

T H E  
W I N E R Y

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# January Tasting 22.01.19

## SPARKLING

### **Prosecco Millesimato Brut 2017, Bosco del Merlo (Veneto/Italy) 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 15 years or so. 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.

The Prosecco grapes are from Conegliano, 35 kms away, an area considered to be "*Prosecco Central*".

## WHITE

### **Bernkasteler Graben Riesling Kabinett trocken 2014, Studert-Prüm (Wehlen/Mosel) 19.99**

Michael Studert and his father Stephan live in on the Mosel riverbank in Wehlen, one of the most famous wine villages on the planet. The vineyards cling to the slate slope on the opposite bank of the Mosel, a slope of uninterrupted Grand Cru sites from Bernkastel through Graach and Wehlen up to Zeltingen, where the river starts another loop. Wehlen is inextricably linked with the family name of Prüm. There are several Prüms in the village; JJ Prüm, SA Prüm, Weins-Prüm and Studert-Prüm. Other well-known estates such as Dr Loosen, Robert Weil, Christoffel and Pauly-Bergweiler also had Prüms in their families.

It was a bottle of Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese trocken 2009 which we drank at the Moselschild in Urzig almost ten years ago that brought us knocking. We have enjoyed their classic Mosel Rieslings ever since. The style is lean and focused. Restrained and elegant. The wines can be shy when first opened and reveal their beauty and class with air and time in the glass.



### **Hallgartener Riesling trocken 2016, Fred Prinz (Rheingau/Germany) ORGANIC 19.99**

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. Evocative names like Steinberg, Marcobrunn, Johannisberg, Hochheim - the home of Queen Victoria's "Hock", back when German wines were the most expensive in the world. In contrast to wine made in historic castles and convents, Fred Prinz made his wine in the garage of the flats where he and his family live in the small village of Hallgarten. Having started as a hobby in 1991, demand became so great that he had to give up his day job and rent another cellar nearby, thereby freeing-up space in his garage for a Mid-Life Harley motorbike.

We have been importing Fred's dry Rieslings since our first buying trip to Germany in 2002. We were very impressed by his 2016s. Bright, blackcurrant leaf, expressive and with hints of lime in the mouth.

This Hallgartener is Fred's village level, made with early selections from his grander vineyards in Hallgarten: Schönhell and Jungfer.

### **Viognier 2017, Aurélien Chatagnier (Rhône/France) 22.99**

We often get asked for Viognier. Finding one that isn't heavy or flabby is tricky. Viognier's spiritual home is Condrieu, south of Lyon, in the northern Rhône valley. We stumbled upon Aurélien Chatagnier's wines in Ampuis, the small town below the Côte-Rôtie, not far from Condrieu.

Aurélien says he was "bad at school". When he was 16, his mother said he should probably knock it on the head and get a job. He went to work for a couple of famous winegrowers, Jamet and François Villard. He loved it - and especially enjoyed working in the vines. In 2002, after a gentle, encouraging nudge from Villard, he set up on his own, starting with just a single hectare. Although he now has 7.5 hectares, he still doesn't make much and it took over two years to claw some bottles from his grip - not helped by the fact that, back in March 2016, thieves broke into his remote winery and made off with most of his wine, including cases earmarked for us. Alarmingly, this is a frequent occurrence in the region. The good news is that our latest two hits of Aurelien's pure, modern Viogniers and Syrahs made it out of "Dodge" to The Winery intact.

This wine has all the classic characteristics of Rhône Viognier: aromatic, expressive, vine peach, apricot stone.

## RED

### **Fleurie "l'Alchimiste" 2016, Anne-Sophie Dubois (Beaujolais/France) ORGANIC 21.99**

Anne-Sophie Dubois comes from the Champagne region, 3 hours north of Beaujolais. Her parents have 3 hectares in Sézanne, halfway between Epernay and Troyes. They had two kids, wanted to expand and bought 8 hectares of vines in Fleurie, one of the ten Crus in the pretty, rolling hills of the Beaujolais. After internships at Roblet-Monnot in Volnay and various Champagne producers around Sézanne, Anne-Sophie took over the small Fleurie domaine in 2007. Her Fleurie bottlings, l'Alchimiste and Clepsydre, are the embodiment of finesse. Her winemaking style is very gentle, to emphasise the purity, fragrance and elegance of the Gamay fruit. Long maceration, wild yeasts, no new oak, no filtration or fining, no pumping – just gravity.

### **Vinsobres 2015, Domaine Vallot - Le Coriançon (Rhône/France) BIODYNAMIC 17.99**

This is our latest arrival 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, a fourth-generation wine-maker, and his daughter Anaïs 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. They have been fully biodynamic since 2004 (*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 following a career in hotel hospitality in north America and Europe, further study in University and an internship at Yquem, the famous Sauternes Chateau, there have been changes to the day-to-day management of the winery and vineyards and 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 - packed with dark matter for the long haul.



### **Rioja Gran Reserva 2010, Longrande (Rioja/Spain) 25.99**

Two decades have passed since we came across Isabel Fernandez's Longrande in the brilliant Casa Toni restaurant in San Vicente de la Sonsierra in Rioja Alta. We had tasted so much mainstream Rioja and her Crianza was a breath of fresh air – a revelation. We had to beg to see her, largely to overcome her fear of export. Fortunately, we were able to convince her to sell to us and her wines have been a fixture on our shelves ever since.

Isabel is as full of personality as her wines. She has been making the wine in her small family Bodega in Abalos for three decades. She goes to great lengths to keep the whole process as natural as possible; treading the whole bunches by foot, using gravity to avoid pumping, never filtering. She determines the bottling date biodynamically, according to the cycles of the moon.

Her wines are fascinating - often boldly perfumed, with a beautiful purity of fruit and surprising body and structure. Isabel rarely makes a Gran Reserva and this is her first since the 2001 vintage. The label is by the artist Gonzalo Martín Calero, who was born in Valladolid.

## 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 following tasting** here at The Winery is scheduled for **Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February**.

**Arriving soon** – fresh, white Burgundy from Mâcon, St-Véran & Pouilly-Fuissé by Thierry & Charles Drouin. From Tuscany, biodynamic Carmignano from Rossella Bencini's Terre a Mano. From Lombardy, the evergreen Cantina di Casteggio, including their much-missed Barbera and Pinot Nero. From Bordeaux: Chateaux Saint-Poly 2007, Meynieu 2002 and La Fon du Berger 2012.

Join us for our **Monthly Tastings**  
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