

WINE Talk: April 2021

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 97

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:

<https://livingwines.com.au/shop/>

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. Or we are always happy to put together a selection for you if you give us a rough idea of the type of wines you like and a budget. We confirm orders by return email before processing them.

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.) You must of course be over 18 years of age to order.

First the bad news - The destruction of the 2021 French vintage

We started importing wine in 2008 and, although it's still early in the year, we are certain that 2021 is going to be the most difficult vintage we have encountered.

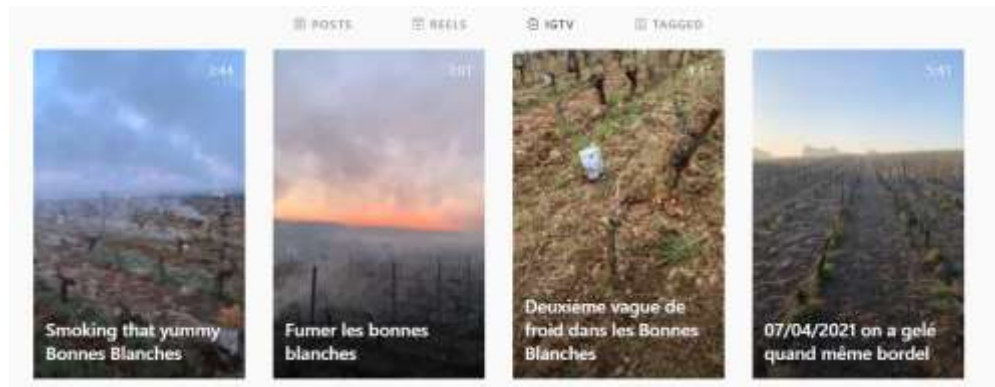
For the first time it seems every region of France has been affected by severe frosts earlier this month. They went for many days and in some regions, like the Jura, it was not just frost but snow. The damage was in part so severe because earlier in March it had been unseasonably warm and so the young shoots had grown robustly, making them all the more vulnerable to the polar cold snap that sent temperatures plunging. Sadly, thanks to smart phones and the ease with which information is now shared it was a tragedy we could watch evolve in real time, starting with dire forecasts like these:



WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

On the morning of 8 April, our spirits sank seeing these sorts of forecasts in every region where we buy wine because we knew what pain and heartache was ahead for the people who we work with.

Once the frosts arrived that was all too visible. Sylvestre Mosse particularly, shared posts and videos of what they did to try to save what would have been their 2021 harvest, trying to protect the Chenin Blanc in revered plots like Les Bonnes Blanches and Le Rouchefer. If you want to try to understand what happened then his videos, still available on Instagram, tell the story much better than we can.



They used giant ‘candles’, large tins filled with wax spread through the vineyard, to try to make enough smoke to keep the temperature near ground level above zero. The battle went for days and when finally they ran out of candles they lit bales of straw. Some of the images shared, of candles in the vineyards, alight before dawn, are hauntingly beautiful, belying the tragedy they represent. Others paint a picture that looks more like a war zone, which of course it was, but a war with nature.

With her extraordinary spirit Alice Bouvot from l’Octavin posted an image of her [smoke-stained hands](#) while at the same time reporting that the 2020 wines are tasting wonderful and will now be sold over two years. It looks like the losses around Arbois will also be catastrophic. A report in the [Guardian](#) quotes Michel-Henri Ratte, from Domaine Ratte, whose beautiful wines are also imported into Australia, as expecting 100% losses. It is a relief that 2020 was such a good vintage in the Jura but still if every second year, there is no vintage, which has been recent history, it is hard to see how people can survive, particularly younger vigneron who are just starting out.

Even in Provence there were losses, something we have never seen. This image from [Domaine Milan](#)’s Instagram stories, posted late in April shows one shoot thriving and another on the same vine snuffed out by the frost. For them, fortunately, the losses will not be 100% but still the impact will be significant and the days have been hard.



And [some reports](#) say between 30% - 50% of the potential Languedoc harvest, also in the south and usually the source of grapes for frost-hit vigneron further north, is lost. For the de Moors particularly grapes from the south of France have been essential to their survival after having so many severely frost and hail affected vintages in the last few years.

