

WINE Talk: May 2025

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 133

Welcome to newsletter 133 for May, the fifth WINE Talk Newsletter for 2025. We hope you continue to enjoy reading them. We certainly are continuing to enjoy writing them!

We have been able to put together **11** 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. Some of the packs also have some of our rarest wines never before advertised.

The newsletter also has:

- Details about wines that have just arrived including details of each wine;
- A brief description of the wines that are coming soon;
- Some more French wine terms, this time addressing rules about how vines are to be planted in the Rully appellation;
- The Sacy grape variety – one of the “unknown” Burgundy varieties.

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 - Domaine Derain, Dominique Derain and Sextant

We have just released a limited collection of new wines from Domaine Derain, Sextant (Julien Altaber), and from Dominique Derain's latest retirement project.

Dominique Derain started his career making wine barrels but decided, instead, to study winemaking in Beaune. In 1988 he and his wife Catherine purchased 5.5 hectares of vineyards in Saint-Aubin just south of Beaune and began tending the vines biodynamically and making their wines in a non-interventionist way. They were among the pioneers in Burgundy for this type of farming and winemaking. Some years ago Dominique and Catherine were joined by an eager young assistant Julien Altaber who wanted to learn from him. As the business grew there was plenty of work for Julien helping Dominique in the vineyards and in the winery but he also found time to start his own small estate, predominantly negociant but with a few small but special plots of his own, as well as work full time with Dominique. During that time working with Dominique he met Carole Schwab, who was already working for him. Carole and Julien became life partners and eventually bought Dominique's estate when he retired.

While Carole and Julien have largely kept Domaine Derain (which they renamed Dominique's estate to) and Sextant separate, as part of the merging of everything, they made the decision to use the grapes from the small plots Julien already owned in Domaine Derain and keep Sextant for négoce wines. It's a lovely story and is why all the labels, both Domaine Derain and Sextant have 'Carole & Julien' on them. They are what links everything.

Among the estate parcels are some very special plots of Chardonnay which sit just above the iconic grand crus of Puligny-Montrachet. We received a few bottles of the 1er Cru Les Murgers Des Cents de Chien but it sold out to the people who requested early access to the new arrivals but we still have some En Remilly, one of Saint-Aubin's most renowned premier cru vineyards.

We also have small quantities of other single vineyard Chardonnays from close by including a 2022 Saint-Aubin and Bourgogne La Combe. From a little further afield there is also a Rully 1er Cru, a Sextant négoce cuvée, which is almost Juraesque in its profile. (This release also has another new Sextant wine, a Bourgogne Gamay, which is made with fruit from Chénas.)

As always there is plenty of Aligoté. As well as the classic Derain and Sextant Bourgogne Aligotés we have Sextant Ecume 2023, which is a complex pet-nat made with Aligoté and Gamay, Sextant Po à Po 2023, which is macerated aligoté, and, for the first time (in small quantities), from Domaine Derain, a sparkling wine called Chut ... Derain, which is made with estate Aligoté using méthode traditionnelle with no dosage. It's a Vin de France because the requirement for Crémant de Bourgogne is at least 30% Pinot Noir or Chardonnay. We love Aligoté and fortunately so do Carole and Julien! French labelling decisions continue to throw us curved balls! There are less than six bottles left.

We have a little more information than usual from Carole and Julien about the wines so our descriptions are quite detailed, including, unusually, the sources for the Sextant négoce wines, something they have often told us about but never with the same level of detail as we have with these vintages.

We also have two new retirement project wines from Dominique, something which draws him to the south each year, and especially to Banyuls sur Mer and the 9 Caves complex. This year he has released two wines both made with fruit from his friend Joachim Roque at Domaine

Caterole, who works out of 9 Caves. Coincidentally some of Joachim's grapes are in the Mosse Combo cuvée we also have on our list at the moment. They are both very joyful.

Following is a detailed summary of each of the wines and, at the end, a table with just the basics in case you want to get to the nitty gritty.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2023

This wine is made with Gamay from Domaine Maxime Troncy in Cogny, in the Beaujolais. The name Métisse implies a mix and in this case it's not the variety but the methods of vinification. 50% is a maceration of whole bunches in a concrete vat for 12 days. The other 50% is directly pressed and vinified in a stainless steel tank. After pressing, the macerated juice is blended with the directly-pressed juice and fermentation is completed as an ensemble. It is aged in stainless steel tanks for 6 months before bottling. Total sulphites < 20mg/l.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2023

This wine is made from a 60 year old plot of Aligoté vines in the commune of Fley in the Côte Chalonnaise owned by Fanny et Damien Gressard. The soil is clay and limestone and the exposition south-west. The grapes were directly-pressed and then put in barrels for fermentation and aging. It aged on its lees for 8 months prior to bottling. Total sulphites 27 mg/l.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Ecume 2023

