

WINE Talk: March 2024

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 121

Welcome to newsletter 121, the third 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 **7** 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 a new vintage of the ever popular Magic of Ju-Ju from the Mosse family as well as some new vintages from Michel Gahier in the Jura;
- Some information about wines which are arriving soon – some to advertise and some of which will only be sold on allocation;
- A story about how we allocate wine;
- We have been reading about the effects of climate change on agriculture in general and grapevines in particular and have summarised these effects in a story, outlining each of the main problems;
- An explanation of the back label of a Piollot Champagne;
- A story about the Pinot Noir grape variety which is one of the most widely planted grape varieties in Burgundy and many other places in the world including Tasmania, where we are based.

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.

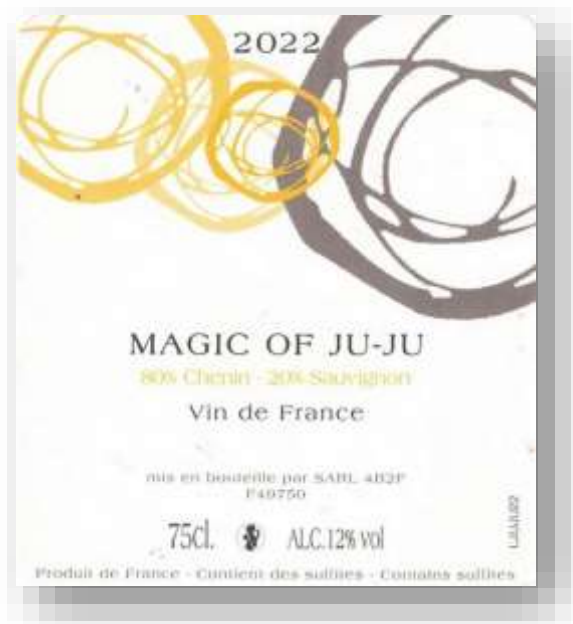
New Arrivals

Mosse Magic of Juju 2022

It is only a few months since we released the Mosse family's 2021 Magic of Juju, thanks to the dreaded oiliness which meant we had to keep it for a long time before it was ready. As anyone who tasted it once it finally started to behave knows it was a delicious wine, a blend of Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc, which in our view was so much greater than the sum of its parts, with the profiles of the two grape varieties fitting together like adjacent parts of a jigsaw puzzle.

Thankfully the 2022 vintage, which arrived towards the end of last year, had none of those issues. It was ready to drink when it arrived but has had the benefit of a rest for a few months while we sold the 2021 vintage which we had just released.

2021 is sold out, so 2022 is ready!



Like the 2021 vintage, it is a blend of Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc but the proportions are slightly different. This is 80% Chenin Blanc and 20% Sauvignon Blanc (2021 was 60/40).

The grapes, grown on schist, are from vines that are farmed organically. Both varieties were vinified separately. Each as slowly pressed in a pneumatic press. The Chenin Blanc was aged for 6 months in barrel on its lees (the typical treatment for Chenin Blanc by this estate) and the Sauvignon Blanc was aged in stainless steel vats. It was assembled for a few weeks prior to bottling in March 2023. It was not filtered but does have a minimal addition of sulphites (total sulphur is 15 mg/litre).

It's a light, fresh wine and only 12% alcohol. It drinks completely dry with similar herbal notes to those we found in the 2021 vintage, and a little tense, bitterness.

Note that Magic of Juju is a *négoce cuvée*, which means the grapes are not from the Mosse estate. It is also why the Mosse name does not appear on the label. The only hint is the distinctive design, which, with minor colour variations, is almost identical for all the wines, both estate and *négoce*. The name SARL 4B2F is the name of the *négoce* business. (It is an abbreviation for 4 Belgians and 2 French in case you were wondering!).

It is \$54 a bottle but we have packs available this month, unusually just made up of this wine, with a 15% discount.

Michel Gahier

We have also released, only on allocation, some new wines from Jura vigneron Michel Gahier.

Michel lives in Montigny-lès-Arsures which is the self-claimed “capitale du trousseau” and all of his red wines are made from Trousseau. This sign in the middle of the small village makes it clear which are the most important grapes to be found here:



Michel’s whites are a mix of Chardonnay and Melon Le Rouge Queue, a variant of Chardonnay found in the Jura which Michel says is more likely to form a yeast veil than vines which a more classic Chardonnay. (The Melon Le Rouge Queue has a quite distinctive stalk when it ripens, hence the name – le rouge queue literally translates as “the red tail”.)

Michel releases his red wines when they are young, so all the red wines in our current release are from the 2022 vintage. It’s a vintage about which Michel was very buoyant when we last saw him just after its harvest.

Depending on the *cuvée* the white wines are aged for several years with the most extended aging being for a *cuvée* called La Fauquette, made with Melon-le-Queue-Rouge, which is not topped up and, of course his Vin Jaune. He harvested nothing in 2021 so there is a noticeable

gap in the vintages. It has meant though that the 2022 wines we have now received a slightly longer aging than usual because there was no rush to empty the foudres for the early-release wines to make room for the 2021 harvest.

The Les Follasses is unusual. Normally, as the white he releases earliest, this would have also been 2022, but instead he sent us the 2020 vintage of Les Follasses B 2020. Michel only makes a distinction between A and B in years when he has a very good vintage. We have had it in 2011 and 2015. The vines are side by side but are planted with different expositions (at right angles to one another) and the B side's soil is slightly different. The soil for A is white marl but the soil for B is more complex, a mix of white and red marl. The latter has more iron. You may have tried the Les Follasses 2020 we had last year, which was from the section Michel calls Les Follasses A.

