

WINE Talk: January 2017

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 67

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2017. Last year was an exciting one for Living Wines. We increased the range of our portfolio considerably and we have attracted many new wholesale and retail customers throughout Australia especially through attendance at the increasing number of natural wine festivals such as Rootstock (Sydney), Soulfor Wine (Melbourne), Handmade (Melbourne), Mental Notes (Sydney) and Bottletops (Hobart). We look forward to attending these again in 2017. Both we and our customers are indebted to the organisers of these events who put in a huge amount of effort, mostly voluntary, to make them happen.

We also have had some exciting news since we published the last newsletter. We have a more detailed story further down in this news, but in brief, our application to broaden the range of products we handle has been approved opening the way for us to distribute Australian wines as well as European and other wines and related products.

We have lots of news for you in this newsletter and seven special packs including two with 20% discounts over our normal prices. The packs include a six-pack designed for drinking at picnics or barbecues this summer; another made up of wines that are 100% Chenin Blanc; another that highlights an often forgotten style of wine, namely the "gris" wines (grey wines) such as Pinot Gris, Grolleau Gris and Grenache Gris. We also have our regular 12 pack which we've also designed for easy drinking over summer and our semi-regular "one only" pack. We have raided our cellar to produce a six pack from our dwindling supplies of the excellent aged wines from Domaine Saint Nicolas. Finally, we are offering a mixed pack of six red wines.

We also have a number of articles for you this month which address different aspects of the winemaking process as well as our regular series on grape varieties which, this month, is about Pinot Gris, nicely fitting in with our grey pack!

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.

Change to our licence conditions

Our application to broaden the range of products that we sell has been approved, so now we are in a position to take on some of the emerging natural wine makers in Australia and beyond whose products we are enjoying more and more.

We will continue to import European wines, spirits, beer and cider but we will be looking to expand our activities into the distribution side so that we can represent other natural wine makers by distributing their products in Tasmania.

We will be looking for products that fit our strongly held philosophy. The wine must be made from grapes that come from vines that have not been sprayed with pesticides, herbicides or fungicides (including glyphosates), the grape juice must have been fermented using the natural yeasts on the grapes and then nothing added or taken away in the winemaking process except for the addition of low levels of sulphites.

We look forward to the new opportunities!

Are Champagne flutes a thing of the past?

For the past few years we have been asking waiting staff to pour our Champagne in a normal wine glass rather than a Champagne flute. The reason is that Champagne flutes are too narrow to properly enjoy the aroma of the wine. There is also a slightly cramped feeling associated with the drinking experience that the narrow opening provides.

So we were delighted when we stumbled across an online story from the Decanter magazine recently where the same issues were addressed. The article was written about a year ago and was entitled “Farwell to Champagne flutes in 2016?” Well, obviously it didn’t happen, but we are noticing more and more restaurants at least offering the choice between a flute and a wine glass for sparkling wines.

The physics behind this preference according to Decanter is that in a wine glass more bubbles reach the surface and explode at the same time. Now the bubbles carry aromas to the surface and if there is a bigger area then there is more aroma to be savoured.

Leading glass manufacturers Zalto (our favourite) and Riedel have both released wine glasses for use with Champagne. The Riedel Veritas Champagne Wine glass and the Zalto Universal are both ideal for this purpose and have a diameter of around 85 millimetres at the widest point.

The difference between a flute and one of these glasses is quite considerable. The average Champagne flute has a diameter of 45 millimetres thus providing a surface area of 1590 square millimetres. The Zalto and Riedel, on the other hand, provide a surface area of 5674 square millimetres – almost three and a half times the surface area of the flute!

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

Of course, the downside, is that a flute maintains the bubbles for a longer period. This is in marked contrast to the old-style Champagne coupe – the saucer shaped glass that was popular in the fifties and sixties and provided a larger surface area.



Champagne coupe

Too wide



Zalto Universal

Just right



Champagne flute

Too narrow

So we think that the wine glass shape is just right for enjoying a glass of Champagne or sparkling wine or a pétillant naturel.

Where to buy our wine in Hobart



The cellar at Dier Makr: Photo ripped off from one of their social media posts

For Tasmanian customers and for visitors to Tasmania we do not have a shop front but can deliver to your home, office, hotel or place you are staying if you need a care package during this period. Just send us an order to wine@livingwines.com.au and we will deliver the wines to you. If you don't know what you want let us know the style of wines you prefer and the price range and we will send you a suggestion.

Some of our wines are also available to buy at **The Wursthau Kitchen** in the Salamanca Place precinct (1 Montpelier Retreat, Battery Point, open 7 days a week until 6pm on week days and 5pm at weekends), at **Willing Bros Wine Merchants** in North Hobart (390

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

Elizabeth St, open till 1am, closed Monday), at **Ettie's** (100 Elizabeth St, open until 11pm, closed Monday), at close-by **Quartermasters Arms** (132 Elizabeth, open until 2am, closed Sunday and Monday), and at brand new city restaurant and bottleshop **Dier Makr** (123 Collins St) where their cellar is open for takeaways from 5pm until midnight Wednesday until Saturday and on Sunday afternoons.

