

WINE Talk: January 2024

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 119

Welcome to newsletter 119, the first WINE Talk Newsletter for 2024. We hope you continue to enjoy reading them. We certainly are continuing to enjoy writing them!

We have been able to put together 10 packs to offer in this newsletter, but many of these packs have only one available, so we expect them to sell out quickly.

The newsletter also has:

- News about wines that are arriving soon;
- Information about recent arrivals from Julien Fremont;
- Information about recent arrivals from Champagne Piollet and Marie Courtin;
- Some wine-related news stories that interested us including which country is the largest producer of wine, an explanation of the rules relating to Vin de France wines, and a discussion of some of the polyphenols in wine;
- A story about what is covered by appellation rules in France;
- A story about the very new Voltis grape variety in Champagne which has been introduced to counter the effects of climate change.

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

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

There's an easy way to order our wines. Just send us an email listing the wines and/or packs you would like to order or even just a budget and your style and region preferences. We confirm a plan 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). You must of course be over 18 years of age to order.

New Arrivals

Julien Fremont

A few weeks ago we released Julien Fremont's beguiling Calvados – the Calvados that smells like apples not alcohol (which admittedly has its own problems because its beguiling aromas make it hard to believe it is so potent). It probably should come with a special "drink with care" warning rather than just relying on the % alcohol and number of standard drinks.



In Julien's orchard about 1 month away from harvest 2022

We have since released the remainder of our current shipment. Some sold out very quickly to people who had requested advance information about them so a few of the new arrivals are only available in the packs we have reserved in newsletter.

Pack 3 has quite a collection including one of the new ciders (Piterne), some very rare cider vinegar and a bottle of Calvados as well as three more classic ciders. Pack 4 has two bottles of cider cuvées we have had before, some of which are still available to order, but it now is the only way to order the Poiré (pear cider) which is otherwise sold out.

We have included some information about the two new cuvées Piterne and Quévrue in the newsletter even though they are not available to order from us (Quévrue is completely sold out).

We are shipping small allocations of both cuvées to many of our regular bottleshops and wine bars with general licences this week so if you would like to try to order and you regularly buy our wines from your favourite local, depending on the shipping gods and whether they ordered some, they should be available towards the end of next week or the start of the following week.

Piterne is named for an old Norman legend, like a presence that lives in farms, presses and apple attics. It is a blend of two vintages of ciders, 2021 and 2022, with the apples from both years, as usual, aged in the attic above the cider press and aging rooms for some time prior to pressing.

The component from 2021 was aged until fully fermented for one year in a 400 litre Calvados barrel, still rich in Calvados tannins. It was then assembled with still fermenting juice from 2022 in a 50/50 assembly. Julien says the power and bitterness comes from the very good 2021 vintage and the tension and acidity from 2022. It is a very intense cider, albeit like all his drinks, with only a gentle fizz.

The other new cuvée is Quévrué. The juice for Quévrué comes from plots close to the forest of Quévrué at the back of the property, where he has bittersweet varieties planted. It was macerated then fermented and aged for 8 months in an amphora which was made in Impruneta, a town just south of Florence in Italy. Julien's translated description is that "It has become an apple wine with silky tannins, a fine bead and with finesse and great length on the palate". He recommends drinking it with Livarot (not unexpectedly given he is 10 minutes' drive from the town of Livarot) but you could substitute other strong washed-rind cows milk cheeses. He also suggests spicy food. We agree with that too.



The distinctive new labels for Piterne and Quévrué

Apart from the packs we still have Silex and Brut Nature ciders and a little Calvados to order directly from us. Both ciders are in 750ml bottles.

Par Nature has a soft fine bead and good acidity and is very dry, invigorating, digestible and thirst-quenching. Julien recommends it with fish, poultry cooked with cream or soft raw milk cheeses (we love his recommendations – they are so coloured by the place where he lives).

Silex is a well-balanced cider with a mix of bitter and sweet flavours, which creates a very delicious fruitiness. As usual the mousse is soft and gently sparkling.

In 500ml bottles the Calvados is from the 2017 vintage. It spends enough time in 400 litre barrel (about four years) to be classified as "Réserve" (the minimum requirement is three years) but

not so long that it loses its distinctive apple aromas. For Julien it is important that you can always find the fruit in his spirits.

All of Julien's drinks, and the vinegar for that matter, are bottled unfiltered and with no preservatives. We'd recommend drinking the ciders soon after opening. There is always a small deposit at the bottom of each bottle too so they can benefit from being stored upright prior to opening.

Below is a summary of what we still have available.

Cuvee Name	Type	Price
Julien Fremont Brut Nature Cidre 2022	Cider	\$45
Julien Fremont Silex Cidre 2022	Cider	\$42
Julien Fremont Calvados 500 ml	Spirits	\$133

Champagne Piollot and Marie Courtin

Our new arrivals from Roland Piollot and Dominique Moreau have also been largely ordered by people who requested information about them. We did not allocate these wines, so it was a situation where the first people who responded were able to buy them.

We do have plenty of Roland's flagship Cuvée de Réserve Champagne though, which is a perfect aperitif, and small quantities of the other wines. We are also advertising them to our wholesale customers this week so we imagine they will not last long.

There are limits on orders of every wine except the Cuvée de Réserve and, for the Marie Courtin Champagne cuvées (of which there are only two) the maximum order is 1 bottle (i.e. one cuvée or the other). You are welcome to order by expressing a first preference but taking the other one if you would like it if your first preference is not available.

Below is a detailed summary of the available wines and prices. The prices are prior to any discount if the wines are ordered as part of a 6-bottle order.

There are also two packs available (pack 5) which includes 5 of Roland's wines and one Marie Courtin.

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Cuvée de Réserve	Pinot Noir, Chardonnay	\$112	No limit	Piollot's classic cuvée, this is a Brut Champagne. It is completely dry but was finished with a small dosage. Predominantly from

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
				the 2021 vintage it was disgorged in July 2023.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Come des Tallants 2019	Pinot Noir	\$134	1	From the tiny Come des Tallants parcel (less than one hectare of vines that are approximately 40 years old), this Blanc de Noir is 100% Pinot Noir. The plot has marne as well as Kimmeridgian limestone. It was disgorged in February 2023. No dosage. Aged in tank, Roland recommends it as an aperitif. He describes the aromas as "mirabelle plum, guava, mint and flowers (lily), with slightly musky notes". There is no dosage. The wine was disgorged in February 2023.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Colas Robin 2017	Pinot Blanc	\$145	1	From an individual parcel of Pinot Blanc planted by Roland's father, the vines are now approximately 65 years old. The soil is marne and Kimmeridgian limestone. 20% was aged in barrel and 80% in tank. It spent 5 years "sur lattes". There is no dosage. The wine was