We are still in the process of sending out offers so if you requested some wines and haven't heard from us an email with the offer of a few bottles won't be far away. We've also put some Gahier wines in Pack 1 and Pack 2 to make sure that at least a few people who didn't request an allocation will still be able to try the wines. They will also be starting to appear in the wine shops which buy from us. No-one will have much of an allocation so we'd recommend getting in early if you would like to secure some wines that way.

What's Coming

There is not a lot of new news here as we continue to see the effects of shipping delays as a result of the shelling in the Suez Canal.

However, in April we will definitely be advertising new **Derain and Sextant** wines from Julian Altaber and Carole Schwab, including the 2022 vintages of Sextant Bourgogne Blanc, Rouge and Aligoté as well as the classic Derain white cuvées such as la Combe, Landré and the Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly. There will be some juicy reds too including Sextant Métisse and Derain 2023 Allez Goutons Rouge, our first wine from the 2023 vintage.

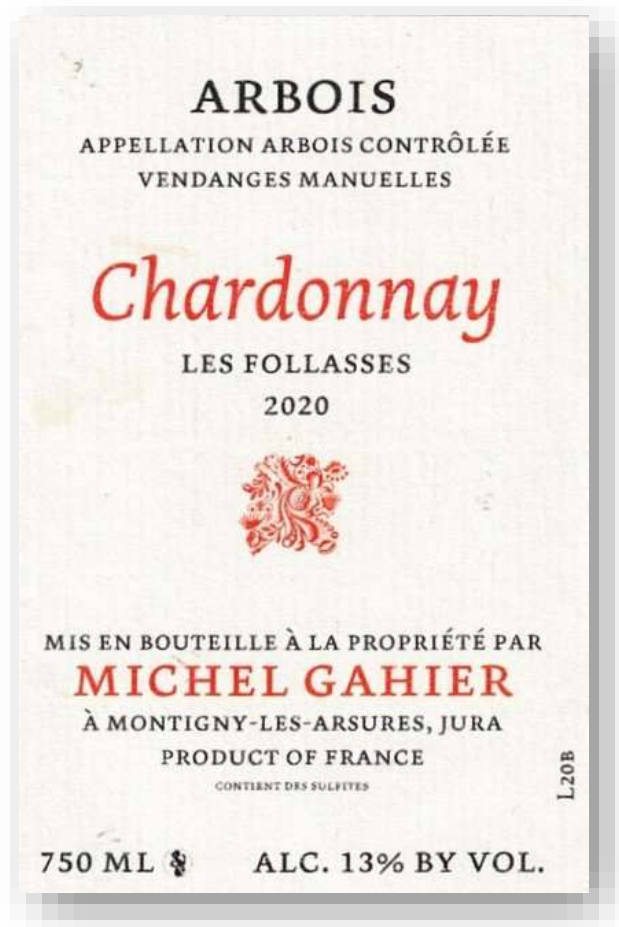
There's also a little more of the 2022 Skin Bull, a pet-nat made from macerated Aligoté. Not long after that we will advertise some **Fanny Sabre** wines. It's mainly 2022 vintages of Bourgogne Aligoté, Blanc and Rouge as well with limited quantities of some of her rarer red and white cuvées. Please let us know if you would like advance information about the Derain, Sextant or Sabre wines.

Further down the track than we imagined (late May or early June) we'll be receiving **Dominique Belluard's 2019 Vin de Savoie Ayze Mont Blanc Brut Nature**, a Méthode Traditionnelle with no dosage made with Gringet that we're confident will be extraordinary. The shipping has unfortunately been delayed. We promise it will be worth waiting for though!

We'll also very soon be allocating some of the Robinot family's wines including many classic cuvées and some more Opera Blanc 2021, a négoce Chenin Blanc we received last year. This will almost certainly happen before the next newsletter so it's your last chance to let us know if you would like an allocation. We will also have a few bottles in next month's packs. This shipment includes a small quantity of some much older Chenin Blancs that we won't be including in any offers as a matter of course. The pricing, not confirmed yet, is likely to be in the order of \$600 and more a bottle. If that doesn't put you off let us know and we will hopefully be able to offer you something. In another story in this issue we wrote about how we allocate wine and mentioned that we sometimes are only dealing with a dozen bottles of a particularly cuvée. In the case of these wines it's much less than 12 bottles per wine.

Pack 1: Mainly New Gahier Arrivals (Approx 11% Discount)

Note: 2 Packs Only!



We are very happy to be able to present this pack which contains 4 wines from Michel Gahier from the Jura and two special cuvées from the Garrelière family.

From Gahier, the Lou Blanc is a young, fresh Chardonnay while the Les Follasses comes from one of his most interesting vineyards which you can read about in the description of the new wines from Gahier above.

Les Crêts is a more complex white wine that has had some time to age. The Vigne de Louis is a Trousseau from the home of this grape which is the village of Montigny-les-Assures where Michel lives and makes his wines.

The Cendrillon is made from grapes picked from 40+ year old vines from a 2.5 hectare parcel of sandy soil on clay and silex. It is directly pressed slowly over about 3 hours. One third is fermented and aged in barrel and the rest in tank. Both components are aged for about 8 months before being combined.

The Cinabre is a red wine made from 40+ year old vines from a parcel of clay and silex on limestone. Initial alcoholic fermentation is in concrete tanks with gentle extraction. After pressing it is aged in 500 litre barrels and undergoes malolactic fermentation. After more than a year it is consolidated into a tank for 2 months before bottling. No filtration.

