

T H E
W I N E R Y

August Tasting *Fulham* 28.08.24

sparkling

Champagne Tradition Brut NV, Verrier (Champagne/France)

37.99

In the depths of a frigid February south of Reims and Epernay in 2022, we stumbled across a new Champagne. Étoges is a small village just south of the Côte des Blancs, with a rather grand Château - now a hotel, complete with brasserie and restaurant. That chilly night, only the brasserie was open. After some last minute cross-checking online before dinner, we ordered a bottle of Champagne Verrier Tradition Brut. It was good - very good - a blend of 75% Pinot Meunier, 5% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay. When we were next passing, we visited Emmanuel Verrier to taste the entire range.

We picked up yet another hit from Emmanuel & his wife Laurence on our Champagne Dash in early summer.

white

Beaujolais-Villages 'Les Pouliches' 2023, Cheveau (Burgundy/France) IN CONVERSION

18.99

White Beaujolais. White. Beaujolais? Yes. It's a thing. In southern Burgundy, where the Mâconnais meets the Beaujolais, the primal presence of the two jagged rock faces of Vergisson and Solutré dominate the skyline above the tiny village of Pouilly, the village that time forgot. When we first visited 20 years ago, the whole Cheveau family, from grandparents to grandchildren, gathered in the doorway to watch the hot-shot wine merchants from London taste their wines. At that time, Nicolas & Aurélie Cheveau made Mâcon, St-Véran and Pouilly-Fuissé. Much has changed since then. There's a swanky new, much more accessible winery on the approach to the village. There are also multiple new bottlings; three Mâcon, one Bourgogne Blanc, one St-Véran, no fewer than eight separate Pouilly-Fuissé bottlings (five of them 1er Cru) three red Beaujolais and now this, a white Beaujolais, not dissimilar from a Mâcon - Chardonnay grown on the soil of Beaujolais. In conversion? They will be fully organic from the 2024 vintage onwards.



Wicker vom Kalkstein Riesling trocken 2023, Flick (Rheingau/Germany) VEGAN

18.99

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. 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. Wine has been in the Flick family since 1775. The dynamic 50-something Reiner Flick has recently been joined by his daughter Katharina. Two and a bit weeks ago we were sitting in Reiner's tasting room in the Rheingau and loving his vibrant, explosive 2023 dry Rieslings. Reiner is best known for Victoriaberg - Queen Victoria's favourite wine. Yes, we have plenty of Victoriaberg but we also have some of Reiner's village/terroir dry Rieslings. We were also impressed by this vom Kalkstein (*from the limestone*) from the village of Wicker with its expressive, peachy, floral nose, structure and racy freshness. Made in very big 1,400 litre oak casks.

Gewürztraminer trocken 2023, Julius Treis (Mosel/Germany)

21.99

Gewürztraminer? Sometimes nothing else will do. It has been increasingly difficult to find a dry Gewürztraminer over the last two decades of global warming. We found what we were looking for two years ago, somewhere you wouldn't expect to: in Reil, in the heart of the Mosel valley, where Riesling reigns supreme. Tobias Treis can trace his family's wine-making history back to 1684.

A friendship formed almost 20 years ago has influenced the direction. Tobias met Ivan Giovanetti at Geisenheim - Germany's leading Wine University. Ivan's family winery is Castelfeder in the South Tyrol. You can sense the high-altitude middle-European influence in Tobias' non-Riesling whites. In fact, it was Ivan who suggested that Tobias might consider planting some Gewürztraminer. Good call! It's a beautiful, balanced and properly dry Gewürztraminer, with all the dizzy *pot pourri* and spicy exotic aromas you could hope for. We picked up our latest hit from Tobias on our way back from Germany week two weeks ago.

red

Fleurie L'Alchimiste 2021, Anne-Sophie Dubois (Beaujolais/France) ORGANIC 27.99

Anne-Sophie Dubois comes from the Champagne region, three hours north of Beaujolais. Her parents have three hectares in Sézanne, halfway between Epernay and Troyes. They had two kids, wanted to expand and bought eight 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. She started producing two Fleurie cuvées: l'Alchimiste and Clepsydre. She has added the fun and vibrant Les Cocottes to her small, perfectly-formed range and renamed Clepsydre 'Les Labourons'.

All Anne-Sophie's vines are in a single block on a high southwest-facing pink granite slope around her house and winery. L'Alchimiste is from vines of 40 years-old or more. Although not certified until 2018, she has always farmed organically and uses many biodynamic techniques. Her only issue with biodynamism is her refusal to use copper (widely used in organic viticulture), which she says is toxic and can leech into the groundwater. Her winemaking style is very gentle and low-intervention 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. She re-introduced whole bunch fermentation into her winemaking technique in 2015 which adds a savoury, dark adult note. Keywords for her wines: Purity, elegance and finesse. Gamay at its most exquisite.

Château Picampeau 2007 (Bordeaux/France) 17.99

Jean-Pierre Rivière and his brother Philippe co-own Clos des Menuts, one of our favourite Saint-Émilions. They also individually own châteaux in Saint-Émilion's satellite appellations. Jean-Pierre has Château Picampeau (aka Haut-Piquat) in Lussac-Saint-Émilion and Philippe owns Château de Lavagnac in the Bordeaux Supérieur zone.

Picampeau's vines are beautifully situated and get plenty of sunshine. In the middle of the vineyard is a dolmen, a sacrificial stone, used by druids in 50 BC. There is evidence that there were vines from the 3rd century Gallo-Roman period. The blend is 75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cabernet Franc. We were happy to see there was some 2007 knocking around when we visited in March. It's always a pleasure to taste (and drink) more mature wines.



Laderas de Sedella Ánfora 2017, Sedella (Málaga/Spain) NATURAL 23.99

Our final red in the line-up is quite unusual. A cooler red from southern Spain? Surprising. Raised in Amphorae? Yes. It's made by Lauren Rosillo, an oenologue who has been making the wine for Familia Martinez Bujanda at their estates in Rioja (including the highly-regarded Finca Valpiedra), Rueda and La Mancha for almost 20 years. He also writes papers and teaches at Albacete Agronomists Technical High School. We met through our friend Nacho León, who makes Demencia, Pyjama and Taruguín – long term fixtures in our Spanish range and who will hopefully be joining us at our tasting in October.

Lauren started his solo project in 2006 on a much smaller scale, with a tiny 2.5 hectares of vines up in the cool slate hills inland from Málaga and made in a more 'Natural' vein, which he calls Mediterranean Mountain Wine. Using traditional techniques such as a Roman-style plough pulled by horse, he makes a skin contact-style white and two age-worthy reds: the big, dense Sedella and this bottling made from old bush vines planted in 1940 with native grape varieties Romé tinta, Garnacha tinta, Jaén tinta and loose strains of other local varieties. They are then vinified in clay, oak and amphorae to produce this impressive, multi-layered and, given how far south its origin is, surprisingly cool red.

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

Our **following tasting** will be at **The Winery Maida Vale** on **Wednesday 17th September** when we will be joined by **Francesca Tanini** of **Dreolino** showing her family's breezy, mouthfilling **Chianti Rufina** from northeast of Florence.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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