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
				disgorged in February 2023. The age of the vines and extended aging have given this wine a complexity that means it's well-suited to matching with Champagne-friendly food rather than treated as an aperitif.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Chevre 2019	Chardonnay	\$154	1	From Chardonnay grown on clay and limestone, this wine had a dosage of 5g per litre of sugar. It was aged for 3 years "sur lattes" prior to disgorgement in March 2023.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Champs Rayés 2018	Chardonnay	\$156	1	From Chardonnay grown on clay and limestone (vines nearly 20 years old), this wine was aged in a mix of tank and oak barrels and then, after bottling spent 5 years "sur lattes" prior to disgorgement in February 2023. with aromas of citrus and tropical fruits it is recommended as a match with crustaceans and other seafood. (In fact, the Piollots provide a recipe on their website - something we've only ever seen with this

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
				wine!). It was disgorged in February 2023 with no dosage.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Mepetit 2018	Pinot Meunier	\$165	1	From nearly 50-year-old Pinot Meunier vines grown on marne and Kimmeridgian limestone, this wine was aged in oak barrels prior to bottling. A Blanc de Noir, it has an intense minerality with notes of lemon, hazelnut and brioche. It was disgorged in March 2023, with no dosage.
Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Les Protelles 2019	Pinot Noir	\$150	1	A rosé made from a 3-day maceration of Pinot Noir (approximately 45 years old) following the traditions of the Côte des Bar. The vines are grown on marne and Kimmeridgian limestone. The wine was aged in tank. It is ideal as an aperitif or with dessert (including chocolate!). Disgorged in November 2022. The

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
				classification is Brut Nature which means no more than 3g/l of sugar in the finished wine (i.e. to all intents and purposes dry). Disgorged in November 2022.
Marie Courtin Champagne Efflorescence 2017	Pinot Noir	\$167	1 (see note)	From Dominique Moreau's tiny estate this Pinot Noir grown on Kimmeridgian limestone was aged in oak. It was disgorged in March 2023 with no dosage. Note: one bottle of Marie Courtin Champagne (i.e. this or Concordance)
Marie Courtin Champagne Concordance 2017	Pinot Noir	\$204	1 (see note)	This wine is also 100% Pinot Noir but, unlike Efflorescence, it is aged in tank and has no added sulphites. Disgorged in May 2022 with no dosage. Note: one bottle of Marie Courtin Champagne (i.e. this or Efflorescence)
Marie Courtin Coteaux Champenois Le Blanc du Tremble 2019	Pinot Noir		1	A still Blanc de Noir (ie a white wine made from direct-pressed red grapes) made with 100% Pinot Noir from Dominique's vines. It was vinified and aged in two

Wine	Variety	\$	Max Order	Notes
				amphoras, each made from different materials (one of clay and one from sandstone). The contents were blended prior to bottling.

What's Coming

We always recommend you read this part of the newsletter. We've started to make it briefer – not giving too many details – so it's not too much of a commitment to read it (you can skip to the last paragraph now if you're already well across the way we work!).

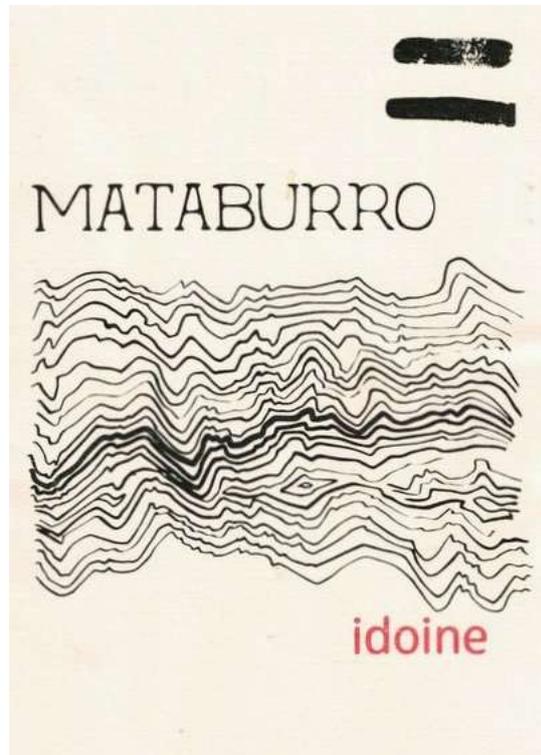
If you tell us you're interested in anything that's arriving that we plan to allocate we'll make sure we offer you something. For allocation wines you're welcome to express general preferences, such as white or red or even a particular cuvée that you love, and we will do our best to accommodate you. The offers are all based on trying to share the wines as fairly as possible though so the more restrictions we have to work with the more limited the offers. That is fine of course – we'd prefer not to offer you something you are not interested in but can't guarantee we can give you what you want. For example, in a recent Jura allocation we only had 12 bottles of red wine to work with in total. All the rest were white.

For wines we advertise if you've expressed interest in advance you will get early warning of what's available.

In immediate future we're expecting to advertise some **Derain and Altaber** wines and allocate some of **Michel Gahier's** Jura wines. Following that we'll have our biggest shipment ever of **Jean-Pierre Robinot's** wines. It includes most of the classic cuvées. We're expecting to allocate it so make sure you are on the offer list if you are interested. At some point soon we will also be releasing some new **l'Octavin wines**. These will be advertised.

Pack 1: Mixed Magnum Pack (15% discount)

Note: 1 Pack Only!



This pack includes a couple of perfect summer party wines. Mataburro's light red Idoine, a blend of Merlot and Grenache Noir, which is designed to be chilled, and Mosse Moussamoussettes pet-nat should need no introduction to regular readers. This pet-nat is a wine we have had for many years. A blend of Grolleau Noir, Cabernet Franc, and Pineau d'Aunis, 2022 is a very typical vintage and it's even better from a magnum.

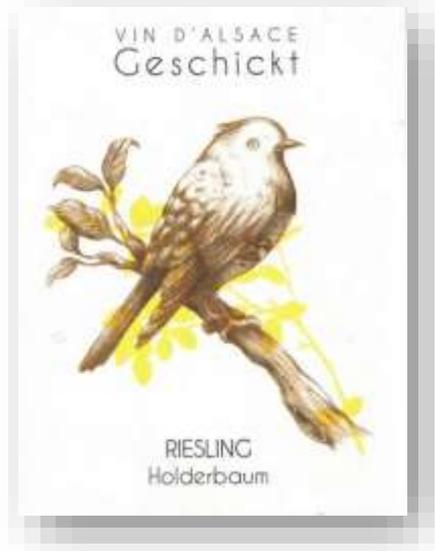
The third bottle is one you could easily keep for a while if you are patient and we'd generally recommend saving it to eat with something special. It's Tony Bornard Le Pinot cuvée, made with grapes from the Pinot Noir vineyard immediately under the famous Pupillin sign he bought when he imagined he would create a separate domaine from his father. The wine is aged in old barrels.

- Mataburro Idoine 2022 Magnum
- Mosse Moussamoussettes 2022 Magnum
- Domaine Bornard Pinot Noir Le Pinot Noir 2018 Magnum

The RRP for this selection of 3 Magnums is \$371.00 but the pack price is only \$315.35. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 2: Such Tall Bottles Alsace Pack (15% Discount)

Note: 1 Pack Only



You really need to see an Alsace magnum to appreciate its slender, tall glory. They are the most beautiful bottles and a nightmare to pack.