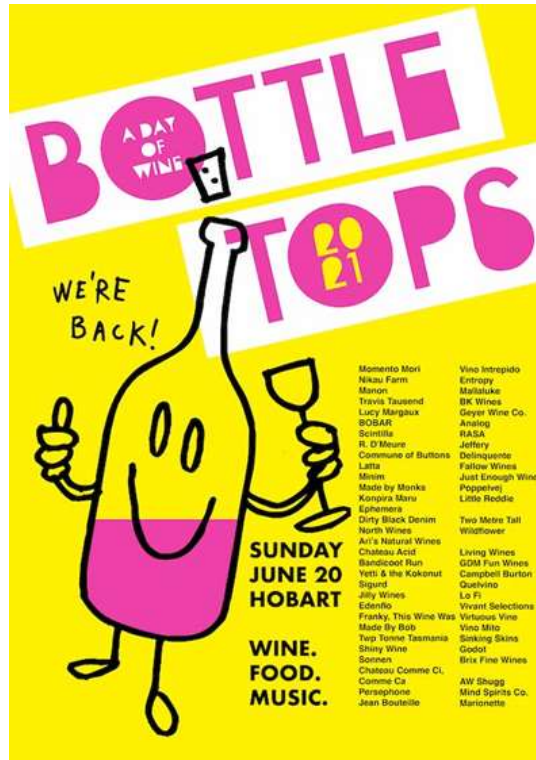
The damage is going to be particularly severe among the varieties which bud earlier, such as Chardonnay. At Domaine Derain and Sextant in Burgundy, for example, Carole Schwab, Julien Altaber's partner, told us that all their Chardonnay is severely affected with 100% losses in some parcels (the Saint-Aubin 1er crus). They hope some of the Pinot Noir may have survived but by mid April it was still too early to know the extent. Similarly, the Robinots, in the Loire Valley, have told us that they don't know yet how severe the impact will be but that they had frost for 10 mornings.

Over time we will know more about the impact of these devastating frosts but suffice it say that when eventually we get to drink a bottle of wine from the 2021 vintage we will treasure it even more than usual, we will remember the battles people fought over many days to ensure it existed and be even more aware than usual of how precious and limited it is.

Please, if you have some time, take a moment to look through the Instagram feeds of some of the winemakers affected by what has happened or google something like 'France Frost 2021' and read some general articles about the extent of the damage. There are going to be inevitable price increases, one of the consequences of climate change you may not have thought about, and we want people to understand why.

Then the good news ... Hobart's Bottletops Festival is Returning in June

We're delighted that Hobart's wonderful natural wine festival Bottletops is returning this June. Like seemingly anything that involved more than two people it was cancelled last year. This will be its fifth year and given each year is better than ever we can only imagine what it's going to be



like when so many people meet up for the first time in over year.

Tickets this year also include an invitation to an after party and Bottletops is running a small bar during the afternoon, which will extend beyond the close of the tasting, and which will no doubt have plenty of hard to find wines.

The list of producers and importers already committed is extraordinary. You can find out who is going to be there (already 57 wine makers, beer makers, importers and distillers have committed) and buy tickets [here](#).

As well as wine tastings there is music and food and, as always, the promise of a number of "off" events over several evenings before the festival. From what we've heard there are going to be some very special events.

If you're thinking of coming to Hobart just for

Bottletops it's worth coming a couple of days earlier so you don't miss out on the extras.

But don't delay – tickets sell out quickly, flights become very expensive and, because the Bottletops weekend is also the finale of Dark Mofo, accommodation is already tight.

For more information follow [@bottletops_21](#) on Instagram or email bottletopstickets@gmail.com.

This month's packs

We'd hoped to have some new wines in April's packs but the shipment we were expecting to arrive by mid April (the one that should have shipped in January and been here in March) is still not in our hands.

So, we've had to be inventive, which has meant a bit of hunting in our personal cellars and in the warehouse for some wines to make up the packs. Make the most of the offer. We are about to be inundated with new arrivals so will be making packs from them in the next few newsletters.

Once the current shipment has passed its brown marmorated stink bug inspection (!) and arrives, hopefully before the end of April, it will be closely followed by a new shipment with several producers around mid May and then a container early in July.

Pack 1: Mixed Winter Reds (Approximately 18% Discount)



Yes, we know it's still autumn but believe us in Tasmania and some other southern states it feels like winter. Almost overnight the weather changed, the temperature plummeted and the winds were cold. It put our minds to red wines, not the delicious chilled reds we can drink right through the year but more powerful red wines that cry out for slow-cooked braises with rich sauces.

So, this is pack for people either already feeling like winter has arrived or wanting to prepare for it. Or, it's a pack for people who enjoy a glass of a good red, no matter what the weather. We've applied a couple of different discounts which is why it is an unusual percentage (17.97% to 2 decimal places so not quite 18%).

- Geschickt Vin d'Alsace Pinot Noir 2018
- Mylène Bru Violet de Mars 2016
- Henri Milan Elliott Rouge 2017
- Domaine Saint Nicolas Le Poiré 2010
- Le Temps Retrouvé Mourvèdre 2014
- Julien Peyras Costefere 2013

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$323 but the pack price is only \$264.95 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 2: Enliven Winter with Sparkling Wines Pack (15% Discount)



One quick way to enliven a cold, grey day is with a sparkling wine. This pack has 6 different dry sparkling wines, two from the Jura (both from Domaine de la Loue), one from Alsace, two from Provence (the two Milans) and one from the Loire (Villemade). The Domaine de la Loue Pet'Nat Rosé self-explains its vinification and the Villemade Bulle Blanc is also a pet-nat. The other four are méthode traditionnelle (i.e. made in the same way as Champagne). The Milans and the Geschickt don't have any added sulphites and none have any dosage.

