

WINE Talk: June 2017

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 69

Welcome to the 69th edition of Wine Talk. We have the second story about how humans perceive taste and aroma with a lot of information about the latest scientific research into this fascinating area. If you missed the story in the last newsletter it is available on the Living Wines website in the Information section.

We also have included some information about some imminent arrivals including the much sought-after wines of Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon from the Jura. We have also written about the success of the Bottletops event in Hobart which saw a stellar line-up of local and interstate natural winemakers displaying their latest wines for the public.

We also have an interesting collection of packs for you this month, headlined by a pack of new arrivals from a special new producer in the Languedoc, Opi d'Aqui (not to be confused with the beautiful wines from Es d'Aqui imported by our friends at Lo-Fi Wines). You can read more about the light, almost ethereal wines of Opi d'Aqui in the description of Pack 1 below.

We have also created a special pack of white wines including some that are in very short supply. We have often written about our affection for Carignan so we have put together a pack of wines created from this southern grape variety.

Continuing the Languedoc theme we have a 12 pack with a 20% discount of wines from this region. Due to the reaction the last time we created a chardonnay pack we have done it again to demonstrate the many different facets of this variety when we move to different regions with different terroir. And, as usual, we have a "One Pack Only" pack which consists of six wines where we are down to the last bottle. First in first served. And there's an End of Financial Year Sale 6 pack for the bargain price of \$120.

At the end of the newsletter we have an article on the Carignan grape variety in case you need more information about this grape which is highlighted in Pack 3.

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.

Renaud Bruyère and Samuel Boulay wines arriving soon



Renaud Bruyère in the evening light in his Pupillin vineyard, just below the famous hillside sign

Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon are young enthusiastic winemakers living in the tiny winemaking village of Pupillin in the Jura. Their wines are eagerly sought-after in many countries and we are delighted to be receiving another shipment of their wines very soon.



The incredibly complex rocks/soils of the vineyard. At the bottom you can see red marl and grey marl above with flecks of white marl showing through

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We would like to give our newsletter subscribers the first chance of getting access to these wines, so if you are interested to receive early notification of the pricing send us an email to:

wine@livingwines.com.au

When they arrive, we will let you know the pricing and how to order.

In the same shipment, we will also be receiving a small order of the very rare wines of Samuel Boulay from the Ardeche. Some of you will have tried his wines in iconic natural wine bars in Paris such as Achille and will know just how beautiful they are. Once again, let us know if you are interested.



Samuel's La Damoselle maturing in an old barrel

Jurassic Park – a party in Melbourne



This coming weekend on Sunday, June 25th will see the launch of a three-continent party with one of the venues being in Melbourne at one of our favourite venues in that city, namely Bar Liberty.

The format for the night is a party from 5pm to midnight. The cost is \$49 and food is complimentary all night, however you need to buy your alcohol.

You can book tickets (if there are any left) at:

www.barliberty.com

Later in the night, we will be hosting another event in the same venue which will be a bar serving glasses of Vin Jaune accompanied by some top-rating Comté cheese that we purchased in Poligny in the Jura recently and carried back to Australia.

Bottle Tops again a raging success



A photo taken at last year's event

The incredibly successful Bottle Tops event last year has become a regular feature it seems. This year it was bigger and better than ever taking over the top floor above Franklin restaurant as well as downstairs and also including a number of importers as well as the local winemakers. Matt Young from Black Market Sake also had several extraordinary sakes and a yuzushu which had everyone rushing to the Bottletops Bottleshop before supplies ran out. The food, which was especially good, was cooked by Deborah Blank and Luke Burgess, a second-last hurrah before they work together at Chardon in Arles in the south of France for the next two months. (Their last hurrah was the following night, the final night of their wonderful pop-up Dier Marisqueria, which they operated with Angus Burton of Spirit People using Dier Makr restaurant for two of the nights they were shut.) We've had some good times in Hobart recently.

The other highlight this year, apart from the wine, beer, and sake, was platters of house-made cheese, hand-made under the watchful eye of Bruce Kemp, a local cheesemaker and teacher who has been sharing his knowledge with many of the Franklin team.

Big platters like the ones below were generously shared with patrons.



Bottletops ended with a big party with lots of wine poured from magnums. Hopefully there will be another one next year. If you want to make a diary reminder, perhaps put it for early May 2018 and make sure you follow [@FranklinHobart](https://www.instagram.com/FranklinHobart) on Instagram.

Pack 1: Opi d'Aqui new arrivals 6 Pack



The Opi d'Aqui wines have arrived!

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

Translated into English from Occitan (a Latin derived language spoken in parts of southern France and other parts of the Mediterranean), Opi d'Aqui translates as “Opium from here”.

Philippe has plots in the wild Garrigue just outside Clermont l'Hérault, not too far from several other winemakers we work with including Julien Peyras, Axel Pruffer and Mylène Bru. He also has a plot of Picpoul near the village of Pinet.

Philippe works organically and biodynamically in his vineyards, harvests his grapes by hand in small boxes in the cool early mornings and then allows them to sit for 24 hours in cold storage before beginning to make the wines. The grapes are fermented naturally and the cool start ensures the beginning of the fermentation is slow.

One thing we immediately noticed when we tried Philippe's wines earlier this year is just how lightly extracted his red wines are. We've classified two of them as light reds rather than red on our list because, while they are not rosés, they have a similar weight.

Massale 2015 is actually a blend of 40% Grenache Rouge, 30% Grenache Gris and 30% Grenache Blanc so it's not surprising it's a light red but Les Cliquets 2015 is 100% Grenache Rouge. Both had 3-4 weeks of carbonic maceration and then were aged in stainless steel tanks for 6 months.

