

WINE Talk: April 2024

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 122

Welcome to newsletter 122, the fourth 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 **9** packs to offer in this newsletter, but some of these packs have only one or two available, so we expect them to sell out quickly.

The newsletter also has:

- A brief summary about wines that have recently arrived including wines from Domaine Derain and Sextant along with a description the difference between the two;
- Some information about wines which are arriving soon – some to advertise and some of which will only be sold on allocation;
- The start of a series of short stories we will be writing in the next few newsletters about faults in wine and what causes them;
- A story about how we save wine labels for future reference;
- A story about the Coteaux Bourguignons appellation because we are offering a wine from this appellation in some of the packs this month;
- A story about the Enfariné grape variety which is planted in tiny quantities in the Jura and neighbouring Doubs départements and can be found in some of the cuvées of Domaine des Cavarodes.

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

Our new arrivals this month, and most of our packs, are from Julien Altaber and Carole Schwab. After reading Alice Feiring's assessment in her reporting from the late January / early February Loire Valley natural wine salons we had been waiting even more impatiently than usual for this moment. Speaking about the wonderful Les Penitentes salon, one of the smaller but most compelling events held during that always-intense weekend, her verdict was "Highlights? Julien Altaber. Every damned cuvee in 2022. Brilliant." We had to wait a little longer than usual because of the uncertainty in the Red Sea – from what we can tell the boat they were on got to the Suez Canal, turned back and went down the west coast of Africa and then possibly changed its mind and eventually went through the Suez Canal. They are uncertain times when you can't even confidently predict the route of the boat!

Julien and Carole are the proud owners of Saint-Aubin based **Domaine Derain** and **Sextant**. Domaine Derain is the Burgundy estate they purchased from their long-time mentor and employer Dominique Derain some years ago now and Sextant is the estate started by Julien while still Dominique's employee. Both he and Carole worked for Dominique for many years before providing him with the perfect succession plan (and also rather dramatically changing the direction of their own lives to become partners in life and business). It's one of the best transfers of ownership we have ever seen, with Dominique still regularly working with them and always keen to taste new wines from the vines he knows like the back of his hand. In fact it's highly likely that, although no longer an owner, he has handled the bottles we are selling now as he still regularly works for Julien and Carole bottling and packing orders and adding wax (although most of our Sextant cuvées no longer have wax seals).

The Derain wines have always been estate wines. As far back as we can remember Dominique only made wines from his own grapes, from vineyards where he worked using biodynamic practices since he began as one of the earliest practitioners of biodynamic viticulture in Burgundy. While owning just Sextant, Julien made some wines from the few tiny parcels he had purchased, but it was also a négoce estate, with him buying regularly each year from a few growers in the neighbouring area around Saint-Aubin and also further south in Beaujolais.

Now they own both, Julien and Carole still run them as separate labels (including continuing to keep separate cellars for the aging of the wines, both of which are in Saint-Aubin a couple of hundred metres apart from one another on the same street) but they have almost entirely adopted the principle that all the wine made from vineyards they own is part of Domaine Derain and Sextant is reserved for négoce wines, made from grapes they purchase. (We say 'almost entirely' because Julien is a world expert at having an exception to every rule. For example, sometimes, Derain aligoté, from Pommard terroir, might make it into a Sextant wine.) That may be partly because Sextant is also where they experiment, particularly with pétillant naturels and macerations of white grapes. We have two such wines in this shipment – a brilliant vintage of Clin d'Oeil, which in 2022 was a blend of macerated Viognier and directly-pressed Gamay, and a second shipment of 2022 Skin Bull, a pétillant naturel made from macerated Aligoté. We were delighted to be able to buy a couple more cases of this fascinating wine. The Skin Bull has already sold out except for being available in pack 2.

They are some slight changes in direction though. The last couple of times we have visited – in 2019 and then again in 2022 on our first visit after covid they have talked at length about their

plans to work a little more like their Jura near-neighbours, aging the whites a little longer in barrel (at least two years before bottling) and bottling the reds earlier while they are young to keep the freshness. We've started to see the beginnings of that approach with some of the renowned white Derain cuvées from 2021 in this release, but all the reds except for the Gevrey-Chambertin, which is always a little darker and more brooding demanding more time, are from 2022, and capturing a juicy, freshness that makes them a joy to drink. Generally the reds are all aged in old barrels but for the first time we think the majority of the 2022 Les Riaux (66%) was aged in stainless steel tanks.

The 2021 whites, a year with a very small vintage because of severe frosts, are intense with a mineral acidity that Dominique and now Julien have always been able to coax from the limestone in the vineyards around Saint-Aubin. Those flavours are always to the fore, with the wine aged in older barrels so wood is not a dominant contributor to their taste. They are the sort of wines that make you think you are sucking rocks.

We have sold out of many of the Derain whites but the very delicious Derain Aligoté, although sold out, is available in several packs.