Pack 1: Summer barbecue 6 Pack



For our first pack this month we have chosen six wines that are perfect for picnics or barbecues. There is a delicious pink pet nat, a couple of lip-smacking whites, a slightly orange wine and two smashable reds.

Jolly Ferriol Vin de France Pet'Nat Rose 2015 – This is an unusually delicious sparkling wine and doubly unusual because it is made entirely from Cabernet Sauvignon - a grape that it not usually associated with the Roussillon. The wine was vinified in fibreglass vats and then bottled before fermentation finished. Fermentation continues in the bottles producing the natural bubbles. The yeast which collects in the bottle as sediment is disgorged leaving a clear, clean sparkling wine. This pet nat has a deep pink colour and a slight herbal bitterness on the finish. It is delightful as an aperitif but is also a very good accompaniment for food.

Le Temps de Cerises La Peur du Rouge 2015 – Axel Prüfer can definitely be described as a low interventionist winemaker. This incredibly complex wine has a very interesting array of exciting grape varieties. It is 40% Chardonnay from Axel's vineyards, 40% Clairette from Emile Heredia's vineyards, 10% Terret Blanc from a neighbour, and 10% Picpoul. The wine is packed with minerality and has a richness derived from the Clairette, one of our favourite grape varieties from southern France. Only a wine made from perfect fruit grown without sprays, irrigation and artificial fertilisers could possibly taste like this. So drink this if you have a "fear of the red" since la peur means fear.

Causse Marines Gaillac Les Greilles 2015 – Les Greilles is a classy white wine blended from local Gaillac grapes Mauzac and Loin-de-l'Oeil with a little Muscadelle and Chenin Blanc thrown in. We perhaps do not give this wine full praise. To us it an amazing wine of great complexity and with nuances that make it a perfect wine to match with a very wide range of foods. It is a perfect aperitif wine as well as being an ideal accompaniment for a range of foods such as charcuterie, including cured meats and many spicy foods such as those from Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, India and Sri Lanka. The grapes come from a number of low-yielding parcels in their stunning vineyards with the maximum yield being a low 35 hectolitres per hectare. The low yield leads to increased fruit intensity that shines through in this wine. Patrice and Virginie are dedicated winemakers who make incredibly delicious wine using traditional grape varieties from this delightful terroir.

Domaine la Paonnerie Vin de France Voila du Gros Lot 2014 – The “Voila du Gros Lot” from La Paonnerie is made from 100% Grolleau Gris (also called Groslot in the Loire) grown in granitic soils. The grapes are hand harvested and then whole bunch fermented. The skins are left in contact with juice for a number of days as per the Italian tradition of creating orange wines. So, this is a rosé because there has been some skin contact, but because it has been done with white grapes it falls more into the orange wine tradition. The wine is fermented with natural yeasts and is neither filtered nor fined. This is a light, lively delicious rose wine that is perfect for sipping at any time and is also a great match for a wide range of foods as it will not overpower them.

Les Vignes d'Olivier Vin de France Rond Rouge 2015 – The Rond Rouge is the first red wine from Olivier that we have brought into Australia. It is made from Syrah, Cinsault and Grenache from his vineyards in the Hérault. Here the grapes benefit from the careful vineyard work he carries out using biodynamic practices. This is a lovely, lively wine with soft tannins and a great mouthfeel. It is perfect for dishes such as braised lamb or a beetroot salad.

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 when we tasted it recently we were delighted with the result so decided that we should release it 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.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$221 but the pack price is \$187.85 including freight.

Pack 2: “Too much Chenin Blanc is never enough” 6 pack



Chenin Blanc is slowly emerging as a grape that can deliver much in the right hands. We are fortunate to have a number of winemakers who deeply understand this grape and who consistently deliver great wines that are perfect for drinking now but which are capable of lasting for quite a long time.

Here is a selection of six of our favourites each from unique terroir to whet your appetite.

Domaine Mosse Anjou Blanc 2015 – The Anjou Blanc is made from Chenin Blanc grapes picked from younger vines in four different parcels of the Mosse vineyards. The vineyards lie on south-west facing slopes and the soils are composed of sand and gravel lying on a bed of schist. The grapes are picked and sorted manually. The average yield is very low for a dry white wine at 25 hectolitres per hectare. The grapes are left to ferment naturally in wooden fûts and undergo both alcoholic fermentation and malolactic fermentation. There is a tiny amount of residual sugar in this fresh-tasting wine with a lovely mouthfeel.

Domaine Vincent Carême Vouvray Le Clos 2014 – We are very lucky to have access to the wines of leading Vouvray producer Vincent Carême. The Le Clos is Vincent's top premium wine from his favourite vineyard that sits high on the slopes overlooking the Loire River. The yields from this vineyard with its 60 year old vines are very low at only 20 hectolitres per hectare. It is a dry white wine made entirely from Chenin Blanc grapes from the flint, clay and touffeau soils in the Le Clos vineyard that displays notes of pear and wild peaches, a generous palate and rich fruitiness along with citrus overtones. Fermentation and maturation was in French oak barrels, 20% of which were new. There are 3 grams per litre of residual sugar in the 2014 Le Clos which is the perfect amount to balance the natural acidity in wines from this region. It is a wine for drinking now or for keeping for five years. A true treasure from the Vouvray appellation.

