

WINE Talk: May 2016

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 61

There is just so much happening at the moment. The Handmade event in Melbourne for the third year where so many members of the public jam through the doors to taste the wines on offer, proving our theory that the natural wine movement is a consumer led phenomenon. We will be there showing some of the wines we import from France.

Then there is the seminal event at Franklin on the 19th June called Bottletops! This is the first time it has been held and there will be a stellar lineup of natural wine producers from interstate showing their wines. You can read more about this event later in this newsletter.

We have a massive lineup of packs for you this month with a 12 pack of red wines and our annual Tour de France pack along with a number of other packs which we deliver to you freight free in many parts of Australia.

Once again, some of our producers have been hit by the massive frosts that recently spread across the northern areas of France. We have included a story about how some of our producers fared below.

And we have finally got around to writing the last section of our tour of country France eating and drinking in lovely restaurants and bars that serve natural wine.

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

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

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

Handmade event in Melbourne, Sunday 29th May



The popular Handmade event in Melbourne is on again this year on Sunday May 29th from 1:00 to 4:30 PM, and, once again, we will be there to pour some of our wines. This event always at the Builders Arms Hotel in Gertrude Street in Fitzroy. It is the third time has been held and it is always insanely popular.

We will be there for the third year in a row and this year we will be representing Domaine Derain from St Aubin in Burgundy and also Yann Durieux from the Hauts Côtes de Nuits, also in Burgundy.

Here is what the Builders Arms has to say about the event:

It's a wine celebration that spans all corners of the pub, highlighting our favourite and international winemakers. Taste, talk and take home as many or as few bottles and you like. This year we even have a dedicated cheese room for you to sample and purchase goods from local cheese makers. It's definitely a day not to be missed!

Tickets are available through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/handmade-2016-tickets-24307167392>

Hobart wine event not to be missed: Bottletop!



An exciting new event is being held in Hobart at Franklin Restaurant in June, at the same time as many people are already visiting our town for the Dark Mofo festival. The event which celebrates wines made using organic principles and low intervention winemaking is being organised by the staff at Franklin Restaurant on Sunday, 19th June 2016 from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM.

There will also be food masterminded by Franklin's Dave Moyle and the tasting wines from the many participants included in the price of the ticket.

A stellar line up of Australian producers who are friends of the restaurant are all heading our way, which of course includes some of the most exciting Australian producers of natural wines.

Among those who plan to be there are some of the leading Australian producers including:

BOBAR, Boomtown, Chapter, Commune of Buttons, d'Meure, Dr Edge, Domaine Simha, Gentle Folk, Good Intentions Wine Co., Jauma, Konpira Maru, Latta, Little Reddie, Lucy Margaux, Manon, Momento Mori, Ochota Barrels, Patrick Sullivan, Project Brian, Sam Vinciullo, Shobbrook, Sinapius, Tim Ward, Travis Tausend, William Downie, Xavier and more.

Those of you who seek out natural and low intervention wines will recognise many of the leading practitioners among those attending.

And, because we're local, we're allowed to show a few of the French wines from our portfolio as well.

It is essential to buy a ticket for the event as numbers are strictly limited and there has already been a lot of interest in the event with tickets selling very fast. Buy your tickets at the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/bottle-tops-a-day-of-wine-tickets-24448841142>

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We can't emphasise how wonderful this event is for Hobart and really hope everyone gets behind it, both members of the public and sommeliers and others in the restaurant trade. This is a great opportunity to meet producers and try their wines.

There has never been an event quite like it in Tasmania and it is going to be a wonderful day!

And if you're thinking about visiting Tasmania for Dark Mofo perhaps this will help decide to make a trip south (and of course there's always the now annual nude winter solstice swim as a further attraction).

Severe April Frosts in France

Following a warmer than normal winter, vines in France were perilously advanced when severe frosts hit many grape growing regions in the final days of April. It's a cruel blow for vigneron, including many we work with, so early in the year and means that after a relatively good harvest for most in 2015 it's back to the recent years of reduced yields and of course fewer bottles of wine to sell. This followed serious unseasonal hailstorms across France, especially in the Mâconnais, about two weeks before. A year without at least one extreme destructive weather event – usually hail or frost – seems unfortunately to be becoming the norm for many French grape growing regions.

The frosts in Burgundy are being reported as the worst since 1981 and in the Loire they are being compared to 1991 and 1994. "Historic" levels of damage are being reported. In Burgundy, the regions that are badly affected include Pommard, Savigny-le Beaune, and Volnay, all regions severely affected by hailstorms in 2012 and 2013. There is also significant damage in Chablis and other parts of northern Burgundy. In the Loire the regions of Bourgueil and Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil have been particularly badly hit. Stéphane Guion, who we work with in Bourgueil, has lost 75% of this year's harvest. But we expect that no-one in the Loire will escape unscathed. Reports from parts of Champagne, especially the Aube are also very distressing. Frost this severe is going to impact yields not just this year but into 2017.

So far, except for those producers who are in the south of France, the news seems to be universally bad. If Tania Carême in Vouvray says that with 15% losses they feel they have got out of it lightly we know a lot of people must have suffered terribly. It's been a wait and see exercise for the worst affected and by now they will be starting to see the full consequences.