We also have two red wines which are macerated traditionally – Ménage à Trois 2014 (from three plots of Grenache) and Les Fainéants 2015 (90% Mourvèdre and 10% Grenache), both of which were aged in barrels.

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Finally, there's a white wine, Pique Poule, made from 100% Picpoul from a plot of limestone and clay soil near the village of Pinet just inland from the Etang de Thau near the town of Sète. Fermentation was 50% in barrels and 50% in tank. None of these wines have any added sulphites.

We have therefore created a special pack of his wines which contains the following as described above:

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Pique Poule Blanc 2015 (2 bottles)

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Les Cliquets Rouge 2015

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Massale Rouge 2015

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Les Fainéants Rouge 2015

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Ménage à Trois Rouge 2014

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$266 but the pack price is **\$226.10 including freight.**

Pack 2: White wine 6 pack



We have assembled this pack to give to a broad experience with different grapes and different regions of France via white wines.

Marc Pesnot Vin de France Folle Blanche 2015 – This is the second time we have imported a wine from Marc Pesnot made from the Folle Blanche grape variety - the first shipment sold out very quickly. The vines of Folle Blanche are between 60 to 80 years old and thrive in mineral, schist soils thus giving the wine extra complexity especially when considering the very low yields that are achieved in Marc's vineyards. This is an excellent dry wine at only 11% alcohol that is perfect for teaming with white fish, scallops or oysters as well as many vegetable-based dishes. By the way, the word Equinoxe that appears on the label above is an indicator that no sulphur has been added to this wine at any time.

La Paonnerie Coteaux d'Ancenis Pineau l'Ancêtre 2015 – This is a new cuvee for Paonnerie. It is made from 100% Chenin Blanc (which is called Pineau in this area). The wine is made from grapes grown on vines that are over 100 years old in the commune of Saint Heblon which is the commune neighbouring Anetz where the Paonnerie winery is located. The age of the vines means that the yield is a very low 20 hectolitres per hectare. While the yield might be low the benefit is that the grape juice is very concentrated and has high minerality. The wine is fermented naturally and matured in old oak barrels. It is bottled without fining or filtration or the addition of any sulphites.

Causse Marines Vin de France Dencon 2014 – The Dencon 4102 is made from a very, very rare grape variety called Ondenc which had almost disappeared from France until it was revived by a small number of growers in Gaillac. The wine is labelled as a Vin de Table because it is not permitted to produce single-grape variety wines in the Gaillac appellation. (Incidentally the same grape was used many years ago in western Victoria to make sparkling wine.) As with the vintage, it is not permitted to put the grape variety on wines from many French appellations. However those of you who enjoy anagrams and similar word games should not take too long to work it out. The humour of the winemakers also shows through on the little tweaks given to some of the symbols that must appear on the label in France.

Le Raisin à Plume (Jacques Février) S des Humeaux Sauvignon Blanc 2015 – Jacques Février makes lovely, precise wines from the Sauvignon Blanc grape variety even though he is hundreds of kilometres away from Sancerre, the spiritual home of this grape. The S Des Humeaux is a wonderful expression of the Sauvignon Blanc grape variety. The name comes from the grape variety and the vineyard from which it is picked. S stands for Sauvignon Blanc and Humeaux is the vineyard (which overlooks the Loire River). It is light, expressive, lingering and very delicious! It was matured in old wooden barrels - 7 were small 225 litre barrels and one was a 600 litre barrel. All were older barrels.

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 Milan Vin de France Le Grand Blanc 2012 – Domaine Milan's Le Grand Blanc is a staff favourite. It is an intense, elegant, refined, gorgeous white wine. This vintage sees Grenache Blanc, Rolle (the local name for Vermentino), Roussanne, Chardonnay and Muscat à Petit Grains used in the blend. The wine was matured in old barrels on the lees for twelve months. This is a beautiful wine that is still fresh and lively now but will continue to change character and improve well into the future.

The RRP for 6 bottles of wine in Pack 2 is \$255 but the pack price is \$216.75 including freight, a discount of 15%.

Pack 3: Carignan 6 pack



In this newsletter we have written an article about the Carignan grape. We love this variety in the hands of people who understand it and who have old vines in their vineyard with reduced yields – which is where this grape variety excels. So we have selected six excellent examples of wines made either entirely from Carignan or where the wine is made from a blend which includes Carignan.

Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Les Vieilles 2013 – This lovely wine is made from grapes picked from very old vines from a very high vineyard that give a great deal of structure and flavour to the wines. The vineyard is bathed with north winds to cool the vines and help retain acidity. The vines are over 70 years old.

Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Escarpolette Rouge 2013 – This wine was bottled 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.

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. 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.

Jolly Ferriol Vin de France Va Nu Pieds (two bottles – one from 2014 and one from 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 transferred to tanks to allow the sediment to settle before it is bottled without filtering or fining.

Mylène Bru Vin de France Rita 2014 – It is so good to see this wine back in our warehouse. This is one of the most beautiful Carignan wines we have ever tasted. If you like Carignan then this is a wine you simply must try! The Rita is named after Mylène's Andalusian grandmother and also St Rita the saint of desperate causes! The wine is made from 100% Carignan from 50 year old vines which is not unusual in her area because it is quite close to Saint Chinian where Carignan is revered. The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of the morning and placed in 10 kilogram baskets to preserve the quality of the fruit. The juice was macerated for approximately 20 days to extract the deep colour of this wine which then matured for 10 months in tanks before being bottled with a very small amount of sulphur this year.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of Carignan in Pack 3 is \$236 but the pack price is **\$200.60 including freight, a discount of 15%.**

Pack 4: Languedoc-Roussillon wines 20% discount 12 pack



This pack assembles 12 different wines from the Languedoc-Roussillon so that you can explore the incredible diversity of wines from the south of France. For those of you not familiar with the area, it has for a long time been the largest wine producing area in France.

