

## WINE Talk: April 2017

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 68

Thank you for downloading our latest newsletter. There has been a lot of activity since the January newsletter.

We have attended a number of natural wine salons in France during January and February in Montpellier, Marseille, Angers and Saumur which provided an opportunity to catch up with many (around 35) of our producers and to taste their recent releases.

It was both heart-rending and exciting depending on the region they came from. Producers in the Loire generally had a really bad season while others were not damaged too much by the variable weather conditions.

We also had the privilege of visiting some of our new producers to walk through their vineyards and to see their wineries and to talk to them about their winemaking processes and vineyard practices.

So, we are able to announce that we will be bringing in wines from Ardèche producer Samuel Boulay, a new shipment from the incredibly focussed Alsace producer Jean Ginglinger, the wines of amazing Languedoc winemaker Phillippe Formentier from Opi d'Aqui who not only produces one of the best Picpoul wines we have ever tasted but also turns out some beautiful light red wines from his Languedoc vineyards (see separate story) and the most recent producer that we visited in the Jura, Arnaud Grenier, who has agreed to supply us from his tiny production. We are delighted with his wines and look forward to them arriving later this year.

There are 7 special packs this month including a dozen red wines, both a red and a white premium 6 pack, a last bottle pack, a pack made up of wines made from very old vines, a fresh and lively 6 pack and a 3 pack of interesting oxidative wines.

We also have news of some upcoming events.

We hope you enjoy reading this latest newsletter.

**For a full list of wines currently in stock and their prices see:**

<http://www.livingwines.com.au/Catalogue/Catalogue.htm>

**There is a link to our order form for these packs and any other wines at the end of this newsletter. But there's no need to use the order form. Just send us an email listing the wines and/or packs you would like to order if that suits you better. We'll confirm the price by return email before processing your order.**

## Handmade



The Handmade wine event is on again! It is now the fourth year of this exciting event and we will be there as usual. There will be 50 winemakers and importers showing their wares this year at the Builders Arms Hotel.

In addition, Mitch Orr from ACME in Sydney will be serving some of his famous pasta dishes, Thi Le from Anchovy will be presenting some of her Vietnamese dishes, ArChan Chan from Ricky and Pinky will be presenting some of Ricky and Pinky's dishes, Troy Wheeler from Meatsmith will be manning the rotisserie and Josh Murphy will also be making an appearance. Definitely a solid lineup!

<b>Tickets:</b> <a href="#">EventBrite</a>
<b>Date:</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2017
<b>Starting time:</b> Noon
<b>Venue:</b> Builders Arms Hotel
<b>Address:</b> 211 Gertrude St, Fitzroy

## Bottle Tops is on again



A photo taken at last year's event

The incredibly successful Bottle Tops event last year is to become a regular feature it seems. The word has gone out that Bottle Tops will be held at Franklin Restaurant on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June. The response to the invitation has been incredible with many of Australia's leading natural winemakers and importers agreeing to attend.

Tickets for Bottletops, which coincides with the last weekend of Tasmania's extraordinary Dark Mofo winter festival, are selling fast.

To make it even more interesting Luke Burgess, Deborah Blank and Analiese Gregory have agreed to do the cooking alongside David Moyle.

<b>Tickets:</b> <a href="#">EventBrite</a>
<b>Date:</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
<b>Starting time:</b> 12:30pm – 4:30pm
<b>Venue:</b> Franklin Restaurant
<b>Address:</b> 30 Argyle Street, Hobart

If things go according to plan, the next day, Monday 19 June, should also be the last day of Luke Burgess and Deborah Blank's [Dier Marisqueria](#) popup, which they've just started running on Sundays and Mondays at Dier Makr (123 Collins St, Hobart). The first weekend was a great success, there's a break on 30 April and 1 May, then it should be every Sunday and Monday from 7 May until mid June.

So many good reasons to get in early and buy a ticket to come to Hobart for that weekend.

## Opi d'Aqui arriving in May



We have been fortunate to secure some of the delightful wines from Philippe Formentin of Opi d'Aqui from the Languedoc.

His vines are all tended using organic and biodynamic principles. We are particularly excited to obtain some of his seafood-loving Picpoul which is grown on a plot just near the village of Pinet which lies directly inland from the coastal village of Sète on the other side of the Etang du Thau in the Languedoc.

Picpoul is a legendary grape variety of the area around Sète. Here it is often teamed with oysters and other seafood dishes such as the amazing local version of the pie called Tielle de Poulpe Sètoise which is braised octopus served in a bread-dough pastry shaped almost like an Australian pie. (We're lobbying Luke and Deborah to come up with a version of this dish for Dier Marisqueria once the Picpoul arrives, having introduced them to tielles in France last year.)

Philippe Formentin picks the Picpoul grapes by hand from a 1 hectare plot near Pinet (limestone and clay terroir) and places in small 10 kg baskets. The grapes are pressed, with 50% of the juice transferred to tanks and 50% to old oak barrels for a period of 6 months. The wine is then bottled without filtration and without the addition of sulphites to ensure freshness.

Another very interesting wine that is light, yet very expressive is called Massale. This light, smashable wine is made from a single plot of grapes where the three Grenache varieties (Grenache Noir, Grenache Gris and Grenache Blanc all grow). Hence this wine is a "mix" of 40% red, 30% grey and 30% white grapes that have undergone cold carbonic maceration for 3 to 4 weeks before being transferred to stainless steel tanks for 6 months to produce a wine that will match with a wide range of foods or which can simply be sipped while sitting outside in the summer sun.

We will also have another light red wine made from three different plots of Grenache Noir called Ménage à Trois, a light and very drinkable Mourvèdre called Les Fainéants and a Grenache Noir called Les Cliquets.

All Philippe's wines are made without fining and without the addition of sulphites so that they remain fresh and lively.

## Pack 1: Fresh and lively “drink now” 6 Pack



The wines we have chosen for you in this pack are all fresh and lively and ready to drink now. There is one white wine made from Chardonnay, one delicious rosé and four vibrant red wines.

**Terres Dorées Beaujolais Blanc Classic 2015** – This is a very interesting Chardonnay from the southern part of Beaujolais made by Jean-Paul Brun who is a long-term player in Beaujolais winemaking scene. It is a fresh and vibrant wine with lovely minerality. He has made special tanks for this wine which lie on their side so that there is more lees contact than is possible with a vertical tank, hence giving a richer texture to the wine.

**Les Vignes d'Olivier Vin de France Rosé Foncé 2015** – This is a stunning biodynamic rosé made from Cinsault grapes grown in his 5 hectares of vineyards at Argelliers not too far inland from the Languedoc city of Montpellier. He makes this wine purely by direct pressing the Cinsault. As with all his wines this one has no sulphur added at any time.