We're already seeing direct effects of the frost. Alice and Olivier De Moor's Chitry and St-Bris vineyards were devastated. This includes not just the Chardonnay vines which make their Chitry and the Sauvignon Blanc from which they make their St-Bris, but their Aligoté vines as well, which are all located in the same areas. They have just advised us that there will be none of their fun, early drinking A Ligoter 2015 this year. In battening down the financial hatches, they will keep that wine for later release under their Aligoté label.

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These regular meteorological disasters are much of the explanation for why the De Moors have taken out a sort of insurance over the last few years by buying grapes from their friend Gerald Oustric from Le Mazel in the Ardèche, well into the south of France. Under their négoce label Le Vendangeur Masqué, in the last couple of years they have released a Viognier made from grapes grown by Oustric and last year they also made some Chardonnay with his grapes. It is just being bottled and we should have it available in August. (As always with the De Moors' wines if you would like some it pays to reserve in advance.)



On 29 April, in a Facebook post, Sylvestre Mosse graphically illustrated (see above) their “très mort” vines (the ones where it was immediately obvious the new buds were completely destroyed) but also held out some hope with pictures of vines for which “on croise les doigts” or for which their fingers’ were crossed. We, and we’re sure our customers, have been doing that and hope the news improves for everyone.

Featured winemaker: Valentin Montanet



Since we have been importing wines for over eight years now we have begun to observe an interesting phenomenon where the parents begin the process of going into “retraite” (retirement) and one or more of their children formally take over the domaine and all the associated duties, from tending the vineyards, making the wines and attending the many natural wine events to market their wines.

This has been the case with Valentin Montanet who has taken over much of the responsibility for the viticulture and winemaking duties at the highly respected Domaine de la Cadette and Domaine Montanet-Thoden. Valentin has been working with his father for a number of years now and is showing that he has inherited an uncanny knack for making delicious wines which are clean, clear and exhibit deep minerality.

The minerality and the depth of flavour in their wines comes from their excellent work in the vineyards where they use no pesticides or herbicides that cause so much damage to the soil and the life that is so active below the surface and which is so fundamental to the wines reflecting the terroir.



A photo we took during harvest last year at [Domaine de la Cadette](#)

In this photo of one of the Montanet-Thoden vineyards you will notice the forest at the top of the slope that provides biodiversity for the vines. You will also see the white rocks that dot the vineyard. These have come to the surface from the limestone substrate below thus increasing the minerality of the soil as the rocks decay.

To place the vineyard in perspective it lies south of Chablis and north-west of Dijon. The Kimmeridgean limestone is still well and truly present as you can see from the above photo. This is recognised in Burgundy by the local wines being given the right to put the village name on the white wines produced here due to the minerality provided by the limestone as in nearby Chablis.

The Cadette and Montanet-Thoden vineyards are within sight of the famous perched village of Vézelay. If we turn 108 degrees from the previous photo you can see the village in the distance



You can see the limestone again and Vézelay in the background

So the Cadette and Montanet-Thoden vineyards are on very good terroir in a wonderful area and the wines are made by the son of a great winemaker. Valentin is now carving out his own reputation as a talented and intuitive winemaker who will maintain the tradition of excellence established by his parents.



You can see the quality of the Chardonnay that Valentin grows

Vézelay Secret 6 Pack

So, to celebrate the excellence of the wines produced here we are offering a special secret pack of six wines called **Vézelay Secret 6 Pack** from the combined estates of wines made by Valentin.

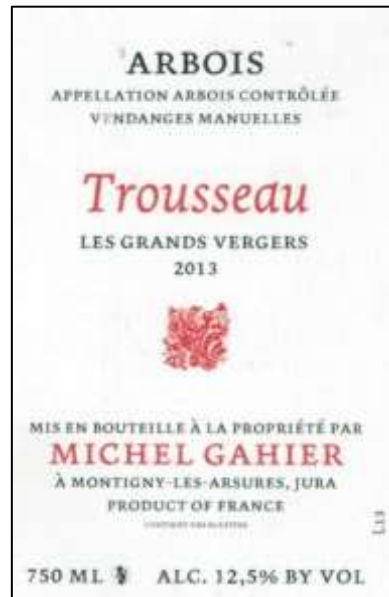
The pack consists of:

- Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay La Châtelaine 2014
- Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay Les Saulniers 2014
- Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne l'Ermitage Rouge 2014
- Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Champs Cadet Rouge 2013
- La Soeur Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay 2013
- Domaine Montanet-Thoden Bourgogne Cuvee Garance Rouge 2013

The Châtelaine, Les Saulniers and the La Soeur Cadette are all Chardonnay from different terroirs. The other three are reds from Vézelay made from Pinot Noir as you would expect. The only surprise is that the l'Ermitage also has 20% of an ancient grape called César which is permitted in this area but little known. It is a legal Burgundy, however.

The RRP for this secret pack of 6 bottles of wine is \$265 but the pack price is **\$225.25 including freight.**

Pack 1: May Mixed Dozen Pack – All Red Wines



Each month lately we have been offering a specially selected 12 pack of interesting wines for those of you who want to experience a wide range of styles and appellations from throughout France. The other big advantage of choosing this pack is that you get a 20% discount as well as the free shipping! This month they are all reds – a pack for those who plan drinking red wines through the winter. In several cases we are down to the last dozen or less of the wine so there may be some variations to later orders.

