



SPRING 2010

CORTI BROTHERS

To Our Customers:

This newsletter for spring 2010 has a lot of new products on it. They are intended to tempt you, delight you, and satisfy you. After the rigors and horrors of this winter, we can welcome better weather and some pleasant treats. I hope you enjoy them.

Darrell Corti

OREN'S KITCHEN APERITIF NUTS Slow roasted artisan nuts

With spring just around the corner and the thought of warmer weather and longer days imminent, here are some products that will enhance spring entertaining. Nicely flavored nuts, with drinks before dinner, make the simplest of appetizers. They give you something tasty to munch on while sipping something delicious.

OREN'S KITCHEN is the brand of slow roasted artisan nuts produced by a Bay Area chef, ARNON OREN. Trained in France and finished in Berkeley, California, Oren has worked with Regent Seven Seas Cruises, ScharffenBerger Chocolates, and now is producing some terrific nuts for our delectation. Slow roasting techniques and unique recipes are the hallmark of his products. The different nuts used, pecans, macadamias, cashews, and almonds are treated to different flavorings with the same slow roasting techniques. Hand roasted in trays, these are delicious, appropriately flavored with either herbs or spices to enhance the nut character. They are remarkable snacks.

There are four types: **SMOKED PAPRIKA PECANS**, a favorite American nut, with smoked Spanish pimentón and sea salt, to bring out the pecan taste; **COCONUT CHILI MACADAMIAS**, thinly shaved coconut, macadamias, and a bit of honey are blended with Full Belly Farms red chiles for a bit of heat and contrasting flavor; **INDIAN AJWAIN CASHEWS**, takes advantage of Brazil originated, but India acclimatized cashews with ajwain seeds, typical of Indian cuisine, with their cumin-like character. Ghee is the roasting oil; **WILD ROSEMARY ALMONDS** are California almonds and wild rosemary roasted in Napa Valley extra virgin olive oil. All four nuts are packaged in 4 oz re-sealable, foil lined, stand up bags.

OREN'S KITCHEN ARTISAN NUTS \$6.99 each

SMOKED PAPRIKA PECANS 4 oz bag. (#2500) **COCONUT CHILI MACADAMIAS** 4 oz bag. (#2501)

INDIAN AJWAIN CASHEWS 4 oz bag. (#2502) **WILD ROSEMARY ALMONDS** 4.5 oz bag. (#2503)

Mix case of 12 (3 each variety) \$75.00 (#2504)

TORRE BIANCA MONOVARIETAL OILS : Correggiolo, Moraiolo, Pendolino

TORRE BIANCA is the property owned by **Marco Mugelli** just outside of San Casciano Val di Pesa, south of Florence in Tuscany. There his own organic olive grove produces the fruit transformed into oil at his experimental press house (frantoio), where, using innovative technology, Marco produces the oils we have offered as **CULTIVARPLUS**, and are now offered under the estate label.

Mugelli's technology produces oils with the highest biophenol levels made. These biophenols, the sum of polyphenols and tocopherols, are those elements which produce the most positive antioxidant characteristics of extra virgin oil.

From the 2009 harvest, I have selected three **MONOCULTIVARS: CORREGGIOLO, MORAILOLO, and PENDOLINO**. Other than their individual varietal characteristics, these oils have high biophenols and very well balanced pungency and bitterness. Sometimes both pungency and bitterness are the only flavors oils have when they should be balanced with fruitiness, pungency and bitterness. Mugelli's new technology shows that you can have all the benefits of high biophenols and excellent, balanced flavor.

This new technology makes these oils a must for tasting to experience the heights which oil achieves when it is very good tasting and even better for you.

TORRE BIANCA OILS: \$21.99 **CORREGGIOLO** 250ml (#2505), **MORAILOLO** 250ml (#2506), **PENDOLINO** 250ml (#2507), **Mixed Case of 6** (2 bottles of each cultivar) \$118.00 (#2508)

L & D SPANISH SEASONING

I have put this bottled seasoning mix in our newsletter before. It is a real throwback to what was American Mexican flavor. Surprisingly, it proved to be very popular and we received many calls from customers saying that they thought the seasoning mix had disappeared and they remember it from their childhood when their mothers would use it to make dishes like tamale pie.

Good things really never die; they just get forgotten about and then get remembered. **L & D SPANISH SEASONING** is something to keep on hand because you never know when the idea of a tamale pie might come upon you, and you want to relive your childhood. (Don't worry, the recipe is on the jar!)