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- Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Lou Blanc 2022
- Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Le Vigne de Louis 2022
- Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Crêts 2020
- Michel Gahier Arbois Chardonnay Les Follasses B 2020
- Domaine de la Garrelière IGP Val de Loire Cendrillon 2022
- Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Cinabre 2018

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$440.00 but the pack price is only \$390.00. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 2: Mixed Red Wines Including Some Gahier (approx 13% discount)

Note: 1 Pack Only



This is quite a diverse pack with some highly sought-after wines. It is a pity that we can only offer 1 pack but that is all we have available.

There are two Trousseau wines from Gahier (where he lives in Montigny-les-Assures is the spiritual home of the Trousseau¹ grape variety). These are completely delicious wines that can be enjoyed now or kept for some time.

We then have one of the highly regarded Beaujolais wines from Michel Guignier – a wine that we think shows the Gamay grape variety in its best light. Then we zip down to the Languedoc for one of Axel Prüfer's wines – a very serious cuvée made from Grenache. There is also a serious wine from Garrelière made from Cabernet Franc which is quite delicious.

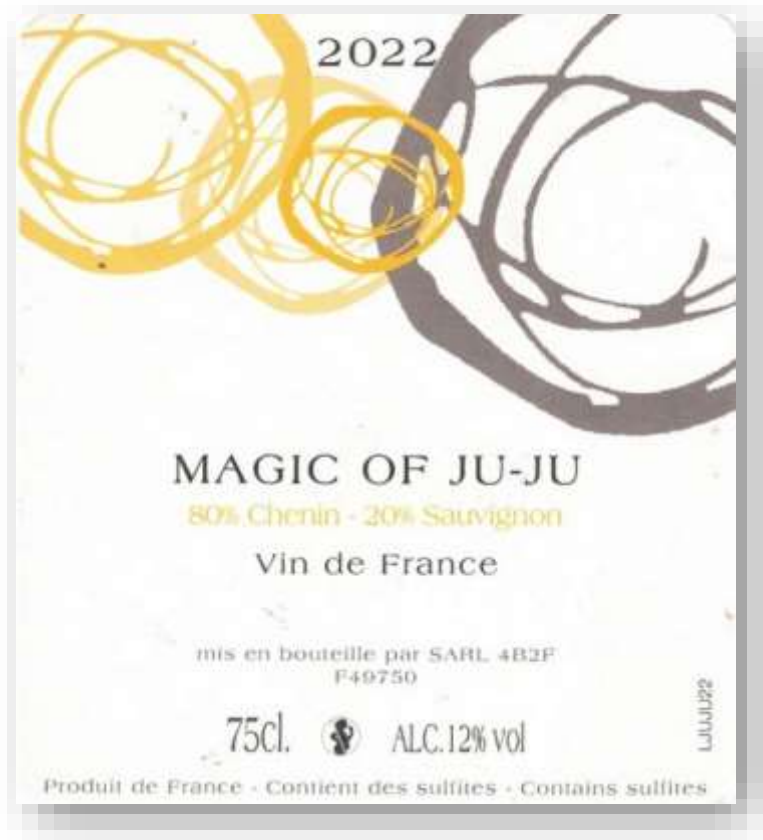
Finally, we head back to the Jura for a wine Alice made there, from biodynamic grapes she picked from Claude Ughetto's vines in Provence.

- Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Le Clousot 2022
- Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau Le Vigne de Louis 2022
- Michel Guignier La Bonne Pioche 2020
- Le Temps des Cerises Les Lendemains Qui Chantent 2021
- Domaine de la Garrelière Le Rouge des Cornus 2021
- l'Octavin Ganache 2022

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$416.00 but the pack price is only \$361.70. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

¹ Sometimes grown in Australia and called *Bastardo*.

Pack 3: Magic of Ju-ju 2022 (15% discount)



This is a rare offering of just one cuvée, namely the very popular Magic of Ju-ju which is named after a jazz piece that is loved by René Mosse, the father of Joseph and Sylvestre. The album was released in the 1968 and is a fine example of “free jazz” which composer Archie Shepp was a leading exponent of at the time.

There are six bottles of this one cuvée. There is a detailed description of how it was made in the New Arrivals section.

- Magic of Ju-Ju 2022 **(6 bottles)**

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$324.00 but the pack price is only \$275.40. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 4: Summer's Last Hurrah Shades of Pink Pack (Approx 16% Discount)

Note: 1 Pack Only



We had a wonderful response to our February newsletter and sold every pack except for a second Summer's Last Hurrah Shades of Pink Pack. There's only one available now but we thought it was such a delicious pack we would offer it again. (It was pack 6 in the February newsletter.)

All these wines are shades of pink – variously classifiable as rosés, light reds or even 'very light reds'. The Guignier rosé is discounted by 20% because the labels are stained as a result of another bottle in a box they were in being broken. The others are our standard 15% pack discount.