Apart from what is in the packs reserved for the newsletter these wines are still available:

Wine	Type	Variety	RRP
Domaine Derain Allez Goutons Rouge 2023	Red	Pinot Noir	\$65
Domaine Derain Bourgogne Landré 2022	White	Chardonnay	\$82
Domaine Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$82
Domaine Derain Gevrey-Chambertin En Vosne 2019	Red	Pinot Noir	\$280
Domaine Derain Mercurey La Plante Chassey 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$114
Domaine Derain Pommard Les Petits Noizons 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$183
Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2021	White	Chardonnay	\$183
Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin Le Ban 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$121
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2022	White	Aligoté	\$61
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2022	White	Chardonnay	\$80
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$80
Sextant - Julien Altaber Clin d'Oeil 2022	Macerated	Viognier, Gamay	\$78
Sextant - Julien Altaber Coteaux Bourguignons 2022	White	Gamay, Pinot Noir	\$61
Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2022	Red	Gamay	\$50
Sextant - Julien Altaber Monthelie 1er Cru Sur La Velle Rouge 2022	Red	Pinot Noir	\$116

What's Coming



In May we will be sending out offers for our latest release of the **Robinot** family's wines we had hoped to send in April. We apologise if you were expecting an offer last month. Thanks very much to the people who responded last month to express their preferences and also those who expressed interest in the limited quantity of older chénins. We will be sending information about those out first, only to people who specifically asked.

We will set aside a few of the new Robinot wines for packs in the May newsletter but, for allocation only wines the pack discount is only ever 10% so that people asking for and taking up an allocation don't end up paying more than anyone who, later in the process, secures a pack. Next month's packs will also include some of **Fanny Sabre's** new wines which we are on the cusp of releasing generally (before the next newsletter). We've just sent out a list of the wines to people who expressed special interest so let us know if you want access to the list before the next newsletter comes out. We have good quantities of Fanny's Bourgogne Aligoté (from vines planted in Pommard no less), Bourgogne Blanc and Bourgogne Rougé and tiny quantities of five other village and premier cru wines.

In the May newsletter we will hopefully also release some of Dominique **Belluard's** 2019 Vin de Savoie Ayzé Mont Blanc Brut Nature, a Méthode Traditionnelle with

no dosage made with Gringet that we're confident will be extraordinary.

This map gives you a hint of what arrivals have been delayed – this is the slow route to Australia!

Following Belluard – probably late June or early July - we'll have some new wines from Arnaud Geschickt and Aurélie Fayolle from **Domaine Geschickt**. We're pleased that this shipment will include Phenix, their compelling macerated Pinot Gris, as well as other wines that have been missing from our list for a while like their great value Riesling and Crémant d'Alsace. We'll also be allocating some 2023 wines from **Mataburro**.

And stay tuned. We prefer not to announce impending arrivals until the reservation is finalised and the shipping is at least booked. There is still plenty of time, especially at the moment, to ask you to tell us if you would like an offer for anything we plan to allocated. But we are close to having news about some of our most asked-about wines in the next newsletter, all of which we will be allocating.

This month's packs

Most of our packs this month are our normal 6 packs, but given the times (and some expensive wines) it seemed like a good idea to experiment with a couple of smaller packs of 2 and 3 bottles of wine. We've made it an option with our Champagne pack (it can be either 6 or 3 bottles at the discounted price) and there are a couple of other surprise smaller packs. We hope they will be helpful for people who would like to try some of the new Sextant or Derain wines but don't need or want a 6 bottle pack. It doesn't do much to solve the problem of the cost per bottle but does help with the amount of the outlay.

Pack 1: Piollot Reserve Champagne Pack (15% Discount)



We've discovered over time that most situations, whether good and bad, are improved with Champagne.

We're not sure why – perhaps it's the appealing mouthfeel of such a fine bead. Knowing you are drinking something which has such a long tradition is part of the appeal too. And, in the case of Roland Piollot and Dominique Moreau's Champagnes, there's our knowledge of the care with which they tend the vines, which makes us love it all the more.

They make their own composts and apply them in such a way that the impacts, while good, are slow, believing that like many good things there is no long-term benefit in hurrying along the growth. You can vicariously enjoy their annual rituals by following their two Instagram accounts @champagnepiollot and @ch_mariecourtin.

So, just in case, like us, you find Champagne necessary, this pack is a rare opportunity to bolster your supply with a six pack of Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Cuvée de Réserve. A blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and also of the 2020 and 2021 vintages it is a great value grower Champagne at the best of times and the 15% discount makes for a little less wallet-pain than usual.

This pack is also available as a 3 pack – 3 bottles which normally would be \$336 for \$285.60.

- Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Cuvée de Réserve **(6 bottles)**

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$672.00 but the pack price is only \$571.20. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 2: Sextant / Derain Celebrating Aligoté pack (15% Discount)

Note: 3 Packs Only



This pack is a celebration of one of our favourite grapes – Aligoté – as well as some new arrivals from Sextant and Domaine Derain.

Dominique Derain was one of the earliest of the Burgundy natural winemakers to make Aligoté – both a “relatively” classic cuvée called Bourgogne Aligoté and then Allez Goutons, a fun wine released to have something from the new vintage available as soon as possible – basically ferment (this time in stainless steel) then bottle! We’re sure the original impetus was to have a new wine to pour and share with gusto at the Renaissance Salon in Angers which Dominique always attended. One of our best memories there is of Dominique wandering around, no doubt having left Julien Altaber in charge of his stand, dispensing Allez Goutons to everyone he met who he knew (nearly everyone) who had an empty glass.

