

WINE Talk: April 2019

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 83

Welcome to edition 83 of the Wine Talk newsletter! This is a short newsletter by our normal standards because we have been incredibly busy with the two recent shipments we have received. We have been overwhelmed with the response and putting in long hours to ensure that all the orders have been fulfilled. Thank you all very much to the people who ordered the wines. We hope you are enjoying them – some of them are very rare and it's great to have them in Australia.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and remember that all past newsletters are available to read on our Living Wines Web site.

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. If you're not personally known to us or haven't already, please also provide your date of birth so we stay legal (a requirement of Tasmanian legislation.)

New venues in Sydney

Winona – New Wine Shop on Sydney's northern beaches

It's such a good story – friends who are also customers get the wine bug so badly they finally throw caution to the wind and put their feet deeply in the water.

That's what's happened to our friends Cam and Ellie Walsh who have opened a wine shop in Manly. It's so good to see the wines we love expanding their presence beyond the obvious areas of Darlinghurst, Surry Hills and Newtown, even into conservative electorates held (at the moment) by people like Tony Abbott.

You may know Cam and Ellie from their excellent Instagram account (it was The Funky Bunch but now it's called @winona_wine) where they provide wonderful descriptions (as well as plenty of practical information) about wines they love.

You can expect the same passionate expressions of their knowledge in the shop, which also has a selection of craft beer and artisan spirits. And, of course, we're pleased to say you'll find some Living Wines' wines too.

Shop 9/2-14 Pittwater Rd, Manly

Web site: winonawine.com

Mary's Underground

Opening in the last week of April, Jake Smythe and Kenny Graham from Mary's are extending their empire deep into the beating heart of Sydney's CBD suit territory. Watch out Macquarie St. The Circular Quay end of Sydney will never be quite the same again as they take control of what was the iconic Jazz venue The Basement.

In respecting but evolving The Basement's traditions, downstairs will continue to be a place for live music, albeit with much a much more interesting wine selection now, with a list put together by Mary's new wine director well-known Sydney sommelier Caitlyn Rees.

It's a full service restaurant, with the promise of a bar to one side serving shellfish (prawns, clams, oysters etc). Dinner and a show with natural wine – proof positive that deep down there's more than just a touch of the romantic about Jake and Kenny as they seek to bring back some glamour to dining out, but with Mary's unique touch (it won't be quiet). Upstairs there's a more casual space with Mary's famous burgers and fried chicken of course.

7 Macquarie Place, Sydney

Container arriving next month with lots of goodies

Our next shipment will be in late May / early June and will have some treasures in it, including wines from Alice and Olivier De Moor, Jean-Pierre Robinot, René and Agnès Mosse (and their sons Joseph and Sylvestre who do much of the vineyard work now), Dominique Derain, Julien Altaber, Causse Marines, Dominique Belluard, Piillot Champagne, and Henri Milan. Some of these wines will be in limited supply and some will not be advertised so register your interest now if you want early warning about what's available from any of these producers.

A visit with Jean Marc Dreyer

We first met Jean Marc Dreyer from the village of Rosheim in Alsace a number of years ago at a winter salon in the tiny village of Glaine-Montaigut in the hills to the east of the Auvergne city of Clermont-Ferrand.

It is a small salon, but we always meet interesting vigneron there and Jean Marc was no exception. We were incredibly impressed with the purity of his wines and his work with maceration that lifted the wines to another level.

Based on this tasting we asked him if he was interested in working with us and he agreed, but he didn't have much wine to sell us at the time and also we think he wanted us to come to see him first, which is not uncommon amongst the winemakers we work with.

In the past twelve months we have visited him in his village of Rosheim twice and tasted the wines again and we are now in a position receive an allocation from the 2018 wines which we expect to arrive later this year.



The entrance to Jean Marc's winery

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Jean Marc has literally dozens of vineyards surrounding his village. Some of his vineyards contain long forgotten varieties that he is patiently looking after such as Abondance which is one of the last plots left in France.



A Dreyer vineyard overlooking Rosheim

All of his vineyards are typified by incredibly healthy soil which shows through in the quality of the grapes and then the quality of the wine.



Healthy soil in a Dreyer vineyard

The grape varieties that flourish in these soils include Riesling, Pinot Gris, Gewürztraminer, Auxerrois, Sylvaner, Muscat and Pinot Noir.

Here is a label from his lively, fresh Auxerrois cuvée.





Jean Marc and his partner Claudine in the vineyards

The photo above was taken in a parcel of Auxerrois, which is part of a so far three year old experiment where every third row has not been pruned. That will continue into the future with Jean Marc saying he thinks it will take the vines at least 7 years to fully understand their new life! You can see also his practice of planting trees amongst the vines.