L & D SPANISH SEASONING \$2.99 2 oz jar (#2509) \$32.00 case/12 (#2509C)

LOISON COLOMBA FOR EASTER

It seems like Christmas just came and now its Easter. The Italian Easter cake, **COLOMBA**, is a dove shaped yeast dough cake. It is thought that the Colomba antedates panettone, the Christmas cake. Again, this year we have the **LOISON COLOMBA** in three styles which have proven to be the most popular: **CLASSICA** with candied citrus including citron and almonds; **ALLA PESCA** with candied peach pieces; and the **MANDARINO DI CIACULLI** with the very aromatic mandarin found only in Sicily.

The Colomba is used as it is. They are simplicity itself as dessert, just open, slice and serve, preferably with an aromatic light sweet wine. This newsletter has several, but remember also our **H.P.O. 2008** which fits the bill very nicely. The Colomba are all one kilo in weight. They should easily serve 10-12 for dessert.

When ripe fresh peaches are available, a wonderful use of Colomba is to cut it in half horizontally, spread with sweetened whipped cream, mascarpone or a combination of both, cover with sliced ripe peaches, top with the other half of the Colomba, let sit in the refrigerator for several hours, remove, slice, and devour.

COLOMBA CLASSICA with candied citrus and almonds \$29.99 (#2510)

COLOMBA ALLA PESCA with candied peaches and almonds \$32.59 (#2511)

COLOMBA AL MANDARINO DI CIACULLI with candied mandarin peel \$33.79 (#2512)

(We have managed to keep the prices for Loison's COLOMBA at the same prices we had in 2008 when the euro/dollar were in a better position.)

CORTI BROTHERS H.P.O. 2008 (6%) \$14.99 750ml (#2513), \$161.00 cs/12 (#2513C)

VIGNALTA ALPIANE 2006 A passito wine made from moscato fior d'arancio

A **PASSITO** wine is produced from withered grapes of any kind, but usually white and aromatic. The name comes from “*appassire*,” in Italian, to wither or soften. It is the ancient method of making a sweet wine that will have high alcohol and still some residual sweetness.

VIGNALTA, an estate in the **Colli Euganei**, outside of Venice, produces **ALPIANE**, a very special passito, from moscato fior d'arancio–Orange Muscat to us. The 2006 vintage produced a stupendous example of this wine. Why stupendous? Because the fermentation got stuck at 12% alcohol—rather than the usual 16%—leaving more residual sugar than normal, enhancing the luscious flavor of this highly scented variety. It wasn't planned this way. It just happened. A fortuitous mistake, but lucky us.

Corti Brothers has the last stock of **Alpiane 2006**; if you want to see what a real marvel this style of sweet wine can be, you should try this vintage. We still have some 2003 vintage which is also very good, has higher alcohol and consequently a slightly drier finish. It is an interesting comparison to taste them together.

VIGNALTA ALPIANE 2006 or 2003 \$27.99 375ml (#2514) \$302.00 case/12 (#2514C)

ANCIENT ORGANICS GHEE: Imperishable Butter

Considered a traditional Indian cooking fat, **GHEE** is nothing more than butter heated until it melts and the clear fat separates from the milky solids which are caramelized as is traditional. **ANCIENT ORGANICS** is a new company founded in Bolinas, Marin County, north of San Francisco by Peter Malakoff and Matteo Maxon, using organic unsalted butter churned by **Straus Family Creamery** in Petaluma. Spring is the best time to buy ghee, since cows are pasturing on new growing green grass which produces the most flavorful milk. As with most things, the better the ingredients, the better the results.

There is a delicious “buttery” scent to **Ancient Organics Ghee**—that scent produced by almost browning butter that is given off when baking with butter, for example. Ghee is very handy in cooking with butter because in this form it has a very high burn point—takes very high heat. It produces a most wonderful butter flavor without burning and becoming acrid. Ghee is a revelation in making popcorn! If you like popcorn as much as I, this is what you should use. Another thing about ghee is that it is stable at room temperature. No refrigeration needed. Just avoid light and moisture.

Sautéing breaded meat—veal, pork, chicken, or turkey cutlets—is very easy with **Ancient Organics Ghee**: Just scoop some out of the jar and melt in a sauté pan and cook away. I do not believe ghee to be a fresh butter substitute—it can be—but a really good cooking fat. For enriching with butter, I still prefer to use fresh butter. But for everything you need clarified butter for, here is possibly the best on the market.

