

T H E
W I N E R Y

April Tasting 03.04.17

SPARKLING

Postumio 100 Anniversario Brut 2012, Cantina di Casteggio (Lombardy/Italy) 16.99

The wines of Cantina di Casteggio in Oltrepò Pavese, a bump on the plain 60kms south of Milan, have long been a fixture on our shelves. To celebrate the Cantina's 100th Anniversary they recently introduced a new sparkling wine. It's a Blanc de Blancs, 100% Chardonnay, with 36 months fermenting on its lees – Champagne-style. The presentation may be a bit "bling" for our colleague Ben but, whether or not you agree with him about the packaging, hopefully you'll agree that the contents are suitably celebratory.

WHITE

Mâcon-Bussières 2016, Thierry Drouin (Burgundy/France) 15.99

Julien and David were in Burgundy all last week and crammed some of this freshly-bottled Macon into our van.

If you find yourself on the Autoroute driving south towards Lyon and you look right as you pass Macon, you will spot two magnificent cliff-shaped rocks; the Roche de Vergisson and the Roche de Solutr . It is difficult not to be impressed by their primal presence. La Roche de Solutr  is a protected, pre-historic site used by human civilisations from 35,000-10,000 BC. Pre-historic humans used the rock for hunting, driving herds of wild horses over the edge of the cliff. Lovely. Its profile was raised in the 1980s by France's then President, Francois Mitterand, who would make an annual ritual ascent to the summit.

Less than 2kms away, as the crow (or pterodactyl) flies, is La Roche de Vergisson, a rock with a friendlier history. Between the two is an amphitheatre-like bowl which cradles the vineyards of Pouilly-Fuiss . Slap bang in the middle of the bowl with a view of both rocks is the Drouin family's home and winery. Thierry Drouin and his son Charles split the workload.

In addition to the Macon-Bussieres we are tasting tonight, they make a Saint-V eran and a spread of Pouilly-Fuiss  bottlings. Oak is used very carefully and never dominates.

We know it's a long way off, but there is talk of Charles coming to our tasting in October... Just saying.



Gau-Odernheimer Riesling trocken 2014, Becker-Landgraf (Rheinhessen/Germany) 16.99

From the ashes of Rheinhessen rises the twin-headed phoenix of modern dry Riesling and Sp atburgunder (Pinot Noir). A local grower threw a party early last decade, hoping his daughter would catch Johannes Landgraf's eye. Johannes made a bee-line for another winery's daughter, Julia Becker, and so in 2004, Becker-Landgraf was born. Among other things (Pinot Blanc, Rivaner, Dornfelder and so on) they determined to make top-class, cool-climate, dry Riesling and silky Pinot Noir, slap bang in the rural centre of the region. Johannes and Julia's Gau-Odernheimer Sp atburgunder is a perennial Winery Classic and multiple award winner. Our recently-arrived pallet is disappearing fast, so we thought it more sensible to show their toothsome Gau-Odernheimer Village-level dry Riesling, surging with minerals, fruit and exhilarating freshness.

Nierstein Riesling trocken 2012, K uhling-Gillot (Rheinhessen/Germany) 21.99

Last month we tasted Christine Huff's Nierstein-Schwabsburg dry Riesling. We thought it might be interesting to open another Riesling from the same town tonight. Drum roll...

This month's Niersteiner is by Carolin K uhling-Gillot.

Carolin's family has top flight vineyards overlooking the Rhine on Rheinhessen's eastern flank in the legendary villages of Oppenheim, Nackenheim and Nierstein. Many of their vineyards are on the Roter Hang (the red cliffs), thick with iron oxide which imparts their wines with an almost tropical spice and intensity.

In 2006 Carolin married Oliver Spanier of Battenfeld-Spanier, another Rheinhessen star winemaker. Oliver makes the wines for both K uhling-Gillot and Battenfeld-Spanier. Their dry Rieslings are bold, opulent and powerful.

T H E
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RED

A Tale of Two Cabernets – part 1 - Classic Bordeaux blend: Cabernet Sauvignon with Merlot.

Chateau Lajarre 2015 (Bordeaux/France)

12.99

The de Lavaux family co-own several Chateaux on the Merlot-heavy Right Bank in various Bordeaux Appellations centred around St Emilion. All sounds very grand, with offices on the Quai in Libourne and yet what we found was a very down-to-earth family, driving beaten-up cars and making classic, traditional Bordeaux - a welcome relief after days of tasting St Emilions that were so oaky it was like licking timber. Lajarre is a classic blend of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Minty and cedary in the nose, evocative of a walk in the woods. In the mouth there's good structure and a sense of fruits of the forest.

It was at the de Lavaux's lunch table that we experienced a local delicacy. River lamprey (the ugliest eel-type thing in the river) cooked in red Bordeaux. We often recommend Pinot Noir with fish but until then we had stopped short of suggesting red Bordeaux. Converted. If you want to drink Bordeaux with your fish, go right ahead. That's what the locals do!

A Tale of Two Cabernets – part 2 - From the Loire: 100% Cabernet Franc.

Anjou Villages "Spilite" 2013, Chateau Pierre-Bise (Loire/France)

20.99

Joëlle Papin-Chevalier and her son René produce benchmark Anjou in Beaulieu-sur-Layon, west of Angers. They make Anjou Villages from two different soils. This is Spilite, a volcanic soil. The grape is Cabernet Franc. These wines age magnificently. We recently had a 1995 of their Clos de Coulaïne and a 1999 of Spilite. Both were still fresh with plenty of life ahead of them. If you can bear to hide a couple of bottles away for 10-20 years, you won't be disappointed. Or just drink them now - in which case it might be worth putting them in a decanter before drinking.

We should also mention their white wines. They make sensational Savennières, certainly one of the Loire's finest appellations for dry Chenin Blanc. They are also sought-after for their sweet wines - they are on the Layon, after all. The Layon is a tributary of the Loire which traps moisture and mist in autumn - a breeding ground for botrytis, the noble rot. In the right hands (the Papin-Chevaliers, for example), late-harvested, botrytised Chenin Blanc makes magical sweet wines.



Nerio 2012, Schola Sarmanti (Puglia/Italy)

16.99

No sooner have they disappeared, you turn your head and they're back. The Men In Black Are Back.

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. Nerio is a reserve wine made with 80% Negroamaro and 20% Malvasia Nera Leccese.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Heredad Pangua Sodupe (Rioja/Spain)

500ml - 12.99

Roberto Pangua makes Rioja in red and white and recently started bottling his own olive oil.

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

Our **following tasting** here at The Winery will be on **Tuesday 23rd May** when we will be joined by Milly & Carlo Paladin from northeast of Venice (makers of The Winery's favourite organic Bosco del Merlo Prosecco) and Alessandro Guasti of Guasti Clemente from Nizza Monferrato, who make delicious Barbera d'Asti.

Just in - Burgundy: Thierry Drouin, Mugnier 2014s, Sirugue & La Maison Romane (*NEW*).

Just in - Bordeaux: Chateau La Haye

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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