**Julien Peyras Vin de France Gourmandise 2015** – The Gourmandise is comprised of 100% Cinsault from 40 year old vines which have been raised on clay and limestone soils then made into an easy-drinking wine. We are particularly impressed with this release! It took a while to settle but it is in a very good place now. The grapes were picked by hand, as all of Julien's grapes are, and then carefully sorted before undergoing natural fermentation in stainless steel tanks. This is a fresh, lively, juicy, young red.

**Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Avanti Popolo 2015** – Avanti Popolo is a lighter style of wine despite an underlying strength. Named after a revolutionary Italian cry of 'Forward People' this wine made from mainly 90 year old vines. The wine is predominantly Carignan with a splash of Grenache this year. The wine has not been filtered or fined, and has no additions. The vines grow on granitic quartz soils and the minerality is pronounced. The 2015 vintage is an absolute winner! It is slightly darker than the iconic Fou du Roi but it has an incredible depth of flavour from the low yielding very old vines.

**Domaine Milan Vin de France Milan Nouveau 2016** – Although it doesn't appear in the name it does on the label - this is another wine from the Milan team which has no added sulphur. This wine is 100% Mourvèdre which was fermented in two separate tanks. One underwent carbonic maceration and the other was fermented traditionally. The contents

## WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

of both tanks were then pressed together, and had a very short period in a stainless steel tank prior to bottling. This is a bright, light, lively wine that is drinking very nicely at the moment. It is delicious.

**Sylvain Bock Vin de France La P'tite Goutte 2015** –La P'Tite Goutte is a lighter red wine from Sylvain Bock. made from Grenache which has been fermented using carbonic maceration where the juice was taken off the must three times to ensure it did not become too tannic. The result is a delicious, eminently drinkable light red wine that provides a window into the more serious Neck cuvee also made from Grenache. Sylvain is an amazing winemaker with an intuitive feel for what will work with the bounty the vines have delivered to him!

**The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$202 but the pack price is ~~\$171.70~~ including freight.**

Pack 2: Premium Reds 6 pack



We have selected six premium red wines for this pack including wines made from very old vines and two wines made in amphora.

**Sextant - Julien Altaber Monthelie 1er Cru Sur La Velle Rouge 2015** – If you drive south out of Beaune on the D973 you very soon pass through the famous wine villages of Pommard and Volnay and then arrive at Meursault on the left side of the road and Monthélie on the right. The Monthélie vineyards are, in fact, very close to some of the finest vineyards of Volnay. It is definitely an appellation to watch. The soils are excellent, the exposure good and the proximity to the other fine appellations means that great wines are possible here. This wine, which has just arrived, is very fresh and lively with good tannin structure, lively acidity and flavours of cherries and red berries.

**Derain Pommard Les Petits Noizons 2011** – There is lots of limestone here because it is quite close to one of our favourite villages in Burgundy, namely Pommard. This village is well known for the intense, structured red wines that benefit from the iron-rich, red soils that surround it. Les Petits Noizons is one of the best sites in Pommard and the wines are particularly attractive. The 2011 is a lively, strong, structured deep-red wine showing all the complexity and elegance you would expect from a Pommard.

**Hervé Villemade AOP Cheverny Rouge Desiré 2014** – We have received a tiny allocation of Hervé's amphora red. He buried three large amphora in his winery and this is his first vintage made completely in these ancient vessels. This one is made entirely from his best Pinot Noir grapes and is a silky smooth and compelling wine with that characteristic texture that can only come from amphorae.

**Jean-Michel Stephan AOC Côte-Rôtie 2014** – This vintage is a mixture of Syrah, Sérine and a little Viognier. Uncommonly for the northern Rhone, Jean-Michel uses carbonic maceration for his red wines. It was matured in stainless steel tanks for a period of twelve months before bottling. 2014 was a difficult year for Jean-Michel and “so he could sleep” he added a small amount of sulphites to his wine. At a recent tasting it was drinking beautifully. It has all the notes that you expect from Syrah and Sérine such as cherries, blackberries, cinnamon, liquorice and little bursts of violets. There is also a lovely expression of minerality derived from the elements in the gneiss and granite soils in

## WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

which the vines thrive. There are also very attractive silky tannins that envelop you. But it is the incredible freshness, finesse and liveliness that really stands out with this lovely wine - it is definitely a living wine and so engagingly different to some of the brutal monsters found in this region. The alcohol level is only 12%. Jean-Michel always recommends decanting his wines, and you could do this up to two hours before drinking.

**Belluard Vin de Savoie AOP Mondeuse 2015** – Savoie vigneron Dominique Belluard is well known for making clean, elegant, expressive white wine from the rare Gringet grape. Even rarer for him though is his Mondeuse, which represents only 2% of his plantings. We get 48 bottles a year so this is a one-off opportunity to try this wine as part of a pack.

**Domaine l'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Jeux de Mains 2014** – The Jeux de Mains is an amazing wine made from carefully selected grapes from a very old vineyard of Cinsault. The whole grapes undergo 10 days of maceration before the juice is transferred to old barrels to mature for one and a half years. The result is a silky-smooth, red wine with lots of length and great texture.

**The RRP for 6 bottles of wine in Pack 2 is \$495 but the pack price is \$420.75 including freight, a discount of 15%.**



### Pack 3: Wines from old vines 6 pack



Why do we get excited about wines made from grapes picked from old vines? We don't always. However, we do if they are very well looked-after vines where a strict pruning regime is carried out and organic or biodynamic practices are in play. The reason is that old vines are less productive and need to be treated gently and the soil need to be nurtured so that the mycorrhizal fungi in the soil can assist the roots of the vine in absorbing the nutrients needed by the vines. If these factors are in play then old vines produce wonderful wines as you will see with those represented here in ages that range between 60 years old and 130 years old!

**Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Les Vieilles 2013** – This lovely wine is made from one of our favourite grapes, Carignan. This is even more exciting for us because it is made from grapes picked from very old vines from a very high vineyard that give more structure and flavour to the wines. The vineyard is bathed with north winds to cool the vines and provide more acidity to the wines. The vines are over 70 years old. The label above is from this cuvée.

**Domaine Le Temps Retrouvé Vin de France Grenache Gris 2015** – This white wine is made from 100% Grenache Gris from vines that are at least 90 years old. After the grapes are pressed the juice is transferred to old 400 litre barrels where the fermentation occurs. No sulphites are added at any stage. Michael likes to leave his wines to mature in barrels for almost a year to develop roundness and texture. This is a very exciting wine and certainly one of the best single variety wines made from Grenache Gris that we have ever tried.