There is a magnum of the gloriously drinkable Geschickt Holderbaum Riesling. This wine contains grapes from the 2020 and 2021 vintages, from vineyards to the east and south-east of Ammerschwihr, including Holderbaum, Prediger and Birgele. Holderbaum, which is south-east of the village makes up 80% of the wine so it provides its name.

When the 2021 vintage was harvested, the 2020 vintage still had 30 grams of sugar. The pomace from the 2021 vintage was added to the still-aging 2020 wine to restart the fermentation. The 2020 and 2021 were ready to bottle at the same time so they did an experiment blending them and it was very successful so that's what was done. Interestingly, they were two completely different vintages. It was aged in stainless steel. We had this in 750ml bottles as well so you may have tried it.

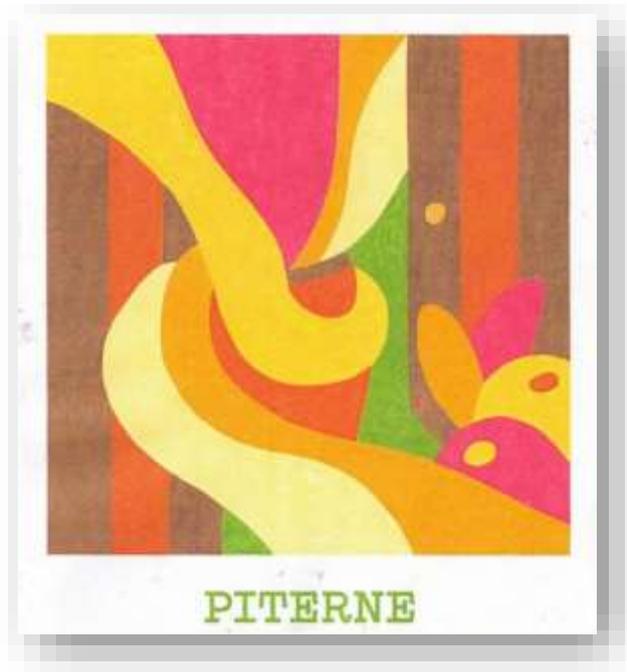
We only received the second wine in magnums and we believe it's the only way Jean-Marc Dreyer, the master of macerated wines, bottled it. It is a blend of many varieties (at least Riesling, Sylvaner, Auxerrois, Muscat, Gewurztraminer, and Pinot Gris) all of which were macerated. This "blend" was aged in old oak for just under a year and then bottled with no additions.

- Geschickt Riesling NV Magnum (2 bottles)
- Jean-Marc Dreyer Vin d'Alsace Gauthier 2021 Magnum

The RRP for this selection of 2 Magnums is \$340.00 but the pack price is only \$289.00. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 3: The Nearly Everything Fremont Pack (15% discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



The first two apple ciders and the Poiré cider in this pack have each been described in the text for Pack 4 below which contains 2 bottles of each of these ciders.

Piterne is a new creation (with a stunning “happy” label), which is a blend of two vintages (2021 was fully fermented and 2022 was still fermenting so it acted like a dosage). This is a beautiful cider with lovely bubbles that are under control, but strong enough to make you feel like you are drinking a cider.

We have also included two exciting additions from Julien, namely a bottle of his cider vinegar which is also made with his own apples and a bottle of his stunning Calvados.

- Julien Fremont Brut Nature Cidre 2022
- Julien Fremont Silex Cidre 2022
- Julien Fremont Piterne Cidre
- Julien Fremont Poiré Cidre 2022
- Julien Fremont Cider Vinegar
- Julien Fremont Calvados 500 ml

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$352.00 but the pack price is only \$299.20. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 4: Classic Fremont Ciders Pack (15% Discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



There are just three of Julien’s amazing ciders offered here. Two are made from apples and one is made from pears. All the fruit is grown in his carefully tended orchards.

The “Brut Nature” cider begins with a very slow natural fermentation of the juice during the cold Normandy autumn and winter. The cider is then bottled and continues fermenting in the bottle until the sugar is fermented out. This usually results in an alcohol level between 5.5% and 6.1% and the current batch is 5.0%.

Silex is made from apples picked from trees that grow in flint (silex in French) soils on the higher slopes above the cellars where the ground is littered with flint “cailloux” (small rocks).

The apples spend some time in the attic to concentrate the flavours, they are crushed and the juice is transferred to large vats to ferment spontaneously.

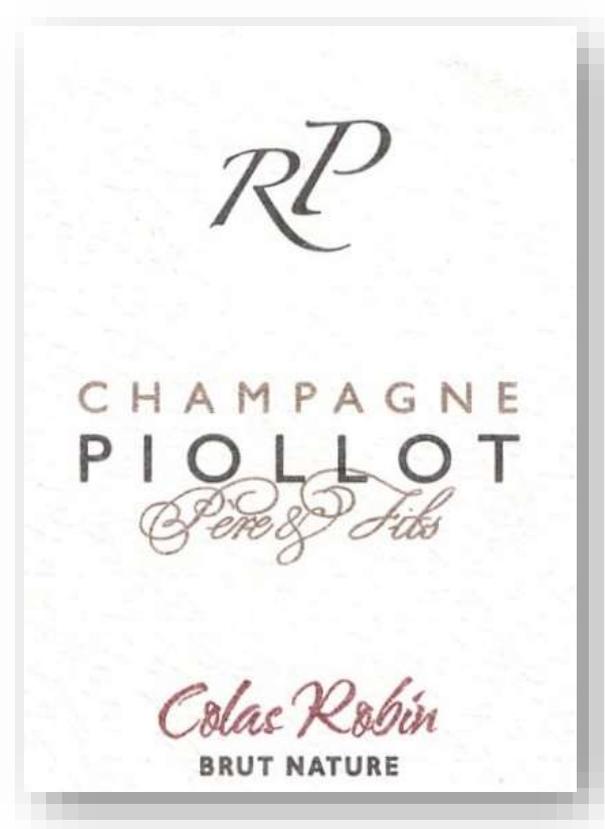
Julien makes his pear cider in exactly the same way as his apple cider. The pears are hand-harvested and then placed in the attic to dry out for a few weeks to concentrate the flavour. Following the drying out process they are pressed using the ancient press that has been in the family for generations. The juice is then left to ferment naturally and aged in very old barrels.

- Julien Fremont Brut Nature Cidre 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- Julien Fremont Silex Cidre 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- Julien Fremont Poiré Cidre 2022 **(2 bottles)**

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$272.00 but the pack price is only \$231.20. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 5: Piollot and Marie Courtin Champagne (15% Discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



The Cuvée de Réserve is Piollot's classic cuvée. This is a Brut Champagne which is completely dry but was finished with a small dosage. Predominantly from the 2021 vintage it was disgorged in July 2023.