The region starts just east of Nimes and covers cities such as Narbonne, Beziers and the ancient walled city of Carcassonne. It extends down past the city of Perpignan as far as the border of Spain.

It is a region of breathtaking beauty and which harbours a rich history. It has been invaded by just about everyone starting with the Romans who built great roads and aqueducts, many of which survive till this day.

Because land prices are lower, particularly in the Languedoc than in the more prestigious areas such as Burgundy and Bordeaux many talented young winemakers have moved to this area and are making very exciting wines. So we have collected together twelve wines that we think demonstrate what this region is capable of producing.

Julien Peyras Les Copains d'Abord 2015 – Julien works near the village of Paulhan which is inland from Beziers where he produces some of the finest wines in the area without using sulphites at any time. He is young and has an enquiring mind which leads him to experiment with new techniques and new combinations of grape varieties. This one is made 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.

Mylène Bru Lady Chasselas 2015 – Mylène discovered an old vineyard of Chasselas grapes in the rugged hills behind the village of Sète. The plot where Mylène has her Chasselas vines is a site of amazing beauty. There is a long view over the short-cropped vines to the mountains beyond. The vines are at least 50 years old and face East North East. Chasselas is almost unknown in this region so this is a very rare wine, but one of

some delicacy and with a really lovely mouth-feel. The clay and limestone soils give the wine a persistent minerality that is very appealing. The finish is quite dry.

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 is 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.

Les Vignes d'Olivier Vin de France Clair 2015 – This very light rosé arose because Olivier's wife happens to like white wines but Olivier doesn't have any white grapes! He decided to make a white wine from some of his red Cinsault grapes - a very sensible idea giving that most red grapes have white juice. He loaded part of his Cinsault harvest into the press and pressed off the juice. Unfortunately for his wife, but fortunately for everyone else, he pressed a bit too slowly so the juice came out as a lovely pale pink colour, so he produced a second rosé. He decided to call it Rosé Clair because it is almost clear. It is a light, lively, fresh wine with the texture of a white wine but the flavour of a rosé.

Opi d'Aqui Vin de France Pique Poule 2015 – We have described this wine in details in the description of Pack 1 in this newsletter. It is a fresh, vibrant white wine with a lovely streak of acidity and great texture. It is a perfect wine for pairing with seafood.

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.

Opi d'Aqui Les Fainéants 2015 – This wine has also been described in detail in Pack 1 above. It is a beautiful expression of the Mourvèdre grape variety.

Mylène Bru 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 they 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 up! 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 is a pretty, elegant and delicious red wine.

Les Vignes d'Olivier Rond Rouge 2015 – The Rond Rouge is a red wine from Olivier 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.

Le Temps des Cerises Un Pas de Côté 2014 – Un Pas de Côté is a dark purple wine that has a beautiful, soft tannin structure with complexity coming from the quality of grapes used. While it used to be a pure Grenache in previous vintages, in 2014 it is 40% Merlot, 40% Grenache and 20% of a blend of Cinsault, Aramon and Carignan (Aramon is a grape that is native to the region). The vines grow on granitic quartz soils and the minerality is pronounced.

Julien Peyras Gourmandise 2015 – We often say that there are no inferior grape varieties in the world – there are, however, inferior winemakers. We believe that we can always find a winemaker who understands a particular grape variety and can make interesting wines with it. Julien Peyras is such a winemaker and he has a great affinity for Cinsault. The Gourmandise is comprised of 100% Cinsault (a variety found throughout the Southern Rhone and the Languedoc) 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 after its long journey 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 which really shows what this grape variety can demonstrate when in the hands of a good winemaker.

Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Escarpolette Rouge 2013 – This wine was bottled in November 2014 after a period of fermentation using the carbonic maceration method 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.

The RRP for this selection of 12 bottles of wine is \$493 but the pack price is \$394.40 (a 20% discount) including freight.

Pack 5: Chardonnay 6 Pack



The last time we created a 6 pack entirely from Chardonnay it was very successful. People commented to us that they had never realised that the one grape could take on so many different expressions through different terroirs and different handling in the winery.

So, we have again put our thinking caps on and selected 6 Chardonnay wines from across France that each show different aspects of this versatile grape variety.

Sylvain Bock Le Fruit de la Patience 2013 – This wine is made from Chardonnay that has been matured in old oak barrels for twenty four months - hence the name. The time spent in old barrels has produced an elegant, soft, subtle wine of considerable charm. Don't expect a big, buttery, oaky wine - this is a polar opposite! Only 600 bottles of this wine were produced from the 2013 vintage so we were lucky to receive this small allocation. This wine also displays intriguing floral aromas as well as anise notes. The old barrel maturation also ensures that the wine is clear and bright in the glass. This is an elegant, refined and compelling wine that truly benefits from the long maturation period.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cuvee Maria Blanc 2011 – Cuvee Maria is named after Thierry's grandmother. The grapes are grown in a vineyard that looks out over the Atlantic ocean. The vines actually feel the salt spray from the ocean. 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 were produced.

