

WINE Talk: November 2024

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 128

Welcome to newsletter 128 for November, the tenth 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:

- Some information about what wines have just arrived and what wines are arriving soon;
- Information about a summer storage option if you don't want wine shipped;
- 9 Packs containing some exciting wines, including some of the new arrivals;
- Part 7 of our faults in wine story and what causes them - for this month is an exploration of carbon dioxide in still wines;
- A section called Bits and Pieces where we comment of various issues impacting on wine;
- This month, instead of the normal story about a grape variety, we have chosen to go up one level and discuss the *Vitis Vinifera* grape species.

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.

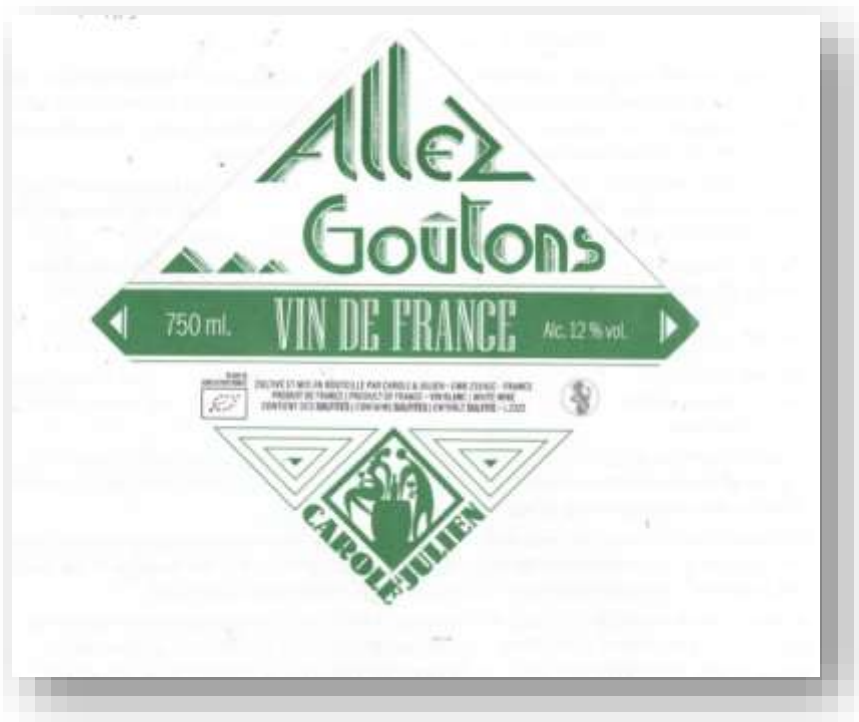
If you're not personally known to us or haven't already, please also provide your date of birth so we stay legal (a requirement of Tasmanian legislation). You must of course be over 18 years of age to order.

New Arrivals

Our new arrivals have been very limited since the last newsletter thanks to the most unfriendly of shipping gods. We'd hoped to have Fanny Sabre and Vincent Carême's wines for sale in November, but they are yet to arrive.

The only wines we have released this month are Derain Allez Goutons Blanc (available in pack 9 in this newsletter) and some allocation-only wines from Domaine Bornard, some of which are also in newsletter pack 2.

2023 Domaine Derain Allez Goutons Blanc



This Aligoté cuvée was the wine with which Dominique Derain started the concept of Allez Goutons. It was later extended to include a red version which is 100% Pinot Noir. (We released the 2023 vintage of the red Allez Goutons earlier in the year and still have a few bottles available, including one in pack 9 with this one, if you like the idea a matching pair). The name, which literally can translate as “come on, let’s taste” is also a play on the name of the Aligoté grape variety, or at least is for this white cuvée. It doesn’t work for the subsequent Pinot Noir but the spirit is the same.

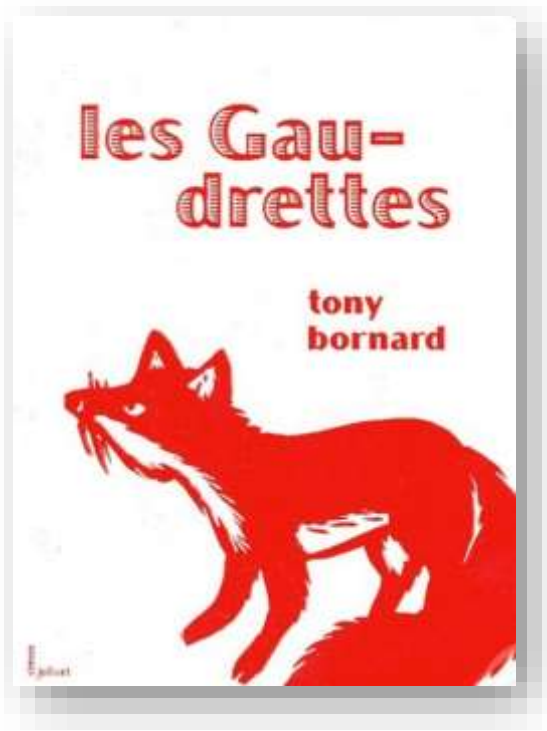
Now, of course the Derain estate is owned by Carole Schwab and Julien Altaber (who also own Sextant). Fortunately, they decided to retain this delicious, easy-drinking cuvée. Traditionally Dominique made it to be ready for drinking early in the year, in the spirit of primeur wines, but we have held ours for a little longer this year because of a flow on effect from having to delay releasing the 2022 cuvée. We have only just sold out of it.

This vintage was made with Aligoté from a parcel of Aligoté planted in 2019 in the commune of Corpeau, which is a few minutes' drive to the south-east from Julien and Carole's Saint-Aubin cellar and just south of Puligny-Montrachet. The soil is clay which is rich in ferric oxides. The wine was directly pressed and aged in a stainless steel tank. It was bottled approximately 3 months after the harvest.

The wine has a line of lemony acidity, saltiness and minerality common with Derain white wines but all in the context of providing an uncomplicated, fun moment. It's not a wine to contemplate but interesting enough that it might cause you to stop briefly and, while enjoying its savoury fruitiness and liveliness, think about the rocks that contributed to its flavour.

Certified organic. 12% ABV. \$65

Domaine Bornard releases



We thought we would mention a few of the Domaine Bornard wines we have just allocated in the newsletter - the Savagnin because it is so unusual, and Point Barre and les Gaudrettes because they are the two we had the greatest quantity of so you may be able to find some at one of our friendly retailers. There were quite a few wines in the shipment in very small quantities (e.g. 12 or 24 bottles) so not everyone will have every wine we received, including the Savagnin, but it is worth following up if you regularly visit one of our retailers or you may find it at a restaurant which we supply. At the moment we do also have two spare bottles of the Savagnin so if you ask quickly before we offer them to someone else they may still be available (any order would be for a single bottle though and only if you haven't already been allocated one). We're on the road for the next few days so it's highly likely we won't be offering them elsewhere just yet so please ask if you are interested.