Jolly Ferriol Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes Syrahe 2009 – This dry red wine is made from 100% Syrah. The grapes grow on schisty marl soil and the yield is very low at 18 hectolitres per hectare. Jean-Luc describes this wine as "a fruity wine with a nose of cherries in kirsch, supple in the mouth and slightly tannic, a lively finish giving off the aroma of red berry fruit". The wine spends 2 years in old Burgundian barrels prior to bottling.

Mylène Bru Vin de France Rita Rouge – The Rita is one of Mylène's most popular wines and is named after her 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. Australian consumers have really come to appreciate this wine. 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.

Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Grands Vergers 2013 – This is a very, very good example of a Trousseau wine having the delicacy that we associate with this fragile grape but also an extraordinary depth of flavour and a complexity that is intriguing. There are tannins present giving it structure but they are not aggressive. The wine is lively on the nose, has deep, deep flavours (hints of cherry and raspberry at the front

of the palate and forest floors in autumn in the middle) and it tastes alive. It has a lingering mineral aftertaste. A release from our cellar stock – this is not on our list.

Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Le Vigne Du Louis 2013 – Le Vigne de Louis is a Trousseau that is lighter than the Grands Vergers and Le Clousot, it is a paler colour but has a vibrant freshness and hints of smokiness. It is made in exactly the same way as the Grands Vergers but the fruit is sourced from younger vines. Younger vines usually produce lighter wine styles of less complexity than older vines, but wines that are pleasant drinking nevertheless. A small amount of sulphite was added to this wine when it was bottled. It has good structure, very good length and is quite juicy - hence is very drinkable. The 'young' vines are twenty years old and lie on a south west facing slope. A release from our cellar stock – this is not on our list.

Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Escarpolette Rouge 2013 – This wine was bottled in November 2014 after initial fermentation using carbonic maceration and then, after pressing, aging in old barrels. 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 and it is very drinkable now.

Michel Guignier Beaujolais Villages Vauxrenard Bistère 2011 – This wine is classified as a named village appellation indicating that the wines produced in this area are superior quality to the normal Beaujolais wines. So it is a Beaujolais Villages wine and the named village is Vauxrenard which is where some of Michel's vineyards are maintained. It is just slightly north-west of the village of Fleurie. The wine is called Bistère because that is the name of his faithful horse that he uses to plough his vineyards. This is an elegant, lively, precise wine of considerable charm. We recently read a report of famed French chef Alain Ducasse who was dining at the wonderful Manfreds in Copenhagen. On being served a 2007 vintage Guignier's Bistère said it was the "*best Beaujolais I've tasted in a long time*". We can but agree!

Domaine la Paonnerie Anjou Villages La Rouge de la Jacquerie 2013 Sans Soufre – The Domaine la Paonnerie Anjou Villages 2013 Sans Soufre is a blend of 66% Cabernet Franc and 34% Cabernet Sauvignon picked from the Clos de la Jacquerie, a vineyard which the Carroget's own exclusively. The grapes are picked when the Cabernet Sauvignon has reached the desired level of ripeness. This is a lively, vibrant wine that is very gluggable! The wine is fermented with natural yeasts and is neither filtered or fined. This is a light, lively delicious red wine that goes beautifully with robust foods.

Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Champs Cadet Rouge 2013 – While we originally approached the Montanets because of their white wines, we soon discovered that their red wines are equally as delicious. This red Burgundy is made from 100% Pinot Noir even though small quantities of the César grape are permitted in this region. The Champs Cadet vineyard is one of Cadette's most remote and difficult with lots of stones littering the surface. This is a lovely wine with a velvet texture provided by maturation in old oak barrels, but also with the trademark freshness that makes these natural wines so appealing.

Domaine la Paonnerie Coteaux d'Ancenis "Simplement Gamay" 2014 – The "Simplement Gamay" 2014 is made from 100% Gamay Noir à Jus Blanc. The wine is fermented in fibreglass tanks using the natural yeasts on the grapes and is neither filtered nor fined. This is a light, lively delicious red wine that goes beautifully with food such as lamb chops or roast chicken or a robust cheese. This cuvee also has no sulphur added at any stage during the winemaking process.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cabaret Rouge 2012 – 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.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2013 – This wine belies its humble Bourgogne Rouge tag. It is made from grapes picked from his vineyards around the village of Saint Aubin which is one of the emerging villages for both white and red Burgundy. About half of the grapes for this 2013 vintage were destemmed and there was less pigeage this year as Julien is becoming more confident about letting the grapes do the talking. It is a silky Pinot with some elegance and structure. We like it a lot!

Nicolas Carmarans IGP Aveyron Mauvais Temps Rouge 2014 – Nicolas Carmarans' Mauvais Temps is a particular favourite. This light, but complex red wine from the Aveyron in central France is lively, exciting, delicious and leaves you wanting more! The wine comprises three grape varieties, namely 40% Negret de Banhars (we believe that Nicolas is the only vigneron left in France who grows this grape variety), 50% Fer Servadou (known locally as Mansois) and 10% Cabernet Franc. The grapes undergo semi-carbonic maceration in 15 hectolitre conical tanks for 20 days and the juice is then transferred to old barriques for 12 months. The vineyard is very steep with narrow terraces covered with native herbs in a stunning valley near the village of Campouriez.

The RRP for this selection of 12 bottles of wine is \$516 but the pack price is \$412.80 including freight.