Nicolas Carmarans IGP Aveyron Selves 2014 – The Nicolas Carmarans Selves is produced from old vine Chenin Blanc plus some grapes from his newly-planted vineyard on the Selves River slopes that thrives in the cold valley near Campouriez in the Aveyron. This is an unbelievably beautiful wine for those who love the power and elegance of this much sought-after grape variety. When we tried it this year during a lunch at chez Nicolas overlooking the beautiful river that meanders through the steep gorges here we were stunned again by the purity and elegance displayed by this wine.

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.

Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Chenin de la Colline 2015 – This lovely wine from the Touraine appellation is made from 100% Chenin Blanc, a grape which reaches its highest expression in the Loire Valley. On the Plouzeau estate, the clay and limestone soils seem to coax even more flavour from the 30 year old vines of Chenin to produce elegant wines with great flavour. The slopes on which the vines thrive face south west. We think that the Le Chenin represents excellent value for money - and it is biodynamic and is made naturally. It is rare to be able to access a well-made Chenin Blanc from the Loire made with such dedication for a price like this! We also like the new label with its gentle nod to the biodynamic winemaking approach that Francois has been so passionate about for so long. The label depicts a winemaker saluting the moon which has so much influence on the vineyard.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Le Haut des Clous Blanc 2012 - This is the prestige white from this domaine and is made from 100% Chenin Blanc. It has been fermented with natural yeasts then aged for 18 months in with 80% old oak and up to 20% of the wine exposed to new oak. The grapes benefit from the schist soils that dominate this area and provide the minerality that is so marked in this wine and the cooling breezes from the Atlantic Ocean which you can see from the vineyard which reduce disease pressure. The biodynamic viticulture that Thierry Michon has practised for so long leads to healthier grapes packed with flavour.

The RRP for 6 bottles of wine in Pack 2 is \$276 but the pack price is \$234.60 including freight, a discount of 15%.

Pack 3: “Grey” wines 6 pack



We all know about red, white and orange wines but some are a bit more obscure. There are black wines in Cahors and green wines in Portugal and then there are “grey” wines which are in no way grey. In France there are grey varieties of well-known varieties such as Pinot and Grenache and a slightly less well-known variety known as Grolleau or Groslot. The French word for grey is “gris” which is defined as “d’une couleur entre le blanc et le noir” – a colour between white and black. We have a little article at the end of this newsletter about Pinot Gris to provide you with a bit more information about the one type of “gris” wine.

So we have selected 6 different wines made from grey grapes that are all quite different and displaying totally different characteristics.

Domaine les Grandes Vignes Bulles Nature Rosé – This a totally natural sparkling wine made with only one fermentation in the bottle with one of the grapes being Groslot Gris (grey Groslot). This method is known in France as Methode Ancestrale. The grapes have never been sprayed, the wine hasn't been fined or filtered and the fermentation was with natural yeasts. The soil here is clay and gravel with some shale. The grapes are sourced from two vineyards, La Butte at Faveraye-Machelles which was planted in 2008 and la Noue at the nearby village of Thouarcé. They are planted to both Groslot Noir and Groslot Gris. This wine tastes completely dry.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Reflets Rosé 2015 – Another wine that contains some Groslot Gris. The Domaine Saint Nicolas Rosé is a delicate, pale pink perfumed beauty that is quite savoury with a dry finish making it perfect as an aperitif. The wine is predominantly Pinot Noir although there is 20% of Gamay and 10% of Groslot Gris as well to provide some additional complexity. The vineyard faces south-west and the soil is comprised of clay and schist. The wine was matured in stainless steel tanks.

Domaine Jean Ginglinger Vin d'Alsace Pinot Gris 2014 – A great example of the Pinot Gris variety with enhanced minerality from the biodynamic practices used by Jean. This is a particularly fine wine reminding us more of an Italian wine made from Pinot Grigio with its beautiful texture and long, lingering effect on the palate. The acidity is restrained allowing the fruit flavours to shine through.

Le Raisin à Plume Vin de France M des Humeaux 2015 – This wine is also 100% Pinot Gris. The village of Oudon where Jacques lives is within an obscure appellation known as Coteau d'Ancenis (named after a nearby village). Within this appellation it is permitted to make white wines from Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Gris. The twist is that the locals (and the appellation authorities) don't call it Pinot Gris, rather they adopt the local name of Malvoisie. Therefore the M stands for Malvoisie picked from the Humeaux vineyard which overlooks the Loire River and benefits from the winds that always blow, thus reducing disease pressure. The wine was matured in fibreglass tanks after a direct pressing of the grapes. This is a lovely wine of considerable complexity and depth and quite amazing energy and minerality. This wine has no sulphur added.

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 la Paonnerie Vin de France Voila du Gros Lot 2014 – This wine is made from 100% Grolleau Gris (also called Groslot in the Loire) grown in granitic soils. The grapes are hand harvested and then whole bunch fermented. The skins are left in contact with juice for a number of days as per the Italian tradition of creating orange wines. So, this is a rosé because there has been some skin contact, but because it has been done with grey grapes it falls more into the orange wine tradition. The wine is fermented with natural yeasts and is neither filtered nor fined. This is a light, lively delicious wine that is perfect for sipping at any time and is also a great match for a wide range of foods as it will not overpower them.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of “grey” wine in Pack 3 is \$228 but the pack price is \$193.80 including freight, a discount of 15%.

