



Wine Talk: March 2009

The newsletter of Terroir Wines

Welcome to the third edition of Wine Talk, Terroir Wines' newsletter and thank you all so much for the overwhelming response to our first shipment. Much of it is sold out and we are eagerly awaiting our next shipment which contains some exciting new wines not seen before in this country.

The Bad News and the Good News

First ... the bad news

Rosé sold out

We have sold out of our delicious, savoury Chateau Unang rosé. It seems you took heed of our advice and as soon as the sun came out the rosé walked out the door, so much so that when we needed one we were forced to buy a bottle at full retail price from the Wursthaus Kitchen, which is stocking some of our wines. That was particularly painful. The Wursthaus Kitchen has now sold out too so it's only a few people who stocked up early who still have supplies to see them through the early autumn.

There is more of the same vintage on the way but we're not expecting it until late March, just in time for the last days of warm weather so, if you're interested, look out for news of its arrival in our next newsletter.

La Source sold out

We've also sold out of Chateau Unang's great value La Source, a blend of Grenache, Syrah and Carignan. Again, we should have more stocks of that in late March.

We also only have small quantities left of La Croix, Chateau Unang's top of the range red, of which local *Hobart Mercury* wine scribe Graeme Phillips said "lovely, pure dark fruit flavours with touches of spice and smoky characters, great balance and length with firm tannins drying the finish and promising a rewarding cellar life".

Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Visan blanc unavailable

And, finally on the bad news front, we have had a problem with our Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Villages Visan white, that started to emerge in early January. If you've bought a bottle of this and still haven't opened it, it's likely your wine is affected too. Send us an email and we'll replace it free of charge with another white wine.

But ... there's lots of good news ...

Beaujolais is on the way

We're delighted to have sourced a supply of Beaujolais from up and coming producer Jean-Marc Burgaud and are looking forward to its arrival in our late March shipment.



Photo: Courtesy Jean-Marc Burgaud Web site

We've been looking for a Beaujolais after becoming enamoured of these Gamay-based wines in Paris wine bars such as Le Verre Vole, Le Cremerie and Chapeau Melon, and in our new favourite New York wine bar Terroir (see separate story). Great Beaujolais is remarkably food friendly and also represents amazingly good value.

We will only have a small supply, especially of the highly prized Morgon «Côte du Py» James (see below), and won't be sure of the exact prices until they arrive and we know the final exchange rate for the shipping, but if you'd like to reserve the chance to buy any of them send us an email and we'll put you on a first orders list. Like all our wines, they are being shipped in refrigerated containers so will arrive in excellent condition. Jean-Marc is kindly also providing us with a few sample bottles so we'll also organise a tasting of some of these wines once they arrive.

In France, wine is generally described according to where the grapes are grown, not the variety of grape, a quite different approach from what we're used to in Australia where the variety is as at least as important and sometimes more important than the location. You're expected to know that red Beaujolais is made from Gamay so the bit you're interested in is not what it's made of but where it's made.

As we explained in the last newsletter, there are 10 areas in Beaujolais designated as Beaujolais Cru areas. All the wines we have ordered are from Morgon [pronounced more-GOH], which we think is the most desirable of all the crus.

Most Beaujolais crus are named after the villages and Morgon is no exception. Within Morgon, there are a small number of special parcels of land that produce the best wines. These are known as *lieu dits* and only wine made from grapes that are 100% sourced from a *lieu dit* can have the name displayed on the label. The most famous in Morgon is the Côte du Py which we featured in our last newsletter. The other is the nearby Les Charmes.

Three of our wines are from Côte du Py and one is from Les Charmes. They are:

MORGON « Les Charmes » 2007



MORGON « Côte du Py » 2007



MORGON « Côte du Py » Réserve 2007



MORGON « Côte du Py » James

This wine which comes from a small parcel of land near the summit of the Côte du Py, and is only available in the best vintages, including 2007.

It's only just been bottled so we're privileged to have a small quantity.

