flavor components that emphasize our terroir, and a lengthy creamy texture. Aged for 16 months in a mixture of French barrels

## *The Winemaker*

## Winemaker Bill Easton is one of the original Rhône Rangers and pioneered the Rhône varietals in the Sierra Foothills in the late 80s. His wines are balanced and elegant, with complexity that develops as the wines age in bottle. The French call it élevage, which is "raising" the wine in the bottle before drinking. There is an art to this style of winemaking and there is great pleasure in drinking a wine that has just started to show what it will be.

## *Tasting Notes*

This full-bodied wine is packed with fruit and spice notes and is especially broad and mouth-filling. Made from mostly Grenache and Mourvèdre, with a dash of Syrah, it has generous ripe plum, macerated cherry and black pepper flavors that spread across the palate and linger on the finish.

hy finish. Several vineyard sites throughout the

**Domaine du Salvard, Cheverny, Loire Valley France, 2019**

*The Wine*

While not untrue, calling Cheverny a value alternative to Sancerre would completely overlook the virtues unique to this appellation. It is a much zippier expression of Sauvignon Blanc compared to its famous neighbor, more citrusy than grassy, while the addition of some Chardonnay in the tank adds a lovely peachy note. A brisk, zesty white like this brilliantly complements a lunchtime salad of whatever fresh produce you can get your hands on, such as cucumber and avocado, abundantly seasoned with a medley of shredded herbs like basil, mint, and cilantro.

*Terroir*

The defining feature of the Loire Valley, not surprisingly, is the Loire River. As the longest river in France, spanning more than 600 miles, this river connects seemingly disparate wine regions. Why else would Sancerre, with its Kimmeridgian limestone terroir be connected to Muscadet, an appellation that is 250 miles away?  
  
Secondary in relevance to the historical, climatic, environmental, and cultural importance of the river are the wines and châteaux of the Jardin de la France. The kings and nobility of France built many hundreds of châteaux in the Loire but wine preceded the arrival of the noblesse and has since out-lived them as well.  
  
Diversity abounds in the Loire. The Kimmderidgian limestone of Sancerre is also found in Chablis. Chinon, Bourgueil, and Saumur boast the presence of tuffeau, a type of limestone unique to the Loire that has a yellowish tinge and a chalky texture. Savennières has schist, while Muscadet has volcanic, granite, and serpentinite based soils. In addition to geologic diversity, many, grape varieties are grown there too: Cabernet Franc, Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, and Melon de Bourgogne are most prevalent, but (to name a few) Pinot Gris, Grolleau, Pinot Noir, Pineau d’Aunis, and Folle Blanche are also planted. These myriad of viticultural influences leads to the high-quality production of every type of wine: red, white, rosé, sparkling, and dessert.

*The Estate*

Domaine du Salvard has been a working domaine since 1898, through five hardworking generations of the Delaille family. Today, all forty-two hectares of vineyards are farmed by the capable brother team of Emmanuel and Thierry Delaille, with help from their father Gilbert. To our delight, they have carried on the traditions established by their ancestors, producing a true, classic Cheverny that is both simple and elegant. The Delaille brothers have focused their attention on growing fresh, lively Sauvignon Blanc, deeply rooted in the sand, clay, and limestone plains of northeastern Touraine. Pinot Noir, Gamay, and Cot constitute their red grape holdings, creating youthful reds with great aromatics.

Praised for its stately Renaissance-era chateaux, the picturesque Loire valley produces pleasant wines of just about every style. Just south of Paris, the appellation lies along the river of the same name and stretches from the Atlantic coast to the center of France.

The Loire can be divided into three main growing areas, from west to east: the Lower Loire, Middle Loire, and Upper/Central Loire. The [Pay Nantais](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/pays-nantais/7155-107101) region of the Lower Loire—farthest west and closest to the Atlantic—has a maritime climate and focuses on the [Melon de Bourgogne](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/melon-de-bourgogne/7155-15439) variety, which makes refreshing, crisp, aromatic whites.