Pack 4: Summer Drinking 20% discount 12 pack



This pack has been designed for the season! It therefore includes some fun sparkling wines that are perfect for summer, some white wines that are perfect for a picnic or for sitting on the deck in the sun and some lighter red wines that can be drunk slightly chilled.

Domaine Mosse Vin de France Moussamousettes 2015 – The Domaine Mosse Moussamousettes is definitely a cult wine! We love this wine. It is light, delicious, limpid, very slightly sweet and the perfect aperitif for a spring or summer lunch or evening aperitif. This year the delicious flavour comes entirely from Grolleau Noir. It was bottled at only 3g residual sugar making an almost undetectable but pleasant sweetness to match the acidity in the wine. This method is known in France as "Méthode Ancestrale" and the wines are often referred to as Pet Nats (Pétillant Naturels).

Jolly Ferriol Vin de France Pet'Nat Rose 2015 – This is an unusually delicious sparkling wine and doubly unusual because it is made entirely from Cabernet Sauvignon - a grape that it not usually associated with the Roussillon. The wine was vinified in fibreglass vats and then bottled before fermentation finished. Fermentation continues in the bottles producing the natural bubbles. The yeast which collects in the bottle as sediment is disgorged leaving a clear, clean sparkling wine. This pet nat has a deep pink colour and a slight herbal bitterness on the finish. It is delightful as an aperitif but is also a very good accompaniment for food.

Marc Pesnot (Domaine de la Sénéchalière) Vin de France La Bohème 2015 – La Bohème is Pesnot's lowest-priced wine, but what a wine it is! We love the bright minerality, the lovely acidity and the incredible length on the palate. Even though it has the humble Vin de France designation this is a very serious wine that casts most other Muscadet wines in its long shadow. The quality of the wine is due to the meticulous vineyard work that even extends to hand picking the grapes only when they are ripe even if that takes a number of passes through the vineyard at picking time. The grapes are then totally destemmed and fermented very slowly (sometimes 4 months, sometimes longer), before resting on the lees for up to six months. This is a perfect summer drink!

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Aligoté 2015 – Fanny Sabre shows a fine touch with her Aligoté. Aligoté is the wine that the locals drink in Burgundy. It is gradually emerging as an interesting wine in its own right rather than playing second fiddle to Chardonnay as more talented winemakers such as Fanny show what can be achieved with this grape. It is not

only the winemaking in this case but also the terroir because Fanny's late father used up some of his precious land in Pommard to plant the Aligoté vines. This is a beautiful wine with great complexity, texture and depth.

Domaine Jean Ginglinger Vin d'Alsace Pinot Blanc 2015 – A pure, tense, energetic Pinot Blanc that we first tried at the annual festival at Chassignolles in the Auvergne this year. Jean was showing his wines to visitors to the festival and was a talking point amongst the wine cognoscenti present. Pinot Blanc is widely planted in the Alsace as well as in Champagne, Lorraine and Burgundy where it is valued for the minerality and acidity that it provides. This Pinot Blanc is very food friendly and can be matched to a wide variety of dishes. A delicate wine for summer sipping.

Julien Peyras Vin de France Les Copains d'Abord 2015 – This year we have received stocks of a special white wine that Julien has crafted from Clairette, Grenache Blanc and Roussanne. The Clairette provides elegance and length, the Grenache Blanc provides structure and the Roussanne contributes its characteristic full-bodied fruitiness. All of the grapes come from small parcels near the village of Villefranche where the soils are limestone mixed with white and pink quartz. This is an amazing wine where the minerality shines through and the quality of the wine is marked by the long, lingering and delicious finish.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Reflets Rose 2015 – The Domaine Saint Nicolas Rose is a delicate, pale pink perfumed beauty that is quite savoury with a dry finish making it perfect as an aperitif. The wine is predominantly Pinot Noir although there is 20% of Gamay and 10% of Groslot Gris as well to provide some additional complexity. The vineyard faces south-west and the soil is comprised of clay and schist. The wine was matured in stainless steel tanks.

Domaine Le Temps Retrouvé Vin de France Syrah Light 2015 – The Syrah vines for this deliciously light cuvée are tended biodynamically and any ploughing work is carried out using a horse. After the grapes are picked manually and are placed in small crates they are macerated for a short time and then the juice is transferred to old wooden barrels for twelve months to mature. The result is a very light, quaffable wine that almost looks like a dark rosé but has the structure of a red wine.

Hervé Villemade Cheverny Cuvee Domaine Rouge 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.

Sylvain Bock Vin de France Bascule 2013 – Bascule is a red wine made exclusively with Carignan grapes. The first thing you notice about this wine is the intense, floral aromas including violets and red fruits. This wine is tense, pure, vibrant and very drinkable since the alcohol is a very restrained 12%! This is the last time that this wine will be available as Sylvain has stopped renting the Carignan vineyard from which this wine was made and we are now about to sell out.