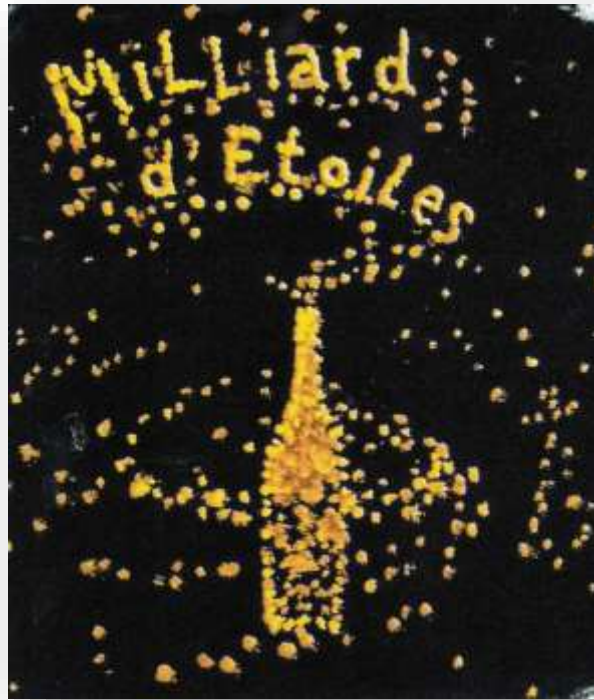
There's a big range of grape varieties. Domaine de la Loue La Bulle Bleue is Chardonnay, the Domaine de la Loue pet-nat rosé is Pinot Noir, the Geschickt Crémant d'Alsace is Chardonnay and Auxerrois, the white Milan is Grenache Blanc, and Bourboulenc and the rosé is Grenache, Syrah and Alicante. And, finally, the Villemade is Menu Pineau, Chenin Blanc, and Chardonnay.

- Domaine de la Loue La Bulle Bleue 2016
- Domaine de la Loue PetNat Rosé 2018
- Geschickt Crémant d'Alsace Double Zero 2016
- Henri Milan Brut Nature Blanc 2019
- Henri Milan Brut Nature Rosé 2019
- Hervé Villemade Bulle Blanc 2015

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$352.00 but the pack price is only \$299.20 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 3: Last Bottle Pack (25% Discount!)

Note: One pack only



This is an eclectic mix, although predominantly red. The Mosse Cabernet Franc, Villemade Grolleauis (a blend of Grolleau Noir and Pineau d'Aunis) and the Montanet-Thoden Bourgogne Rouge (Pinot Noir) are all red.

The other three are one white (Opi d'Aqui Mars Âne 2017), which is 100% Marsanne from the Languedoc, Domaine de la Garrelière's Milliard d'Etoiles, which is a refined white pet-nat from the Loire Valley made with Chenin Blanc and direct press Cabernet Franc and a complex, deep-flavoured macerated Grenache Blanc made by Julie Brosselin (Mata Hari 2016).

- Mosse Cabernet Franc 2018
- Villemade Grolleauis 2019
- Montanet-Thoden Bourgogne Rouge Garance 2018
- Opi d'Aqui Mars Âne 2017
- Domaine de la Garrelière Milliard d'Etoiles
- Julie Brosselin Mata Hari 2016

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$330 but the pack price is only **\$247.50 including freight to most Australian cities.**

Pack 4: From the Cellar (15% Discount)

Note: One pack only



Partly from the bowels of the cellar and partly from the not-so-distant past, this is a completely random selection of predominantly red wines. It's possible some of the older ones are past their best but equally likely some will be in their prime. It will be a lucky dip for the person who buys it but we're sure it will be a fascinating drinking journey. It is our normal pack 15% discount but calculated on the original prices, which for the older wines are substantially lower than today's equivalent.