Julien Altaber began Sextant with very few vines, but his holdings did include some Aligoté planted in Pommard. From the beginning he made an Aligoté in a classic style (direct press and aging in neutral barrels) but in recent years he has also experimented with various sparkling wines. This pack includes what’s possibly our favourite of the experiments – macerated aligoté in a pet-nat called Skin Bull. It’s our second shipment of this vintage and these 3 packs have the last 3 available bottles.

All the wines in the pack are made by Julien as he now also owns Domaine Derain, having purchased it from Dominique when he retired. As well as Skin Bull there is a single bottle of Allez Goutons 2022, which has been released for a few months, 2 bottles of newly-arrived 2022 Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté, which is now otherwise sold out and only available in this

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month's packs, and 2 bottles of the also newly-arrived 2022 Sextant Bourgogne Aligoté. It should be a wonderful project to compare them with Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté.

It's a thoroughly delicious way to explore this wonderful Burgundy white variety all through the lens of one winemaker working with different parcels of fruit and in different ways and for different purposes.

- Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Skin Bull 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- Domaine Derain Allez Goutons Blanc 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$375.00 but the pack price is only \$321.95. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 3: Mixed Sextant and Derain Pack (15% discount)

2 Packs Only



This pack has a lovely mix of new wines from Sextant and Domaine Derain, including the 2022 Domaine Derain Aligoté which is now only available in the packs in this newsletter and three of Julien Altaber's stellar 2022 vintage – Métisse, which is a mix of mainly macerated but also a little direct pressed Gamay, his saline Bourgogne Blanc and the very pretty Bourgogne Rouge.

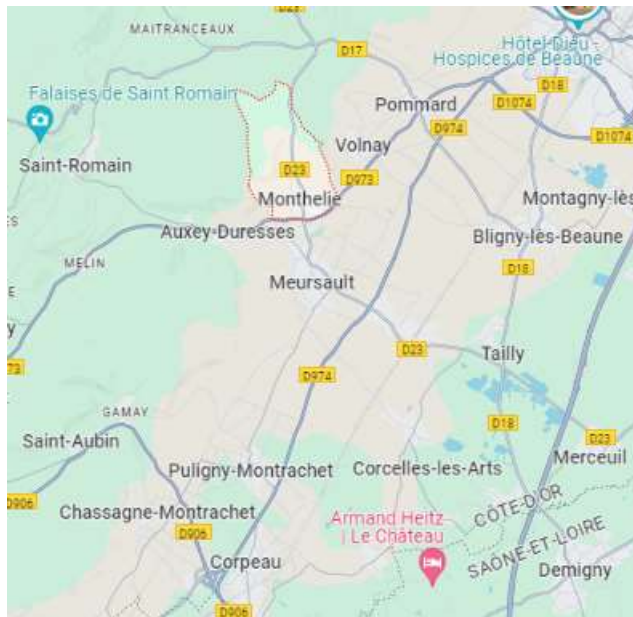
The other two wines are the Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux parcel, a Pinot Noir which like the Sextant Bourgogne Rouge, is fine to drink as a young wine. For the Landré Chardonnay it's a toss up – drink now or give it a little time to develop.

- Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Landré 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$437.00 but the pack price is only \$371.45. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 4: Sextant and Derain 1er Cru 2 Pack (15% Discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



This is possibly the first time that we have offered a pack consisting of just two bottles. But it is quite an exciting pack!

The first bottle comes from the Monthelie appellation which is not very well known. But if you know Pommard and Volnay you will know that these locations produce amazing red wines made from Pinot Noir. When you drive south from Beaune on the D974, the first appellation you drive past is Pommard, the next is Volnay and the next is the less well known Monthelie. It shares much the same terroir as the other two and is a red wine appellation like the other two. In addition the lieu dit that this bottle is made from, La Velle Rouge, is classified as a Premier Cru plot within the Monthelie appellation. And like all of the Sextant wines it is a fresh, saline and energetic drink!

The second wine is also a Premier Cru, this time from the Saint Aubin appellation which is south of Monthelie. You then pass through Meursault which is very much a white wine appellation reflecting the change in geology in between Monthelie and Meursault because of the concentration of limestone in the area. It is where you find Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet which are all famous for their amazing white Burgundies.

Saint Aubin sits between the two Montrachet appellations and shares much of the terroir. The En Remilly climat lies at the south end of the Saint Aubin appellation and borders Chassagne-Montrachet, so you will find that this wine is quite complex and very delicious!

PS: We have included the location of Saint-Romain in the map because the best coffee in Burgundy can be found in that village at the Saint Romain Coffee Co on the rare days it is open!

- Sextant - Julien Altaber Monthelie 1er Cru Sur La Velle Rouge 2022
- Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2021

The RRP for this selection of 2 bottles is \$299.00 but the pack price is only \$254.15. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 5: Sextant Ways with Gamay 3 Bottle Pack (15% Discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



This pack comprises 3 bottles and there are 2 of these packs on offer. Each of the three wines has been produced by Carole and Julien from Sextant.

