

T H E  
W I N E R Y

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## June Tasting *Fulham* 01.06.22

### SPARKLING

#### **Riesling Sekt Brut NV, von Othegraven (Mosel-Saar/Germany)**

24.99

The rather grand von Othegraven estate can trace its history back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. We can trace our history with von Othegraven back to 2004, when our friend Andreas Barth of Lubentiushof was hired to make the wine there. His collaboration with vineyard manager Swen Klinger (the down to earth guy from southern Germany) cemented a dream team and the quality went from strength to strength.

The estate only has Grand Cru vineyards on the Saar. Kanzem Altenberg (the magnificent steep slope behind the von Othegraven house), Wiltingen Kupp, Wawerner Herrenberg and Ockfener Bockstein, The base wine for this fabulous Sekt comes from these Grand Cru vineyards and the *liqueur d'expédition* (the dosage that is added to each bottle for the secondary fermentation) was their 2017 Altenberg Spätlese. It spent 9 months on the lees of the yeast to add texture. Broad, round, lovely.

### WHITE

#### **Chardonnay Alexander Valley 2018, Hafner (California/USA)**

29.99

Scott and Parke Hafner have a different business model to most. They only sell to private clients, no retail. It is probably 15 years since we were lucky enough to spot a bottle from the 5% they sell into California restaurants at Ralph's Bistro in Healdsburg. We phoned the next morning. "Hi, we're from London. We know that you don't normally sell to retail, but would you be interested in selling to us?"

"Sure, why not?"

Hafner's family winery is located in the beautiful Alexander Valley and surrounded by their own meticulously kept vines. While their winery was being built back in the early 80's, Parke Hafner did a stint at Comte Lafon in Meursault, influencing the style ever since. Lush, ripe Alexander Valley fruit unobscured by oak, with aromas of roasted nuts and a stream of minerality rarely seen in Californian Chardonnay.



#### **Fiano di Avellino 2018, Salvatore Molettieri (Campania/Italy)**

19.99

An hour's drive into the volcanic hills east of Naples, is the Taurasi zone. Taurasi is one of Italy's great reds: the so-called "Barolo of The South."

The Molettieri family make several Aglianico-led reds and also a handful of whites, Greco di Tufo and this Fiano di Avellino.

Fiano is thought to be the grape in *Apianum*, glowingly written about in Roman times. Fiano is one of the grapes (along with Greco di Tufo) that was rescued from the verge of extinction by high-profile pioneering local, Antonio Mastroberardino, after World War 2. Although Fiano is also grown in Puglia and Sicily, and more recently popping up in Australia, Argentina and Rioja, the volcanic area around Avellino in Campania is considered its natural home.

Salvatore Molettieri and his oenologue son Giovanni pick their Fiano very late, usually at the end of October, sometimes even as late as November. The 2018 has good density and evocative of apricot stone, baked apple with some herbal notes and a texture that suggests its volcanic terroir.

#### **Max Riesling trocken 2020, 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.

Our shared history straddles two owners. The charming Dr Heidi Kegel, former head anaesthetist from Cologne hospital, was left the historic 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? (We would always say 11.00h) "Would you like to stay for lunch?" Yes, please! Lunch would usually finish with something old and special from the cellar.

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In 2010, Dr Heidi sold the estate to Günther Jauch, who is 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 relative of earlier von Othegravens. He brought new energy and finance to his new acquisition. The wines are always effortless and exquisite - a world away from the searing acidity of the old-school Saar wines. Effortless. Max, named after Maximus von Othegraven, is an early picking from Kanzem Altenberg, the Grand Cru slope behind the house. Wild yeasty nose, low in alcohol (only 11%) and full in slatey flavour.

### RED

#### JJ Adeneuer Spätburgunder 2019, Adeneuer (Ahr/Germany)

22.99

Spätburgunder is German for Pinot Noir.

The tiny Ahr valley near Bonn is one of the most northernmost winemaking regions of Europe. Romans planted vines here. Locals say the sheltered valley has an almost Mediterranean micro-climate. We wouldn't go quite that far, but there is little doubt that some of Germany's finest Pinot Noir (Spätburgunder) comes from here.

The Adeneuer family has been making wine for 500 years in the spa town of Ahrweiler and in 1984 brothers Marc and Frank took over from their aunt. 1984 was the worst vintage since records began and they almost gave up there and then but, fortunately, they persevered. Year in, year out they manage to deliver delicious smoky, autumnal Pinot Noir, whatever the climate throws at them. And the climate has thrown a lot at them. Last July's biblical flooding affected everybody in the valley: lives were lost and vintages were swept away. It was good to see the Adeneuers back on their feet again, when we picked-up these wines a couple of weeks ago.

JJ Adeneuer is a step up from village-level, a blend from multiple parcels grown on sandy clay, aged in big old casks called *Fuder*. Deep dark fruit, smoky and silky-smooth.

#### St Nicolas de Bourgueil 'Les Gravelices' 2017, Clos des Quarterons (Loire) BIODYNAMIC 19.99

One of our lockdown trips last year was to the Loire valley. We were there to reconnect with Xavier and Agnès Amirault of Clos des Quarterons in St-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil, the village where the Touraine meets the Anjou. This part of the Loire is pretty much 'Cabernet Franc Central' – a grape we often hanker for. The Amirault family's Clos des Quarterons is a story about Cabernet Franc on multiple terroirs on a flood plain reclaimed by engineers in the 1800s.

In the olden days, Loire Cab Franc would struggle to get ripe, producing bracing, hard reds with a signature green pepper nose. They could often be found in Parisian Brasseries served chilled in summer.

The tireless Xavier has steered the domaine through its biodynamic conversion. Biodynamic farming and winemaking have settled-in and the wines are fabulous: deep, textured, with wonderful balance. Raspberry, green peppers and pencil shavings? Les Gravelices refers to the deep gravel soil of the former flood plain which enjoys excellent drainage. It is probably worth mentioning that our colleague Nelly is bonkers for these wines.

#### Château Tour Canon 2018 (Bordeaux/France)

26.99

Our final red in tonight's line-up, Chateau Tour Canon, comes from a little further south and has a regal connection. Fronsac, part of the Bordeaux right bank, is visible from Pomerol and shares a very similar geology. Despite that, it is intriguing that the appellation is relatively unknown in the UK whilst enjoying a much greater reputation in France. History may have had a part to play. The French King Charles VII was grateful for the support of Fronsac which rallied to his side when he was trying (successfully) to boot the English out of Bordeaux in the 1450s. Fronsac was rewarded with the King's favour and has been highly prized in France over the following centuries.

Owned by the de Coninck family, it is a blend of mainly Merlot with a splash of Cabernet Franc from 40 year-old vines on clay and limestone soil.

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

Our following tasting, which will be at **The Winery Maida Vale**, will be on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June**.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings  
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