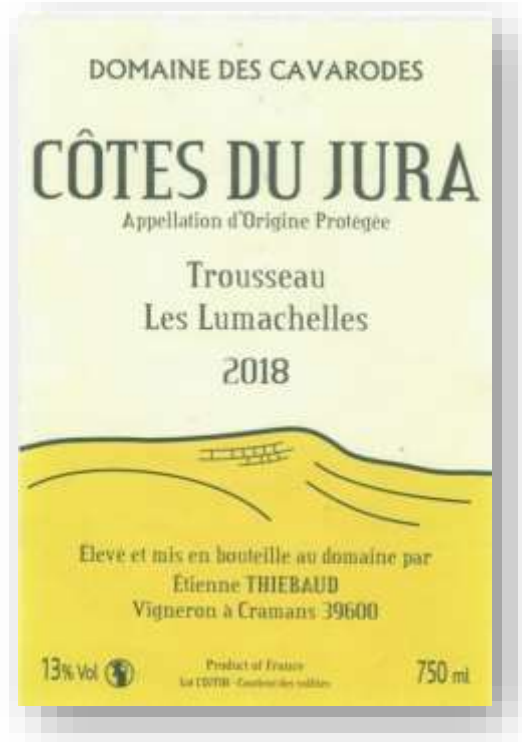
They are all quite different. The l'Octavin Grenabar, made from Vermentino and Carignan, is quite ethereal – a wine it feels you should drink with tiny, mythical creatures at the bottom of a flower-filled verdant garden. Bisou, from the Mosse family, is a highly gulpable light red made with classic Loire Valley fun red grapes, so we thought two bottles would be helpful and the Noah, a blend of Grenache and Syrah, which was aged in foudre for a year, is very gastronomic. It's officially a rosé, lifted by its acidity, but with enough depth from the combination of the grapes and the vinification to make it well-suited to eat with some serious food. It would be really good with any sort of spicy pork-based dish.

- Michel Guignier Mystère de Rosée 2021
- Mosse Bisou 2022 **(2 bottles)**
- l'Octavin Grenabar 2021
- Milan Noah Rosé 2020 **(2 bottles)**

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$362.00 but the pack price is only \$304.90. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

**Pack 5: Partly Lucky Dip, Partly Jura Treats and More Pack
(Approx 16% Discount)**

Note: 2 Packs Only



We very unexpectedly found a few bottles of the 2004 vintage of Philippe Gimel's Saint Jean du Barroux Oligocène. These wines were from our second ever shipment which we received early in 2009. They were returned by a courier after another bottle in the box broke (nothing's changed!) and we have had them ever since. We've discounted them by 25% because they have almost certainly passed their prime drinking window but, for lovers of southern Rhone wines, drinking these is an unusual opportunity and also could be fascinating and rewarding. Before starting his own estate Philippe worked for Château de Beaucastel and Domaine de La Janasse and those influences are in his brooding red wines. He works organically in the Ventoux, with predominantly old vines. His wines were fermented naturally but will have had sulphites added. This one is predominantly Grenache (75%) and the rest is a mix of Syrah, Carignan, and Cinsault. The aging was in old barrels. Remembering how powerful it was when we received it there is a good chance that these wines are still standing up well.

We have also slightly diminished the size of our personal Jura collection by including a bottle of 2018 Domaine des Cavarodes Lumachelles Trousseau and a 2018 Domaine de la Loue Arbois-Pupillin Savagnin in this pack. These should both still be drinking well.

The other two bottles are also wines we thought we had long sold out of but hadn't – a rosé Champagne from Roland Piillot, made from 100% Pinot Noir, and one of Alice Bouvot's négoce wines, a white wine made from Molette, which was grown in the Bugey region of France (adjacent to the Savoie).

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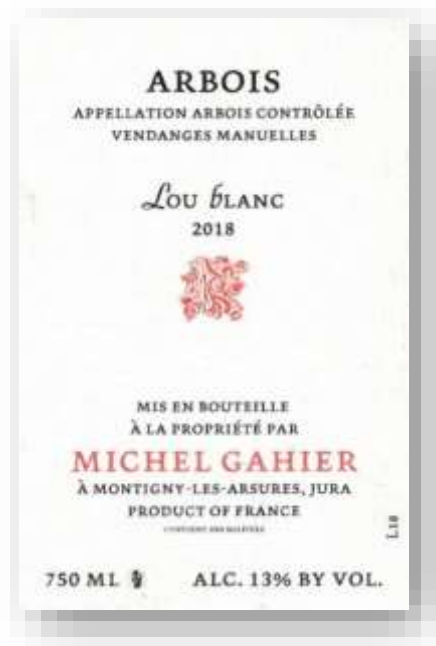
I think we can say that this collection is truly unique! With the large discount for the Saint Jean de Barroux bottles, recognising there is a risk they may have passed their best, and our normal 10% discount for the two Jura wines, the pack has averaged out at a 16% discount.

- Saint Jean du Barroux Oligocène 2004 **(2 bottles)**
- Piollot Père et Fils Champagne Les Protelles 2019 (rosé)
- Domaine de la Loue Arbois-Pupillin Savagnin 2018
- Domaine des Cavarodes AOP Côtes du Jura Trousseau Lumachelles 2018
- l'Octavin Clé à Molette 2020

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$390.00 but the pack price is only \$326.65. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 6: Mainly Random Discoveries Pack (Approximately 15% discount)

Note: 1 Pack Only



Most of the wines in this very mixed pack have come as a result of a forage in our warehouse. But it also includes the last bottle of Mosse Chenin 2020 and almost the last available bottle of Michel Guignier’s beguiling Beaujolais La Petite Oseille 2020. (As with all Michel’s wines now, though, it is not appellationed, but it is from a parcel Michel has in Moulin à Vent).

The bottles from our cellar include Michel Gahier’s first vintage of Lou Blanc (2018), from a family plot he has recently begun to vinify. The soil is grey marl and the vines selection massale from very old Jura Chardonnay. There’s a bottle of the Saint Jean du Barroux wine we discovered (see description in pack 5) substantially discounted because it may have passed its best drinking window and two macerated wines – l’Octavin Roi de Cepage 2018, which is Alsace Riesling, and Opi d’Aqui Orangeade 2020, which is a blend of Marsanne and Grenache Blanc from the Languedoc.

