

# vinoetcetera

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MAGAZINE | WINE | TRAVEL | PEOPLE | FOOD | TRENDS

  
opimian  
WINE CLUB DE VIN

## LA DOLCE VITA

An Italian Holiday and Wine Tasting in Chablis

# Remembering John "Sam" Sambrook

It is with deep sadness that we learned of the passing of Opimian's Founder, Mr. John Sambrook, on December 12, 2018. Diagnosed with cancer, he passed away at the age of 83 surrounded by his family.

John was a pioneer in the Canadian wine industry. He played an instrumental role in expanding the private import wine market. It was John who noticed the gap between the wines offered by the liquor boards and wines available worldwide, which then led to the creation of The Opimian Society in 1973. From the early days of managing the club with his wife Mary from their home, he nurtured this ambitious project into the largest and most respected wine club in Canada.

Even when facing obstacles from provincial monopolies and regulations across the country, John had a reputation of not taking no for an answer. While some endeavors were more successful than others, whenever he believed in a project, he persevered until the end. His passion for bringing quality wines to Canadians was the motivation that led to Opimian's success.

Even in his last days, John remained a true supporter of the organization. He hosted small intimate tastings showcasing Opimian wines and, right to the end, continued to introduce newcomers to the club. We are grateful for his contribution as an unwavering club ambassador.

Thank you, John, for all that you have done for Opimian. We will continue the journey connecting our members to the fascinating world of wine.

Cheers to you.

## The Opimian Family

Like many great wines, which at certain times are a bit more out of balance than one would always wish, Sam offered both sweetness and acidity, certainly complexity. Usually showing well, he was sometimes in need of a nip more maturity interpersonally.

**JAY MACDONALD,**  
MEMBER SINCE 1978

Sam absolutely was a visionary. It is a great tribute to him, his early colleagues and the wisdom, creativity and energy of those who have followed, that Opimian remains alive and well today, 46 years after it was founded.

**DENNIS APEDAILE,**  
MEMBER SINCE 1973



Sam, Simon Stracey and I met for lunch in the fall of 1972. We discussed ideas for importing wine for a small group of friends, which led us to create the Opimian Society the following spring. But it was Sam who turned our dreams into reality. His great strength was his relentless creative dynamism. He simply made things happen, regardless of how difficult they might have seemed at first.

**PETER KEITH,**  
FOUNDING MEMBER

## MARKET TRENDS

# Super Tuscans | The emergence of Super Tuscan Wines

Jane Masters, Opimian's Master of Wine

**Super Tuscan wines appeared in the 1970s, as a response to rigid rules governing the production of Chianti wines. Producers started using non-traditional grapes to make better quality wines.**



A category known as "Super Tuscan" wines emerged in Tuscany in the 1970s. At that time, the majority of Chianti wines being produced were thin and insipid. The DOC regulations insisted on wines being made from indigenous grapes and had to include a minimum of 10% white Malvasia or Trebbiano grapes and could include up to 30% of these. In addition, the Sangiovese vines that were available for planting from the nurseries were poor, propagated essentially for their ability to produce high yields.

Frustrated quality focused producers sought ways to improve their wines through the addition of non-Tuscan varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. The first such wine to be launched commercially in 1974 was Tignanello by Piero Antinori. The wine, the first not to incorporate any white grapes, was a blend of Sangiovese with Cabernet Sauvignon and, horror of horrors, had been aged in small French oak barrels rather than large traditional "botti". The Italian wine police were horrified, and Piero was forced to declassify the wine to a mere

Vino da Tavola or table wine. Today some Super Tuscans are amongst the most prestigious wines produced in the region. Many Chianti estates include a Super Tuscan in their range and these now have IGP status.

