

T H E  
W I N E R Y

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## Candlelight, Carols and Wine Tasting at Clifton Nurseries - 29.11.13

Welcome to this evening of Candlelight, Carols and Wine Tasting. Members of St Mark's Hamilton Terrace Choir will be singing carols in The Quince Tree Cafe. There is a rumour that Father Christmas may make an appearance for younger guests. Make sure you wander around the Nurseries for some festive gift inspiration – handmade wreaths, Christmas trees, decorations and, most importantly, wine! Tonight's line-up previews selected wines from a couple of our handy 6-bottle Christmas gift packs.

### SPARKLING

**Zum Krug Riesling Sekt Brut 2011, Josef Laufer (Rheingau/Germany) 12.99**

Hotel Zum Krug in Hattenheim, is a magical place. The sort of place that may have existed in mediaeval Germany, atmospheric twists and turns in a wooden interior straight out of a fantasy grotto from ancient legend. Josef Laufer, owner and font of Rheingau knowledge, always gives us a warm welcome and we start with a glass of his brilliant dry Sekt made from top class Rheingau fruit just outside the village - a wake-up call to the senses in all its petrolly splendour.

### WHITE

**Pinot Grigio 2012, Cantina di Casteggio (Lombardy/Italy) 8.99**

The little-known region of Oltrepó Pavese is a bump on the plain south of Milan. It's fair to say Cantina di Casteggio is bigger than any other winery we work with. Much bigger. A Co-op with 350 members and a massive facility, part run-down *fascista*-style, part space age. The Cantina is very switched-on and started a "quality project" with their best 50 growers, bringing in famous Italian consultant Riccardo Cotarella. Try as we might, we just couldn't resist: they make a great range of modern wines. The sparkling Postumio in white and pink, aromatic Malvasia, a smoky Pinot Noir, a cherry-bright Barbera and this delightfully floral Pinot Grigio.



**Riesling trocken 2012, Riffel (Bingen/Rheinhessen) ORGANIC 12.99**

Bingen is on a massive corner on the Rhine, opposite Rudesheim. It is at the north-western edge of the region where four wine-growing regions meet. Rheinhessen, Nahe, Mittelrhein and the Rheingau. Carolin and Erik Riffel have vines in the full south-facing Bingen Scharlachberg vineyard. Millions of years ago the Rhine looped below it, which explains why the wines have an almost Rheingau-like opulence. The Riffels make electric, dry, modern Riesling which express the steep, quartz-infused, fossil-laden slate it is grown on and the very late October harvesting which extracts maximum ripeness. We owe thanks to the German Food Writer Ursula Heinzelmann for tipping us off about Riffel. She was researching a piece about the wines Goethe drank and heard about the Scharlachberg. Thanks Ursula!

**Riesling trocken 2012, Bischel (Appenheim/Rheinhessen) 14.99**

Brand new to our shelves and brand new to the UK. The Winery's David Motion was recently involved in a Dragon's Den type German Wine event and Bischel was one of the clear winners. Their prize? An order from us.

Based in Appenheim, not far from Bingen where the Riffels are based (and where they share some vineyards in the Scharlachberg), the young Bischel brothers, Christian and Mathias, took over the family winery and have been turning heads in Germany. The grapes come from younger vines on chalky soil in Appenheim and Gau-Algesheim. No expense is spared and everything is done by hand. Wild yeasts and long lees contact give the wine added texture. Although the richness and minerality would seem to contradict the lab stats, the wine is bone dry.

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**RED**

**Bourgogne Pinot Noir 2011, Noëllat (Burgundy/France)**

**16.99**

Those of you who are familiar with our shelves of Burgundy may have come across Noëllat from the village of Vosne-Romanée in the Côtes de Nuits. Vosne-Romanée is a name that makes Pinot lovers go misty eyed. Alain Noëllat and his brother Jean-Marc were lucky to inherit most of their Grandfather's vines centred around Vosne-Romanée itself. Over the decade we have been buying from them they have snaffled up parcels in Gevrey-Chambertin, Morey-St-Denis, Nuits-Saint-Georges and have even ventured into the Côte de Beaune and the Hautes-Côtes.

Alain Noëllat's daughter Sophie did a very short stint with us as an intern. This unfortunately coincided with some serious love-sickness. She had fallen in love with Arnaud Sirugue, the son of another wine-making family, from around the corner, less than 100 metres from her home. That, and the contrast between a quiet French village and a flat in Brick Lane, made her revise her plans. Shuttle forward 18 months and the two were married this summer.

We tasted again when we visited in June and are always impressed by this Bourgogne Rouge, their basic Pinot Noir, from vines around Vosne.

**Longrade Rioja Crianza 2008, Isabel Fernandez (La Rioja/Spain)**

**11.99**

Fiery Isabel has been making the wine in her small family Bodega in the Rioja Alta for almost 30 years. She goes to great lengths to keep the whole process as natural as possible; treading the whole bunches by foot (she's bought and abandoned three modern presses, but always ends up treading the grapes), using gravity to avoid pumping, never filtering. She even hermetically seals her subterranean barrel room with masking tape and determines the bottling date biodynamically, according to the cycles of the moon. Her wines are fascinating - often boldly perfumed, with a beautiful purity of fruit and surprising body and structure.

**In Fine Rouge 2011, Cascavel (Rhône/France)**

**9.99**

The Mont Ventoux towers over the southern part of the Rhône Valley which embraces Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the Côtes-du-Rhône Villages. Although the wines are very much in a similar style, the Ventoux has, despite some of its gun-toting, redneck locals, become a very trendy, upcoming sub-region. We had been circling Domaine de Cascavel for almost a decade. The urbane Raphaël Trouiller originally set up Cascavel in the mid-1990s with the highly-strung Olivier Baguet. Olivier left to do his own thing and Raphaël continues with his delicious, broad-flavoured whites and a spread of rich reds. Made with 80% Grenache and 20% Syrah, we love In Fine's herbal flavours - evocative of the lavender and thyme-laden local landscape.



**LUNAR CALENDAR OBSERVERS** – today is a **Root Day**. Aargh, not again!

**JANCIS ROBINSON** – check out [jancisrobinson.com](http://jancisrobinson.com) – **Ruber Spätburgunder 2010** by **Thomas Nelles** is her **Wine of the Week** - yay!

Our **following tasting** will be at our shop in Clifton Road on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January** from **17.00-21.00h**.

**ARRIVING NEXT WEEK** – From Sicily, Mimmo Paone's Funnari and Giovanni Scarfone's Faro. From Piedmont, the last of Guasti Clemente's 2007 Barbera d'Asti (catch it while you can!) plus Dolcetto, Barbera and Barolo by Mauro Veglio and Palladino. Lots of Bordeaux, including some more of the Chateau Brisson 2002, which sold out very quickly six weeks ago. Beauties from Bergerac by Malleveille and Haut-Pécharmant. Our biggest selling item - Champagne Amyot. More arrivals from Burgundy and Germany the week after.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**  
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