

T H E
W I N E R Y

March Tasting Maida Vale 15.03.23
featuring Cascina Longoria, Piedmont

sparkling

Champagne Les Clés Grand Cru Brut, Stéphane Coquillette (Champagne/France)

44.99

We go way back with Stéphane Coquillette. We had been working with his lovely (now late) father, Christian, whose Saint-Chamant Champagnes we have imported for two decades. Shortly after we began with Saint-Chamant, Christian, the proud father, took us to visit his son's brand new winery in Chouilly, at the north end of the Côte des Blancs. That must have been in 2002. Stéphane and his wife Marie-Hélène started in 2001.

A contrasting style to his father, Stéphane makes contemporary, chic, dry Champagnes from Chardonnay vines in Chouilly & Cuis and Pinot Noir from Aÿ & Mareuil. Les Clés is 100% Pinot Noir from Aÿ, a village known for its exuberant, expressive Champagnes. Made from vines planted in 1960, this Cuvée is perfumed and very long.

white

Vouvray Sec 2019, d'Orfeuilles (Vouvray/Loire) ORGANIC

18.99

Given how much we like Chenin Blanc, it's alarming how sporadically we get to Tours or Angers in the Loire valley. The hankering for Chenin Blanc becomes overwhelming so, during the Pandemic we dropped-in a couple of times on Arnaud Hérivault of Domaine d'Orfeuilles in Vouvray. Arnaud makes the full, delicious spectrum of Chenin Blanc: dry, off-dry, sweet, very sweet and sparkling.

We picked up the 2018, 2019 and 2020 vintages. 2021, when we last dropped in, was not going well. Frost in April, frost in June and hail in July. The hail was so forceful that it left marks on the wooden posts in his vineyards. Imagine the impact on newly-formed bunches of tender grapes. Arnaud lost 80% of his crop. Ouch. Tonight, we are showing his lean, dry Vouvray, made on the flinty soil of his vineyard on the plateau above his frigid cellar, hewn out of the chalky rock.



Würzburger Silvaner trocken 2021, Juliusspital (Franken/Germany)

22.99

Bonkers about Bocksbeutel? Yes, we are. The Bocksbeutel (*aka goats' sack*) is the traditional bottle shape for wine from Franken. Although many growers have switched to more mainstream shapes, we adore the unique, distinctive traditional shape and seek it out.

After spotting (and drinking) a few on wine lists in Germany over the past decade, it's fair to say that we had become a bit fixated about Juliusspital wines. It was finally time to visit. Despite the contrast in our relative sizes (180 hectares, makes it the second largest producer in Germany), we were very warmly received. Our first pick-up (last month) included all the classics: Silvaner, mature Silvaner, Riesling, mature Riesling. All dry.

Franken is famous for its Silvaner. Thought to come from the Austrian empire, the first recorded planting of Silvaner in Germany was in 1659 in the area around Würzburg. Characterless when over-produced (as it was in the 1960s and 70s), here in Franken, with lower yields, it becomes a delicious, elegant white, expressing the geology that it is grown on – in this case chalk, rich with fossils. In Germany Silvaner is widely held to be the perfect companion to Asparagus (particularly white Asparagus). A touch of mint in the nose, broad and creamy in the mouth with a lift of freshness at the end.

Würzburger Riesling trocken 2021, Juliusspital (Franken/Germany)

22.99

For a population of 130,000 Würzburg has a remarkably high density of historic buildings: cathedral, churches, palace, fort and wineries - many with histories going back centuries. Vineyards can be seen rising above the city in every direction.

Julius Echter, Prince & Bishop, founded the Juliusspital in 1575 – a hospital for the poor, providing care, education, religious instruction and wine in the centre of Würzburg. It has continued with the same model to this day. The extensive wine cellars are below the hospital.

Franken and the Juliusspital may be famous for Silvaner but they also make wonderful dry Riesling. Herbal, mouth-filling and exhilarating.