A blend of 50% of each variety. The Aligoté is from Fanny et Damien Gressard, whose vines are in the commune of Saint-Gengoux-Le-National, in the Côte Chalonnaise. The Gamay is from Bérengère Bézaud et Antoine Miguel, from a late ripening parcel on granitic soil in Jullié, in the northern part of Beaujolais. Certified organic. Both a directly pressed and start fermenting in fibreglass tank. The completion of the alcoholic fermentation is blocked by cooling the tank. It is racked several times before blocking and then 2 months later is bottled. The bottles are stored at approximately 20° for 3 weeks to encourage the resumption of fermentation. It is then aged in bottle for several months before release. it is not disgorged. No detectable sulphites.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Po à Po 2023

The Aligoté is from a plot of 15 year old vines owned by Fanny et Damien Gressard (Saint-Gengoux-Le-National, in the Côte Chalonnaise). The soil is very stony well-drained clay and limestone which produces small grapes that, when fully ripe, are a deep golden-brown "purplish" colour. As Julien and Carole explain "they invite the idea of maceration". The grapes are 50% whole bunch and 50% destemmed and macerated for 12 days. After pressing in a vertical, wooden press the wine is aged in barrels for 8 months prior to bottling. Total sulphites 25 mg/l.

Sextant - Julien Altaber MaMaMia 2022

The Pinot Gris for MaMaMia come from Patrick Besson (Domaine du Moulin) whose vines are in Bully in the south of Beaujolais. The vines are approximately 30 years old on bluestone. For the maceration 50% is destemmed and 50% is whole bunch. The maceration is for 12 days. Following that it is directly pressed and the juice put in barrels where it completes the fermentation. Aging is for 8 months on lees. Total sulphites < 20 mg/l. We only have one bottle left.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Rully 1er Cru Blanc 2022 -

This is a new wine for us and very special. The grapes are sourced from 70 year old vines at Domaine De Surremain (Château de Monthelie). The soil is clay and limestone and the exposition south-east. It was directly pressed and the wine aged in barrels on its lees for 18 months. Its minerality is quite Juraesque. <20 mg/l total sulphites.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Gamay 2022

This is a new Sextant cuvée. The grapes are from Château des Jean Loron in Chénas, cultivated by Guillaume Bouchacourt. The vines are old (approximately 65 years) located at the bottom of granite slopes. It has a southerly exposure but the surrounding large trees and a stream help keep it cool in the height of summer. Whole bunches were macerated in a concrete tank for one month. After pressing aging was in a stainless steel tank for approximately 8 months. Interestingly Julien and Carole choose to use the appellation Bourgogne Gamay, which is allowed, rather than Chénas. Total sulphites: 13 mg/l.

Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2023

The grapes for this wine are from a plot of 45 year old Chardonnay owned by Fanny et Damien Gressard (Saint-Gengoux-Le-National, in the Côte Chalonnaise). The soil is clay and limestone and the exposition south-east. The grapes were directly pressed and fermented in barrels where it aged on its lees for 12 months prior to bottling. Total sulphites <20 mg/l.

Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2023

The grapes for this estate wine come from Dominique's oldest Aligoté plots, harvested at the end of the vintage. These plots produce small golden grapes, which makes for an intense and rich wine. The vines are located in the lower part of Puligny-Montrachet, on clay-silt soil. The harvest is directly pressed then fermented and aged in barrels. Total sulphites 8 mg/l.

Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 2022

This wine is from a parcel of estate Chardonnay in the Le Ban lieu-dit in Saint-Aubin which was replanted in 2007. The soil is gravelly clay and limestone and the vineyard is on a hillside and south facing. The grapes were directly-pressed and then put in barrels for fermentation and aging. It was aged for nearly 18 months on its lees. Total sulphites < 20 mg/l.

Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2022

This estate wine is made from Chardonnay vines planted by Dominique Derain in 1988 in En Remilly, one of Saint-Aubin's most renowned premier cru vineyards. It sits on the rocky part of Montrachet just above the iconic grand crus of Puligny-Montrachet. En Remilly sits between "Les Murgers Des Dents de Chien" and the N6, which is the main road for entry into Saint-Aubin. It is a very sunny south-facing plot and the very hard limestone is almost marble-like forcing the roots to grow between the cracks. The vines have always been tended using biodynamic methods. The grapes are directly-pressed and then put in barrels for fermentation and aging. This wine is typically aged for 18 months on its lees.

Domaine Derain Chut ... Derain

This is the first time we have had this wine. Although it is a méthode traditionnelle it cannot be labelled as a Crémant de Bourgogne because the requirement is for at least 30% Pinot Noir or Chardonnay and this, happily, is 100% Aligoté. It comes from a plot in the commune of Corpeau. The soil is clay and chalky limestone, a combination which supports acidity and freshness making the grapes very suitable for this type of vinification. It was aged for 12 months sur lattes, disgorged but with no dosage. Total sulphites 6 mg/l.

