

All I Want for Christmas...

DEAR SANTA,

I KNOW IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE I'VE LAST WRITTEN, BUT I'VE BEEN A BIT BUSY FOR THE LAST FORTY YEARS OR SO, AND FRANKLY, SINCE I'M NOT ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT YOU EVEN EXIST, THE IDEA OF WRITING EVERY CHRISTMAS HAS SEEMED, WELL, JUST A BIT SILLY. I'M CERTAINLY WILLING, FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS LETTER, TO CONCEDE THE FACT OF YOUR EXISTENCE, AND FURTHERMORE, TO STIPULATE THAT YOU POSSESS CERTAIN SKILLS AND POWERS, AND THAT SUCH POWERS ARE BEYOND MY ABILITY TO COMPREHEND.

I'M ALSO WILLING TO ADMIT THAT I HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN ON MY BEST BEHAVIOR, AND IF YOU TRULY KNOW 'WHEN I'VE BEEN BAD OR GOOD,' I MAY HAVE SOME SERIOUS EXPLAINING TO DO. BUT IN MY DEFENSE, ALTHOUGH MY BEHAVIOR MAY HAVE BEEN QUESTIONABLE FROM TIME TO TIME, ON THE WHOLE, I'VE DONE MORE OVERALL GOOD THAN BAD IN RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS. I MEAN, THERE ARE LOTS OF REAL CREEPS OUT THERE! SO, LET ME GET RIGHT OUT IN FRONT OF THE ISSUE AND APOLOGIZE FOR MY BOORISH BEHAVIOR WHILE DRUNK ON BOONE'S FARM STRAWBERRY HILL IN '72, MY DISRESPECT FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN '73, MY DISRESPECT FOR MY PARENTS IN '74-'79, MY TASTE IN CLOTHING THROUGHOUT THE '80S, THE REAGAN YEARS, CHEERING WHEN ANGELOS BOUGHT THE ORIOLES, CASHING IN MY IRA TO BUY STOCK IN WINE.COM, VOTING FOR RALPH NADER AND A MYRIAD OF OTHER SILLY, DUBIOUS AND DOWNRIGHT STUPID ACTIONS AND DECISIONS ALL THROUGHOUT MY LIFE. LIKE, MY BAD. OKAY? ARE WE GOOD NOW?

I THINK ITS ONLY FAIR TO POINT OUT THAT MY CHRISTMAS WISH, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO GRANT IT, IS REALLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WORLD AT LARGE. I MEAN, SURE, I BENEFIT TOO, BUT REALLY, IT'S A VERY COOL WISH. ITS NOT LIKE I'M ASKING FOR A PONY FOR CHRISSAKES! I MEAN, WHERE WOULD I KEEP A PONY! SO, WHEN YOU'RE WEIGHING THINGS OR ADDING STUFF UP OR WHATEVER IT IS THAT YOU DO TO DECIDE WHO GETS WHAT, PLEASE JUST BEAR IN MIND THAT MY WISH IS PRETTY UNSELFISH, OR IF NOT EXACTLY UNSELFISH, IT'S REALLY FOR EVERYONE'S BENEFIT. NOT JUST MINE. OKAY?

I JUST WANT THE TRUTH FOR CHRISTMAS.

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS THE TRUTH.

OK, I KNOW THAT YOU PROBABLY CAN'T MAKE EVERYONE TELL THE TRUTH ALL THE TIME, YOU MAY BE PRETTY POWERFUL AND ALL, BUT YOU'D NEED A VERY BIG SLEIGH TO COVER ALL THAT. SO, HOW ABOUT JUST ONE DAY? SAY LIKE, DECEMBER 27TH OR SOMETHING.

IF YOU COULD JUST MAKE EVERYONE TELL THE TRUTH ON DECEMBER 27TH. LIKE FOR THE ENTIRE DAY. THAT WOULD BE VERY COOL.

MAKE PRESIDENT BUSH TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT WMD AND IRAQ. MAKE DICK CHENEY TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT HALIBURTON. MAKE BARRY BONDS TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT STEROIDS. MAKE RUSH LIMBAUGH TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT HIS DRUG USE. MAKE BILL CLINTON TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT INHALING. MAKE MOBIL/EXXON TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT OIL PRICES. MAKE DONALD TRUMP TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT HIS HAIR. MAKE WINE CRITICS TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT SCORES. MAKE FOOD PRODUCERS TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT ADDITIVES. MAKE BOSSES TELL THE TRUTH ON THE JOB. MAKE EVERYONE COME CLEAN, COME OUT, 'FESS UP. JUST FOR ONE DAY. AFTER THAT, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

COULD YOU DO THAT? WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, COULD YOU ALSO TELL US IF ELVES REALLY MAKE ALL THE TOYS? OR IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.