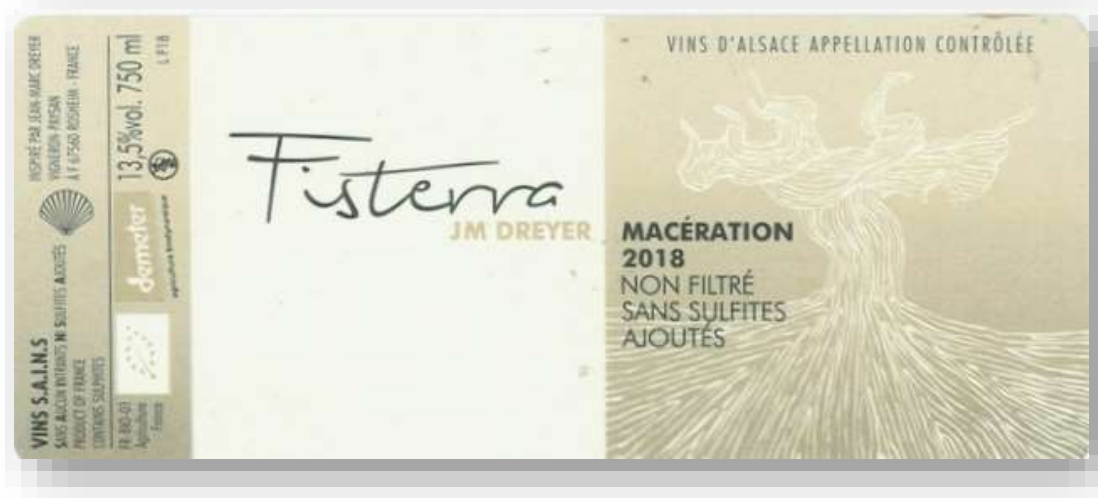
All the wines are red except for the Ginglinger, which is macerated Gewurztraminer. Of the reds, the Mosse le Gros, which is a blend of Cot, Grolleau Gris, Gamay, Grolleau Noir, is the freshest and lightest. There is a 2011 Bourgogne Rouge from Fanny Sabre, and then three more intense reds. Laurent Lebled's Le Gam Cab 2013 is a blend of Gamay and Cabernet Franc. Jolly Ferriol Va Nu Pieds is Carigan and Grenache and Alice Bouvot's l'Octavin aptly named Cariboom! on the front label and Cariboum on the more official back label is an explosive 100% Carignan made with grapes from Remi Poujol. We part with these reluctantly.

- Mosse Le Gros 2017
- Laurent Lebled Le Gam Cab 2013
- Jolly Ferriol Va Nu Pieds 2015
- l'Octavin Cariboum 2017
- Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge 2011
- Jean Ginglinger Gewurztraminer Maceration 2016

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$276 but the pack price is only \$234.60 including freight to the most Australian cities.

Pack 5: Anything But Red Pack (15% Discount)

Note: One pack only



By the time we got to creating Pack 5 it was becoming obvious that there were a lot of red wines in this month's packs. That was the impetus to create this one. It has two orange wines, two white wines, one oxidative white wine (aged in barrel without topping up) and one sparkling wine. So, if your cellar needs a non-red top up this selection is for you.

It includes the 2016 Geschickt Grand Cru Kaefferkopf 2016 blend of Gewurztraminer, Riesling, and Pinot Gris which has been one of our favourite wines over the last few months.

- Henri Milan Luna & Gaia 2018 – orange
- Jean-Marc Dreyer AOC Alsace Fisterra 2018 - orange
- Jean-Marc Dreyer AOC Alsace Pinot Gris Weg 2017 – this is oxidative
- Geschickt Crémant d'Alsace Double Zero 2016 – sparkling
- Opi d'Aqui L'Éléphant Blanc 2017 - white
- Geschickt Alsace Grand Cru Kaefferkopf 2016 - white

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$344 but the pack price is only **\$292.40** including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 6: Things You Won't find on the List Pack (15-25% discount)

Note: One pack only



Pack 6 is another mix of wines we have removed from our list some time ago. They are probably all last bottles but we haven't looked in all our boxes so can't be certain. The capsule on the Mosse wine is cut and the wax on Tony Bornard's Le Pinot has a tiny air gap (heart-shaped which he would like) but no sign of any leakage but we have discounted those two by 25%. It makes for an average discount of about 18%.

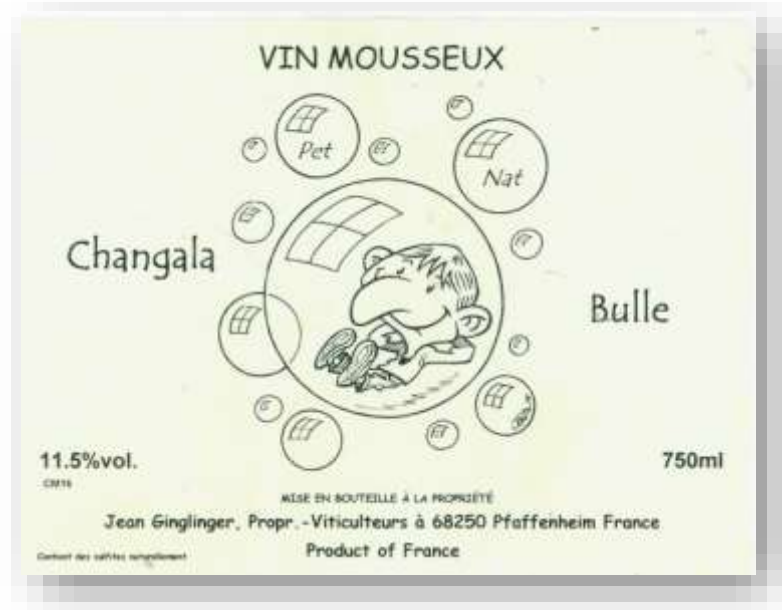
These are the wines. We're not sure of the vintage of the Jolly Ferriol but based on the lot number it is probably 2012.

