

T H E
W I N E R Y

October Tasting 16.10.17

featuring Charles Drouin

Wine lovers go misty-eyed at the mere thought of white Burgundy. Burgundy is the spiritual home of Chardonnay. One of the most evocative names in Burgundy is Pouilly-Fuissé. Tonight, we are delighted to be joined by Charles Drouin and Melanie Malard from the epicentre of Pouilly-Fuissé - Vergisson, southern Burgundy. Charles and his father Thierry make wonderful Mâcon, Saint-Véran and Pouilly-Fuissé.

SPARKLING

Zum Krug Riesling Sekt Brut 2014, Josef Laufer (Rheingau/Germany)

14.99

None of our tastings would be complete with at least one dry Riesling. Hotel Zum Krug, in Hattenheim, is a magical place. Reminiscent of a gingerbread house, it's the sort of place that takes you back to mediaeval Germany with its atmospheric twists and turns in a wooden interior straight out of a fantasy grotto from ancient legend. Josef Laufer, owner and font of Rheingau knowledge, always gives us a warm welcome and we start with a glass of his brilliant dry Sekt made from top class Rheingau fruit just outside the village - a wake-up call to the senses in all its petroly splendour.



WHITE

Mâcon-Bussières "Le Vieux Puits" 2016, Thierry Drouin (Burgundy/France)

15.99

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 Solutré. It is difficult not to be impressed by their primal presence. La Roche de Solutré 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-Fuissé. 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.

"Le Vieux Puits" means "*the old well*". We'll have to ask Charles if the well still exists. Meanwhile, this is a classy Mâcon with body, texture and freshness.

Saint-Véran "La Côte Rotie" 2016, Thierry Drouin (Burgundy/France)

18.99

This comes from a pure south-facing slope with a 45% gradient. It gets hot: hence the name La Côte Rotie (*the roasted slope*) - not to be confused with the famous Rhône red that carries the same name. It is the first vineyard to be harvested each year. It spent 7 months on its fine lees in mainly used oak barrels. The Drouins always use oak very carefully - it never dominates. Hazelnuts, honey, lemon meringue.

Pouilly-Fuissé "La Vieille-Vigne du Bois d'Ayer" 2013, Thierry Drouin (Burgundy)

24.99

Charles and Thierry make a spread of Pouilly-Fuissé bottlings. This bottling from a parcel of very old vines planted in 1946 is one of our absolute favourites. It has some maturity now and is moving into a nuttier, developed phase. It has a beautiful intensity and balance.

It might also be worth noting that we were lucky enough to prise 12 bottles of their top bottling "En Maréchaude" from their hands. It's from a tiny 0.3 hectare parcel. The wine is dense, viscous, concentrated and long.

T H E
W I N E R Y

RED

Pinot Nero 2015, Cantina di Casteggio (Lombardy/Italy) 11.99

The little-known region of Oltrepó Pavese is a bump on the plain 60kms south of Milan. There is one major player in town. It's fair to say Cantina di Casteggio is bigger than any other winery we work with – much bigger. A Co-op with 350 members and a massive facility, part run-down *fascista*-style, part Space Age. Try as we might, we just can't resist the wines. The Cantina is very switched-on and started a "quality project" with their best 50 growers, bringing in high-profile consultant Riccardo Cotarella. This is their sleek, silky Pinot Noir.

Nebbiolo 2010, Il Chiosso (Piedmont/Italy) 19.99

“When are you next getting those Italian reds with the mediaeval astrological labels?” We heard that more than once. Soon. Soon. And so, it is with great pleasure that we can announce the wait is over.

We have always had a massive weakness for Nebbiolo – it is the grape of Barolo after all. Before heading to Barolo on our way from Friuli and Venice we turn north after Milan. Past the rice fields of Arborio, towards the Alps, to Gattinara – the *other* home of Nebbiolo. Carlo Cambieri and Marco Alunno brought their two families' vineyards together to form Il Chiosso in 2007 and make beautiful, high toned, high-altitude Nebbiolo in the Alto Piemonte. Marco is an Oenologue and, with his Dad, takes care of their vines over in the Colle Novarese, including their Ghemme. Carlo (who has a day job as an engineer) and his Dad look after Il Chiosso's Gattinara vines. Il Chiosso means “home garden” or “Clos” and their labels are taken from a manuscript from 1500 AD depicting ancient astronomical phases.

Côtes-du-Rhône 2014, Coriançon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 14.99

We had a busy day last Wednesday when our shipments from Il Chiosso and Coriançon both arrived at the same time. This is our latest hit from the southern Rhône valley, where Grenache and Syrah vines are twisted and ravaged (rather than caressed) by the Mistral wind. The heavily moustachioed François Vallot is a fourth-generation wine-maker and, with his daughter Anaïs, they own one of the oldest wineries in the Côtes-du-Rhône, an area where much of the wine is still bottled by the big co-operatives. Since the 2007 vintage they have been fully biodynamic (*Biodynamism is the extreme end of organic viticulture, where decisions are synchronised with the lunar calendar*). Their winery 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. Since the return of Anaïs to the day-to-day management of the winery and vineyards, we notice some subtle changes in presentation; an overhaul of the website and a new label for the latest vintage of their Côtes-du-Rhône. The wines remain butch, chunky and deep.



OLIVE OIL – the latest crop is just being bottled. Rossella Bencini's Terre a Mano should be with us in time for our next tasting.

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

Our following tasting here at The Winery will be **Wednesday 22nd November** when we will be joined from the Rheingau by Reiner Flick, who makes Victoriaberg - Queen Victoria's favourite wine.

More dates for your diary

Coming up later this week and over next weekend. We are keen supporters of The Little Venice Music Festival. Now in its 16th year, it will run from Thursday 19th October until Sunday 22nd. Curated for the second time by the very talented Berkeley Ensemble, it's a joy to have such an exciting and varied programme packed with extraordinary performers in our midst. Tickets are available online, also at The Winery or on the door.

And to make your concert experience even more relaxing, The Winery will be providing some wine options for the evening performances.

<http://littlevenice-mf.com/events-2017/>

Join us for our Monthly Tastings
The Winery, 4 Clifton Road, London W9

mailinglist@thewineryuk.com
020 7286 6475

www.thewineryuk.com

info@thewineryuk.com