**Domaine Le Temps Retrouvé Vin de France Rosé 2015** – The rosé is made using the saignée method where the juice is bled off from a tank of, in this case, the amazingly old vine Carignan (130 years old) and forty year old vines of Grenache before it has undergone full maceration in the tank, to create a light, textural, refined, delicious rosé that has been aged in 400 litre oak barrels for 10 months. This wine is sealed with a crown seal.

**Bainbridge and Cathcart Vin de France Rouge aux Levres 2015** – This wine is made from the red Grolleau Noir (aka Groslot Noir) grape that is only found at this end of the Loire Valley and rarely seen as a single varietal. The very old vines thrive in red clay and schist soils. The grapes underwent three weeks of whole bunch semi-carbonic maceration (the juice is not drained so both carbonic and alcoholic fermentation occur). Toby does not like to add carbon dioxide so uses a double lidded system in the tank to trap the ambient gas. The wine shows very fresh berry aromas and flavours, soft tannins and lots of juicy goodness. It tastes very fresh. The wine has a little remaining carbon dioxide, which acts as a preservative, so you might detect a bit of a 'prickly' at the beginning when the glass is first poured. The vines are very old (at least 85 years and some possibly over 100 years old) giving rise to a beautifully structured wine which exhibits considerable charm.

**Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Avanti Popolo 2015** – Avanti Popolo is a lighter style of wine despite an underlying strength. Named after a revolutionary Italian cry of 'Forward People' this wine made from mainly 90 year old vines. The wine is predominantly Carignan with a splash of Grenache this year. The wine has not been filtered or fined, and has no additions. The vines grow on granitic quartz soils and the minerality is pronounced. The 2015 vintage is an absolute winner! It is slightly darker than the iconic Fou du Roi but it has an incredible depth of flavour from the low yielding very old vines.

**Bainbridge and Cathcart Vin de France Les Jongleurs 2015** – This is a dry Chenin Blanc made from 60 year old vines covering just 0.14 hectare from near Faye d'Anjou where the soil is sandy. Old vine Chenin is a real treat as there is a complexity in the wine that cannot be achieved from young vines. The wine is quite dry and is low in alcohol at only 12 percent. If you love Chenin Blanc then you will love this wine.

**The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of old vine wine in Pack 3 is \$252 but the pack price is **\$214.20** including freight, a discount of 15%.**

Pack 4: Red wine 20% discount 12 pack



This pack contains 12 good-value red wines that are all drinking very nicely at the moment and don't need to be cellared.

**Hervé Villemade AOP Cheverny Rouge Domaine 2015** – This vintage was an interesting one in the Loire. The quality of the grapes was very good due to the excellent summer prior to picking which allowed the vines to recover from the earlier rain storms. The soil here is clay and flint over the limestone base that is widespread in this part of the Loire. This vintage saw a mix of 60% Pinot Noir and 40% Gamay undergo carbonic maceration for two weeks before the juice was transferred to old barrels for aging. It is a very pretty, fresh, flavoursome wine with a compelling liveliness that shows off the two grape varieties perfectly. We like to serve it slightly chilled.

**Nicolas Carmarans Vin de France Maximus 2013** – The Nicolas Carmarans Maximus is a fresh, vibrant red wine that sees 16 days of carbonic maceration to ensure the freshness and flavour that you expect from a wine made using this process. The 2013 vintage is low in alcohol, light, fresh and elegant. But flavour has not been sacrificed. The wine is made from Fer Servadou (also known as Mansois) which is local to the region around the Aveyron and then in an arc down to the area around the town of Gaillac which is just north of Toulouse.

**Jolly Ferriol Vin de France Va Nu Pieds 2015** – Va Nu Pieds means “go barefoot” and conjurs up the image of summertime drinking at the beach or barefoot at a barbecue. It is a fresh, bright, lively wine. The grapes (Carignan and Grenache) have undergone carbonic maceration and the wine was then matured in old wooden barrels. The wine is then transferred to tanks to allow the sediment to settle before it is bottled without filtering or fining.

**Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Vin de France Escarpolette Rouge 2013** – This wine was bottled in November after a period of fermentation using carbonic maceration to start the fermentation. The grapes used for this wine are the Languedoc favourites, namely Cinsault, Carignan and Syrah. This is a wine that exhibits balance and a harmony that derives from the harmony in the old-vine vineyard. The wine was naturally fermented in concrete tanks and then transferred to old wooden barrels.

**Henri Milan Vin de France Milan Nouveau 2016** – Although it doesn't appear in the name it does on the label - this is another wine from the Milan team which has no added sulphur. This wine is 100% Mourvèdre which was fermented in two separate tanks. One underwent carbonic maceration and the other was fermented traditionally. The contents of both tanks were then pressed together, and had a very short period in a stainless steel tank prior to bottling. This is a bright, light, lively wine that is drinking very nicely at the moment. It is delicious. Don't be put off by the fact that there are many wines made with this grape that are big, sweet and alcoholic – this wine shows just how light and elegant Mourvèdre can be!

**Julien Peyras Vin de France Gourmandise 2015** – The Gourmandise is comprised of 100% Cinsault from 40 year old vines which have been raised on clay and limestone soils then made into an easy-drinking wine. We are particularly impressed with this release! It took a while to settle but is in a very good place now. The grapes were picked by hand, as all of Julien's grapes are, and then carefully sorted before undergoing natural fermentation in stainless steel tanks. This is a fresh, lively, juicy, young red wine that is drinking beautifully right now.

**Terres Dorées (Jean Paul Brun) Bourgogne Rouge 2015** – This is a Bourgogne appellation wine instead of the more usual Beaujolais from Jean Paul Brun because it is a Pinot Noir rather than Gamay. The grapes come from three small, sun-drenched parcels of vines that were planted over 25 years ago in limestone soils in the south of Beaujolais. Remember that Beaujolais is a sub-region of Burgundy, therefore it is permitted to label a Pinot Noir grown in this region as a Bourgogne. The wine is matured in old wooden fûts. It is delicious.

**Mylène Bru Vin de France Violet de Mars 2012** – The story behind this wine is very special. This is a beautiful, silky Grenache that used to always feature on the wine list at the famous Garagistes in Hobart. It always sold out quickly and our allocation has always been small, but when Mylène and her partner were clearing out their winery recently they found some boxes of the 2012 vintage under some other vintages. Luckily we were visiting Mylène at the time and were able to snap them all up! This wine is made from grapes picked from Mylène's stunning vineyards in the hills behind the Languedoc seaside village of Sete. Mylène normally produces blended red wines, but in seasons when the Grenache ripens perfectly and when the grapes are very healthy she loves to make a wine from 100% Grenache. She calls the wine Violet de Mars. The vines grow on crumbly clay and limestone soils on slopes which face north and north east providing protection from the hot summer sun. The vineyards are ploughed by horse to avoid compacting the soils. The grapes are picked by hand to ensure they are in good condition and then fermented on their skins for between 10 to 20 days. The wine is then matured in tanks until March (Mars) when the wine has become quite purple (Violet). This a pretty, elegant and delicious red wine.

**Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Les Grands Vergers 2014** – The vines for this wine are over 80 years old. The wine is named after the lieu dit (parcel of land) where the vines grow, just beside his cellar. Here the gentle slopes are fully exposed to the sun allowing the grapes to ripen perfectly. The marl in which the vines thrive add minerality to the wine. This is a very, very good example of a Trousseau wine having the delicacy that we

associate with this fragile grape but also an extraordinary depth of flavour and a complexity that is intriguing. There are tannins present giving it structure but they are not aggressive. The wine is lively on the nose, has deep, deep flavours (hints of cherry and raspberry at the front of the palate and forest floors in autumn in the middle) and it tastes alive. It has a lingering mineral aftertaste. This is a living wine! No sulphite is added.

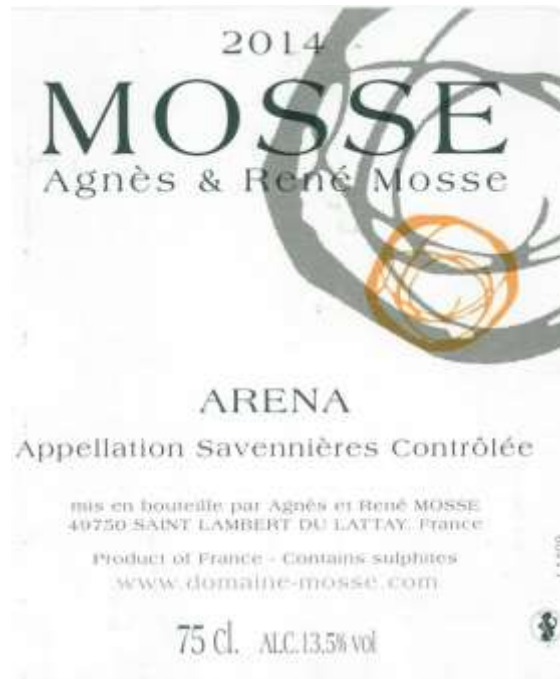
**Le Raisin à Plume (Jacques Février) Le Pâtis des Rosiers 2015** – This is one of three wines that we have from Jacques this year made from Gamay from vines that range between 25 to 45 years old. This one had two weeks of skin maceration before being pressed and matured for approximately one year in fibreglass tanks. The wine gains its minerality from the mix of old gneiss and schist soils that are mixed with basalt and quartz as well. The wine has serious structure and length with a lovely, savoury finish and will match a wide variety of dishes without overpowering them. It was bottled without the addition of any sulphites and without being filtered.

**Laurent Lebled Vin de France On Est Su l' Sable 2015** – As the name implies, this wine is made from Cabernet Franc grapes that have been grown in a sandy vineyard. It has none of the harsh aspects that Cabernet Franc can display in the wrong hands. Laurent understands this grape well and coaxes a suppleness, fruitiness and juiciness from this grape to make this fine, gulpable wines. The grapes are harvested manually in small crates. The grapes then undergo carbonic maceration for up to 12 days in cement tanks. The grapes are then pressed in a screw press before completing the fermentation in large fibreglass tanks. The wine is neither fined nor filtered. The wine is light enough to accompany chicken or quail or a range of charcuterie while being complex enough to pair with grilled meats.

**Le Temps Retrouvé Vin de France Mourvèdre 2014** – It is rare to find a single-variety Mourvèdre this far south but this one works very well. This wine clocks in at only 12.5% alcohol but has wonderful structure and very good fruit balance. It is very moreish and the first bottle that we opened after it arrived in Australia disappeared very quickly! Don't think of a Bandol here (the same grape is used in that appellation). Think of a wine that is more supple and elegant and easy to drink when young.

**The RRP for this selection of 12 bottles of wine is \$442 but the pack price is \$353.60 (a 20% discount) including freight.**

Pack 5: Premium White Wine 6 Pack



We have put together a tempting set of treats from around France that are all at the premium end of the spectrum. The grape varieties range from the slightly obscure (Gringet from the Savoie) to the very familiar (Chardonnay from two Burgundy producers) as well as Chenin Blanc from the Loire and Aligoté from Burgundy (a favourite grape of ours) and a pure and very elegant Roussanne from Provence.

**Domaine Belluard AOP Vin de Savoie Le Feu 2015** – The Le Feu is perhaps our favourite of Doninic’s stunning line up of wines. It is particularly elegant and refined with the late-maturing grapes being selected from very old, low-yielding vines in the Le Feu vineyard which has very steep slopes. The vines grow in iron-rich clay soils at 450 metres above sea level. The alcohol level is 12%. There are floral and fruity elements on the nose, and in the mouth you will detect citrus fruits and white peaches with a minty note that gives it freshness and minerality as well as refinement and balance. This vintage marks a change for Dominique Belluard because he has now achieved his ambition to ferment his best wines in concrete 'eggs' - large ovoids that he believes allow the fermentation to proceed in a more harmonious way. This wine teams well with all types of seafood but also goes very well with chicken and quail and a range of fresh cheeses. It is worthy of cellaring for several years.

**Fanny Sabre AOP Pernand Vergelesses Blanc 2014** – This elegant white wine is produced from vineyards in the northern section of the Côte de Beaune that lies to the north of the city of Beaune. The area sees some beautifully elegant white wines produced and this one is no exception. The grapes were hand-picked then taken to her winery in Pommard where they were crushed and the juice transferred to old wooden barrels for fermentation to occur naturally. This is the first time we have imported a wine from Fanny that has been produced from grapes in this appellation.

**Domaine Mosse AOC Savennieres Arena 2014** – The Savennieres appellation occupies a small area (only 150 hectares) just south of the city of Angers. Some of the great wines of France are produced here from the sandy soils that sit over a shale base. This is a dry wine style made from Chenin Blanc from a tiny plot of land that is less than half a hectare - therefore there is very little of this wine available. The alcohol level is 12.5%. The grapes were pressed gently and then allowed to undergo natural fermentation in wooden barrels that has already been used for two vintages and hence imparted no wood flavours to the wine. This wine is amazing value for the price considering the appellation and the elegance of the wine.

