

T H E  
W I N E R Y

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## January Tasting 23.01.20

### SPARKLING

**Crémant de Bourgogne Brut NV, Denis Père et Fils (Burgundy/France) 20.99**

Recently arrived from Pernand-Vergelesses, a village nestling behind the hill of Corton in Burgundy. After a hiatus of two years, owing to two vintages with output decimated by hail and frost, Christophe and Valérie Denis finally had enough grapes from the 2017 harvest to make some more Crémant. It's delicious, as usual – fresh and balanced. 70% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay and 5% Aligoté, picked from the Bourgogne Rouge and Blanc parcels five days before the main harvest to keep the acidity high.

### WHITE

**Riesling trocken 2018, Borrell Diehl (Pfalz/Germany) VEGAN 1000ml - 13.99**

We go to Germany a lot but not so often south of Rheinhessen. We fixed that with a trip to the Pfalz. Immediately south of Rheinhessen, the Pfalz (*aka Palatinate*) is sheltered by the forests of the northern Vosges on its western flank. The region is warm and fertile. Fruit and vegetables grow easily here – as do vines. Growers tend to have a very wide range of varieties to satisfy as many visitors' palates as possible. We are fixated on dry Riesling, so, as long as they have some to offer, that'll get us through the door!

We met Daniel Nett, who has a guesthouse in the outskirts of Neustadt an der Weinstrasse in the Pfalz, when he came to a Winery tasting with Johannes Landgraf of Becker-Landgraf. When the call to visit the Pfalz again after a decade became impossible to ignore, it was obvious we would have to base ourselves at Daniel's. He told us we should check out Borrell Diehl. Good call.

The Borrell Diehl family have multiple dry Riesling bottlings from different soils; Bundsandstein (colourful sandstone), Muschelkalk (chalk, thick with fossil deposits) and Schiefer (slate). Their entry-level dry Riesling, in litre bottles (!), is zesty and limey, easy-going and joyful.



**Weisser Burgunder trocken 2018, Borrell Diehl (Pfalz/Germany) VEGAN 12.99**

Thomas and Annette Borrell-Diehl and their winemaking son Georg can trace their family history back to 1619. Their house is on a tight bend in the picturesque village of Hainfeld between Neustadt and Landau, on the Weinstrasse (*Wine Road*) that runs alongside the forest and the hills.

Access to their house and winery was so tight that they recently built a new, larger cellar on the edge of the village. They have 32 hectares and, like many in the area, make a wide range of wines including Riesling, Weisser Burgunder (Pinot Blanc), Grauer Burgunder (Pinot Gris/Pinot Grigio), Gewürztraminer and Pinot Noir/Spätburgunder. The Weisser and Grauer Burgunders are creamy and broad.

**Gelber Muskateller trocken 2018, Pfirmann (Pfalz/Germany) ORGANIC 17.99**

We came across a Pfirmann Spätburgunder at Moro Moro, a restaurant attached to Daniel Nett's Landhaus in Neustadt-Gimmeldingen.

Before taking over from his father Otto in 2000, Jürgen Pfirmann studied at Neustadt and Bad Kreuznach. He went to school with Karsten Peter, the young winemaking star at Gut Hermannsberg in the Nahe. Jürgen isn't doing a bad job either!

He and his wife Sabine are based in the village of Wollmesheim, just outside Landau, and make Spätburgunder/Pinot Noirs and a range of whites. We were particularly struck by the aromatic whites: a classic, exotic Gewürztraminer and this startling, oily, dry Gelber Muskateller (yellow Muscat) – all lychees and spice. When would you drink it, you may ask? As an aperitif, or with asparagus, with cheese, with spicy Indian and southeast Asian food. Or with some good bread and olives as the sun is going down.

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**RED**

**Spätburgunder 2018, Pfirmann (Pfalz/Germany) ORGANIC 15.99**

The first Spätburgunder is from 12 year-old vines, a combination of Mariafeld M1 and Freiburg clones, giving it an intrinsically German flavour profile. Picked early for freshness, it spends 10 days on its skins and is raised in 3-8 year-old barrels. The charming nose reminded us of the bright cherry, crunchy fruit of a very good Bourgogne Rouge but with more intensity and sappiness in the mouth.

**Spätburgunder Kalkmergel 2017, Pfirmann (Pfalz/Germany) ORGANIC 19.99**

The Kalkmergel Spätburgunder is from 10 year-old vines (the 777 clone from Morey-St-Denis) grown on chalk marl and raised in 2-3 year-old barrels. They call it one of their Terroir wines – not from a single vineyard but from parcels with the same geology. It has a gently autumnal nose and a deeper texture in the mouth.

**Crozes-Hermitage Rouge 2017, Maxime Chomel (Rhône/France) 17.99**

We first stumbled upon Maxime Chomel's musky Crozes doing some research in a shop in Tain l'Hermitage. A visit followed - although his high-altitude hideaway proved extremely hard to find.

Maxime's father and grandfather had a hectare of apricot trees and, when Maxime took over in 1984, he bought vineyards and taught himself how to make wine. He now has 8.5 hectares, most around his secluded domaine on sandy loess and granite. It is so secluded, it is impossible for lorries to make it up to his winery. Yes, that makes picking-up a challenge unless we do it ourselves!

He can sometimes come across as being a bit gruff. He has no interest in new clients, never receives private visitors, bristles if anyone writes to him in English (we never do, of course) – sending back a stiff reply with multiple exclamation marks thrown in for good measure. That said, he has always received us with good grace.

We love the unreconstructed style of his Crozes-Hermitage: 100% Syrah. The 2017 is thick with violets, dark fruits and meaty notes.

We also managed to prise his last few magnums from his grip. 34.99 - since you ask.



**OLIVE OIL**

**Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Heredad Pangua Sodupe (Rioja/Spain) 500ml - 13.99**

In addition to making Rioja in red and white, Roberto Pangua also bottles his own olive oil.

**LUNAR CALENDAR OBSERVERS** – today is a **Fruit Day**.

Our **next tasting** will be on **Monday 3rd February** when we will be joined by **Anne-Sophie Dubois**, who makes very pure, very fragrant Fleurie - one of the ten Crus of the Beaujolais.

**Reiner Flick** was planning to come too, but will join us later in the year instead.

**New arrivals** – from **Gerrit Walter** on the Mosel (we can't get enough of his dry Rieslings), **Reiner Flick** (Queen Victoria's favourite wine), more of those aged dry Rheingau Rieslings from **Schloss Schönborn**.

**Pascal Chalon's Grande Ourse** will hopefully be arriving tomorrow. All his wines will now carry La Grande Ourse label. The former Petite Ourse still exists but with a different name. It will say Visan on the back label. La Grande Ourse will be labelled Suze la Romane.

Coming soon – more **Longrande Rioja** (we are getting close to empty), from Tuscany - Rossella Bencini's **Terre a Mano Carmignano** (and some of her unique white). **Bordeaux** from Chateau Martinet, Tour Cordouan, Laujac, La Fleur Poitou, Tour Canon and more of those halves of Croix de St Georges 1999 (everything else has gone).

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**  
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