

## **Wine & Cheese by TCC's December 2008 Wine Club**

This month we bring you festive sparkling wines perfect for your holiday parties.

Sparkling wines are delicious all year round for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and pair well with a large variety of foods and cheeses. We don't think that they should be reserved for special occasions and we hope that after this month you agree that sparkling wines can be extremely versatile.

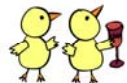
This month's first selection is a sparkling wine from New Mexico, (yes, New Mexico) produced by Gruet Winery. Their vineyards are at a 4300 foot elevation, an altitude that allows for hot days and a 30° drop in temperature at night, cooling the fruit and slowing the maturation process. Also, the sandy soil and lack of humidity prevent mold on the grapes resulting in a consistent crop year to year without using pesticides. The area has an excellent terroir and micro climate that is comparable to that of the Champaign region of France.

Our second selection comes from Krier Winery in France. Sparkling wines are made in all the major winegrowing regions of France, not just in Champagne. Krier, for instance, is based in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of France. Krier has access to the best white varietals from all across this region which is the world's largest expanse of vineyards.

In the following pages, there is some information regarding your wine club selections. First, you'll find maps\* showing the regions where the wines were produced. Next, you will see a description of each wine, some technical information on the wines, and food pairing suggestions.

As always, your feedback is encouraged. Please call us or stop by with your comments regarding our selections.