Domaine Bornard Savagnin Amphore Mammouth Italien 2016

Savagnin from Arbois-Pupillin which was macerated for several months (until the April of the following year) in an Italian amphora and then was returned to the amphora for its extended aging. It is noticeably unfiltered and absolutely delicious, especially with any umami-compatible food.

Domaine Bornard Ploussard Point Barre 2022

This wine is more intense (darker and more profound) than usual. A reflection of the vintage, the alcohol level is higher than usual and Tony Bornard thinks it is a vintage that will keep for much longer than usual. The vinification was slightly different too. It was destemmed then macerated in stainless steel for a month (that bit is typical) but it was infused with the marc from la Chamade, the other Ploussard cuvée. After pressing it was aged in stainless steel and bottled in July 2023.

Domaine Bornard Côtes du Jura Chardonnay Les Gaudrettes 2020

This wine, unexpectedly as Tony has largely eschewed appellations, is a Côtes du Jura Chardonnay, a cuvée the domaine has made for many years. The parcel Les Gaudrettes has a westerly exposition and is comprised of red marl and Triassic iridescent Keuper. The vines were planted in 1975. It was directly pressed, initially fermented in vats and then aged for three years in foudre with topping up. It was bottled in August 2023.

Note:

We will also have another small shipment of Bornard wines before the end of the year. If you would like an allocation please let us know.

What's Coming

Thanks to our shipping issues, most of what was coming last month is still coming – **Sabre**, **Carême**, and more **Bornard**. There is more information about them in the October issue of the newsletter, which you can access [here](#) if you don't still have a copy.

We're still hopeful that we will be allocating **Domaine des Cavarodes** in late January and now can confirm that we will also have some wines from **Michel Gahier** available at the same time. They will be allocated as well.

The most unexpected news though that we're sharing now because it is too exciting to stay silent about is that recently we heard from **Mito Inoue** about some new wines she's made (for the first time since 2019, and the 2019 offer did not ever eventuate because of covid). We have agreed to buy a small quantity of wines from her which will be shipped early next year. The wines, all from very old Gamay d'Auvergne vines, are eye wateringly-expensive so saving is definitely recommended if you want one of these. We have not decided how to sell them yet but no-one is likely to get more than one bottle. We sold our first allocation ever by ballot because we only had 6 bottles but we have a little more this time. We can confirm though that unless you ask you will not be offered. We do have a few requests already going back to 2020 so there is no need to ask again unless you want to double-check.

Other things that will ship late this year some of which we release as soon as they arrive include new vinegars from **la Guinelle**, a shipment from the **Montanet family (La Cadette, Montanet-**

Thoden, La Soeur Cadette) which is predominantly white wines, some more **Fanny Sabre**, some new Mosse wines including **2024 Bang Nouveau** (this will not last long) and **Magic of Juju 2023** and new wines from **Domaine Derain** and **Sextant**. Let us know if there is anything you're interested in early notice about.

Summer Wine Storage Options

We've recently expanded the amount of storage space we have available. Its intent was to make our lives a little easier and eventually to make it easier to gradually release some of our stored wines (there are a few in this newsletter).

But one consequence is that we are now in a position to store any wines you may want to buy over the summer and then have shipped when the weather cools. For customers who we can deliver to via Anonymous Wines shipping over summer is not such a big issue because they look after the wines very well.

But if we have to ship to you via Aramex or Australia Post we have pretty much reached the point where it's not practical for the next few months. December is particularly impractical because extra parcel shipping around this time of year makes it even worse than usual – hot and very slow, not just hot.

We've often stored wines for people who have asked us to but haven't publicised the option because we were so short of space. Now it's fine.

So if you would like to buy anything over the next few months and then wait until April or May to ship it we're all set up to accommodate your needs. We do need the wine to be paid for though. It's too complicated to keep wines on hold that might otherwise be sold out and then find some time down the track that the reservation is cancelled. We may be left with wines we're no longer advertising and have told people we have sold out of.

We find the safest way to ensure that people do take the wines they ask us to store long term is to ask them to pay for them. That's the point where we then separate them from our general stock and set them aside for you until you are ready.

Please get in touch if you would like to do that or mention it when you place an order.

Introduction to the November Packs

Packs Introduction

As mentioned earlier, the shipping gods have not been kind to us this month and some new wines that we should have been releasing have not arrived in time.

We decided not to hold up the November newsletter because shipping wine even at the end of November is always preferable to shipping wine in December (although the latter is nowhere near as stressful as it used to be when we depended on Aramex for shipping most of our orders).

As a result, there is not much in the way of new arrivals in the packs. We had some wines from Tony Bornard which we have been selling by allocation and have created one pack (Pack 2) which has two of the wines from that release. We also released some Derain Allez Goutons Blanc 2023 and there is one pack with a bottle of that (Pack 9), although we also still have about a case of that available to order separately if you want some but not in a pack.

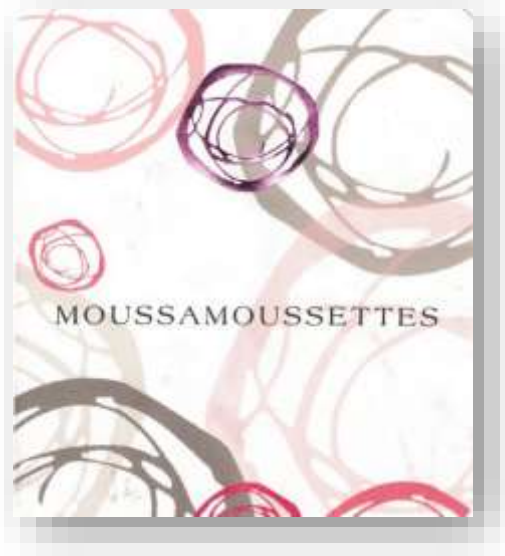
There is a mixed pack with a 20% discount designed to get you through most Christmas drinking needs (Pack 1).

Then, due to the lack of new wines, we delved into the cellar. There are six one-off 6 packs with 3 wines from our personal cellar, plus for each pack, the same 3 final bottles - a bottle of 2023 Mosse Moussamoussettes (because it's always useful and very delicious this year), a bottle of one of Alice's négoce macerated wines (l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021, which is a blend of two Alsace varieties – Gewurztraminer and Pinot Gris), and a bottle of la Guinelle red wine vinegar (La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls). If you like to cook we're sure you will love the vinegar which is of course made from natural wine (mainly Grenache). And if you don't, it would make a perfect, rare Christmas present for a friend or family member who does.

When we release one-off packs with older bottles in them we usually get many enquiries but can only satisfy one person. Hopefully with a few more than usual in this newsletter there might be some packs available for a few hours rather than a few minutes.