WARM REGARDS,

PETER WOOD



SPARKLING WINES

2002 MARQUES DE GELIDA “EL CEP”

CAVA BRUT EXCLUSIVE, PENEDES, SPAIN
REGULAR \$11.99 **CASE PRICE \$115.20**
(20% OFF!)

LET'S CALL THIS A HYBRID CAVA. IN ADDITION TO ITS BASE OF THE TRADITIONAL PENEDES GRAPES: MACABEO, XAREL-LO, AND PARELLADA THERE IS ALSO 15% CHARDONNAY. A GENTLE MOUSSE IS OFF SET BY REMARKABLY CLEAN FRUIT AND MEDIUM ACIDITY. PERFECT AS AN APERITIF, THE GELIDA CAVA IS ALSO A LOVELY ACCOMPANIMENT TO SEAFOOD, BE IT SHELLFISH OR MORE MILD WHITE VARIETIES. CREAMY AND CRISP, THIS DELICIOUS SPARKLING WINE, FROM SPAIN'S EAST COAST, IS DESTINED TO BE CONSUMED BY THE CASELOAD. ONE MUST ACT FAST AS THIS IS A VINTAGE DATED BOTTLING WITH A MEAGER 3,000 CASE PRODUCTION. (IAS)

NV GLORIA FERRER BLANC DE NOIRS

SONOMA, CALIFORNIA
REGULAR \$18.99 **TWS PRICE \$14.99**

THE GLORIA FERRER BLANC DE NOIR, A BLEND OF 92% PINOT NOIR AND 8% CHARDONNAY, FEATURES A SLIGHTLY PINK HUE AND UNUSUAL DEPTH OF FLAVOR FOR ITS PRICE. BUT DO NOT FEAR THE SUBTLE STRAWBERRY COLOR OF THIS WINE, AS BY NOW WE HAVE ALL BEEN TOLD THAT COLOR IS NOT IMPORTANT, MERELY INDICATING COLOR AND NOT FLAVOR (I.E. THIS STUFF ISN'T SWEET). RICHNESS AND SMOOTHNESS ARE THE DOMINATING CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS CLASSY CALIFORNIAN OFFERING. IT MAKES FOR A PERFECT FOIL TO SPICY CUISINE SUCH AS THAI OR CURRY-BASED DISHES. (IAS)



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NV PIPER HEIDSIECK BRUT

CHAMPAGNE, FRANCE
REGULAR \$39.99 **TWS PRICE \$24.99**

THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER AND AUTUMN, WE HAVE TIRELESSLY SEARCHED FOR A VALUE-DRIVEN HOLIDAY CHAMPAGNE. FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR WE HAVE DECIDED ON PIPER HEIDSIECK BRUT, A NON-VINTAGE WINE FROM THE REIMS BASED OUTFIT. WHILE THERE ARE CERTAINLY CHEAPER CHAMPAGNES AVAILABLE, WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BEAT THE PRICE-TO-QUALITY RATIO POSSESSED BY THIS TASTY BUBBLY. THE TERRIFIC BALANCE OF YEASTY RICHNESS AND ZESTY CRISPNESS MAKE THIS WINE A TREAT FOR THE GATHERED HORDES AT YOUR HOLIDAY GET-TOGETHERS. LIFE IS SHORT, DRINK CHAMPAGNE. (IAS)

NINO FRANCO ‘RUSTICO’ PROSECCO, NV

VALDOBBIADENE, ITALY
REGULAR \$14.99 **TWS PRICE \$11.99**

PROSECCO, THE FAMOUS SPARKLING WINE OF THE VENETO, IS BOTH THE NAME OF THE GRAPE AND THE WINE. THE ONLY SIMILARITY IT SHARES WITH THE WINES FROM CHAMPAGNE ARE THE BUBBLES, AND ANYONE THAT TELLS YOU THAT IT TASTES, ‘JUST LIKE VEUVE AT HALF THE PRICE,’ DESPERATELY NEEDS A PALATE TRANSPLANT. NONETHELESS, IT'S A DELIGHTFUL APERITIF, CREAMY AND SOFT WITH FLAVORS OF GOLDEN DELICIOUS APPLES. THIS WINERY IS ONE OF THE OLDEST IN VALDOBBIADENE AND HAS BEEN ONE OF THE LEADERS IN INTRODUCING PROSECCO TO THE REST OF THE WORLD. NOW OPERATED BY THE THIRD GENERATION OF THE FOUNDING FAMILY, NINO FRANCO HAS SET THE STANDARD FOR PROSECCO OF HIGH QUALITY AND OUTSTANDING VALUE. (PW)

