

T H E

W I N E R Y

November Tasting 22.11.17 *featuring* Reiner Flick

It has become an annual event – the visit of the dynamic Reiner Flick from the Rheingau, Germany. Reiner is the man who makes Queen Victoria's favourite wine. He doesn't have any of the sparkling Nonnberg at the moment, so we have an extra Riesling in the line-up tonight.

WHITE

Nonnberg Riesling trocken 2016, Flick (Rheingau/Germany)

17.99

The Rhine takes a sharp turn west at Mainz before turning north again at Rudesheim. The south-facing slope on the north bank between the two is the Rheingau, thick with castles, convents and vineyards. This is the classical home of Riesling.

Wine has been in the Flick family since 1775. Reiner, his family and assorted animals, live in (or around) a renovated 13th Century mill in the village of Wicker at 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.

The entire Wickerer Nonnberg belongs to Reiner. Nonnberg (*Nun's hill*) is on the hill at the edge of the village and overlooks his 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.



Nonnberg Riesling trocken "R" 2011, Flick (Rheingau/Germany)

20.99

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, with the Prussian Army in hot pursuit. It was then that the village of Wicker was burnt to the ground after a particularly nasty battle.

"It would be nice to show something a little bit older at the tasting, wouldn't it?" said Reiner when we visited a few weeks ago. Yes, it would. What have you got?

Nonnberg 2011. One year in an oak barrel, several years in bottle. Savoury, salty, oily, dry.

Victoriaberg Riesling trocken 2016, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) (*magnum 2016 - 48.99*)

18.99

We were really excited that from 2010 Reiner 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 she asked to see the vineyard on a visit to Germany in 1845. 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? Elegant, expressive, persuasive and reeking (in a good way) of history and breeding.

FRUITY

Victoriaberg Riesling Kabinett 2015, Flick (Rheingau/Germany)

18.99

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 (albeit different vintage) as the dry version but with a different outcome – a sweeter, fleshier wine with lower alcohol. It may be playful, delicate and charming but it is also a wine that can age for 30 years or more with ease.

RED

Chateau Lajarre 2015 (Bordeaux/France)

12.99

The de Lavaux and de Coninck families (who share a Great-Grandmother) 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 extended 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.

They also look after a number of friends' estates. Chateau Lajarre, south of the Dordogne and southeast of Castillon, is made by a young Doctor called Grégory Lovato. It's a classic blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc - 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.

Chianti Classico "Capotondo" 2014, Castelvechi (Tuscany/Italy)

20.99

Carlo and Milly Paladin's Bosco del Merlo organic Prosecco has been a Winery staple for a decade and a half. The Paladins live near Annone Veneto, on the flat plains northeast of Venice. Not content with expanding their vineyards locally, they 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 Castelvechi 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 Castelvechi (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*), named after the shape of the hillock the vineyard is planted on, is sleek and polished - a classic Chianti Classico blend of Sangiovese with a splash of Canaiolo.



Pécharmant 2014, Haut-Pécharmant (Southwest France)

16.99

One night, on a trip to Bordeaux three or four years ago, after a long day in the Médoc, we found ourselves in the quirky Au Petit Bois wine bar, the one with a tree inside the bar. The wine of the evening was, surprisingly, not a Bordeaux. It was a wild, sweaty Pécharmant from Bergerac. The dangerous scent of undergrowth, the animal sweat of this uncompromising, untamed red wine got us excited. So excited that we re-organised our timetable to drive east to meet Didier Roches of the Domaine du Haut Pécharmant, the winery at the top of the slope that is Pécharmant, northeast of the city of Bergerac.

Didier's Pécharmant is Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc with some Merlot and Malbec. The 2014 isn't quite as "lived-in" as the 2009 or 2010, but it still has some of those gently perspiring, countryside-meets-locker-room aromas. Proper French wine from the southwest.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil "La Villa", Melchiorri (Umbria/Italy)

1000ml - 22.99

One of our new Olive Oils. Served in the Vatican and, supposedly, "The Pope's Favourite".

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

Our following tasting here at The Winery will be our December Tasting, which has been moved forward a week to **Thursday 30th November**, to synchronise (hopefully) with the Clifton Road Christmas Trees and Lights - *and* a visit from the Mayor of Westminster.

Just arrived – Cheveau & Paul Pernot (Burgundy), **introducing** Aurélien Chatagnier (Rhône), Amyot Champagne, Flick (Rheingau), Malleveille & Haut-Pécharmant (Bergerac), lots of Bordeaux, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto). **Arriving soon** – Terre a Mano (Tuscany), Casteggio (Lombardy), more Bordeaux, more Burgundy, more Champagne, more Germany (Becker-Landgraf, Huff, Adeneuer, Zum Krug, JB Becker, Querbach). Banneret's Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Single Cask Whiskies, Port.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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