In his winery, Jean-Marc has some wonderful old large wooden foudres where he ferments and matures most of his wines. Some of these are quite large holding thousands of litres of wine.



This foudre contains Pinot Noir destined for the Elios cuvée

So, we look forward very much to the arrival of Jean Marc's wines later this year as they are certainly very special.

If you have been lucky enough to try these wines in France and want to be notified of their arrival, please send us an email.

New Arrivals Pack I - Fanny Sabre 6 Pack



We are delighted to offer this 6 pack of the wonderful Burgundy wines of talented Fanny Sabre. This is the first time we have received any Pinot Noir from Fanny's new vineyard, Clos des Renardes in the Beaune appellation. We also have 2 bottles of the "other white wine" of Burgundy, the wonderful Aligoté. And we have also included one of her mineral-laden white Burgundy and two bottles of her red Burgundy.

Fanny Sabre Beaune Rouge Clos des Renardes 2017 – This delicious red wine is from the Beaune appellation from a new vineyard acquired by Fanny, called Clos des Renardes. It is made from 100% Pinot Noir.

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Aligoté 2017 (2 bottles) – Fanny's father loved Aligoté so much he planted a vineyard of this intriguing white grape in the famous Pommard area which is well known for producing some of the great red wines of Burgundy. This is one of our favourite wines.

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Blanc 2017 – The 2017 white wines from Fanny are quite delicious and this Bourgogne Blanc is no exception!

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge 2017 (2 bottles) – We always order good quantities of this red wine from Fanny because it is consistently excellent and great value considering the prices of wines from Burgundy these days.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$365 but the pack price is only \$310.25 including freight to most Australian cities.

New Arrivals Pack 2 - Carême Vouvray 6 Pack



Vincent Carême is now recognised as one of the leading winemakers in the Loire Valley appellation of Vouvray which is famous for the production of superb, age-worthy Chenin Blanc wines. He is also a master of sparkling wines, so we have included two bottles of his delicious Ancestrale sparkling Vouvray. All the wines in this pack are made from Chenin Blanc.

Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Ancestrale 2016 (2 bottles) – We are so delighted to have received a new shipment of the Ancestrale sparkling wine from Vincent Carême. This is a beautifully-made wine that is consistent, delicious and very satisfying. It is made using the pétillant naturel style and Vincent actually uses a small heater to keep the temperatures in his tuffeau caves to 14C to ensure that the fermentation continues during winter. He then disgorges (removes the sediment) from the bottles tops then up, seals them and puts them away for two years to mature.

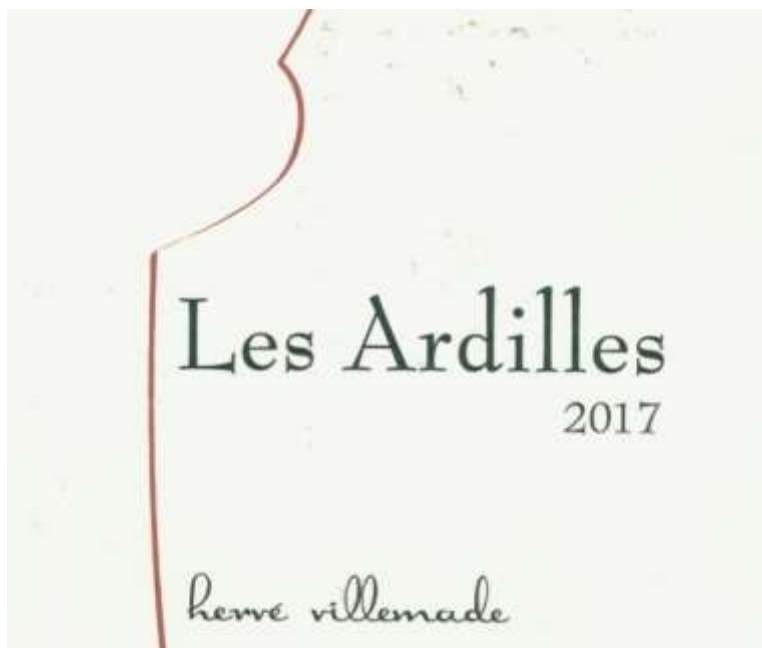
Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Le Clos 2017 – The Le Clos is Vincent's top premium wine from his favourite vineyard that sits high on the slopes overlooking the Loire River. This vineyard can be seen in the photo in the introduction to these wines. The yields from this vineyard with its 60 year old vines are very low at only 20 hectolitres per hectare. It is a dry white wine made entirely from Chenin Blanc grapes from the flint, clay and tuffeau soils in the Le Clos vineyard that displays notes of pear and wild peaches, a generous palate and rich fruitiness along with citrus overtones. Fermentation and maturation was in French oak barrels, 20% of which were new.

Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Peu Morier 2016 – Le Peu Morier is a still, dry white wine made from old Chenin Blanc vines that thrive in a terroir rich in flint and situated on some of the prize slopes of the famous Vouvray appellation. The wine is matured in oak barrels for 1 year and is then transferred to tanks for 12 months to ensure that all of the lees are deposited before bottling. It displays very mineral overtones and notes of citrus and white fruits. It is a very complex wine.

Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Sec 2017 (2 bottles) – The Carême Sec is a dry white wine that displays notes of pear and wild peaches. From interesting flint soils in both Vouvray and Noizay it has a generous palate and displays rich fruitiness and citrus overtones. It is a wine for drinking now, but will also benefit from some aging.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$322 but the pack price is only \$273.70 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 3 - Winter is coming - red 6 pack 15%



As winter approaches the food we eat changes and so does the wine we reach for to accompany that food. We have selected 6 red wines that are perfect for accompanying winter braises, bean stews, cassoulet, steak and chips, octopus stews and other winter favourites.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Reflets Rouge 2017 – This is Thierry Michon’s “workhorse wine” made entirely from his beloved Pinot Noir vines. The vines thrive on a south-east facing slope overlooking the Atlantic Ocean where the soil is schist-derived clay mixed with quartz pebbles. It was matured in large wooden foudre for almost a year before bottling with very little sulphur to retain the freshness. It is an elegant wine with good structure. It has not been filtered at our request and we are very happy with the results. This is a smooth and delicious wine that will go very well with a wide range of foods.

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge 2017 – This is Fanny’s Bourgogne Rouge made from grapes picked from various plot around the central town of Beaune. It is made from 100% Pinot Noir which are fermented naturally and then matured in old wooden barrels. The resulting wine is both expressive and lively with spicy red fruit notes with excellent underlying structure.

Henri Milan Papillon Rouge 2015 – 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 sulphur added to the bottle or at any other time. The only sulphur in it is naturally occurring sulphur which is in miniscule quantities. For this wine, the grape varieties Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvedre were direct pressed and the fermented juice spent 8 months in old barriques before bottling without fining or filtration.

Jolly Ferriol Syrahre 2015 – There are only a few bottles of this amazing wines left. Made from 100% Syrah which has been naturally fermented and without the addition of any sulphites at any time in the winemaking process. This falls into the category of luscious wines and is a real treat on a cold winter’s night!

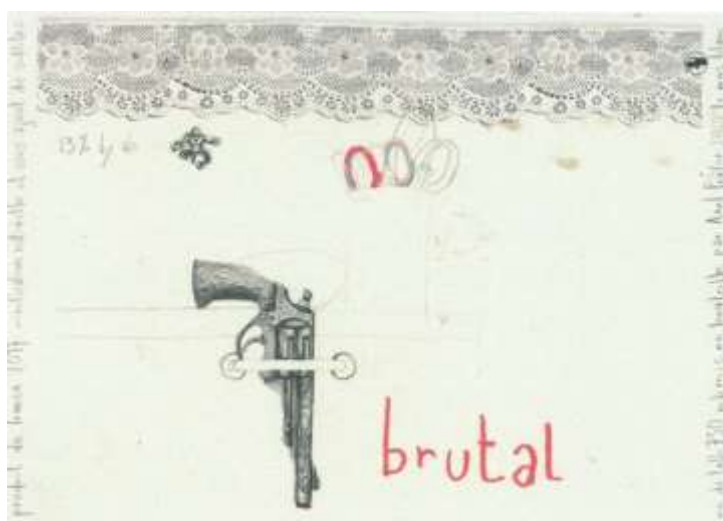
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Hervé Villemade Cheverny Rouge Les Ardilles 2017 – This absolutely delicious wine is a blend of 85% Pinot Noir and 15% Gamay. It is elegant, displays pronounced minerality and has an intense aroma that is very appealing. It is a very good example of where the blending of Pinot Noir and Gamay can produce a wine where both grapes contribute to making a wine where the sum is better than the parts. Leading wine writer Mike Bennie recently wrote about this wine calling it “a succulent and fine-boned wine from the Loire Valley”.

Le Temps des Cerises Un Pas de Côté 2017 – 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. It is made from Grenache for this vintage. The vines grow on granitic quartz soils and the minerality is pronounced. The grapes undergo carbonic maceration for a period of two weeks.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$316 but the pack price is only \$268.60 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 4 - Last bottle 6 pack: 20% discount



This pack consists of 6 bottles where each is the last bottle left in the warehouse. Therefore there is only one pack and this will go to the first person who orders it. There are two red wines (the Jolly Ferriol and the Sextant), one light red (Axel Prüfer's Brutal) and three white wines.

