

**PRWS**

**January 2021 Wine Club**



## Organic Thoughts

As we begin a new year, my thoughts always turn to the growers whose back-breaking labor produces the grapes that turn into our favorite wines. Farming is never easy, and organic farming even less so. But tending the earth with minimal chemical intervention is definitely gentler to our beleaguered planet. Nurturing the organic matter in our soils may even produce more flavorful wines. And consuming less chemicals is perennially at the top of my to-do list. Thus, we're starting off 2021 with four producers who practice strictly organic viticulture. All the flavor, none of the chemical load.

### White #1) Moretti Omera Nessuno Umbria Bianco 2017



Situated south-east of Montefalco in Giano dell'Umbria, Azienda Agraria Moretti Omero is owned and run by Omero Moretti. The area is small but in ten years has grown from 30 farms to 62. The origins of the property go back to just after the first World War, when in 1925 Moretti's grandfather Domenico emigrated from Switzerland, using his savings to buy his first olive grove. Omero fell in love with farming after receiving his first tractor in 1972 and joined the

family business, eventually bringing his wife Daniela and two daughters, Lucia and Giusy, into the fold. Today, the 32 ha estate is certified organic, and produces olive oil, a number of red wines, and this lovely blend of Grechetto and Malvasia. Unoaked, with mango and stone fruit accented by orange blossom, sage, and lime. For an unusual but excellent pairing, try it with sushi.

### White #2) Draga Ribolla Gialla Collio 2017



On the steep slopes of the Collio hills of Friuli, the terrain is rough and the soil is composed of layers of clay and stone, which locally is called "ponca". The area is blessed with plentiful sunshine and light, drying winds; perfect conditions for organic viticulture. The grapes are manually worked and harvested, primarily since machinery is not capable of working the vertiginous slopes.

Ribolla Gialla, an ancient grape variety, originally from northern Italy and Slovenia. In modern times, it has become somewhat of a specialty of this region specialty of this region, producing fresh, clean wines with fruit-forward and floral aromas. Draga, s version is a bit more complex, offering up baked apple, tangerine, beeswax, and fresh thyme, with bracing acidity on the finish. Try it with fried seafood-that acidity magically 'lifts' anything from calamari to fish and chips.

## Red #1) Chateau Chavignac (Bordeaux) 2019



This 32-hectare vineyard was founded by the Bouron family in 1964. Situated 60 km from Bordeaux in the Entre-Deux-Mers region between the Garonne and the Dordogne, Chavignac produces Bordeaux that is well-balanced and fruit-forward. Apart from grapes, they also grow grains and raise animals – all cultivated organically. Respect for nature and its rhythms is essential to the Bourons. The winery has employed organic methods of viticulture and vinification since 1964, and all the wines of Chateau Chavignac bear the Ecocert certified organic stamp.

The vineyards are planted to a mix of Merlot (60%), Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Cabernet Sauvignon. The Bourons feel that limiting the amount of Cabernet results in a silkier, more layered and complex wine, as opposed to one with monolithic and bruising tannins. Flavors of plum,

blackberry, and blueberry mingle with leather, mushroom, and spice.

## Red#2) Prunatelli Toscana Rosso 2015



Everyone knows Chianti Classico. But are you familiar with Rufina, an area north of the Classico zone and famous for its complex but silky and feminine reds? The Grati family has been growing grapes and olives in Rufina for five generations. The Galiga and Vetrice estates are owned by the Grati brothers and extend over an area of 562 hectares, on the hills between Pontassieve and Rufina, and one hundred are dedicated to vineyards. The family is so deeply involved in these hills, they have altered the landscape, creating lakes Galiga and Vetrice, named after their two estates. Naturally, they choose to tend their vines without chemicals. This 'little' red is a perfect intro to the estate. 100%

Sangiovese-resisting the fashion to add Merlot or Cabernet- and unoaked, Prunatelli's Rosso expresses red cherry, black cherry, plum, and cedar, and is excellent with grilled dishes or pasta.

