

First and foremost, thank you!

Seriously.

As many of you know, what is happening in the world around us has had a huge impact on our business, our industry, and our world. We have been chugging along to do our best to adapt and innovate, and try to keep our trajectory aiming forward. We are proud of the fact that we have been able to keep some of our team employed, and we have you to thank for that. So, from all of us, thank you!

So, you bought a package of “blind wines”. There are a few ways to tackle this, and I will walk you through how to get the most out of that experience.

So, decide which route you want to go:

**Pure Enjoyment-**Well, you hold 12 or 24 generous glasses of great wine. Get them to the right temp, pop ‘em open and pour them into a wine glass (or not...we are in a lawless society after all), and drink...log onto our website, and look up what you are dinking if you want.

**Want to learn a bit about wine?** -Follow the steps above, but, make sure that you pull up the tasting sheet on the website while you are tasting the wine, and check out the tasting notes of some world class sommeliers. These are notes that talk about what classic wines of these regions taste like. Take note if you like or don't like it and why, and shoot Colin or I (Christopher) a message, and we can help pick out some wines you might like in the future!

**Into wine and want to give this blind tasting stuff a shot?** -Do as above, but, before opening the tasting sheet, take a few minutes to gather your clues (check out @sommelierbates Instagram videos on how to tackle this or [www.guildsomm.com](http://www.guildsomm.com) has a great tutorial on blind tasting), and draw your own deduction based on your observations. Then, open the file, and compare your tasting notes. See if you feel like adjusting your calls before moving onto page three to discover what the wine is.

**Prepping for an exam?** -Well, you already know what to do...But, please remember, these are not all meant to be “testable” wines...but, rather wines I believe are important to understand deeply to fully understand the current state of the wine world.

Looking for something fun to do with friends-let us know and we can send identical packs, so you can log on and taste with your groups on the internets.

### So, what's included:

Well, the bottles in front of you.

The numbers are ID numbers, and they correlate to a tasting note we are posting on our website [www.flxprovisions.com](http://www.flxprovisions.com) (hopefully before you receive the wine...but...). These notes are broken down as follows:

#### **Page 1- Tasting notes from top sommeliers:**

*Master Sommelier Max Kast* (from Broadbent-one of our favorite importers)- Isabel and I met Max almost 15 years ago, before either of us were in the MS program, and, well...here we are!

*Master Sommelier Brian Cronin* (from Palm Bay-one of Americas most important importers)-Brian one of the most dedicated and passionate mentors I have had the privilege to work with over the years, AND our resident soba master...also, he ran 7 marathons on 7 continents in 7 days a few months ago... Brandon Ford, Advanced Sommelier (from Hyde Park Restaurant Group)-After meeting Brandon at his intro exam, and then watching him crush his Certified Exam, I was impressed. When I found out he was an upstater, I asked him to reach out to me if he was considering move on in the CMS program. And he did. And 4 years ago, we started our tasting group in the Finger Lakes. He would drive from Buffalo to meet me at 8 am on Sundays (yeah...that's 3 hours away...after Saturday service...). That group has grown to 20-30 regular members, most whom have passed their own certified exams, and has now seen 2 members pass their Advanced Exam!

*Joshua Carlson* (from Nine Four Cellars)-I met Josh 5 years ago, and we connected the dots to realize I had been buying wine from Josh for 20 years without knowing each other. Well, Josh turned out to be one of the two most knowledgeable people in the world about the Finger Lakes, and...a true wine geek...Josh passed his Advanced Sommelier exam in 2018.

*Michalis Kalampoukas*, you might already know, Michalis is the General Manager and Sommelier at FLX Table. I met Michalis when he was a student at the International Culinary Center in NYC, where I teach throughout the year. He then showed up at our restaurants a few times and mentioned he was considering moving to the region. The table next to him was some friends who had recently moved here, so I introduced them...some wine was drunk, and everyone went on their way. We had opened Table, and I was cooking lunch at the Wienery, heading to the farms to grab ingredients for Table, planning to menu while I drove, and figuring out the pairings and wine orders when I got there...after I had finished prep of course...it was..."unique". I was on my way up, stressed, freaking out, and realizing this wasn't going to be able to last for long. I walked in the back door, and looked out the front window, and saw someone who reminded me of Michalis walking by...Which made we wonder what he was up too...he

texted me a few hours later to let me know he'd just moved to Geneva and was wondering if we were looking for any help...

So, ultimately, I chose this line-up of bad-asses because, if you don't know Brian and Max, you should...they are amazing and world class. And, Brandon, Josh and Michalis represent the next generation, and they are doing it from upstate NY (interestingly, an area that birthed a lot of Master Sommeliers), an area that has never been a hot bed for such activity.

**Page 2- a reminder of what we are trying to deduce.**

**Page 3-the reveal.** This page will include the actual wine, its winemaking and tech info, and a tasting note about how to ID this style of wine. And, of course...if you liked the wine, there is a link to request more!

So, I really hope you have enjoyed this. I can't thank you enough for continuing to push us forward. And, I can't thank you enough for enabling us to rebuild our team, and eventually, our company.

Feel free to hit me up with questions about these wines.

Christopher P. Bates & Team