

T H E  
W I N E R Y

---

## Wine, Mayor, Choir! *Maida Vale* 30.11.22

We have a tasting line-up packed with recent arrivals and, as if that wasn't enough, we are expecting a visit from 18.00h onwards from the new **Lord Mayor of Westminster**, Hamza Taouzzale (the youngest Westminster Mayor so far – born in 1999, apparently), as he opens the Christmas season in Clifton Road. A **choir** from **St Joseph's Primary School** will be outside Raoul's singing Christmas Carols from 17.45h. Please remember to **visit our neighbours**, **Raoul's** and **Tokyo Pizza**, who will have some delicious samples for you to taste.

Special thanks are due to our **local councillors** at **Westminster** for their support with the Christmas Trees and Lights and to all the shops who are taking part.

### *sparkling*

#### **Champagne Carte Or Brut NV, Amyot (Champagne/France)**

23.99

Champagne is vast. The northern sections fan out from Épernay; north across the chalky Montagne de Reims towards the city of Reims, west along the Marne Valley towards Paris, then due southwards, the Chardonnay slopes called the Côte des Blancs. Continue south and you find the Aube, also known as the Côte des Bar. Here, off the beaten track, the tiny village of Loches-sur-Ource is the very rural home of Champagne Amyot. They speak an impenetrable local dialect: it took us the best part of a decade to understand what we were saying to each other. Their entry-level champagne Carte Or (*gold label*) has been our biggest selling item in The Winery for 26 years. 100% Pinot Noir, grown on sandy soil, mouthfilling and generous.



### *white*

#### **Verdejo 2021, Reina de Castilla (Rueda/Spain)**

12.99

Two hours' drive northwest of Madrid, on the high, flat plains northwest of Segovia in the former Kingdom of Castille you find Rueda, one of Spain's finest white wine-producing regions. The area is known for its crisp, zizzy whites: Sauvignon Blanc and the local speciality Verdejo, which is a bit like Sauvignon Blanc but different. We mistakenly believed that Verdejo is a synonym for Verdelho. It seems to be related to Savagnin (from Jura in eastern France) and Castellana Blanca (a grape which is hard to trace and, awkwardly, shares its name with a breed of sheep). There is even a suggestion Verdejo originated in North Africa.

Reina de Castilla is an excellent example of a newly modernised bodega, like many in Spain, originally a co-operative – a grouping of local wine-growers. They harvest in the cool of night and ferment in stainless steel tanks to maintain aroma and freshness. We were very taken by their Verdejo: zingy, zesty and herbal – evocative of lime blossom and camomile flowers with a savoury, almost saline mouthfeel.

#### **Bernkastel Riesling trocken 2021, Wegeler (Mosel/Germany)**

21.99

Wegeler is an estate in the unusual and enviable position of having wineries in two top locations: the heart of the Rheingau and the heart of the Mosel.

People with long memories or those interested in German wine trade history may remember the Deinhard name. The Deinhard estate in Bernkastel-Kues was co-owned by the Deinhard and Wegeler families until the 1990s, when the energetic, suave Tom Drieseberg and his wife Anja Wegeler, bought the Deinhard out, including top vineyard holdings in the Bernkasteler Doctor and the Wehlener Sonnenuhr. Tom and his wife retired recently and the baton has been handed to Ralf Frenzel, a well-known publisher of books and magazines about Food and Wine in the German speaking world. Other than management, the team remains the same.

Last week we visited Norbert Breit in Bernkastel-Kues. Norbert has single-handedly run the Mosel estate since 1995. We love his wine-making style - quintessential Mosel: ethereal, minerally and with a bewitching lightness. That said, this village-level Bernkasteler has been more open-throated and expressive in recent years.

*white continued*

**Riesling ‘sur lie’ 2008, Querbach (Rheingau/Germany)**

**19.99**

How does Riesling age? Effortlessly. Some say that the acidity of Riesling gives it longevity. We often drink old Rieslings at Zum Krug (our favourite Hotel and Restaurant in the Rheingau). We have drunk amply from the 1970s, less frequently 1959, 1949 and, most recently, a 1917. All alive.