And finally, a reminder. If you are ordering a pack and have alternative preferences it's always wise to tell us up front in case your first choice is gone but we still have something else you would take.

Pack 1 –November Christmas Pack (20% Discount)



We have designed this discounted pack to cater for a variety of Christmas needs. The Mosse Moussamoussettes sparkling pet-nat rosé is ideal for back yard cricket or park picnics. There is also a serious sparkling for Christmas Day as an alternative to Champagne. It's a Belluard Gringet, particularly useful for those who like to show off their knowledge of rare grape varieties.

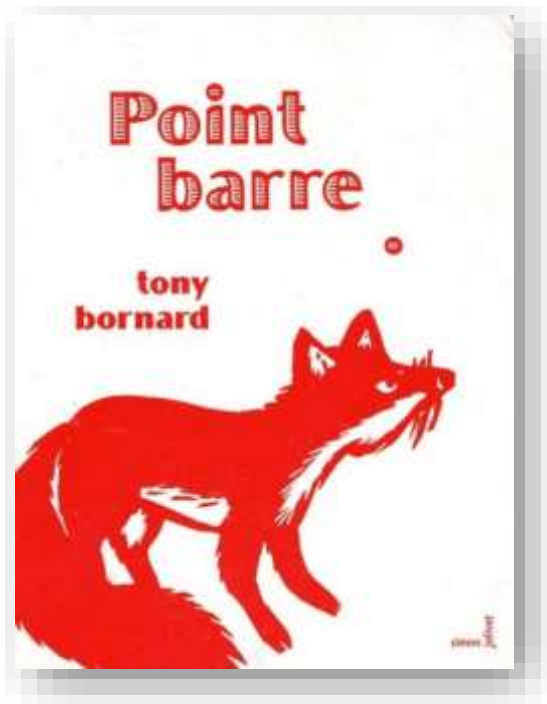
There is a red and white Burgundy (Fanny Sabre Beaune Rouge Clos des Renardes 2022 and Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2022) which would grace the Christmas table very nicely. We included a second white because so many people eat at least some seafood and the Mosse La Joute 2022 should be an excellent match, and finally there is a luscious, sweet Chenin Blanc, which would be a brilliant dessert wine with classic plum pudding, the Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Couleur du Temps 2018. (If you are not into traditional Christmas desserts and don't think this wine would match what you have in mind let us know and we may be able to suggest a substitute.)

These are the wines:

- **Fanny Sabre Beaune Rouge Clos des Renardes 2022**
- **Belluard Vin de Savoie Ayse Mont Blanc Brut Nature 2019**
- **Mosse La Joute 2022**
- **Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023**
- **Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Couleur du Temps 2018**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2022**

The RRP for this selection of **6** bottles is \$584.00 but the pack price is only **\$467.20**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

**Pack 2: Things Come in 2 Pack
(2 Packs Only - Approx 13% discount)**



This pack includes 2 bottles of new Jura wines from Tony Bornard, 2 Mosse wines and 2 Jura l'Octavin wines.

Tony's wines are two of his classic cuvées, 2022 Point Barre and 2020 Les Gaudrettes. Having said that the 2022 Point Barre is not quite its usual self. They are both described in detail earlier in the newsletter.

The two Mosse wines are both pink and both from the 2023 vintage. They are also both very summery. Bisou is a light red made with Grolleau Noir, Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Côt. The wine was aged in foudre and barrels for about 6 months. The Mosses' translated description is "Raspberry colour. An expressive nose of cherry, strawberry and white pepper. A frank attack on the palate, light, fruity wine and a tangy finish. " They recommend drinking it at 12°C. It's also only 11% ABV. For Moussamoussettes the Grolleau Gris and Pineau d'Aunis were directly-pressed and fermented and aged in a stainless steel tank and an underground tank. The Cabernet Franc was macerated for 5 days before pressing. The wine was bottled in October 2023 with 10 grams of residual sugar which meant it continued to ferment naturally in bottle. The Mosses' notes describe the wine as having "living and invigorating bubbles" (this may be our favourite description of a sparkling wine ever!). They recommend a serving temperature of 8°. It is 10.5%ABV.

The l'Octavin Hip Hip J Chardonnay 2020 includes the intriguing 'en jarre' as part of the lot code. This is to distinguish this rare release from another cuvée of the same name. It is a négoce wine but the vines are in the lieu dit La Mailloche, on the edge of Arbois, where Alice also has vines. The grapes were destemmed and then macerated in glass (en jarre) for eight months before pressing and bottling in September 2021. We don't know a lot about Hip Hip J Poulard /

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Trousseau / Gamay 2018 except that we know that at least the majority of the grapes were sourced from Arbois from the vigneron who provides the certified organic grapes for the other Hip Hip wines. It's predominantly Poulsard and Trousseau with a little Gamay. The characteristics are similar to the 100% Poulsard from the same vintage we had in 2021 and 2022. It's light but obviously unfiltered with a touch of volatile acidity balanced by red fruits, especially pomegranate.

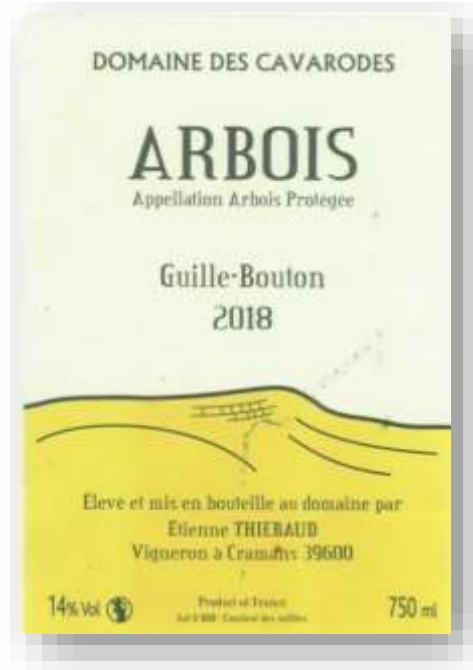
The wines are:

- **Domaine Bornard Ploussard Point Barre 2022**
- **Domaine Bornard Chardonnay Les Gaudrettes 2020**
- **l'Octavin Hip Hip J Chardonnay (macerated en jarre) 2020**
- **l'Octavin Hip Hip J Poulsard / Trousseau / Gamay 2018**
- **Mosse Bisou 2023**
- **Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023**

The RRP for this selection of **6** bottles is \$474.00 but the pack price is only **\$411.70**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 3: From the Cellar Pack (Approx 12% Discount)

1 Pack Only



This pack has three extraordinary Jura wines from our cellar and the three new bottles, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

See the list below for details. The two different spellings of Ploussard / Poulsard are deliberate – it depends if the wine comes from Pupillin or Arbois. They are three kilometres apart so not unexpectedly spell the same variety differently!

