

T H E

# W I N E R Y

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## June Tasting *Fulham*

12.06.25

### *sparkling*

#### **Cuvée Réserve Brut, Amyot (Champagne/France)**

34.99

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. Southwards are the Chardonnay slopes of the Côte des Blancs. Further south 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. Their entry-level champagne Carte Or has been our single biggest seller for over 25 years. Their Reserve is a blend of 80% Pinot Noir, 10% Chardonnay and 10% Pinot Blanc from three vintages, 2016, 2017 and 2018.

### *white*

#### **Soave Il Selese 2024, I Stefanini (Veneto/Italy)**

15.99

A good friend of ours recommended that we check out Soave by I Stefanini while we were in Verona in April. Good call: certainly the loveliest Soave that we have tasted for a couple of decades. We swiftly ordered our first pallet and here it is.

Although the Tessari family had been involved in farming and grape production since 1800, in a river valley rich in fossilised deposits east of Verona, it was current incumbent Francesco who went to the bank in 2003 to take the leap into winemaking and bottling themselves.

Il Selese takes its name from the building where wheat was dried. The grape is Garganega, vinified in stainless steel – never oak – and, to keep the freshness, they avoid the secondary malolactic fermentation, the process where the crisp apple notes convert into heavier creamy, buttery flavours.

We are excited by this delightful Soave with its attractive, mouthwatering nose, tingly freshness and beautiful balance.



#### **Vom Muschelkalk Riesling trocken 2024, Borell Diehl (Pfalz/Germany) VEGAN**

15.99

Immediately south of Rheinhessen, the Pfalz (aka *The Palatinate*) is sheltered by the forests of the northern Vosges on its western flank. The region is warm and fertile. Fruit and vegetables grow easily here – as do vines. Growers tend to have a very wide range of varieties to satisfy as many visitors' palates as possible. We are fixated on dry Riesling, so, as long as they have some to offer, that'll get us through the door!

We met Daniel Nett, who has a guesthouse in the outskirts of Neustadt an der Weinstrasse in the Pfalz, when he came to a Winery tasting with Johannes Landgraf of Becker-Landgraf. When the call to visit the Pfalz again became impossible to ignore, it was obvious we would have to base ourselves at Daniel's. He told us we should check out Borell Diehl. We are glad we did!

The Borell Diehl family have multiple dry Riesling bottlings from different soils; a zesty entry-level in litre bottles, Schiefer (slate) and vom Bundsandstein (from the colourful sandstone) and Muschelkalk (limestone, thick with fossil deposits). Lemon zest and mint in the nose, good weight and body.

#### **Vermentino 2024, Audarya (Sardinia/Italy)**

19.99

During four days of extensive and thorough research in Cagliari pre-Covid, Audarya surfaced as our favourite Vermentino producer. Our former colleague Serena Costa's Sardinian friend Gianluca Putzolu recommended we go to *Cucina.Eat* and ask for Giuseppe Carrus. That was our first night and it turned out to be an excellent recommendation. Giuseppe gave us a vinous tour of Sardinia and orientation was completed in one sitting. Audarya appeared (and shone) in the line-up. We tried many a Vermentino over the following days and a trip to Oyster, Filippo Mundula's restaurant/wine bar in Cagliari, confirmed that Audarya was our favourite.

*continued*

*white – Audarya Vermentino - continued*

Our latest shipment just arrived and we are happily swimming in Vermentino again. 2024 was a cooler vintage, hence the slightly lower alcohol level of 12.5%. This fresh bottling was gently pressed and fermented in stainless steel to preserve its bright, clear, zesty, limey notes.

We saw Nicoletta Pala in April. Nicoletta runs Audarya with her two brothers, Salvatore and winemaker Davide, supported by their father Enrico. She was telling us that her great grandfather was a shepherd who built up two hectares of olive trees and a farm where they reared horses, chickens and goats. Her grandfather, another Salvatore, started growing Cannonau (*aka Grenache*) in 1948. The family now have four estates in different parts of Sardinia, all planted with traditional bush vines. Their main vineyard is just 20 kms north of Cagliari.

*red***Spätburgunder 2022, Borell Diehl (Pfalz/Germany) VEGAN****16.99**

The Deutsche Weinstrasse (*the German Wine Road*) runs the length of the Pfalz wine region for 85kms, passing through dainty villages to the French border in the Vosges. One of the daintiest villages is Hainfeld and here you find Borell-Diehl. Their oldest building dates from 1619. There is a stunning new tasting room in their courtyard. Annette Borell and Thomas Diehl married in 1990, since when they have grown their vineyard holdings from 5 to 32 hectares. Their son Georg looks after the winemaking and vineyards. He did internships around Germany (Rebholz in the Pfalz and van Volxem in the Saar) and New Zealand. Their Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir), made in used barrels to avoid oaky aromas and flavours, is gently autumnal, supple with good intensity and length.

**Rafael Sastre Roble 2023, Viña Sastre (Ribera del Duero/Spain)****21.99**

We were in northern Spain two years ago. After another hard day's tasting, we were in Vino Tinto restaurant in Valladolid in Ribera del Duero. We had almost finished a bottle of the benchmark Pesquera Crianza when we were joined by Jorge Herreras (we met through Bodegas Alvides who we have worked with for over twenty years).

"We need another bottle of red. Do you see anything interesting on the list?"

"Do you know Viña Sastre?"

"Not yet."

So along came the Viña Sastre whose entry-level Joven Roble showed impressively up against the fancier Pesquera.

Young vines, harvested by hand. Vigorous, saturated fruit, beautifully balanced.

**Château de Francs 'Les Cerisiers' 2016 (Bordeaux/France)****22.99**

Tasting, tasting, tasting. It was late afternoon on day three of our trip to Bordeaux last year and Tunde Thompson (who we have known for over a decade) had opened 30 reds for us to taste. That was on top of the 60 we had tasted earlier in the day. It was going to be a challenge for any wines to shine through at this point but Château de Francs' 'Les Cerisiers' 2016 shone brightly.

The Château was bought in 1986 by Hubert de Boüard de Laforest, co-owner of Château Angélu and Dominique Hebrard, former co-owner of Château Cheval Blanc. Very fancy. They saw potential in this part of Bordeaux's Right Bank, beyond Saint-Émilion's satellite appellations of Lussac and Puisseguin and yet sharing a similar geology.

90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Here is David M's note from that tasting after roughly 75 wines. "Dark, deep, fleshy, rich – impressive. Weight, fruit and structure. Punching way above its weight. Savoury."

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

Our next tasting will be on **Wednesday 9th July** at **The Winery Maida Vale**.

**Join us for our Monthly Tastings**

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