- Eric Thill AOP Côtes du Jura Savagnin Cuvée Romane 2016 – white wine
- Careme Fizzy Pink 2019 – pink sparkling
- Julien Peyras Séraphin 2017 – red wine
- Mosse Le Gros 2016 – red wine
- Jolly Ferriol Fait d'Hiver – red wine
- Tony Bornard Pinot Noir 2015 – red wine

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$296 but the pack price is only \$242.10 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 7: Another Mixed Pack from the Cellar (15% discount)

Note: One pack only



This pack includes one of the oldest wines we still have from our early shipments and its price helps keep the pack price amazingly low (its full price was \$23 a bottle – they were the good old days!). We've tasted 20 year old vintages of this cuvée at Stephane Guion's cellar and they were still extraordinary so this 2007 wine should also be special.

There's also a bottle of Julien Altaber's 2012 Bourgogne Blanc. While 2012 may generally be beyond the limits of best drinking for a Bourgogne Blanc we've found the acidity in Julien's wines has carried them for longer than you might expect so it could be special.

The other big unknown in this pack is Axel Pruffer's unique Un Pas de Côté, which was a blend of the rich 2009 vintage with some 2010 juice to wake it up. There are also some more recent vintages, like a 2019 Vincent Carême Vouvray Sec, Jean Ginglinger's 2016 sparkling wine called Changala and Mylène Bru's 2016 Rita, each of which should be perfect drinking.

- Jean Ginglinger Changala 2016
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2012
- Vincent Carême AOC Vouvray Sec 2019
- Mylène Bru Rita 2016
- Le Temps des Cerises Un Pas de Côté 0910
- Domaine Stephane Guion Bourgueil Cuvee Prestige 2007

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$246 but the pack price is only \$209.10 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 8: Some of these are Unicorns Pack (10% Discount)

Note: One pack only



We've dug a little deeper for this pack to find, among other things, a very rare bottle of Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon's Chardonnay from the wonderful 2016 vintage. Also, from the Jura is the Philippe Bornard Arbois Pupillin Trousseau Le Garde-Corps 2013. 'Garde-Corps' is the cuvée which is made for aging so, while you could drink this wine now, like the Bruyère / Houillon it could happily sit in a cellar for longer.

It's probably best to drink the Le Vendangeur Masque d'Une Si Belle Compagnie Méridionale 2016, which is a «frost wine» made by Alice and Olivier de Moor from grapes purchased from superstar friends in the south of France when, yet again, their harvest failed because of severe frost. It includes Grenache Blanc from Julie Brosselin in the Languedoc, Gérald Oustric's Viognier and Chardonnay (Ardèche), Eric Pfifferling's Grenache Blanc from the southern Rhone (l'Anglore), Clairette from Pierre Pradel and Emile Hérédia in the Languedoc, Viognier from Michèle Aubéry-Laurent from Domaine Gramenon (southern Rhone) and Roussanne from Eric Texier, also from the southern Rhone.

The three more recent wines are all special too. We've included two delicious recent arrivals from Domaine Milan. Papillion Blanc is a white wine made from Grenache Blanc, Rolle, Roussanne, and Marsanne with no added sulphites and Luna & Gaia 2018 is an orange wine made with the same varieties. Both are from the 2018 vintage. And finally, there's a bottle of Burgundy from Domaine Derain, their Mercurey La Plante Chassey from the same 2018 vintage.

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

Made from old vine Pinot Noir (some vines are more than 80 years old), as allowed in Mercurey this wine also has a small percentage of Pinot Beurot (the name people in Burgundy use for Pinot Gris).

- Philippe Bornard Arbois Pupillin Trousseau Le Garde-Corps 2013
- Le Vendangeur Masque d'Une Si Belle Compagnie Méridionale 2016
- Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Croix-Rouge 2016
- Henri Milan Papillon Blanc 2018
- Henri Milan Luna & Gaia 2018
- Derain Mercurey La Plante Chassey 2018

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$436 but the pack price is only \$392.40 including freight to most Australian cities.

Pack 9: Mainly l'Octavin Pack (Approximately 11% discount)

Note: One pack only



We had a few spare bottles after finalising all the allocations of Alice Bouvot's l'Octavin wines from our recent shipment, so decided to use some in a pack in this newsletter. There were four bottles available.

Two are wines from Alice's own vineyards, both just outside Arbois. Commendatore 2018 is Trousseau from Les Corvées and Marceré is a macerated wine made with Chardonnay from en Arces.

The other two are négoce wines. Chardonnay Hip Hip J is also wine from the Jura, but from another grower and the Muscat is a remarkable orange wine. It's only 10.5% alcohol but completely in balance. The Muscat à Petit Grains and Muscat d'Alexandrie which she uses to make it were grown by Vincent Lafage from Saint-Jean Lasseille in Roussillon.