The first is from one of the oldest appellations in France having been created in 1937. The appellation effectively “joins” Burgundy and Beaujolais allowing Gamay to be mixed with other grape varieties only used in Burgundy. We have included a story about Coteaux Bourguignons in this newsletter for you to delve deeper into the complexities of this interesting appellation. This wine was made by blending juice from Gamay and Pinot Noir to create a fresh and lively red wine.

The Métisse is predominantly traditionally-macerated Gamay with a little directly-pressed Gamay added.

Clin d'Oeil is macerated Viognier with some directly-pressed Gamay added to produce a complex and interesting orange wine.

- Sextant - Julien Altaber Coteaux Bourguignons 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Clin d'Oeil 2022

The RRP for this selection of 3 bottles is \$189.00 but the pack price is only \$160.65. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 6: Sextant and Derain New Reds Pack (15% discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only



This is an amazing pack comprising some négoce wines (where Julien and Carole have bought organic grapes from their friends and released them under the Sextant label) and three wines from plots they own which are released under the Domaine Derain label. They are all red, to fit with the changing seasons.

The Coteaux Bourguignons is a red wine with a mix of Gamay and Pinot Noir. The Bourgogne Rouge is a 100% Pinot Noir and the Métisse which is a mix of old vine Gamay that has been macerated on its skins for ten days to extract the red colour and Gamay from young vines which has been direct-pressed.

Those of you who have been buying Derain wines for a long time will know that Dominique has sold his vineyards to Carole and Julien so old favourites like Les Riaux, La Plant Chassey and Le Ban are now in their very capable hands.

- Sextant - Julien Altaber Coteaux Bourguignons 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Rouge 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux 2022
- Domaine Derain Mercurey La Plante Chassey 2022
- Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin Le Ban 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$508.00 but the pack price is only \$431.80. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 7: Domain Derain 3 Pack (15% discount)

2 Packs Only



This is another pack where there are only three bottles in order to offer you an interesting selection of wonderful wines but at a lower price than our normal six packs.

The Les Riaux vineyard is less than half a hectare and sits on the plains of Puligny-Montrachet which is just outside the Saint Aubin village. The wine is made from 100% Pinot Noir which grows on limestone soils.

The Aligoté also comes from a plot of Aligoté Doré (golden Aligoté) which grows quite close to the famed white wine areas of Puligny-Montrachet.

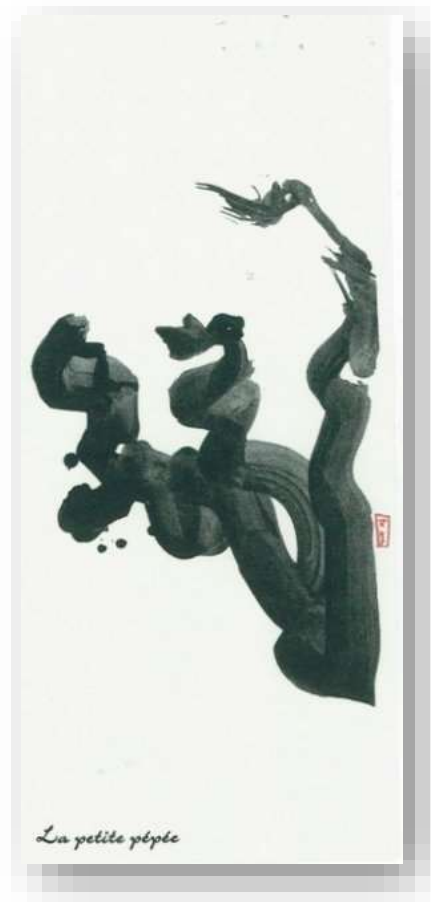
The Landré vineyard is quite new and is also tiny at only 0.3 hectares, but is a wonderful plot for growing Chardonnay.

- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2022
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Landré 2022

The RRP for this selection of 3 bottles is \$227.00 but the pack price is only \$192.95. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 8: From the Cellar Including Some Last Bottles Pack

(Average 15% discount) 1 Pack Only



Pack 8 is the result of one of our regular cellar forages. It's entirely white and sparklings although the Les Cigales Dans La Fourmilière La Petite Pépée 2017 is a little hard to categorise. It's a direct press wine made with Grenache Noir in the hope of making a white wine but with such intense juices it somehow always felt to us more like drinking an orange wine. It is a long time since we tried it – this has been the last bottle for a while – so it will be a rare opportunity to see how it has developed. It's probably past its best drinking window but should definitely be interesting.

The pack also includes our last bottle of the 2021 vintage of Magic of Juju, a vintage which gave us a lot of grief because the wine was oily and then finally it came good and turned out to be very delicious. We weren't surprised it turned out to be very delicious because every time we tasted it – about 12 attempts – to see if the oil had disappeared it tasted wonderful. The problem was always just with the texture. We were very tempted to drink this last bottle ourselves but there are so many new wines we have to work through we decided we were willing to let it go, especially given we had tried it many times as it gradually shed its problems.

