

T H E
W I N E R Y

September Tasting 19.09.18

SPARKLING

Rosé Spumante Brut, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto/Italy) ORGANIC 15.99

AKA Prosecco Rosé. Strictly speaking, no-one is allowed to write that on the label yet, but it is in the regulatory pipeline. It will be, as it is here, Glera (a synonym for the Prosecco grape) with a splash of Pinot Noir.

Carlo and Milly Paladin have been making organic wines under their Bosco del Merlo label for many years including The Winery's top performing, favourite Prosecco for a decade and a half. 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.

WHITE

Pinot Grigio 2015, Alessandro Vicentini Orgnani (Friuli/Italy) UNDER CONVERSION 17.99

From the Friuli-Grave, in the foothills of the Alps in the top right hand corner of Italy. A massive earthquake in 1976 reduced the Orgnani home to rubble - the family moved their home into the winery and the winery into the barn. Alessandro came back from architecture college in nearby Venice, took over from his father, overhauled and modernised everything, and decided to bottle the entire output himself.

When we visited him again recently, we found that the style had changed. What happened? "Quite a lot. My wife and I split up, I have a new girlfriend called Raffaella, I ditched my Oenologues and made the wine myself". In our opinion, ditching the consultants was a very good move. The wines are bolder and more textured. This is a bold interpretation of Pinot Grigio - very different to the mainstream. Wild yeasty nose, plenty of texture. Bravissimo!

To all intents and purposes, Alessandro has been organic for several years, using very low levels of SO₂, and is currently, finally, going through the certification process.



Riesling "Classic" 2008, Querbach (Rheingau/Germany) 16.99

Peter Querbach was a long-time member of the VDP (the Premier League of German growers). He eventually found the rules too restrictive and handed his membership back: a big step - like a chef handing back Michelin stars. So, the Rheingau Bad Boy is now free to do what he pleases. And what he pleases pleases us. Peter likes to age his Rieslings. The dry Classic 2008 is straw yellow, smooth, enveloping, mature. "Please Sir, can we have some more?"

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese trocken 2016, Nico Simonis (Mosel/Germany) 18.99

Pünderich is one of the most beautiful villages on the incredibly beautiful river Mosel. In wine terms, its reputation is dominated by Clemens and Rita Busch who have set the bar extremely high since the late 1970s.

We found ourselves in 2015 at something suspiciously like a Pünderich Village Summer Fete. It was an all-day event, culminating in an evening of Flammkuchen (a super-thin pizza with onion, cheese and lardons) and dancing (Hoedown followed by Oompah and Techno). The main theme was the "Riesling Kartell", a group of six young growers from the village.

As we were piling through our second bottle of Busch's Marienburg GG, we bumped into Gerrit Walter (our former intern and maker of one of our top-selling dry Riesling) and asked him if there was something we should be trying. "Try this" he said, passing a glass. It was proper Mosel - light, delicate, floral and yet with backbone - all about herbs, salty slate minerals and racy, running water. Lovely. What is it? It's Nico Simonis' Rot-Schiefer (*red slate*) Kabinett trocken 2014. He's young and learning a lot, working a few days a week at Franzen.

Needless to say, we visited Nico and his parents Elke and Elmar asap. It's a very small, family winery with just 3 hectares of vines. Nico (now 27) was very proud of that Rot-Schiefer Kabinett trocken 2014, the wine that brought us to his door, because it was the first wine that his father let him do entirely his own way. It turns out that his father, Elmar, was very nervous about Nico's wine. Nico was using wild yeasts and long lees contact, like he'd seen at Franzen's. By contrast, his Dad was taught a very different style of winemaking - super clean, super safe, zero risk. The results in the bottle and the reception locally suggest that Elmar would let Nico do more going forward - or, at least, try to look the other way! This is Nico's flagship dry Riesling, picked late (Spätlese) and vinified dry.