To complete the pack we added two wines from another grower who works without any additions or any sulphites and, like Alice, often blends red and white grapes - Philippe Formentin from Opi d'Aqui. They are Massale 2018, a light red which is a blend of Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris and Grenache Noir and Mars Âne 2018, which is a white wine made with 100% Marsanne.

- l'Octavin Commendatore 2018
- l'Octavin Marceré 2019
- l'Octavin Chardonnay Hip Hip J... 2018
- l'Octavin Mus'cat 2018
- Opi d'Aqui Massale 2018
- Opi d'Aqui Mars Âne 2018

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$471 but the pack price is only \$418.00 including freight to most Australian cities.

An Update on What's Coming

It feels like forever that we have been promising our next arrivals – so many delays at every stage of the process, even though the boat was already on this side of the Suez Canal when the Ever Given ran aground.

We still don't have the wines but are expecting them any day. The shipment includes Alice and Olivier de Moor, which we will be allocating, Domaine Derain, Sextant (Julien Altaber) and Piollot and Marie Courtin Champagnes (these are from the same family but Dominique Moreau, Roland Piollot's wife, separately identifies her own small holding with a name which is a homage to her grandmother). This new shipment will include our first still white from the Champagne region. A Marie Courtin, the appellation is Coteaux Champenois and the wine, 2016 Coteaux Champenois Le Blanc du Tremble was aged in amphora. Many people have put in requests for advance information about these wines and we will be contacting you once they are here. If you've asked about de Moor since our last shipment (last July) we already have you on a list to allocate some wines to offer you. We are planning to advertise Derain, Sextant, Piollot and Marie Courtin.

The following shipment, which was on the wrong side of the Suez Canal but thankfully, it seems, far enough away not to be affected by the delays, is due in Australia mid May so we should be releasing at least some of the wines later that month.

It has seven cuvées from **Les Capriades**, including for the first time, a pear cider and two different magnums (Pepin La Bulle 2015, which is a blend of Chenin Blanc, Menu Pineau, and Chardonnay and Piège à ... Rosé 2018 (the same rosé we had in bottles last year). We're also especially happy to have more Pet Sec, which is the driest cuvée and the uniquely delicious Le Bulle Rouge (formerly known as BCF), which is a blend of three teinturier gamay varieties (i.e. gamays with red juice) - Gamay de Bouze, Gamay de Chaudenay, and Gamay Fréaux.

There are 11 cuvées from **Jean-Marc Dreyer**, including Sylvaner, Auxerrois, Riesling and Gewurztraminer in his 2019 Origin single variety macerated wines, two 2019 Pinot noirs (Elios and Anigma), and the always delicious Ping Pong, a blend of macerated Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir.

We have the 2019 still whites and Mondeuse from **Dominique Belluard**, including this year a vintage of Le Feu, which was not made in 2018. In Gringet we have les Alpes, Le Feu and Pur Jus. There is also some Grand Jorasses, which is made from Altesse. The Belluard wines include 2017 Les Perles du Mont-Blanc and a little more Brut Zéro Mont-Blanc 2016. There are also, for the first time, a small number of magnums of Les Perles du Mont-Blanc, from the 2015 vintage.

There is a third and final delivery of the **Domaine de la Cadette** Vézelay La Châtelaine 2018, making it one of the most popular wines we have ever sold.

And we have a collection of ciders and a 500ml Calvados top up from **Julien Fremont**. This order includes some more of the very special cuvées Pomme de Paille 2018 and Grenier 2017, which sold out so quickly last year.

And finally, this shipment also has a small allocation from **Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon** including the final release of 2018 Ploussard. These will be offered on allocation.

The shipment after that, which is currently being collected, is a bumper delivery, but we'll save news of most of that for another newsletter. It won't be here until July, which seems like a lifetime away. But it does include **La Guinelle** vinegar!

The Swiss define natural wines

In January this year the Association Suisse Vin Nature released the regulations for the production of Natural Wine in Switzerland, joining the breakthrough move in France where there is now a set of regulations to follow for the care of vines and the production of natural wines.

The Swiss regulations have clearly been modelled on the French ones because there is so much overlap between the two. This is not surprising as there is common agreement throughout many countries now as to what constitutes a natural wine.

People producing natural wines in Switzerland must not only abide by the regulations, they must also be able to prove that they have done so through a required paper trail.

Here are some of the main requirements explained and commented (our brief comments are in red):

The grapes must come from certified vines

The vines, cellar and wines must be certified by one of the three certifying authorities in Switzerland for organic and biodynamic practices. **This is even stricter than our requirements. We are quite happy to import wine from producers who we know are rigorous about only using organic grapes yet who are not certified.**

There must be traceability and control

Winemakers must maintain a log of all practices and procedures for each batch of wine and must supply all documentation and analyses of the wine to the inspecting authority and provide access to their cellars to the inspecting authorities. This requirement follows the practice in France where the INAO can inspect a winery at any time. **We well remember when one of our producers (who never uses added sulphites) was inspected. They were asked to produce their "sulphur log book". They explained that they didn't use sulphur. Not good enough. They failed the inspection and were required to undergo another at considerable expense. When they were asked for their sulphur book they produced an exercise book with Sulphur marked on the outside and nothing inside (as they hadn't added any). They passed the inspection because they could produce the book!**

Harvesting of the grapes

Harvesting of the grapes must be done by hand. No mechanical harvesting is permitted. **This requirement ensures that pickers only use small (up to 10 kilos) crates to pick into so that the grapes are not damaged.**

Use of enzymes

The addition of enzymes for any reason is not permitted.