Pack 2: Tour de France 6 pack



Once again we offer a pack to help you through the traumas of the Tour de France. This year the route goes through many of our wine regions so it was fairly easy to put together a pack of six to give you something to drink on at least some of the nights you stay up late to watch the action.

The start of the race is just below Normandy so we won't offer you one of our stunning ciders from that region. Instead we will wait for Stage 3 when the race reaches one of our favourite towns in France, namely Angers. This Loire town is a hotbed of natural wines with many restaurants and bars serving nothing else – even the high-end restaurants such as Une Ile.

In this region you must try one of Angès and René Mosse's stunning Chenin Blanc wines for which they are famous in this area and well beyond (their wines have been regularly featured on Noma's wine list). We have chosen one of our favourite wines from this domaine, namely the **Le Rouchefer**. This wine will be a perfect accompaniment for just about any food you want to pair with it. It is incredibly versatile.

After Angers the race heads down towards Central France and moves into the Aveyron where our friend Nicolas Carmarans makes incredibly soulful wines in a remote region bordering the Selves River. His wine is called **Mauvais Temps** because the name serves two purposes – it references the bad weather that they experience here and it also suggests bad times!

At the end of Stage 6 the race ends in the Montauban north-west of Toulouse. This is to the east of the small town of Montréal. Here we import the wines from the uber-

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enthusiast, Dominique Andiran, who converted his vineyards to spray free and natural after a life-changing illness caused by the horrible sprays he was using in his vineyard. His wines are now ultra-pure and absolutely delicious due to the health of the soils in his vineyards. We have chosen a Chardonnay called **Montis Régalis** that is highly expressive of the region. You will notice that it has 3102 on the label. This is because it is not permitted to put the vintage on the label of a Vin de France wine without paying extra for the privilege. You will be able to see what year he means!

The race then heads up into the Pyrenees before descending to the coastal area towards the city of Montpellier. Just behind this city Ivo Ferreira tends his vineyards around the town of Montpeyrroux. The wine we have chosen from this area is his **Escarpolette Rouge** which is made from Cinsault, Carignan and Syrah and has been aged in old barrels for approximately 12 months. This wine has had no sulphites added.

Next the tour heads across the southern area across the top of the fascinating Camargue crossing the mighty Rhône River and then ascending the demanding Mont Ventoux. This calls for a classy red wine from the local area. We have chosen one from star winemaker Philippe Gimel who used to work at one of the top domains in Châteauneuf-du-Pape before establishing his own vineyards on the slopes of Mont Ventoux. The red is **La Pierre Noire 2006** which is made from 66% Grenache and 34% Syrah.

Finally the race heads to the mountainous Savoie region where some of the most demanding climbs are planned. One of the towns they ride through is Megève which lies close to the village of Ayse where the talented Dominique Belluard tends his vines. This region is known for the elegant white wines made from local grape varieties. And there is no grape more local and difficult to find than Gringet. Dominique is the only commercial producer of wines made from this grape variety. We have included the lovely sparkling wine called **Les Perles du Mont Blanc 2012** for you to celebrate the end of the tour and the end of sleepless nights!

We have numbered these wines so you can see where they are on the map of the race above.

1. Domaine Mosse Anjou Le Rouchefer Blanc 2013
2. Nicolas Carmarans IGP Aveyron Mauvais Temps Rouge 2014
3. Dominique Andiran Vin de France Montis Régalis 3102
4. Domaine L'Escarpolette (Ivo Ferreira) Escarpolette Rouge 2013
5. Saint Jean du Barroux Ventoux La Pierre Noire 2006
6. Domaine Belluard Savoie AOP Ayse Brut "Les Perles du Mont Blanc" 2012

The RRP for this pack of 6 bottles of wine is \$261 but the pack price is \$221.85 including freight.

Pack 3: Magnum 3 red pack



Once again we offer the popular MAGNUM 3 pack for those of you who love larger format wines. These are great for a party or great for pouring on a special occasion.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2012 – This wine belies its humble Bourgogne Rouge tag. It is made from grapes picked from his vineyards around the village of Saint Aubin which is one of the emerging villages for both white and red Burgundy. It is a silky Pinot with some elegance and structure.

Domaine Milan Sans Soufre Ajouté Blanc 2014 – The 2014 vintage is a particularly fine example of this blended wine. This vintage sees Grenache Blanc, Rolle (the local name for Vermentino), Roussanne, Chardonnay and Muscat a Petit Grains used in the blend. The wine was kept on lees in old barriques for 5 months. This is a beautiful wine that is fresh and lively now but will continue to change character and improve well into the future. No filtration or fining has been applied to this wine. This is a great wine for people who have developed a reaction to sulphur as this one has no added sulphites (that's what Sans Soufre Ajouté means).

Mylène Bru Vin de France Rita Rouge 2012 – 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 3 magnums of wine is \$264 but the pack price is \$224.40 including freight.

Pack 4: One Pack Only 6 Pack



This pack is comprised of 6 bottles which are each the last bottle left. Thus there is only one pack and the first person to order it will be the only person to receive it! There won't be any substitutions because if one is sold they are all sold. Not all of these wines appear on our list as available – generally we remove them from the list once they get to this point so don't be surprised if you look on our website and see SOLD OUT next to most or all of these wines.

Several are wines we have had for some time which can continue to age, particularly Jean-Paul Brun's northern Rhone wines and Philippe Gimel's Saint Jean du Barroux Pierre Noire.