The Colas Robin is made from an individual parcel of Pinot Blanc planted by Roland's father, the vines are now approximately 65 years old. The soil is marne and Kimmeridgian limestone. 20% was aged in barrel and 80% in tank. It spent 5 years "sur lattes". There is no dosage. The wine was disgorged in February 2023. The age of the vines and extended aging have given this wine a complexity that means it's well-suited to matching with Champagne-friendly food rather than treated as an aperitif.

The Champs Rayés is a Chardonnay grown on clay and limestone (vines nearly 20 years old), this wine was aged in a mix of tank and oak barrels and then, after bottling spent 5 years "sur lattes" prior to disgorgement in February 2023. with aromas of citrus and tropical fruits it is recommended as a match with crustaceans and other seafood. (In fact, the Piollots provide a recipe on their website - something we've only ever seen with this wine!). It was disgorged in February 2023 with no dosage. It is Roland's finest Champagne.

The Les Protelles is a rosé made from a 3 day maceration of Pinot Noir following the traditions of the Côte des Bar. The vines are grown on marne and limestone. The wine was aged in tank. It is ideal as an aperitif or with dessert (including chocolate!). Disgorged in November 2022.

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The Marie Courtin is from Dominique Moreau's tiny estate. This Pinot Noir grown on Kimmeridgian limestone was aged in oak. It was disgorged in March 2023 with no dosage.

- Piillot Père et Fils Champagne Cuvée de Réserve **(2 bottles)**
- Piillot Père et Fils Champagne Colas Robin 2017
- Piillot Père et Fils Champagne Champs Rayés 2018
- Piillot Père et Fils Champagne Les Protelles 2019
- Marie Courtin Champagne Efflorescence 2017

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$842 but the pack price is only \$715.70. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 6: Mixed Red Sale Pack (20% Discount)



This is a red wine pack with some very interesting wines included ranging from quite light to medium weight. They are all beautifully made, and each has a place among the best of natural winemaking. Having said that, each is quite different.

Many of you will know about Gamay Sans Tra La La which we buy a lot of each year because it is a very juicy expression of Gamay which is matured in large concrete tanks by the Plouzeau family. It is eminently drinkable and beautifully made.

Their Rouge des Cornus is also beautifully made by fermenting the juice for 15 to 20 days before being transferred to concrete tanks for about 8 months of maturation.

The Quel Âne de Course (racing donkey) is a clever wine which this year is 100% Carignan rather than being a blend of Carignan, Shiraz and Merlot. Wim only made the decision at the last moment after tasting the Carignan – and we can see why!

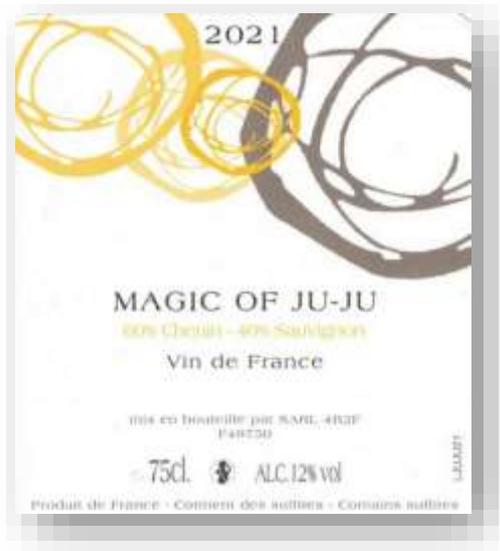
Michel Guignier is one of the quiet stars of Beaujolais. All his cuvées are stunning and this one is no exception. It is 100% Gamay that is made with skill and attention to detail.

The l'Octavin Ganache is made by Alice with grapes purchased from the south of France just north of Carpentras. This is a light, very drinkable wine made from Grenache grapes that she buys each year and transports them back to Arbois where her ethereal wines are all made.

- Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay Sans Tra La La 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Rouge des Cornus 2021
- Le Bouc à Trois Pattes Quel Âne de Course 2021
- Michel Guignier La Bonne Pioche 2020
- l'Octavin Ganache 2021

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$336.00 but the pack price is only \$268.80. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 7: Wine, Vinegar and Cider Pack (Discount 15%)



Magic of Juju is one of the most beloved wines from the Mosse stable! It is made by direct pressing Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc and then maturing the juice in old wooden barrels (between 10 and 20 years old) for 7 months. The result is a beautiful, energetic white wine with savoury, herbal notes.

The Un coup de Kuq is Wim Wageman's regular Syrah offering of a red wine that looks deep due to the colour but is a pleasant, light expression of this grape variety as is the rosé from nearby Julien Peyras which is a combination of Grenache and Syrah.

We find that Julien Fremont's ciders are a perfect drink at any time of day so we have included one of his recently arrived offerings. We have also included a bottle of the amazing natural vinegar that we bring in from the Roussillon which are based on wines from natural winemakers. And we finish this pack with a bottle of one of the most popular wines we import – namely the amazing Gamay Sans Tra La La from the Garrelière family in the Loire Valley. We think it's a fun mix.

- Mosse Magic of Juju 2021
- Le Bouc à Trois Pattes Un Coup de Kuq 2021
- Julien Peyras Rose Bohême 2021
- Julien Fremont Brut Nature Cidre 2022
- La Guinelle Vinaigre de Banyuls 50 cl
- Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay Sans Tra La La 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$267.00 but the pack price is only \$226.95. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Packs 8, 9 and 10: Reluctant Release Packs (Slightly more than 10%)

Note: 1 Pack of each Only

Just occasionally we confront reality and release a few wines we have put to one side for personal consumption. It's self-indulgently unfortunate because it means parting with the bottles but also accepting we can't drink as frequently and speedily as we used to. The latter reality makes our section of the cellar increasingly look impractical. Our section of the cellar also needs some free space for new arrivals.

These packs are a result of one of those moments. We don't increase our prices over time so these are all original prices for these wines. Please don't ask if there are more available. It's a bit of an emotional wrench to part with these bottles and we certainly won't be looking into these "Sue and Roger" boxes again for a while! They are also only available as part of the pack and there is only one of each pack.

We've kept these wines in the expectation they would age well. They have been in our temperature-controlled warehouse all the time they have been in Australia. However, we would in most cases only ever have drunk one or two bottles of them and some time ago so it's hard to be definitive. But we're sure whoever buys them will have an excellent adventure with them.

Four of the wines fall into the category described above and two are wines which are currently available. The discounts for the older wines are 10% - the discounts we would have given at the time to anyone who ordered them at the time. The discounts for the other two wines (the delicious light red Mosse Bangarang 2022 and juicy Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay sans Tra La La, also from the 2022 vintage) are 15%.

The three packs (8, 9 and 10) are limited to one per person. If you have more than one preference you are welcome to express it at the time you order. As usual we'll allocate the orders based on when we receive them so if you have a second or third choice in your original email we can allocate you that if it's still available.

Pack 8: Reluctant Release Part A Pack (Slightly more than 10%)

Note: 1 Pack Only



This “Part A” pack contains some real gems. The fabulous Bistrotologie made by Robinot is a serious wine that is always delicious and low in alcohol, as is the Le Garde Corps, a wonderful Trousseau (the cuvée made for aging) which was made by Philippe Bornard.