Addition of sugar

The addition of sugar or concentrated must at any stage is not permitted.

Fermentation rules

Spontaneous fermentation with indigenous yeast only. No other yeasts are permitted in the cellar at any time. **This is quite rigorous and necessary. If only some of the wines are being made with natural yeasts, the commercial yeasts used in the cellar will contaminate the cellar and dominate all the wines made in that cellar.**

Only natural aeration of the wine is authorised. Practices such as micro-oxygenation are not permitted. **Micro-oxygenation is widely used in winemaking particularly to soften tannins in aggressive wines made from Tannat in South West France. The effect can be obtained more naturally by slow maturation in old barrels which let some oxygen through the pores of the barrel.**

No additions of yeast nutrients are permitted. **Obvious!**

Clarification of wine is only permitted via natural settling. **See fining below.**

Fining

Fining with the lees of natural wine is permitted, but no other additions such as egg white, clays or fish bladders are permitted. **This also ensures that all wines are vegetarian and vegan which is not the case when fish bladders or egg whites or other proteins are used for fining.**

Thermal techniques

Heating and cooling of the wine is permitted, but only between 0°C and 35°C. In addition, any form of pasteurisation is not permitted. **Self-explanatory!**

Biological reduction of acids

No commercial bacteria are permitted. **Once again, no additions!**

Acidity correction

No correction of acids is permitted. **Once again, no additions!**

Preservation of the wine

No added sulphites are permitted in any form nor is any other preservative such as potassium metabisulphite, E224, SO₂, E220 or ascorbic acid. **This is the most contentious requirement. It is also a requirement for organic certification in the United States. Some countries, including France allow some sulphur (less than 10mg per litre).**

Filtration

No filtration is permitted. **We do have some wines, such as the La Cadette and Montanet-Thoden white wines, where a gentle filtration is made. We don't think we work with anyone who filters red wines.**

Use of wooden barrels

Wooden containers are permitted for aging the wine but the addition of wood into the wine (eg wooden chips) is not permitted as is the addition of tannins. We believe that the use of new wood should not be permitted, because the wood becomes an addition, but we understand that there are some people who are passionate about the smell of new wood in the morning! New wood actually adds chemicals from the wood into the wine which is why we avoid buying wines that have used new wood.

Topping up

Topping up of barrels is permitted provided it is with natural wine from the estate. This is a common practice in the natural wine world where some of the new wine is placed in a tank with an adjustable lid so it can be used to top up barrels when the wine level drops due to evaporation through the pores of the wood.

Micro-oxygenation

Micro-oxygenation (and macro) in any form is not permitted. This is a non-natural manipulation of the wine.

Use of inert gases

The addition of nitrogen or CO₂ is permitted. There is an interesting issue here. Many of our winemakers allow a little sugar to remain in the wine on bottling to create a small amount of carbon dioxide naturally in the wine because it is such a good preservative. However, some from the “old school” regard this as a fault – which it isn’t because it is deliberate and non-invasive. In fact, we actually enjoy that little “prickle” you get on your tongue when you pour the first glass. This soon disappears.

Grape variety: Gamay Fréaux

Gamay Fréaux is a small berry, red-fleshed grape that originated in Burgundy near the very neat village of Couchey which lies close to Dijon and which was first discovered by Antoine Fréaux in 1841. It is one of a few grape varieties that are known as teinturier grapes.

The term “teinturier” refers to grapes that have dark-coloured flesh. Not all red grapes have dark flesh – in many the red colouring comes mainly from the skins. Colour is caused by a polyphenol called anthocyanin and for most red grapes this polyphenol only exists in the skin.

However, Gamay Fréaux has deep red-blue skins and red flesh. This leads to a grape juice which is quite dark in colour even without extended maceration.