**Have a great month!**  
**The Gang at TCC**

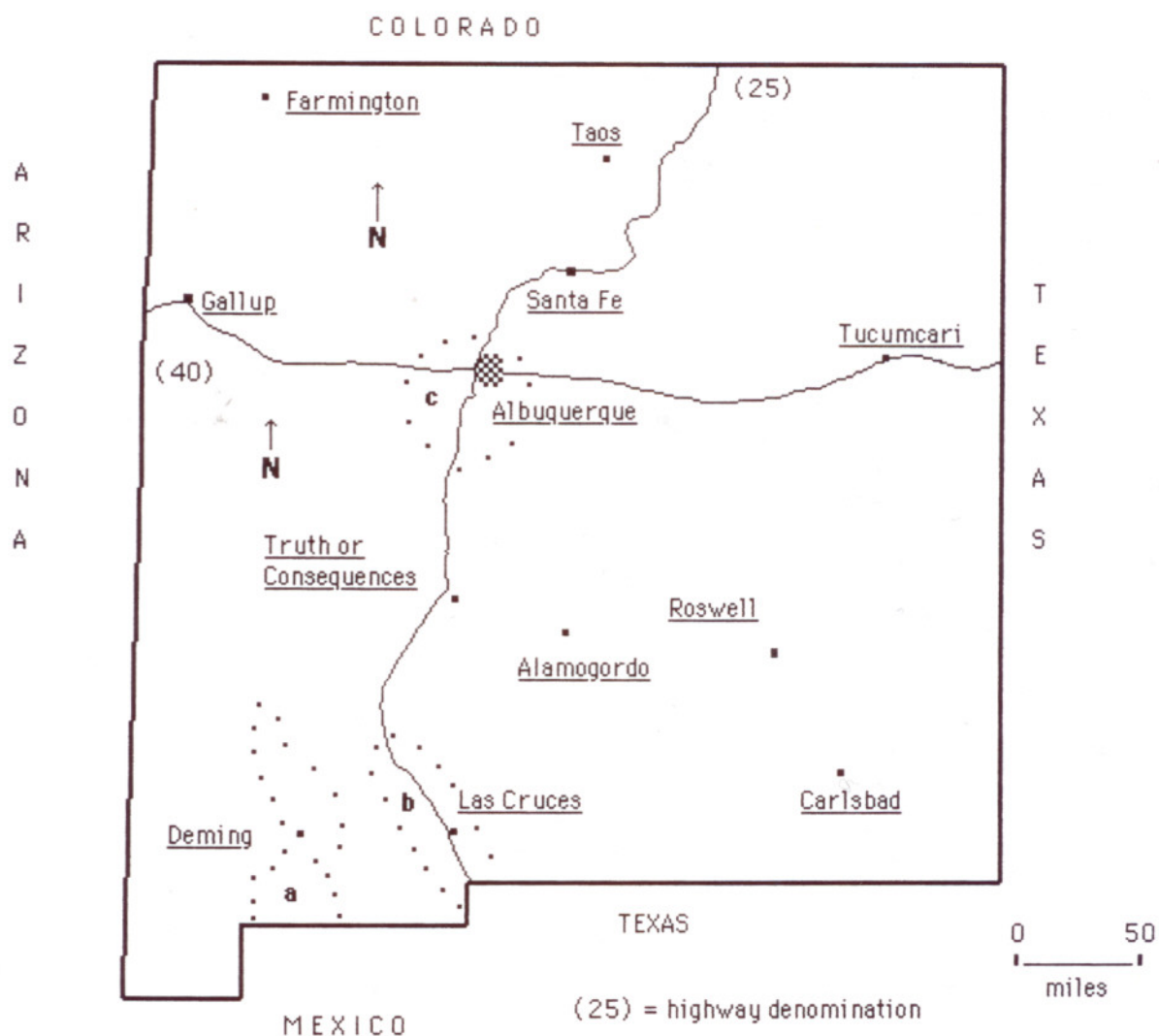


**Wine & Cheese** by TCC



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# #30--NEW MEXICO



(25) = highway denomination



CWS

### VITICULTURAL AREAS

- a. Mimbres Valley
- b. Mesilla Valley (w/Texas)
- c. Middle Rio Grande Valley

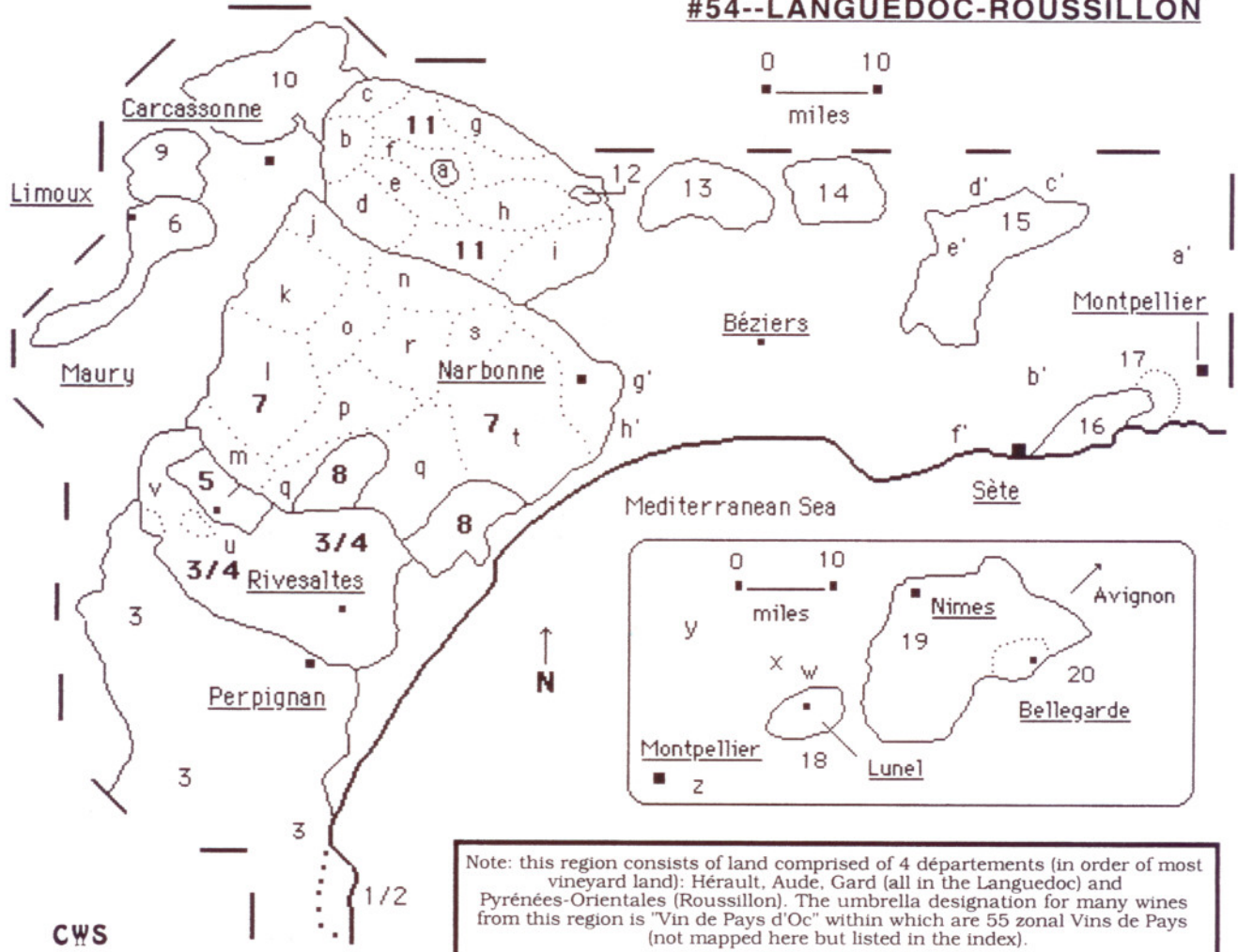
### WINERIES

33  
**PRODUCTION** (2002)  
 328,000 gallons (est.)  
 4,000 tons

### VINEYARD LAND

c. 900 acres  
 of which 95% is vinifera (Chardonnay, Ruby Cabernet, White Riesling, Pinot noir, Sauvignon blanc & Cabernet-Sauvignon predominating), with 4% French-American hybrids and traces of native American and Muscadine varieties.

# #54--LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON



Note: this region consists of land comprised of 4 départements (in order of most vineyard land): Hérault, Aude, Gard (all in the Languedoc) and Pyrénées-Orientales (Roussillon). The umbrella designation for many wines from this region is "Vin de Pays d'Oc" within which are 55 zonal Vins de Pays (not mapped here but listed in the index).

## LEADING VARIETIES (acres: 2001)

**Red:** Carignan (193,200), Grenache (108,200), Syrah (80,600), Merlot (66,200), Cinsault (48,800), Cabernet-Sauvignon (35,800), Aramon (20,000), Alicante Bouschet (17,600), Mourvèdre (10,100), Cabernet franc (5,100), Tempranillo (3,700) & Caladoc (Grenache X