Another Jura wine is the ever-popular Les Follasses from Michel Gahier made from Chardonnay, followed by another Jura maker, Alice Bouvot who has made the Joker Macérée from grapes (Jacquère) she brought in from the Savoie.

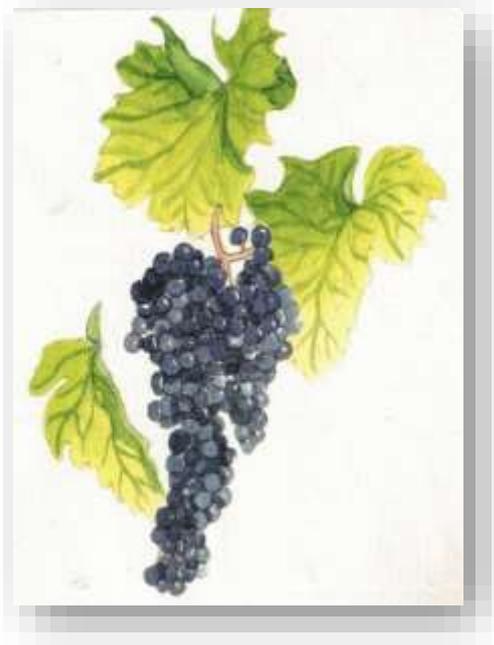
The pack is rounded out with two of our most popular current release wines. One is the Bangarang, a light red made by the clever Mosse family in the Loire Valley and the other is the ever-popular Gamay Sans Tra La La from the Plouzeau family also from the Loire.

- Jean-Pierre Robinot Bistrotologie 2017
- Philippe Bornard Trousseau Le Garde Corps 2015
- Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Follasses 2020
- l'Octavin Joker Macérée 2020
- Mosse Bangarang 2022
- Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay Sans Tra La La 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$393.00 but the pack price is only \$348.35. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 9 – Reluctant Release Part B Pack (Slightly more than 10%)

Note: 1 Pack Only



Rouge de Max label

As you can see from the previous pack, this pack maintains the same two wines from Mosse and Garrelière, and also the same winemakers for the first four wines, but in this pack we have offered 4 different wines from Robinot, Bornard, Gahier and Octavin.

This time the wine from Robinot is a red made from the totally delicious Pineau d’Aunis grape variety that thrives in his vineyards above the city of Tours. And we have done the same with the Domaine Bornard which is a delightful Chardonnay from 2018 with fruit from the Les Gaudrettes vineyard.

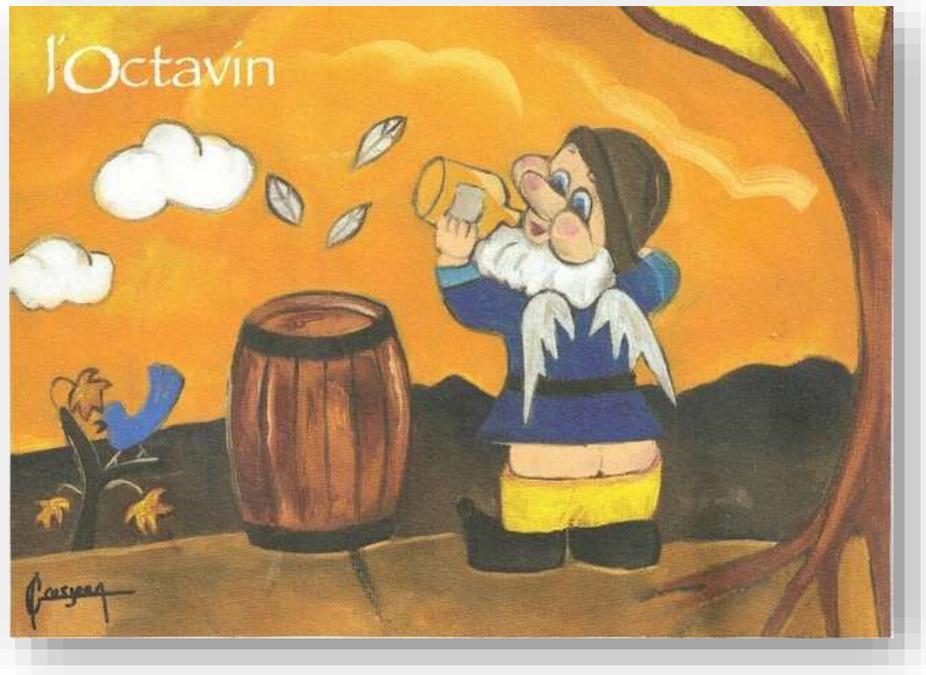
We have also swapped in a red from Gahier made from Trousseau called Rouge du Max and the lovely Ivre de Vivre from Alice which is a white wine made from Viognier grapes from southern Beaujolais.

- Jean-Pierre Robinot Nocturne 2017
- Domaine Bornard Côtes du Jura Chardonnay Les Gaudrettes 2018
- Michel Gahier Rouge du Max 2020
- l'Octavin Ivre de Vivre 2018
- Mosse Bangarang 2022
- Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay Sans Tra La La 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$409.00 but the pack price is only \$362.75. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 10 – Reluctant Release Part C Pack (Slightly more than 10%)

Note: 1 Pack Only



As you can see from the previous two packs, this pack maintains the same two wines from Mosse and Garrelière, and also three of the same winemakers for the first four wines, but in this pack we have offered one from Robinot, one from Bornard and 2 wines from Octavin.

This time we included a wine (Pamina) that Alice from Octavin has made with Chardonnay from her own vines. It is one of her most renowned wines. The next from the same area is the highly praised Point Barre from Domaine Bornard that is made from grapes in their Pupillin vineyards which are within the Arbois Pupillin appellation area.

There is also one of the stunning pet nats from Robinot (Fêtebulles) made from his beloved Chenin Blanc vines. It's aged but we drank a bottle recently and it was still delicious. There is also a white Hip Hip J from Alice made from Chardonnay and Savagnin grapes – a truly delicious Jura offering!

- l'Octavin Pamina 2016
- Philippe Bornard Ploussard Point Barre 2015
- Jean-Pierre Robinot Fêtebulles 2017
- l'Octavin Chardonnay / Savagnin Hip Hip J 2018
- Mosse Bangarang 2022
- Domaine de la Garrelière Gamay Sans Tra La La 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$407.00 but the pack price is only \$360.95. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

January Wine News

France regains the title as the biggest wine producer

Over the past few years France has ceded the title of the biggest producer of wine to neighbouring Italy.

However, this year the crop in Italy was severely hit by both fungal diseases and extreme weather events which wreaked havoc among the vines.

While the same problems occurred in some parts of France, it wasn't as widespread as in Italy this year so France is likely to regain the crown.

However, we should add that once again Bordeaux has been hit by both weather and disease which will see the availability of this year's vintage drop sharply.

France's agriculture ministry estimates that this year the harvest will return 47.2 million hectolitres, an increase of 2.2 million hectolitres on last year's figure.

What are the rules for wines labelled Vin de France?