Over the years, the quality of Sangiovese vines has improved dramatically with the identification of clones producing low yields of high-quality grapes and the tightening of DOCG rules. Chianti Classico became a separate DOCG in 1996 and has three quality levels within – Rosso, Riserva and Gran Selezione. The top category, Gran Selezione, has the most rigorous standards and was approved by the European Commission in 2014 for wines produced from 2010 vintage onwards. Producers are focused on quality and the region has never produced such good wines. Try Opimian's Super Tuscans in the current offering!



SERAPHICUM ROSSO  
TOSCANO, IGT, 2017,  
LOT 1202



Q&A

# Michel Lamblin

Lamblin Fils

Michel Lamblin has been working for Lamblin Fils since 1975. He took over the company along with his brother Didier in 1987. His two passions are his profession (Chablis wine and all the human connections it creates), and motorcycles. He competes in motocross, and he and his wife Sylvie also enjoy taking long road trips on his prized Ducatti.



**1. WE HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH YOU SINCE OPIMIAN'S INCEPTION, 46 YEARS AGO. WHAT DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP MEAN TO YOU?**

Friendship, loyalty, partnership, pride.

**2. THE LAMBLIN FAMILY HAS BEEN PART OF THE WORLD OF WINE SINCE 1690. HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED QUITTING?**

No, never—quite the contrary!

**3. DESCRIBE YOUR PHILOSOPHY IN ONE WORD.**

Respect! Respect for the land so that it continues producing well for a long time, respect for our customers by providing them with the best of our work, respect for the environment for a better quality of life.

**4. WHICH RECENT VINTAGES ARE YOU ESPECIALLY PROUD OF? WHY?**

The 2005 vintage. As proof, our Chablis Premier Cru Fourchaumes was crowned third best Chardonnay in the world and first in France.

**5. BESIDES WINE, WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE DRINK?**

Beer.

**6. IF YOU DIDN'T PRODUCE WINE FOR A LIVING, WHAT KIND OF WORK WOULD YOU DO?**

I'd be a doctor, involved with "Médecins du Monde".

**7. APART FROM YOUR OWN WINES, WHAT IS THE MOST BREATHTAKING WINE YOU HAVE EVER TASTED? WHY?**

A Château Cheval Blanc. A Russian customer served us both a Pétrus and a Cheval Blanc at a dinner. I found the Cheval Blanc extraordinary and superior to the Pétrus.

**8. WHICH OF YOUR CURRENT WINES FASCINATES YOU THE MOST? WHY?**

The Chablis Premier Cru Fourchaumes for its finesse, fullness and femininity.

**9. WHICH BOTTLE IS OPEN IN YOUR KITCHEN RIGHT NOW?**

A Chablis Vieilles Vignes 2013 and a Rioja.

**10. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE DESTINATION? WHY?**

There are several. Thailand for the warmth and tranquility of its people, culture, cuisine and sun. But, in all sincerity, I love Canada and am looking forward to returning in the fall.

**11. WHAT IS THE BEST ASPECT OF LIFE IN MALIGNY?**

That's not easy to answer. It's the village of my childhood, so I have only fine and beautiful memories.

**12. IF YOU COULD INVITE THREE PEOPLE, LIVING OR DEAD, TO YOUR TABLE, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE?**

De Gaulle, Churchill and Alexander the Great.

**13. LET'S PLAY A LITTLE GAME:**

**DOGS OR CATS?** Dogs.

**BOOKS OR MOVIES?** Difficult choice... (joking) both!

**FOOTBALL OR RUGBY ?** Rugby.

**RED, WHITE OR ROSÉ?** White—what else?

# The Wine People

**Martina Gozzi, The Wine People's Export Manager, shares a few words about Sicily and Puglia and what makes The Wine People unique.**

The Wine People was established in 2009 by Stefano Girelli and winemaker Stefano Chioccioli. Based in Sicily and Puglia, they produce wonderful wines while respecting provenance, and offer great value for money.

## PUGLIA

Puglia is located in southeastern Italy, surrounded by the Adriatic Sea to the east and the Ionian Sea to the west. The Salento Peninsula, one of the most important agricultural areas in the country, lies in the extreme southeast of Puglia. The wines of Salento are rich and full-bodied, as the microclimate is perfect for producing deep and complex organic wines.

