

T H E
W I N E R Y

December Tasting 02.12.15

featuring Reiner Flick

SPARKLING

Nonnberg Riesling Sekt Brut 2012, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) 23.99

Tonight we are delighted to be joined by Reiner Flick on his annual trip to London. We picked up Reiner's latest releases when we were in the Rheingau last Friday. He was very keen to show his sparkling Riesling tonight - from the Nonnberg, his Monopole vineyard on the slope above his house.

WHITE

Nonnberg Riesling trocken 2014, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) 14.99

Reiner Flick and his family live in a renovated 13th Century mill in the village of Wicker. It is part of the east end of the Rheingau next to Hochheim where the River Main meets the Rhine and from whose slopes you can watch the planes on final approach to Frankfurt airport. Although wine has been in the Flick family since 1775, it is only over the past decade and a half, through Reiner's rising fortune, that Wicker has been put on the wine-lovers' map.

Reiner told us that the not particularly big road in front of their property was once the main route between Paris and Moscow, and that Napoleon passed their gates twice - once on his way to Russia and once on the way back, hotly pursued by the Prussian Army. It was then that the village of Wicker was burnt to the ground after a particularly nasty battle.

The entire Wickerer Nonnberg belongs to Reiner. Nonnberg (Nun's hill) is on the hill at the edge of the village and overlooks their home and winery. There's a sandstone statue of a nun in one corner, the original Abbess of the monastery which owned the vineyard in the late 1200s. Reiner has worked hard with the chalky, clay soil and has been introducing some mixed flowers, grasses and herbs between the rows of vines. His Nonnberg always produces impressive, spicy Riesling with depth and concentration.



Königin Victoriaberg Riesling trocken 2014, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) 16.99

Reiner always seems to have a new project whenever we visit. We were really excited that from 2010 he managed to rent the vines in a small vineyard in Hochheim called Königin Victoriaberg (Queen Victoria's hill). This was Queen Victoria's favourite wine and where the name "Hock" comes from (the British struggled to pronounce Hochheim and eventually referred to all Rhine wine as Hock). She was so taken with the wine that, on a visit to Germany in 1845, she asked to see it. She observed it from her carriage and, shortly after, the vineyard was named after her and a monument was built to commemorate the visit.

We adore this wine and adore the historic label. Reiner phoned us to ask our opinion on whether he should keep the original label. "Yes, definitely!" we replied. Emphatically.

And the wine? We are loving the 2014. It may be tighter and more understated when compared to his Nonnberg or Hölle, but it is elegant, persuasive and reeks (in a good way) of history and breeding.

WHITE (FRUITY)

Königin Victoriaberg Riesling Kabinett 2013, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) 16.99

What happens if you use the same grapes and, at some point, stop the yeast from fermenting all the natural sweetness of the grapes into alcohol? This is the same vineyard, same vintage as the dry version but with a different outcome - a sweeter wine with lower alcohol. Playful, delicate, charming. A wine that can age for 30 years or more with ease.

Reiner and Kirsten have unfathomable energy; running the winery, making wine, running events in their venue down the road, barbecuing and cooking for 300 guests, hunting in the forests near Frankfurt, making wild boar sausages, experimenting with new grape varieties (Cabernet Blanc?!), making barrels from wood felled from their own land, building a new cellar with a vaulted ceiling, putting in a light display to demonstrate the effect of different coloured light on the taste of wine...and so on.

T H E
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RED

Hautes-Côtes de Beaune 2013, Denis Père et Fils (Burgundy/France) 15.99

Burgundy is the spiritual home of Pinot Noir. Fickle and difficult to grow, it thrives in the marginal, cold climate of this corner of France south of Dijon and fascinates wine geeks as it ages.

We had been looking for good Pernand-Vergelesses for years and finally we found them at a small family winery run by Christophe Denis and his wife Valérie. Pernand-Vergelesses is sandwiched between the hill of Corton and the village of Savigny-lès-Beaune just to north of Beaune. The Denis family make a spread of Pernands in red and white at Village and 1er Cru level, some Corton Grand Cru, a delicious Crémant de Bourgogne and two regional Pinots; a Bourgogne Rouge and this deeper Hautes-Côtes de Beaune.

La Petite Ourse 2013, Pascal Chalon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 14.99

It is almost a decade since we stumbled across Pascal Chalon making biodynamic Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages in his Granny's garage not far from Châteauneuf-du-Pape. We clambered around, amongst the tools and apples, squeezed ourselves around her beaten-up Renault and, as soon as we had tasted his two wines, "La Petite Ourse" and "La Grande Ourse", were quick to back the van up and load the last cases he had. La Petite Ourse is a rich blend of 60% Syrah and 40% Grenache from vines caressed (some might say ravaged) by the Mistral wind. We love its deep richness and herbal flavours, evocative of the lavender and thyme-laden local landscape.

Armentino 2014, Schola Sarmanti (Puglia/Italy) 13.99

The Men in Black are the stuff of legends at The Winery. We had a Godfather moment when we were sniffing out new wines in Puglia some summers ago.

"We'll meet at 17.00h in the square."

"How will we recognise you?"

"Don't worry, we'll find you".

Men in black, following a black car along remote country roads, horses heads in beds, we experienced them all – (apart from the horses heads). Puglia's hot southernmost corner is known for its big, juicy reds. Armentino is made with 50/50 NegroAmaro and Primitivo (also known as Zinfandel).



OLIVE OIL

L'Arbaude Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Mas de Cadenet (Provence/France) 500ml - 22.99

Olive Oil has become scarcer over the past 6 months. The Négrel family make peppery Extra Virgin Olive Oil overlooked by the Mont Sainte-Victoire.

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

Our **next tasting** here at The Winery is provisionally slated for the **end of January**.

JUST ARRIVED – France - from the Loire, more of those Anjou Rouge bottlings by Chateau Pierre-Bise that flew out earlier in the year. More biodynamic Pouilly-Fumé by Pascal and Rachel Kerbiquet of Domaine du Bouchot. New Sancerres by Didier and Isabelle Raimbault.

From the Rhône valley; Côtes-du-Rhône Villages by Pascal Chalon and Domaine de la Garance, Châteauneuf-du-Papes by Banneret and Saint-Siffrein. **Germany** – Von Othegraven (Saar), Van Elkan (Ruwer), Haart, (Mosel). From the Rheingau; Peter-Jakob-Kühn, Asbach-Kretschmar, Chat Sauvage, Schloss Vaux & Flick. From Rheinhessen; Becker-Landgraf. **Italy** - from Puglia; Schola Sarmanti, from Piedmont; Scarpa and Guasti Clemente. Prosecco by La Vigne di Ermes.

ARRIVING SOON – Our favourite Beaujolais by Cédric Vincent and Laurent Gauthier. Bordeaux from the Rivière brothers in St-Émilion and Chateau Charmant in Margaux. Burgundy from the Guillemot family in Savigny-Lès-Beaune and Paul Pernot in Puligny-Montrachet. Champagne from Vautrain-Paulet, Monsieur Coquillet's Saint Chamant, François Sécondé and hopefully a handful of bottles from Marie-Noëlle Ledru. From Sicily; Mimmo Paone's Nero d'Avola "Funnari".

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**
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