

T H E W I N E R Y

July Tasting *Maida Vale* 09.07.25

sparkling

Champagne Rosé Sec, Amyot (Champagne/France) SUSTAINABLE (halves 19.99) 37.99

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 the past 29 years. Their Rosé is 80% Pinot Noir with 20% Pinot Blanc grown on Kimmeridgian clay-limestone soil. The limestone is thick with fossilised seashells. Around 10% of the blend is a Pinot Noir still wine known as Côteaux Champenois which they make in riper years. It's a mouth-filling, generous, gently fruit-driven Rosé evocative of soft red fruits.

white

EX Unoaked Chardonnay 2022 Wrath (California/USA) SUSTAINABLE 26.99

We stumbled across one of Wrath's impressive Pinot Noirs as we overnighted in San Luis Obispo on our way from LA to San Francisco. Wrath are based on the edge of the Santa Lucia Highlands, 40 miles southeast of Monterey. Michael Thomas, an Archaeologist and Director of Study of Ancient Italy at the University of Texas in Austin, got the food and wine bug during excavations in Italy, and bought the San Saba vineyard with his mother Barbara in 2007. Although the Wrath speciality is Pinot Noir, they have a wide range of varieties. Chardonnay (obvs for California). On our visit last October, we also enjoyed their tropical-meets-ripe-melon Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah (all blueberries and spice) and 'Destruction Level' (an archaeological term) – an impressive blend of Grenache and Syrah. Here is their unoaked Chardonnay made EX (*from/out of*) the San Saba vineyard which was planted in 1985. Bright, fruit-led with some savoury notes. Freshness and fluidity. Opulent but not over-the-top.



Hallgartener Riesling trocken 2023, Fred Prinz (Rheingau/Germany) BIODYNAMIC 22.99

The Rhine takes a sharp turn west at Mainz before turning north again at Rüdesheim. The south-facing slope on the north bank between the two is the Rheingau, thick with castles, convents and vineyards. This is the classical home of Riesling. Evocative names like Steinberg, Marcobrunn, Johannisberg, Hochheim - the home of Queen Victoria's 'Hock', back when German wines were the most expensive in the world. In contrast to wine made in historic castles and convents, Fred Prinz made his wine in the garage of the flats where he and his family live in the small village of Hallgarten. Having started as a hobby in 1991, demand became so great that he had to give up his day job and rent another cellar nearby, thereby freeing-up space in his garage for a mid-life Harley motorbike. We have been importing Fred's dry Rieslings since our first buying trip to Germany in 2002.

This Hallgartener is Fred's village level, made with early selections from his grander vineyards in Hallgarten: Schönhell and Jungfer. The 2023 is exotic in the nose and mouth. Passion fruit and pineapple. Expressive and fleshy.

Camminera Vermentino 2023, Audarya (Sardinia/Italy) SUSTAINABLE 26.99

During four days of extensive and thorough research in Cagliari in 2018, 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.

continued

white – Audarya Camminera continued

We tried many a Vermentino over the following days and a trip to Oyster, Filippo Mundula's restaurant/wine bar in Cagliari, cemented Audarya as our favourite.

Our latest shipment arrived recently (Vermentino aplenty) and we have another pallet on its way with more Rosato (*Rosé*) to see us through summer, we hope. Tonight we are featuring their top Vermentino: 'Camminera', named after the tracks that run alongside the vineyards. It's a selection from their best vineyards. We love it for its broad texture, its intensity and quivering lime jelly-ness.

*red***Spätburgunder trocken 2023, Prinz (Rheingau/Germany) BIODYNAMIC 22.99**

Prinz Spätburgunder (*aka Pinot Noir*)? What? They make red wine too? Yes, but in tiny quantities.

Fred Prinz made his wines for years in the garage below his family's flat. No more. Next step was renting a cellar in the next village and now they have a new building where the village of Hallgarten meets the vines, tucked behind bushes and trees. Fred and his family have always majored on Riesling but also have a couple of parcels of Spätburgunder. We were rather taken with the 2023. It comes from sandy loess-clay and colourful slate soils in the Hendelberg vineyard between Hallgarten and the Steinberg. Although the grapes were ripe, they were picked early to preserve the freshness and keep the alcohol low. 12 months in used oak casks and barrels. Bright, forward notes of strawberry, raspberry and autumn fruit.

Gigondas Tradition Les Jardinières 2023, Gour de Chaulé (Rhône/France) SUSTAINABLE 37.99

Meanwhile, in the southern Rhône valley last November, we were staying at our former customers John and Valeria Anderson's gorgeous guest house Mas de Carabelle high up in the hills above Beaumes de Venise. They recommended we visit Bistrot Vin Ensèn in Caromb, two villages away. A bottle of Châteauneuf had just been opened and Jean-Philippe, the wine guy, came with another bottle and said "if you haven't had this before, you should try it next time". Never mind next time, let's do it now. Gour de Chaulé Gigondas. Wow. That's a fantastic Gigondas: such purity of fruit, definition and elegance - unexpected in a wine dominated by Grenache.

The following day, it took some doing to make contact with Paul Fumoso at Gour de Chaulé and it was our host John who happened to be there when Paul came back from hunting. And we happened to be nearby too. Gour de Chaulé, established in 1871, has passed through the female side of the family since 1970, from great grandmother to grandmother to Paul's mother. Paul may be young but he has very clear ideas about how their wine should be made. Mostly, enormous attention in the vineyards. The 2023s we tasted pre-bottling were fabulous and now they have arrived. Who would've known that Grenache could be so elegant?

**Pinot Noir Pommard 4/777 2021, Wrath (California/USA) SUSTAINABLE 38.99**

Pinot Noir is Wrath's speciality and they are geeky about their clones - the provenance of their vines. So much so that they credit their Pinot clones on their labels.

What does Pommard 4/777 mean? Pommard 4 was brought into the USA in the 1940s by Dr Harold Olmo, known as 'The Plant Explorer' - a vine cutting from Château de Pommard on the Côte de Beaune in Burgundy. The 777 clone is one of the Dijon clones from the 1970s and 80s, supposedly a cutting from a serious Burgundy vineyard (probably in Vosne-Romanée on the Côte de Nuits) and possibly smuggled into the States in someone's suitcase.

We love the Wrath Pinots, slightly cooler than many Cali Pinots and full of deep, brambly fruit, a smoky, earthy whiff of autumn and silky mouthfeel.

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

Our next tasting will be on **Wednesday 20th August at The Winery Fulham**.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings
The Winery, 4 Clifton Road, London W9

www.thewineryuk.com

mailinglist@thewineryuk.com

The Winery, 797 Fulham Road SW6 5HD

info@thewineryuk.com