There is also a last bottle of an older shipment of Piollot Cuvée de Reserve Champagne. From our experience these Champagnes reward cellaring so it should be very good, as should the last

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two very rare bottles of Chardonnay – a Domaine Derain Bourgogne Landré 2019 and Alice Bouvot's estate l'Octavin P'tit Pousot 2020. We release both of these with some reluctance.

- Les Cigales Dans La Fourmilière La Petite Pépée 2017
- Domaine Derain Bourgogne Landré 2019
- Mosse Magic of Juju 2021
- Piillot Champagne Cuvée de Reserve Brut
- Jean-Pierre Robinot Fêtembulles 2017
- l'Octavin P'tit Pousot 2020

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$400.00 but the pack price is only \$339.95. Check with us for the freight charge to your location.

Pack 9: April Sale Pack (20% Discount)



This is a 6 pack of three different wines with a large discount (20%). Each of the wines come from a formal appellation (Vouvray, Touraine and Vin d'Alsace) and each is white or white-ish.

The first wine is the Vouvray Sec made by one of the masters of Vouvray wines (which are all white wines, and all made from Chenin Blanc) namely Vincent Carême. We always enjoy visiting Vincent and Tania and walking in their vineyards to admire the care taken with the soil and the vines. We also love tasting their wines in their limestone caves dug into the cliffs behind their home. The 2022 version of the Vouvray Sec is particularly beautiful and representative of the best of Vouvray.

The Les 2 Amis comprises 50% Gamay and 50% Cabernet Franc. The wine is a collaboration between two vigneron from the Touraine appellation, namely François Plouzeau from Garrelière and Geoffrey de Noël who also grows vines in the Touraine appellation. It is a light, bright and persistent wine that represents the appellation well despite its unusual provenance.

The third wine comes from the eastern side of France in the Alsace and is 100% Riesling from Jean-Marc Dreyer's wonderful vineyards. It is part of his Origin series which means that it is made from a single variety (Riesling) and has been macerated for a short time.

- Vincent Carême Vouvray Sec 2022 (2 bottles)
- Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Les 2 Amis 2021 (2 bottles)
- Jean-Marc Dreyer Vin d'Alsace Riesling Origin 2021 (2 bottles)

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$362.00 but the pack price is only \$289.60. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Wine faults 1 – Acetic acid

Over the next few newsletters we will revisit some of the wine faults that cause problems for winemakers and discuss the science behind the cause of these faults. We will also address some of the “perceived” faults – those that might be a fault under some circumstances but are not under others.

An example is the so-called fault of bubbles appearing in a still wine which is often used to deduct points in a wine show setting. Many winemakers are now using small quantities of natural carbon dioxide, created as part of the winemaking process, to preserve their wines as we will discuss in more detail when we get to that one. In that case it certainly cannot be classified as a fault!

The motivation for this series came from a random lucky moment when we were searching through some academic papers on the subject and came across an older paper written by two South African scientists in 2000.

What caught our attention was their detailed discussion of faults that can occur and then their proposal to use biological remedies to overcome these faults rather than the widely used chemical remedies.

It is interesting to read a paper that was a forerunner of alternative ways of dealing with microbial and other agents in wine. This paper was written by Du Toit and Pretorius in 2000s.

The abstract from the paper will show what the authors are addressing:

*The winemaking process includes multiple stages at which microbial spoilage can occur, altering the quality and hygienic status of the wine and rendering it unacceptable. The major spoilage organisms include species and strains of the yeast genera *Brettanomyces*, *Candida*, *Hanseniaspora*, *Pichia*, *Zygosaccharomyces* etc., the lactic acid bacterial genera *Lactobacillus*, *Leuconostoc*, *Pediococcus*, etc. and the acetic acid bacterial genera *Acetobacter* and *Gluconobacter*. The faults caused include bitterness and off.flavours (mousiness, ester taint, phenolic, vinegary, buttery, geranium tone), and cosmetic problems such as turbidity, viscosity, sediment and film formation. These spoilage organisms can also affect the wholesomeness of wine by producing biogenic amines and precursors of ethyl carbamate. The judicious use of chemical preservatives such as sulphur dioxide (SO₂) during the winemaking process decreases the risk of microbial spoilage, but strains vary considerably in their SO₂ sensitivity. There is, moreover, mounting consumer bias against chemical preservatives, and this review focuses on the possible use of biopreservatives in complying with the consumers' demand for "clean and green" products.*

Ten of the faults we will discuss include:

- Excess acetic acid (volatile acidity);
- Excess other acids;

- Cork taint (2,4,6-Trichloroanisole);
- Brettanomyces spoilage;
- Oxidation;
- Reduction;
- Yeast spoilage;
- Mousiness;
- Mercaptan;
- Effervescence in still wines;

The topic of our first fault, described in this issue, is **acetic acid**. All wines contain acetic acid to some extent. Acetic acid is a by-product of the fermentation process and a small amount can even improve the flavour of a wine. However too much can impart a “vinegar” flavour which detracts from the drinking enjoyment.

Allow us to divert for a moment to provide an analogy that might help. In the winemaking process there are many substances (such as acetic acid) and creatures (such as yeast and bacteria, for example) which can cause problems in the wine. The result winemakers look for is balance. Think of how we use salt in cooking and you have an analogy that works. If we don't add any salt or only a little, the full flavour of the vegetable or meat will not be achieved. If we add too much salt then the food will be ruined. The same applies to making wine. We have to be careful and cunning in what we add and when.

