

T H E
W I N E R Y

June Tasting *Fulham* 11.06.24
featuring Château La Corne

sparkling

Cava Gran Reserva Brut Nature, Bolet (Penedès/Spain) ORGANIC/VEGAN 24.99

Good Cava had been on our wish-list for more than a decade, so our Cava Quest was the first priority when we landed in Barcelona last spring. To our taste we find some Cavas rather hard and metallic. Not so with Xavier Bolet's bottlings which are broader, deeper, more complex. The blend in his classic Cavas is 50% Xarel-lo, 40% Macabeo (aka Viura, the grape of white Rioja) and 10% Parellada. This Gran Reserva was a Reserva from the 2014 vintage, selected and aged as Gran Reserva and bottled as a Brut Nature with no added sugar (*dosage*). It's a bold, complex Cava. Honeysuckle, lanolin, nuts and flowers crowd the nose. There's a wonderful sense of aged fruit, structure and depth in the mouth. The finish is long and yeasty.

white

Greco di Tufo 2022, Salvatore Molettieri (Campania/Italy) 24.99

An hour's drive into the volcanic hills east of Naples, is the Taurasi zone. Taurasi is one of Italy's great reds: the so-called "Barolo of The South". The Molettieri family make several reds and a couple of whites. Greco di Tufo, as the name implies, is thought to have originally come from Greece 2,500 years ago. Greco is one of the grapes that was rescued from the verge of extinction by high-profile pioneering local, Antonio Mastroberardino, after WW2. Tufo is the name of a small town between Avellino and Taurasi.

Salvatore Molettieri and his oenologue son Giovanni pick their Greco di Tufo very late, usually at the end of October, sometimes even as late as November. They say that the wine is too acidic if you pick earlier. This is a striking wine, energised by the volcanic and clay soil, with an almost salty, saline finish. Savoury marzipan, even?



Orchard Sémillon 2022, Château La Corne (Bordeaux/France) BIODYNAMIC 33.99

"I am an old Winery staffer ('84-'86) who is now making his own natural wine here in Bordeaux." That got our attention. Steve Lawrence, originally from Buckinghamshire, came to see us in Spring 2022. He had worked at The Winery from 1984 and 1986 before heading to the States for a career in selling wine. There he met Diana Lucz, originally from Tucson Arizona, who was also working in wine. A long-term ambition emerged: to have their own winery. Napa, where they were living, was out of reach, as was California generally. They did however find a small estate in 2017, in Bordeaux on high ground just across the river Garonne from Langon, not far from Sauternes and Barsac. Their dream was coming true.

Orchard is 100% Sémillon from vines planted in 1945, aged in used barrels from Château Yquem. Wonderfully oily, nutty, apple and honeysuckle nose, and broad mouthfeel.

Ürziger in der Kranklei Riesling Spätlese* trocken 2022, Karl Erbes (Mosel/Germany) 28.99

Ürziger Würzgarten (*spice garden*) is an eye-catching vineyard in the middle Mosel. It has a Hollywood-style sign high up in the vines and has the largest concentration of red slate in the Mosel. It owes its red colour to the iron oxide suspended in the slate which gives its Riesling an exotic, flamboyant overtone. We happened to be in the Mosel valley one weekend in June when the annual Mythos Mosel tasting festival was on. High point of the day was the only dry wine on Karl Erbes' table: Ürziger in der Kranklei Riesling Spätlese* trocken 2022. Exotic, herbal, viscous. So, we picked some up from Stefan Erbes (who runs the winery) when we were back there a couple of weeks later. The vineyard has vines up to 80 years old and sits precariously above the sundial close to Erdener Prälat. The name is intriguing. "Krank" usually means "sick" or "ill" in German and "Lei" (same as *Lay* or *Ley*) is derived from the Celtic, meaning "slate" or "slate rock". Apparently "krank" has nothing to do with "sick" in this case but is a purely phonetic development from "grande" (often pronounced *grang* in German) to "krank". Shame. We quite liked the idea of "*sick slate*" in the contemporary application of "*sick*". That's some *sick* Riesling. Anyone?

red

JJ Adeneuer Spätburgunder 2022, Adeneuer (Ahr/Germany)

24.99

Spätburgunder is German for Pinot Noir. The tiny Ahr valley near Bonn is one of the most northernmost winemaking regions of Europe. Romans planted vines here. Locals say 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 (Spätburgunder) comes from here.