Sextant Bourgogne Blanc 2015 – We were delighted when this wine arrived in Australia because it had not suffered from the journey at all. The first bottle of this 100% Chardonnay was alive and vibrant. The taste lingered on the tongue and the length was very pleasing. Although it is labelled as a humble Bourgogne Blanc, the vineyards that Julien maintains around Saint Aubin and in the Cote Chalonnaise (near the village of Montbellet, are on very good terroir, similar to the nearby Puligny Montrachet where outstanding white wines are produced. We look forward to the evolution of this wine. Lou Amdur from Lou Wine Shop in Los Angeles put this wine in a tasting recently because, as he said: "nothing fancy pants or extortionate, just beautifully grown, traditional wines from the heartland of Chardonnay." This wine will develop with age.

La Soeur Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay 2013 – The La Soeur Bourgogne Vézelay is a blend of grapes grown in the Domaine de la Cadette vineyards and grapes grown in the Domaine Montanet-Thoden vineyards. For this reason they cannot display the name of either domaine, therefore the wine is labelled with their 'negoce' La Soeur designation. This is all due to the rules laid down by the French wine authorities. The wine is, however, able to be labelled with the prized Bourgogne Vézelay appellation which is only available for white wines made entirely from grapes grown within the area. These wines are able to put both the Bourgogne appellation on the label and also the name of the village where the grapes are grown. As a result, this is a very beautiful wine made entirely from Chardonnay grapes sourced from the limestone-rich soils of their vineyards which show many of the characteristics of the Chablis vineyards just slightly north of here.

Terres Dorées Beaujolais Blanc Classic 2015 – This great-value Chardonnay gets its freshness from natural vinification and no use of oak barrels. The very old vines thrive on limestone soils in Beaujolais. It is a lively, fresh wine that is drinking beautifully right now. The finish is long and clean and the flavour profile is classic southern Beaujolais. This is a wine of some interest as very little white Beaujolais is produced. There is one other technique that Jean-Paul uses to produce the lovely texture of this wine. He no longer uses high, vertical tanks, but has had a tank made that lies horizontally so that there is closer contact between the wine and the lees at the bottom of the tank.

Here is what Chambers Street Wines in New York had to say recently:

"On the nose luscious green apple fruit mingles with poached pear and citrus zest. The palate does have some weight, but this is a lean, sharp wine with a sturdy mineral backbone. It's really quite amazing to drink such a precise wine for such a value!"

Dominique Andiran Vin de France Montis Régalis 4102 – Montis Régalis is made from 100% Chardonnay. The name Montis Régalis is the name the Romans gave to the South-West France village in which Dominique lives, namely Montreal. The grapes come from a plot near Montreal with brown clay. The wine was matured in fibreglass tanks without skin contact. It is crisp and clean with fascinating floral notes and a slightly oxidative finish. It is reasonably rich this vintage coming in at 13.5% alcohol, reflecting the season.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$260 but the pack price is \$221 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 Milan Clos Milan 2006 which is one of their most famous wines, a premier cru from Julien Altaber in Burgundy and a lovely, elegant Burgundy from stellar winemaker Fanny Sabre. 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!

Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Follasses 2015 – The grapes for the Les Follasses, which benefit from limestone and clay soils in the vineyard are manually harvested and sorted prior to pressing. The wine is made in the 'ouillé' style where the barrels are topped up during maturation so that the wine does not oxidise in the barrel. No sulphites are added to this wine at any stage. This is a fresh, lively Chardonnay that is typical of this style of wine from the Jura with just a hint of those oxidative qualities that Jura aficionados just can't get enough of.

Domaine Milan AOC Les Baux de Provence Clos Milan Rouge 2006 – The Clos Milan is Henri Milan's premium red wine made from 75% Grenache, 5% Mourvedre and 20% Shiraz (Syrah). The grapes come from vines that are at least 42 years old that grow in Quaternary sands and gravels. The combination of the interesting minerality of the soils and the organic treatment of the vines means that they are able to absorb more minerals from the soils and transmit them to the grapes. The grapes are destemmed and fermented in cement tanks for about three weeks then aged in old 225 litre barriques. The result is an elegant, perfumed, smooth, luscious wine that can be drunk now or will age further.

Domaine Milan Sans Soufre Ajouté Rouge 2013 – The name of this wine gives you a clue about how it was made. In French the words 'Sans Soufre Ajouté' means no added sulphur. This wine has not had sulphites added to the bottle. The only sulphur in it is naturally occurring sulphur which is in miniscule quantities. The wine has travelled well to Australia and displays a liveliness and freshness that is typical of naturally-made wines that have not had sulphur added. The grape varieties are Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvèdre, Cinsault and Cabernet Sauvignon and it only spends 8 months in old barriques.

Sylvain Bock Vin de France Bascule 2013 – 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 well as the last bottle) as Sylvain has stopped renting the Carignan vineyard from which this wine was made.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Monthelie 1er Cru Sur La Velle Rouge 2014 – 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 is a very fresh and lively wine with good tannin structure, lively acidity and flavours of cherries and red berries. If you are looking for a wine from an emerging and exciting appellation then you should give this one a try as it is from a highly regarded Premier Cru vineyard, namely Sur La Velle.

Fanny Sabre Hautes-Côtes de Beaune Rouge 2015 – Obviously, the vineyards that Fanny maintains in the Hautes-Côtes de Beaune are at a higher altitude than her standard Beaune vineyards, therefore they benefit from the cooler climate in this area. The vines here have very low yields so Fanny is able to make concentrated wines from the concentrated flavours developed in the fruit. Harvesting is always manual and the grapes are placed in small crates so the fruit is not damaged. The grapes are taken to her winery just near the centre of Pommard where the juice is placed in old barrels for up to twelve months before resting in stainless steel tanks prior to bottling. This is a lovely, complex wine with great minerality and black and red fruit aromas and very fine tannins.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$325 but the pack price is \$260 including freight, a discount of 20%.