Le Raisin à Plume Vin de France Les Petites Mains 2015 – This is one of two wines that we have from Jacques this year made from the Gamay grape variety. This is a lighter wine than Le Pâtis des Rosiers as it was only given two days of skin contact and was bottled after a few months in the tank. It is therefore a lighter style of wine even though the colour is quite ample. Jacques calls it a "red wine in a frame of white". We look on this as a winter rosé and would serve it slightly chilled. The characteristic minerality and tension found in Jacques wines still exists in this wine despite the short maceration.

Laurent Lebled Vin de France Ca C'est Bon 2015 - This is the wine that we have been following for some years. We have come across it a number of times in fashionable wine bars and bottle shops in Paris on our perambulations through that wonderful city. We have always loved its juicy, gulpable qualities and the fine winemaking that sits behind it. It is an incredibly juicy, smashable Gamay but with depth and elegance wrapped up in a fine package of flavour and length on the palate. 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.

The RRP for this selection of 12 bottles of wine is \$430 but the pack price is \$344 (a 20% discount) including freight.

Pack 5: Domaine Saint Nicolas Cellar 6 Pack



Note: There are only TWO of these packs available!

We have scoured the cellar to find some wines that we have had tucked away for a few years due to their ageing potential and some that are drinking very nicely despite being young. We have been able to create two packs of six wines from the famous Domaine Saint Nicolas winery in western France. The vineyards here are on gentle slopes of schist soils overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Thierry Michon and his sons farm biodynamically, and have been certified since 1996, so the fruit produced here is of the highest quality and this shows in the wines.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Plante Gate 2006 – The Plante Gate is one of the domaine's prestige red wines and is made from pure Pinot Noir from vines that are at least 25 years old, on soil that is a mix of schist, quartz and clay. The vineyard, which is .5 of a hectare, provides very low yields (approximately 15 hectolitres per hectare). It is already elegant and refined but will continue to improve with age. It is a sensible 13% alcohol. The wine was matured in 100% new oak, but the intervening ten years in bottle has seen the negative impacts of the new oak diminish to produce a supple, elegant wine.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Reflets Rosé 2015 – The Domaine Saint Nicolas Rose is a delicate, pale pink perfumed beauty that is quite savoury with a dry finish making it perfect as an aperitif. The wine is predominantly Pinot Noir although there is 20% of Gamay and 10% of Groslot Gris as well to provide some additional complexity. The vineyard faces south-west and the soil is comprised of clay and schist. The wine was matured in stainless steel tanks.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Le Poiré 2007 – This is an intriguing wine made from an intriguing grape (100% Negrette). The colour is deep red and the flavour has hints of cherries and plums and a lingering, intense spiciness. One reviewer referred to it as 'brooding and primary'. It is a great, full-flavoured, intense wine. We think it is like a Pinot Noir on steroids!

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cuvee Maria 2011 – Cuvee Maria is named after Thierry's grandmother. This is a very Burgundian wine being made from pure Chardonnay. It spent 18 months in small old oak barrels and now has had several years' maturation in the bottle. If you like the wines of Burgundy then you will love this cuvee. Only 1200 bottles of this wine was produced.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Gammes en May 2015 – The Domaine Saint Nicolas Gammes en May is a light, refreshing and delicious pure Gamay red wine. It is great for summer drinking served slightly chilled. It has less filtering than other Domaine Saint Nicolas wines, which gives it a meaty texture that belies its apparent light juiciness. Thierry does not always make a pure Gamay, but the quality of the fruit in 2015 was, again, exceptional.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cabaret 2011 – This is a wine that is typical of the Loire region. It is made from pure Cabernet Franc that has been aged in barriques for a year. This is a particularly good example of a Loire Cabernet Franc. It is a great food wine which is drinking very nicely now. It is unusual for a wine of this quality to be available for such a reasonable price. In all the wine tastings that we have carried out in Australia this has been regarded as a beautiful expression of the Cabernet Franc grape.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$269 but the pack price is \$228.65 including freight, a discount of 15%.

Pack 6: One Pack Only 6 Pack



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

For the first time the One Pack Only 6 Pack, which was in our December newsletter, didn't sell (usually they disappear within the first hour!). Since then we have drunk the Piollet Champagne (the 2010 Champs Rayes) that was part of December pack. So this pack is the same as the December pack, with a replacement for the Champagne, another wine which we have now sold out of except for one bottle. .

Terres Dorées Beaujolais l'Ancien Le Buissay 2013 – The Le Buissay differs from Jean-Paul Brun's normal l'Ancien in two distinct ways. First, the grapes are sourced from vines that are seventy years old and which grow on rare limestone terroir which Jean-Paul Brun purchased in 1999. Second the elevage takes place in 5 year old barriques. The fruits here are not as dark as with, say, the Fleurie, reminding us more of raspberry and cherry rather than blackberry and plum. There are other elements working here as well, including a beautiful umami-like savouriness and a chalkiness that is evident given that it comes from a rare piece of limestone terroir. This is a very interesting Gamay.

Domaine la Paonnerie Muscadet Coteaux de Loire Rien que Melon 2012 – The Rien que Melon is aptly named as there is nothing in the bottle except for juice from Melon de Bourgogne grapes picked from vines that are about thirty years old. There are no additions to this juice - not even any sulphur. It is a delightful wine that expresses the terroir from the vineyard which is on the banks of the Loire River about halfway between Angers and Nantes in the beautiful Loire Valley. The vineyards are at the eastern end of the Muscadet region and Jacques allows the wine to go through malolactic fermentation which is unusual in Muscadet and more like what happens in the neighbouring Anjou appellation. The grapes are crushed with a little time for skin contact and then transferred to tanks to ferment and mature for about six months before bottling.