When you look at our portfolio, the majority of the wines are labelled as Vin de France which is a general appellation covering the entire country.

However, there are some generic rules that still must be obeyed, even though they are easier to apply than those for specific appellations (see our article below entitled "Understanding Appellation Rules").

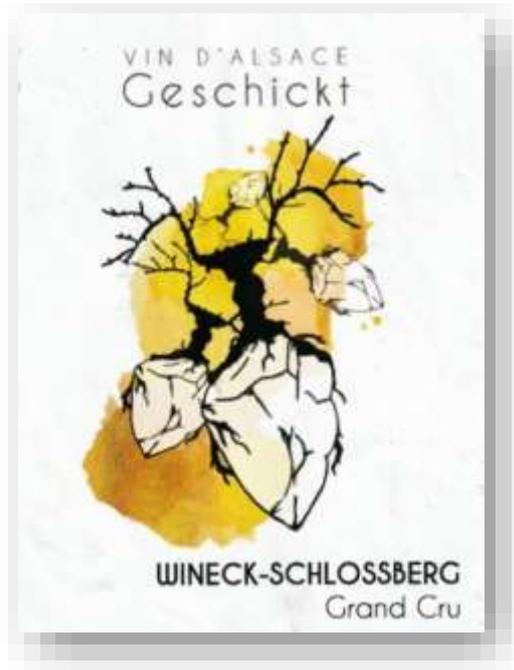
There is an hierarchy of appellations shown below with the most rigorous first and then regional appellations where the rules are easier.

The hierarchy is:

- AOC / AOP appellations. These are the most rigorous appellations, and the differences are minimal – AOC stands for Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée and is French controlled, and the AOP – Appellation d'origine Protégée is a European-wide set of rules. Examples of the AOC/AOP appellations are Pommard in Burgundy which is a red wine only appellation, Château-Chalon in the Jura which is an appellation for Vin Jaune only, Bourgogne Rouge which is an appellation for red wines made from grapes grown in the Burgundy region which covers everywhere from the south of Beaujolais to the northern region just below Chablis, and Gaillac AOC in south-west France where white still and sparkling wines are permitted along with red and rosé wines from an extensive array of grape types including many rare grapes and also additional wine types such as primeur¹ and méthode ancestrale. There is a further complication in that wines made from grapes picked from specific areas within an appellation area may also qualify to use the

¹ For example, in Gaillac a red wine can only affix the term Primeur if it is made from Gamay. And a sparkling wine can use the term méthode ancestrale if it is made from Mauzac and/or Mauzac Rose.

designations Grand Cru or Premier Cru such as can be seen on the Alsace wine label shown below.



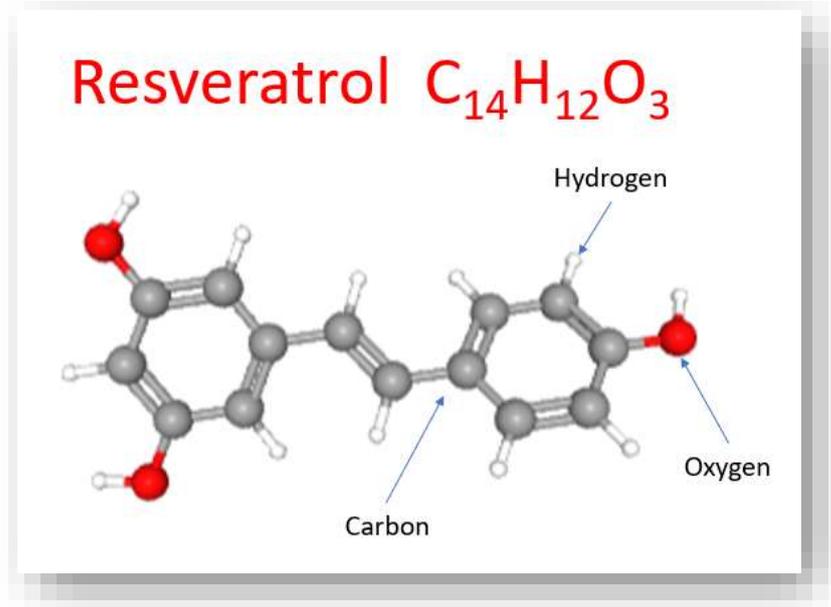
- IGP appellations. These are regional appellations that cover regions within France such as the Loire Valley. There are 75 such appellations and the rules are governed on a European-wide basis and are generally less onerous than AOP/AOP rules. This appellation type used to be called Vin de Pays, but the IGP rules have been changed and modernised and the number decreased significantly. Examples of IGP appellations are Vin de Loire which covers the Loire Valley, IGP Pays d'Oc which covers the Languedoc and Roussillon areas and IGP Méditerranée which covers Provence and Corsica. Some of the IGP appellations represent smaller regions such as IGP Pays d'Hérault which is within the Languedoc region and therefore wines made in this area can use either option (IGP Pays d'Oc or IGP Pays d'Hérault).
- Vin de France appellation. This is the broadest French appellation with the least number of rules. Grapes can be sourced from anywhere in France and our producers often do this due to the vagaries of climate these days. However, this is not to say that Vin de France wines are necessarily lesser wines. Some of our producers such as the Robinot family, Tony Bornard, Alice Bouvot and the Mosse family all produce stunning wines under this label.

Polyphenols in wine – and their benefits

Polyphenols are an important chemical found in wines that have been extracted from the skins during pressing and maceration. They are important for providing many of the textures and flavours in the wine as well as the colour. They are also responsible for some of the health benefits associated with drinking wine.

We will now provide a brief and simple explanation of what roles these various polyphenols play in our wines.

Resveratrol



Resveratrol is probably the best known of the polyphenols that are found in wines, as they have been lauded in the press over the past decade for providing health benefits including longevity in areas around the Mediterranean.

Resveratrol is found in high concentrations in red grape skins rather than white grapes. It has been shown to be beneficial for preventing damage to blood vessels, preventing blood clots and lowering cholesterol levels.

Catechins

These flavonoids are found in the seeds of grapes in fairly high concentrations and have antioxidant properties. For those who eschew the drinking of alcohol, these are also found in high concentrations in green tea.

Catechins are also one of the main building blocks for creating tannins which are not only one of the main molecules for providing flavour in wines but are also one of the key molecules for preserving wine.

Catechins may help with reducing blood pressure, they can assist with reducing atherosclerosis and promote better blood flow. Some research indicates that catechins may also have a role in reducing the onset of cancer.

One of the catechins found in wine, gallate epicatechins, also play an important role in the taste sensations experienced when drinking wine.

One recent finding is that catechins are found in higher concentrations in lighter wines due to conversion to tannins in heavier wines, therefore their beneficial properties are more likely to be exhibited in light wines. This is very good support for the trend towards lighter red wines which we see gaining momentum in both France and Australia.

Anthocyanins

These are also flavonoids which provide the grapes and hence the wines with colour and also provide antioxidant properties as well.

Anthocyanins also interact with tannins and play an important role in the item we mention in the Catechins section above in helping in the aging of wine.