Back by popular demand and scooped up on last week’s trip, we have another batch of Peter Querbach’s 2008. Peter 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. Peter likes to age his Rieslings (and his Pinot Noirs btw). And that pleases us.

*red*

**Gau-Odernheimer Spätburgunder 2020, Becker-Landgraf (Rheinessen/Germany) ORGANIC**

**19.99**

*Spätburgunder is German for Pinot Noir.* A Rheinessen grower threw a party early last decade, hoping his daughter would catch Johannes Landgraf’s eye. Unfortunately, it didn’t quite go according to plan and Johannes made a bee-line for another winery’s daughter, Julia Becker. So, in 2004, Becker-Landgraf was born and they embarked on their plan to make top-class, cool-climate, dry Riesling and silky Pinot Noir slap bang in the rural centre of the region.

Johannes and Julia outgrew the basement below their house, where they would scuttle around with bended heads, checking their gleaming tanks and a handful of barrels. Space was so tight that, when we first rocked-up at their door during the 2009 harvest, they were pressing and fermenting their harvest in a tent. Their spacious new cellar (with plenty of headroom) has been built and was finished just days before the 2015 harvest began. This fabulous, autumnal, silky, smoky Spätburgunder comes from old parcels of vines planted by Julia’s Great Grandfather on the Petersberg, the only hill for miles around, just outside the rural village of Gau-Odernheim.

**Rasteau 2019, Château de la Gardine (Rhône/France)**

**23.99**

Eurotunnel has seen a lot of The Winery van over the past few weeks. Nelly and David M got back from Provence, the Rhône, Burgundy and Champagne two weeks ago. One of our stops was in Châteauneuf-du-Pape at Château de la Gardine. Yes, we picked up some mature 2011 Châteauneuf (the one with the distinctive, wonky bottle) and also several cases of Rasteau which we are opening tonight.

Rasteau is one of the Côtes-du-Rhône 17 Crus and one of the villages that fan out across the striking landscape of the southern Rhône valley between Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the hills and mountains to the east: the jagged Dentelles de Montmirail and the imposing Mont Ventoux. It’s a windy place - a hot, dusty wind in summer turns bone-chilling in winter. The wind has a name: Le Mistral. The vines are weather-beaten and gnarly - the wines are muscular and deep. This is a classic southern Rhône blend of 75% Grenache and 25% Syrah. The violet notes of the Syrah often seem to appear more forward in the nose than you might expect.



**Tercera Generación Ribera del Duero 2018, Alvides (Ribera del Duero/Spain)**

**31.99**

Alvides is a small family bodega in the dusty Duero valley two hours drive north of Madrid. The Casado family’s grandfather Eutimio founded the Co-operative in Aranda del Duero in 1962. In 2001, Eutimio’s sons Ildefonso and Delfin Casado - the next generation - set-up their own small winery with the help of Emmanuel Ivar, a young French oenologist who studied winemaking in the Loire and had moved to Ribera del Duero.

Alvides now have 25 ha of vines, all Tempranillo, with an average age of 40-50 years old. Harvesting is always by hand. All levels of wine from Roble, Crianza up to the Vendimia Seleccionada (formerly Reserva) and the Tercera Generación are treated to a spell in French oak and much stirring of the lees. The results are excellent: we find a high, dark fruit content in the nose (with a touch of vanilla – from the oak) and a fabulous suppleness in the mouth.

Two decades ago, when we first visited Alvides, the kids were very young. Héctor, one of those kids, is now making the wines. As a special treat, we are opening the Tercera Generación (Third Generation), a stunning red made in tiny volumes from 75 year-old vines and only in the greatest years.

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

Our following tasting will be on **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December** at **The Winery Fulham**.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**

**thewineryuk.com**

[mailinglist@thewineryuk.com](mailto:mailinglist@thewineryuk.com)

[info@thewineryuk.com](mailto:info@thewineryuk.com)