Pascal Simonutti Orange label 2012 – This wine is made from 100% Sauvignon Blanc but is a far cry from the tropical fruit bombs that we normally associate with this grape variety. It has a beautiful texture (possibly from a little extra skin contact) and a style that is rounded, compelling and slightly haunting. It is a wine for thinking about as well as drinking.

Vincent Carême Vouvray Brut 2012 – This sparkling wine is made from Chenin Blanc, one of the world's most versatile grapes. It is balanced by a beautiful acidity which runs through each mouthful. The vines give this wine a distinct fruity character though and it exhibits very fine bubbles.

Jean-Paul Brun (Terres Roties) Condrieu 2008 – Beaujolais vigneron Jean-Paul Brun makes this wine for a family member who grows grapes in the northern Rhone. Only a small number of bottles are made so they are rarities. The Condrieu is 100% Viognier.

Jean-Paul Brun (Terres Roties) Côte Rôtie 2007 – Also made by Jean-Paul Brun, this is a classic blend of Syrah and Viognier, and benefiting from several years of bottle aging.

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Saint Jean du Barroux Pierre Noire 2007 – Made from 75% Grenache and 25% Syrah, Philippe Gimel, the vigneron and winemaker, proudly says that this wine should last for 25 years. It's from his best terroir and has structure and power. His vineyards, in Provence, are in the foothills of Mont Ventoux and protected from the intense summer heat. The grapes ripen easily but in this cooler microclimate it happens more slowly than most of wines from the Ventoux. The yield for these vines is 15hl/ha. The grapes had 18 days of maceration and then were aged in concrete or enamelled tanks so the flavours here are all grape, not wood.

Philippe Bornard Arbois Pupillin Melon Le Rouge Queue 2011 – With the last full case just sold to a restaurant there was one lonely bottle of this beautiful white Jura wine left in the warehouse. This is not Melon de Bourgogne but a variant or cousin of Chardonnay that has 'evolved' in this region. The local name of the grape is Melon-Queue-Rouge which refers to the red stems of the vines. Bornard thinks that people just forgot about this grape but his father and a few others kept growing it even though it was a smaller grape and somewhat susceptible to disease. However the INAO which officially controls French appellation law does not recognise its existence. There are some classic Jura oxidative notes in this wine which makes it very appealing to those of us who crave this experience. It is a big, rich wine but with a razor-sharp streak of acidity offsetting the sweetness of the fruit. As is the case with many of the Bornard wines, the finish is incredibly long.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$345 but the pack price is \$276 including freight, a discount of 20%.

Pack 5: White(ish) wines NOT to give to a wine judge 6 pack



When we talk about natural wine we think of it as a spectrum. At one end (we think of it as the left end of the spectrum because it's the most radical) the wines have no added sulphites, are visibly unfiltered, and still wines might have a slight prickle from residual carbon dioxide. At the other end, the wines are quite classic, but still naturally fermented, with very low levels of sulphites and while, they may be clear, as a result of a settling and bottling using gravity or have had a coarse filtration, they are never fined (that process of using something foreign such as extract of fish bladders, egg whites or specially made products that used to precipitate and so they can easily be removed, proteins and other solid matter suspended in the wine).

For this pack we have selected 6 white wines that sit on the left extreme of the spectrum that makes up our portfolio. They have characteristics which would see them thrown out of a wine show, hence the pack title, but they are wines we love to drink for the pleasure of the life that's been somehow captured and retained in the bottle.

Le Temps de Cerises La Peur du Rouge 2014 – Axel Prüfer can definitely be described as a low interventionist winemaker. This incredibly complex Chardonnay is like no other we have ever tried. It is packed with minerality and is totally expressive of the vineyard from which the fruit has been derived. Only a wine made from perfect fruit grown without sprays, irrigation and artificial fertilisers could possibly taste like this. Expect cloudiness, some sediment in the wine and a totally delicious flavour!

Le Petit Gimios Vin de Table Muscat Sec des Roumanis 2013 – This wine is unlike any other Muscat you are likely to have tried. The Lavaysse family add nothing to their wine to change the essential characteristics of the Muscat à Petit Grains grape variety. As such they produce a wine of great interest and complex characters. The grapes are harvested from old vines that produce exceptionally low yields therefore the flavour is quite concentrated in the grapes that are harvested. This one qualifies for the contempt of the judges as there is a little carbon dioxide in the bottle to protect the wine. Therefore you might experience a little tingle on the tongue which, for some inexplicable reason, seems to frighten the judges. We find it very appealing.

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Domaine Derain Vin de France Allez Goutons 2015 – This wine has been bottled with its lees so is somewhat cloudy, but displays an incredibly savoury “roundness” on the palate. It is a beautiful white wine made from Aligoté, one of our favourite white wine grapes. This wine is made by Dominique as an early drinking style to be consumed soon after being made.