Sylvain Bock Faux Sans Blanc 2015 – Faux Sans Blanc is a refreshing white wine made from two thirds Chardonnay and one third Grenache Blanc. Sylvain fermented and matured this wine in a fibreglass tank to ensure it remained fresh and lively. The finish on this wine is stunning with a slight level of residual sugar providing a balance to the natural acidity in the wine. It is bottled in clear glass with a crown seal because it was bottled with 6 grams of residual sugar which will ferment to produce a faint sparkle in the wine making it a perfect aperitif wine.

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

Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Peu Morier 2014 – Le Peu Morier is a still, dry white wine made from old Chenin Blanc vines that thrive in a terroir rich in flint and situated on some of the prize slopes of the famous Vouvray appellation. The wine is matured in oak barrels for 1 year and is then transferred to tanks for 12 months to ensure that all of the lees are deposited before bottling. It displays very mineral overtones and notes of citrus and white fruits. It is a very complex wine.

Le Temps des Cerises Brutal 2017 – The “Brutal” brand is an effective marketing campaign that sees the same label used by dozens of winemakers ranging from Spain through to Austria and even Australia. Axel is one of those winemakers. Each year he produces either one or two cuvées and releases it under this brand. This year his red (a light red with a good tannin background) Brutal is made from 80% Carignan and 20% Syrah to give a wine that is nothing like it was last year. However, it is still quite light despite the darker colour and it is still distinctively an “Axel” wine. He picked the grapes later than last year and the maceration extended over 6 weeks to extract a bit more colour.

Domaine Les Grandes Vignes Pineau de la Loire 2014 – This white, still, slightly sweet wine is made from 100% Chenin Blanc which also goes by the name of Pineau de la Loire locally. The vines grow on flat vineyards in clay and gravel soils with some shale providing additional minerality. We have been lucky enough to walk through this vineyard to inspect the incredibly healthy grapes and to see the care with which the vines have been managed. The biodynamic approach to vineyard management really shines through in the Domaine Les Grandes Vignes vineyards with healthy vines producing grapes with intense flavour. This is a pleasantly sweet wine with 32 grams of residual sugar which is perfect as an aperitif or with goat cheese or with a winter dessert such as a rich pudding or similar.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2016 – 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 2014 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.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$268 but the pack price is only \$214.40 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 5 - What we're drinking 6 pack: 15% discount



We are revealing our secrets here! These are the wines we are currently turning to for drinking pleasure. We actually like every wine we import, but these are ones that have a little something extra and at certain times we find ourselves gravitating to certain wines. For example, the Aligoté from Fanny Sabre comes from prime terroir in Pommard and the Les Ardilles from Hervé Villemade is a stunning example of a red wine from the Cheverny appellation.

It's also a bit theoretical – more “what we would be drinking” because we are in France and only had one chance to get excited by the Fanny Sabre Aligoté, which arrived just before we left.

There are only two of these packs because one wine is almost sold out but we can adapt it if you order and some of the original wines are gone.

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Aligoté 2017 – Fanny’s father loved Aligoté so much he planted a vineyard of this intriguing white grape in the famous Pommard area which is well known for producing some of the great red wines of Burgundy. This is one of our favourite wines.

Le Raisin à Plume (Jacques Février) Elsass Connexion 2017 – In 2017, Jacques was hit by the dangerous frosts that took a toll on vineyards throughout the Western Loire region, but particularly around the village of Oudon where Jacques lives. This wine therefore is made entirely with Sauvignon Blanc grown by Paul and Corinne Gillet from Les Maisons Brûlées in Touraine. Most of the wine was aged in fibreglass but this one was aged in 400 litre barrels. It’s called Elsass Connection because the Gillets came from Alsace. Jacques added 2 grams of sulphur to this wine.

Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Follasses 2016 – 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. Only 12.5% alcohol.

Julien Peyras Rose Bohême 2017 – This deep pink, delicious rosé is comprised of 40% Grenache and 60% Mourvedre two of the most popular reds grapes used in the Languedoc. The age of the Grenache is 35 years and the Mourvedre is slightly younger at 30 years. The yield from the vines is quite low at 30 hectolitres per hectare, but this means that there is more flavour concentrated in the grapes. The skins were macerated for about 12 hours to extract the juice to a medium pink colour. The result is a juicy, deeply-flavoured and enticing rose of considerable charm. The rosé has been produced using the saignée method which means bleeding off some of the juice from a tank of wine that keeps macerating to produce a red wine.

Opi d'Aqui L'Orangeade 2017 – The name “Orangeade” is a light-hearted attempt to explain this wine. It is made by macerating the Clairette grape variety (a variety that we particularly like when in the hands of a skilled winemaker) which was destemmed and macerated for 3 weeks. He then added some Picpoul to the macerated juice to provide freshness and acidity. The proportions are 60% Clairette and 40% Picpoul. It is a lightly orange wine which we have found stands up quite well over a couple of days of being opened. It is not aggressively tannic like some macerated wines. It will match with a wide variety of foods.