Domaine Moss Vin de France Rosemonde Rosé 2015 – The Rosemonde is a delicious rosé made from Grolleau Gris (the main component) and a little Cabernet Franc. There are two separate parcels of 30 year old Grolleau Gris vines which grow in soils made of clay, gravel and schist (the schist is quite weathered and sits over a bedrock of schist). The grapes were hand-picked in early October and were lightly pressed and allowed to ferment naturally. The resulting wine was bottled in April 2016. The colour of the wine is a deep pink with an orange hue.

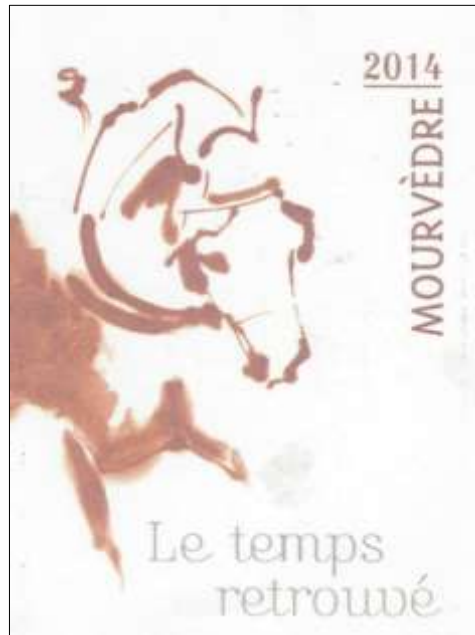
Terres Dorées Beaujolais Rosé d'Folie 2015 – This is the quintessential Jean-Paul Brun wine! And once again there is a stunning label and attractive bottle to enhance the experience. The Rosé d'Folie is a light pinkish-orange tinted wine that gives raspberry on the palate, an appealing freshness and a nice lingering finish. It is perfect for spring and summer sipping, but as we always say of rosé wines, there is absolutely no reason why they can't be sipped all year round. This wine was fermented in tanks and has seen no wood at any time, therefore it remains fresh and vibrant and perfect for easy drinking. There has been no carbonic maceration as Jean-Paul prefers Burgundian methods of wine making.

Bainbridge and Cathcart Vin de France Rouge aux Levres 2013 – 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 carbon dioxide in it as a preservative so you might detect a bit of 'fizz' 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.

Causse Marines Gaillac Peyrouzelles 2014 – We received a small shipment of the 2014 release which has now all sold out except for 1 bottle. Peyrouzelles is a red wine blended mainly from Brauacol, Duras and Syrah but there is added interest from three very obscure grapes from the local region. Patrice Lescarret also says that this wine has a 'bit of everything' (un peu de tout) including the rare Alicante (a grape with very dark red flesh), the very rare Prunelart (also a dark-coloured grape) and Jurancon! These are all traditional grape varieties of the Gaillac region that Patrice and Virginie are reviving. The wine is dark and brooding, reminding Australians of their native bigger wines. The Peyrouzelles is big, dark and brooding but also light and elegant on the palate. It is a wine that marries well with lots of dishes without overpowering them.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$192 but the pack price is \$153.60 including freight.

Pack 7: Mixed Red Wines 6 pack



This mixed selection of six red wines comes from several different regions, grape varieties and styles, providing a pack with wines for different occasions..

Julien Peyras Vin de France Costefere 2015 – Costefere is a blend of Syrah and Carignan (with twice as much Syrah as Carignan) with the age of the Syrah being around 30 years and the Carignan around an astounding 70 years. The yield from the old Carignan is a low, low 15 hectolitres per hectare making the juice very, very concentrated. The wine is fermented naturally and then transferred to three year old 400 litre barrels where it matures for 18 months.

Domaine Le Temps Retrouvé Vin de France Mourvèdre 2014 – It is rare to find a single-variety Mourvèdre as far south as the Roussillon (in fact this vineyard is very close to the Spanish border) 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.

Sylvain Bock Vin de France Raffut 2014 – This red wine from the Ardèche exhibits strength, freshness and refinement. Despite the underlying strength of this wine it is ready to drink and to give much pleasure in doing so! This 100% Syrah has been matured in barrels that are between 2 and 4 years old so that no wood flavours dominate this wine. Sylvain is particularly happy with this vintage of Raffut, describing it as "silky and smelling of violets"! Sylvain has put two thirds of the grapes through carbonic maceration to provide the freshness and drinkability that it shows and the remaining third has been fermented traditionally to provide the underlying structure for the wine.

Tony Bornard Vin de France Le Pinot Ctambule 2015 – This is the first time that we have imported a Pinot Noir from Tony Bornard and we were delighted by the response to it at the Rootstock festival in Sydney in November. It is useful to remember that Tony's

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

vineyards are only an hour's drive from the centre of Burgundy, so it is not surprising that Pinot is grown here. This is a very supple wine with good fruit and some length. It is a perfect wine for roast lamb or roast chicken and is ready to drink now.