Our philosophy is to be in perfect harmony with nature, intervening only when absolutely necessary, thereby ensuring that each and every grape expresses its own individual personality. Negroamaro is one of the region's finest native grapes, and our Integro Negroamaro is a pure expression of the land where it is grown.



## SICILY

Sicily is one of the most characteristic and authentic Italian regions. Winemaking here dates back to the 8th century B.C. with the Phoenician colonization. The "alberello" (head-trained bush vines) training system, still largely used in the world, helped increase production up until the 6th century B.C.

With its warm Mediterranean climate and rich soils, Sicily is famous for its agriculture, resulting in a brilliant culinary and oenological tradition. It is considered by many to be the most suitable Italian region for the production of organic wines—the perfect environment for sustainable agriculture.

The rich Sicilian volcanic soil is highly fertile and provides organic nourishment to the vineyards. Sea breezes cool and aerate the vines, naturally minimizing disease. Moreover, the privileged Sicilian microclimate and the abundant sunshine help our grapes grow healthy and strong.

We bottle exactly what Mother Nature has given us—nothing added and nothing removed. The taste of the wine reveals a complete purity of fruit, unaltered by any chemicals.

These two Italian wine regions are the ideal starting point for Stefano Chioccioli, who crafts wonderful wines in harmony with the terroirs.



DENATILE GRILLO  
CHARDONNAY AND NERO  
D'AVOLA SHIRAZ, DOC SICILIA,  
2018, LOTS 1222-1223

L'AURATAE NERO  
D'AVOLA, DOC SICILIA,  
ORGANIC WINE, 2018,  
LOT 1226



WINE TOURISM

## Italian Roadtrip | La Dolce Vita, from Rome to Palermo

Italy is synonymous with sunshine, good wine and gastronomy. To discover magnificent landscapes and an invaluable historical and cultural heritage, take the road from Rome to Palermo and enjoy the delights of Italian life.

### ROME AND CASTEL GANDOLFO

After a few days strolling around sunny **Rome**, enjoying the splendours of the Vatican and the Forum, you'll appreciate the coolness of Lake Albano. In Castel Gandolfo, be sure to tour the Papal Palace, partially open to the public.

### THE AMALFI COAST

Eating is a way of life in Italy. In Naples, the gateway to the Amalfi Coast, indulge yourself in a famous *pizza napoletana* with *mozzarella di bufala*. A stop in Pompeii is essential, as is a hike up Vesuvius. Tired of exploring? Cruise the gorgeous road along the coast to Sorrento and **Capri**. To enjoy the most beautiful sunsets in the Mediterranean, relax at one of the many terraces and enjoy the show with an aperitif.

### THE HOUSES OF SASSI DI MATERA

Head south to encounter the **Sassi**, hundreds of stone dwellings and churches carved into a rocky escarpment that make up this impressive UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### PASSIONATE SICILY

Your journey may be coming to an end, but there is still much to discover about impetuous Sicily and its legendary sites, including the **Greek-Roman Theatre of Taormina** (cover), the mythical Valley of the Temples and other archaeological remains located on the acropolis. In Palermo, end your trip on a high note with the best arancini and cannoli of your life.

Since all roads lead to Rome, there will be only one thing on your mind: to see Italy again!



LOMBARDY

**RISOTTO ALLA MILANESE**

Staple dish where rice is toasted with a flavoured base of sautéed onion, then simmered in broth one ladle at a time.

MILAN  
**PANETTONE**

VENETO  
**CAPPUCCINO**  
Espresso-based coffee topped with foamed milk.

PARMA  
**PROSCIUTTO**  
Air-cured ham eaten as is or wrapped around a breadstick or morsel of cantaloupe.