ANCIENT ORGANICS GHEE \$11.99 8 oz jar (#2515) \$129.00cs/12 (2515C)
\$19.99 16oz jar (#2516) \$215.00cs/12 (#2516C)

LACRIMA DI MORRO D'ALBA, a little known Italian varietal

With this imposing name, **LACRIMA DI MORRO D'ALBA**, a little known red variety produces a singular wine in the Marche on Italy's Adriatic coast. **Morro d'Alba** is the name of the village which grows the approximately 150 acres of this variety and bottles the wine under its name. I first tasted this wine on a visit to the Marche and was fascinated by the wine's perfume and flavor. It seems that there are several Lacrima varieties, but the Morro d'Alba one is probably the one also known as Lacrima “*garofolata*” which has a distinctive berry size and a rose-like scent.

MAROTTI CAMPI is the estate producing several styles of Lacrima di Morro d'Alba, and I would like to point out two: **ORGIOLO** and **XYRIS** (pronounced ex-siris). **ORGIOLO** is a deeply colored, medium full bodied dry red with the characteristic scent and flavor of Lacrima, which, once tasted, is not easily forgotten. **XYRIS**, also the name of a sedge-like iris, is made like Moscato d'Asti, frothy, low in alcohol, with residual sugar, a pretty red color, and a wonderful scent. This is an unusual and delicious red dessert wine, or frankly, an anytime wine. It too would admirably accompany the Easter Colomba from Loison.

One of the very seldom seen red varieties of Italy, Lacrima di Morro d'Alba wines merit a bit of attention. They are unique and special. You deserve to experience them.

MAROTTI CAMPI ORGIOLO 2007 (13%) \$19.99 750ml (#2517) \$107.00 cs/6 (#2517C)
XYRIS 2008 (6.5%) \$16.59 750ml (#2518) \$89.00 cs/6 (#2518C)

MONTASIO: The Veneto's most famous cheese from LATTERIA PERENZIN

The Alpi Giulie, the Julian Alps in northeastern Italy produce some spectacular scenery and pastures. These pasturages, known in Italian as "alpeggi" produce the forage for cows which pasture there during the late spring, summer and early fall. This forage produces milk which is transformed into cheeses, the most famous of which is **MONTASIO**, whose history dates back to the 1200s. Even the cattle breed is special, the Pezzata Rossa. At the Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco, I tasted a superb example of Montasio from a small cheese factory or "latteria" named **PERENZIN**, in the province of Treviso. Their Montasio had just won the top award in the Valle d'Aosta, where they know a thing or two about alpine cheese. Perenzin has been producing cheese for four generations, winning its first cheese gold medal in Brussels in 1933.

Montasio is a 3 inch by 20 inch round form DOP cheese, having a compact, small eyed paste, with a nutty, rich flavor that resembles aged Gouda. This lot I've selected has been aged for more than a year. We can ship this medal winning production in cut, cryovac packed wedges of about one pound each, or to order. It should be refrigerated for storage and used shortly after you receive it. It is terrific with Veneto red wines.

MONTASIO LATTERIA PERENZIN \$19.99 per pound, approximately 1 lb pieces in cryovac (#2519)

VIGNALTA VENDA 2006: 80% merlot 20% cabernet sauvignon

VIGNALTA, an estate in the **Colli Euganei**, west of Venice, has been featured on these pages previously. Now I would like to point out to you a particularly charming red wine made from **MERLOT**, that ubiquitous red variety in the Veneto. **VENDA** is the name of a mountain in the Colli and this wine is made from Merlot, the most popular variety planted there. **Venda**, merlot blended with cabernet sauvignon, is a very high quality wine at a very lovely price.

Merlot perhaps is a bit over exposed these days, but in Italy's Veneto—it has been there for about 200 years—it is considered a "local" variety. It ripens well without becoming pruney. It produces a smooth wine when ripe that has perfume and flavor but is not tiring due to its acidity. Not overly oaked, **Venda** has that composed flavor of a wine with just enough wood to keep the fruit interesting. This is a wonderful drinking wine for this spring, summer, and fall.