Jolly Ferriol Vin de France Va Nu Pieds 2014 – Va Nu Pieds means “go barefoot” and conjures 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.

Domaine Stéphane Guion Bourgueil Cuvee Prestige Rouge 2013 – This wine is also 100% Cabernet Franc but has had some oak treatment (old oak barrels, never new oak) and is produced from older vines than the Domaine (these are up to 80 years old). This is a fine, savoury wine with lovely tannins and good length on the palate. There is a streak of acidity running through this wine that will ensure that it will last for many, many years. It represents excellent value for money and is currently drinking very well, but will also last for a considerable time in the cellar.

The RRP for 6 bottles of wine in Pack 7 is \$252 but the pack price is **\$214.20 including freight, a discount of 15%.**

Organic wines rate better on traditional scores – new evidence

A recently published paper in the Journal of Wine Economics by staff from the University of California¹ found that certified organic wine rates better even on conventional scoring systems.

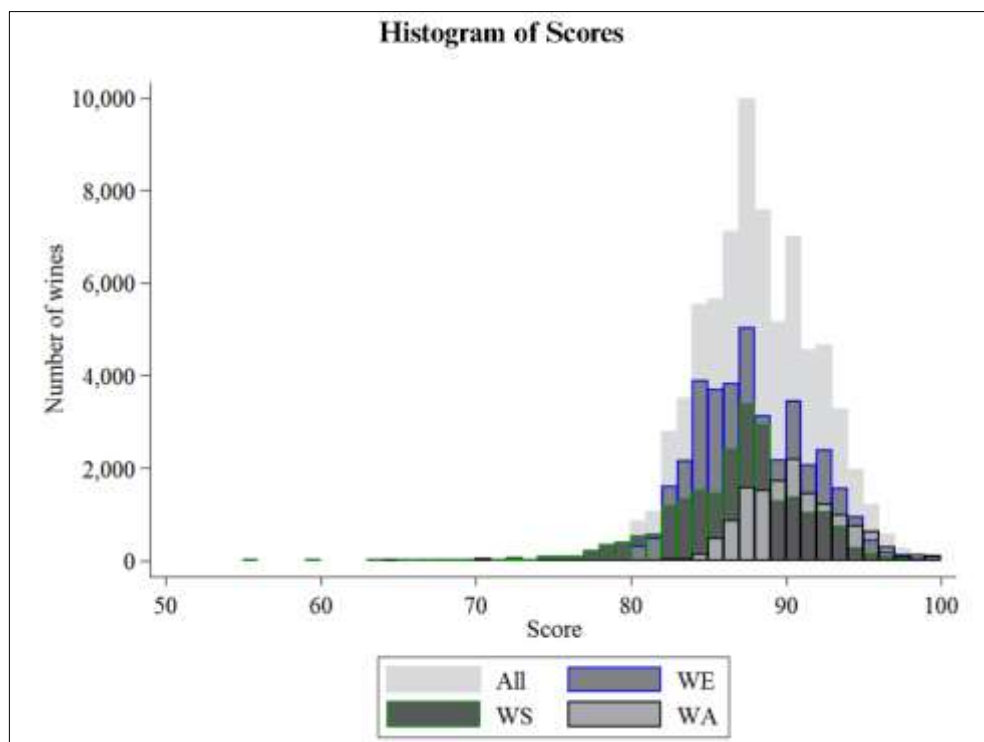
The paper looked at the scores given to over 70,000 wines by well-known wine publications Wine Advocate, Wine Enthusiast and Wine Spectator.

They analysed the scores given to this huge number of wines and then looked at which ones had organic certification (whether on the label or not).

The wines that had organic certification has a statistically significant increase in wine quality rating. Being certified increased the scaled score given to the wine by 4.1 points on average.

This is fairly amazing given that wine scores over the past twenty years have become quite compressed around 80/100 up to, very rarely, 100/100 which really makes the rating a score out of 20. For organically certified wines to score on average 4.1 points higher is very significant.

The graph that was published in the paper tells the story.



Note: WE is Wine Enthusiast, WS is Wine Spectator and WA is the Wine Advocate. The grey bars are the combined totals which are compressed in the 80 to 100 range.

¹ Magali A. Delmas, Olivier Gergaud and Jinghui Lim. Does Organic Wine Taste Better? An Analysis of Experts' Ratings. *Journal of Wine Economics*. Volume 11, Number 3, 2016, Pages 329–354, doi:10.1017/jwe.2016.14

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

We need to add here that, despite this information, we don't believe in reducing the toils of the vigneron/winemaker to a simple numerical score. But it is interesting (although not surprising to us) that this study provides some evidence that people who do choose to score tend to rate wine from organically-grown grapes higher than other wines.

Grape variety: Pinot Gris

Pinot Gris has become a very popular grape variety consumed in Australia even though there are not many plantings of it in this country. Rather, people are consuming wines made from this grape that are sourced from France, Italy (where it is known as Pinot Grigio as confirmed by the Vitis International Variety Catalogue) and Germany, where there are widespread plantings and where it is known as Grauburgunder.

Pinot Gris is a mutation of Pinot Noir (a grape that is notorious for the ability to mutate to different varieties) which means that sometime in the past in some location the characteristics of the grape changed to produce different phenolics in the skin giving it a lighter more pink appearance than that of Pinot Noir. In fact, it is sometimes claimed that Pinot Gris is the darkest-skinned grape that produces a white wine.