MODENA  
**BALSAMIC VINEGAR**

BOLOGNA  
**LASAGNA**

PIEDMONT  
**PANNA COTTA**

TUSCANY  
**OLIVE OIL**

ABRUZZO  
**BRUSCHETTA**  
Appetizer of grilled bread rubbed with garlic and topped with olive oil and salt.

ROME  
**PASTA ALLA CARBONARA**

PUGLIA  
**BURRATA**

NAPLES  
**PIZZA**  
A genuine Neapolitan pizza is made with San Marzano or Roma tomatoes and mozzarella cheese.

CALABRIA  
**LICORICE**

SICILY  
**ARANCINI**  
Deep-fried, breaded rice balls stuffed with meat, tomato sauce, cheese, mushrooms, pistachios or eggplant.

COMMUNITY

# Mangia bene !

Italian cuisine has more to it than pizza and pasta. It encompasses an entire palette of flavours, quality local ingredients, and centuries-old techniques. Use our handy map to find out where best to partake in Italy's culinary specialties.





WINE TOURISM

## Chablis | A Perfect Blend of Pleasure and Wonder

**Chablis and its region offer unique wines and luxurious landscapes where you can enjoy tasting delicious wine under the shade of trees, all in the setting of a medieval village nestled between vineyards. Time gets suspended among the old stones and hundred-year-old trees; let the Serein River carry you away to an unforgettable stay.**

Known as the “Golden Gate of Burgundy”, Chablis is home to prestigious vineyards and a rich architectural heritage. Be sure to visit the Obédiencerie monastery cellars and wine press, the two towers of Porte Noël, the wharfs and the old wash house, as well as the Collegiate Church of Saint-Martin.

On Sundays, the day of the **Burgundy Market**, tickle your taste buds by stocking up on sausages, artisanal cheeses and a wide range of fresh local products. Picnic in Pâtis or Liberté Parks with a good bottle (or two!) to accompany your feast.

For some fresh air and exercise, explore the vineyards by bike, by foot, by boat or even by air—soaring high in a hot air balloon, where you’ll appreciate the beauty of the vineyard landscapes even more.

Visiting this region is like going through a time machine; from the Fontenay Abbey to the Vezelay Basilica, from the medieval village of Noyers-sur-Serein to the Arcy-sur-Cure caves and their rock paintings, everything is here to make this trip one of your most memorable experiences ever.

Come evening, a taste of authentic castle life takes place at the **Château de la Resle**, a unique boutique hotel where a night’s stay will leave you with a feeling of true bliss.



# Cocktails | Fruit Liqueurs

There are countless ways to use Lamblin's crèmes de fruits. Here are a few ideas that might inspire you!



## BRAMBLE COCKTAIL WITH GIN AND CRÈME DE MÛRE

- 4cl gin
- 2cl Crème de Mûre
- 2cl lemon juice
- 1cl cane sugar syrup

Add the gin, lemon and sugar syrup to a shaker. Shake well. Strain into an ice-filled tall glass. Trickle the Crème de Mûre over the top. Garnish with freshly picked blackberries or add a splash of Crème de Framboise.

## CRÈME DE CASSIS COCKTAIL

- 3cl Crème de Cassis
- 5cl rhum
- 1cl lemon juice
- Sparkling water

Add crushed ice to a shaker. Pour in the crème de cassis, rhum and lemon juice. Shake well and serve through a cocktail strainer. Top up the glass with sparkling water and garnish with redcurrants.



L&F CRÈME DE MÛRE, L&F CRÈME DE CASSIS DE DIJON, L&F CRÈME DE CERISE, LOT 1245, MIXED CASE

## KIR ROYALE WITH CRÈME DE CERISE

- 4/5 Crémant de Bourgogne
- 1/5 Crème de Cerise

Both bottles should be chilled at the same temperature. Pour the wine over the Crème de Cerise and gently stir if necessary.



LAMBLIN CRÉMANT DE BOURGOGNE BRUT ROSÉ, AOC, LOT 1244



# Vitello Tonnato

The Walch family shares a recipe from Piedmont. Enjoy it with a nice glass of white wine.