The Middle Loire contains [Anjou](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/anjou/7155-107109), [Saumur](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/saumur/7155-107108) and [Touraine](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/touraine/7155-107102). In Anjou, [Chenin Blanc](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/chenin-blanc/7155-165) produces some of, if not the most, outstanding dry and sweet wines with a sleek, mineral edge and characteristics of crisp apple, pear and honeysuckle. [Cabernet Franc](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/cabernet-franc/7155-197) dominates red and rosé production here, supported often by Grolleau and [Cabernet Sauvignon](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/cabernet-sauvignon/7155-139). Sparkling Crémant de Loire is a specialty of Saumur. Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc are common in Touraine as well, along with [Sauvignon Blanc](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/sauvignon-blanc/7155-151), [Gamay](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/gamay/7155-150) and [Malbec](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/malbec/7155-10079)(known locally as Côt).

The Upper Loire, with a warm, continental climate, is Sauvignon Blanc country, home to the world-renowned appellations of [Sancerre](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/sancerre/7155-107106) and [Pouilly-Fumé](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/pouilly-fume/7155-107107). [Pinot Noir](https://www.wine.com/list/wine/pinot-noir/7155-143) and Gamay produce bright, easy-drinking red wines here.

*Winemaker Notes*

Sauvignon Blanc is often described using the word “gooseberry,” better known as groseille à maquereau in French, thanks to traditional Norman fishermen’s recipes that include these berries to season mackerel dishes. Indeed, the snappy taste of Salvard’s Cheverny brings to mind my grandmother’s delicious “Bouonia”: mackerel cooked simply in a pot of white wine, vegetables, lemon, and gooseberry. Fresh and zesty! 85% Sauvignon Blanc, 15% Chardonnay

*Winemaker Notes*

This wine is pleasantly aromatic with notes of refreshing green apple and delicate white flowers. On the palate, the Domaine du Salvard Cheverny Blanc is juicy with gooseberries melon, and orchard fruits, and a hint of green herbs and lime zest. It is medium bodied with a lingering almost savory herbal finish.

*Food Pairings*

shrimp tacos, Cuban-style braised pork with sour orange onion sauce. If you want to go more traditional, try it with pan-seared fresh water fish with lemon-butter sauce.

**Gainey Vineyard, Merlot, Santa Barbara County, 2017**

Santa Ynez Valley AVA

Santa Barbara, Central Coast

The Santa Ynez Valley AVA (American Viticultural Area) located in Santa Barbara County, California covers over 76,000 acres and is part of the larger Central Coast AVA. The Santa Ynez Valley is home to the most wineries in the county and contains two smaller AVAs, Sta. Rita Hills known for quality [Pinot Noirs](https://www.goldmedalwineclub.com/varietal/pinot-noir) and Happy Canyon of [Santa Barbara](https://www.goldmedalwineclub.com/region/santa-barbara-county-region) which host some of the best [Cabernet Sauvignon](https://www.goldmedalwineclub.com/varietal/cabernet-sauvignon) grapes in the region. The valley formed by the Purisima Hills and San Rafael Mountain on the north and the Santa Ynez Mountains to the south, offers growers a wide range of temperatures to grow many types of grapes.  
  
In the cooler parts of the Valley, Pinot Noir and [Chardonnay](https://www.goldmedalwineclub.com/varietal/chardonnay) do very well. In the far eastern portion farthest from the influence of the Pacific Ocean fog, [Merlot](https://www.goldmedalwineclub.com/varietal/merlot) and Cabernet Sauvignon thrive.

From Dan Gainey . . .

IN 1962, MY GRANDFATHER AND FATHER PURCHASED 1,800 ACRES OF UNDEVELOPED LAND STRETCHING ACROSS THE EASTERN END OF SANTA YNEZ VALLEY. WITHIN A YEAR, THEY STARTED A CATTLE OPERATION AND CONVERTED 600 ACRES INTO FARMLAND FOR VEGETABLES, FRUIT, FLOWERS, AND HAY CROPS THAT HAVE SUSTAINED OUR FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS.