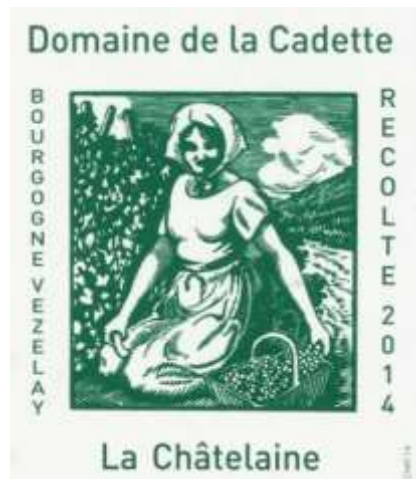
**Recrue des Sens (Yann Durieux) Vin de France Love & Pif 2014** –Yann Durieux's Aligoté is made from grapes picked from his vines that grow not too far from the central town of Beaune. Love & Pif is a great example of this grape, showing why Burgundians revere this grape and the wines made from it. It has amazing length and structure and has certainly benefited from some time in the bottle. We've aged it for you.

**Domaine Derain AOP St-Aubin En Vesvau 2015** – This delicious Chardonnay, which has just arrived, is made from vines in the En Vesvau lieu dit which lies on the rocky, sunny slopes of Montrachet. The terroir here is perfect for the production of flavoursome white wines for which the area is rightly famous. The yield is relatively low at 38 hectolitres per hectare. The grapes are picked by hand and placed carefully in small boxes to avoid crushing the fruit. After crushing the juice is left to ferment using the complex natural yeasts that collect on the fruit. The wine is both powerful and elegant making it perfect for aging - however it is also drinking very nicely now.

**Domaine Milan Vin de Table La Carrée 2013** – The La Carrée is a refined, elegant, complex wine that shows the wonderful characteristics of the Roussanne grape in its best light. It is labelled as a Vin de Table because white wines made from 100% Roussanne are not permitted in the Les Baux de Provence appellation. This wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts, matured in tanks for a year and then transferred to barriques for a further 9 months. No filtration or fining is used to preserve the flavour of this special wine. This wine will keep for a long time and continue to improve in the bottle. We only have a small supply of this sought-after wine as only 1000 bottles are produced.

**The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$466 but the pack price is \$396.10 including freight, a discount of 15%.**

## Pack 6: One Pack Only 6 Pack



As usual this pack consists of 6 wines that we have sold out of except for one final bottle. This month we have some premium, sought-after bottles such as the Mosse Bonnes Blanches which is one of their top wines. We give a special discount for this pack of 20% so it represents excellent value. And this month there is an even split between white wines and red wines.

Please remember that there is only one pack and the first person to order it gets it!

**Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay La Châtelaine 2014** – La Châtelaine is one of Domaine de la Cadette's best cuvées made from the only permitted white grape variety in the Bourgogne Vézelay appellation, Chardonnay. The wine comes from grapes from the vineyards on the pretty south-facing slopes of the Vézelay hills. The grapes are harvested by hand and then fermented naturally in stainless steel tanks. This is a beautifully-textured wine, showing that white wines of considerable elegance can be produced in this region.

**Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Crêts 2013** – The grapes for this wine are manually harvested and matured in old wood so that the wine can 'breathe' but so that no new oak flavour dominates it. There is the trademark oxidative quality to this wine which provides a nutty spiciness and umami flavour that makes you want to sip more and more of it. This is Jura Chardonnay at its best! There are honey and pear and almond flavours in abundance and a long, lingering minerality that reflects the amazing terroir of the area around Michel's village.

**Domaine Mosse Vin de France Les Bonnes Blanches 2014** – René Mosse didn't bother to submit his Bonnes Blanches to the authorities this year. He knows his wine is good and he knows it will sell so he doesn't need the appellation. He therefore has released it as a Vin de France as so many winemakers are doing these days. Like the Le Rouchefer it is a white wine made from 100% Chenin Blanc. The vines are from a 2.5 hectare plot where the vines are over 35 years old and the yield is very low at only 20 hectolitres per hectare. The wine is aged in wooden fûts. Grapes are picked by hand on this domaine. This is a very good food wine. The alcohol percentage is 13.5% and there is a very small amount of residual sugar while still finishing dry. This is a stunning example of Chenin Blanc. It displays precision and strength and the spicy notes linger for ages.



**Laurent Lebled Vin de France Ca C'est Bon 2015** – We have always loved the juicy, gulpable qualities of this smashable Gamay, made with carbonic maceration, which also has plenty of length. Some of this length comes from the rocky soils that the Gamay vines grow in and further complexity is the result of the carefully selected (selection massale) vines that were planted in 1950 and 1970 and are therefore at the peak of their maturity.

**Terres Dorées (Jean-Paul Brun) Fleurie 2013** – This wine is much stronger than the average Fleurie however the berry fruits and cherry fruits are there and the long, lingering, mineral, pure finish is very appealing. This 'cru' Beaujolais (from one of the best of the ten cru regions in Beaujolais) is complex, elegant and very drinkable.

**Domaine les Grandes Vignes Anjou Villages Les Cocainelles 2013** – This is a red wine of great provenance. The Cabernet Franc vines grow on soils made from decomposed grey and black schist mixed with decaying marine fossils. It is classified as an Anjou Villages wine made from vines that are over 25 years old which makes it stand out among the crowd in this region. The wine was naturally fermented, and was bottled without fining and without filtration. This is a smooth, silky wine with a great mouth-feel. No sulphur has been added at any stage.

**The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$281 but the pack price is \$224.80 including freight, a discount of 20%.**

## Pack 7: Oxidative Wines 3 pack



With this pack, we are offering three wines that have undergone oxidative treatment to develop those much sought after nutty and umami characteristics. The three wines are totally different to each other. The first is a white wine from the Jura that was under the veil of yeast for three years. The second is a Chardonnay from Tasmania that had five years in a barrel under the veil of yeast, then over three years in the bottle. And finally, a wine from Provence that was made from accidentally overripe Grenache Blanc grapes from the 2011 vintage. It has been bottled for many years and is now quite dry but with an alluring oxidative quality.

**Philippe Bornard Cotes du Jura Savagnin Les Marnes 2012** – This wine will grab the attention of the oxidative crowd even though it is, to our taste, relatively lightly oxidative. Let's explain about sous-voile wines. These are wines that have an extended period of barrel aging, during which the barrel is not topped up. The wine gradually evaporates exposing it to air but also forming a 'veil' of yeast on the surface which protects it from the more negative effects of oxygen. The resultant wine develops nutty characteristics and a savoury palate that is quite compulsive. The wine was produced with native yeasts and very little sulphur has been added to the bottle. The old casks that the wine is matured in impart little if no oak flavour. This is an intriguing and beautiful wine that will appeal to lovers of the Jura experience. It's more affordable than Vin Jaune but, like it, is a wonderful match with nutty cheeses such as Comté, which comes from the same region.