PINOT GRIGIO, DOC ALTO ADIGE,  
E. VON KELLER, 2018, LOT 1186



## Ingredients

- 2 lb 12 oz (1.25kg) thick veal tenderloin
- 1 onion
- 2 celery sticks, halved
- 1 medium carrot, peeled
- 1.8 fl oz (50 ml) native olive oil
- 3 oz (75g) canned tuna
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons salted capers, rinsed and drained
- Few extra capers as garnish
- Salt
- 500g mayonnaise

## Directions

1. Place the meat in a large saucepan, along with the onion, carrot, celery and salt.
2. Fill the pan with water and bring to a boil. Once boiling, turn down the heat, cover the pan and let it simmer for 1 hour 30 minutes.
3. Remove the meat from the liquid and let it cool.
4. While the veal is cooling, prepare the tuna sauce by mixing the mayonnaise, capers and tuna in a food processor until smooth. Add the lemon juice and blend the sauce for a second time until it is just a bit smoother. Decrease the speed of the food processor and slowly add the olive oil. Be careful—if the oil is added too fast, the sauce will curdle.
5. Slice the veal very thinly, place the slices on a plate or serving dish and drizzle the tuna sauce over the top.
6. Garnish the dish with whole capers and serve. Enjoy!

# Happy Hour

Opimian's Area Representatives reflect on previous vintages from suppliers featured in the current Cellar Offering. Each issue will highlight a few bottles they have enjoyed with friends and family.



**CORINNE KEDDIE,**  
AREA REPRESENTATIVE,  
CALGARY CHAPTER



CHABLIS, AOC, 2014,  
C238, LOT 8427  
2017 VINTAGE  
NOW AVAILABLE,  
C265, LOT 1241

My personal cellar has cases of Chablis including many Premier and Grand Crus. It's hard to go wrong with just a Chablis AOC. I prefer mine with a few years of age and this 2014 has started to develop wonderful honey notes, combined with typical citrus, wet stone aromas and flavours, and a lemony finish. I shared it with a friend who is just learning about wine and his response was simply "wow!" I think that says it all.

It is hard not to like Amarone and this one delivers, with notes of black cherry, mocha, dried fig, nutmeg and black licorice. At 16% alcohol, this is not a light wine. It's well balanced and great to drink on its own or paired with food. With six years of age, it is drinking beautifully now, but you can certainly keep it for another four to six years. Whenever I am in Italy, I try to look for our Opimian wines and I recently saw this wine at a shop in Milan selling for more than what we pay here in Canada—so stock up now!



CA' LA BIONDA AMARONE DELLA  
VALPOLICELLA DOCG 2012, C240, LOT 8550  
2016 VINTAGE NOW AVAILABLE,  
C265, LOT 1198



COLPASSO PRIMITIVO,  
IGP PRIMITIVO PUGLIA,  
2016, C247, LOT 9046



**HEATHER DOWNEY,**  
AREA REPRESENTATIVE, NORTH EASTERN  
ONTARIO CHAPTER

The 2016 Colpasso Primitivo IGP from Puglia is a wonderful, warming winter red. It is a lovely ruby, with hints of purple that exhibit sauntering legs. There is nice aroma intensity of brambly blackberry jam, soft fire embers, forest floor, and tobacco. The palate is dry with welcome acidity and ample steady tannins. This 14.5% wine will certainly warm you on a cold winter evening. The palate exhibits choke cherry, ripe plum and dried herbs. The structure of this wine would be perfect to drink now, with well-marbled braised or roasted red meats. Mangia bene!



## Opimian Does Its Part

In the interest of eco design, this magazine is printed on Domtar Cougar Smooth paper, allowing us to make a responsible environmental choice without sacrificing quality or performance, with a minimum of 10% post-consumer recycled content. It is acid-free and FSC® certified.



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