Anthocyanins have both hydroxyl groups and methyl groups. If there are free hydroxyl groups, the wine will tend towards a blue-ish colour and if they have free hydroxyl groups then they tend towards red.

Quercetin

Quercetin is a flavonoid with similar properties to Catechins and Anthocyanins. This naturally occurring phenol is found in grape skins and stems and plays a role in protecting grapes from ultraviolet light damage.

It may also be the chemical (quercetin-3-glucuronide) responsible for headaches after drinking wine according to some recent research we have read.

Research studies have shown that quercetin and related flavonoids have inhibited the growth of some cancerous cells particularly in breast, colon, prostate and lung cancer.

Malic acid

Malic acid is one of the primary acids in grapes and subsequently in wine. However as the grape ripens the level of acidity decreases due to metabolic respiration where the grape is using the malic acid as fuel.

In cooler climates the grapes do not need as much malic acid for food so the levels remain high and the acidity is more pleasing.

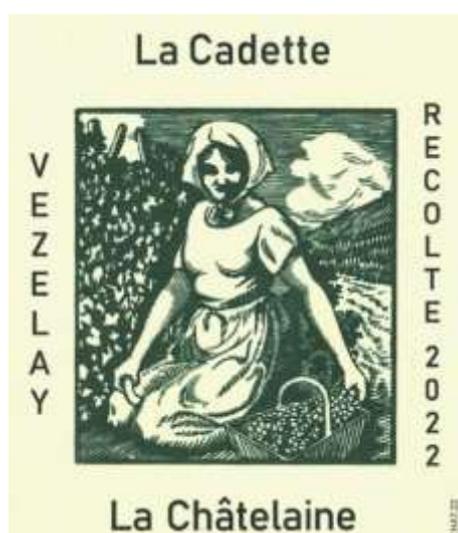
Some winemakers find malic acid to be quite harsh on the palate so prefer to convert malic acid to lactic acid through the process known as malolactic fermentation.

Understanding appellation rules

Wine appellations in France vary greatly in their rules which govern what grape varieties can be used, how they are planted, how they are pruned, when the grapes are harvested, how the wine is made and much more.

All of these rules are the responsibility of an organisation called the INAO which stands for Institut National de l'origine et de la qualité and controls agricultural, forestry and food products.

The INAO publishes a set of rules for every wine appellation in France (there are over 800 appellations currently). These rules are called the Cahier des Charges which simply means “Specifications” and there is a document for each of the appellations.



Let's talk about some of the rules and their importance.

The first is the **location**. Consider the relatively new appellation that covers some of the Cadette wines that we import.

You can see from the accompanying label for the La Châtelaine wine from Cadette that it references, on the left side of the label, the appellation Vézelay and on the right side that it is from the 2022 harvest (recolte).

Now the Vézelay appellation in the north of Burgundy was created to recognise the quality of white wines made on the Kimmeridgian limestone soils that are profuse in this area.

It is section III of Chapter 1 of the rules that defines the types of wine that are permitted. The rule for Vézelay wines is in Section 3 as shown in red:

III. - Couleur et types de produit

L'appellation d'origine contrôlée « Vézelay » est réservée aux vins tranquilles blancs.

Which translates as:

The “Vézelay” controlled designation of origin is reserved for still white wines.

Therefore, it is only permitted to use the word Vézelay on the label if the wine is still and white. Red wines, rosé wines and sparkling wines are not permitted in this appellation.

If you have red grapes planted in the approved area, then it must be labelled as Bourgogne Rouge (provided it meets the rules for that much broader appellation). The alternative, as many of our winemakers throughout France have turned to is to use the Vin de France appellation which has very few rules.

The appellation is geographically centred on the Vézelay “commune” which is a defined area.

Because the limestone is also found in some of the neighbouring communes, it is also permitted to use the Vézelay appellation on the label if the grapes were grown in the communes of d'Asquins, Saint-Père (where the Cadette vines are) and Tharoiseau.

The section of the rules is shown below:

IV. - Aires et zones dans lesquelles différentes opérations sont réalisées

1°- Aire géographique

La récolte des raisins, la vinification, l'élaboration et l'élevage des vins sont assurés sur le territoire des communes d'Asquins, Saint-Père, Tharoiseau et Vézelay dans le département de l'Yonne.

When it comes to grape varieties each appellation defines which grapes can be used in Section 5. So the grape requirements are very simple for Vézelay as you can see in red below:

V. - Encépagement

Les vins sont issus exclusivement du cépage chardonnay B.

The wines must be made exclusively from the grape variety Chardonnay Blanc.

The grape rules for this appellation are very simple – only one grape variety. Let's contrast this with an appellation in the southern Rhone called Chateauneuf du Pape, known for its big red wines. Here is section 5 for that appellation.

V. - Encépagement

Les vins rouges et blancs sont issus des cépages suivants : bourboulenc B, brun argenté N (localement dénommé « vaccarèse »), cinsaut N, clairette B, clairette rose Rs, counoise N, grenache blanc B, grenache gris G, grenache N, mourvèdre N, muscardin N, picardan B, piquepoul blanc B, piquepoul gris G, piquepoul noir N, roussanne B, syrah N, terret noir N.

Notice here that the wines can be red or white (rouges et blancs) and can be made from any of the 18 grape varieties listed – many of which are not common in Australia. The letter which follows the grape variety is the colour of the grape allowed with N (Noir = Red), B (Blanc = White), G (Gris = Grey) and R (Rose = Pink) where the grape is a mutant of the white Clairette which has pink flecks on the skin.

There is also another little variation in these rules where the red grape known as Brun Argenté is known in the southern Rhone as Vaccarèse.

One of the longest sections of the rules is Sections 6 to 9 which lays out the rules for Vineyard Management (Conduite du vignoble). This is a complicated section but, to give you an idea of some of the areas that are covered we have listed some below:

- Density of the vines where the width of the rows and the distance between vines are specified;
- Pruning rules;
- Irrigation rules – irrigation is not permitted and this is generally the case throughout France;
- Harvesting and transport rules for the grapes including level of ripeness for the grapes before harvesting can take place and the minimum alcohol content permitted (11%);
- The rules for inside the winery which are also quite exacting.

There are many other sections which we won't go into now but we will mention that in Section 10 the rules for labelling are set out specifying the size of various items on the label, even to the point that if you mention the grape variety then the print must be less than 2 millimetres in size!

Chapter 2 sets out some very rigid rules for documenting what has been done in the winery with dozens of items of documentation required.

If, for example, you wanted to have a look at the rules for the Pommard appellation in Burgundy where both Fanny Sabre and Julien Altabar from Sextant have plots of vines, then you can type the following into Google:



You will then see the following result (or similar):



You will see that Google has found the Pommard document and presented a PDF which will be downloaded if you click on the main subject line.

Note that if you download a document for one of the appellations, you can highlight any sections that interest you, copy them to the clipboard and then paste them into Google Translate if you need help with the French.

Grape variety: The “Climate Change Grape” Voltis

Voltis is a white grape variety that has been bred by a cooperative effort between France and Germany to create a grape that will be more resistant to the dramatic effects that climate change is having on grape harvests in Europe.