The other three bottles (which are the same in Pack 4 through to Pack 8) are described in the introduction to the packs above.

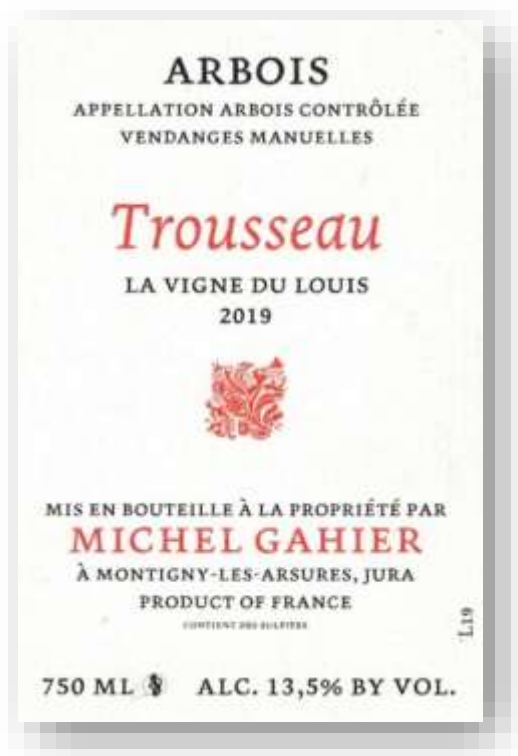
These are the wines:

- **Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois-Pupillin Ploussard En Aspis 2020**
- **l'Octavin Dorabella Poulsard 2015**
- **Domaine des Cavarodes AOP Arbois Guille-Bouton 2018**
- **Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023**
- **l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021**
- **La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl**

The RRP for this selection of **6** bottles is \$421.00 but the pack price is only **\$370.30**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 4: From the Cellar Pack (Approx. 12% discount)

1 Pack Only



This pack has three quite different wines from our cellar and the three more recent bottles common to all these cellar packs, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

The cellar wines include a pet-nat from Loire master Jean-Pierre Robinot, Alice and Olivier de Moor’s Le Vendangeur Masqué Bourgogne Blanc, which is a négoce wine they have made for many years with grapes sourced from the same grower and finally, Michel Gahier’s 2019 La Vigne de Louis which is Trousseau from Montigny-lès-Arsures, a commune which is renowned as one of the best locations for this variety.

The other three bottles (which are the same in Pack 3 through to Pack 8) are described in the introduction to the packs above.

Wine	Type	Variety
Jean-Pierre Robinot Fêtebulles 2018	Sparkling	Chenin Blanc
Le Vendangeur Masqué Bourgogne Blanc 2020	White	Chardonnay
Michel Gahier Arbois Trousseau La Vigne de Louis 2019	Red	Trousseau

Wine	Type	Variety
Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023	Sparkling	Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Pineau d'Aunis
l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021	Macerated	Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris
La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl	Vinegar	Mainly Grenache

The RRP for this selection of **6** bottles is \$357.00 but the pack price is only **\$312.70**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 5: From the Cellar Pack (15% Discount)

2 Packs Only



This pack has three quite different wines from our cellar and the three more recent bottles common to all these cellar packs, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

The highlights of this cellar pack are two bottles from the very generous 2018 vintage at Domaine Bornard, by which time Tony Bornard was well and truly charting the domaine’s destiny. These are the original prices which makes the wines incredible value. One is a Ploussard and the other Chardonnay. The final cellar wine is the only true red wine which Roussillon vigneron Laurent Roger from Mataburro makes. It should be drinking beautifully now, and we can imagine it being quite a good match to turkey if that’s your Christmas vibe.

See the table below for more details.

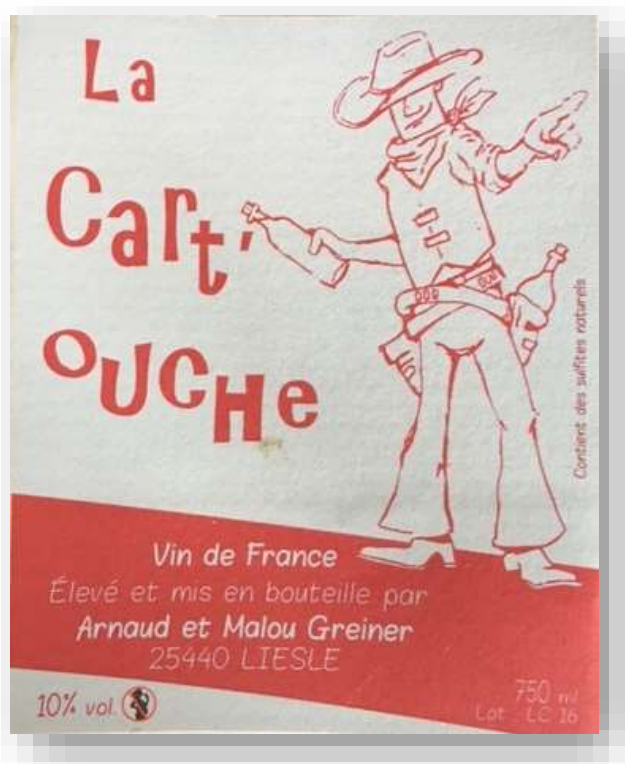
There are two red wines, one white, one sparkling, one macerated and one vinegar.

Mataburro Totem 2021	Red	Mourvèdre, Grenache
Domaine Bornard Point Barre "Les Chambines" 2018	Red	Ploussard
Domaine Bornard Chardonnay Les Gaudrettes "Second Tirage" 2018	White	Chardonnay
Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023	Sparkling	Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Pineau d’Aunis
l’Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021	Macerated	Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris
La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl	Vinegar	Mainly Grenache

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$381.00 but the pack price is only \$334.30. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 6: From the Cellar Pack (Approx 12% Discount)

1 Pack Only



This pack also has three Jura wines from our cellar and the three more recent bottles common to all these cellar packs, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

The cellar wines include Michel Gahier’s oxidative Melon le Rouge Queue, made in the same way as Vin Jaune. It is a wine which can cellar for many years. The other two are red. Tony Bornard’s Ploussard is unusual because we rarely have a still red wine made from the Les Gaudrettes vineyard. Mostly it is planted with Chardonnay, with some Ploussard often used for Tant Mieux. The last wine, Arnaud and Malou Greiner La Cart'ouche, is predominantly Pinot Noir but also has some Ploussard and Trousseau. Arnaud has slightly less than 1 hectare of vines, in several parcels, all around the village of Liesle, which is to the north of Arbois. He works full time for Etienne Thiebaud from Domaine des Cavarodes. This wine was aged for nearly a year in a single oval-shaped old barrel. We think it will have subsequently aged well in bottle but there is an element of lucky dip about it. We have so few it is hard to get experience of the wines with age. Someone will though!