Hervé Villemade Cheverny Rouge Les Ardilles 2017 – This absolutely delicious wine is a blend of 85% Pinot Noir and 15% Gamay. It is elegant, displays pronounced minerality and has an intense aroma that is very appealing. It is a very good example of where the blending of Pinot Noir and Gamay can produce a wine where both grapes contribute to making a wine where the sum is better than the parts. Leading wine writer Mike Bennie recently wrote about this wine calling it “a succulent and fine-boned wine from the Loire Valley”.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$308 but the pack price is only \$261.80 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 6 - Sale Pack: 6 pack: massive discount



This pack comprises 6 bottles where the stock is low and we need to space for a container that is to arrive in May. There are two delicious reds with some age, one sparkling wine that is perfect as an aperitif and three white wines.

Henri Milan Papillon Rouge 2015 – 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 sulphur added to the bottle or at any other time. The only sulphur in it is naturally occurring sulphur which is in miniscule quantities. For this wine, the grape varieties Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvedre were direct pressed and the fermented juice spent 8 months in old barriques before bottling without fining or filtration.

Mylène Bru Moulins de Mon Coeur Rouge 2014 – This fresh, lively red wine was made from whole bunches placed in fibreglass tanks so that Mylène can easily see what is happening to the wine. She placed a layer of Cinsault then a layer of Carignan and then a layer of Syrah and repeated this until the tank was full. Maceration took six days before pressing. The resulting wine has an amazing depth of colour, beautifully fine tannins and a lovely up-front freshness. This wine would go very well with steak grilled over charcoal or a meat braise such as a navarin of lamb or even a cassoulet.

Causse Marines Raides Bulles 2015 (Sparkling) – This amazing wine has a little residual sugar to make it a very appealing aperitif or nightcap! The grape varieties used to make this wine are Syrah, Duras, Brauacol (Fer Servadou) and Jurançon Noir plus some Mauzac. Apart from the Syrah all of these grapes are native to the area surrounding Gaillac. This wine has undergone a single ferment in the bottle with only natural yeasts (the method is called méthode ancestrale or Pétillant Naturel which has been carried out in Gaillac for many hundreds of years and certainly pre-dates the production of Champagne). It has not been disgorged hence there is a little sediment in the bottle, but this adds to the complexity of the flavour. No sulphur has been added at any time during the winemaking process which adds to the liveliness of this wine on the palate.

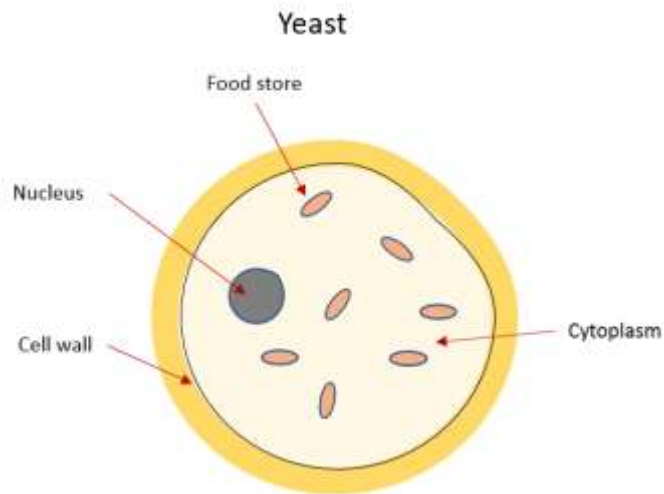
Hervé Villemade Sauvignon Blanc 2017 – This wine is a pure Sauvignon Blanc from Herve Villemade that belies its moderate price tag. He does great things with Sauvignon Blanc and this wine is no exception! It has intriguing white pear and other fruit characteristics without them being dominant. The wine was matured in steel tanks and fibreglass tanks for an extended period before being bottled in late June 2017. It is classified as a Vin de France because the Cheverny appellation requires that white wines are blends of Sauvignon Blanc and either Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc or Menu Pineau, hence this one does not meet the appellation rules. This is an excellent wine for teaming with charcuterie, chicken dishes, fish and a wide range of vegetable-based dishes or just drinking at any time of day or night.

Dominique Andiran Chut! Blanc 2015 – Chut! is an intriguing wine because it is made from a very rare grape variety that makes a beautiful wine with subtle aromas and a long finish. The grape variety is Sauvignon Rose which is so named because the skin has a soft pink colour. It is thought to be a mutation of Sauvignon Blanc that probably occurred hundreds of years ago in the Loire Valley. The grapes are a deep pink in colour and produce a wine with a pink hue which is not a rosé but rather a white wine. This is a very pleasant drink with a lot going on. Think herbs and flower petals and a lovely streak of minerality.