Pack 7: End of Financial Year Sale Pack – 6 bottles



The end of the financial year has coincided with the arrival of a shipment of wines from France, so we need some space in the warehouse! We have put together a pack of wines that have a deep discount to encourage these wines to move to make room on the floor.

They are all wines that we love from excellent winemakers.

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.

La Paonnerie Muscadet Coteaux de Loire Rien que Melon 2015 – The La Paonnerie 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.

Sylvain Bock Vin de France La P'tite Goutte 2015 – The La P'Tite Goutte is an exciting red wine from Sylvain Bock that is light, delicious and smashable. It is made from Grenache which has been fermented using carbonic maceration where the juice has been 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 cuvée 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!

Le Raisin à Plume Vin de France Les Petites Mains 2015 – This is one of three 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. It has a beautiful, lingering flavour and the characteristic minerality and tension found in Jacques wines still exists in this wine despite the short maceration.

Les Vignes d'Olivier Vin de France Rosé Clair 2014 – This very light rosé arose because Olivier's wife happens to like white wines but Olivier doesn't have any white grapes! He decided to make a white wine from some of his red Cinsault grapes - a very sensible idea giving that most red grapes have white juice. So, he loaded part of his Cinsault harvest into the press and pressed off the juice. Unfortunately for his wife, but fortunately for everyone else, he pressed a bit too slowly so the juice came out as a lovely pale pink colour, so he produced a second rosé. He decided to call it Rosé Clair because it is almost clear. It is a light, lively, fresh wine with the texture of a white wine but the flavour of a rosé.

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.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles in Pack 7 is **\$206** but the pack price is only **\$120** including freight. (Which is approximately a 41.5% discount!!)

Aromas and flavours in wine: Part 2 (flavours)



In the first part of this article published in Wine Talk for April 2017 we discussed the importance of the human aroma receptors, volatile compounds associated with wine, the link between aroma receptors and the brain, how aroma is a construct of the brain and how different people smell totally different things in wine sparked by different memories.

This second part is going to explore flavour and how it too is a construct of the brain. But there is even more going on with flavour because molecules that tell our brain about flavour are partly created as we taste the wine by the all-important bacteria in our saliva before the wine reaches our rather inadequate taste receptors.

We will also address the issue of the mix of flavour and aromas as we taste wine because after tasting it we get the chance to detect aromas again through volatile compounds being released at the back of the mouth and entering the nasal passage from there – this is known as retro-nasal inhalation.

The important point we want to emphasise again is that flavour and aroma are constructs of our brains and different people taste different things in a given wine. There is no one answer, there is no one flavour. And this is why one person can find a wine delicious and another might hate it.

This is clearly spelled out in a recent article by the famous Harold McGee¹ who has studied this topic deeply:

Each of us has perceptions that don't necessarily correspond to someone else's. These days, neuroscientists are telling us that flavor is all in the brain. Flavor is a perception, an experience that's constructed in the brain. Food is made up of molecules, and molecules by themselves don't have any sensory qualities. Our experience of food is sensory: there's taste and smell and pungency, texture and

¹ McGee, H (2016) *Perception vs. Reality: Perception is its own reality when you're eating*. May 2016 edition of *Lucky Peach*.

temperature. The chemical and physical materials that generate these sensations in us do not, by themselves, have any of those qualities.

This partly explains why different people react differently to the same foods or beverages. We can vividly remember an evening in Kuala Lumpur when we first tried the Malaysian specialty called tempoyak which is made from fermented durian. We loved the almost fetid aroma and the creamy, earthy, taste, but a friend who was with us thought it was the most revolting thing she had ever tried to eat.

This may explain the dissonance in the wine community. Wine judges and fine wine enthusiasts have trained their brains to perceive certain qualities in wine and they expect the wines to conform to the norm. Something outside their experience is often rejected as not being a “proper” wine.

But there is another community that finds excitement and interest in different wines with different perceived flavours and textures. Many of these people have rejected the existing paradigms and are looking for new flavours, new textures and new aromas.

In this article we are going to explore the various aspects of taste which explain why some people find a wine delicious and others don't – or at least we will try!

Taste receptors

Part of the confusion about taste and perception was the long held theory that different parts of the tongue were responsible for detecting the primary tastes (sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami) with sweet being detected at the front of the tongue and bitter at the back.

What has been discovered subsequently is that some parts of the tongue are more likely to detect a particular taste at low levels but all parts are capable of detecting higher levels of each taste.

However, the text books are still riddled with out of date “taste maps” with sweet at the front of the tongue and bitter at the back.

Another impetus for this part of the article was reading a paper by Chandrashekar and others in the journal *Nature* which was entitled “The receptors and cells for mammalian taste”². This gave us a much more modern take on how we taste and how taste receptors work.

In the abstract to the paper they made a comment that resonated with us:

Contrary to what was generally believed, it is now clear that distinct cell types expressing unique receptors are tuned to detect each of the five basic tastes: sweet, sour, bitter, salty and umami. Importantly, receptor cells for each taste quality function as dedicated sensors wired to elicit stereotypic responses

They have claimed to detect different receptors for each of the five basic tastes and that these receptors lead to the response in humans to that taste.

² J Chandrashekar, MA Hoon, NJP Ryba, CS Zuker (2006) *The receptors and cells for mammalian taste. Nature 444, 288-294.*

They have incorporated a diagram in their paper which we reproduce below that shows that all tastes are detected in similar regions of the tongue.