See the table below for more details.

Michel Gahier Arbois Melon La Fauquette 2016	Oxidative	Melon le Rouge Queue
Domaine Bornard Ploussard Point Barre Les Gaudrettes 2018	Red	Ploussard
Arnaud and Malou Greiner La Cart'ouche 2017	Red	Pinot Noir, Ploussard and Trousseau

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Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023	Sparkling	Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Pineau d'Aunis
l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021	Macerated	Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris
La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl	Vinegar	Mainly Grenache

The RRP for this selection of **6 bottles** is \$392.00 but the pack price is only **\$344.20**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 7: From the Cellar Pack (Approx 13% Discount)

1 Pack Only



This pack has three of our rarest wines from our cellar and the three more recent bottles common to all these cellar packs, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

It's a moment of weakness to release one of Dominique Belluard's 2019 wines as this vintage is the final one he brought to completion. And Grand Jorasses, made from Altesse, is one of his rarest wines. Unusually, this wine was macerated.

Nocturne is Pineau d'Aunis from some of Jean-Pierre Robinot's older vines. It's had some aging already but could be kept for many more years.

We wrote at length about Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon's vineyards in last month's newsletter. Needless to say, this Ploussard from Arbois Pupillin is also very rare.

See the table below for more details.

Wine	Type	Variety
Belluard Vin de Savoie AOP Blanc Grand Jorasses 2019	Macerated	Altesse
Jean-Pierre Robinot Nocturne 2018	Red	Pineau d'Aunis
Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Pupillin Ploussard 2018	Red	Ploussard
Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023	Sparkling	Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Pineau d'Aunis
l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021	Macerated	Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris
La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl	Vinegar	Mainly Grenache

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$438.00 but the pack price is only \$381.60. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 8: From the Cellar Pack (Approx 12% Discount)

1 Pack Only



This pack also has three Jura wines from our cellar and is completed with the three more recent bottles common to all these cellar packs, all of which are described in the introduction to the packs.

The 2017 Tant Mieux, the Bornards’ joyful Ploussard pet-nat is a bit of a lottery. It will most probably be delicious but may have lost a little of its life. Knowing when it arrived, we suspect it’s still in our cellar because when we should have drunk it, around 2020, things weren’t quite as joyful as usual! This is the version with the blue label and a fox playing the guitar which means it was disgorged.

The other two wines should still be quite perfect to drink. They will have benefited from our aging and can age some more. There is a Pinot Noir from Domaine des Cavarodes and Renaud and Adeline’s Chardonnay / Savagnin blend from the Les Tourillons vineyard, just outside Arbois.

Philippe Bornard Ploussard Tant Mieux 2017	Sparkling	Ploussard
Domaine des Cavarodes AOP Côtes du Jura Pinot Noir Lumachelles 2018	Red	Pinot Noir
Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Chardonnay / Savagnin Les Tourillons 2015	White	Chardonnay, Savagnin
Mosse Moussamoussettes 2023	Sparkling	Grolleau Gris, Cabernet Franc, Pineau d’Aunis

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l'Octavin La Cigogne Green 2021	Macerated	Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris
La Guinelle Vinaigre de Vieux Banyuls 50 cl	Vinegar	Mainly Grenache

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$362.00 but the pack price is only \$317.20. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 9: New Allez Goutons Blanc and Other Burgundies Pack

(15% Discount) 2 Packs Only



We created this Burgundy pack so there was at least some 2023 Allez Goutons Blanc, which we have just released, available for newsletter subscribers. All the wines are made by Julien Altaber, either as Sextant or Domaine Derain. Based in Saint-Aubin the Derain estate and Sextant négoce business has grapes from several areas in Burgundy but most of the estate wines are close to Saint-Aubin.

There are three whites (two Chardonnay and one Aligoté) and three reds (Pinot Noir). They include both the red and white Allez Goutons, fun wines which are designed to be drunk young along with two of the most serious estate wines (premier crus Saint-Aubin En Remilly white and Monthelie Sur Le Velle red).

The other two sit somewhere in the middle of those wines in terms of complexity and are both from the 2022 vintage. The white is the Sextant Bourgogne Blanc and the red is the Derain estate Bourgogne Les Riaux. Les Riaux, just outside the village of Saint-Aubin is a less than half hectare plot.

There are only 2 packs available because these are the last two bottles of En Remilly. These are the wines:

- **Domaine Derain Allez Goutons Blanc 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2022**

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- **Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2021**
- **Domaine Derain Allez Goutons Rouge 2023**
- **Domaine Derain Bourgogne Les Riaux 2022**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Monthele 1er Cru Sur La Velle Rouge 2022**

The RRP for this selection of **6** bottles is \$591.00 but the pack price is only **\$502.35**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Wine faults 7: Sparkles in a still wine

We are nearing the end of our series on faults in wine. This month we are attempting to explain what many wine professionals define as a fault, however we are strongly against this categorisation due to other reasons.

Let us first explain why these people call it a fault as do most wine judges who want wines to conform to a set of strict rules rather than determining whether the wine tastes good or not.

The fault as defined is detected when a bottle of wine claiming to be a still wine is opened and some bubbles are detected in the glass. It is a fault because there is a rule that says “no bubbles in still wines”.

OK. If it is supposed to be a still wine then it may, on the surface, seem reasonable to say no bubbles allowed.

We disagree.

First, we need to admit that this topic is somewhat complicated and also depends on what is being discussed. For example, we need to be careful as to whether we are discussing dissolved carbon dioxide in wine or carbon dioxide manifested as bubbles.

When we talk about dissolved carbon dioxide in still wine (usually represented as DCO_2) then everyone (almost) agrees that this is a good thing because it makes the wine seem more lively and fresher as discussed in a recent paper¹ published in Australia which also admitted that the whole topic had not been represented in academic papers previously.

In their summary of the paper they say:

At still wine concentration DCO_2 directly influences the taste and astringency of wine.

Notice that this is not quite what we are looking at in this story, but it is important as they are implying that wines with dissolved carbon dioxide taste better!

If they taste better, then it can hardly be classified as a fault.

However, the issues that gets the wine judges excited is when they detect bubbles in the wine not dissolved carbon dioxide which is more difficult to detect.

This problem is also linked to the appearance of natural wines and the resurgence of the use of carbonic maceration in winemaking, particularly with natural wines.

Many natural winemakers deliberately bottle their wines when there is still a couple of grams per litre of sugar in the wine – this means that there is still some fermentation occurring and the fermentation creates carbon dioxide from that sugar. And carbon dioxide that is not dissolved as discussed above will be in the form of bubbles.

¹Gawel, R et al (2020) Effect of dissolved carbon dioxide on the sensory properties of still white and red wines. *Australian Journal of Grape and Wine Research* 26, 172–179.