**d'meure l'avenir oublié 2008** – This sous voile "under the veil" Chardonnay, from southern Tasmania, is unique. Dirk Meure's vineyard was just south of Woodbridge at Birchs Bay. It's right on the coast overlooking d'Entrecasteaux Channel and Bruny Island. He sold it a couple of years ago and the last wines made under the d'meure label are from the 2014 vintage. But, waiting patiently there was also l'avenir oublié (forgotten future). Only made once, it was an accident. Once the d'meure 2008 Chardonnay was made, there was not enough to fill the last barrel. So Dirk Meure's friend chef Luke Burgess said to him don't worry "Set this aside and it will become very good vinegar". He thought d'meure chardonnay vinegar would be excellent to use at Garagistes! But it didn't become vinegar. Instead a flor of yeast formed on top of the wine, in the way of the Jura's famous Vin Jaune. Once discovered this caused great excitement. They waited and waited and it

## WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

started to taste amazing, unique of course but with umami not dissimilar to Vin Jaune. Eventually in 2013 Dirk bottled it, without any added sulphites, and now, it is released (as of 19 March 2017). We're very proud to be selling it. (Note this bottle is 375 mls.)

**Henri Milan La Saco Noble Irago 2011** – This wine has recently arrived in Australia after being bottled this year. It spent a lot of time in a tank and became oxidative. The grapes were picked in early September 2011 and the Grenache Blanc was directly pressed and transferred to a tank. Only five grams of residual sugar remain so it is almost dry. This wine also has a connection with Luke Burgess from Garagistes. Last year, he and his partner Deborah Blank did a popup at Chardon Restaurant in Arles, which is quite close to the Milan vineyards), which featured the wines of Domaine Milan. While tasting for possible matches with Théophile Milan prior to the dinner, they discovered this wine, which had been hidden away.



La Saco Noblo on our table at Chardon

They teamed it with a dish of skate with fresh Espelette pepper and the match was perfect.



It is the fourth dish down

We bought 24 bottles and, having tried one since it arrived, can report that it's equally as compelling and unique as it was in Arles. The bottles are 500 mls.

**The RRP for 3 bottles of wine in Pack 7 is \$221 but the pack price is \$187.85 including freight, a discount of 15%.**

## Aromas and flavours in wine: Part 1 (aromas)

It is almost an habitual reaction. When someone hands you a glass of wine it is inevitable that the first thing you will do is swirl the wine in the glass and take a sniff. The better the glass the more likely you are to detect a range of aromas coming from the wine – this is why Zalto glasses have become so popular because they are specially designed to improve both the aroma and the flavour of the wine.

So why do we swirl the wine around? The reason is that the aromas come from volatile compounds within the wine and volatile compounds are released as vapour through the swirling action. The resultant vapour impacts on our aroma receptors and creates a signal that is transmitted to the brain where that signal is interpreted.

And this is where some of the big questions need to be asked. Do we all detect the same aromas in a particular wine? What role does memory play in detecting aromas? Does everyone have the same acuity in detecting aromas? Are there aromas that turn some people off a wine and yet cause others to like it?

It is answers to questions such as these that are central to the long running debate over natural versus conventional wines. Wine tasters who have long been sniffing and slurping their Burgs, Barossas and Barolos have come to expect a certain range of aromas and flavours in their wine and are puzzled about the hordes of people who are seeking different flavours and aromas and textures in their wine.

This article was prompted by a very pleasant dinner we had recently with a friend who is heavily into traditional wines from areas such as Burgundy, Bordeaux and Champagne but has had little exposure to natural wines.

When we progressed to a Domaine Belluard Vin de Savoie Le Feu 2009 it got interesting. This amazing wine from high in the old glacial valley near the village of Ayse is picked from vines that thrive in iron-rich, morainal soils in perfect terroir. The grapes used to make this wine were the indigenous variety called Gringet which DNA testing organised by Dominique Belluard shows that it is unrelated to any other known grape variety. Our friend sniffed the wine, then sniffed it again and then again. He was perplexed. He said that he had no vocab to describe what he was smelling – and this from someone who is used to describing Burgundian wines in detail. He couldn't use the aroma to guess where the wine came from which he found quite disturbing.

So, that got us thinking about how aromas are detected by our brain and how those memories are organised and catalogued and the link between aromas and a way to describe and classify them.

Harold McGee<sup>1</sup> recently wrote an article called “Perception vs. Reality” in the estimable magazine Lucky Peach. In it he claimed that aromas and flavours are constructs of the brain that are, in turn, influenced by memory. In part, he said:

*“each of us has a different set of sensors and a different brain. This is partly a matter of genetics. There are a half dozen taste receptors and a few hundred different smell*

---

<sup>1</sup> McGee, Harold, *Perception vs Reality. Perception is its own reality when you're eating. Lucky Peach. May 6, 2016.*

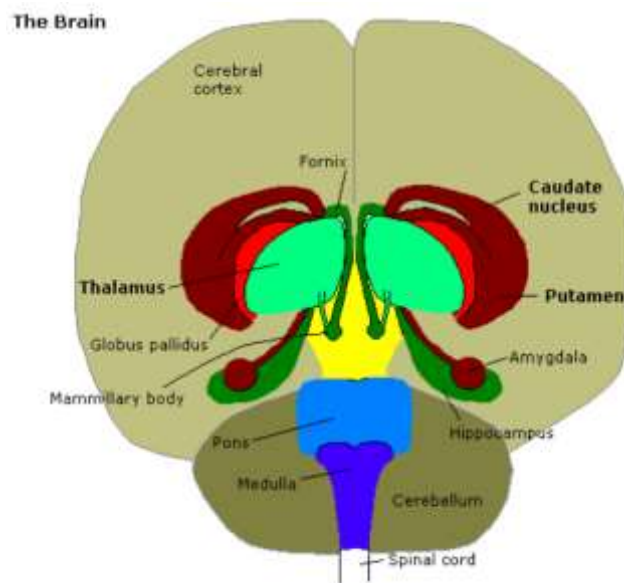
*receptors; no one gets a complete set, and everyone gets a different set. There can be a tenfold difference between one person and another in the number of taste buds on their tongues. And we all have different databases of experience to which the brain is always referring to make sense of what's going on in the moment."*

How do aromas penetrate the brain? The first port of call for our aroma compounds is the aroma receptor in our nasal cavity. The receptor is called the *olfactory epithelium* and contains sensors<sup>2</sup> mounted on tiny strands called cilia. These sensors are capable of combining with specific volatile aroma compounds from the wine. This is quite complicated because specific sensors are designed to combine with specific aroma compounds. We know this from work carried out by Axel and Buck<sup>3</sup> which won them a Nobel Prize.