- Saint Jean du Barroux Oligocène 2004
- l’Octavin Le Roi des Cepages 2018
- Opi d’Aqui L’Orangeade 2020
- Michel Gahier Arbois Lou Blanc 2018
- Mosse Chenin 2020
- Michel Guignier La Petite Oseille 2020

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$363.00 but the pack price is only \$307.60. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

Pack 7: Serious Sale Pack (20% discount)



Some of our favourite current wines are in this sale pack, including the 2022 Mosse Bisou which we drank again last week on a very enjoyable early-evening boating trip on the Huon River, just south of Hobart. It was tasting so good we decided to put it in a pack that might encourage more people to enjoy it right now.

It's quite a mix in every way. There are wines from Alsace, the Loire Valley, Burgundy and the Languedoc. Bisou itself, which is a lightish red, is a mix of five grapes - Grolleau Noir, Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Côt, and Chenin Blanc. The Geschickt Vin d'Alsace Pino 2018 is a white blend of four different types of pinots (Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Auxerrois, all Pinot Noir, with the red grapes all direct pressed).

The others are all single variety wines but quite a mix of styles. There is one other red (Le Bouc à Trois Pattes Un Coup de Kug is a Languedoc Syrah), one sparkling (Julien Altaber's Foufou'nette 2022 from Burgundy is Aligoté but it has been infused with apricots), one macerated wine (Dreyer's Origin Pinot Gris from Alsace) and the last white is a complex, mineral Sauvignon Blanc from the Loire (Domaine de la Garrelière Cendrillon 2022).

- Domaine de la Garrelière Cendrillon 2022
- Jean-Marc Dreyer Vin d'Alsace Pinot Gris Origin 2021
- Le Bouc à Trois Pattes Un Coup de Kuq 2021
- Mosse Bisou 2022
- Sextant - Julien Altaber Foufou'nette 2022
- Geschickt Vin d'Alsace Pino 2018

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$337.00 but the pack price is only \$269.60. Check with us for the subsidised summer freight charge to your location.

How we allocate wine



The Robinot caves dug into limestone

Many of the families we buy wine from work on small estates (often 7 hectares or less and in one case less than 1 hectare). And just about every French winemaking family has suffered with severely diminished yields in at least some of the last few years, caused mostly by late frosts where up to 90% of a potential harvest can be lost (hopefully 2024 isn't one of those years – the next 6-8 weeks is the critical time!). It means our allocations are often very small.

With a few of the people we work with we choose to allocate their wines rather than advertise them. We do this for most of the Jura producers, the Robinot family, Mataburro and de Moor.

We don't limit who we allocate to but ask people to let us know in advance if they are interested in an allocation from any forthcoming release. We advise what's coming soon in the newsletter and that's the time to ask for an allocation.

With a few producers the allocations are so tight we may not promote them and rely on you to ask if you want them (we don't tell – you have to ask). And, the harder it is going to be to come up with an allocation plan, the fewer times we are likely to mention the wine is coming so it may be only mentioned in one newsletter. (For that reason if you are interested in any of the allocation-only wines we always recommend you at least glance at the 'What's coming' section of the newsletter even if you don't have time to read anything else.)

We have always been able to offer anyone who asks for an allocation from an estate at that stage at least one or two bottles and sometimes more if it's a year where we have a good quantity of wine. (That may not be the case forever but so far we have never said no.)

When we make you an offer we hold the wines until we hear back from you or, if we don't hear back within a few days we may give you a deadline, after which we cancel the tentative reservation.

But generally, the wines are reserved for you until you tell us if you want any or not. This gives you time to decide rather than the wines just going to the people who can be quick off the mark, as is the case with the packs we advertise. Our offers are never for a complete package – you can pick and choose what you would like from what we were able to offer you. The converse of that is that, once you have an offer, we really appreciate it if you can let us know as soon as it is convenient whether you would like the wines or not. It's as helpful to know what you don't want as it is to know what you do.

Our aim, though, for both our retail and wholesale customers is to try to come up with offers which are largely likely to be taken. The closer we get to what you want the better it is for you and us as it saves us having to do a second round of asking someone else if they would like the wines you have rejected. Because of that you are welcome to make requests, express preferences, and tell us up to how many bottles you would like. We will never make any promises but we will take anything you tell us into account. If several dozen people ask for a wine which we only have 12 bottles of then we obviously can't please everyone. (With the sorts of wines we are dealing with it's quite common for us only to have 12, 24 or 36 bottles to share amongst all of our customers.) And unfortunately it's no good making special requests once you see the wines appear on Instagram. By that stage we will have largely finished the allocations.

To help ensure that you don't miss out on wines you would really like the most important thing is that you don't rely on the fact you've had a wine before as a guarantee you will be offered it again. If you have been taking the same wine every year for many years we will probably remember to offer you some just in case you missed the information in the newsletter saying it was coming, especially if you are a regular customer who we are communicating with often because we'll know for certain you are still interested in buying wine from us. But, as a general rule, we work from a list of people who have specifically requested an allocation from the shipment. That way there's a good chance we will be offering it to people who really want it.

We also thought it would be helpful to share how we make the decisions of what and how many wines to offer each customer. Our allocation decisions are generally based on the length of your relationship with us and breadth of purchases across the range of our portfolio. Someone who only buys one allocation-only wine a year will have a smaller offer of those wines than someone who buys at least some of the wines we advertise as well and some of most of the allocation-only wines. (For any wholesale customers who buy on credit timeliness of payments also plays a part in the size of allocations!)

Finally, there are also a small number of large wholesale customers, without whom we wouldn't have a business, who will always receive an offer whether they have specifically asked for a particular shipment or not. Some of these are wineshops our retail customers buy from as well. We can't emphasise enough the value of cultivating a good relationship with these shops, especially if they are local to you so it's easy to drop in, buy a bottle of something they have on the shelves, and have a chat about what's coming soon. They will know what they are receiving and some may sell our rarer wines before they hit the shelves to people who have asked.