Acetic acid (CH_3COOH) is a sour tasting compound which makes vinegar taste like vinegar. It usually has about 4% or slightly more of acetic acid. Therefore, it is reasonable to ensure that the percentage of acetic acid in wine is much less than 4% otherwise the outcome is obvious!

Acetic acid is created in wine by bacteria (Acetobacter and Gluconobacter) which flourish in temperatures that are slightly elevated compared to normal cellar temperatures. It is best to keep the grape juice at a temperature around 10 degrees Centigrade to avoid the bacteria multiplying too rapidly.

When acetic acid is created there is also the likelihood that esters are created as well as related toxins. The esters can be created through reactions of the acid with alcohols. These reactions can create methyl acetate, ethyl acetate and butyl acetate, for example.^{1 2} Each of these are undesirable in wine.

Cleanliness in the winery is often touted as the best way to avoid volatile acidity in wine and there is good reason for this advice as the bacteria which cause the fault flourish if wine making equipment is not clean.

¹ FLEET, G.H., 1998. *The microbiology of alcoholic beverages*. In: WOOD, B.J.B. (ed). *Microbiology of Fermented Foods*, vol. 1. Blackie Academic & Professional, London. pp. 217-262.

² SPONHOLZ, W.R., 1993. *Wine spoilage by microorganisms*. In: FLEET, G.H. (ed). *Wine Microbiology and Biotechnology*. Harwood Academic Publishers, Chur. pp. 395-420

However, this is not as easy as it sounds if the cellars are hundreds of years old as many are in Europe.

The other way that these bacteria can be introduced into the wine making equipment is through damaged fruit. This occurs if the fruit is left on the vine for too long and cracks form in the skin – a perfect place for bacteria to congregate!

Many in the science community and the commercial winemaking fraternity promote the use of particular commercial yeast strains when fermenting the grapes and advise against the use of native yeasts, however natural wine makers prefer the natural yeasts which are part of the “terroir” of their vineyards.

Another precaution that can be taken whether making natural wine or using commercial yeasts is to keep fruit flies away from the grape juice as they are carriers of bacteria.

How to “save” wine labels

This story has nothing to do with wines as such. It has to do with building a collection of memories of wines you have enjoyed by saving the labels.

The primary reason for us doing it the way we are about to explain, rather than just taking a photo of the label has to do with the curvature of the bottle. When you take a photo of the label when it is still affixed to the bottle you find that some of the information is less clear than if the label is removed.



Notice on the photo of the Dreyer bottle above it is easy to see that the wine is one of his Origin series, and you can just tell that it is made from Gewurztraminer that has been macerated and it is from the 2018 vintage. As with all his wines you can also tell that there is no filtration and no added sulphites. If you look really hard you can see that it is in the appellation Vin d'Alsace.

But if you look at the left side of the label you can see that there is further information.

Now look at the same label that we have removed from the bottle.



There is a lot more information you can easily see on both sides of the label. You can see VINS S.A.I.N.S in the bottom left corner which means he is a member of an organisation whose members never add sulphites to their wine. You can also see that the wine has 13.5% alcohol and that the Lot Number is L GWM18 and so on. You will also see the Demeter sign showing he is certified for biodynamic practices and so on.

So, this is why we remove the labels and then scan them so that we have all of this information in perpetuity.

We will talk you through how we do it, even though it is incredibly simple, although sometimes if the paper they have used is very thin you have to be careful.

The first part is simple – you have to drink the wine!

Next, we fill a kettle and bring the water to boiling point. Make sure you have an empty bottle than add the water until it reaches the top of the label.

Wait a couple of minutes for the glue to soften.

Now, slip your fingernail under one of the corners of the label and very gently start to peel it away from the glass. If it is a front label, it will probably start to come away quite easily – some labels, however, will be quite resistant and might tear if you try to do it too quickly.

Keep going slowly and eventually you will have a label in your hand. You can now affix it to a sheet of paper carefully so that it stays flat. Enough of the glue that affixed it to the bottle should work in sticking it to the paper.

Now you can place the sheet of paper in your scanner and you will soon have an electronic version of the label.

We find that about 90% of front labels are relatively easy to do this way, but with some they will just want to tear whenever you apply force (even mild force) to them due to the type of paper used. In this case you need to half fill the bottle with hot water and then put it in a container that is higher than the label and pour water into the container until it covers the label.

After an indeterminate time (sometimes about ten minutes sometime longer) the label can easily be removed or might even just “float” off the bottle. You can then take the label off and cover it with some absorbent kitchen paper to dry it out. You can then scan it.

We will now show what can happen if the paper used for a label is too thin or of lesser quality. We recently received a shipment of the beautiful Sextant Bourgogne Aligoté 2022. The front label is a striking diamond shape. It came off the bottle very easily and in good condition as shown below.



That was easy with the front label, however the back label was less accommodating with the paper being much thinner and not of the same quality as the front.