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Why do they do this? The main reason is that a significant number of natural winemakers do not like the deadening effect of sulphites in wine so prefer to use carbon dioxide as a preservative. It is a very good preservative.

In the next section of the newsletter, we decipher a back label from a beautiful Bruyere – Houillon wine. On the label they include the words:

le gaz carbonique issu de la fermentation est notre seul conservateur naturel.

This translates as:

Carbon dioxide from fermentation is our only natural preservative.

They make it quite clear that they have deliberately kept carbon dioxide to preserve the wine. We find that if there is a small amount of bubbles in the glass when first poured they will disappear almost immediately. Hardly a fault, when it is so deliberate and so useful in preserving the wine.

Bits and pieces

Vigne de la Peche

This is a brief story that will end with a practical thing that a few vigneron in France still practice despite the rarity of the plant they employ.

The plant is called “Vigne de la Peche” and we first came across the fruit from this plant on a pleasant evening in a quiet, out-of-the-way restaurant in the 12th arrondissement in Marseille.

We had booked into this restaurant to try their version of bouillabaisse (which turned out to be very good) and following the soup and fish fillets for the main event we were served a vivid, blood red sorbet made from a small “peach” that grows on a vine not a tree. Hence the name of “vine peach”.

It was delicious!

Now to the plant itself and the relationship to vineyards!

The fruit of these small peaches grow on a vine and are sometimes seen planted at the end of rows of grapevines.

The Vigne de la Peche is typically smaller and more colourful than common peach varieties that grow on trees. The skin can range from deep red to purple, sometimes with green or yellow undertones.

They have an intense and rich flavour as was reflected in our sorbet.

Historically they were planted at the ends of vineyard rows to attract aphids away from the grapevines, acting as a natural pest control. As an added bonus, they thrive in similar conditions to grapevines, benefiting from the same care and climate.

This is because there is a species of aphid called *Myzus persicae*² (or peach-potato aphid) which is attracted to peaches, but if it can't find peaches then grapes are next on its list of desirable fruits.

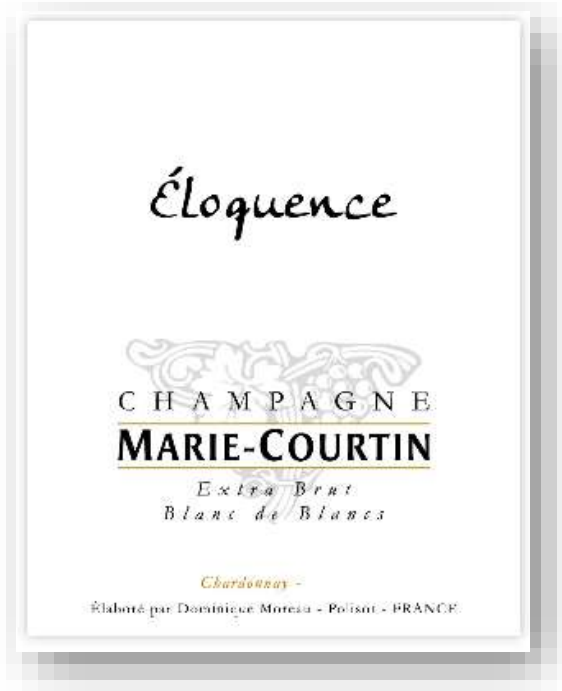
It is common in natural wine circles to use plants to attract insects. Another example is the blackberry plant (commonly considered a nuisance in Australia) which also is very good at attracting bugs away from the grapevines.

Champagne Blanc de Blancs

We read recently an article that claimed that Champagnes that had Blanc de Blancs on the label were made from 100% Chardonnay. This seemed odd to us because there are more white

² Paprocka, M (2023) Probing behavior of *Aphis fabae* and *Myzus persicae* on three species of grapevines with analysis of grapevine leaf anatomy and allelochemicals. *The European Zoological Journal*, 90:1, 83-100

grapes than Chardonnay permitted in the appellation. (See Marie Courtin label below which is made from 100% Chardonnay)



As the INAO official document for Champagne describes, white Champagne can be made from any of the 7 legal grape types either white grapes or red grapes. The red grapes need to be directly pressed so that no colour is extracted from the skins.

However, if the maker wants to put the more restrictive Blanc de Blancs on the label then the wine must be made only from white grapes which means Chardonnay, Arbane, Petit Meslier and Pinot Blanc all of which are white grapes. This does not mean that they have to use each of these – they could use any one or more. But it is most likely that their choice will be Chardonnay.

And just to round this out, they can also use the words Blanc de Noirs on the labels if the

wine is made exclusively from red grapes which have been directly pressed, namely Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier.

France vintage for 2024

Each year there appear to be greater and greater problems with the weather in France (and Europe generally) leading to smaller and smaller harvests. In fact some are saying that 2024 is the worst vintage in 100 years.

The French are very good at keeping records about agricultural production and grape harvests in particular – grape harvest records go back to the mid-1600s.

This year the official harvest was recorded as 39.3 million hectolitres which is 18% less than the harvest in 2023. That is a very significant fall and sadly the region with the greatest losses is the Jura, from where we source many of our wines.

Rosé is a thing

We have been writing in this newsletter about chilled red wines, lighter coloured red wines and rosé for many years. Many of the red wines we import are quite light, with those from the Mosse family, for example, being exemplars of this style of wine.

Although we don't think many natural wines are sold in French supermarkets, the sales of pink and light red wines have doubled over the period 1994 to 2020. As this style of wine has increased there has been a corresponding decrease in the sale of traditional red wines.

It is also interesting to note that France accounts for 11% of all wine consumed globally, with 35% of the rosé consumed world-wide being drunk by the French.

A Bruyere – Houillon back label explained (briefly)

Consider the following back label on one of our Bruyere-Houillon wines from the Jura. This label is packed quite densely with information about the origin of the soil in the vineyard and some indication as to how the wine was made.



First you can see at the top that the appellation is Arbois, it was from the 2018 vintage and is made from Ploussard and Trousseau which are legal grape varieties for the Arbois appellation. Then it gets a bit more difficult.

Argileux refers to clay of the Lias geological period which is a European term for the early Jurassic period (roughly 180 million to 200 million years ago) when there were a lot of oceanic deposits in Europe. In Australia at the same time significant quantities of dolerite were being created below the surface by molten rock solidifying near, but not on, the surface of the earth.

Much of central Tasmania is covered by Jurassic dolerite rocks which are now exposed including kunyani mountain which towers over Hobart.

They then note that each of the grape varieties bring their own typicity to the wine.

The wine was vinified and bottled without any filtration and without added sulphites.

And as we mention in the Wine Faults story above, here is a case where they deliberately allow a little carbon dioxide (gaz carbonique) to remain in the bottle as a preservative.