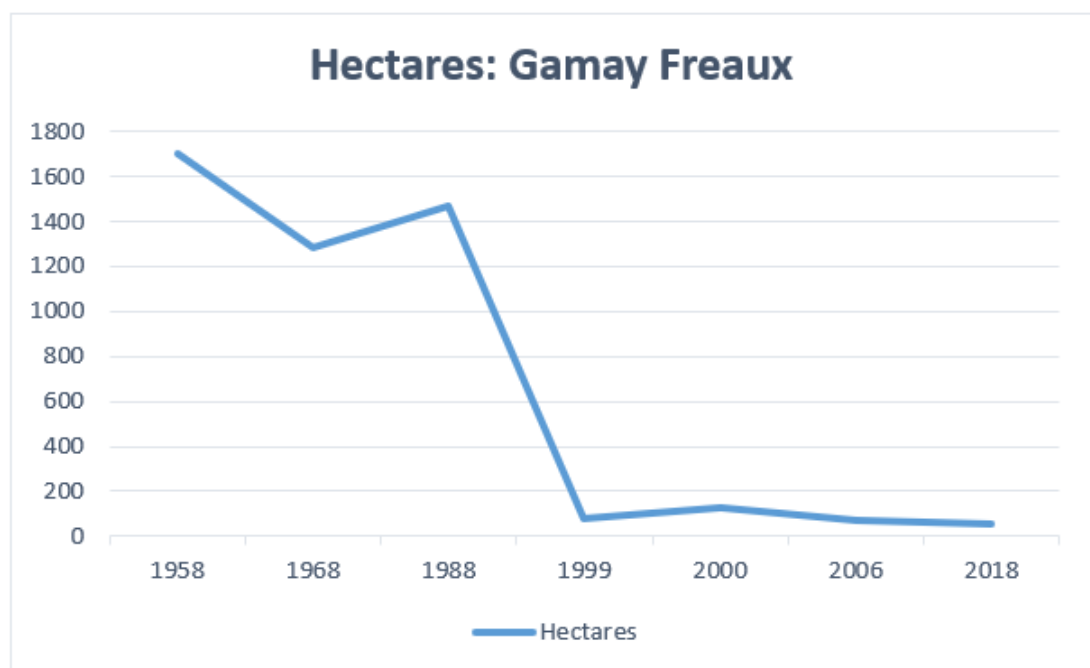
Examples of teinturier grapes are three Gamay varieties (this one, Gamay de Bouze, and Gamay de Chaudenay) along with other slightly obscure grapes such as Petit Bouschet (which was originally created by crossing an unknown teinturier grape with the Aramon grape), Alicante Bouschet (created from Petit Bouschet and Grenache), Chambourcin and Saperavi (not so obscure in Georgia).

Gamay Fréaux is thought to be a mutant variety of Gamay de Bouze which originated near the village of Bouze in southern Burgundy although it is no longer found there.

It has been used in the past by some unscrupulous Burgundians to give their wines a deeper red colour.

When you consider the extent of the plantings of this grape variety, you can see the dramatic decline in the extent between 1988 and 1999.

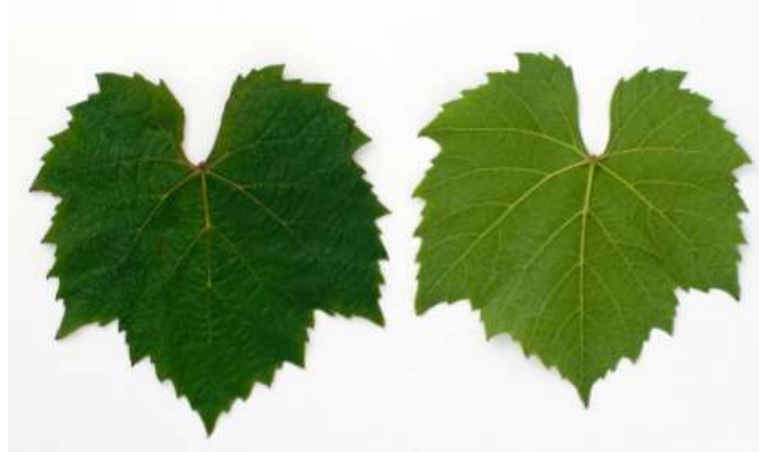
These days there are just a few hectares of the variety remaining, mainly in the Loire Valley. Read the paragraph at this end of this story to see how the grapes are being put to very good use.



WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

The grapes are certainly a problem in that they are susceptible to disease so have to be tended very carefully.

The leaves of Gamay Fréaux are quite classic with a central pointed lobe and two pronounced side lobes with two less-pronounced lobes near the top of the leaf forming an hexagonal shape as can be seen in the photo below.



Ursula Brühl, Julius Kühn-Institut (JKI), Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants, Institute for Grapevine Breeding Geilweilerhof - 76833 Siebeldingen, GERMANY

The berries are quite dark and form relatively tight bunches which is one of the causes of disease. Loose berry bunches allow the wind to get into the bunches and therefore there is less likelihood of diseases surviving there.



Ursula Brühl, Julius Kühn-Institut (JKI), Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants, Institute for Grapevine Breeding Geilweilerhof - 76833 Siebeldingen, GERMANY

As a final comment, from time to time the masters of Pet Nats, Pascal and Moses from Domaine Capriades in the Loire Valley, produce a sparkling wine made entirely of teinturier grapes called BCF because it is made from Gamay de Bouze, Gamay de Chaudenay and Gamay Fréaux.

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 from you when ordering via the Internet. We apologise for this imposition. In the past we have been able to accept a declaration that you are over 18.