We started to remove it in the bottom right corner as you can see from the photo below:



You can see here that after a short while the paper has torn. It is almost impossible to rectify this problem without coming at the problem from a different direction, so we moved to the top right corner and started again.



Notice now that we are pulling the label from the top right and approaching the danger zone where it became stuck.

We managed to fix that problem and pulled more slowly for a while, then another problem occurred.



Here you can see that the label is detaching from the bottle quite well except it has got a problem towards the bottom where the label has torn and part is stuck.

If we had kept pulling at this stage the stuck part would have increased in size and soon would cause a hole through to the front of the label.

So, we started pulling from the left side and soon had the entire label removed.



You can only just see where we tore it on the right side as shown by the blue arrow, so our patience paid off. As you can now see, there is often useful information on the back labels, in this case the official appellation (Bourgogne Aligoté) and the alcohol percentage.

We have used software from the Windows environment to carry out these tasks. There will be plenty of software for the Macintosh as well. We find that the main tasks the software needs to carry out are:

- Scanning the label for which we use Microsoft Paint;
- Rotating the label if we haven't aligned it properly on the page we pasted it to. For this task we use an old fashioned piece of Windows software called Picasa;
- Cropping the image for which we use either Picasa or Snip& Sketch.

Once you have mastered these simple steps you will begin to accumulate "labels as memories" quite quickly without the need for expensive tools.

Appellation – Coteaux Bourguignons

The Coteaux Bourguignons appellation was first created on the 31st July 1937 under two different names (Bourgogne Grand Ordinaire and Bourgogne Ordinaire). Some changes/additions were applied on the 22 July 2010 including the change of name to Coteaux Bourguignons.

The following is taken from the cover page to the existing version of the appellation rules:

CAHIER DES CHARGES DE L'APPELLATION D'ORIGINE CONTRÔLÉE
« ~~BOURGOGNE GRAND ORDINAIRE~~ » ET « ~~BOURGOGNE ORDINAIRE~~ »
« COTEAUX BOURGUIGNONS »

CHAPITRE I^{er}

I. - Nom de l'appellation

Seul peuvent prétendre à l'appellation d'origine contrôlée « ~~Bourgogne grand ordinaire~~ » et « ~~Bourgogne ordinaire~~ » « **Coteaux Bourguignons** », initialement reconnues par le décret du 31 juillet 1937 sous les noms de « Bourgogne grand ordinaire » et « Bourgogne ordinaire », les vins répondant aux dispositions particulières fixées ci-après.

Notice that in order to emphasise the fact that the former names have been deprecated they are struck through with a line with the new name replacing them.

It is an interesting appellation as it allows for the combining of the grape varieties of Burgundy with those of Beaujolais (which is an official part of Burgundy).

Possibly the two most interesting features of this appellation are that it allows:

- The combination of Gamay with other Burgundian varieties;
- Allows other more obscure varieties to create wines using 100% of that variety.

The use of Gamay is widespread in this appellation and it can be combined in any proportion with Pinot Noir and/or César and also small amounts of Chardonnay, Gamay de Bouze, Gamay de Chaudenay, Pinot Blanc and/or Pinot Gris.

Coteaux Bourguignons also allows white wines and rosé wines. The white wines allow a full range of the white from all regions of Burgundy.

The permitted white grapes are:

- Aligoté, Chardonnay, Melon de Bourgogne, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris.

As an aside this is very different to many of the other appellation rules for white wines. Usually in appellation rules the grape types are divided into principal (cépages principaux) and accessories (cépages accessoires). This may refer to the percentages of the grape types picked or the percentage of the vines planted. The principal type will be something like 85% and the accessory grapes will be not to exceed 15%, for example.

But in this appellation they can make a wine from any of the varieties listed above, including Pinot Blanc or Pinot Gris or even the very rare Melon de Bourgogne which is only permitted to grow in the Yonne department in the north of Burgundy.

Another feature here is that in the Yonne our producer Domaine de la Cadette and Domaine Montanet-Thoden would not choose this appellation for their white wines because they will release them under the more prestigious Vézelay appellation which recognises the superior quality of white wines produced in the area around Vézelay.

Now here are the rules for the use of grapes in red wines for the appellation:

Les vins rouges sont issus des cépages suivants :

- cépages principaux : gamay N, pinot noir N et pour le seul département de l'Yonne le César N.;

- cépages accessoires : chardonnay B, gamay de Bouze N, gamay de Chaudenay N, pinot blanc B, pinot gris G.



Only Gamay and Pinot Noir are permitted everywhere in Burgundy as principal grapes and in the Yonne it is permitted to use César as a principal grape. The second element of the rules for reds lists the accessory varieties, namely Chardonnay, Gamay de Bouze, Gamay de Chaudenay, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris.

The rules then go on to specify how much of the principal and accessory grapes can be used.

- La proportion des cépages accessoires gamay de Bouze N et gamay de Chaudenay N, ensemble ou séparément, est inférieure ou égale à 10 % de l'encépagement.

- les autres cépages accessoires chardonnay B, pinot blanc B, pinot gris G sont autorisés uniquement en mélange de plants dans les vignes. Leur proportion totale est limitée à 15 % au sein de chaque parcelle.