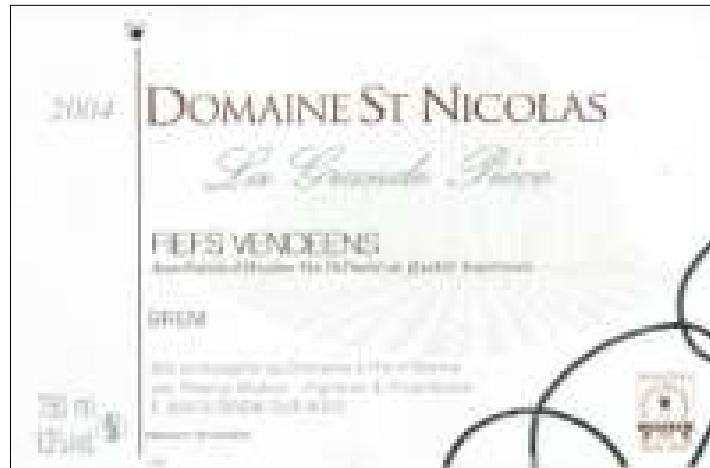
l’Octavin Vin de France Corvées de Trousseau 2014 – This wine is a Trousseau made from grapes sourced from a number of local vineyards. Notice that this is a Vin de France rather than being under the Arbois appellation. The reason is that the alcohol level is only a tiny 9.0% which is less than the required minimum of 10%. Low alcohol wines tend to do badly in shows as it is the powerful wines that seem to demand the attention of the judges. Nevertheless, to us this is a fascinating wine. The flavour is fully developed and very appealing. It has the colour of a rose but the weight and texture of a red wine making it a very versatile food wine but also perfect as an aperitif.

Domaine la Paonnerie Vin de France Voila du Gros Lot 2014 – The Voila du Gros Lot" is made from 100% Grolleau Gris (also called Groslot in the Loire) grown in granitic soils. The wine is fermented with natural yeasts and is neither filtered nor fined. Although this is technically a white wine, the colour from the skins give it the appearance of a light rosé and flavours more reminiscent of an orange wine. It is a great match for a wide range of foods as it will not overpower them. This cuvee also has no sulphur added at any stage during the winemaking process.

Laurent Lebled Vin de France La Sauvignonne 2014 – This Sauvignon Blanc has been produced from organically-grown grapes and then fermented naturally so that the wine retains the true flavour of the Sauvignon Blanc grape rather than the "tropical" flavours introduced via commercial yeasts. The juice and the skins for this wine are kept together for about ten days to extract some of the anthocyanins out of the skins hence giving it a light orange colour. This is a lovely wine at a very, very reasonable price considering the quality of the winemaking skill involved.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$258 but the pack price is **\$219.30 including freight.**

Pack 6 – We aged them for you 6 Pack



We have a few wines in our warehouse that have been there for several years. They have been stored under temperature controlled conditions and now provide a way for a couple of people to get a six pack of wines that we've aged for you.

The maximum number of these packs available is two because we only have two bottles of one of the wines in the pack.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Grand Pièce 2004 – This is one of the domaine's prestige red wine and is made from pure Pinot Noir from vines that are at least 25 years old and that provide very low yields (<30 hectolitres per hectare). The south-west facing vineyard, on schist, has been cultivated biodynamically since 1993. It is already elegant and refined but will continue to improve with age. It is a sensible 13% alcohol. Elevage was in 100% new oak, which is why we have kept it for so long.

Domaine Mosse Anjou Rouge 2010 – The Anjou Rouge is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc picked from small parcels of old vines (ranging from 30 to 50 years old). This is a pure, thrilling wine that is fresh and lively on the palate and has a lingering finish. There are blackcurrant leaf, tobacco and cocoa notes that linger and a quite complex aroma. The tannins are quite fine and well-integrated. We thought we had sold out of this wine straight after Rootstock last year but found two bottles when we were reorganising our warehouse recently.

Mylène Bru Vin de France Rita 2011 – This wine from Mylène Bru 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. A very good exemplar of Carignan.

Cause Marines Vin de Table Sept Souris 2008 – The Sept Souris 8002 is a Vin de Table wine and is made from 100% Syrah. Despite its lowly appellation it is a wine of considerable elegance and is the flagship wine of this exciting domaine. It is only made in the best years. They made it last year (2015) and this 2008 vintage was the last time they made it. This wine is drinking very nicely right now with exceptionally

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fine tannins and a long, satisfying finish. It is not permitted in France to put the vintage on the label of Vin de Table wines but if you look at the name of the wine it doesn't take too long to work out that it is now 8 years old!

Domaine Derain St-Aubin Le Ban Rouge 2008 – This wine shows just how good wines can be from the underrated appellation of St Aubin. The vines here thrive on an east facing slope covered in limestone-derived clay and gravel. This is a lovely wine with an appealing cherry and strawberry fruit flavour, a core of acidity, great freshness, an underlying spiciness and perfect balance. Great drinking now.

Hervé Villemade Cheverny Les Ardilles 2011 – We love the blend of 80% Pinot Noir and 20% Gamay Hervé uses for this cuvée. It creates a wine of quiet elegance that is very food friendly. The grapes were macerated for 20 days and, after pressing, transferred to old barriques and demi-muids for maturation.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$287 but the pack price is \$243.95 including freight.

BEYOND PARIS PART 3 – Languedoc-Roussillon, Champagne, the South-West

This is the third in this series of articles about where we eat and drink in France on our many long trips through the countryside. There are descriptions of our favourite restaurants in all parts of the French regions (mainly those serving natural wines) and places where you can buy natural wines

So far we have published two other articles:

Wine Talk Edition 56, October 2015

This article was called BEYOND PARIS – PART 1 and the newsletter can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.livingwines.com.au/Newsletter/Living_Wines_October_2015_newsletter.pdf

Wine Talk Edition 58 January 2016

This article was called BEYOND PARIS PART 2 – THE LOIRE and the newsletter can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.livingwines.com.au/Newsletter/Living_Wines_January_2016_newsletter.pdf

These are the sorts of places that, when we're planning a trip and know what parts of France we want to visit, we set up a set of constraints to show what days they are open and closed and then we can make sure we're in the right place at the right time.