Because a given sensor can combine with many different volatile compounds it means that the human brain is capable of detecting more than a trillion different aromas, sometimes at very low concentrations, as low as 1 part per trillion<sup>4</sup>.

Once these compounds combine with the sensors they send electrical signals to the *glomerulus* layer in the *olfactory bulb* at the back of the nose (almost directly between the eyes) where it is encoded into signals understood by the brain. Masurkar and Chen<sup>5</sup> put it succinctly:

*"A central function of the olfactory bulb is to process odor coding patterns and relay processed odor codes to the higher olfactory brain centers."*



Source: Wikipedia

---

<sup>2</sup> Some people have around 450 sensors while for others it may rise into the thousands. We have only a few taste receptors, however.

<sup>3</sup> Buck, L & Axel, R (1991) A novel multigene family may encode odorant receptors: a molecular basis for odor recognition. *Cell* April 5.65, pp 175-87.

<sup>4</sup> Bushdid C, Magnasco MO, Vosshall LB, Keller A. Humans can discriminate more than 1 trillion olfactory stimuli. *Science*. 343(6177): 1370-2 (2014)

<sup>5</sup> A.V. Masurkar, W.R. Chen, in *Encyclopedia of Neuroscience*, 2009

But here is where it gets even more interesting. Recent research has shown that the signals may be modulated by the *thalamus* before they reach the cortex region of the brain. They are also sent to the *hippocampus* regions of the brain as well. These regions are responsible for long term memory.

### Memory and wine aromas

And so we now have a reason for a phenomenon that we constantly see at wine tastings. People will often sniff a wine and almost immediately start talking about a childhood memory. They will associate the aroma of the wine with something from their grandmother's cupboard or a school pencil box or an aroma associated with a pet or the aroma of something they used to eat or smell in a forest or a park.

This is because up until it reaches the brain the data generated by the compounds are fixed and scientifically verifiable – they are specific compounds or nerve signals. However once these signals are interpreted by the brain it becomes subjective and the memory areas of the brain start to suggest aromas based on the most vivid memories.

One friend who is Sri Lankan by birth has strong memories of curries she ate as a child and exclaims “curry leaf” whenever she sniffs a wine with the compound sotolon in it because it is one of the active ingredients of both curry leaf and fenugreek, both widely used in curries.

This is why people come up with different suggestions for aromas because it is arbitrated by brains with differing experiences.

McGee again:

*“When you think about how we describe tastes, we have abstract words for sweet and sour and bitter. But if you talk about aroma in a wine, it's going to be a leather saddle or a raspberry. We name smells by the materials we've experienced those molecules in before. The moment you smell something and recognize it, you're relying on past experiences of reality. Those experiences in turn influence what you experience in the moment.”*

### What are the aroma compounds and where do they come from?

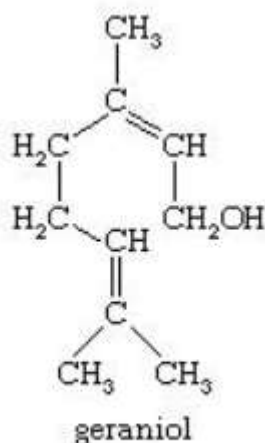
The types of compounds that are volatile and hence contribute to the aroma sensation vary widely but can be divided into some broad groupings. It is common to talk about three main groups of compounds:

1. Those aroma compounds found in the grapes themselves – these are called primary aromas;
2. Those aroma compounds generated during the fermentation process and through the maturation processes that occur in the barrels – these are called secondary aromas;
3. Those aroma compounds generated through the maturation processes that occur in the bottle – these are called tertiary aromas.

We will address these three in order. The primary aromas are very interesting mainly due to the lack of them rather than anything else. For most grape varieties, the aromas coming from the juice of the grape are difficult to distinguish between one grape variety and another – most grape juice is fairly boring in an olfactory sense which is obviously

why fermented grape juice is more exciting. Many of the aromatic compounds found in wine are created during the fermentation processes.

There are some exceptions to this such as the various varieties of the Muscat grape which has the same floral aromatic compounds in the skin of the grape as is found in the wine. These compounds are monoterpenes<sup>6</sup> (C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O) such as geraniol and nerol which develop in the grape skin when the grapes are exposed to reasonable amounts of sunlight.



**Geraniol monoterpene: notice 10 carbon atoms and 18 hydrogen and 1 oxygen**

This probably explains the intense floral aroma in the Petit Gimios Muscat wines from near Saint-Jean-de-Minervois in the Languedoc where there is lots of sunshine.

Of course, since the compounds are stored in the skin much will be lost by directly pressing the grapes. However, extended skin contact with Muscat grapes can lead to an overpowering floral character.

Another good example of a primary aroma is the presence of the sesquiterpene (C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>24</sub>) compound Rotundone in grapes such as Grüner Veltliner, Vespolina and Syrah. As we have written about before, this is the same aromatic compound found in black pepper and is the compound that gives Syrah its distinctive peppery aroma.

The secondary aromas come from the fermentation process and from the interactions with wooden barrels during maturation. The aroma compounds produced vary significantly between natural fermentation and fermentation with commercial yeasts.

One of the reasons why we do not like to see wines fermented with commercial yeasts is that they are designed to add flavours to the wine. Thus the tropical fruit flavours that are found in many of the New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc wines come from the yeasts selected rather than the grapes.

This was confirmed in a study by Swiegers and others in a paper entitled “The influence of yeast on the aroma of Sauvignon Blanc wine” published in 2009. They concluded:

---

<sup>6</sup> Monoterpenes are also emitted by forests and act as aerosols which help clouds to form and increase their brightness thus reflecting incoming sunlight and cooling the climate! Hence the more forests, the better it is for the climate.



*“While the 'green' characters in Sauvignon Blanc wines can be manipulated through vineyard management, the 'tropical fruity' characters appear to be largely dependent on the wine yeast strain used during fermentation”.*

This is because the yeasts produce the volatile thiol compounds associated with those tropical fruit aromas.

With natural fermentation there are up to thirty strains of yeast that might be on the grapes depending on the terroir. Each of these yeast strains naturally contributes different aroma compounds to the wine.

The other type of secondary aroma refers to those aroma compounds that are generated as a result of maturation in barrels or tanks. We prefer to see wines matured in old wooden barrels that have had the most strident of the compounds leached out of them, however there are many wines that are matured in new oak and there are many wine lovers who just love that taste of oak compounds! We don't.

