

T H E  
W I N E R Y

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## October Tasting 17.10.16

### SPARKLING

**Prosecco Millesimato Brut 2015, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto/Italy) ORGANIC 15.99**

Carlo and Milly Paladin have been making organic wines under their Bosco del Merlo label for many years and their Prosecco Frizzante has been a Winery staple for over a decade. When Milly and Carlo visited us last, they brought a bottle of their new vintage Prosecco Spumante in a distinctive, beautiful, dumpy bottle. One sip and we simply had to add it to our latest shipment.

The grapes are from Conegliano, which could be considered “*Prosecco Central*”, 35 kms away from their family winery in Annone Veneto north-east of Venice and equidistant from their new-ish estate in Valdobbiadene further into the foothills of the Alps.

### WHITE

**Chateau de Callac Graves Prestige Blanc 2013 (Bordeaux/France) 375ml 7.99**

This is a special bottling in halves with screwcaps we were asked to arrange for Kate Bush’s residency at Hammersmith. They were to be served at the VIP dinners before each concert. Kate and her people chose a couple of Bordeaux and the Rivière brothers bottled this nutty, grassy Graves white specially for us. We decided to hang onto some for ourselves.

Graves starts at the southeastern edge of the city of Bordeaux and is equally well-known for its whites as its reds. Chateau Callac’s Prestige is an elegant blend of 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Sémillon.



**Jacobus Riesling trocken 2015, Peter-Jakob Kühn (Rheingau/Germany) BIODYNAMIC 16.99**

When we visited the Kühn family a couple of weeks ago in the Rheingau, we happened to arrive on an auspicious day in their biodynamic calendar.

*What is Biodynamic? Biodynamism is the extreme end of organic viticulture based on the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian Philosopher - a holistic, spiritual approach to farming, emphasising the interconnectedness of the universe with soil, plants and animals. It’s a self-sustaining, self-nourishing system, in which decisions are synchronised with the Lunar Calendar. Biodynamics captures the imagination with its use of the Lunar Calendar and strange-sounding rituals, such as dynamising rainwater or burying a cow horn filled with cow manure through the winter, and its widespread use of Yarrow, Nettle, Dandelion and parts of animals.*

They had just taken delivery of four crates of cow horns, three containers of fresh cow dung. A crate of recently collected nettles stood ready too. We had often absent-mindedly wondered how the cow horns are filled with cow dung before planting around the vineyards (a process which brings the soil alive). It turns out that they are filled by hand. No gloves allowed. It was a gorgeous day and we were tasting outdoors. Turns out we were sitting downwind of the horn-filling table and had to move further away so it wouldn’t affect our tasting notes.

So, how are the Kühns’ wines? Their style is utterly distinctive, certainly standing quite apart from others in the Rheingau, and they can challenge our idea of how Riesling should taste. The aromas can invoke incense, orange peel and hedgerows. There’s sometimes a sense of tannin that you expect in red wine but not in white. We often recommend putting their top Rieslings in a decanter several hours before serving.

**Blauschiefer Riesling Kabinett trocken 2015, Bastgen (Mosel/Germany) ORGANIC 15.99**

Imagine a big loop in a beautiful river, so loopy that the next loop round almost meets the previous one in the middle. Now imagine a saddle-like hill brow at the top. Now imagine you built a beautiful house right there. That’s where Armin Vogel and his wife Mona Bastgen live. They named the winery after her surname, partly because their family was known in the village of Monzel– as butcher, baker and candlestick maker. But mainly because Armin didn’t want their wine to be called “Bird”, which is what his name means. They make taut, lean, dry Riesling from the steep slate slopes of Kesten and Brauneberg here on the Middle Mosel. Blauschiefer means “Blue Slate”. Nervy, smoky, slaty minerality with notes of white flowers and pears.

**RED****Chateau La Croix Moulinet 2012 (Bordeaux/France)****13.99**

Our latest shipment from Bordeaux has just arrived from the de Lavaux and de Coninck families who own a handful of small Chateaux on the Right Bank around Libourne and Saint-Émilion.