Le Petit Gimios Muscat Sec des Roumanis Blanc 2010 – 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 a 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. Even though it has the Sec designation indicating that it is a dry wine, there is an appearance of a little sugar due to the floral nature of the Muscat grape variety adding interest and a beautiful finish. This is an intriguing wine!

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$261 but the pack price is only \$160 including freight to most Australian cities.

Exploring the secret life of yeasts: Part I



Yeasts are tiny creatures, but they are vital for creating wine and therefore we have a passionate interest in their well-being!

Without yeasts there would be nothing to convert the sugars in grapes into alcohol and then where would we all be?

But we want to explore some of the things that are not fully discussed about these tiny creatures:

- Are all yeasts the same?
- Where do they live?
- How do they get onto or into grapes?
- How do they convert sugar to alcohol?
- Do they do anything else during their brief life in the grape juice?
- Do different yeasts produce wines that taste different?
- And many more questions

In many of the wine books and magazines the analysis is often trite. Press the grapes to create grape juice then add a commercial yeast that has the characteristics you want in the wine and presto the wine emerges in the tank or barrel.

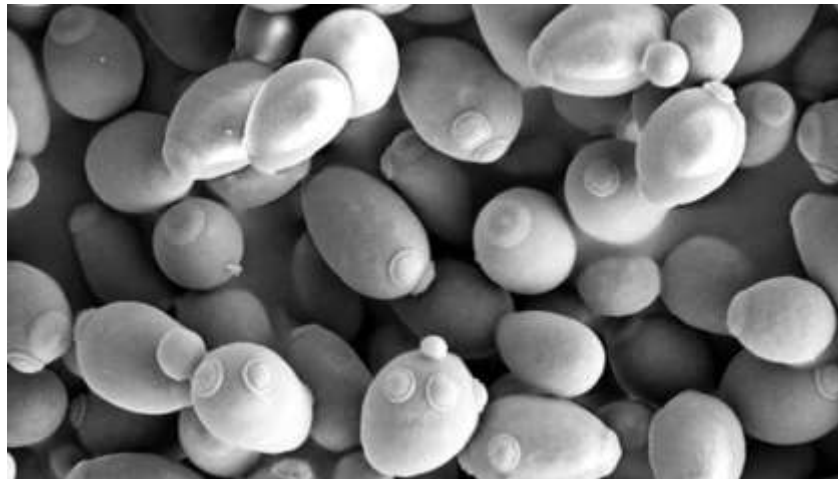
Fairly simple really, but what is actually going on and what happens to these tiny creatures when the grape juice is turned into wine?

First it is important to know that yeasts are living creatures that are relatively simple single cell organisms that are capable of producing enzymes such as maltase which play a role in breaking

down the sugars in grapes. They can also produce amylase enzymes which are necessary for breaking down starches in the fermentation of flours.

And not all yeasts are the same. There are thousand of different types of yeasts and they each have special characteristics.

Probably the species you might have heard about is the famous *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, which is now thought to have originated in China¹ (like most things!). This yeast which occurs widely in nature, has been cloned and cultured into manufactured commercial yeast for decades so that winemakers can take some of the uncertainty out of the process of making wine predictably.



Microscopic image of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*

One of the main attributes of this strain of yeast is that it is capable of withstanding higher levels of alcohol than many other strains, so it is useful for ensuring that wines are fermented to dryness (if that is what the winemaker wants).

But one of the things we have become acutely aware of since delving deeply into natural wine processes is that the more different types of yeast that are involved in creating a wine the more complex the wine can be. This is because different yeasts create different by-products in the wine, so therefore the more yeast types present during the fermentation the more potential there is for a more complex wine. This only happens with natural fermentation.

Another myth that abounds in the commercial world is that it is only possible to ferment a wine to dryness using a commercial strain of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. We recently sat through a presentation where this statement was made on numerous occasions.

However, two years ago we turned up at Mylene Bru's new winery that she had built in her beautiful vineyard from new materials (we say this to show that there were no residual yeasts from any other winery). As we walked into the winery we could hear the familiar "songs" of the happily fermenting wines in the fibreglass and steel tanks that lined the walls.

All of the wines she produced that year fermented to dryness without any commercial yeast at all being added.

¹ Liti, G (2015) The fascinating and secret wild life of the budding yeast *S. cerevisiae*. *eLife*. 2015; 4: e05835.

This experience is repeated across all our producers. Sometimes the natural fermentation might be slow because of the cold cellars the wines are fermented in, but they always work in the end.

The first question we raised in this article was “are all yeasts the same”. The answer is a definite NO!

Recent research has proved that yeast colonies vary dramatically from one side of a valley to another and from the top of slopes to the bottom of slopes. These colonies, in turn, contribute to the flavour and texture of the wine produced from those sub-areas and hence can be considered a vital part of the terroir, as we have written about before.