Cascina Longoria, Neive, Piedmont, Italy

We were spending an afternoon and a night in Monforte d'Alba on an emergency Barolo run in summer 2022. We have started many evenings at Le Case della Saracca with antipasti and bubbles but this was the first time we stayed for dinner and overnights in one of their amazing rooms. It's an incredible place, built into the side of the hill, a labyrinthine repurposing of old buildings and a chapel. Giulio is a wonderful host and he knows his wine list inside out. We were chatting and told him that we had been looking for a traditional Barbaresco – something that had eluded us recently. “Try this”. It was **Barbaresco Bordini 2018 by Cascina Longoria**: delicious, haunting Nebbiolo, a combination of elegance and controlled power, and, as if that wasn't enough, we love the label! Shortly afterwards, as if by magic, Pietro arrived. “I'm Alessandra Toso's boyfriend and I do some tastings and events with her. Here are her contact details – she's around tomorrow, if you want to meet.” The following day, this beautiful bottle brought us to the township of Neive, where we met Alessandra Toso and her father Carlo who make old school Barbaresco, the Queen of Nebbiolo. Carlo, 62, finished his studies 43 years ago and has made the wine ever since. Alessandra is 5th generation and does the vineyard work with her cousin Davide. **Alessandra Toso** and **Pietro** have flown over to join us tonight.

red

Barbera d'Alba Superiore 'Ardote' 2019, Cascina Longoria (Piedmont/Italy) 23.99

In the hierarchy of Piedmontese wines, 70 years ago Barbera was at the top. We have been told that merchants would give away a cask of Nebbiolo (the grape of Barolo & Barbaresco) free with purchases of Barbera. Times have changed with the development of methods to bring the tannins of Nebbiolo under control. Barbera was considered a noble grape and, as we have experienced with the 20-25 year-old Barberas by Guasti Clemente, are still ageworthy.

The Toso family's Barbera is gently modern: deep, rich and succulent from 92 year-old vines, aged in oak for one year.

Langhe Nebbiolo 2020, Cascina Longoria (Piedmont/Italy) 25.99

Aged for a year in 1,000 litre Botti, the classic Piedmontese oak casks, this is serious Nebbiolo – the equal of many a Barbaresco. At 14% Alcohol, certainly no lightweight either.

Barbaresco Bordini 2018, Cascina Longoria (Piedmont/Italy) 43.99

This is the wine that brought us to the Toso family's door.

Barolo and Barbaresco straddle the city of Alba. If Barolo is the King of Nebbiolo, Barbaresco is the Queen. The Toso family overlook the Barbaresco Cru Bordini in the hilltop township of Neive. The colour of the wine is almost terracotta, the haunting aroma is classic tar and roses. In the mouth there is silky elegance with controlled power – the tannins restrained but present. It may seem ethereal and airy but there is a dark undertow. Sky and earth in one glass.

You may be interested to know that we also have the Barbaresco in 2017 and 2016.

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

Our **following tasting** will be at **The Winery Fulham** on **Wednesday 12th April 2023**.

Just arrived - from Tuscany: **Dreolino** Chianti Rufina and **Il Macchione** Vino Nobile di Montepulciano. From Germany: **Juliusspital** from Franken, **Nelles** Spätburgunders from the Ahr Valley.

We will be heading to France shortly to pick-up more **Clos des Poulettes** and **Trapet-Rochelandet** from Burgundy, and **Gérard Dubois** from the Côte des Blancs in Champagne.

On their way – another shipment of Gavi by Stefania Correa of **Terre di Maté**. Also **Gerrit Walter's** dry Mosel Riesling – a Winery Classic. And, from the very south of Baden, a shipment of **Jürgen von der Mark's** Spätburgunders. Finally, more of Domaine d'Orfeuilles' delicious sparkling Vouvrays, 100% Chenin Blanc from the Loire Valley.



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