

T H E
W I N E R Y

May Tasting

08.05.13

SPARKLING

Cuvee Vaux 2010, Schloss Vaux (Rheingau/Germany)

17.99

It was Claudia von der Papen, one of our talented interns from Geisenheim who brought us our first bottle of Schloss Vaux. We were very impressed. It turns out that Schloss Vaux is one of the top sparkling wine producers in Germany. Schloss Vaux originally started in Berlin in 1868 and in the 1880s had the opportunity to buy a winery in Metz, which became Chateau Vaux. Fifty years later it was time to move from Metz to Eltville where they focused on making sekt from top Rheingau sites. From the beginning it was based on the French Champagne House model. Although they own no vines, they have longstanding grape contracts with top growers such as Kloster Eberbach and Langwerth von Simmern and produce startling sparkling versions of the legendary Steinberg and Erbacher Marcobrunn Rieslings and the red Assmannshäuser Höllenberg from Spätburgunder. Steinberg with bubbles? Höllenberg with bubbles? Crazy - and yet delicious. Cuvee Vaux, their calling card, is a blend of Pinot Blanc and Pinot Noir, with a splash of Riesling.

WHITE

Riesling trocken 2011, Fritz Ekkehard Huff (Rheinhessen/Germany)

13.99

We had been on the lookout for a great Nierstein ever since our beloved St Antony winery changed hands in 2005. A dinner at the excellent Schloss Sörgenloch restaurant deep in the Rheinhessen countryside ended in intense conversation with the owner, Thomas. Nierstein? Try this Fritz Ekkehard Huff. Yum. When we phoned shortly afterwards, the daughter Christine said, "that's amazing, I only dropped a single sample bottle off at Sörgenloch!" Fate. Christine is fresh out of Geisenheim, the top German wine college and making bright, minerally dry Riesling from the iron-rich red cliffs overlooking the Rhine at Nierstein. There have been developments over the past two years. Jeremy Bird, a New Zealander, came to the Huffs to do a harvest in 2009. One thing led to another and he never left - Christine and Jeremy got married last summer. On our recent visit Christine revealed the latest, most precious addition to the family's vineyard holdings - Niersteiner Pettenthal. Winding back in time to the St Antony estate in Dr Alex Michalsky's day, Pettenthal was always our favourite of their single vineyards. Is it possible that this small 0.25 hectare parcel of 32 year-old vines came from St Antony? Christine suddenly becomes uncharacteristically taciturn and refuses to be drawn. "I can't say!" Whatever the origin, Christine's Pettenthal 2011 is exquisite. Tonight we are showing the first dry Riesling on Christine's ladder from the charming, beautifully balanced 2011 vintage.



In Fine Blanc 2011, Cascavel (Rhône/France) ORGANIC

9.99

The Mont Ventoux towers over the southern part of the Rhone Valley which embraces Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the Côtes-du-Rhône Villages. Although very much in a similar style, the Ventoux wines have, despite some of its gun-toting, redneck locals, become a very trendy, upcoming sub-region.

We had been circling Domaine de Cascavel for almost a decade. Raphaël Trouiller originally set up Domaine Cascavel in the mid-1990s with the highly-strung Olivier Baguet. Olivier left to do his own thing and the urbane Raphaël continues with his delicious, broad-flavoured whites and a spread of herbal reds from the lower slopes of Mont Ventoux. This is Raphaël's nutty, oily white made with 80% Clairette and 20% Bourboulenc.

Chablis Vieilles Vignes 2010, Mosnier (Burgundy/France)

18.99

We were excited to have found this delicious Chablis after a long search. Stéphanie Mosnier gave up her job in logistics to come home and take over her father Sylvain's domaine in the small village of Beine. She makes top-class Chablis - tightly-wound, concentrated and crystal clear, a wonderful balance of fruit and fresh acidity. This is Stéphanie's intense old vine bottling.

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RED

Kristplonerhof Edelvernatsch Schiava Nobile 2012, Rottensteiner (Alto Adige/Italy) 12.99

We were in northern Italy again earlier in the year and it was a surprise bottle at our lunch in Trentino that made us drive further north into Alto Adige rather than south. Hannes Rottensteiner makes an excellent range of dry mountain whites and lighter reds in the outskirts of Bolzano, close to the Brenner Pass. Borders here are blurry. Hannes sounds Austrian, speaks German but, being as Bolzano is in Italy, is Italian. He studied Oenology locally at San Michele, then Geisenheim in the Rheingau in Germany, then Udine in Friuli and now makes a wide range of wines. Weissburgunder, Pinot Grigio, Müller-Thurgau (the most impressive we have yet tasted), dry Gewürztraminer and Goldmuskateller form the range of whites. In reds he offers Edelvernatsch (also known as Schiava in Italian and Trollinger in German), Blauburgunder (Pinot Noir), Lagrein and a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Carmenière. The biggest influence on the wine is the red porphyry rock that the vines grow on, which bring an exotic spiciness. It's an impressive range and half of their output gets no further than the Bolzano city limits. The rest is sold to visitors, some restaurants around Italy and now us.

Neuenahrer Schieferlay Spätburgunder 2011, Peter Lingen (Ahr/Germany) 17.99

Here's a silky, smoky, autumnal Spätburgunder (that's German for Pinot Noir), brand new to our shelves and to the UK, picked up week before last from the Ahr valley near Bonn. The Lingen family can trace its wine growing history back to 1599. Generations 9, 10 and 11 live under one roof where the spa town of Bad Neuenahr and mediaeval Ahrweiler blur into each another. Ninth generation Peter-Josef passed over the reins to his son Hans-Peter in 1987. Hans-Peter and his wife Tanja work four hectares of vines in the steep vineyards above Bad Neuenahr of Kirchtürmchen, Schieferlay and Sonnenberg. Four hectares, four children, a holiday house in the vines for rent and some wonderful Ahr Spätburgunder.



Fronton Cuvée Tradition 2007, Saint-Guilhem (Southwest France) 9.99

Much has been written about the French Paradox – the life-enhancing properties of certain red wines protecting the French from high fat diets. We regularly receive streams of data from the very excited former Teacher and Estate Agent Philippe Laduguie of Saint Guilhem, north-west of Toulouse. One of his wines tested with the highest number of Phenolics and Proanthocyanidins, which have been directly linked to a long list of health benefits; reducing histamine production, improving circulation by strengthening capillary walls, helping collagen repair (keeping your skin elastic and wrinkle-free), an internal sunscreen, protecting blood vessels in the brain, increasing mental acuity, decreasing stroke potential, fighting senility. We all want to believe it's true as we pile into our plate of delicious, high-fat cheese! "Tradition", one of his magic potions, is a blend of 70% Négrette, 15% Gamay and 15% Cabernet Franc. Think of it less as wine, more of a life-extending health drink.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Boscarelli (Tuscany/Italy) 24.99

Sensational, peppery, extra virgin olive oil from our favourite producer in Montepulciano.

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

Our following tasting will be at **The Winery** and is slated for **Tuesday 4th June**.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**
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