VIGNALTA VENDA 2006 (13.5%) \$12.99 750ml (#2520) \$140.00 cs/12 (#2520C)

CASA BRINA OLIO DI NOCCIOLA del MONFERRATO

HAZELNUT OIL is a very special oil. It is Piemontese, since hazelnuts grow in Piemonte where grapes won't. Traditionally, nut oil, both hazelnut and walnut, is produced in Piemonte since olive oil must be imported from neighboring Liguria. For the first time Corti Brothers is offering a superb hazelnut oil produced in Cuneo from the noted Tonda Gentile hazelnut variety grown to the east in the Monferrato.

CASA BRINA is the name given to this oil made for the **BAVA FAMILY** of Cocconato d'Asti, producers of **BAVA** Piemontese wines and the products from **GIULIO COCCHI**, Barolo Chinato and Americano Cocchi.

Sold in a pretty flask shaped bottle, packaged in a carton, **CASA BRINA OLIO DI NOCCIOLA** must be kept in a cool, dark place or in its carton. Hazelnut oil, like other nut oils, is highly susceptible to going off if not kept properly and used rapidly. Light damages it very quickly as does air. When you open the bottle, use it up. This is not for keeping around and using from time to time. It does not improve with time!

It is a delicious change of pace from olive oil. It is made like really good olive oil, by mechanical means. The delicate scent and deep hazelnut flavor make this a wonderful experience with hard paste cheeses, as the oil for "carne cruda," Piemontese steak tartare, on risotto as a finishing oil, in salads just to be different, and with firm fleshed white fish and shellfish. We have a limited supply.

CASA BRINA OLIO DI NOCCIOLA 100ml flask \$33.99 (#2521)

LINGHAM'S HOT SAUCE since 1908

LINGHAM'S HOT SAUCE is one of my favorite condiments. It is unique since it is all natural and has been so since 1908 when it was created in Malaysia by an Indian gentleman, Mr. **Lingham**. Now owned by the Chinese **Yeoh** family, it continues to be made in Malaysia in the same way with only red chilli, sugar, vinegar, and salt. It has a very distinctive yellow label with its bottle's even more distinctive red color. It is probably the best chilli sauce made. In the US it is labeled "**Hot Sauce**." In the rest of the world, "**Chilli Sauce**." It is also a **SAVEUR TOP 100** pick for 2010.

The chiles grown for this sauce are usually grown on small plots where the individual growers can harvest them as they turn from green to red, when the chile still has a fruity character and is not all heat and no flavor.

Highly versatile, it can be used to improve dishes as the company states "[as a] mild piquant relish and appetizer of delightful flavour." It is without peer, for example, as the chilli sauce for corned beef hash. For anything you want to liven up, this is the perfect sauce. For it is a sauce, not just a "hot" flavoring as are some other "hot sauces." This is a pantry must since you never know when a bit of heat will make a dish sparkle.

LINGHAM'S HOT SAUCE \$3.99 12.5 oz. (#2522) \$43.00 cs/12 (#2522C)

CORTI BROTHERS TUERCA DE MAIZ: Toasted corn for snacking

While I am writing about nuts for snacking, I should remind you of a Corti Brothers product which I am very fond of. It is **TUERCA DE MAIZ**, light hulled, parched and fried corn, much like the 1936 creation of CornNuts. Our store director, Rick Mindermann came up with the name, which is a mis-translation from Spanish. In any event, the product is delicious and anyway, a name is just what you call something.

Parched and toasted corn has antecedents in our history. It was corn made edible when cooking was not an option. Our **Tuerca de Maiz** has been tweaked a bit since we introduced it in Summer 2009. It is now fried in high oleic canola oil, with no trans fats. It is still as tasty, tender, and crisp as before and easy on teeth. However, if you have delicate teeth, forgo this pleasure! Since gin and tonic season is coming, **Tuerca de Maiz** is its best accompaniment.

CORTI BROTHERS TUERCA DE MAIZ 16oz. resealable zip bag \$3.99 (#2523) \$21.00 cs/6 (#2523C)

CASA CADAVAL TRINCADEIRA 2005

As we come to know wines from ever increasing sources, the wine lover has the possibility of enjoying wines that previously he would never have had. Our world of wine is no longer circumscribed by the “classic” varieties that we know and appreciate. What has happened is that varieties new to us, (they were the old varieties where they came from,) are now better grown and better vinified, making their slow way into our sight.

TRINCADEIRA is one such Portuguese variety. Known in the Port district as **TINTA AMARELA**, and a constituent of that wine, it is grown in other areas of Portugal, namely the **RIBATEJO**, the area to the east and north of Lisbon and in the warmer **ALENTEJO**, south of Lisbon. Eminently suited to warm growing areas, it produces a balanced, softish wine, with a spicy, almost peppery character, with rose-like notes, and good acidity.