Dominique Derain McKBeO 2023

This wine was made by Dominique Derain, former owner of the Derain estate, with his friend Joachim Roque at Domaine Caterole on the southern Mediterranean coast. Joachim has vines in the communes of Collioure and Saint-André (Roussillon). Directly pressed, it was bottled after a short period of aging in May 2024. It is super fresh and lively (and rare!) There are no added sulphites.

Dominique Derain Métissage 2023

This wine was made by Dominique Derain, former owner of the Derain estate, with his friend Joachim Roque at Domaine Caterole on the southern Mediterranean coast. Joachim has vines in the communes of Collioure and Saint-André (Roussillon). It is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache Noir. We don't have details of how it was vinified but know it was bottled early - in May 2024. It's a wine that's about freshness and energy, and ready to drink. There are no added sulphites.

In this table the blue shading is Sextant, the green shading is Domaine Derain and the orange shading is the justification for Dominique's visits to the south of France! All prices are pre any 10% discount if the wine is part of an order of 6 bottles.

Wine	Category	Variety	RRP
Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2023	Red	Gamay	\$52
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2023	White	Aligoté	\$67
Sextant - Julien Altaber Ecume 2023	Sparkling	Aligoté, Gamay	\$65
Sextant - Julien Altaber Po à Po 2023	Macerated	Aligoté	\$85
Sextant - Julien Altaber MaMaMia 2022 (1 bottle available)	Macerated	Pinot Gris	\$80
Sextant - Julien Altaber Rully 1er Cru Blanc 2022	White	Chardonnay	\$149
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Gamay 2022	Red	Gamay	\$70
Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2023	White	Chardonnay	\$82
Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2023	White	Aligoté	\$67
Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 2022 (2 bottles available)	White	Chardonnay	\$124
Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2022	White	Chardonnay	\$187
Domaine Derain Chut ... Derain	Sparkling	Aligoté	\$79
Dominique Derain McKBeO 2023	White	Macabeu	\$81
Dominique Derain Métissage 2023	Red	Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache	\$81

If you would like to order any wines, please let us know.

What's coming

We are currently in the process of allocating some Robinot wines and will also soon be releasing a small amount of Piollot and Marie Courtin Champagnes next month. We don't allocate these Champagnes, ironically because we have too little, so it's likely most will be sold to people who request information about them in advance. There are many wines (16 cuvées) and very little of each. Even if you have ordered it from us in the past we would encourage you to request an early look at the list before we advertise them if you don't want to miss out.

Our la Guinelle vinegar release didn't quite make this month but will happen early in June.

On the water we have a new shipment of Cadette wines, mainly because we didn't want to lose the chance to buy the 2023 Melon de Bourgogne, which was not ready when we last shipped, but there will also be top ups of Vézelay La Châtelaine 2023 and the 2023 la Soeur Cadette Bourgogne Blancs and Bourgogne Rouges that we had in 2024. The final wine is the new La Cadette Bourgogne Champs Cadet 2023, an estate Pinot Noir.

Around the same time we will receive this year's allocation of de Moor and La Petite Empreinte closely followed by Mataburro. The de Moor and Mataburro will be allocated and we haven't decided whether to allocate or advertise La Petite Empreinte yet. Sometimes when the quantities are very small it's just too hard!

That's also the case with Mito Inoue's wines which leave France in June. We will be advertising those not allocating them so encourage you to ask for an advance look at the list if you are interested (and keep saving!).

This Month's Packs

We have eleven packs this month. The first four are various mixes of most of the new Domaine Derain and Sextant wines. There are two six packs and two three packs, which have some of the rarer wines. We have an introduction to each pack but there are very detailed descriptions of all the wines in the New Arrivals section if you would like to know more about them. We didn't repeat them in the descriptions of the packs.

The remaining packs are all three-packs and all made up of older wines from our depths of our cellar. We think they are all extraordinary and part with them with some reluctance. It's only ever possible when we're in the right mood to let go. None of these wines are available to order separately. They are only available in the packs and, to be fair to everyone, we won't swap wines in or out.

There aren't detailed descriptions of these special three packs, just a list of the wines. To write in detail about them would be to dwell on them and then we may have changed our minds. We expect it's also very much a case of "if you know you know". We are getting what the press might call 'elderly'. We don't need them and this is the right decision – it's just that one of us in particular has tendencies to hoard. Who knows – if this mood continues we free up some more next month! It takes a long time to put them together though so it's not likely to become as common as we would like it to be.

As usual, but particularly this month, if you would like one pack but, if it's not available, would settle for another let us know your preferences in order. We process all requests in the order they arrive and if you've given us a couple of choices will reserve you what we can. But, if you only give us one option, and later ask for a second preference by the time we get to your second response it may be too late. It is also possible to order more than one pack. We're not limiting them to one per person so if you order more than one and they are all still available that's fine. We'll be delighted to be able to pack a 6 pack which is much quicker to pack and also also better per bottle freight-wise.

When we sell old wines we use the prices we sold them for originally so some are, by current pricing, relatively inexpensive. But we've also released a few wines which were very expensive even then. It's one reason why the packs are only 3 bottles. Perhaps we are mentally preparing you for the arrival of Mito Inoue's wines!