I think we all want to make sure the wines end up in the hands of the people who love to drink them, but it can be a challenge all round! Keeping lines of communication open is a very important part of making sure that happens.

More effects of Climate Change

As we come across problems caused by climate change in the scientific literature, we make a note of those which are likely to cause problems for grape vines. Here are some of the problems being caused.

Increased Frequency of Extreme Weather Events

More frequent and intense extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, hurricanes, and storms can damage or destroy plant habitats.

In a paper by Venios and others they examine previous papers by others looking at the effect of temperature on the activity of important molecules during the photosynthesis process and found that an important enzyme called *Rubisco activase* loses its ability to carry out required tasks as the temperature increases thus reducing the efficiency of photosynthesis – one of the most important tasks for the plant kingdom to perform.

A paper by Jensen (2000) also confirms this effect on photosynthesis including the effect of increases in Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere as a result of increased temperatures.

Both of these effects are very important but are not easy to recognise in vineyards even though there are considerable effects on growth of the grapes as a result.

Other papers point to the following effects in the vineyards as temperatures and the associated rise in carbon dioxide lead to more dramatic changes such as:

- Defoliation of vines during dramatic storms that have become more frequent;
- Sunburn of grapes on very hot days;
- Poor fruit set if heat events occurred during the flowering period leading to lower yields;
- Some research has shown that damaged grape bunches left on vines can lead to poor bud burst and spring growth in the following season;
- Other research has found that some grape varieties (especially the widely planted *Vitis Vinifera* species popular in Europe) may need to be irrigated (which would require changes in the law in Europe and particularly France) for the vines to survive prolonged periods on little or no rainfall (Keller, 2023). This paper also has a very interesting figure (Figure 5 in the paper) showing the variation among 31 different grape varieties of the various stages of veraison (ripening) over the period 2015 to 2022.

Scientific paper: Xenophon Venios et al. (2020) Grapevine Responses to Heat Stress and Global Warming. *Plants* (Basel). 2020 Dec; 9(12): 1754.

Richard Jensen (2000) Activation of Rubisco regulates photosynthesis at high temperature and CO₂. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 2000 Nov 21; 97(24): 12937–12938.

Keller, Markus (2023) Climate Change Impacts on Vineyards in Warm and Dry Areas: Challenges and Opportunities. *Am J Enol Vitic*. 2023 74:0740033.

Altered Soil Moisture Levels

Changes in rainfall patterns alter soil moisture levels, affecting the ability of the grapevines to absorb nutrients and affect the ability of the grapevine's roots to grow deeper into the soil.

Once again, the effect that lower moisture levels have on the grapevines is first noticed in the photosynthesis process that we have written about in previous newsletters. The effect on photosynthesis includes the following outcomes for the vines:

- Reduced vegetative growth thus less shading for the grapes in hot weather;
- Reduced yield due to fewer bunches forming;
- Lack of internal grape composition leading to lower yields.

The paper concentrates on the supply of water and nutrients (mainly nitrogen) to the leaves and fruit on the grapevines. It also discusses soil temperature which, in the past, has not been much of an issue because the soil in Europe rarely reached temperatures where problems occur.

Pereyra, Gustavo (2023) How soil and climate variability within a vineyard can affect the heterogeneity of grapevine vigour and production. Vol. 57 No. 3 (2023): OENO One.

Pest and Disease Spread

Higher temperatures can allow the spread of pests and diseases that may harm plants, disrupt ecosystems and lower grapevine productivity. This correlates with the reason some winemakers plant their vines in mountainous areas where they can be guaranteed that it will snow in winter and that the snow will stay on the ground for a significant time.

This is why Frank Cornelissen, for example, chose a place to make wine (high grounds in Sicily) where it regularly snows in winter thus killing the bugs and other infestations.

In a long and detailed paper reporting on the effect of climate change on insect pests in agriculture, Skendžić and others report on how temperature affects pests and their distribution. They present a very compelling diagram which shows that increased temperatures affect the following:

- Increased number of generations alive at the same time;
- Expansion of the geographical range of insects;
- Increase in the type of diseases being transmitted by insects;
- Increase in over wintering survival;
- Desynchronization of insects and their natural enemies;
- Loss of synchrony with the host plant.

The only positive to come out of their research was that around one third of the predatory species that affect agricultural plants will not be able to survive the increase in temperatures or the increase in carbon dioxide, although those that are not affected will survive longer than currently the case and will have an effect over a wider area for a longer period.

Sandra Skendžić et al (2021) The Impact of Climate Change on Agricultural Insect Pests. *Insects*. 2021 May; 12(5): 440.

Shifts in pollination and bud burst timing

Changes in seasonal timing due to climate change can disrupt the synchronization between plants and their pollinators, affecting reproductive success. Another major issue is with increasing temperatures budding starts earlier but frost can hang around just as long as before. So, in the northern hemisphere we are noticing buds of the vines popping out in March and April but severe frosts are still happening in May, thus damaging the vines unless extraordinary measures are implemented such as setting hay bales alight in the vineyards or lighting very large candles or, in the extreme, hiring helicopters to hover over the vines.

One important factor that is stressed by many of the papers we consulted is that the period between bud burst and flowering is very temperature sensitive. As mentioned above, once the flowers come out, the frosts can easily damage the flowers thus killing the incipient parts of the vine that are waiting to be pollinated and hence stopping the process of grape growth.