For more information, visit www.jean-marc-burgaud.com

A new supplier from Le Barroux – Philippe Gimel

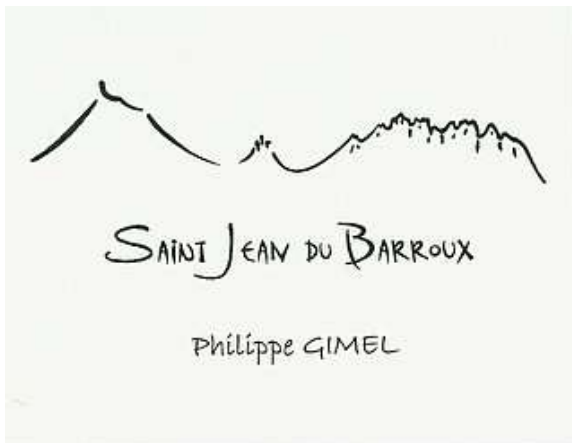
We are also delighted that the talented Philippe Gimel has agreed to supply us with his highly sought after and very low volume Saint Jean du Barroux organic wines.

He produces just one red and one white wine under this label. These wines have caused a lot of excitement in France, Holland and the United States where they are eagerly snapped up as soon as they are released.

Due to the scarcity, the quality and the very low yields, these wines will be more expensive than our other wines (probably around \$50 per bottle), however we feel certain that once you have tried them you will treasure them in your cellar.

As soon as we have the final paperwork from the shippers we will post the retail prices on the Terroir Wines Web site. If you would like to reserve some bottles from the shipment, simply send us an email. We'll have some of the 2004 and 2005 reds in this shipment and are hoping to have the 2005 white in our next shipment.

The front label from the white wine showing the beautiful Dentilles du Montmiral that loom in front of the vineyard is shown below. (This label is from a bottle we had last year in Caromb, the village where Philippe lives and where our rental house is located.)



The vineyards are near the picturesque village of Le Barroux, one of the perched villages of Provence. The vines grow on the lower slopes of the famous Mont Ventoux near the road between Le Barroux and the Roman town of Vaison la Romaine.

One of the reasons people are sitting up and taking notice of Philippe's wines is the incredibly low yields. Whereas most producers in this area produce some 50 hectolitres for each hectare of vines, Philippe's yields are down around 20! This means that the fruit flavour is much more concentrated – and this is certainly reflected in the wines.

Robert Parker called his red wine "a gorgeous blend of 75% Grenache, 15% Syrah, and the rest Carignan and Cinsault. The wine's bouquet is reminiscent of a great Côte Rotie even though the Syrah component is small and no Viognier is utilized. Exotic floral aromas intermixed with blackberry and cherry fruit jump from the glass. In the mouth, the wine is soft, velvety, medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant, and exotic." (The Wine Advocate # 178 August 2008).

You can also follow Philippe's exploits on his idiosyncratic Web site:

www.saintjeandubarroux.com

And for more information about our house in Caromb visit www.provencevillagehouse.com

This month's special offers

This month we have two special offer 6 packs with a 10% discount and free shipping Australia wide.

In Fine Côtes du Ventoux Super Bargain Quaffing Pack

We all need wine we can open without wincing at the price. The In Fine reds and whites, from Caravinserrail, the company that also makes our Domaine de Cascavel wines, fit the bill nicely. So, as our contribution to solutions for recessionary drinking, we're offering six packs of In Fine reds and whites as one of our specials this month, both from the highly regarded 2007 vintage.

The In Fine 2007 white is a pale yellow wine with a soft mineral background and aromas reminiscent of flowers, pears and citrus. It is a mixture of Clairette (80%) and Bourboulenc (20%). This is the wine Graeme Phillips reviewed recently in the *Hobart Mercury*, describing it as "*fresh peaches and citrus flavours on a tight, lightly textured palate with a typical and very appetising dry, mineral stony finish*". 13.5% alcohol.