Languedoc-Roussillon

Percherons

Percherons is owned by talented chef Mathieu Perez who we first met when he was the master of the tiny kitchen at Aux Deux Amis in rue Oberkampf in Paris. We'd heard he had move to the south of France and a quick google found us planning a trip to Céret, a village not far from Collioure and the Spanish border, an area we particularly enjoy, and it has the advantage of being close to Jolly Ferriol, one of the domaines we work with.

What we didn't realise we were also going to get was a small gem of a museum as well. Picasso lived in this village for a considerable amount of time and the village's museum of contemporary art has pieces of his and his contemporaries, many donated by the artists, as well as changing exhibitions from living artists. The Picasso collection runs to almost 80 pieces, of which 57 were donated to the town by

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Picasso. Céret is also famous for its cherries so must be wonderful to visit in spring when the trees are in flower and again in summer when the fruit is ripe.

At Percherons Mathieu Perez's food is uncomplicated and absolutely delicious, making full use of the Mediterranean's wonderful produce. We ate smoked eggplant and fig with anchovies (the port of Collioure is France's most famous town for anchovies), excellent terrine, vitello tonnato, dusted with finely-ground spirulina (see picture), salted cod with courgette and preserved lemon, and an extraordinary dish of Barbary duck with spelt, a black olive purée and intense chocolate mint. It goes without saying the cheese (pont leveque, an old gouda and thin shavings of a semi-hard sheep milk cheese) was excellent. We finished with ganache covered with shaved local hazelnuts, lemon curd and yuzu.



Vitello tonnato with spirulina

This is seriously good food and there's a wonderful cellar of natural wine which you can explore as well.

7, rue de la République, Céret, +33 4 11 64 41 12

Les 9 Caves

Les 9 Caves is partnership between 13 people, including nine winemakers (one is renowned winemaker Bruno Duchêne, who for the last couple of years has had a run project making a wine jointly with Nico Carmarans, whose wines we import) and the owners of the wonderful La Guinelle Banyuls vinegars, the best in the region. The winemakers have their cellars here – the building was once the cellars of the Cellier

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des Templiers, the local co-operative which makes 75% of Banyuls wine, which has expanded into huge modern cellars above Banyuls.

At Les 9 Caves they serve simple dishes, including some of France's best charcuterie (e.g. Alain Grezes' hams) and cheese, excellent tomato salads in summer and Collioure's best anchovies, but you can also buy all sorts of excellent produce and plenty of wine, plus you might run into a local winemaker as a bonus. It's a brilliant address if you're picnicking or staying in self-contained accommodation. They also regularly have concerts and other events which they advertise ahead of time so check their Facebook site if you're planning to be in this region. They also have some accommodation so every base is covered.



Simple but delicious – the start of a meal at 9 Caves

les9caves.tumblr.com

56 avenue du Général de Gaulle, Banyuls-sur-Mer. +33 4 68 36 22 37.

El Xadic del Mar

El Xadic del Mar is a wine bar, also in Banyuls, run by Manu Desclaux who was one of the originals at Le Verre Volé in Paris. It's only tiny, with just a few tables, so bookings are essential if you want to eat. Tables are closely spaced and it's easy to get into conversation with other diners who are just as likely to be local winemakers. It's a potentially dangerous situation. We left this place after a very long lunch probably drunker than at just about any other restaurant we've been to in France. As well as charcuterie and cheese, Manu cooks quite a few dishes too. It will depend on the season but you might find asparagus with serrano hams, steamed clams with pata negra (yes we're very close to Spain here and ham especially tend to come from over the border) Of course there's a wonderful selection of natural wines.



Lunch over but no-one's quite ready to leave ...

11, av. du Puig-del-Mas, Banyuls-sur-Mer. +33 4 68 88 89 20.

Pas Comme les Autres

Pas Comme les Autres translates as “Not like the Others”. its owner Romain Niess’s statement about where he thinks his wine bar fits into Béziers’ dining scene. And he’s right –there’s nothing else that’s anything like it. His selection of wines and delicious simply-prepared food using organic produce, not to mention his wealth of knowledge that’s he’s keen to share makes Béziers a great place to stay in this part of France. We also are indebted to him for introducing us to Julian Peyras’s wines. The fact we import them is directly due to our first visit here.

Initially, given he was sommelier, chef, waiter and dishwasher, most of the food was brought in, including charcuterie from famed Basque producer Eric Ospital (Domaine Louis Ospital) and very very good brandade, cassoulet and braised tripe, which he would reheat.



But on our 2015 visit he'd really upped the ante and was cooking (amazingly with almost no equipment) many dishes from scratch. He has a network of great producers. Some quail roasted with foie gras and grapes was sensational. He served us perfectly cooked very polite pigeon breast and then later, the remains of the carcass to pick at after a further blast in the oven. Anyone who does that loves good food! The mushrooms he sources in autumn are especially good too.