After my grandfather passed away, my father took over farming our Home Ranch and planted 50 acres of grapevines, nurturing a dream he had of one day producing a Gainey family wine. In 1984, he established our Spanish-style winery – designed to produce small quantities of high-quality wine – and released a Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The following year, I joined my father in the family business and set about learning it from the ground up. In 1996, I purchased an additional plot of land in what would become the Sta. Rita Hills appellation in western Santa Ynez Valley, and planted 60 acres of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah. I named the vineyard Evan’s Ranch after my great-grandfather. The Sta. Rita Hills proved ideally suited to those varieties, so in 2009, I planted another 50-acre parcel in this cool, maritime appellation and named it Rancho Esperanza.

Today, our vineyards and winery comprise an important part of my family’s agricultural operations, and we’re fortunate to have vineyards that yield enough high-quality fruit to estate bottle all our wines. My wife, Diane, and I are proud that our son and daughters, the fourth generation of Gaineys in the Santa Ynez Valley, are continuing our family’s tradition of farming and winemaking in this most beautiful region of California. We invite you to come visit us the next time you’re in Santa Barbara wine country.

*The Ranches . . .*

MY FAMILY’S THREE RANCHES ARE LOCATED IN TWO OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY’S MOST ESTEEMED APPELLATIONS: THE SANTA YNEZ VALLEY AND THE STA. RITA HILLS.

Each ranch offers a unique combination of soil types, microclimate, sun exposure and grape varieties, ensuring great complexity in our wines. We grow warm climate varieties at our Home Ranch in the warmer, eastern end of Santa Ynez Valley and cool climate varieties at our Evan’s Ranch and Rancho Esperanza in the cool, marine-influenced Sta. Rita Hills appellation. All three ranches yield grapes of exceptional character, allowing us to craft 100% estate-grown wines. Controlling the process from vine to bottle ensures we maintain a consistently high level of quality.

My family and I have long employed sustainable farming practices at our three Santa Ynez Valley ranches. Long before it became fashionable, we were using cover crops, compost, and natural soil amendments to condition our soils; avoiding the use of pesticides to ensure the well-being of our environment and vineyard workers; controlling weeds by hand to prevent the use of herbicides that can leach into ground water; and relying on organic sprays to combat mildew and vine pests.

Farming sustainably reflects our longstanding commitment to our land and the Santa Ynez Valley community.

The Wine . . .

Produced entirely from grapes cultivated at the Home Ranch in eastern Santa Ynez Valley, the Estate Grown Merlot is a sumptuous red wine boasting fragrant black cherry and dark plum aromas mingled with appealing vanilla, milk chocolate and light herbal scents. Juicy and succulent on the palate, the wine’s concentrated dark cherry, plum and cassis flavors gain a zesty tea-leaf tone in the long, savory finish. Beautifully balanced, with supple tannins, the Merlot is delicious on release with poultry, duck, game, and beef dishes.

**$90 Wine Selections**

**Almarosa, Pinot Noir, Sta. Rita Hills, 2017**

**About the grape varietal:**

**Pinot Noir** is the dominant red wine grape of [Burgundy](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-burgundy), now adopted (and extensively studied) in wine regions all over the world. The variety's elusive charm has carried it to all manner of vineyards.

The essence of Pinot Noir wine is its aroma of red berries and cherry (fresh red cherries in lighter wines and stewed black cherries in weightier examples). Many of the more complex examples show hints of forest floor.

**A little about the region**:

Founder Richard Sanford was the first to plant Pinot Noir in the Central Coast region of California, and our complex wines reflect over 40 years of experience capturing the best that Pinot Noir has to offer from our exceptional region.

With a total area of 30,720 acres, the Sta. Rita Hills AVA is home to over 59 vineyards, totaling 2,700 hundred acres planted to Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and 18 other cool climate wine grape varieties.

GEOLOGY

The miracle of the region’s microclimate began about 20 million years ago during the Miocene Epoch, as marine sediment was deposited deep under the Pacific Ocean. Due to tectonic plate movements, mountains rose out of the ocean in a north-south orientation. Over a timespan of twelve million years, the mountains broke from the plate and turned clockwise, creating the most clearly delineated transverse range, from Alaska to Chile, on the Pacific Coast.