Grape species – *Vitis Vinifera*

This month we have departed radically from our normal grape variety series to discuss one of the most widespread grape species, namely *Vitis Vinifera*. Nearly every grape variety that we have written about over the years that we have been producing this newsletter belongs to this species. An exception occurred when we discussed the Voltis grape variety which has been adopted temporarily in Champagne to help fight some of the diseases they are experiencing. This variety belongs to the *Vitis rotundifolia* species.

Vitis vinifera is one species that is renowned for making wine and was originally found in warmer climates around the Mediterranean such as France, Spain and Italy at the western end and the Middle East including Lebanon, Persia, Greece and Georgia to name only some of the countries in that region.

Vitis Vinifera has also been successfully grown in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and South America. It also thrives on the west coast of the United States in the warmer climate that is found there.

In a book called *Viticulture*³, Ronald Jackson talks about the appearance of *Vitis Vinifera* in ancient times as follows:

The ancestral range of the European grape (Vitis vinifera) extended westward from Algeria, around the eastern, northern and western coasts of the Mediterranean, up into central Europe, eastward, across present day Turkey and into northern Syria, Iraq, and Iran, up and around the Black Sea, and across to the Caspian Sea. Current evidence indicates that the origin of viticulture likely occurred within the Anatolian region of northern Turkey and/or adjacent Transcaucasia. This region incorporates regions where the distribution of wild V. vinifera grapevines juxtaposes the origins of Western agriculture.

He goes on to mention that the appearance of these vines across these regions was matched by the appearance of oak trees which provided wood for barrels and, more importantly, may have been the progenitor of the yeast species *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* which completes a tripartite required for making wine.

Where does *Vitis vinifera* fit in?

Plants are classified in an hierarchical structure and grape vines fit into the Order called Vitales. The Vitales order has a number of Families sitting below it, one of which is called Vitaceae – this is the Family that contains the *Vitis* genera called *Vitis*, which in turn has the *Vitis Vinifera* species below it and in turn over 1000 varieties of grapes below it.

You will notice that we are talking here about a species of grape of which there are many, although *Vitis Vinifera* is the most widespread.

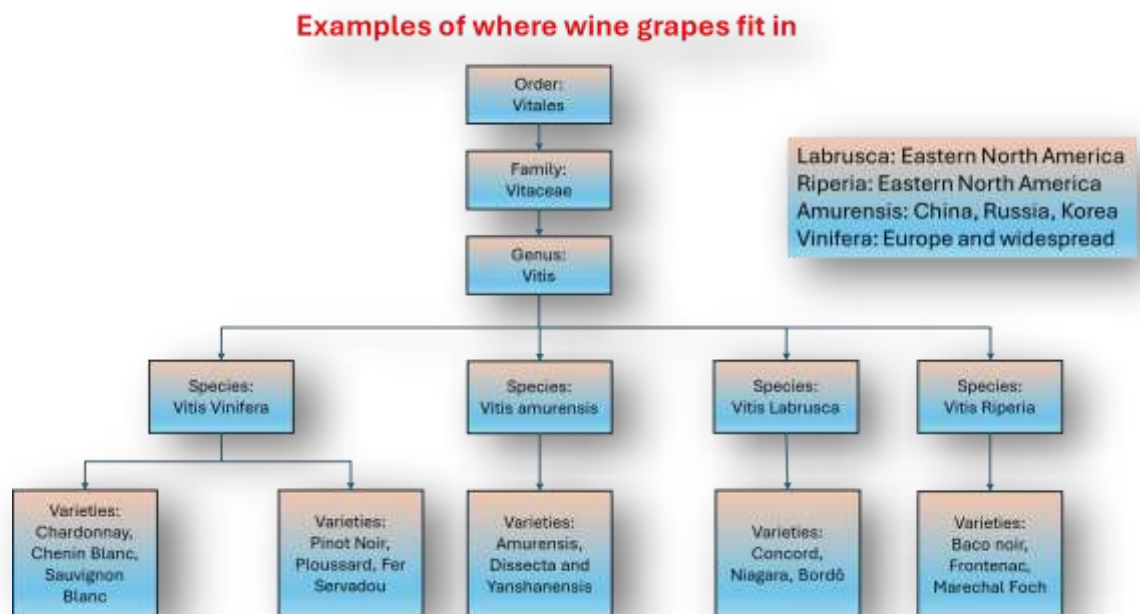
³ Jackson, R (2016) *Viticulture*. Elsevier Inc.

If you are a coffee lover, then you will know that it is at the species level that you find the greatest variation in the characteristics of the coffee plant. For example, at the species level there is *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea canephora*, together these dominate the coffee market throughout the world, just as *Vitis Vinifera* dominates the wine world.

However, the two coffee species are quite different with *Coffea arabica* generating literally hundreds of varieties such as Gesha, Bourbon, Typica, Mundo Novo and many more. *Coffea canephora* (which is often referred to as Robusta) is responsible for varieties such as Parainema, Obata and Catimor. This species is quite bitter compared with *arabica*-derived species due to the much higher caffeine content in Robusta.

Many of the coffee varieties have been created by combining different varieties in the laboratory just as new wine varieties have been created by organisations such as the Université de Montpellier et l'institut Agro to make them more resistant to disease and the vagaries of the weather.

The diagram below shows the structure of a small sub-section of wine grape species and varieties with different countries favouring different species and hence different varieties.



Non-Vitis Vinifera Species

While we are most interested in grapes from France which are all from the *Vitis Vinifera* species apart from a small number that are being trialled such as Voltis, other regions such as Asia find that different species tend to perform better given the different climates and different soils.

We have therefore mentioned just a few of the alternate species. Each of those mentioned below also have some or many different varieties sitting below them (we have included a few in the diagram above) each of which has different quantities of specific polyphenols and other compounds that contribute to the overall flavour and other features of the juice extracted for winemaking.

Vitis Riparia

This is a species that is native to North America and is grown widely in the eastern part of that continent. It is commonly used as both a table grape and for winemaking. The rootstock for this species is also used for grafting *Vitis Vinifera* in Europe because it is resistant to phylloxera.

Vitis Rotundifolia

This species is commonly called Muscadine and is found in the eastern states of the USA where it is used for winemaking. It can also be found in Mexico, the Bahamas, and other Caribbean islands. These vines are resistant to many diseases that affect *Vitis vinifera* cultivars including Pierce's Disease, grapevine downy mildew, and powdery mildew⁴.

They are also late in breaking buds in spring so therefore could be useful in Europe where vines are receiving a lot of damage in spring when frosts occur just after bud break and cause havoc in the vineyards leading to much lower yields.

