

T H E
W I N E R Y

July Tasting

13.07.16

Tonight we have 3 Italians, 2 Germans and 2 French in our line-up. Also, we will be saying “*Aufwiedersehen*” for the second time to our colleague **Philip Geck** who has to return to Germany to complete his studies at Wine Uni in Geisenheim. We wish him every success for the future.

SPARKLING

Prosecco NV, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto/Italy) ORGANIC

13.99

The Winery's top performing, favourite Prosecco for over a decade. Carlo and Milly Paladin have been making organic wines under their Bosco del Merlo label for many years. They have a spread of vines over the flat plains at Annone Veneto northeast of Venice, the Alps visible in the background. It's an area rich with Roman history - the old Roman road, the via Postumia runs right by the estate. This Prosecco is made in a *frizzante*, lower pressure style, under a normal cork. Gently floral in the nose, crisp, lean and fresh.

WHITE

Greco di Tufo 2013, Salvatore Molettieri (Campania/Italy)

16.99

Last month we introduced Salvatore Molettieri's Irpinia Aglianico - junior Taurasi (The Barolo of The South) – this month we are opening one of his white wines (strictly speaking more straw yellow/golden); Greco di Tufo. As the name implies, the grape is thought to have originally come from Greece 2,500 years ago. Greco is one of the grapes that was rescued from the verge of extinction by Antonio Mastroberardino after WW2. Tufo is the name of a small town between Avellino and Taurasi, an hour's drive into the volcanic hills east of Naples.

Salvatore and his oenologue son Giovanni Molettieri pick their Greco di Tufo very late, usually at the end of October, sometimes even as late as November. They say that the wine is too acidic if you pick earlier. This is a striking wine – bold, energised by its volcanic and clay soil. Savoury marzipan, anyone?



Riesling trocken 2015, Becker-Landgraf (Rheinhessen/Germany)

13.99

From the ashes of Rheinhessen rises the twin-headed phoenix of modern dry Riesling and Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir). A local grower threw a party early last decade, hoping his daughter would catch Johannes Landgraf's eye. Johannes made a bee-line for another winery's daughter, Julia Becker, and so in 2004, Becker-Landgraf was born. Among other things (Pinot Blanc, Rivaner, Dornfelder and so on) they determined to make top-class, cool-climate, dry Riesling and silky Pinot Noir, slap bang in the rural centre of the region. Johannes and Julia's Gau-Odernheimer Spätburgunder is another Winery Classic and multiple award winner. To ring the changes we are showing their latest limey, mineral-driven dry Riesling, a freshly bottled 2015.

Kanzemer Riesling trocken 2014, von Othegraven (Mosel-Saar/Germany)

21.99

Terroir. It's a sense of place. It's the expression of the earth, of the geology. Here on the Saar, like the Mosel that it feeds, it's all about slate. The slate here sparkles with Quartz, which often gives the wine a dizzy, spicy, almost tropical character.

We always loved Dr Heidi Kegel, the charming former Head Anaesthetist from Cologne hospital, who was left the historic von Othegraven estate by a maiden aunt in the early 1990s. When we phoned she would say “what time would you like to come?” “How's 11.00h?” “Would you like to stay for lunch?” Lunch would often finish with something old and special from the cellar.

Unfortunately Dr Heidi became ill and decided (at 70-something) it was probably time to sell. Enter Günther Jauch, generally held to be the most popular man in Germany. An unassuming man, he's a TV host and commentator - a national treasure. He is also a distant relative of earlier owners and has brought new energy (and finance) to his new acquisition. The same winemaking and vineyard team is onboard (Andreas Barth of Lubentiusshof and the taciturn Swen Klinger) and continue to make exquisite wines, a world away from the searing acidity of the old-school Saar wines. Effortless.

One of their Grand Cru bottlings was a top scorer in the latest issue of Decanter magazine. The Winery's David Motion was one of the judges but, rest assured, it was a blind tasting! We don't have enough bottles to show the winning bottle (Ockfen Bockstein GG 2014) but tonight we are showing their village-level Kanzemer 2014, made with an earlier selection from the Grand Cru Altenberg vineyard behind the von Othegraven house.