As a side note there is another mutant variety of Pinot Noir called Pinot Liébault which is also a permitted variety in many Burgundy appellations (such as Côte-de-Nuits-Villages, Auxey-Duresses, Blagny, Chassagne-Montrachet, Chorey-lès-Beaune, Ladoix, Meursault, Monthélie, Pernand-Vergelesses, Puligny-Montrachet, Saint-Aubin, Saint-Romain and Santenay to name just a few) which has red flesh and juice – quite a departure from Pinot Noir which has red skin but white flesh and juice.

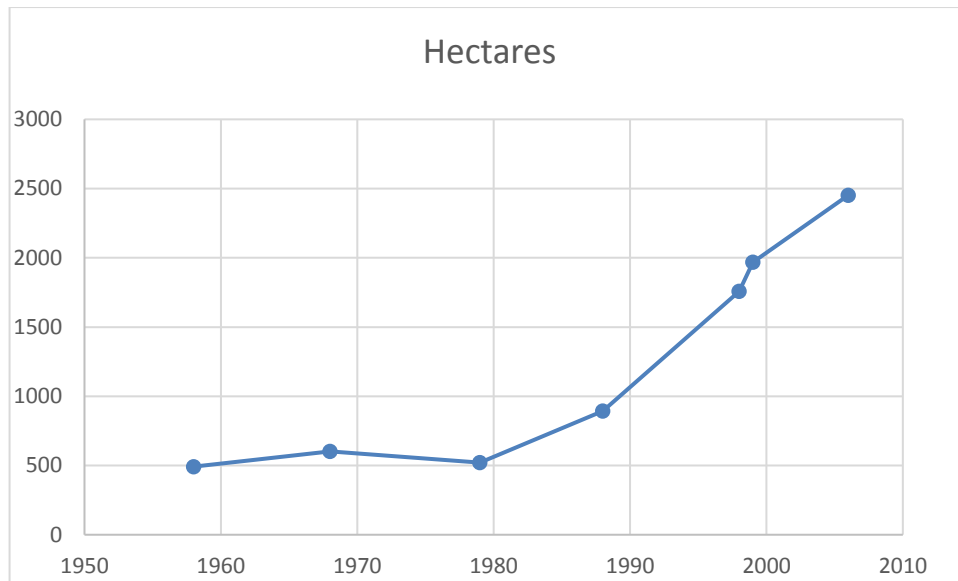
It is often not realised that Pinot Gris is quite often used as a blending wine in Burgundy. Red wines in a number of appellations can have a percentage of Pinot Gris added. We have one wine from Dominique Derain (Domaine Derain Mercurey La Plante Chassey Rouge) which has Pinot Beurot added. This is another local name for Pinot Gris.

Pinot Gris is also one of the seven permitted varieties in the Champagne appellation where it is sometimes known as Fromenteau. The other varieties that are permitted are Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Petit Meslier and Arbane.

The number of hectares given over to Pinot Gris in France has increased steadily over the past fifty years as shown in the following table and graph which uses data sourced from the Vitis Catalogue.

Year	Hectares
1958	492
1968	601
1979	520
1988	893
1998	1759
1999	1969
2006	2452

Notice that there was five times the area given over to Pinot Gris in France in 2006 than in 1958.



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

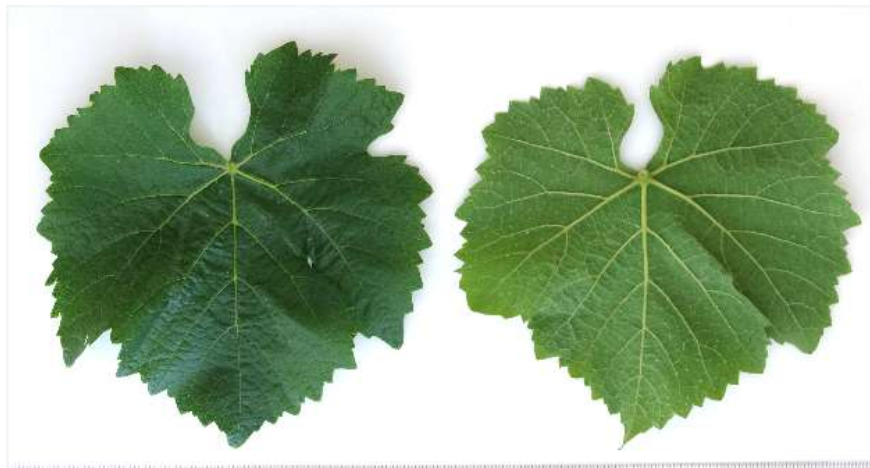


Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

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



Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

The colour of the skin is such that any maceration of the skins will result in a very pink wine. One such wine in our portfolio is the Pinot Gris Macération from Jean Ginglinger which is macerated on skins for approximately 10 days resulting in a brightly pink orange wine.

Note that there is a Ginglinger Pinot Gris (not the maceration one – it's in the category of wines we desperately don't want to sell out of, so don't particularly promote) in Pack 3 this month.

How to order

You can order any of these packs by sending us an email to 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

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