NV GRUET DEMI-SEC

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

REGULAR \$14.99 **TWS PRICE \$11.99**

IN 1984, GILBERT GRUET, WHOSE CHAMPAGNE HOUSE, GRUET ET FILS, HAD PRODUCED FINE CHAMPAGNE IN BETHON, FRANCE, SINCE 1952, MADE THE DECISION TO PLANT AN EXPERIMENTAL VINEYARD IN NEW MEXICO. AT 4300 FT., THE VINEYARDS ARE SOME OF THE HIGHEST IN THE UNITED STATES, SO REGARDLESS OF HOW HOT THE DAYS MIGHT BE, THE TEMPERATURE AT NIGHT CAN DROP AS MUCH AS THIRTY DEGREES, COOLING THE FRUIT AND SLOWING DOWN THE MATURATION PROCESS. IN OTHER WORDS, DESPITE ITS DISSIMILAR LOCATION, THE HIGH PLAINS OF NEW MEXICO YIELD A SIMILAR RIPENESS LEVEL TO THAT OF CHAMPAGNE. THE FIRST WINES, SOME 5000 BOTTLES, WERE PRODUCED IN 1987 IN THE TRADITIONAL *METHODE CHAMPENOISE*, AND UPON THEIR RELEASE IN 1987, STUNNED THE WINE WORLD WITH THEIR QUALITY AND PRICE. THIS SEMI-DRY SPARKLER IS PERFECT FOR DESSERT OR ANYTIME ONE'S SWEET TOOTH IS DEMANDING ATTENTION. A BLEND OF CHARDONNAY AND PINOT NOIR, THE WINE TASTES OF APPLE, PINEAPPLE AND PEAR WITH JUST ENOUGH CARAMEL TO OFFSET THE CRISP FINISH. (PW)

NV DOM RUINART ROSÉ

CHAMPAGNE, FRANCE

REGULAR \$69.99 **TWS PRICE \$55.99**

THIS IS A RATHER UNUSUAL ROSÉ, BASED HEAVILY ON THE WHITE VARIETY CHARDONNAY. THE DELIGHTFUL PINK TINGE IS CREATED BY THE ADDITION OF 20% STILL PINOT NOIR TO THE MIX WHICH NOT ONLY ALLOWS FOR THE COLOR BUT ALSO IMPARTS A DELICATE CHERRY AROMA AND RICH TEXTURE. TRY THIS ELEGANT DRINK WITH SALMON OF EITHER THE GRILLED OR SMOKED VARIETY. THIS IS SERIOUS ROSÉ FOR THE CHAMPAGNE LOVER, FOR THE WINE LOVER, FOR ANYONE WITH A SET OF TASTE BUDS. (IAS)

1995 NICOLAS FEUILLATTE CUVEE SPECIALE, 1ER CRU

EPERNAY, FRANCE

REGULAR \$59.99 **TWS PRICE \$47.99**

MOST CHAMPAGNE HOUSES TRACE THEIR HISTORY IN CENTURIES, NICOLAS FEUILLATTE DOES SO MERELY IN DECADES. NOW THAT'S NOT NECESSARILY A BAD THING; OLD HOUSES CAN MAKE BAD WINE JUST AS WELL AS YOUNG ONES. THIS YOUNG HOUSE PRODUCES SOME OF THE FINEST AND BEST VALUED WINES IN CHAMPAGNE. THIS WINE, OF 40% PINOT NOIR, 40% CHARDONNAY AND 20% PINOT MEUNIER, IS DELICATE AND SUBTLE, WITH UNDERSTATED RED BERRY NOTES INTERMINGLED WITH THE TYPICAL APPLE AND BAKED BREAD AROMAS. A STEP UP IN QUALITY IF NOT IN PRICE, THIS WINE MAY BE THE CLASSIEST AND MOST ELEGANT CHAMPAGNE OF THE SEASON. (PW)