Vitis Amurensis

This species is little known in the west, but is widely planted in China, Russia and Korea. It is also used to develop hardiness against the cold in other varieties. It can withstand long periods covered in snow. It is said that 15,000 varieties of grapes are derived from this species⁵. The main grape varieties grown in China, Russia and Korea are *Amurensis*, *Dissecta* and *Yanshanensis*⁶.

This species develops markedly different amounts of the polyphenols that are developed in *Vitis Vinifera* grapes leading to a different flavour and texture in the wines.

Vitis Labrusca

This is another species that is commonly found in eastern North America and in turn has grape varieties such as Concord, Niagara, and Bordô below it. These are used as both table grapes and winemaking grapes.

Vitis Rupestris

This is another North American species which, like Riperia, was also used as rootstock for European vines to ameliorate the problems caused by phylloxera.

⁴ Buck, K. and M. Worthington. 2022. Genetic diversity of wild and cultivated muscadine grapes (*Vitis rotundifolia* Michx.). *Frontiers in Plant Science* 13:852130.

⁵ Gastón Gutiérrez-Gamboa et al (2020) Oenological potential and health benefits of Chinese non-*Vitis vinifera* species: An opportunity to the revalorization and to breed new varieties. *Food Research International*.

⁶ Wan, Yizhen et al (2008) A review of taxonomic research on Chinese wild grapes. *Vitis* 47(2), pp81-88.

Vitis Berlandieri

This is another North American species which, like *Riparia*, was also used as rootstock for European vines to ameliorate the problems caused by phylloxera.

Each of these species has unique characteristics that make them suitable for different growing conditions and uses. They contribute to the diversity of the grapevine gene pool and play crucial roles in viticulture, particularly in regions where *Vitis vinifera* faces challenges such as extreme weather, pests, or diseases.

A major European problem with *Vitis Vinifera*

At the end of the 20th century a major problem occurred in Europe (and France in particular) that could have seen *Vitis Vinifera* assigned to the dustbin of history. This problem was addressed recently in a paper by Daniel Chitwood⁷:

*In the mid-1800s, an aphid crossed the Atlantic from North America attacking the root system of *Vitis vinifera* (domesticated grape) vines in France decimating the wine industry. North American grapevine species rootstocks were resistant to the pest and ultimately provided the solution to the blight that restored wine production.*

So, in Europe they were able to graft *Vitis Vinifera* vines onto American rootstock that was resistant to the aphid and the vineyards were replanted and the wine industry continued and grew to be what it is today.

How can we tell if a vine is *Vitis Vinifera*?

The science of determining the species that a particular vine belongs to has evolved over the past century or more. Originally it was carried out by determining the measurement and other key features of the leaves and grape bunches to assign the vine to a specific species.

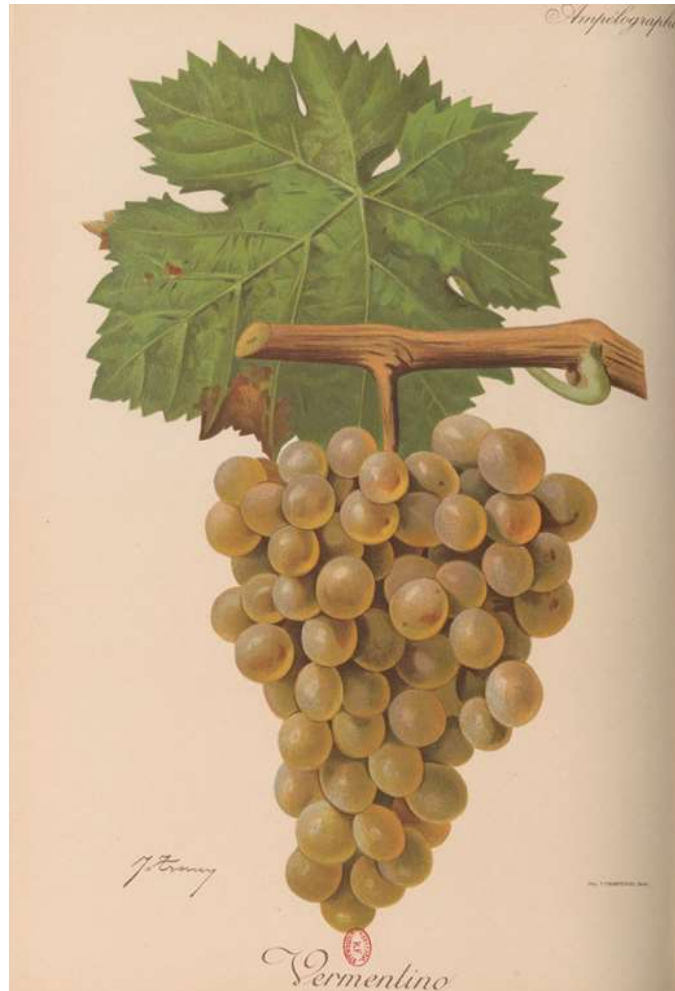
The science behind this measurement was known as ampelography. Since the late 1800s the science of ampelography has grown more and more sophisticated as botany and chemistry have become more sophisticated.

When we look at the book such as *Ampélographie Française* by Victor Rendu which was published in 1857, *Vitis Vinifera* is only mentioned once in the first line after the preface, hence assuming that every vine in France belonged to that species. The book does not address individual varieties, rather discussing where vines were grown in great detail throughout the 616 pages.

⁷ Chitwood, D (2020) *The shapes of wine and table grape leaves: An ampelometric study inspired by the methods of Pierre Galet*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ppp3.10157>.

If we move forward to 1873 and the equally long manual called *Ampélographie Universelle* we find that many grape varieties are mentioned maybe with different spelling (eg Malbeck).

By the time we reach the turn of the century, the incredibly detailed books of Viala and Vermorel called *Ampélographie Tome 1* through to *Tome 7* had long discussions about every French grape variety as well as beautiful hand drawing of each grape variety discussed. We have used some of these beautiful drawings in past newsletters but to remind you we have shown one below.



Notice that in this drawing of the Vermentino variety both the grape bunch and the leaf are clearly displayed including the sinuses in the leaf (the indents) and the veins (venation) that hold everything together.

It wasn't long before the shape of the leaves in particular were used by ampelographers to identify the variety and hence the species of the grape. Perhaps the most famous of these ampelographers was French ampelographer Pierre Galet who published many books on the topic throughout the 20th Century.

(In a future newsletter we might show what these measurements were and how they are different for each species and variety.)

Now, of course, scientists have many ways to determine which variety or species they are dealing with through DNA identification. They can even determine which parent varieties were used to create new varieties.

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One of the most interesting cases occurred with the Gringet grape variety in the Savoie. In her first book, Jancis Robinson said it was the same grape as Traminer. However, Dominique Belluard disagreed completely with this conclusion and paid to have DNA analysis done. The result was that Gringet turned out not to be related to any other known grape variety. This work was an important part of his legacy.

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.