Please also specify the pack number when you order. The packs of older wines have very similar names so while of course include the names if you want the main thing that guarantees we give you what you want then the number is the most certain way of doing it!

Pack 1 – New Sextant Burgundy Wines (15% Discount)

(2 Packs Only)



It's getting harder and harder to find affordable natural wines from Burgundy. This collection from Julian and Carole from Sextant, all certified organic, is a great-value package with plenty of variety. It's a mix of three white and three red wines.

Most of the wines are single varieties which are classified as Bourgogne (the Aligoté, Bourgogne Blanc (100% Chardonnay) and the less common Bourgogne Gamay). There is a Côteaux Bourguignons (otherwise sold out), which is a blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay, and the last wine is Métisse, which is a 100% Gamay but a blend of macerated and directly pressed juice.

There are detailed descriptions of all the wines in the New Arrivals section.

These are the wines:

- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Métisse 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Côteaux Bourguignons 2023 - 2 bottles**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Gamay 2022**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2023**

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles is \$395 but the pack price is only **\$335.75**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 2: Julien's Experimental Wines Pack (15% Discount)
(1 Only 3-Bottle Pack)



From its early days Julien Altaber's Sextant label has included experimental wines which definitely don't fit the classic expectations of an estate based in Saint-Aubin, a village known best for its pristine white chardonnays (which Julien also makes). These three cuvées, all quite a shift when they first appeared, have stood the test of time. They may not be classic Burgundies but they are delicious wines. We're very grateful for his experiments as it means a shipment from Sextant always has a dazzling array of wine styles.

There are only three bottles in this pack and there is only one pack. There is a detailed description of each wine in the New Arrivals section but, in summary, the 2023 Ecume is a pet-nat which is a blend of Aligoté and Gamay. It has the faintest pink hue and is one of our favourite sparkling wines at the moment. Po à Po, also from the lovely 2023 vintage, is macerated Aligoté (from a vineyard that produces small, golden grapes that Julien and Carole think cry out to be macerated) and the final wine, the 2022 MaMaMia, is macerated Pinot Gris. It is a beguiling shade of pink. All these grapes are négoce from the Côte Chalonnaise and Beaujolais. There is more detailed information about their sources in the descriptions in the New Arrivals section.

The wines are:

- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Ecume 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Po à Po 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber MaMaMia 2022**

The price for this selection of **3** bottles is \$230 but with the 15% discount it becomes **\$195.50**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 3: New Sextant and Derain Whites – 15% Discount

(2 Packs Only)



Given many of our customers mainly drink white wines we thought there might be some interest in a white-only Domaine Derain and Sextant pack. This one has an Aligoté and two Chardonnays from each estate.

As just mentioned, the area around the village of Saint-Aubin is known best for its Chardonnays and Domaine Derain La Combe and Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly come from some of the best known nearby vineyards.

En Remilly in particular sits on the rocky part of Montrachet just above the iconic grand crus of Puligny-Montrachet. Dominique Derain planted the vines for this vineyard in 1988, in the estate's early days. La Combe is a plot of Chardonnay in the heart of Puligny-Montrachet. It was planted by Dominique in 1987. La Combe is sold out now so only available in these two packs.

We're also particularly entranced by a new Sextant cuvée, from a 1er cru plot in Rully. Like many of the white wines it's had extra time in barrel. The wine is almost "Juraesque" in mineral salinity.

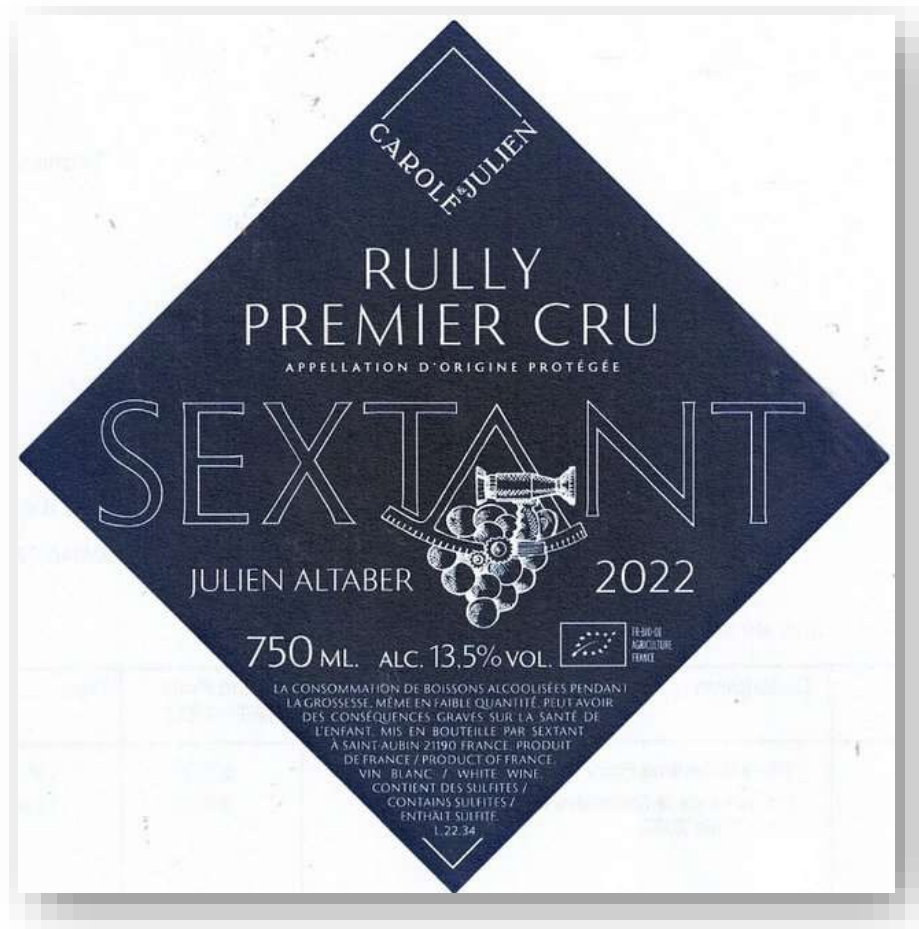
These are the wines:

- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Aligoté 2023**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Rully 1er Cru Blanc 2022**
- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Bourgogne Blanc 2023**
- **Domaine Derain Bourgogne Aligoté 2023**
- **Domaine Derain Bourgogne La Combe 2022**
- **Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2022**

The price for this selection of 6 bottles is \$641 but the pack price is only \$544.85. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 4: Derain and Sextant Premier Cru Chardonnays (10% Discount)

(3 bottle pack – 1 Only)



This pack, which we only have one of, has the crème de la crème of the new arrivals from Domaine Derain and Sextant.

All three are from Premier Cru vineyards and include the 2020 vintage of the very rare Domaine Derain cuvée - Saint-Aubin 1er Cru Les Murgers des Dents de Chien.

This is the first we have been able to secure since the 2017 vintage. It is otherwise sold out so this one pack is the only way to buy it from us.

Refer to the descriptions in the New Arrivals section for detailed information about these iconic wines.

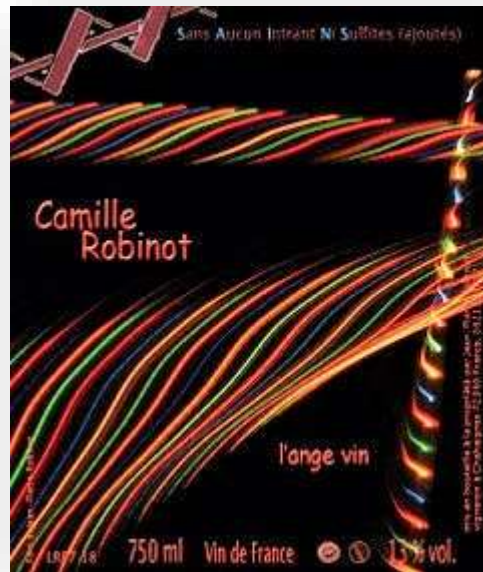
These are the wines:

- **Sextant - Julien Altaber Rully 1er Cru Blanc 2022**
- **Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru En Remilly 2022**
- **Domaine Derain Saint-Aubin 1er Cru Les Murgers des Dents de Chien 2020**

The price for this selection of **3** bottles is \$538 but the pack price is only **\$484.20**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 5: Jean-Pierre Robinot, Domaine des Cavarodes and de Moor Pack

(10% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



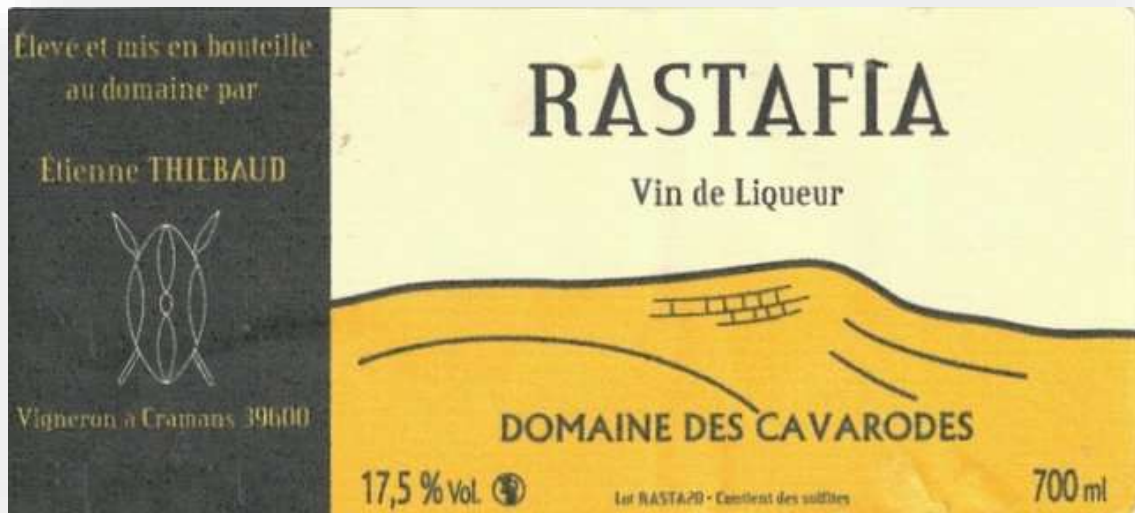
The 3 wines are:

- Jean-Pierre Robinot Camille 2018
- Domaine des Cavarodes Vin de Liqueur Rastafia 2020
- Alice and Olivier de Moor Bourgogne Aligoté Plantation 1902 2020

The RRP for this selection of **3** bottles is \$440 but the pack price is only **\$396.00**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 6: Jean-Pierre Robinot, Domaine des Cavarodes, Bruyère and Houillon Pack

(10% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



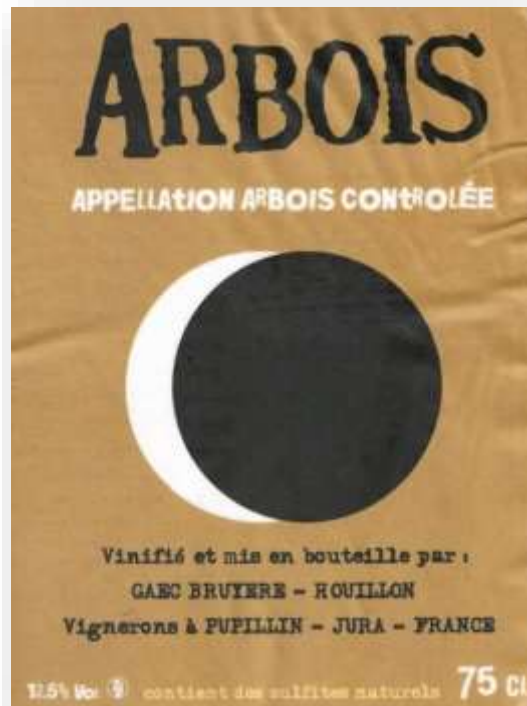
The wines are:

- Jean-Pierre Robinot Lumière de Silex 2006
- Domaine des Cavarodes Vin de Liqueur Rastafia 2020
- Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Rouge 2018

The RRP for this selection of **3** bottles is \$507 but the pack price is only **\$456.30**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 7: Bruyère and Houillon, Jean-Pierre Robinot, Bornard Pack

(10% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



The wines are:

- **Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Blanc Les Tourillons 2018**
- **Jean-Pierre Robinot Juliette Cuvée S 2009**
- **Domaine Bornard Côtes du Jura Savagnin Les Chassagnes 2016**

This Cuvée S Juliette (the S stands for Super) is a wine from the super-rich 2009 vintage which spent many years in barrel prior to bottling. It still has some residual sugar and is one of the most mind-blowing wines we have ever drunk. I can be drunk with dessert or with rich foie-gras type dishes or with ripe soft cheeses.

The RRP for this selection of 3 bottles is \$732 but the pack price is only \$658.80. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 8: Jean-Pierre Robinot and Bornard Pack

(10% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



The wines are

- Jean-Pierre Robinot (l'Opéra des Vins) Lumière de Silex 2003
- Domaine Bornard Ploussard Au Fil des Générations 2017
- Domaine Bornard L'Ivresse de Noé 2011 500ml

The RRP for this selection of **3** bottles is \$614 but the pack price is only **\$552.60**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 9: Jean-Pierre Robinot and Yann Durieux

(10% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



The wines are

- Jean-Pierre Robinot Lumière de Silex 2018
- Recrue des Sens (Yann Durieux) Love and Pif 2018
- Recrue des Sens (Yann Durieux) Les Fleurs des BT 2018

The RRP for this selection of **3** bottles is \$463 but the pack price is only **\$416.70**. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

Pack 10: Chardonnay Pack (de Moor, Bruyère and Houillon, Tony Bornard)