The combination of a purely East/West maritime throat, poor marine-based soils, elevated calcium in the soil and the Pacific’s cooling influence through fog, wind and moderating summer heat combine to form one of the world’s best cool-climate viticulture areas for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

The WINES

The flavors and complexity of Sta. Rita Hills wines come from a combination of east-west coastal valleys, cool weather, fog, wind and soils that limit vine vigor and crop yield intensifying the flavors of the wines. Natural acidity balanced with firm structure is a common thread in the wines throughout the region making them easy to pair with a variety of foods.

[**The VINEYARDS**](http://www.staritahills.com/vineyard-images)

Although the appellation contains a few of the more revered older Pinot Noir vineyards in the state, many of our Sta. Rita Hills AVA vineyards are distinct from those of older winegrowing regions. Because most of the vineyards have been planted in the last two decades, they have been able to use modern trellising, newly available ‘cultivars’ or ‘clones’ of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and have been able to implement cultural practices that have been championed in the recent body of viticulture research and literature. While the vineyards and wines have received critical acclaim in a short period of time, they continue to fine tune the vineyard practices and look for ways to improve wine quality as the vines mature. There are approximately 3,000 acres of Pinot Noir and 500 acres of Chardonnay planted in our AVA. Additionally, 140 acres of Sta. Rita Hills vineyards are planted to Syrah, Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier, and other wine grape varieties.

### **The Winery**:

Alma Rosa Winery is situated on the north-facing slopes of the Santa Rosa Hills in Santa Barbara County. Our wines are layered, vibrant and balanced, and they reflect the special terroir of the Sta.Rita Hills, which benefits from cool Pacific Ocean breezes funneled inland through the unique transverse mountain range of our region.

**Tasting Notes:**

Tangy aromas of red plums, sumac and sour cherry peels kick off the nose of this appellation blend. There's a tartness to the red-plum-skin and sour cherry flavors that also show on the sip, but they are warmed by nutmeg and mace spices.

**Kurtatsch, Sonntaler Vernatsch Alte Reben Schiava, Tentino-Alto Adige Italy, 2019**

The Region

The northern area of the Italian double region Trentino-South Tyrol; the southern ara is Trentino. The Italian name is Alto Adige. It corresponds geographically to the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. The Rhaeto-Romans planted the first vineyards there as early as 1,000 BC, making South Tyrol one of the oldest German-speaking wine-growing regions. Here the Romans learned from the Celts how to use wooden wine barrels for storage and transport. In the Middle Ages, viticulture reached its peak. The German emperors who went to Rome for their coronation got to know and appreciate South Tyrolean wine on their travels. A decline occurred from the end of the 19th century, as in many other wine-growing regions, due to phylloxera and mildew. After the First World War, when South Tyrol was annexed to Italy in 1919, the northern sales markets were lost. After the loss of quality in the 1980s due to the marketing of mass-produced wines, there was now a return to top quality wine making.

The vineyards cover 5,500 hectares at mainly 500 to 1,000 meters above sea level. In the Adige Valley the soils consist of gravelly alluvial gravel, on the slopes of weathered scree with a high lime content. A continental climate prevails with warm summers and cold winters with relatively large temperature fluctuations.

# **Schiava Wine**

**Schiava** is an Italian name used to refer to several grape varieties common to the [Trentino](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-trentino) and [Alto Adige](https://www.wine-searcher.com/regions-alto+adige+-+sudtirol) regions of northern Italy. It is not unusual for a group of unrelated vine varieties to bear the same name; evidence of this is easily found in relation to the various [Malvasia](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-264-malvasia) and [Muscat](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-302-muscat) vines that are found all around the Mediterranean, and even the interesting case of the four [Bonarda](https://www.wine-searcher.com/grape-54-bonarda" \o "Bonarda Wine Grape Variety" \t "_self) varieties.

Naturally, for a variety grown at the junction between the French, Italian and Germanic parts of Europe, Schiava vines have several synonyms, further complicating an already confusing name.