The second question we asked was “where do the yeasts live”? Well, this is quite complicated. Many researchers have addressed this question in recent times, especially since methods of identifying yeasts in the wild have improved. An associated question is how do the yeasts get onto or into the grapes to carry out the fermentation.

In the next part of this article we are going to reveal some exciting research recently carried out in Germany that could answer the questions about why we do not need to add commercial yeast and where the yeasts come from and how they get to be present in the juice that needs fermenting.

The effect of glyphosates on the soil

Many of the articles we have published in this newsletter have decried the use of systemic sprays in general and glyphosate-based herbicides in particular. We have pointed to extensive research that shows the damage caused to human health through the use of this product. This is why we will not knowingly drink any wines where the vines or surrounding soil have been sprayed with these products as they often end up in the wine.

Recently, an article was brought to our attention that confirmed one of the other issues with the use of these sprays. Not only can they damage our health, they also damage the soil according to experts from the European Union.

This research was summarised in an article by Simon Marks entitled “Concerns over glyphosate pass from human health to the soil”. In fact, the subtitle of the article claims “Experts say the weedkiller’s impact on soil health represents a serious threat to Europe’s long-term food security.”

Marks had reviewed recent scientific studies and concluded there are “clear links between the use of substances such as glyphosate with drops in soil fertility and the collapse of microbe ecosystems essential to healthy soil”².

He also reported on research carried out by Vera Silva, a researcher for the soil physics and land management group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Silva and other researchers raised concerns about pesticide residues in a 2015 study, which looked at more than 300 samples of agricultural topsoil from across the EU.

They found that four out of five samples contained at least one residue, and nearly three in five contained mixtures of chemicals.

² Marks, S (2019) *Concerns over glyphosate pass from human health to the soil*. Politico, 4th March.

He also reported on another study from 2015 carried out by researchers from the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna which also showed that casting activity of earthworms had nearly disappeared from the surface of farmland within three weeks of glyphosate application. And we know that the casting activity of worms is vital for soil health.

Over the past few weeks we have been lucky enough to be in the vineyards of many of our producers in France and to pick up the soil in our hands and smell it and wonder at the work that these people do to promote the health of the soil. We just need all other primary producers to follow their lead. It can be done!

Appellation News: Macvin de Jura

This is a strange appellation because it references a wine type as well as an area. There are some 140 winemakers in the Jura who are registered as producing this wine.

This is a wine that is made from unfermented grape juice and “must” which has been boiled to reduce the volume by 50%. The wine is then fortified with a marc which has been made on the premises to gain an alcohol level between 16% to 22% which is required for acceptance by the appellation. The resulting wine must then be aged in old oak barrels for at least a year before being released. The wine can be red, white or rosé depending on the grapes used.

We have been lucky enough to secure a small quantity of the Macvin de Jura from Michel Gahier which weighs in at 17%. It is delicious!

In the Fiche Technique published by the appellation authority (the INAO), they suggest either a small glass of this wine as an aperitif or to accompany a ripe melon or ice cream made from honey.

Grape varieties: Aligoté

Aligoté is one of our favourite grapes. Maybe it is because it gets a bad wrap. Or maybe we don't like the fact that when phylloxera hit Burgundy in the late 19th century, the best terroir was replanted with Chardonnay and Aligoté was relegated to the valley floor where the soil was nowhere near as good as higher up on the slopes.

In some of the highly prized areas of Burgundy some producers clung to Aligoté including on the famous Corton-Charlemagne where it continued being harvested until the 1970s.

However, we are not alone in our devotion to this fascinating variety. The manager of the world's most famous domaine Aubert de Villaine of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti is also a passionate advocate of this variety and has planted his own vineyard devoted to Aligoté in the AOP Bouzeron appellation, a village level appellation which allows only this grape variety.