(No Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



The wines are

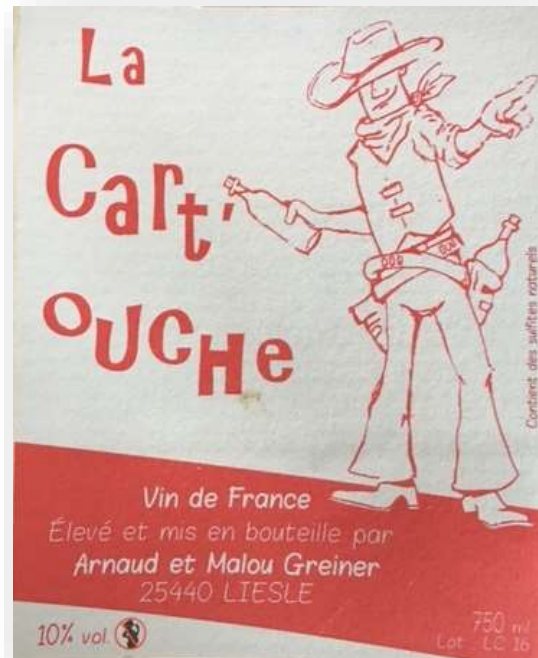
- Le Vendangeur Masqué AOC Bourgogne Blanc 2018
- Renaud Bruyère and Adeline Houillon Arbois Chardonnay Croix-Rouge 2015
- Tony Bornard Chardo-Gai 2016

The RRP for this selection of **3** bottles is **\$202** and there is no discount. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

There is no discount on this one or subsidised freight because the prices are from a long lost era and don't lend themselves to day's shipping costs.

Pack 11: Take a Risk Pack

(15% Discount - 3 Bottle Pack – 1 Pack Only)



The wines are

- **l'Octavin Betty Bulles Molette 2018**
- **Charles Dagand Charpindo 2016**
- **Greiner La Cartouche 2018**

The RRP for this selection of 3 bottles is \$189 and the pack price is \$160.65. Check with us for the subsidised freight charge to your location.

This pack is slightly riskier so with a slightly bigger discount. We don't think the wines were made with the extended aging we have accidentally given them in mind, so drinking them may be more about inquisitiveness than seeking something that's reached a perfect age. We should have drunk them earlier. It's a bit more of a lucky dip than some of the older wines in the other packs.

French wine terms

Here are some more French wine terms we accumulated this month. These terms are all related to the rules in France relating to planting density of vineyards where the wines will be submitted to allow an appellation to be displayed on the label.

We have used the cahier des charges for the Burgundy appellation Rully as an example.

Rules relating to the density of the vines

The following French terms are used when discussing the density at which vigneronns are required to plant their vines in various appellations.

Every appellation that we have seen the rules for has a section outlining how far apart each “foot” in the same row must be from each other and also how far apart the rows must be from each other.

Sometimes these distances are very low. There are many benefits including encouraging the roots to drive deeper towards the rocks. It is also, of course much better for hand-picking the grapes.

Densité

This one is easy – it translates as density of the vines. You often see this word accompanied by the word minimale (minimum) because in France the rules usually demand that the density of the vines must be greater than a minimum value such as 8000 vines per hectare. For example, the Rully rules state:

Les vignes présentent une densité minimale à la plantation de 8000 pieds à l’hectare, avec un écartement entre les rangs qui ne peut être supérieur à 1,40 mètre et un écartement entre les pieds sur un même rang qui ne peut être inférieur à 0,80 mètre.

There are some other important words in this paragraph to know about:

Minimale

As mentioned above, this means that the density of the vines must be higher than the minimum value stated in the rules, in this case 8000 vines per hectare. This means that 8500 vines per hectare is OK, but 7500 vines per hectare is not.

Pieds

This is the word for “feet” which is used to refer to the trunk/roots of a vine which, in the case of the rules for Rully, must be planted at a density of at least 8000 “feet” or vines per hectare. This contrasts to Australia where the density is often around 2667 vines per hectare, where the lower number is partly due to wider spaces between the rows allowing use of tractors in the vineyards. In France, horses are often used to plough the vineyards, or in the case of natural wines there is often no ploughing of vineyards at all.

Écartement

This word translates as spacing. There are two types of spacing referred to in the rules. The first is the spacing between the “feet” and the second is the spacing between rows.

Rangs

In the context of vineyards this translates as “rows”. Therefore, in the text above the words *“avec un écartement entre les rangs qui ne peut être supérieur à 1,40 mètre”* translate to *“with a spacing between the rows which cannot be greater than 1.40 meters”*. So, in Rully the maximum distance between rows is 1.4 metres.

Entre

As seen above, this translates as “between”.

Même

This word is used towards the end of the French passage above. It refers to the spacing as follows:

entre les pieds sur un même rang qui ne peut être inférieur à 0,80 mètre.

You will notice from the translation that although the space between the rows of vines must be 1.40 metres or less, the spacing between “feet” in the same row must be less than or equal to 0.80 metres. The translation is:

between the feet on the same row which cannot be less than 0.80 meters.

Grape variety: Sacy

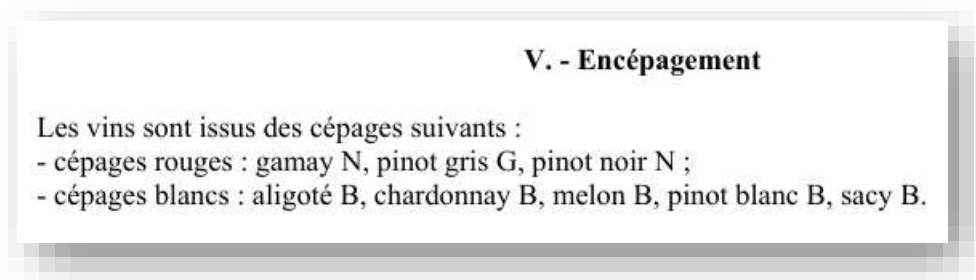
This month we have decided to fill in a gap that we have mentioned before but never included in our extended descriptions of grape varieties.