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RED

Spätburgunder 2015, Johannes Sinss (Nahe/Germany) UNDER CONVERSION 18.99

There is an eye-catching stand-alone hill not far from the Autobahn in the Nahe. The village is Windesheim. We always thought that there must be someone making good wine there. Turns out the answer was right under our noses.

We met Johannes Sinss at the same time we met Gerrit Walter, back in 2009, when they were both at Wine Uni in Geisenheim. Johannes did internships at Williams-Selyem in California and Wairau River in New Zealand before heading straight back to work in the family winery.

Johannes must've been paying attention during his internship at Williams-Selyem. Over the past few years Johannes has eased off picking late to try to bring the alcohol levels down. "It's all about tasting the grapes – looking for ripeness without over-ripeness".

This Spätburgunder (*Spätburgunder* = *Pinot Noir*) is bright, ripe, with pretty fruit and some adult tannic structure. It was aged in 70% old oak barrels, 30% steel tanks. Unfiltered and without fining (that's the clarification process).

We also picked up some of his Windesheimer Spätburgunder "S" 2015 last week – up a notch or two, it has a beautiful, haunting, almost fragile perfume and silky mouthfilling texture.

La Grande Ourse 2015, Pascal Chalon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 19.99

In 2007 we stumbled across Pascal Chalon in the village of Tulette not far from Chateauneuf-du-Pape, making biodynamic Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages in his Granny's garage. We clambered around, amongst the tools and apples, squeezed ourselves around her beaten-up Renault and, as soon as we had tasted his two wines, "La Petite Ourse" and "La Grande Ourse", were quick to back the van up and load the last cases he had. La Grande Ourse is a deep, meaty blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre from vines caressed (some might say ravaged) by the Mistral wind. We love its deep richness and herbal flavours, evocative of the lavender and thyme-laden local landscape.

Taruguin 2015 (Castilla y Leon/Spain) ORGANIC/LOW INTERVENTION 19.99

Nacho Leon was driving back from Barcelona to Bierzo (where he lives and makes Demencia and Pyjama) and had taken some back roads through the villages near Soria. What's the story Nacho?

"I was really surprised to see some very old vines and decided to take a walk through them. It was marvellous and exciting because I knew this area lots of years ago. A close friend from my childhood has family there and I used to spend some weekends with him and his friends.

I was thinking about the wines that I tasted in Barcelona, and was looking for another profile of Ribera del Duero wine - more altitude, more fruity sensations, more acidity. Maybe vines like these could help us? I told my friend Julio and we began working on the idea of making a different type of wine from his parent's land. We chose some vineyards in the area and, thanks to his family, were able to start work right away. We are not the owner of the vines but we do the vineyard work.

Although it could be labelled as Ribera del Duero, they decided to make it outside the Denominación de Origen (Spain's classification system). "We are only a 'Vino de Mesa', the lowest classification in Spanish laws, but we believe that this is not important, the most important thing for us is the wine we have in the bottle."

Taruguin is made from Tempranillo (known as Tinta del País locally) with a splash of Albillo, a white varietal. "We took the grapes in a van and brought them here (to Bierzo) where I can work easier. 9 months in French barrels and the result - a pretty wine that sold out in 3 weeks!"

Pretty might imply that it is light and fruity whereas we would describe it as big, rich, deep and powerful.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Il Mercante di Delizie (Veneto/Italy) 500ml - 14.99

Milly and Carlo Paladin's latest Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Peppery, liquid gold.

Lunar Calendar Observers – today is a Fruit Day.

Dates for your diary - The Little Venice Music Festival

We are keen supporters of The Little Venice Music Festival. Now in its 17th year, it will run from Thursday 3rd until Sunday 7th October. Curated for the third time by the very talented Berkeley Ensemble, it's a joy to have such an exciting and varied programme packed with extraordinary performers in our midst. Tickets are available online, also at The Winery or on the door.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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