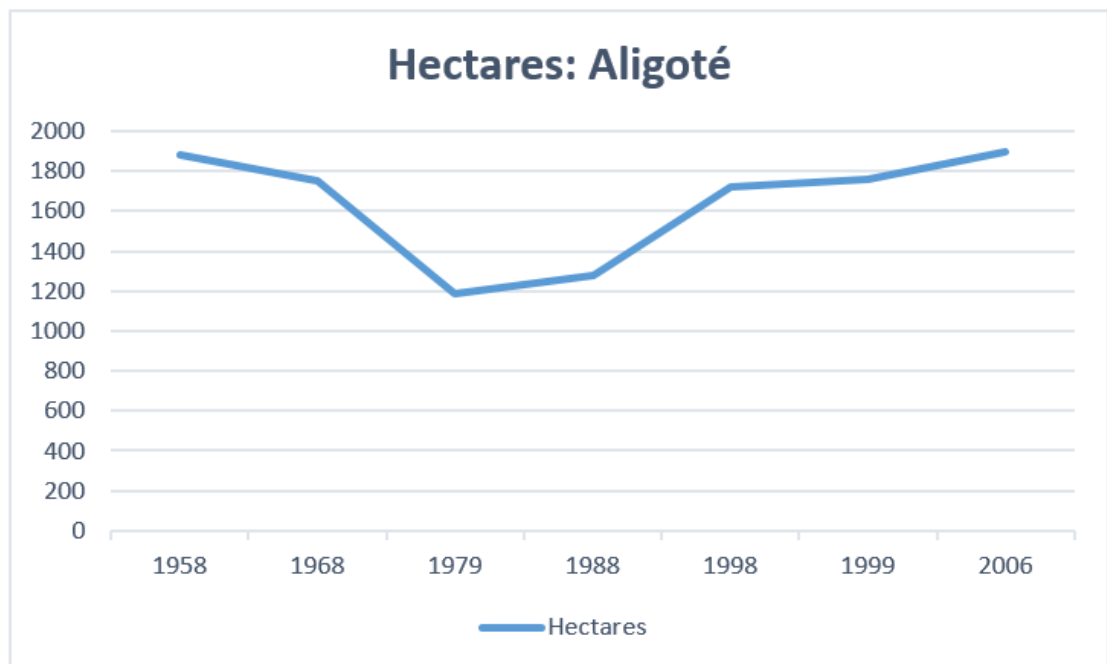
Historical information about Aligoté is somewhat scarce, however there are records of its presence in Burgundy dating back to the seventeenth century. Recent DNA testing has shown that it is descended from Pinot Noir and Gouais Blanc and is therefore a relative of Chardonnay.

But things are always a bit more complicated than appears at first. The reason is that there is no single variety of Aligoté, rather it has a number of expressions including Aligoté Vert which is widely planted and the highly prized Aligoté Doré or golden Aligoté which is much rarer. This is mainly the variety planted in Villaine's vineyards in Bouzeron.

It is not only Villaine who treasures Aligoté. Other leading producers who cling to this variety in addition to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay include Ponsot who has a plot in the famous Clos des Monts Luisants as well as other luminaries such as Sylvain Pataille and Coche-Dury.

We are fortunate because the Aligoté that we import from Julien Altaber comes from a plot in the superb terroir of Pommard which is planted to the golden variety. Fanny Sabre also has a plot in Pommard planted by her father because of his devotion to this grape variety.

As can be seen in the following graph, in the late sixties and seventies this variety fell out of favour and the plantings declined to around 1200 hectares and has, since then, slowly risen again to the levels seen in the 1950s.



The leaf of the Aligoté grape variety is very distinctive with a pentagon shape without clearly defined lobes as shown below.

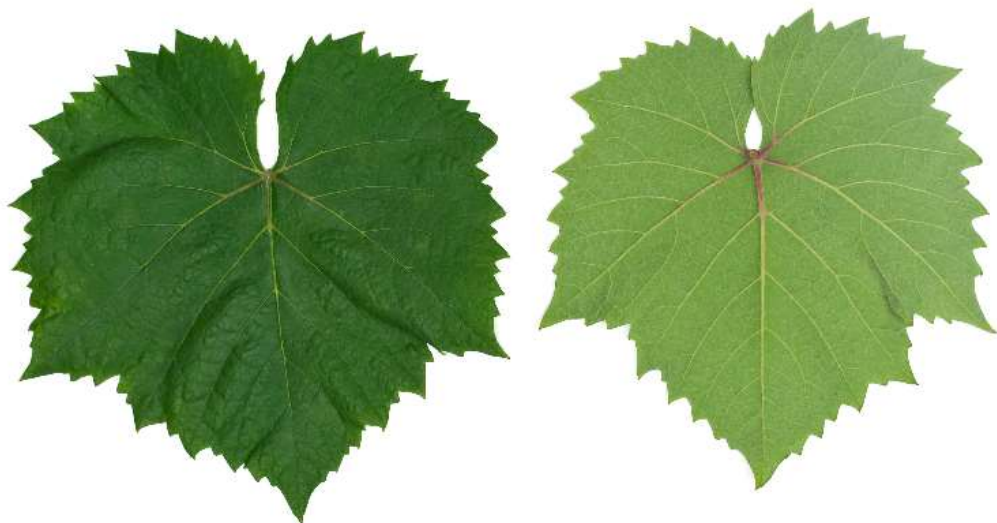


Photo Courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

The grape bunches are quite loose with the grapes not too tightly packed which allows air to circulate through the bunches and hence reducing disease pressure as shown below.



Photo Courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

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

Because of the above penalties we are now required by the Tasmanian Government to collect your date of birth in order from you to order via the Internet. We apologise for this imposition. In the past we have been able to accept a declaration that you are over 18.