

Our goal with the Cider Club is to provide you a wide diversity of cider to showcase the many styles of the world. This February, we include two of our favorite up and coming Northeastern cideries: Rocky Ground (Maine), and Rose Hill (New York). Plus, Jacques Perritaz from Switzerland makes a return to the club with his Quince, Apple, & Pear blend, 'Trois Peppin', and we round out with a classically minded French cider from Romilly in Normandy, France!

# THE CELLAR D'OR

## WINE & CIDER

Cider Club • February 2022



Who is Matt Sanford?

## Rose Hill Farms 'Ellis Bitter'

**Key Words:** Hudson Valley (NY), USA 85% Ellis Bitter Spontaneous Ferm. Unfiltered/Unfined Blend of Various Lengths of Maceration

It was an eye-catching Instagram post from Rose Hill that first caught Mark's attention (owner of Cellar d'Or). Between the hip labels, natural ferments, and promising New York cider fruit — Rose Hill looked like a great fit for our shelves. Even so, we didn't expect these ciders to feel this refined and complete this early in production. But it made sense when Matt Sanford walked through the door to hand deliver the Ellis Bitter we've packed this February. I first met Matt while on the floor of the shop a few years ago. We support an extensive selection of cider and Matt knew pretty much every one of the producers on our shelves, many by first name. He's worked harvests, in cellars, and talked apples with cider icons from across the world. With Matt at the helm of Rose Hill's cider production, his years of training and experience — command of craft — it's on display, here. Ellis Bitter is a tannin-structured (bittersweet) biannual variety of English origin. Today, you can find Ellis Bitter planted in West Country and Herefordshire in England where it makes juicy, apple-forward styles of cider framed by soft tannins. Rose Hill's Ellis Bitter is blend of multiple macerations ranging from 1 hour to 8 days. Look for flavors of juicy peach, shaved apple, Juicy Fruit Gum, praline, ginger, with hints of key lime, dried pineapple, and citrus salt. Apples: 85% Ellis Bitter, ~10% Yellow Bellflower, and the remaining ~5% is a mix of Wickson, King David and Chisel Jersey.



Angus and Abbey Deighan

## Rocky Ground 'Queen'

**Key Words:** Maine, USA Cider + Honey 43 Different Varieties! Spontaneous Fermentation 1 Year in Oak Barrel Bottle-Conditioned w/ Honey

"We forage because the wild seedlings & old heirloom trees offer us flavors that make a cider we want to drink. Each vintage & blend is a mysterious alchemy of time & place; the available harvest, the soil, & the weather of that growing season. We put the juice in oak barrels & let wild yeast do the work. The fermentation takes almost a year. All of our ciders are dry. We do not use commercial yeasts, sulfites or filtration." — Rocky Ground Rocky Ground's 'Queen' is comprised of 69% foraged/31% grafted apples that begin a spontaneous fermentation in oak barrels where it's allowed a full year to slowly complete fermentation. General rule: longer fermentations = more complexity. Indigenous yeasts (causing spontaneous/natural fermentation) are less vigorous than commercial yeasts. After a year slowly fermenting in barrel, Angus and Abbey Deighan bottle condition Queen (along with a few other ciders of theirs) with locally sourced honey! I'm a sucker for the textural, mead-like flavors ciders with honey additions provide. It's hard to describe... but it's a little like the creamy-nutty flavors of say, maple candy, but minus the intensity of maple flavor (as odd as that might sound) and winking at a faint flavor of baklava. This cider hits a sweet spot of feral rusticity and a clarity of fruit.



Jacques Perritaz

## Cidrerie du Vulcain 'Trois Peppin'

**Key Words:** Switzerland Apple + Quince + Pear Hand-Harvested Partial Indigenous Yeast Ferm. in Steel Tank Bottle-Conditioned

The ciders of Jacques Perritaz continue to impress us. Once an understudy of Eric Bordelet (Master Sommelier and Normandy cider icon) Jacques produces a number of ciders in Switzerland, many from foraged and/or unsprayed trees. The Trois Peppin we've packed is a blend of equal parts apples, pears, and quince! Quince is a pome fruit that is similar to cider apples and perry pears in that it's raw flesh is spongy, stiff and astringent. It's this palpable astringency (structure, i.e. tannin and acidity) that provides the framework for the complexity we find in craft ciders across the world. If you've been a member of our cider club through the past year, you'll remember Perritaz' Turgowy bottling had delicate fruit and lofty lifted ephemeral aromatics. Trois Peppin follows fits inside this mold, with fresh shaved apple, edges of browned/oxidative/waxy pear and playful tutti tutti notes on the nose. And, again, there's a note that evokes a golden field of wheat that we can't quite place. On the bottle you'll find the image of the Vulcain butterfly. These butterflies are common in the orchards of Fribourg where Jacques Perritaz picks a lot of the fruit for his ciders, mostly on his own. Also, while this cider is lightly clarified, Perritaz utilizes mushroom extract rather than egg whites!

## Romilly Cidre de Normandie 'Demi-Sec'

**Key Words:** Isigny-Sur-Mer, Normandy, France Biodynamic Estate Fruit Spontaneous Fermentation Keeved Unpasteurized

We often find old-school, rustic, French cider full of character at incredibly low price points. They sport a richness of apple fruit that largely contrasts with the lean and crisp profiles of entry-level U.S. offerings. Places like Normandy and Brittany in Northeast France have been producing cider for more than a millenia. They've had ages (literally) to fine tune their methods and scope out a broad style. Because these styles and methods are associated with particular regions, it's beneficial for these areas to standardize the style itself so that folks can rely on Normandy and Brittany ciders to display these classic flavors. The Old-World/New-World distinction in wine can be directly applied to the world of cider. Folks walk into Cellar d'Or looking to try 'craft cider' for the first time. I often recommend a French cider to start because they will feel more sturdy and substantial through their display of baked, honeyed, and browned apple fruit, natural sweetness, and tannin for mouthfeel and body. The consumer and the region both benefit, because the consumer can rely on, say, Normandy cider to reflect this profile while the producers of Normandy can rely on each other to reinforce that association. The folks at Romilly are continuing this 1000-year tradition, and it's part of what makes Normandy cider special.



Ben Fonte

