

T H E W I N E R Y

September Tasting *Maida Vale* 13.09.22

It seems appropriate at this time to open a wine with a royal connection - Flick's Königen Victoriaberg (Queen Victoria's Hill). Very discreet rumour has it that Queen Elizabeth II, whilst being extremely moderate in her consumption of alcohol, enjoyed German wine.

Queen Victoria was very partial to Hock, as the British (who sometimes struggled with German pronunciation) called wines from Hochheim in the Rheingau. Hock then became the generic term for all Rhine wines.

sparkling

Champagne Tradition Brut NV, André Fays (Champagne/France)

29.99

In the depths of lockdown in March 2021, hotels that were open in France were few and far between. Particularly any that had a good kitchen and wine-list. We did however find three between Calais and Beaune. One of the most useful was (and still is) the Val Moret, conveniently close to the autoroute just east of Troyes. It may look like a motel in the US midwest, complete with a fluorescent sign visible from the autoroute, but the rooms are good and they have a wine-list which draws heavily on champagne growers from the southern part of the Champagne region – the Côte des Bars.

We were drawn to a Solera Champagne by André Fays. Solera? Champagne? Solera system, like for Sherry? Yes, you draw enough out of the tank to bottle and fill up with the latest vintage. The tank has every vintage from 2013-2021.

It was inevitable that we would then go to Celles-sur Ource to meet Marie Fays, current owner and granddaughter of André. What we weren't expecting was the high quality and sheer deliciousness of her other champagnes. Tradition, Réserve, Prestige, Rosé and Étincelles (a local peculiarity, being 100% Pinot Blanc). Boom. In the van and on our shelves. More than once. Marie's Cuvée Tradition is a blend of 85% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Blanc and 5% Pinot Meunier.



white

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2020, Trapet-Rochelandet (Burgundy/France)

23.99

We had been keeping a close eye on Trapet-Rochelandet in Gevrey-Chambertin for a few years and visited Laurent Rochelandet and his wife Anne on one of our emergency van trips during lockdown. We were impressed with the range from the regional Bourgogne Aligoté, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir through the village Gevrey-Chambertin and up through the 1er Crus. Tonight we are showing their Bourgogne Blanc, a rarity - Chardonnay grown in Gevrey-Chambertin! Delightful white Burgundy, with good texture and a tiny touch of oak.

Theirs is a story of multiple marginal gains over several years; a new de-stemmer, upgrading the barrel-cleaning process, a new, much gentler press. We loved the 2014s (Gevrey-Chambertin Carougeots 2014 in particular), and the 2018s and 2019s go from strength to strength. One to watch - and enjoy.

Timorasso 2020, Guasti Clemente (Piedmont/Italy)

26.99

Guasti Clemente are well-known at The Winery for mature Barbera. Last month we brought back 1998, 2000, 2001, 2004 and the slightly younger Boschetto Vecchio 2017. We also made space in the van for some whites. The latest addition to the range is Timorasso, a grape that by the 1980s had almost died out. Rescued from extinction by Walter Massa, this gently aromatic, creamy white is enjoying its rebirth and its 'on trend' status. 2020 is Guasti Clemente's first vintage of Timorasso, complete with new label courtesy of Enrico Piantato, the nephew who has recently taken over the historic winery from his two uncles.

Victoriaberg Riesling trocken 2021, Flick (Rheingau/Germany)

(Magnum 49.99) 21.99

Reiner Flick and his family live in a renovated 13th Century mill in the village of Wicker. It is part of the east end of the Rheingau next to Hochheim where the River Main meets the Rhine and from whose slopes you can watch the planes on final approach to Frankfurt airport. Wine has been in the Flick family since 1775.

Reiner always seems to have a new project whenever we visit. We were really excited that from 2010 he managed to rent the vines in a small vineyard in Hochheim called Königin Victoriaberg (Queen Victoria's hill).

continued

white continued

The vineyard formerly known as Hochheimer Decantenruhe was where Queen Victoria's favourite wine was made. She was so taken with the wine that she asked to see the vineyard on a visit to Germany in 1845. She observed it from her carriage and, shortly after, the vineyard was named after her and a monument was built to commemorate the visit. We adore this wine and adore the historic label.