Roast quail



Pigeon part 1



Pigeon part 2 – the bit you eat with your hands

Each day he also makes a delicious fruit tart. Add natural wine to this formula and it's a perfect combination.

www.pascommelesautres-beziers.com/

3 Rue Porte Olivier, Place de la Madeleine, Béziers. +33 4 67 48 53 05

Champagne

Aux Crieurs du Vin

Roland Piollet, the Champagne producer we work with, lives in Polisot in the Côte des Bars, which means Troyes is an obvious place to stay when we visit. But even if it wasn't we would manufacture an excuse to spend a night or two here because of Aux Crieurs du Vin, one of France's most loved natural wine bars. It became famous when Nicolas Vauthier owned it and has kept its reputation and quality after he sold it to become a vigneron (Viti Vini Vinci).

Bookings are essential here. At night there's a substantial menu with a choice of four or so entrées, mains and desserts and of course excellent cheese. They're mostly classic bistro dishes, but usually with a touch of lightness. So a grilled Laguiole sausage might be served with steamed eggplant, roast lamb is flavoured with cumin and the starters might include a beetroot tartare with fresh chèvre. And always start with the charcuterie and order cheese. This is also one of the best places to order andouillette. They're made by the renowned local butcher Daniel Thierry whose andouillettes appear in many of the places we like to eat, all around France.



Excellent grilled sausage, unexpectedly but successfully paired with steamed eggplant.



A wonderful cheese selection

Oh and it's also a great wineshop if you're looking to buy wines as well.

www.auxcrieursdevin.fr

4 Place Jean Jaurès, Troyes. :+33 3 25 40 01 01

South-west - Gaillac

Vigne en Foule

Vigne en Foule is unique for us – a restaurant partly owned by Patrice Lescarret and Virginie Maignien of Causse Marines, two of the winemakers we work with. They share the ownership with two other winemakers Bernard Plageoles and Michel Issaly, distiller Laurent Cazottes and the chef who makes everything happen Julien Bourdaries. It solves the problem of what to do with visiting importers for lunch or dinner – take them to your own restaurant - plus there's also a gite upstairs!

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Named after a very old method of close planting grape vines that has long since been abandoned in France, wine is front and centre here. The restaurant has a wonderful collection of bottles of preserved grapes so you can do some self-education on local varieties between courses. And its wine list, while showcasing the local winemakers and local varieties such as Mauzac, Duras and much more, has wine from many other regions as well. You might even find a bottle of Tom Shobbrook's wine on the shelves!

Typical dishes include excellent "croquettes de pieds et de tête de cochon", crisp croquettes and inside pig feet and head, on a green herb sauce, beef tongue with mustard sauce and cuttlefish in a rich shellfish sauce with a purée of chickpeas, and 'curry de porc' pommes allumettes", pieces of tender pork enhanced by a mild curry sauce with matchstick potato fries on the side. The food is imaginative, drawing on many influences and the produce is excellent. Desserts are delicious too.



Pork Croquettes – feet and head



Beef tongue with mustard sauce

We've been the lucky beneficiaries of several meals here as guests but we still can't help noticing what amazing value it is.

vigneenfoule.fr/

80, place de la Libération, Gaillac, +33 5 63 41 79 08

Grape variety: Grenache Blanc

Grenache Blanc is a widely planted grape variety in the south of France, from Châteauneuf-du-Pape through to the southern department of Roussillon which borders Spain. According to the Vitis International Variety Catalogue it arose as a mutation of the red Grenache variety which is a Spanish variety.

One of the interesting things about this grape variety is how the area planted to this grape in France has changed. The following table shows the rise and fall of Grenache Blanc.

Year	Area (hectares)
1958	8,652
1968	9,362
1979	16,286
1988	12,083
1999	6,460
2000	6,843
2006	8,405
2009	4,976

This pattern is unlike no other that we have seen in Europe. The pattern shows strong growth from the 1950s through to 1979 and then a very quick decline from then until 1999. This can often be explained by Government programs to pull out indigenous grape varieties and replace them with “international” varieties such as Chardonnay in the vain hope that they will be able to compete on the international market.

However, from 1999 to 2006 there is a resurgence and then again a very sharp decline over just three years to 2009!

The grape is one of the eighteen approved varieties¹ for the white wines of the famous Châteauneuf-du-Pape appellation which lies beside the Rhone river at the southern end of the absolutely riveting Dentelles du Montmirail mountains that sweep up towards Vaison-la-Romaine forming a backdrop for many of the southern Rhone appellation from Beaumes de Venise through Sablet and on to Seguret.

The leaf of this grape variety is quite angular as can be seen from the photo below.

¹¹ Yes, it is eighteen. The often quoted thirteen varieties has almost always been wrong. The varieties are Bourboulenc, Brun argenté, Cinsaut, Clairette, Clairette Rose, Counoise, Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris, Grenache Noir, Mourvèdre, Muscardin, Picardan, Piquepoul Blanc, Piquepoul Gris, Piquepoul Noir, Roussanne, Syrah and Terret Noir.



Photo courtesy: Vitis International Variety Catalogue

One of the most interesting wines that includes this grape variety is the elegant Domaine Milan Grand Blanc 2012. This wine is a blend of Grenache Blanc, Rolle (Vermentino), Roussanne, Muscat à Petit Grains and Chardonnay. They also have a white wine called Papillon which has the same grapes but this cuvée has no added sulphites.

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