The first part says that for the two special Gamays they must not either together or separately exceed 10%. The others, namely Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris are limited in total to 15%.

The rules for rosé wines are similar to those for red wines with Gamay, Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir as principal grapes throughout Burgundy/Beaujolais and César in the Yonne.

The accessory grapes for rosé wines are Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc which must be less than 15% of the vines in each plot (parcelle) used.

Grape variety – Enfariné

When we think about the grapes of the Jura there is both clarity and discord regarding how many varieties there are both officially and unofficially.

We are on relatively safe ground when we discuss the reds which are Trousseau which has its best expression around the village of Montigny-les-Arsures where Michel Gahier has his prized vineyards. The other red grape varieties are Ploussard/Poulsard and Pinot Noir.

For white grapes the issue is not so clear. Everyone agrees about Savagnin which is dominant right through the Jura and is used both for regular white wines and for the prized Vin Jaune.

However, Chardonnay is also a permitted grape (the Jura is only an hour's drive from Burgundy after all) but this is where the opinions diverge.

Chardonnay was introduced to the Jura some time around the 15th or 16th Century from cuttings taken from nearby Burgundy.

In Burgundy the best Chardonnay grows in limestone. However, when the Chardonnay was planted in the Jura the soil was quite different being marl of various colours such as blue, white, black and yellow.

When vines are exposed to different soils and climates it is inevitable that changes will occur and this is what happened to Chardonnay with some of the vines morphing into a new variety which some of the locals call Melon à Queue Rouge which we have discussed in Newsletter 96, February 2021, including why it was given that name.

So those are the official grape varieties and one variation, however some vineyards have many more grape varieties that were planted a long time ago and one of these is Enfariné.

We have found references to this grape variety in some of the old books addressing viticulture in France. For example, it is mentioned in a book dedicated to vines and grapes called *Ampélographie* published many times in the 19th Century. Our version is the sixth edition which was published in 1876.

On page 275 it is mentioned as growing near Arbois, Salins and Poligny, three towns which are still key centres of wine production in the Jura.

In another book by Viala and Vermorel also called *Ampélographie Tome II* published in 1901 we found a comment about Enfariné which states:

The grape varieties with which the Trousseau behaves best and gives the best products are Enfariné and Argent;

They also state (on page 390) that Enfariné is descended from Gouais which makes it part of the Pinot and Chardonnay families.

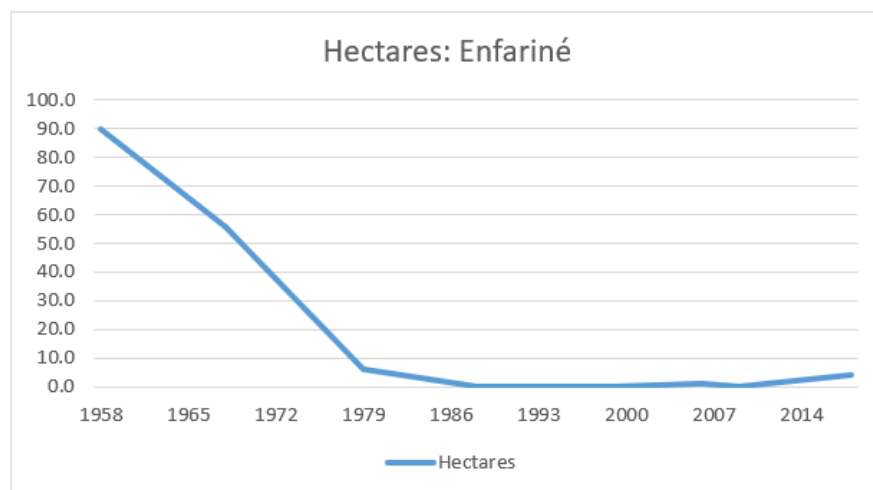
They also reference a book published in 1774 by F. F. Chevalier who says that Enfariné was mentioned in an edict of the Parliament of Besançon as a “bad plant to uproot” which we interpret as being praise for the plant.

Here is their original drawing of the Enfariné vine and grape bunches which is from the 1901 edition of their book.



We have included a photo further down in this article which shows remarkable similarities.

Here is a graph of the demise of the area given over to Enfariné in France, but only found now in tiny quantities in the Jura and Doubs in Eastern France.



Notice that the area planted to Enfariné has decreased dramatically year by year ever since 1958. However, the slight rise from 2014 onwards is due to two producers in particular Étienne Thiebaud from Domaine des Cavarodes and Jean-François Ganevat from Domaine Ganevat replanting this variety in special conservation vineyards so that they can take advantage of the high acid content of this rare grape variety.

The photo below is of the leaf of Enfariné on a typical grape vine.



The above photo shows the structure of the Enfariné leaves with their deep sinuses and serrated edges. Notice that there are three clearly defined lobes and sometimes five depending on the soil and the climate where they grow.

In the photo below you can see how the Enfariné grapes are tightly bunched causing problems for this variety as it is easy for diseases such as powdery mildew to get in between the grapes and it is not easy to eradicate these intrusions. Grape bunches that are much looser can be cleared of these diseases simply by the wind blowing through them.



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.