*red***Spätburgunder Tradition trocken 2015, Schloss Schönborn (Rheingau/Germany) 15.99**

Given the slight hiatus on our 'socials', you may not be aware that we have spent the last two weeks in Germany. After 4.5 hours at German Customs in the Rheingau, on Friday afternoon - in extra time - we managed to clear 360 bottles of mature Riesling and Spätburgunder from Schloss Schönborn.

Schloss Schönborn was one of the grand old estates of the Rheingau, tracing its vineyard ownership back to 1349. Although Paul Graf von Schönborn and his family have another wine estate, a castle and agricultural land in Franken, we were somewhat disappointed that, at the end of 2020, the Graf decided to sell their Rheingau estate and rent out all their top-notch vineyards from one end of the Rheingau to the other (Rüdesheim to Hochheim) and everything between (Winkel, Hattenheim and Erbach). Many of you know that we have been visiting with increasing frequency to plunder their deep cellar of mature vintages and we will continue to do so until all the old stock has gone. The Graf's son Alexander opened the cellar for us two weeks ago and we picked out a selection going back to 2003, including this Spätburgunder (*Pinot Noir*) which is mainly Oestricher Doosberg with a splash of Hochheimer Reichsthal. It's a charming, light-coloured Pinot with hints of autumn leaves and bracken in the nose, salty minerals in the mouth. Good texture and ageing nicely.

Dogliani Superiore Pirochetta Vecchie Vigne 2018, Cascina Corte (Piedmont/Italy) NATURAL 24.99

Alessandro (Sandro) Barosi makes (among other things) wonderful Dogliani – very fancy Dolcetto. We have been eyeing up his wines since we first met eight years ago at a biodynamic wine tasting in Paris.

His Dolcettos are impressive – possibly the finest we have tasted. That said, special mention must also be made of a 1992 Dolcetto d'Alba that Elio Altare served with a dinner of fresh porcini, but that's another story.

Sandro makes three Dogliani; San Luigi – floral, silky, round, charming; this Dogliani Superiore Pirochetta Vecchie Vigne – great depth from vines planted in 1946, almost peachy notes and thrilling freshness; and the same Pirochetta but raised in amphora – with a touch of leather and game.

He also makes Nascetta, Riesling (50/50 Italic and Renato), Barbera, Nebbiolo, Pinot Nero, a blend of Barbera, Nebbiolo & Dolcetto called Banedol. Latest addition is the fragrant, little-known Freisa, a close relative of Nebbiolo. Beppe Rinaldi, local Barolo legend, suggested to Sandro that he should plant some. First vintage is 2021.

**Le Peyron 2019, Pascal Chalon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 20.99**

Full name: Le Peyron X 191-2 Suze La Rousse Côtes du Rhône villages 2019, La Grande Ourse

We discovered Pascal Chalon in 2007 when he was making his wines in his granny's garage not far from Châteauneuf-du-Pape and we had to clamber over apples and a dusty old Renault to get to his five barrels. As soon as we had tasted his entire range, which consisted of two wines 'La Petite Ourse' and 'La Grande Ourse', we were quick to back the van up and load the last cases he had. In the meantime, Pascal has built his own, larger winery and extended his range to include Ursa Major, a couple of whites and very recently some specific new bottlings from Visan and Suze La Rousse.

Le Peyron is a blend of Grenache and Mourvèdre from two parcels in Tulette, his home village. The Grenache is from vines planted in 2013. The Mourvèdre, at over 50 years-old, is not exactly young either! X 191-2 refers to the vineyard parcel numbers in the official register.

Pascal's wines are always pure, biodynamic Rhône heaven. Fragrant and gutsy. Deep richness and herbal flavours, evocative of the lavender and thyme-laden local landscape ravaged by the penetrating Mistral wind.

Biodynamic? Organic viticulture taken to the extreme, ruled by the lunar calendar - man, moon and earth in perfect harmony - a self-sustaining, self-nourishing system. Its roots can be traced through Maria Thun to Rudolf Steiner and back to Hildegard of Bingen, the mystic nun (1098-1179).

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

Our **following tasting**, which will be at **The Winery Fulham**, is slated for **Thursday 6th October**.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**

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