The Adeneuer family has been making wine for 500 years in the spa town of Ahrweiler and in 1984 brothers Marc and Frank took over from their aunt. 1984 was the worst vintage since records began and they almost gave up there and then but, fortunately, they persevered. Year in, year out they manage to deliver delicious smoky, autumnal Pinot Noir, whatever the climate throws at them. And the climate *has* thrown a lot at them. The biblical flooding in July 2021 affected everybody in the valley: lives were lost and vintages were swept away. It's amazing to think that this vintage was only a year after the disaster.

JJ Adeneuer is a step up from village-level, a blend from multiple parcels grown on sandy clay, aged in big old casks called *Fuder*. Bright, fresh, saturated fruit, silky-smooth mouthfeel.

Les 7 Cépages 2022, Château La Corne (Bordeaux/France) BIODYNAMIC

33.99

Steve and Diana's vineyard is small, but 2.5 hectares of old vines planted in 1945, 1955 and 1981 is enough for them to farm and vinify themselves with extreme care. No pesticides, no herbicides, wild yeasts, ageing in neutral used barrels. Their small cellar is 400 years old. Steve says it's a Burgundian cellar in Bordeaux. They make around 3,000 bottles a year from their 9,000 vines. That's not very much but may help explain the concentration of their wines.

So, what are the 7 grape varieties in this, their main red? Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Carménère, Bouchalès (never heard of it) and Castets (never heard of this one either). Whatever grapes are in it, this hilltop red is rich and juicy with peppery tannins.

Côte Sud 2022, Château La Corne (Bordeaux/France) BIODYNAMIC

52.99

This is their top-of-the-range red from their south-facing slope, 100% Cabernet Sauvignon: plush, silky, violets, savoury and succulent. Fabulous. As is their new label, which tells its story. To the Lawrences, La Corne (*The Horn*) means 'Horn of Plenty'. Their small, yet perfectly-formed estate is home to orchards of fruit and nut trees, beautiful old vineyards and a guest suite for rent. From careers in selling wine in California to hand-making their own wines in Bordeaux - congratulations, Steve and Diana - living the dream!



Biodynamic? Organic viticulture taken to the extreme, ruled by the lunar calendar - human, moon and earth in perfect harmony - a self-sustaining, self-nourishing system. Its roots can be traced through Maria Thun to Rudolf Steiner and back to Hildegard of Bingen, the mystic nun (1098-1179).

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

Our **following tasting** will be at **The Winery Maida Vale** on **Tuesday 9th July** when, **if everything falls into place**, we will be joined by **Pascal Chalon** of **La Grande Ourse** – long featured on our shelves (since 2006) from the hot and windy southern Rhône valley between Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the Mont Ventoux.

Just arrived – Dreolino Chianti Rufina (Tuscany), Cheveau (Burgundy), Pascal Chalon La Grande Ourse (Rhône) Gerrit Walter (Mosel), Clos des Poulettes (Burgundy), Baccate Fruit Liqueurs (the finest, for your Kir), Champagnes by Marie-Noëlle Ledru, Stéphane Coquillet, Saint-Chamant. **Recently arrived** - Raimbault Sancerre, Champagne Amyot, Guillemot and Sirugue from Burgundy, Peter Jakob Kühn (Rheingau). Martin Müllen (Mosel), Adeneuer (Ahr), loads from Bordeaux, Terre a Mano (Tuscany), Salvatore Molettieri (Campania). **Coming in the next few days** – Stéphanie Mosnier's Chablis, Bordeaux from Château de France and a bit more stock more from Château La Corne.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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