Malbec: 2,700);

**White:** Chardonnay (24,000), Grenache blanc (12,700), Maccabeu (aka Viura: 12,400), Muscat blanc (13,100), Sauvignon blanc (11,100), Muscat Alexandria (7,600), Terret blanc/gris (6,500), Grenache gris (6,280), Ugni blanc (4,900) and Mauzac (4,130).

## ROUSSILLON (AOCs)

1. Banyuls VDN \* (2,945 acres)
  2. Collioure (1,360)
  3. Côtes du Roussillon (21,330: incl. 1 & 2)
  4. Côtes du Roussillon-Villages (7,740 \*\*)
  5. Maury VDN (4,540)
- VDN ACs Rivesaltes & Muscat de Rivesaltes (40,000: overlaps all of 1, 2 & 4 and most of 3; a small portion overlaps north into the Languedoc).

## LANGUEDOC (AOCs)

6. Limoux (incl. Blanquette & Crémant 7,100)
7. Corbières (49,980: forming 11 zones \*\*\*)
8. Fitou (5,850)
9. Côtes de Malepère (5,715)
10. Côtes de Cabardès et de l'Orbiel (2,400)
11. Minervois (38,880 \*\*\*\* and (a) Minervois-Livinière: 1,480
12. Muscat de St. Jean de Minervois (460)
13. Saint-Chinian (13,700)
14. Faugères (5,140)
15. Clairette du Languedoc (740)
16. Muscat de Frontignan VDN (1,910)
17. Muscat de Mireval VDN (770)
18. Muscat de Lunel VDN (900)
19. Costières de Nîmes (15,200)

20. Clairette de Bellegarde (275)

2001

\* Vin Doux Naturel

\*\* incl. u) Latour de France and v) Caramany sub-zones.

\*\*\* j) Montagne d'Alaric, k) Serviès, l) Termenès, m) Quéribus, n) Lézignan, o) Lagrasse, p) Saint-Victor, q) Durban, r) Boutenac, s) Fontfroide and t) Sigean.