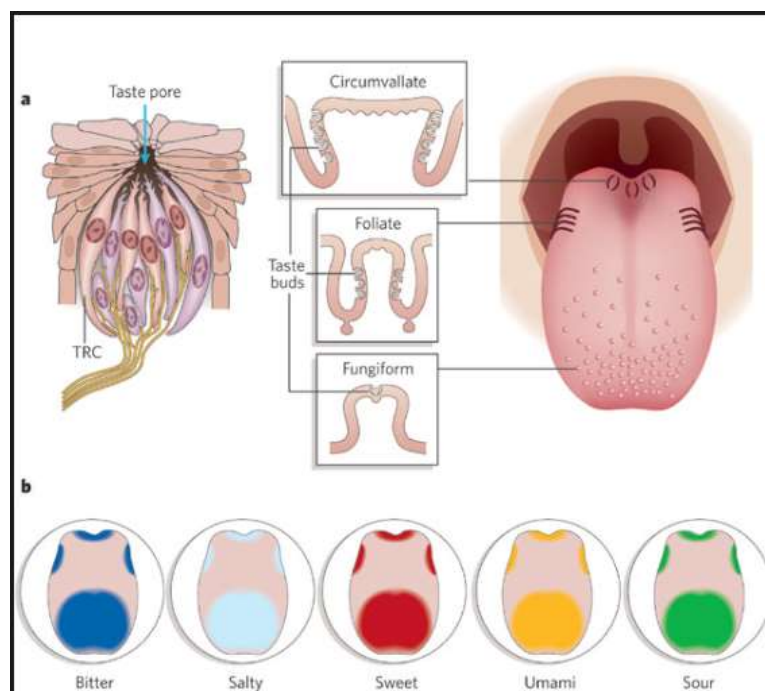


Diagram copyright Food Chemistry journal

The top part of the diagram on the left shows a taste bud with lots of Taste Receptor Cells which usually numbers between 50 and 150 in humans per taste bud. These buds are found on different “papillae” shown in the centre of the diagram (circumvallate, foliate and fungiform) which are at the back, sides and front of the tongue respectively.

The highest concentration of taste buds (thousands) is at the back and the lowest at the front (two or three). Some people have lots of taste buds others have fewer.

Sipping the wine

To understand how taste works we need to understand what happens when we take a sip of wine. What is the relationship between the wine and our taste receptors? Where are those receptors? What else is in play apart from the receptors? And then the big question, do different people experience different tastes from the same wine?

When we take a sip of wine and hold it in the front part of the mouth we are able to detect whether it is sour or bitter or sweet or salty.

What then happens is the wine mingles with our saliva?

Muñoz-González and others³ show that aromatic compounds are created by bacteria in the saliva on our tongues. But every one of us has different bacteria which leads to the formation of different aromatic compounds thus giving different people different perceptions of the same wine.

³ Muñoz-González, C., Cueva, C., Pozo-Bayón, M.A., Moreno-Arribas, M.V. 2015. Ability of human oral microbiota to produce wine odorant aglycones from odourless grape glycosidic aroma precursors. *Food Chemistry* 187: 112-

It is even more complex than this because there are enzymes in our saliva that break the bond between sugar molecules in the wine and smaller aromatic molecules allowing these smaller molecules to vaporise and add additional aromas for us to appreciate.

Or in their words referring to the conversion of compounds in the wine by the bacteria in our saliva:

The hydrolytic activity seemed to be bacteria-dependent and was subject to large inter-individual variability.

By the time the wine has rolled over our tongue it is our own individual wine – we have created a new product!

By now the wine is hitting the many receptors on the sides of our tongue and at the back where the majority of the taste receptors are found. These receptors send molecular signals to the brain and the brain constructs a taste for us based on the myriads of experiences we have had in the past, often before we are born⁴.

The first port of call is the part of the brain called the insula where the primary tastes are assessed and the texture is remembered. The signals then move to the front of the brain (orbitofrontal cortex) where the taste and the odour responses are combined. The amygdala section of the brain also assembles an emotional response – do we love it or do we hate it?

Retro-nasal inhalation

By this stage we have almost created our complete reaction to the wine but there is one extra step and that is the contemplation of the wine immediately after swallowing.

At this stage there is still a film of wine in the saliva at the back of the tongue and hence, coming back to the ideas we put forward in Part 1 of this story, volatile compounds are again created from the wine and enter the nose from the other end of the nasal passage.

It is at this point that if you breathe out through your nose you get the most intense aromas from the wine as modified by our saliva. This process is known as retro-nasal inhalation and it is a crucial component for advanced wine tasting.

Of course, the compounds we are now smelling are volatile compounds altered by their passage through our saliva with its payload of bacteria which help form these compounds.

Conclusion

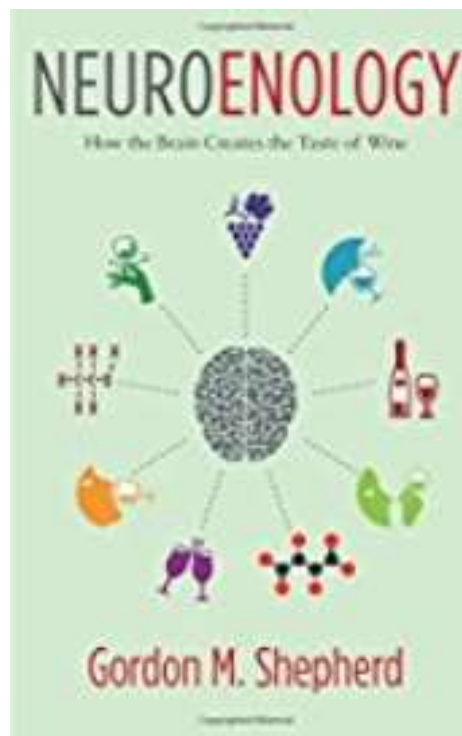
It is a long journey for a single sip of wine, but knowledge of the process has changed a lot over the last few years and we have a much better understanding of how a bunch of molecules in wines with no aroma and no taste associated with them can cause our brains to create the complex array of aromas and tastes that give us so much pleasure.

