



## November 2016—TL CLUB

### 2015 Domaine des Bérioles 'Trésaille'

#### Saint-Pourçain, France

Tréssallier is a local varietal unique to Saint Pourcain which is at risk of being pulled out and replaced by more international grape varieties. Domaine des Bérioles is determined to preserve Tréssallier and to make wines that demonstrate its full potential.

Domaine des Bérioles Saint-Pourcain Trésaille is a mineral driven, lively wine. In 1989, Odile and Olivier Teissedre bought a beautiful old walled vineyard called Clos des Bérioles which was originally planted in 1809. The property is located in the commune of Cesset, in the Loire Valley region of France. The Saint-Pourcain appellation lies in central France (Auvergne) to the west of Burgundy and to the east of the Loire appellations. In 2009, the appellation received AOC status. Odile and Olivier slowly acquired additional land and by 2010 their estate had grown to 17.29 acres. The white estate varietals are Chardonnay and Tréssallier and are planted on clay and limestone soils. The estate is farmed in the *lutte raisonnée* method and the hand-picked grapes are sorted twice, once in the vineyard and again in the cellar. This wine is 90% Tréssallier and 10% Chardonnay aged 3-6 months in stainless steel tanks. It delivers fine, expressive aromatics and balanced notes of citrus with a firm mineral backbone. This zesty wine pairs well with lemon seasoned poultry or seafood.

SAINT-POURÇAIN



### 2012 Monsecco Nebbiolo "Pratogrande," Colline Novaresi

#### Alto Piemonte, Italy

There is almost a religious reverence in the Alto Piemonte for Monte Rosa, the mountain that hovers over the region, the grand eminence that protects and nurtures the region. It is visible from all points whether one is in Gattinara or Sizzano or Ghemme, an eternally white-topped mountain whose melting snows form the Sesia river that splits Gattinara from Ghemme. The soils of these hills are marked by the mineral salts and the glacial moraine from millennia of geological movement. Further, sitting in the foothills of this part of the Alps and neighboring the great lakes of Orta and Maggiore, the vines are exposed to large variations in temperature, warm days married to cool nights: an ideal ambiance for the noble Nebbiolo and the other local varieties, all of which benefit from the long growing season to reach proper ripeness while maintaining a lively acidity.



Here, the grand Nebbiolo takes center stage, a wine made exclusively from this noble grape and harvested from vineyards outside of the Gattinara and Ghemme delimited zones but still in hillside sites on the slopes above and around the towns on the eastern shore of the Sesia river. Manual harvest occurs normally during the second half of October. The Zanetta family gives this wine a shorter maceration than it applies to some of its other reds but then the wine is aged in large (15 hectoliter) "botte" for two years before bottling and then left to age an additional year before being released to the market. It is a fine and elegant wine with subtle tannins, bright cherry flavors and a persistent finish that again emphasizes the complex mineral composition of the underlying soils.





## November 2016—B2 CLUB

### 2004 Balgera 'Sassella' Valtellina Superiore

#### Italy

The Valtellina is a very small wine-producing region in the mountains north of Milan, just south of the Alps that border Switzerland. The predominant grape variety is Nebbiolo, usually referred to here as Chiavennasca, and this is (along with the Barolo/Barbaresco area and the string of appellations in northern Piedmont, such as Ghemme and Lessona) one of the best places for this classic variety. The Valtellina valley runs East-West, and the steep slopes on the northern face of the valley are terraced for grapevines in what the Italians call 'heroic viticulture;' the amount of work involved in establishing and maintaining the terracing alone is hard to imagine, never mind working the vineyards. The soils here are largely morainic, the climate distinctly cooler than the Barolo zone, and red grapes are grown at altitudes up to 500 meters or more, which is unusual in northern Italy.



Composed of 95% Nebbiolo and 5% other local varieties such as Rossola Nera and Pignola. Soil consists of decomposed morainic rocks, including granite, serpentine and gneiss, formed into terraces on the steep north face of this east-west valley at 350-550 meters above sea level; soil pH is acidic. The harvest takes place around the beginning of October. The grapes are destemmed and lightly crushed, the fermentation is carried out with indigenous yeasts, the wine is macerated for a total of about 15 days, then spends a year in tank and 10 more years in large (3,000L) barrels.

This extraordinary wine is beautifully expressive, with a long, delicate finish of well integrated tannin. Notes of roses, wild strawberries, and lavender are underpinned by a savory earthiness. This combination of fresh acidity and depth of flavor is very intriguing and irresistible, making it a joy to pair with food. The extended aging in wood makes it ready to drink when released, which is very unusual and a welcomed surprise.