\*\*\*\* incl. b) la Clamoux, c) les Côtes Noires, d) les Balcons de l'Aude, e) Argent Double, f) le Petite Causse, g) le Causse, h) les Mourels and i) les Serres.

The AC "Coteaux du Languedoc" (36,835 acres) covers c. 40 dispersed communes from Narbonne to Montpellier; those which may append their names to this AC include w) Verargues, x) Saint Christol, y) Saint-Drézéry, z) Pic Saint Loup, a') La Mejanelle, b') St.-Georges d'Orques, c') Montpeyroux d') Saint-Saturnin, e') Cabrières, f) (Picpoul de) Pinet, g') La Clape and h') Quatourze.

Note: figures may not jibe due to overlap of ACs



2002

## VINEYARD DATA

### LANGUEDOC

632,100 acres  
402,557,500 gals  
(19% AC & 62% VdP)

### ROUSSILLON

88,000 acres  
35,611,500 gals.  
(49% AC & 37% VdP)

# Gruet Winery

## Demi-Sec

Type:	Sparkling wine
Varietal composition:	50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot noir
Vineyard Location:	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Vintage:	Non Vintage
Country:	USA
Alcohol:	12%
Age-ability:	Drinks best now

### Winemaking Philosophy and Vinification Details

In 1983, the Gruet family was traveling through the Southwestern part of the United States and met a group of European winemakers who had successfully planted vineyards 170 miles south of Albuquerque, New Mexico. While the Gruet family's Champagne house, Gruet et Fils had produced fine Champagne in Bethon, France, since 1952, they made the decision to plant an experimental vineyard of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes in New Mexico. The son and daughter and a family friend relocated to New Mexico to begin their American wine making adventure. Their first two wines were from the 1987 harvest and followed the strict guidelines of a true *Méthode Champenoise*. (Very simply put, *Méthode Champenoise* is a method of making sparkling wine. The fermentation process of yeast converting sugar to alcohol emits carbon dioxide. Ferment once to form a base wine, then do it again and capture the CO<sub>2</sub> in the bottle and you have sparkling wine.) When released in 1989, critics and connoisseurs alike were astonished by their quality and value putting New Mexico wine on the map.

### Tasting Notes

The subtle fruity aromas and the freshness of the Demi-Sec drive the character of this light bodied, semi-dry sparkling wine. The palate carries through with a creamy sensation and bright flavors of green apples, ripe pears, pineapple and a hint of mineral.

### Pairing Suggestions:

This wine will go with a variety of desserts but don't rule this out for some of your day to day fare, especially food with a little spice such as Thai and Caribbean cuisine.

For this month's cheese club selection, enjoy this wine with Truffle Tomini. The light fruit notes and mild sweetness from this Demi-Sec is a delicious match to the tang and earthiness of the cheese.

# Kriter Brut Blanc de Blancs

Type:	Sparkling
Varietal composition:	Ugni Blanc, Colombard, Chenin, Folle Blanche, Menu Pineau
Vineyard Location:	Languedoc-Roussillon
Vintage:	Non Vintage
Country:	France
Alcohol:	11.5 %
Age-ability:	Drink now

## **Winemaking Philosophy and Vinification Details**

Kriter Winery was created just after World War II and has established itself as one of the leading producer of French sparkling wines. Under the guidance of its founder, Andre Boisseaux, Kriter became widely popular in both France and around the world because of its consistent quality and remarkable value. In recent years, Kriter has made subtle changes in the blend to create a soft mouthfeel to allow for a hint of fruity sweetness while retaining the classic "Brut" style.

## **Tasting Notes**

This wine has citrus fruit aromas with lemony notes. The palate has a nice creamy texture with apple and citrus flavors. This brut is a very balanced wine that is bright yet flavorful.

## **Pairing Suggestions**

Kriter's Blanc de Blancs is structured enough to suit a wide variety of foods from oysters to berries. One of our favorite pairings would have to be "Ouefs Bourgeon" (red wine poached eggs on a crusty French baguette) on a Sunday morning.

For this month's cheese selection, pair with the Caciocavallo. The lemony notes of the cheese are a perfect match to the refreshing nature and light citrus notes of this bubbly.

Enjoy!