The In Fine 2007 red is a dark red colour with purple hues. On the nose there are hints of berries, liquorice and spices. The grapes are Grenache (90%) and Shiraz (10%). 14% alcohol. Normally they're \$17 a bottle but with the 10% discount they work out at **\$15.30** each. You can make up your own mix - 3 whites and 3 reds, all whites or all reds or anything in between. There aren't huge quantities of the whites left though so it will be first in best dressed.

6 Pack Price \$91.80 (tell us how you want to split the red and white)

Chateau Unang Bargain Pack

The Chateau Unang rosé and La Source may have sold out and we may only have very limited quantities of the delicious La Croix, but we do have plenty of Chateau Unang's Côtes du Ventoux reds and whites.

The Chateau Unang Côtes du Ventoux 2006 red is made from Grenache, Syrah and Carignan sourced from the Chateau's highest vineyards. The Syrah provides spice and pepper to this wine but the Grenache and Carignan add character.

The crisp Chateau Unang Côtes du Ventoux 2007 white is made from Clairette and Roussanne grapes that have been hand picked from low-yielding vines (at 35 hl/hectare). Completely unwooded, it is a delicately straw-coloured wine and well-suited to summer drinking (what's left of it!).

Although a touch more damaging to the pocket than the two In Fines, the red is normally only \$21 and the white \$20 a bottle, which with a 10% discount, makes them **\$18.90** and **\$18** a bottle. This 6 pack contains 3 whites and 3 reds.

6 Pack Price \$110.70

New York's Terroir Wine Bar

We share the name of our wine business with some special places, including our favourite bolt hole in New York, Terroir, which opened early in 2008. Despite only being in New York for 6 days last November and with a list of places to eat at a mile long, we still managed to fit in three visits.

We were seduced - that's the only word for it - by the world's most opinionated wine list (that bit happened before we got there), by the dissertation on Jerez and sherry generally, by the incredibly sensible policy of offering a small taste of any wine you choose from their selection by the glass, and then letting you decide if you want it, by the wine knowledge of all the staff, by the palpable euphoria in the room (it was just after the election) and by some wonderful food.

Some highlights (admittedly bits are a blur):

- late night glasses of Madeira (these are in the blurry category)
- a bottle of Palari's Rosso del Soprano (when the Faro wasn't available)
- a glass of El Maestro Sierra fino from Jerez
- a monumental pork chop
- beautiful rieslings
- Marco Canora's meatballs (which we later saw him cooking for Matt Tebutt on television - very nostalgic)
- finocchietti (from the charcuterie list)
- And a small tragedy - why did we forget to order the whipped lardo on bruschetta?

But here is a picture of the pork chop - meat doesn't get more elemental than this:



If you're interested in wine and wine lists, do yourself a favour and visit Terroir's website and download their current wine list. It's a joy (unless you don't like people with opinions and you were disappointed with the US election result - if that's the case it might be best to stay away).

Terroir is Paul Greico's and Marco Canora's self-described "thinktank" (if we lived in New York it would be our thinktank too - until it drained us of all our funds). They've got plenty to think about. They also own Hearth, an excellent restaurant a couple of doors along from Terroir, which we loved, and Insieme, a one star Michelin restaurant, which we didn't try. Both also have excellent (and fun) wine lists.

If you're going to New York, make sure you drop into Terroir. It's at 413 E. 12th St. There's no phone so you just have to go there.

www.wineisterroir.com

Grape of the month: Clairette

Clairette is a white grape that is widely used in southern France to give wines delicacy and finesse. The main areas of production for this slightly oblong grape are Provence, the Rhone Valley and Languedoc. Some appellations even carry the name of this grape (unusually for France). These include Clairette de Die near Lyon and Clairette de Bellegarde and Clairette de Languedoc in the Languedoc.

Clairette is also one of the permitted grape varieties for the Côtes du Ventoux (where Clairette, Bourboulenc, Grenache blanc and Roussanne are permitted), Côtes du Rhône (where the Ventoux varieties plus Marsanne, Viognier, Ugni blanc and Picpoul blanc are also allowed) and Cotes du Luberon (which has the same white varieties as the Côtes du Rhône plus the addition of Vermentino or Rolle as it is known locally).