You may ask why the fuss with adopting a new variety in France? Well, the issue is partly the fact that all grape varieties currently approved by French appellations belong to the *Vitis Vinifera* species which is a variety thought to have been brought to France from Asia by the Phoenicians in around 600 BCE when they populated the area now called Marseilles.

Voltis is not a pure *Vitis Vinifera* plant, having been bred from crossing Villaris (which, in turn, was created by crossing plants from two American species namely *Vitis rupestris* and *Vitis aestivalis*) with *Muscadina rotundifolia* to give it genes from *Vitis berlandieri*, *Vitis rupestris*, *Vitis vinifera* and *Vitis rotundifolia*. The reason is that Voltis was created to be resistant to both downy and powdery mildew which is becoming more and more of a problem throughout Europe.

The most extraordinary thing that has happened is that it has recently been approved, on an experimental basis, for use in Champagne of all places! This approval comes from the official body in France that controls all aspects of wines marketed under any of the French appellations. It is the L'Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité (INAO).

As we have written in this newsletter before, Champagne currently has 7 official grape varieties that are allowed by the INAO, namely Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Pinot Gris, Arbane, Petit Meslier and Pinot Blanc. And now, number 8 has been added, albeit with some restrictions which we will discuss further down.

It is quite a remarkable (desperate?) move as this variety was only created in 2004. The move reflects the fact that diseases are getting increasingly worse as the weather is creating more and more problems with higher temperatures, more severe frosts and more severe rain storms.

However, Voltis is only admitted on an experimental basis and will still have to prove itself.

Enter Drappier

Voltis has been enthusiastically embraced, on a trial basis, by the famous Champagne house of Drappier. They are currently planting Voltis vines which must be limited by regulation to less than 5% of their plantings.

They (and others who might plant the grape) have been permitted to trial the grape for a period of ten years, after which an assessment will be made of the quality of Champagne that includes Voltis. If it is felt by the authorities that the quality is not what is expected for a Champagne then Voltis will be removed from the authorised list.

However, some trials have already been carried out, and the Champagnes using Voltis were blind tasted with others made with the traditional grapes and those with Voltis were judged to be fresher and more flavoursome than the ones without!

The Restrictions

There are three main restrictions relating to the introduction of the Voltis grape:

- The first is that it has only been permitted for a trial period of ten years;
- The second is that the area planted to the seven fully approved varieties mentioned above must be at least 95% of the area planted and the area planted to Voltis must be less than or equal to 5%;
- A wine made using Voltis must not use more than 10% Voltis by volume in the blend.

Although 10 years seems like a long time for a trial, remember that it takes about five years for most vines to come to maturity and produce grapes that are mature. Therefore if everyone in Champagne planted Voltis now, they would only have a five year window for the trial.

Chemistry and Composition of Voltis grapes and wine

Now for a relatively new term. Voltis is known in wine jargon terms as a PIWI grape variety. This is a shorthand for grapes that combine various species of grape as we mentioned in the introductory paragraphs.

The PIWI shortcut comes from a very long German word, **Pilz**Widerstandsfähig which means “fungus resistant” and applies to grapes that usually have been created by crossing *Vitis vinifera* grape varieties with other species of grape that are more resistant to fungal diseases, such as powdery mildew and downy mildew.

The crossings are usually made with species from other countries or continents and Voltis was created by crossing a European species, *Vitis vinifera*, with species from the United States.

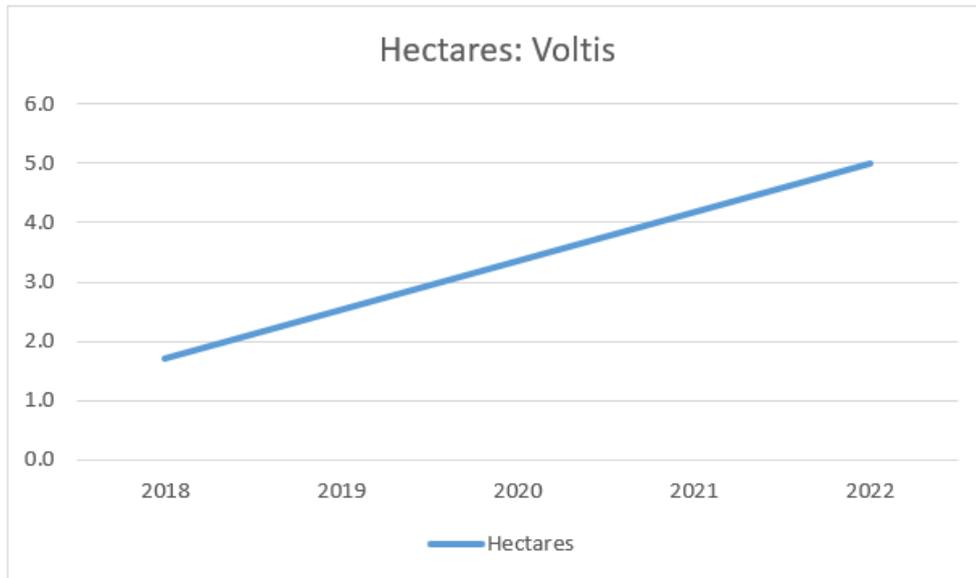
There are many different species in the United States because grapes of *Vitis vinifera* were found to be unsuitable due to the harsh weather conditions east of the Rocky Mountains. So, early pioneers had to locate hardier species elsewhere than Europe.

There are now a few grape varieties that European countries are experimenting with in order to reduce or eliminate the need for fungal sprays. These include Voltis and also Souvignier Gris, Johanniter, Sauvignac, Muscaris, Pinotin, Cabernet Noir, Cabernet Cortis and Cabernet Jura.

How much Voltis has been planted so far?

Each month, we create a graph showing the area planted to the grape we are discussing over the years that records have been maintained for that grape variety.

This month the graph isn't very exciting as there are very few producers who have planted any Voltis, therefore the graph looks very sparse – but we think that, in itself, says something!



As you can see from the above graph, the area planted to Voltis has more than doubled over the past five years but only from 1.8 hectares to a little less than 5 hectares!

Now to what Voltis looks like!

The Voltis leaf has three distinct lobes with one central lobe and one on each side of the central lobe. The lobes are separated by variable sized “sinuses” – as can be seen in the photo below.

You can also see in the photo below that there are three lobes which are very thin and “pointy”, and with only the frontal lobe being distinct.

The two other lobes are almost circular towards the top of the leaf.



Photo courtesy of PlantGrape database

The following photo shows the structure of the bunches of grapes which are reasonably loosely packed.

This is an advantage in warmer times ahead as the wind can blow through the bunches thus making it difficult for diseases, especially those that are in the form of a fungus to deposit on the grapes and leaves.



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

The grapes are white and quite spherical, showing none of the normal elongation that many grapes display.

The grape bunches are also quite loose as can clearly be seen in the photo above. This helps the wind to get in amongst the grapes to stop fungal diseases from settling.

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 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.