The grape we are discussing this month is called Sacy and it is yet another official grape in Burgundy. Many descriptions of grape varieties in Burgundy concentrate on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir but there are many more that can legally be used.

Among these legal varieties along with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are Gamay, Sauvignon Blanc, Melon de Bourgogne, César, Sacy, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Aligoté and Aligoté Doré.

So, what is Sacy and where is it grown? It is mainly used in Crémant de Bourgogne as can be seen in the list of legal grape varieties in the document outlining the rules for the associated appellation.

The following snippet from the appellation rules shows the legal grape varieties for Crémant de Bourgogne.



Here you can see that many of the varieties we have mentioned above are permitted in this appellation. For example, "melon B" is the shorthand "melon Blanc" which stands for Melon de Bourgogne which is permitted in the Yonne department in northern Burgundy, as is Sacy Blanc.

It is possible that this variety originated in Italy but the evidence for this is not solid. It is possible that it might have been brought to Burgundy in the thirteenth century by monks of the Reigny Abbey.

It is possible that the monks liked the high yields and productivity of this variety. However, the high yields also resulted in wines that were not as deeply flavoured as those made with Chardonnay and in 1732 the Parliaments of Vermondon and Besançon banned further plantings of this variety.

However, the grape continued to be planted in the Yonne department which is in the north of Burgundy where it still plays a role in Crémant de Bourgogne as mentioned above.

It is also an authorised variety in the Saint Pourçain appellation which lies just above the central city of Clermont-Ferrand.

The list of authorised varieties in the Saint Pourçain appellation is shown below:

V. - Encépagement

1°- Encépagement

- a) - Les vins blancs sont issus des cépages suivants :
 - cépages principaux : chardonnay B, sacy B ;
 - cépage accessoire : sauvignon B.
- b) - Les vins rouges sont issus des cépages suivants : gamay N et pinot noir N.
- c) - Les vins rosés sont issus du seul cépage gamay N.

You can see that Sacy is a principal variety in that appellation along with Chardonnay, with Sauvignon Blanc being a minor variety for white wines.

It is likely that Sacy is descended from the grape varieties Pinot Noir and Gouais Blanc.

The grape bunches are reasonably tight as seen below.

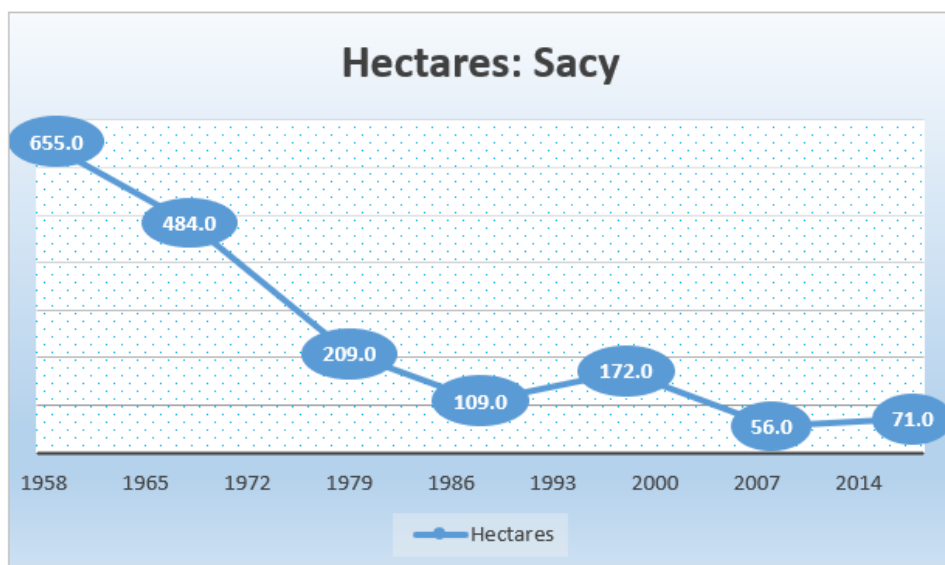


This can lead to diseases such as mildew as the wind cannot get in between the grapes to stop it in its tracks.

The grape leaves appear very regular with pronounced sinuses and lobes. The teeth around the lobes are quite small. The colour of the leaves is pronounced and in the dark green part of the colour spectrum.



The graph below shows the overall decline in the area planted to this grape with most of the areas being the Saint Pourçain appellation and the area in the Yonne where it is used for the Crémant de Bourgogne.



The decline since 1958 has been from 655 hectares down to 71 hectares in 2018.

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.