⁴ Mennella JA et al. (2001). Prenatal and Postnatal Flavor Learning by Human Infants. *Pediatrics* 107:88-93.

Footnote

Since we completed this article we have purchased a book that, in part, uses the same scientific paper that we have referenced for many of the ideas in this part of the article, namely the one by Muñoz-González and others referenced above. The book is called *Neuroenology* and was written by Gordon M Shepherd.

If you would prefer to read a book on the subject rather than our potted attempt here then the link below will take you to Amazon.



[Neuroenology by Gordon M Shepherd](#)

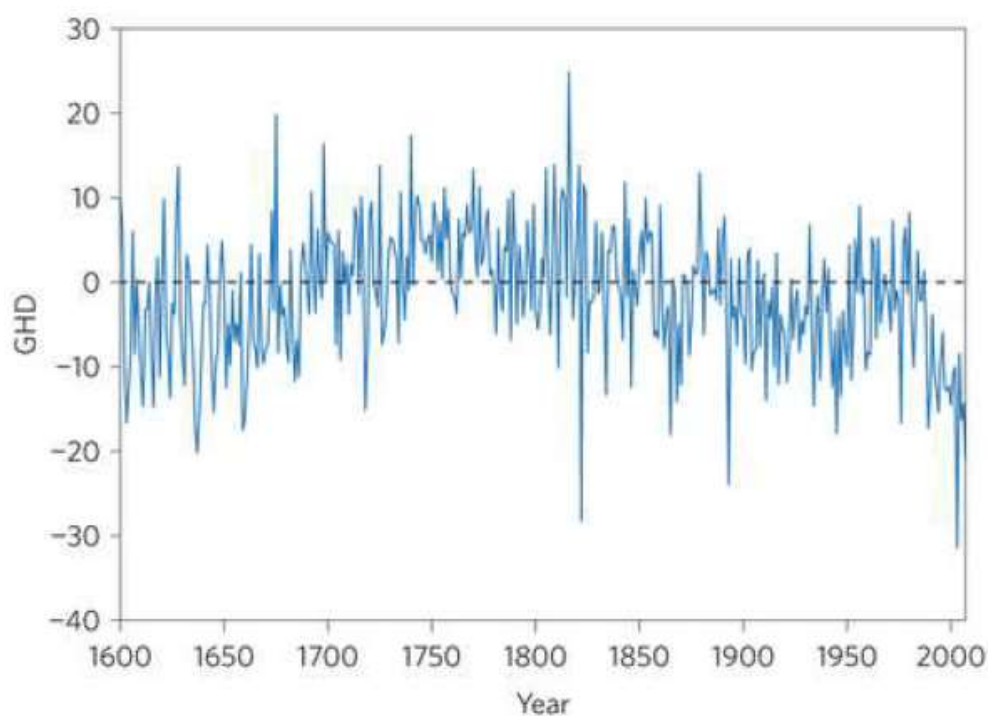
Grape harvests and climate change in Europe

A recent peer-reviewed paper in Nature Climate Change analyses the beginning of the grape harvest in various sites in Western Europe since the 1600s (there are very good records dating back this far in many parts of France, Switzerland and Germany). In the past there was a relationship between an earlier harvest and the presence of drought, however this paper has shown that this nexus was broken in the early 1980s and now early harvest is not reliant on the presence of a drought but has been taken over by climate-induced higher temperatures.

This matches the experience of many of our vigneron in France where their harvests are starting earlier by a significant amount – in fact up to three weeks in some cases. This has brought the starting date back to early August in hotter areas such as Roussillon causing major problems because August is the traditional holiday month in France.

The article is called “Climate change decouples drought from early wine grape harvests in France” and was written by Benjamin I. Cook & Elizabeth M. Wolkovich.

The following graph from the paper shows the deviation from the average picking date over the period 1600 to 1900 (shown as zero on the graph) for the period 1600 to 2007. Therefore a negative GHD (Grape Harvest Date) value means that the harvest started earlier than the average and a positive value shows it started later.



One thing that is clear from the graph is that since 1981 the harvest has been trending dramatically downwards meaning earlier and earlier harvests.