All sounds very grand, with offices overlooking the river in Libourne and yet what we found was a very down-to-earth two family business, driving beaten-up cars and making classic, traditional Bordeaux - a welcome relief after days of tasting Saint-Émilions that were so oaky it was like licking timber. La Croix Moulinet is a Bordeaux Supérieur from Villegouge, near Fronsac – a blend of 70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Cabernet Franc.

**Clos de la Magnaneraie 2013, Coriançon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC****14.99**

This is an unusual 99% Syrah from the southern Rhône by François Vallot and his daughter Anaïs. Their domaine (one of the smallest and oldest in an area dominated by co-operatives) is in Vinsobres, one of the named Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages - like Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Cairanne, all satellites of Chateauneuf-du-Pape. It's a beautiful, warm, windswept setting with the jagged Dentelles de Montmirail and Mont Ventoux as a backdrop.

Côtes-du-Rhône Villages is almost always a blend and almost always involves Grenache (*OK, this one does too, but it's only 1%*). Clos de la Magnaneraie is from a walled vineyard four miles up the road in Nyons, a town better known for its olive oil. François says the neighbours in the town are "a bit sensitive" about when he works on the vines with his tractor, which can interfere with their breakfast, their post-lunch nap or their pre-dinner aperitif. Whatever the sensitivities are on the ground, we love the results. Big, chunky, earthy - and yet silky - Syrah from the south.

**Carmignano 2013, Terre a Mano (Tuscany/Italy) BIODYNAMIC****28.99**

It was our former colleague Dan Towler who first told us about Terre a Mano after doing a harvest in the region. One thing led to another and we have been bringing in Rossella Bencini's fabulous Carmignano ever since. We visited Rossella and her winemaker Marco Vannucci in spring and lobbied her heavily to let us buy some of her mad dry white wine Sassocarlo, her sweet Vin Santo, some olive oil and as much of this fabulous, fleshy Carmignano as possible. Rossella inherited the beautiful estate high up in the hills and woods above Prato, 40 kms west of Florence, from her grandfather. The farm previously formed part of a much larger estate belonging to the Medici family which was used for hunting parties.

Although Carmignano was recognised as one of the first *Super-Tuscans* in 1975, the locals argue that its DOC (*Denominazione d'Origine Controllata* or *Appellation*) dates back 300 years to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Cosimo III de' Medici who proclaimed that Carmignano, Chianti, Pomino and Valdarno were superior quality and granted them legal protections.

Carmignano is allowed to blend a percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon into their Sangiovese. Rossella is keen to point out that Cabernet was not new to the area – Catherine de Medici married into French royalty and the grape was brought to the area and known locally as Uva Francesca.

Biodynamic since 2001, Rossella's blend is 75% Sangiovese with a 15% splash of sunshine-soaked Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Canaiolo (which, along with Sangiovese, is one of the grapes used for Chianti)). Supple, high-class, high-toned, juice-saturated Tuscan red.

**OLIVE OIL****Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Terre a Mano (Tuscany/Italy) BIODYNAMIC****500ml - 24.99**

Rossella's Extra Virgin Olive Oil from olive trees on her estate.

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

**Our following tasting** here at The Winery is scheduled for **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November** and, to help celebrate our **20 Years of Independence**, we will be joined by Reiner Flick from the Rheingau (who makes Victoriaberg) and Nacho Leon from Bierzo (who makes Demencia, Pyjama and Taruguin).

**Just arrived** – Bordeaux, Germany (Bastgen, Busch, Studert-Prüm, Kühn, Asbach-Kretschmar), Rhône (Chateauneuf-du-Pape by Banneret & Saint-Siffrein), Bandol by Chateau Vannières, Natural Wine by François Grinand of Domaine du Perron. From Spain; Demencia, Pyjama, Taruguin and Adrede.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**

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