There is a very detailed pictorial and text description of the minutiae of the process from budburst onwards on the AWRI (Australian Wine Research Institute) website at the following link:

<https://www.awri.com.au/wp-content/uploads/grapegrowth.pdf>

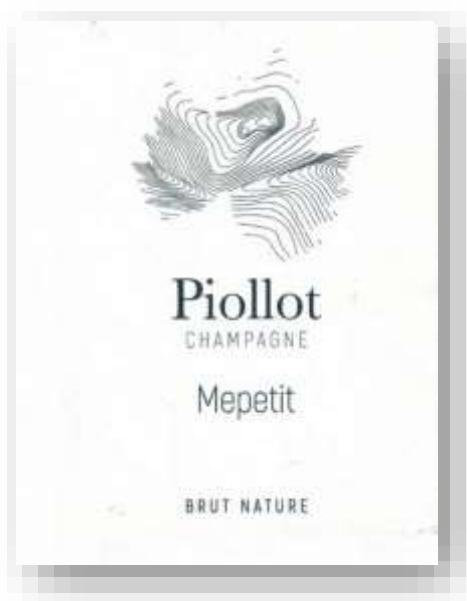
Disruption of Symbiotic Relationships

Climate change can disrupt symbiotic relationships between plants and beneficial organisms such as mycorrhizal fungi, affecting nutrient cycling and plant health.

We have already discussed how climate change has meant that temperatures can be much higher in some areas leading to the soils become warmer than before. We have written a number of stories over the past fifteen years of this newsletter about the importance of mycorrhizal fungi for the health of grapevines as they are responsible for ensuring that key nutrients such as nitrogen are efficiently transmitted into the vines.

We will leave a deeper explanation of this area as it is quite complex. It not only involves bees removing the calyptra from grapevine flowers, but also encouraging sympathetic plants in the vineyard to assist with soil quality and many other aspects of looking after the vines following budburst.

Champagne Grape Varieties Revisited



This is just a short piece to remind you that we have a treasure trove of information about grape varieties on this site, developed from our stories in our Wine talk newsletters over the past approximately 15 years. The story below this one is also about a Piollot Champagne!

For example, if you want to explore the permitted grape varieties used for making Champagne then each of them has been described in detail in the newsletter as shown in the table below.

Name	Newsletter	Alternate name	Area for this variety
Arbane	October 2021	Arbanne	0.1%
Chardonnay	September 2012		31%
Petit Meslier	April 2015	Meslier Doré	0.1%
Pinot Blanc	June 2022		0.1%
Pinot Gris	January 2017	Fromenteau	0.1%
Pinot Meunier	September 2021	Meunier	31%
Pinot Noir	December 2009 and March 2024		37.55%
Voltis	January 2024		0.05%

Voltis, as described in the January 2024 newsletter has only been approved as a trial for five years in the Champagne region as an attempt to provide a suitable variety to mitigate some of the serious issues being faced as a result of climate change.

The Pinot Noir entry in the December 2009 issue of the newsletter is not as extensive as more recent descriptions have been, so we will do a more rigorous description of this important variety in the next few months.

The Champagne label shown above from Roland Piollot is from a Mepetit cuvée which is made from 100% Pinot Meunier.

Piollot Cuvée de Réserve Champagne – More Information



In our February newsletter we wrote about some of the l’Octavin wines via pictures of their back label. Due to some favourable comments about this approach we decided to write about our Champagne supplier via their back label for their introductory Cuvée de Réserve Champagne which is a delicious drink made from Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

We have only recently received this cuvée in their beautiful, new boxes of 6.

The first line on the back label seen above is the name of Roland Piollot’s operation – Champagne Piollot. His wife Dominique Moreau, makes her wines under the name Champagne Marie-Courtin. They make their wines together and in the same facility.

The name we mention above is the name used to identify the wines. The second line on the label refers to the “company” that makes the wine namely SCEV du Tremble which is located in the village of Polisot, all part of the property where they live. They have created this entity SCEV du Tremble to be able to sell both the Piollot and Marie-Courtin wines via a single entity.

The name of this particular wine is “Cuvée de Réserve”.

This cuvée is classified as a Brut Champagne meaning that it has between 0 and 12 grams of residual sugar per litre, meaning that it will taste quite dry but with a hint of sweetness.

The section between the two lines states that the wine was “assembled” from Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grown on their estate, which were chosen using the “selection massale” technique which involves selecting the cuttings from the “best” vines on the estate.

The soil “sol” is Kimméridgian limestone which is common throughout the Champagne region and Chablis.

The words under the line point out that their practices are certified as **biodynamic** by Demeter and **organic** by CertipaQ whose registered identifier is FR-BIO-09.

The wine is a Product of France and Contains Sulphites.

WINE Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

The number beginning with RM (RM-25532-01) is a unique registration code. The first two characters tell us a lot. They indicate the category of Champagne maker. There are many such two-character categories. RM, which stands for Récoltant-Manipulant, is the category reserved for those who exclusively make Champagne from their own grapes and are responsible for selling their own wines. In recent years the term “grower Champagne” has been used for wines made by récoltant-manipulants. Roland’s registration number, which is allocated by the Comité Champagne, is RM-25532-01. For Marie-Courtin the registration number is RM-25532-04. 25532 is the primary number for the family company SCEV du Tremble and ‘01’ and ‘04’ are sub-sections. When we next visit Dominique and Roland we’ll try to remember to ask why they use 01 and 04 and what happened to 02 and 03!

The bottles also have a lot number but the lot number is not on the label. The lot number is etched near the bottom of the bottle (and very difficult to find!). Its meaning is another story!

Grape variety - Pinot Noir

There is no agreed background to how Pinot Noir made its way to France. Grape pips have been found in eastern France and Switzerland dating back some 10,000 years, but Pinot Noir is likely to have arrived on the scene much, much later.

