

T H E
W I N E R Y

May Tasting 23.05.17
featuring Bosco del Merlo
& Guasti Clemente

Tonight we welcome growers from either side of northern Italy: Milly & Carlo Paladin of Bosco del Merlo from near Venice and Alessandro Guasti of Guasti Clemente in Piedmont.

SPARKLING

Prosecco Millesimato Brut 2016, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto) ORGANIC

16.99

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. They have a spread of vines over the flat plains at Annone Veneto north-east of Venice, the Alps visible in the background. It's an area rich with Roman history - the old Roman road, the via Postumia runs right by the estate.

In 2014 Milly and Carlo showed us their new vintage Prosecco Spumante in a distinctive, beautiful, dumpy bottle. One sip and we were convinced: it has been on our shelves ever since.

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

Lison Classico "Juti" 2014, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto) ORGANIC

15.99

Visitors to The Winery with very long memories may remember our Hungarian colleague Kristian Kielmayer and how worked-up he used to get that the Italians called their delicious white wine from Friuli in the north-eastern corner of the country 'Tocai Friulano'. "How dare they use the word Tocai?! They are trying to piggy-back on the reputation of Hungary's famous dessert wine, Tokaji!"

Never mind that Tocai Friulano is dry - or that the Italians had used the name for almost a century. Under enormous pressure from the Hungarians, the Italians were forced to drop the word Tocai in 2007. Most growers call it Friulano, some are calling it Tai (a name that hasn't entirely caught on so far). Whatever it says on the label, it has a beautiful honeysuckle nose and a creamy, rich texture. Milly and Carlo went further and decided to call the wine something completely different - Lison Juti. Lison is the area. What's Juti? That's their own name for the wine.

Sauvignon Blanc "Turrano" 2016, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto) ORGANIC

17.99

Aromatic, spicy, herbal, cool. Named after Ruffino Turrano a monk, historian & theologian who lived 345-411 AD. From the Duca delle Grazie vineyard at Lison di Portogruaro.

As long as we have known them, the Paladin family never seem to let the grass grow below their feet. They are constantly adding new wines (like the Prosecco Millesimato and an impressive Traminer), or reviving less well-known ones (Refosco and the sparkling red Raboso Fiore) and have also been snapping up estates in other regions.

They bought Castello Bonomi in Franciacorta (widely held to be the best area for sparkling wine in Italy) and a Tuscan estate - Castelvechi in Radda, in the Chianti Classico Zone near Siena.

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RED

Chianti Classico “Capotondo” 2014, Castelvechhi (Tuscany) 19.99

Not content with expanding their range of wines locally, the Paladin family bought an estate in Tuscany, in the heart of the Chianti Classico region and have converted part of it into a luxury hotel.

The heavily fortified Castelvechhi was built in 1043 at the convergence of several ancient roads between Florence and Siena. It was a time of constant friction between local nobles and later developed into intense rivalry between the two larger city states.

The vineyards are Castelvechhi (on the estate) and Colle Petrosi which, at 560m above sea level, are among the highest (and coolest at night) in the whole Chianti region. These two vineyards were originally planted between 1300-1400. Today’s vines average over 50 years old.

Capotondo (*Round Head*) is a classic Chianti Classico blend of Sangiovese with a splash of Canaiolo.

Malbec “Gli Aceri” 2013, Paladin (Veneto) 23.99

The Paladins are particularly fond of their Malbec. Merlot has long been the red of choice in this corner of northeastern Italy and Malbec is relatively rare. Their first success in a show was with Malbec in 1975 predating the acquisition of their Bosco del Merlo vineyards near Annone Veneto in 1977. Cool, smooth, cherry, chocolate.

Barbera d’Asti Fonda San Nicolao 2011, Guasti Clemente (Piedmont) 19.99

One of the highlights of a trip to northern Italy a few years ago was stumbling across a ridiculously good Barbera d’Asti in Le Due Lanterne, a restaurant in Nizza Monferrato in Piedmont. We were there to visit the iconic Scarpa winery and were wading through a bottle of their delicious Barbaresco 1999 when we asked the restaurant owner if he could recommend something else from his winelist that was in a similarly unreconstructed and old-fashioned vein. He thought for a moment and said, “there is just one other wine I can think of”. He disappeared and came back with a bottle of Barbera d’Asti Fonda San Nicolao by Guasti Clemente. It was excellent. Plump, deep, dark autumnal fruit with a whisper of truffles and distant bonfire. The following day, after a wonderful tasting at Scarpa, we hot-footed it around to meet Andrea and Alessandro Guasti and to be dazzled by Andrea’s incredibly mobile and expressive hand gestures - and the wines. (*We were going to show the 2004 but stumbled across a small stash of the 2011 that we had expressly put aside for tonight’s tasting.*)



Barbera d’Asti Superiore “Barcarato” 1998, Guasti Clemente (Piedmont) 29.99

Alessandro and his brother Andrea are best known for their deep, fleshy, unreconstructed Barbera d’Asti and you can currently find (for a limited time only, we suspect) a vertical of older vintages on our shelves. It is easy to forget that Nebbiolo’s reputation, in the form of Barolo and Barbaresco, has only risen in the last 40 years. Before that, Barbera was the undisputed king of Piedmontese grapes and occupied all of the finest slopes. In fact, it’s only 50 years since merchants would give away casks of awkward, tannic Nebbiolo free of charge with purchases of casks of Dolcetto. When you taste these magnificent, mature vintages of Guasti Clemente Barbera d’Asti from favoured sites, it’s easy to appreciate why it had the reputation it did.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Il Mercante di Delizie 500ml - 13.99

Milly and Carlo’s latest Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Peppery, liquid gold.

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

On a sorrowful note, we send our thoughts to **Manchester** and everyone affected by last night’s events there. Our thoughts and condolences are also with friends & family of **Rex Dean**, a frequent visitor to The Winery, who died at the beginning of May. His warmth & appetite for life will be missed.

Diary Dates - Our next tasting will be at The Winery on **Tuesday 6th June**. We are hoping that our tasting on **Wednesday 12th July** will feature two visiting growers. Christophe Graf of **Schloss Vaux**, the wonderful Sekt producer in the Rheingau, and Chris Cardon & his wife Caroline, owner of the excellent **Chateau La Haye** in St-Estèphe, Bordeaux.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

The Winery, 4 Clifton Road, London W9

www.thewineryuk.com

mailinglist@thewineryuk.com

020 7286 6475

info@thewineryuk.com