Clairette is also one of the three permitted varieties for the noble white wines of Chateauneuf-du-Pape. The Clairette produces the lively, lemony, fruity flavour whereas the Roussanne and Bourboulenc provide complexity, longevity and length.

To sample the Clairette grape in all its youthful exuberance try our In Fine Blanc. For a more restrained use of Clairette try one of the Chateau Unang whites.

Interpreting French wine labels

Reading a French wine label is an art although there are now a number of producers in the Languedoc and the Loire who are turning convention on its head and are using highly abstract labels that follow none of the traditional rules (for example, Domaine Singla in the Languedoc, our latest vineyard Saint Jean du Barroux from Ventoux and Domaine de la Garraliere in the Loire).

The secret was unlocked for us many years ago when a wine writer who was showing us around Burgundy told us to start in the bottom right-hand corner and work our way up. He said that generally you would move from the general at the bottom (eg France) to the more specific at the top (eg the vineyard or wine maker).

One of the issues that many Australians have when they read a label is knowing what type of grapes are in the bottle. The French don't usually do it that way. You need to know the appellation, which is the area where it comes from. It may be a small parcel of land, the name of a village, designating specific land surrounding the village, or a broader region such as Côtes du Rhône. Once you know the appellation then that tells you which grapes can be in the wine.

So you just have to learn that in Burgundy appellations, most white wines are made from Chardonnay and the red wines are made from Pinot noir (two other white wines Aligote and Sauvignon blanc are permitted – Aligote is reasonably widespread and Sauvignon blanc is only permitted in the Saint Bris appellation).

If the wine is a Chinon from the Loire Valley then the red wine will be predominantly made from Cabernet franc with a little Cabernet sauvignon permitted and the long-lasting white wines will be based on Chenin blanc.

Where it becomes very difficult is in appellations such as Chateauneuf-du-Pape where there are 13 permitted varieties allowed. Unless you know which grapes the producer favours it is not easy to work out what is in the bottle.

So here is one of the labels from the wines of our new Beaujolais producer Jean-Marc Burgaud along with the key to understanding what is on the label.



Terroir Wines Order Form

Name:

Street:

Suburb: Postcode: State:

Telephone: Email:

Special newsletter selection	Price inc GST	Number	Sub-total
In Fine Quaffing Pack (six bottles including freight)	\$91.80		
Chateau Unang Bargain (six bottles including freight)	\$110.70		
Compose your own selection	Price per single bottle		
Chateau Unang Côtes du Ventoux 2007 White	\$20		
Chateau Unang Cuvee Adeline Côtes du Ventoux 2006 White	\$30		
Chateau Unang Côtes du Ventoux 2007 Rose	\$20	Sold out	New shipment in March
Chateau Unang Côtes du Ventoux 2006 Red	\$21		
Chateau Unang La Source Côtes du Ventoux 2006 Red	\$25	Sold out	New shipment in March
Chateau Unang La Croix Côtes du Ventoux 2006 Red	\$40		
Cuvee le Cascavel Côtes du Ventoux Red	\$23		
Domaine de Cascavel Cuvee les Amidyves Côtes du Ventoux Red	\$32		
Caravinserrail In Fine Côtes du Ventoux 2007 White	\$17		
Caravinserrail In Fine Côtes du Ventoux 2007 Red	\$17		
Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône White	\$25		
Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Villages Visan White	\$29	N/A	N/A
Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Red	\$19		
Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Villages Valreas Red	\$28		
Domaine des Grands Devers Côtes du Rhône Villages Visan Red	\$26		
		Total	

Note: Please email your order to wine@terroirwines.com.au, post it to GPO Box 2160, Hobart, 7001, Tasmania or Fax to 03 62247552. We will then contact you to discuss payment arrangements. You can pay by credit card, cheque or direct bank deposit.

If you order your wines in lots of 12 (they can be mixed) we will pay the freight charges. The two special six packs will be sent freight free. If freight costs apply, we'll contact you and let you know how much it will be is before processing your order.