Pinot Noir is believed to have descended from the wild grape variety *Vitis vinifera sylvestris*, which is native to the Burgundy region of France and may have been in that region for up to a thousand years.

The Burgundy region was initially turned over to grape production because of the plethora of monasteries there, however the land they occupied was taken over during the French Revolution and divided among new owners, the descendants of which still own much of the land that was distributed at the time.

Pinot Noir is one of the world's most important wine grapes. The small, tight bunches of blue-black grapes thrive on the slopes around the town of Beaune in eastern France where they are the main source of the red wines of Burgundy and also can be used as a component of wines such as Crémant de Bourgogne and Bourgogne Passetoutgrain (where it must comprise at least 30% of the blend).

We mention Burgundy first because much of the area of Burgundy is devoted to at least some wine made from Pinot Noir. One of the regions that produces the most acclaimed Pinot Noir-based wines is the Côte de Nuit which includes the following highly regarded Pinot Noir appellations:

- Gevrey-Chambertin
- Chambolle-Musigny
- Vosne-Romanée
- Nuits-Saint-Georges

A bit further south there are two villages that also are highly regarded for their Pinot Noir wines. These are:

- Pommard
- Volnay

Each appellation can have its own rules. In Chambolle-Musigny, where a lighter style of red wine based on Pinot Noir is common, Pinot Noir must comprise at least 85% of the wine (calculated based on the area planted in each vineyard) and the remaining area not planted to Pinot Noir can be planted with Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc and/or Pinot Gris.

But it is not just in Burgundy that this variety is found. It is also permitted by appellations in Alsace, the Jura, at both ends of the Loire Valley and, of course, in one of the most widely recognised appellations, Champagne.

It is interesting to note some of the old writings about Pinot Noir where the need for the ideal soil had already been determined. For example, in the monumental works of Viala and Vermorel consisting of 7 massive tomes covering most of the grape types that were known at the time,

including beautiful drawings of each of the vine types, the soil types for each were also discussed and the associated regions.



For example, in talking about the best places for Pinot Noir, the following discussion of the soil types occurs in Volume 7²:

Le Pinot donne, dans les calcaires du Crétacé ou dans ceux du Jurassique, les grands vins de Champagne et de Bourgogne; dans les sables granitiques ou dans les argiles du Lias et du Trias, les produits du Pinot sont bien différents et ont moins de qualité.

This roughly translates to:

Pinot gives, in Cretaceous limestones or in those of the Jurassic, the great wines of Champagne and Burgundy; in granite sands or in the Liassic and Triassic clays, the Pinot products are very different and have less quality.

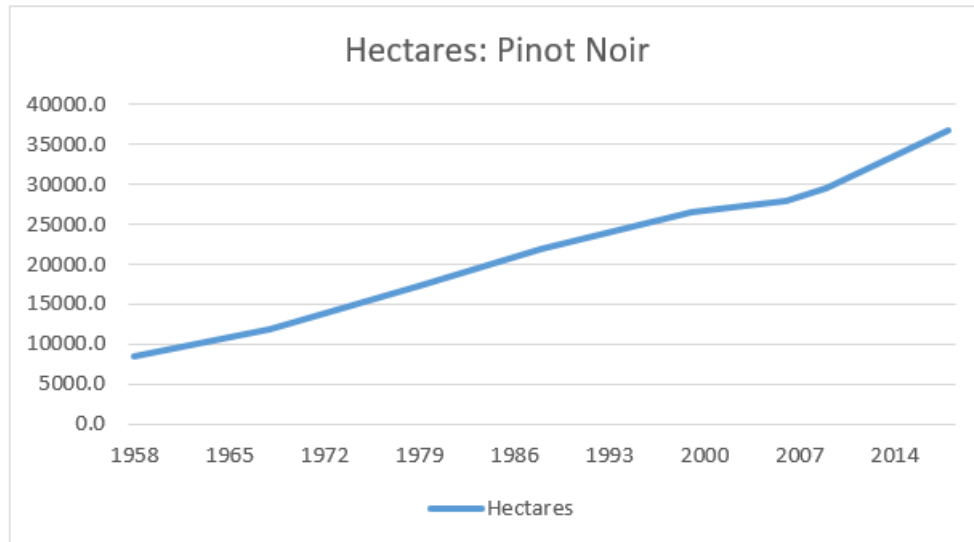
The authors clearly favour the Cretaceous and Jurassic limestones for Pinot Noir rather than, say, the granitic sands of the Beaujolais region which Gamay quite likes.

Pinot Noir is also planted widely in countries close to France and is called by different names in each. For example, Pinot Noir is called by these names: Blauer Burgunder in Austria, Blauer Spätburgunder in Germany, Modri Pinot in Slovenia, Pinot Nero in Italy, Pinot Crni in Croatia and Rulandské Modré in the Czech Republic.

It is also widely planted in the so-called New World including Oregon, Washington and California in the United States and, of course, in Australia and New Zealand.

Here is a graph of the rise and rise of the area given over to Pinot Noir throughout France.

² Viala, P et Valmorel, V, 1910. *Ampelographie. Volume I. Page 646. Paris.*



Notice that the area planted to Pinot Noir has increased significantly year by year ever since trusted records of the area planted to Pinot Noir were taken.

The figure in 2018 at the edge of the graph is 36,727 hectares in France.

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



The above photo shows the structure of the Pinot Noir leaves with their deep U-shaped sinuses and serrated edges. Notice that there are five clearly defined lobes.

In the photo below you can see how the grapes are tightly bunched causing problems for the Pinot Noir variety as it is easy for diseases such as powdery mildew to get in between the grapes but 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.