RED

Rosso di Montepulciano 2014, Il Macchione (Tuscany/Italy) ORGANIC 19.99

Our trip to Campania and Tuscany in Spring proved to be very fruitful – and we are excited to introduce the very pure, very elegant reds of Il Macchione to our shelves.

We were having a wonderful dinner at Osteria La Porta in Montichiello between Montepulciano and Montalcino. The first red was high-profile and a bit overwhelming for us. “Do you have something a bit more restrained, austere, traditional and low-profile?” Daria Cappelli, the charming owner, and her wine-waiter looked at each other and came up with a bottle of Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva from Il Macchione.

We were so taken with it that we contacted Il Macchione at the crack of dawn. “May we visit you? We are really sorry we only have one hour to cram a meeting in before heading to Montalcino.” “OK.”

An hour later we arrived at Il Macchione to be met by Simone Abram, a bearded man with bags of energy and bags of quotes.

Quote #1 – “We’re not from Tuscany. We were driving around for 5 or 6 years looking for the right spot.” His family was originally from Trentino.

Quote #2 – “I didn’t choose Sangiovese – I chose this land”.

Quote #3 “It’s just me, my brother and a couple of gypsies. No, they really are gypsies. Actually just one main one really. He’s one of the family. Totally committed.”

Quote #4 – “100% Sangiovese – not cut with Cabernet or Merlot or other stuff.”

Quote #5 – “Everyone talks about acidity and dark fruits and tannins and stuff – I taste with my body.”

Not certified but totally organic, we would describe Il Macchione as *beyond* organic. This is where we first saw Favino plants (Broad Bean/Field Beans) between the rows - an effective natural fertiliser, used to fix nitrogen in the soil.

We listened, loved the attitude, tasted with our bodies and were very impressed. One hour morphed into two, but we think it was worth it!

Côtes-du-Rhône 2013, Coriançon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 13.99

Also just in is our latest hit from the southern Rhône valley, where Grenache and Syrah vines are twisted and ravaged (rather than caressed) by the Mistral wind. The heavily moustachioed François Vallot is a fourth-generation wine-maker and owns one of the oldest wineries in the Côtes-du-Rhône, an area where much of the wine is bottled by the big co-operatives. Since the 2007 vintage he has been fully biodynamic (*Biodynamism is the extreme end of organic viticulture, where decisions are synchronised with the lunar calendar*). His winery is in Vinsobres, one of the named Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages, like Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Cairanne, all satellites of Chateauneuf-du-Pape. It’s a beautiful, warm, windswept setting with the jagged Dentelles de Montmirail and Mont Ventoux as a backdrop. Since the arrival of his daughter Anaïs in the day-to-day management of the winery and vineyards, we notice some subtle changes in presentation; an overhaul of the website and a new label for the latest vintage of their Côtes-du-Rhône.



Côtes de Provence Rouge 2011, Domaine de Mauvan (Provence/France) 13.99

We were looking for another Rosé in Provence in the wilting 40C heat of summer. Much of our shortlisting work was done in the (thankfully) cool Côtes-de-Provence-Sainte-Victoire Vinothèque in the town of Trets. Our clear winner was Mauvan. 30 minutes later, with the stunning long ridge-like Mont Sainte-Victoire as backdrop, we were tasting the full range with Martin Massot, Gaëlle Maclou’s long-term boyfriend and co-worker. Gaëlle’s Grandfather started the Domaine in the 1950s. It was mixed farming; mainly cereal, fruit and a few vines. Gaëlle, a qualified Oenologist, took over the Domaine 25 years ago, stripped out the cereal production and has concentrated on wine ever since. The wines are terrific. A refreshing white, two levels of Rosé and three reds. Unusually for Provence, Gaëlle’s first red is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Il Mercante di Delizie (Veneto/Italy) 500ml - 11.99

Milly and Carlo Paladins’ latest (and scarce) Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Peppery, liquid gold.

Our following tasting here at The Winery is scheduled for **Tuesday 9th August**.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**
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