**The Producer**

The cooperative is located in the municipality of Kurtatsch (Cortaccia) in the Italian wine-growing region of South Tyrol (Trentino-Alto Adige). It was already founded in 1900. The Freienfeld estate is the center of the village, built in 1521, was the headquarters of the winery until 1923. Then the present winery building on the Wine Road was built. Today the cellar of the estate is used as a barrique warehouse and wine archive and is the venue for exclusive tastings.

The vineyards comprise 190 hectares of vines, which are cultivated by 190 members in a [sustainable](https://glossary.wein.plus/sustainability) manner. They extend - unique in [Europe](https://glossary.wein.plus/europe) - from 220 to 900 metres above sea level, mostly on steep slopes. Following the French model, an ideal location-variety balance has long been the norm. The white wine varieties Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc), [Chardonnay](https://glossary.wein.plus/chardonnay), Pinot Grigio[(Pinot Gris](https://glossary.wein.plus/pinot-gris)), [Müller-Thurgau](https://glossary.wein.plus/mueller-thurgau), [Sauvignon Blanc](https://glossary.wein.plus/sauvignon-blanc), [Gewürztraminer](https://glossary.wein.plus/gewuerztraminer) and [Goldmuskateller](https://glossary.wein.plus/gold-muscat-1), as well as the red wine varieties [Lagrein](https://glossary.wein.plus/lagrein), Vernatsch[(Schiava](https://glossary.wein.plus/schiava)), [Rosenmuskateller](https://glossary.wein.plus/rose-muscatel), Blauburgunder[(Pinot Noir](https://glossary.wein.plus/pinot-noir)), [Cabernet Sauvignon](https://glossary.wein.plus/cabernet-sauvignon), [Cabernet Franc](https://glossary.wein.plus/cabernet-franc) and [Merlot](https://glossary.wein.plus/merlot) are processed

On the slopes below Kurtatsch there are the best red vineyards, which with temperatures up to 40 °Celsius in midsummer are among the hottest sites in Italy. The Merlot grapes ripen in the steeply sloping vineyards of the Brenntal site on heavy, red loamy soil, which has great similarities with the French area of [Pomerol](https://glossary.wein.plus/pomerol). The Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc varieties are cultivated below the rock walls on loose, deep soils with a high gravel content. The heat of the milla walls favours an optimal [physiological ripeness](https://glossary.wein.plus/physiological-ripeness) of the late maturing Cabernet grapes. The white wine grapes grow predominantly on steep calcareous soils at airy altitudes of up to 900 m above sea level and benefit greatly from the cooling nightly down winds.

With reduced yields, strictly controlled cultivation and pure vinification, terroir typical wines are produced. The wines are made from strictly selected grapes with optimal ripeness and uncompromisingly pure cellar management. Before bottling, a strict taste test is carried out. The extensive product range comprises over 30 wines. There are two lines: TERROIR (top line with special character of the area or vineyard, certain wines only in the best vintages) and SELECTION (first selection with reduced yields and strictly controlled cultivation program). Depending on the type and variety of wine, ageing takes place in stainless steel tanks, in large wooden barrels or in [barriques](https://glossary.wein.plus/barrique). Premium wines include "Chardonnay Riserva Freienfeld", "Cabernet Sauvignon Riserva Freienfeld", "Gewürztraminer Riserva Brenntal", "Merlot Riserva Brenntal", "Cuvée Weis Amos" and the [Passito](https://glossary.wein.plus/passito) "Aruna" (Gewürztraminer, Gold Muscat)

**TASTING NOTES:** Schiava SONNTALER unites their oldest vineyards. The vines are between 60 and 90 years old. Old vines produce inherently lower and therefore higher quality yields. Traditionally, SONNTALER is an assemblage of different Schiava varieties with a large share of Schiava grigia. Ideal terroir and traditional ageing in large Slavonian wooden barrels result in a wine with complex aromas of raspberries, wild strawberries, cherries and redcurrants. Its elegant, lean body is gripping on the palate. Fine-grained tannins give the smooth fruitiness typical for the variety a long, hearty finish.

Food Pairing:

* Tirolese canederli (traditional Alto Adige dumpling soup with speck)
* Baked ham
* Mature pecorino cheese