KRUG GRAND CUVÉE, MV

REIMS, FRANCE

REGULAR \$199.99 **TWS PRICE \$159.99**

OF COURSE THE QUESTION HAS TO BE ASKED...WHY WOULD ONE SPEND \$150 FOR A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE? BECAUSE IT'S KRUG! ESTABLISHED IN 1843 BY JOHANN-JOSEPH KRUG, WHOSE GOAL WAS TO MAKE THE FAMILY NAME SYNONOMUS WITH HIGH QUALITY, THE HOUSE MAKES ONLY TINY AMOUNTS OF HIGH PRESTIGE WINES. STILL RUN BY THE SAME FAMILY, KRUG IS WHAT DOM PERIGNON WOULD LIKE TO BE WHEN IT GROWS UP. GRAPES ARE HARVESTED FROM ONLY PREMIER CRU SITES AND WINES ARE HELD FOR A MINIMUM OF SEVEN YEARS PRIOR TO RELEASE. THE DISTINCTIVE "KRUG STYLE"—A RICH, BOLD, YEASTY, FULLBODIED TASTE MAKES KRUG AS MUCH LIKE A FINE WHITE BURGUNDY AS A CHAMPAGNE. WHY SPEND \$150 FOR A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE? BECAUSE IT'S KRUG! (PW)

Mark Your Calendar!



FREE TASTING

It's the time of year for Bubbly.
Stop by and taste some for free.
Friday, December 15, 4:30 - 7:30 pm
TWS, 3601 Elm Ave

FREE TASTING

It's the time of year for Bubbly.
Stop by and taste some for free.
Saturday, December 16, 1:30 - 5:30 pm
TWS, 3601 Elm Ave

SPECIAL HOLIDAY HOURS

Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 24th 9am - 7pm

New Year's Eve
Sunday, December 31st 9am - 7pm

Closed Christmas and New Year's Day

For a complete up-to-date
listing of our events, check our website
at www.the-wine-source.com

THE WINE SOURCE
3601 Elm Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211
(410) 467-7777
www.the-wine-source.com

Comments from the Cheese Cave

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR SELECTION OF CROWD-PLEASING FAVORITES DURING THIS WEEKEND'S CHAMPAGNE TASTING. WE'LL BE SAMPLING SOME OF OUR TOP CHOICES FOR HOLIDAY CHEESE PLATES INCLUDING ROARING FORTIES BLUE, COMTE, BEAUFORT AND OUR NEW FAVORITE TRIPLE-CREAM CHEESE, FELICIANA NEVAT!

THIS WEEK'S NEWEST ARRIVALS!



PREMIUM PATE FROM PATCHWORK TRADITIONAL FOODS

PATCHWORK WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1982 BY MARGARET CARTER, A TALENTED, ALTHOUGH UNTRAINED, HOME COOK, WHO FOUND HERSELF DIVORCED WITH THREE CHILDREN TO LOOK AFTER. WITH A START UP COST OF JUST £9.00, SAVED FROM THE HOUSEKEEPING, SHE BEGAN SELLING HER HOME MADE PÂTÉS TO PUBS NEARBY LLANGOLLEN. AS MARGARET ATTRACTED MORE AND MORE CUSTOMERS AND THE BUSINESS SUCCESSFULLY STARTED TO EXPAND SHE MOVED THE BUSINESS FROM HER HOUSE IN 1987 TO A PURPOSE-EQUIPPED FACTORY IN THE HEART OF RUTHIN. DESPITE THE COMMERCIAL SCALE TODAY, EVERYTHING IS STILL HAND-MADE IN SMALL BATCHES, WITHOUT ARTIFICIAL COLOURING, ADDITIVES OR PRESERVATIVES, TO MARGARET'S ORIGINAL RECIPES. IF THERE ARE A DOZEN PATE'S IN A BATCH, THEN THERE WILL BE A DOZEN MIXING BOWLS LINED UP WITH INDIVIDUALLY WEIGHED INGREDIENTS. EACH RE-SEALABLE 8 OZ. CONTAINER IS JUST \$8.50. NEED SOMETHING TO SERVE IT ON? OUR PETIT TOASTS ARE JUST THE TICKET.

CHICKEN LIVER, BRANDY & HERB PÂTÉ

THE SEDUCTIVE FRENCH BRANDY LACED IN THIS CLASSIC PÂTÉ BRINGS A WARMING GLOW TO EVERY OCCASION. IT'S PERFECT FOR AN ELEGANT BUFFET, A DINNER PARTY OR TO SHARE ON A QUIET NIGHT.

CHICKEN LIVER, MUSHROOM & GARLIC PÂTÉ

THE CONTINENTAL AROMA OF THIS CREAMY SMOOTH PÂTÉ TAKES YOU TO THE BEST PARISIAN BISTROS WITH ITS GORGEOUS RACY AROMATIC FLAVOUR.

CHICKEN LIVER, COINTREAU & ORANGE PÂTÉ

THE CITRUS TWIST ON THIS RICH, SMOOTH PÂTÉ IS A COCKTAIL OF DELIGHT. IT GETS EVERY PARTY DOING THE TANGO LATE INTO THE NIGHT.

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