

T H E
W I N E R Y

July Tasting 12.07.18

After the saga of our van becoming sick on the Autoroute north of Reims last month, limping back and being put to pasture, we had to retrieve our emergency pick-ups with a massive rental van, so big it was hard to manoeuvre out of the Avis car park. The arrival of our new van in September cannot be more keenly awaited. Tonight we have a Tale of two Chardonnays, two Germans, two Italians and a Frenchman. Plus, red wines (Gamay, Pinot Noir and Dolcetto) that you might expect to be much lighter than they are.

SPARKLING

Prosecco “Tapo Spago” NV, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto/Italy) ORGANIC 13.99

It's back! The Winery's top performing, favourite Prosecco for a decade and a half. Carlo and Milly Paladin have been making organic wines under their Bosco del Merlo label for many years. They have a spread of vines over the flat plains at Annone Veneto northeast 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. This Prosecco is made in a *frizzante*, lower pressure style, under a normal cork. Gently floral in the nose, crisp, lean and fresh.



WHITE

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2017, Denis Père et Fils (Burgundy/France) 18.99

Good Burgundy is getting scarcer - partly through increasing demand and partly through adverse weather conditions, which have slashed the yields. With floods, hail and frost, recent years have seemed almost biblical. On one of our visits to Christophe and Valérie Denis, in spring 2016, they showed us the impact of a late, hard frost. Some parcels (the one at the back of their winery, for example) had been 100% hit, which would mean no grapes could be produced there in 2016.

More demand + less supply = less than ideal. We are grateful that Valérie and Christophe always manage to keep some wines for The Winery.

We were very taken with this Bourgogne Chardonnay from a parcel called “La Grande Corvée de Bully” on the north west side of the Hill of Corton. Classic white Burgundy – expressive, crisp yet creamy Chardonnay with a touch of honey in the nose.

EX Unoaked Chardonnay 2017, Wrath (California/USA) 23.99

After a strong dollar induced hiatus of over two years we are excited that our latest shipment has finally landed from California. We are delighted to introduce Wrath to Little Venice, to London and the UK. We stumbled across one of their impressive Pinot Noirs as we overnighted in San Luis Obispo on our way from LA to San Francisco. Although based in the Santa Lucia Highlands 40 miles southeast of Monterey, they also have a conveniently located tasting room in Carmel. Michael Thomas, an Archaeologist from Texas who got the food and wine bug during excavations in Italy, bought the San Saba vineyard with his mother Barbara in 2007. Tonight we are showing their gently tropical unoaked Chardonnay made EX (*from/out of*) the San Saba vineyard which was planted 35 years ago.

Briedeler Riesling trocken 2016, Walter (Mosel/Germany) 17.99

Gerrit Walter was an intern with us for twelve weeks in the summer of 2009 and went back home to help with the harvest before heading back to Geisenheim, the top Wine Uni in the country. Most of us are familiar with his basic Riesling trocken, a long-time staple at The Winery, so tonight we are showing the next level up in the pyramid of quality. This is his village-level dry Riesling, picked later than the basic and packed with minerals drawn from the perilously steep, slate vineyards of the small village of Briedel between Pünderich and Zell on the river Mosel.

RED**Moulin-à-Vent “Cuvée Étalon” 2014, Laurent Gauthier (Beaujolais/France) 16.99**

When we first stumbled upon wild-eyed Laurent Gauthier well over a decade ago, he seemed a man of few words. It could just have been that he didn't understand our mangled French. Laurent makes an excellent Moulin-à-Vent called Cuvée Étalon, a dense and fleshy interpretation of the Gamay grape. Moulin-à-Vent is one of the ten “Cru” villages of Beaujolais, all of which enjoy superior soil, rich in granite, compared to the rest of the region. Moulin-à-Vent always tends to be the fullest-bodied of all the Crus and is one of the wines of the Beaujolais that can age 30 years with ease.

Despite having bought annually since our first visit in around 2004, there was a 10 year gap before we visited again. Since then we have been dropping by his mini-fortress style winery on the road between Fleurie and Chénas much more frequently. In the meantime Laurent seems to have become a bit chattier - either that or our French has improved a little. “See you in another ten years then?” he said as we went. “Haha – maybe sooner!”

Ruber Spätburgunder 2015, Nelles (Ahr/Germany) 19.99

The tiny Ahr valley near Bonn is one of the northernmost winemaking regions of Europe. Romans planted vines here. Locals claim that the sheltered valley has an almost Mediterranean micro-climate. We wouldn't go quite that far, but there is little doubt that some of Germany's finest Pinot Noir comes from here. Philip Nelles and his father Thomas name their top wine “B52” and ferment their wines in the traditional, huge, old oak Fuders. Founded in 1479, the Nelles family has been making wine for generations and own some of the best vineyard sites for red wine in Germany. "Ruber" is from the steep-sloped Landskrone vineyard in Heimersheim, clearly visible from the Nelles' house and winery. Ruber is always supple and velvety - bursting with layers of smoke, autumn leaves and forest fruits with good acidity and remarkably soft, almost slippery, tannins. How can they make Pinot Noir this good, this far north?

**Dolcetto d'Acqui VT 2000, Scarpa (Piedmont/Italy) LOW HISTAMINE 18.99**

Ever since our first bottle of Scarpa, we have been hooked. Scarpa was founded in 1854 and one of the first to bottle Barolo and Barbaresco in 1949. To this day, their cellar is a treasure trove of mature Barolo, Barbera and wines made from obscure local grapes such as Freisa Secco and Rouchet. With the same winemaker, Carlo Castero, for over 50 years, the style is truly traditional.

Dolcetto is a grape that normally produces a light-bodied, breezy, fruity wine. It is usually picked in mid September. Carlo went to the vineyard towards the end of August 2000 and found that the grapes were already over-ripe. They scrambled to harvest without further delay. It may not be a mainstream Dolcetto but a late harvest (VT), mature example is a rare treat. Like walking into a library with old leather chairs. Plum compôte, balsamic, autumn leaves.

LOW HISTAMINE? Ever wondered why some people's faces flush when they drink red wine? It may be sensitivity to Histamines. Histamines are naturally occurring and found in (among other things) aged cheese, fermented foods, smoked fish, dried fruit, avocado, aubergine, beer and red wine. Histamine levels in red wine tend to be anywhere between 5-40mg/l. Piedmontese reds such as Dolcetto and Barbera are usually 5mg/l or lower, so are considered low histamine wine.

OLIVE OIL**Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Heredad Pangua Sodupe (Rioja/Spain) 500ml - 13.99**

In addition to making Rioja in red and white, Roberto Pangua also bottles his own olive oil.

Lunar Calendar Observers – today is a **Fruit Day**.

Our **next tasting** at The Winery is scheduled for **Tuesday 21st August**.

Just arrived - California – Introducing Wrath and, yes, Hafner is back (we remain the only shop on the planet with Hafner on our shelves! **Burgundy** from Denis & Chablis by Stéphanie Mosnier. **Champagne** from Amyot, Louis Casters, Sabine Godmé, Vautrain-Paulet, Marie-Noëlle Ledru. Provençal **Rosé** by Mauvan, **Beaujolais** by Anne-Sophie Dubois and Laurent Gauthier. **Prosecco** by Bosco del Merlo, **Malbec** by Paladin, **Chianti Classico** by Castelvechi.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**

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