One of the most common compounds is vanillin which is extracted from the wood. There is also a group of compounds known colloquially as oak lactones which give those easily detectable sweet, toasted and coconut aromas.

Tertiary aromas come into play once the wine is bottled and there is little oxygen left in the bottle to create oxidative characteristics.

### **Different aroma compound types**

There are quite a few aroma compounds that we discussed in the previous section. We are now going to group them into some broad categories and try to assign some characteristics to them.

Possibly the group that most people have experienced but might not know the name of is the group of pyrazine compounds ( $C_4H_4N_2$ ) that exhibit herbal or vegetable aromas. This is the one that is usually experienced when smelling Sauvignon Blanc and detecting grassy aromas or Cabernet Franc with its characteristic capsicum aroma. Sometimes in these wines the pyrazines have more of an asparagus aroma.

The pyrazine compound is also detected in Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon since they both have Cabernet Franc as a parent.

We have already discussed terpenes which can have aromas ranging from pine tree resin through to tropical lychee aromas.

Another compound group is that of thiols which in low concentrations add pleasant fruit-like aromas to wine. It is a thiol compound that gives good Colombard wines like Dominique Andiran's Vain de Rû hints of citrus and that gives the blackcurrant notes to Ivo Ferreira's Domaine l'Escarpolette L'Enchanteur which is made from very old vines of Merlot.

And we should also mention esters. These are the compounds that provide the “fruity” aromas in some wines. Esters are only present in grapes in low concentrations with most being produced during fermentation. Some esters are volatile and hence contribute to the aromas and some are non-volatile and therefore influence flavour.

### Conclusion

The way in which we detect the aromas in a wine are quite complex and the scientific knowledge in this area is still evolving.

In the next part of this article which we will publish in the next newsletter we will examine the even more complicated sense of taste and show that when the brain processes tastes it also combines the information it has about the aromas with the information from the taste receptors.

We will also try to explain that what is delicious to some people is not delicious to others by examining why we can no longer enjoy wines with heavy new oak influence or too many added sulphites, but how we do enjoy orange wines and oxidative wines that are spurned by others.

## Grape variety: Cinsault

Cinsault is often a forgotten grape, but our producers in the Languedoc love this variety. Many people will know it as one of the 15 (or 17) official grapes of Chateauneuf-du-Pape.

This grape flourishes from the Southern Rhone around to the Languedoc and down to Roussillon on the Spanish border.

It is often used as a blending wine, which means that winemakers don't trust the variety to produce a single variety wine of sufficient quality due to the low level of tannins in the skins of this grape.

However, we have a theory about this and many other grapes that we would like to share. We strongly believe that there are no bad grape varieties, instead we believe that there are only bad vignerons and winemakers. We think that there is always a grower and winemaker who can make great wines out of a despised or unknown grape variety, particularly if the soils are and vines are treated well.

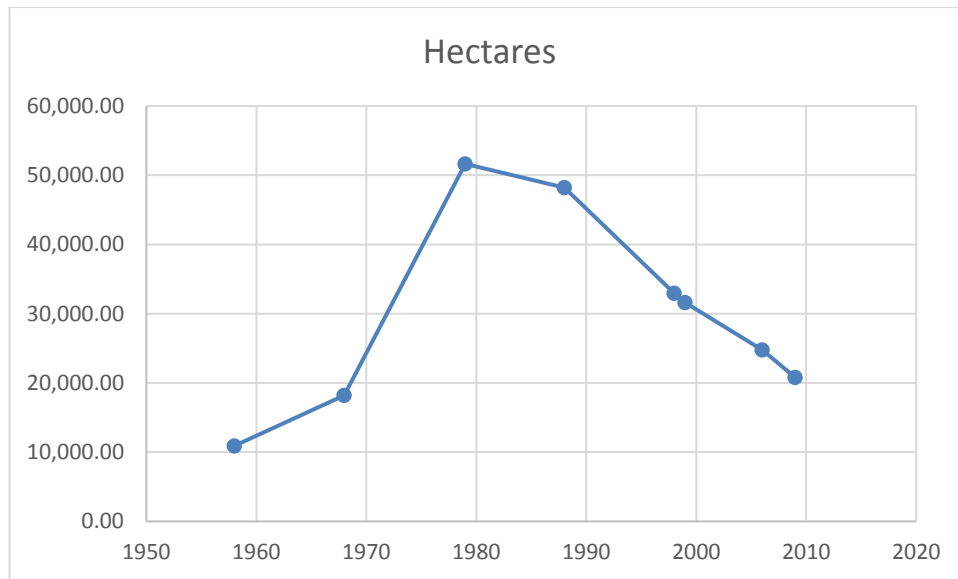
Think for a minute about the wines produced by Dominique Belluard. He crafts his white wines in the Savoie to critical acclaim throughout the world from the almost totally unknown Gringet grape variety.

We also carry the wines of Jean-Pierre Robinot who crafts long-lasting red wines in the Loire Valley from the Pineau d'Aunis grape variety which is relatively unknown outside a small area around the city of Tours.

Therefore, we get excited when we find a 100% Cinsault wine where the producer trusts the grape variety to deliver a great drinking experience.

So, we are delighted by the Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Jeux de Mains which is made entirely from Cinsault from old vines. We also love the juicy, smashable Julien Peyras Gourmandise which has no sulphites added and is made from grapes plucked from 40 years old Cinsault vines. And, of course, the young master of Cinsault, Olivier Cohen, is also making stunning rosés from this grape variety. We have both his Foncé and Clair rosé wines made entirely from Cinsault.

The rise and fall of Cinsault can clearly be seen in the following graph which shows the number of hectares planted to this grape variety in France over the past 50 or so years.



The vines have pointed leaves with a central lobe and two side lobes as shown in the photo below.



Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

The large, black grapes are clustered into tight bunches which makes them somewhat vulnerable to disease pressure.



Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

Overall this is a very useful grape variety that provides intense flavours to wine.

### How to order

You can order any of these packs by sending us an email to [wine@livingwines.com.au](mailto:wine@livingwines.com.au)

Or for other wines you can use our order form or just describe the wines in an email.

[http://www.livingwines.com.au/Catalogue/Order\\_Form\\_Current.pdf](http://www.livingwines.com.au/Catalogue/Order_Form_Current.pdf)

## WARNING

Under the *Liquor Licensing Act 1990* it is an offence:

for liquor to be delivered to a person under the age of 18 years.

*Penalty: Fine not exceeding 20 penalty units*

for a person under the age of 18 years to purchase liquor.

*Penalty: Fine not exceeding 10 penalty units*