CASA CADAVAL is an old estate in Ribatejo and its single variety Trincadeira, from 50 year old vines, is emblematic of the variety which you should learn about. It would be a good choice for certain areas of California and probably should be tried in our warmer areas, where other varieties tend to flatness.

In any case, **Casa Cadaval Trincadeira 2005** is a wonderful red wine that is satisfying, flavorful, and delicious. Its deliciousness, being the most important factor.

CASA CADAVAL TRINCADEIRA 2005 (13%) \$10.79 750ml (#2524) \$58.00 cs/6 (#2524C)

COCCHI BOMBON: Sugar Free Piemontese Candies

The word **BOMBON** or **BONBON** dates from about 1777 in France, and in child’s speak means “very good,” hence delicious. **ROBERTO BAVA**, one of the three young brothers who now run the **BAVA/COCCHI** wineries in Asti, has introduced, from a noted Italian candy maker, these small, hard candies, called “caramelle” in Italian. The traditional Piemontese word for them is “bombon.”

The company marketing these candies is called, tongue in cheek, “**OPIFICIO CARMELLE DURE.**” This is an elegant play on words from the famous Florentine mosaic production of inlaid stones called the Opificio delle Pietre Dure.

Cocchi Bombons are made to traditional Piemontese taste. One flavor, **LA MENTA PIEMUNTEISA** is made with the best mint grown in Italy, that of Pancalieri, outside of Torino. The mint is so famous that it's origin is written in Piemontese. **AL LIMON** is the classic lemon drop of Piemontese grandmothers. **AI MIRTILLI** is made from blueberries. **CASO MAI**, alle erbe digestive, with rhubarb, gentian, licorice, mint, and chamomile, the traditional digestive combination. These bombons are SUGAR FREE, all without added sugar, but contain sweeteners including aspartame.

Not found all over, in fact Corti Brothers are the only source in the U.S., the Cocchi Bombon little boxes, smaller than a box of cigarettes, are easily carried and satisfy the need for a sweet something from time to time. As Robert Bava says: "They are a bit out of fashion right now and we may have to eat them all ourselves. Our history begins only in 2008, actually at the end of 2008. Since they are not made by an international company, we've put 'Made In Piemonte' on the boxes."

COCCHI BOMBON \$3.99 per 27g box **LA MENTA PIEMUNTEISA** (#2525), **AL LIMON** (#2526), **AI MIRTILLI** (#2527), **CASO MAI** (#2528), **Mixed Case** of 12 \$43.00 (#2529)

L'ORIGINAL COMBIER: Since 1834, the oldest clear orange liqueur from Saumur

From time to time a new product appears which is really not new, just newly rediscovered. **L'ORIGINAL COMBIER** is just that: newly rediscovered since it has been around since 1834, but kept as a local specialty in its Loire Valley hometown of Saumur. It seems that the Loire Valley is a hot bed for orange liqueurs. Cointreau comes from there, and is the most famous. **COMBIER**, however, is older, and presumably an inspiration.

Now resurrected and brought into the US, the clear **COMBIER** orange liqueur titillates our palates. The maceration of dried Haitian orange peel is alambic distilled in the same stills used by the liqueur's creator, Jean Baptiste Combiere. Relatively dry, it is wonderful served chilled or with ice after a meal. It can be used in any recipe calling for an orange liqueur, especially when you want a bit less sugar.

Combiere is a pleasant change of pace from other after dinner liqueurs since it is relatively dry with a delightful scent and flavor. This is the kind of liqueur which is very more-ish and hard to resist.

L'ORIGINAL COMBIER \$39.79 750ml (#2530) \$214.00 cs/6 (#2530C)

TERMS OF SALE: This list supersedes all others. All taxable items, such as wine, beer, or spirits will be taxed at the rate of 8.75%. This is for all sales since we sell in California. Foodstuffs are not taxable. Shipping will be charged at prevailing rates. PLEASE NOTE: In extreme weather, either hot or cold, please give us a shipping address where your order may be properly received and stored. Corti Brothers cannot be responsible for items left without protection.

You may order online at www.cortibros.biz, by phone at 800-509-FOOD (3663), by Fax at 916-736-3800, or by mail. Inventories are limited, so order early.