

T H E
W I N E R Y

September Tasting 10.09.15

SPARKLING

Riesling Sekt Dosage Zéro 2012, Thorsten Melsheimer (Mosel/Germany) ORGANIC 23.99

"I'm the only one stupid enough to work the steepest part of the Reiler Mullay-Hofberg vineyard" says Thorsten Melsheimer, the perfect picture of a Saxon in rude health. "It's not as if the vines are actually facing in an ideal direction either. It forces you to work hard. It helps to be biodynamic. You have to slash the yield and pick insanely late. I bought some vines in a perfect south facing vineyard on the other side of the river and the wines are not as interesting - the vines are just lazy!"

Thorsten is certainly not lazy - he has been nursing old vines back to life, rebuilding walls in the remotest, steepest, least accessible parts of the Mullay-Hofberg vineyard. "When I get really hot working in the vines, I jump into the Mosel for a quick swim to cool off."

Thorsten has always made a wonderfully mouth-filling Brut Sekt and, not one to stand still, has recently released this bone-dry Dosage Zéro.

WHITE

Riesling trocken 2013, Thorsten Melsheimer (Mosel/Germany) BIODYNAMIC 13.99

Certified Ecovin (Organic) since 1997, in 2013 Thorsten now also has the Demeter Biodynamic certification. *Biodynamism = the extreme end of organic viticulture where decisions are made according to the Lunar Calendar - based on the teachings of Maria Thun, who in turn was a disciple of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian philosopher who laid out his mission statement for an alternative agriculture in the 1920s.*

Thorsten sees this dry Riesling as his calling card – it's a blend from his vineyards other than the Mullay-Hofberg; Reiler Goldlay, Reiler Falklay, Burger Hahnenschrittchen and Pündericher Marienburg, In 2013 it is racy and incisive – a wine for acid freaks!



Binger Quarzit Riesling trocken 2014, Riffel (Rheinhessen/Germany) ORGANIC 16.99

Bingen is on a massive corner on the Rhine, opposite Rudesheim. It is at the north-western edge of the region where four wine-growing regions meet. Rheinhessen, Nahe, Mittelrhein and the Rheingau. Carolin and Erik Riffel have vines in the full south-facing Bingen Scharlachberg vineyard. Millions of years ago the Rhine looped below it, which may explain why their wines have an element of Rheingau opulence. The Riffels make electric, dry, modern Riesling which express the steep, quartz-infused, fossil-laden slate it is grown on and the very late October harvesting which extracts maximum ripeness. This is Quarzit, their Spätlese trocken. They are fully organic and, when we visited recently, Erik was telling us about their aim to become biodynamic. He showed us the Camomile and Yarrow which are used to make infusions to spray in the vineyard in homeopathic concentrations. How can such small concentrations have any effect? Somewhat incredulously, he says, they seem to work.

Bergerac Blanc Sec 2014, Chateau de la Malleville (SW France) 9.99

It was a fascinatingly oily, dry white wine, Montravel, that brought us to a hill in the Bergerac, just east of Saint-Émilion and Castillon in Bordeaux. Four days into our recent Bordeaux trip, Montravel had popped into mind and, seeing how close we were geographically, we thought we would call in on its finest grower.

Once they had called off the imposing and very vocal Alsatian guard dog, we were very warmly received by Thierry Bernardinis and his father-in-law Philippe Biau. The tasting was a joy. Their wines are packed with character and thoroughly enjoyable - each punching well above its weight. Their Bergerac Blanc is a grassy, limey Sauvignon Blanc with a splash of Semillon. Thierry and Philippe talk about a walk in a spring forest when describing this wine.

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RED

Barbera d'Alba 2013, Mauro Veglio (Piedmont/Italy) 14.99

From the hilltop township of La Morra in the rippled Piedmontese landscape just southwest of Alba, an hour's drive south of Turin. There are two houses on the Cascina Nuova outcrop overlooking the "Arborina" vineyard. One belongs to the chief revolutionary (recently retired) Barolista Elio Altare, the other to his protégé Mauro Veglio and wife Daniela. With help and guidance from Elio in the early years, Mauro and Daniela started producing wine in 1992 and have built up a formidable reputation with their basket of Barolo "Crus".

Visit any producer in the Barolo zone and you will taste a classic sequence of reds. Dolcetto followed by Barbera, followed by Nebbiolo and then onwards and upwards to Barolo. Barbera is the most widely-planted grape variety in Piedmont and, until the 1970s, was held to be its best. Barbera occupied the most favourable positions on the slopes. Although Nebbiolo has since nudged it from its throne, Barbera is still widely appreciated - possibly thanks to its brambley, dark fruit and low tannins (the opposite end of the tannin spectrum from Nebbiolo).

Château Malfard "Cuvée La Chapelle" 2012 (Bordeaux/France) ORGANIC 13.99

Bordeaux still relies heavily on a system of merchants. Families can own multiple properties, form alliances, have their own merchant arm selling wines from their own estates and those of others. It is sometimes a little fuzzy who owns what. Château Malfard is a good example. We frequently buy from the de Lavaux family who co-own several Châteaux on the Merlot-heavy Right Bank in various appellations centred around Saint-Émilion. Château Martinet, Clos du Vieux Plateau Certan, La Renaissance, Bellevue, Clos des Galevesses and so on. They co-own a merchant company called Horeau-Beylot and offer this delicious organic Bordeaux Supérieur by Château Malfard - 70% Merlot with 20% Cab Sauvignon and 10% Cabernet Franc. Dig a little deeper and we find that Malfard was owned by the Beylot family until 1872. This makes sense, as the Beylot and de Lavaux families converged (via marriage) over the next 140 years. Malfard describe themselves as being between Pomerol and Fronsac. That might make them sound a teeny bit grander than they are – in an area where a kilometre one way or the other has an enormous influence, Pomerol is 12 kms and Fronsac 16kms. It might be more accurate to describe Malfard as forming a long triangle with Pomerol and Fronsac. In any case, the Château itself (built in 1850) is rather grand and their wine is charming.



Valdetomé Crianza 2010, Manuel Piquer (Cariñena/Spain) 9.99

From a windy, dry, hot corner of northern Spain, Cariñena is a plateau close to the foothills of the Pyrenees in the former Kingdom of Aragon. The wind comes roaring around the mountains, battering the gnarly, old Tempranillo and Grenache vines, which can be relied on for their deep, dark fruit. A couple of years ago, Manuel visited The Winery in London with a posse of 14 family members. There may have been more of them, we lost count.

Manuel's Crianza, one level up from "Lelia" (a perennial Winery favourite), is an 80/20 blend of Tempranillo and Grenache, 10 months in American oak and then 7 months in bottle before release. Cooked plums, balsamic notes, warm spices and leather.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Il Mercante di Delizie (Veneto/Italy) 500ml - 11.99

Here is Milly and Carlo Paladins' latest (and scarce) Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Peppery, liquid gold.

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

Tell no-one! At our **next event**, slated for **Monday 19th October**, we hope to be joined by Sabine and Marie Godmé from Verzenay on the Montagne de Reims who will be showing a couple of their fabulous Champagnes. Again – do not tell a soul!

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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