Grape variety: Carignan

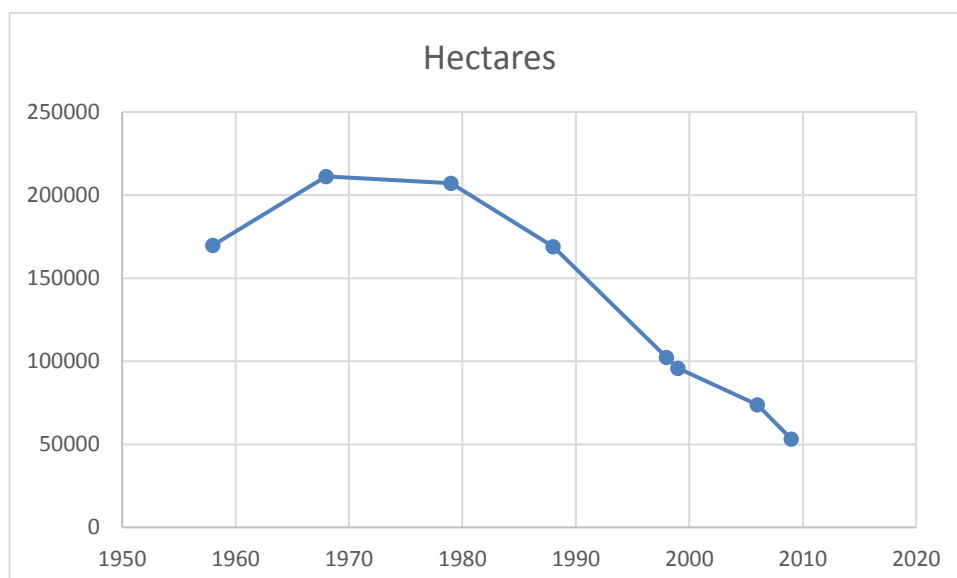
Carignan is a very common red wine grape in the south of France. At one point it was the most common red grape grown in France. It particularly thrives on the crumbly shale and schist soils found on many of the steep slopes in the Languedoc and is also a popular blending grape in the southern Rhone, the Ventoux and in some parts of southern Provence. While it is common as a blending grape, there are also some outstanding examples of single varietal wines from the Corbières and Saint Chinian appellations as well as other areas of the Languedoc and Roussillon.

Although it is widespread in southern France it probably originated in Spain in the Aragon region and it is possible that is named after the town of Cariñena. The ampelographer Guy Lavignac⁵ says that it is identical to the grape called Mazuelo and it was brought to France by pilgrims returning from Santiago de Compostela in Spain in the 12th Century.

In the United States they add an extra 'e' on the end so that it is spelled as Carignane. It is not a grape that has distinguished itself in Australia although there is widespread ancient schist and shale soils in Tasmania that could potentially support this variety, especially as the climate warms.

Carignan was, in the sixties and seventies, the most widely planted grape variety in France. Even now with a rapid decline in the area planted (see graph below), it still ranks highly in total area planted. The reason that the area planted plunged so much is that the European Union paid farmers to pull out their Carignan in order to plant "international" varieties such as Syrah and Merlot.

Notice that in the sixties and seventies the area planted was over 200,000 hectares. At the same time there was 13,000 hectares of Chardonnay and 17,000 hectares of Pinot Noir in France. Now the most widely planted grape in France is Merlot.



⁵ Guy Lavignac (2001) *Cépages du Sud-Ouest. 2000 ans d'histoire, mémoires d'un ampélographe.*

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

The vines have pointed leaves with their characteristic five lobes as shown in the photo below.

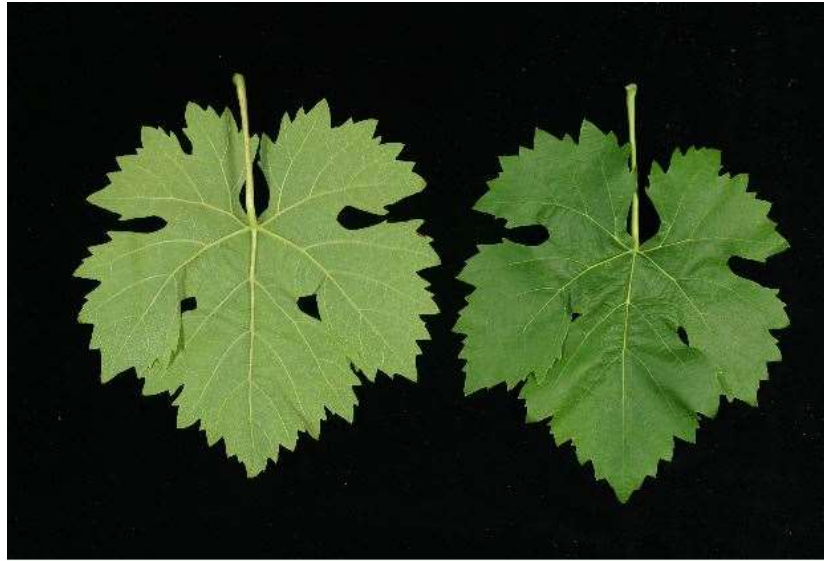


Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

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



Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

One of the great advantages of this grape variety temporarily falling into disfavour is the fact that there are literally hundreds of old vineyards being rediscovered by young

winemakers throughout the Languedoc and further afield. These old vines support fewer bunches but the quality of the fruit can be exceptional.

We have written before about the mistaken view of many (especially the European Union) in picking winners among grape varieties. The attempt to force homogenisation of grape varieties was misplaced and counter-productive. The view that grapes such as Clairette or Carignan or Cinsault were somehow inferior varieties was just plain silly. As we always say: there are no bad grape varieties, only bad winemakers! There is always someone who can make great wines out of a grape variety that is shunned by the mainstream, especially if it planted in soil that enhances its best characteristics. A great example are the wines made by Dominique Belluard out of the Gringet variety. These are stunning wines by any measure but from one of the world's most obscure grapes.

With Carignan the same applies with great wines being produced by winemakers such as Axel Prufer, Sylvain Bock, Michaël Georget, Jean-Luc Chossart, Ivo Ferreira and Mylene Bru. We have created a lovely pack Pack 3) of six wines made either entirely or partly from Carignan which you can read about earlier in this newsletter.

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