

T H E

W I N E R Y

June Tasting

04.06.19

SPARKLING

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

19.99

First up from the vanload we brought back from 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

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2018, Denis Père et Fils (Burgundy/France)

18.99

Pernand-Vergelesses is a pretty village north of Beaune, nestling behind the hill of Corton. In the 23 years of our guardianship of The Winery, we spent the first ten looking for good Pernand-Vergelesses before we found what we were looking for: a small family Domaine run by Christophe Denis, his wife Valérie, with some help from their nephew Jean-Baptiste Gauthier. They make a spread of Pernands in red and white at Village and 1er Cru level, Bourgogne Blanc and Rouge, some Savigny-lès-Beaune, Aloxe-Corton, Chorey-lès-Beaune, Corton Grand Cru and (occasionally) Crémant de Bourgogne.

They work the vines according to the “Lutte Raisonnée” a half-way house between conventional and organic. Most of their vineyard work and all harvesting is done by hand.

Good Burgundy is getting scarcer - partly through increasing demand and partly through adverse weather conditions, which have slashed the yields. With floods, hail and frost, recent years have seemed almost biblical. More demand + less supply = less than ideal. We are grateful that Valérie and Christophe always manage to keep some wines for The Winery. We were very taken with this Bourgogne Chardonnay from a parcel called “La Grande Corvée de Bully” on the north west side of the Hill of Corton. Classic white Burgundy – expressive, creamy Chardonnay with a touch of honey in the nose.



Riesling trocken 2016, Huff (Rheinhessen/Germany)

15.99

Tonight's first dry Riesling is by Christine Huff from Nierstein, a town overlooking the Rhine on the strip between Mainz and Worms, and which historically has always been considered to be at the peak of the hierarchy of Rheinhessen's vineyards.

We came across Christine's bright, mineral, dry Rieslings shortly after she finished at Geisenheim, the top German wine university. She has had a busy decade; increasingly taking control of the winery; meeting and marrying Kiwi Jeremy Bird (who came to help with the 2009 harvest and never left); having two babies; working tirelessly in the vines and cellar to create wonderful, finely-judged dry Rieslings from the red slate and sandstone cliffs (*der Roter Hang*: red from iron oxide, which can often infuse Riesling with some marked spicy and tropical notes).

Niederhäuser Riesling trocken 2014, Gut Hermannsberg (Nahe/Germany)

25.99

The Domain was started in 1902 using some manpower from the local prison and plenty of earth-moving, rock-shaping dynamite by Forester Hoepf who persuaded the reluctant Prussian State to build a new wine domain in the Nahe. The region's vital fruit and oak sales had collapsed and Hoepf, who was a strong supporter of “Naturwein” (a new concept of wine as a natural product), believed that winemaking should be encouraged. He proposed that the new domain should be operated as a “model vineyard”; improving the quality of winemaking in the area and raising the reputation of German wine generally. He was convinced that the location and geology were perfect for vines. Subsequent decades proved him to be correct.

The new owners, Dr Christine Dinsel and Jens Riedel, have invested generously in every area of the estate and have an excellent young winemaker plucked from the Pfalz, called Karsten Peter.

This is one of the wines that brought us knocking at the gates of the estate. A striking, bold, full-throttle dry Riesling exploding with deep, layered minerals and surging with freshness. This is their village level selection, from the Hermannsberg vineyard that surrounds the winery and barely 200 metres from the Kupfergrube which tastes completely different.

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RED

Château La Fon du Berger 2012 (Bordeaux/France)

19.99

La Fon du Berger is in the Haut-Médoc a kilometre west of Pauillac, in the commune of Saint-Sauveur. The Chateau sits on two terroirs. One is on Pauillac gravel and is (unsurprisingly) labelled Pauillac. The other terroir is sandier and labelled Haut-Médoc. Some might say that this Haut-Médoc is the more elegant of the two. In any case, this is a *Cru Bourgeois*. *Cru Bourgeois* has been a moving target since 1932. Originally designed to classify 444 Médoc Chateaux that missed the *Crus-Classés* classification in 1855, it became horribly complicated with multiple tiers and was never officially ratified. The system was annulled in 2007. Since 2010 it has been revised and now seems to have some meaning as a mark of quality. Each year any Médoc Chateau can apply and, following several professional panel blind tastings, a list of wines that have achieved the status is published.

A blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cab Franc and 5% Petit Verdot, this is what one hopes for from a Left Bank Bordeaux: elegance, structure and finesse.

L'Exception 2012, Vaquer (Roussillon/France)

14.99

In the draughty, café-less, bar-less village of Tressère, barely 10kms from the Spanish border, with a view of the snow-capped Pyrenées in one direction, the Mediterranean sea in another, lives the Vaquer family. Frédérique, originally from Burgundy, took over from her father-in-law over thirty years ago. She makes mad, distinctive reds from Carignan, Grenache and Syrah, a big-boned white from Roussanne, Macabeu (Viura), Grenache Blanc & Gris, and, as you'd expect in this corner of France, close to Banyuls and Maury, some impressive, sweet, fortified Vins Doux Naturels.

L'Exception is a blend of Grenache, Carignan and Syrah. The Carignan comes from very old vines, planted by her father-in-law and his father in 1947. Of the three varietals, only the Syrah is raised in oak (never new) – the idea being to create an open, expressive wine with deep fruit in the foreground.



Roccamora 2015, Schola Sarmanti (Puglia/Italy)

15.99

The Men in Black are back! In fact, they are never far away. We had a Godfather moment when we were sniffing out new wines in the very south of Puglia over a decade ago.

“We’ll meet at 17.00h in the square.”

“How will we recognise you?”

“Don’t worry, we’ll find you.”

Men in black, following a black car along remote country roads, horses heads in beds, we experienced them all - apart from the horses heads.

Puglia's hot southernmost corner is known for its big juicy reds. This is 100% Negroamaro – a traditional Puglian variety evoking the southern sun-baked land. Made from 30 year-old vines, Roccamora is rich, earthy and savoury.

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 **Flower Day**.

Our following tasting at The Winery is scheduled for **Wednesday 3rd July**.

New arrivals from Burgundy: Mosnier Chablis, Denis, Lafarge, Mugnier, Baccate (Cassis, Mure, Framboise etc), ridiculously scarce Champagne by Marie-Noëlle Ledru. From the Mosel: Gerrit Walter's dry Riesling & Spätburgunder.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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