

LISTE VINS TERROIRS

The wines on this list are sourced from small artisan growers who work sustainably, organically or biodynamically in the vineyard and with minimal interventions in the winery. Much of the farming is labour-intensive, often done with horses rather than tractors and all of the picking and selection is by hand. Yields, usually from old vines, are low. Fermentations tend to be with wild yeasts and several wines are made without addition of sulphur dioxide and are unfiltered and unfinned. In style the wines tend to be light-to-medium bodied, fresh (even refreshing), savoury and delicious to drink – but even more delicious with food.

The focus is on France and Italy. Many of the French growers are certified organic and biodynamic. Several of the Italian growers belong to Vini Veri (Real Wines), a movement of like-minded natural winemakers.

Our objective is to present wines that most sympathetically reflect the place from which they originate, the nature of the vintage itself and the personality of the grower - in short those wines that encapsulate the notion of terroir.

For those who don't have the time or inclination to explore the full list there is a selection of wines by the glass and pot, which contains a good cross-section of the wide variety of wines on offer.

Please also check our many blackboards (which are green) for daily specials, recommendations, food and wine suggestions and regional promotions.

Santé!

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Wines by the Glass and Pot	5
Champagnes, Ciders, Sherries and Aperitifs	7-9
<i>WHITES</i>	
Nantes to Nevers – The Journey of the Loire	10-12
From the Rhône to the Roussillon	13-14
The Eastern Borders – From Alsace to the Alps	15-16
Périgord to the Pyrenees – The Atlantic Influence	17
White Burgundy	18-19
Italy – North and South	20-22
Token Spanish Whites!	23
<i>ROSÉ</i>	24
Amber wines, their dotty friends & lovable relations	25-26
New World – Whites & Reds	27
<i>REDS</i>	
Anjou to Auvergne – From Elegant Cabernet Franc to Mountain Gamay	28-30
A Quick Tour of “Real” Beaujolais	31-32
From the Vosges Mountains to the French Alps – France’s Eastern Flank	33-34
Côte-Rôtie to Corsica – “Garrigue and Maquis”	35-37
Pic Saint Loup to Perpignan – The Mediterranean Arc	38-40
From Bergerac to the Basque Country (including Bordeaux)	41-42
Red Burgundy	43-44
Italy – North and South	45-48
Token Iberian Reds!	49
Sweet Wines	50-51
Selection of Magnums	52
Eaux de Vie and Digestifs	53-54

Wines by the Glass & Pot

SPARKLING & CHAMPAGNE	125ml	750ml
N.V. Prosecco di Conegliano, Casa Coste Piane – <i>Veneto</i>	5.95	28.50
2009 Trebbiano Frizzante, Camillo Donati – <i>Emilia</i>	6.25	31.50
2009 Malvasia Rosa Frizzante, Camillo Donati – <i>Emilia</i>	6.50	32.00
2010 Vouvray Pet Nat Moustillant, Catherine Breton - <i>Loire</i>	7.00	33.00
N.V. Philipponnat Royale Réserve Non Dosée – <i>Champagne</i>	9.50	48.00

WHITES	175ml	500ml	750ml
2010 Côtes de Gascogne, Cuvée Marine, Domaine de Ménard – <i>SW France</i>	4.75	12.50	17.00
2011 Muscadet Nouveau, Domaine Jo Landron – <i>Loire</i>	5.25	13.50	19.00
2010 Sauvignon de Touraine, Domaine Guy Allion -- <i>Loire</i>	6.00	16.50	24.00
2010 Jurançon sec, Clos Lapeyre- <i>Jurançon</i>	6.50	18.50	25.00
2010 Three Trees, Domaine de Majas – <i>Roussillon</i>	6.75	19.00	28.00
2010 Chasselas Sans Soufre, Pierre Frick – <i>Alsace</i>	7.00	19.50	29.00
1999 Savennières « Les Genêts », Damien Laureau - <i>Loire</i>	9.25	25.50	37.00
2009 Carso Vitovska, Benjamin Zidarich – <i>Friuli</i>	9.75	27.00	40.00

REDS			
2010 Les Clampins d'Abord, Isabelle Frère – <i>Roussillon</i>	4.50	12.00	-----
2010 Cuvée des Galets, Vignerons d'Estezargues – <i>Rhône</i>	5.50	14.00	
2010 Gran Cerdo, Usabiaga – <i>Rioja</i>	5.75	14.25	18.00
2010 Cheverny Rouge, Domaine du Moulin, Hervé Villemade – <i>Loire</i>	6.50	17.00	24.50
2010 Cuvée Briand, Domaine Le Mazel – <i>Ardeche</i>	7.50	21.50	30.00
2004 VdT "Le Pech Abuse"- <i>Buzet</i>	8.00	22.50	31.50
2008 Valpolicella Classico Superiore « Camporeno », Monte dall'Orla – <i>Veneto</i>	8.90	25.00	37.00
2008 Cannonau Urulu Cantine di Orgosolo – <i>Sardinia</i>	9.80	27.50	40.50

ROSÉ			
2010 Tire l'Arigot Rosé, Domaine Les Terres Promises - <i>Provence</i>	5.50	15.00	----
2010 Château Plaisance Rosé— <i>Fronton</i>	6.75	17.50	23.50

All prices are inclusive of VAT at 20%. Wines by the glass are also available in 125ml

SPARKLING WINES, CIDERS & APERITIFS

CHAMPAGNE

Champagne Philipponnat

The Philipponnat style relies on balance between intensity and freshness. The intensity results from the dominance of Pinot Noir in the blends, particularly that of the exceptional southern-facing vineyards from the south of the Montagne de Reims and the search for an optimal physiological maturity of the grapes due to slightly late grape picking. The legendary Clos des Goisses originates from just 5.5 hectares of walled, very steep, pure chalk slope facing south above the river Marne in Mareuil-sur-Ay on the southern flank of the Montagne de Reims. It unveils an exciting complex nose of firm pears amidst a background of toasty aromas (almost cocoa bean) whilst concentrated citrus forms the backbone for other flavours of toast, biscuit, pear, and yellow apple to bloom from the glass.

	Bottle
Royale Réserve Non Dosée	48.00
Royale Réserve Brut	50.00
Réserve Rosée Brut	57.00
2004 Grand Blanc Millésime	68.00
2000 Clos des Goisses	130.00

Champagne Bertrand Gautherot

100% Pinot Noir, saignée method, zero dosage. Crushed red fruits nicely cut through by a refreshing chalky flavour mark this exceptional rosé.

Saignée de Sorbée Rosé	73.00
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Champagne Jérôme Prévost

100% Pinot Meunier. Oak aged in new to 13 year old barrels for ten months, before being bottled and then disgorged 17 months later in December 2008, at which point no dosage was added. Rich, vinous, dense, complex and extremely long on the palate. A connoisseur's wine.

La Closerie Les Béguines Brut Nature	73.00
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Champagne Francis Boulard

Extremely serious Champagne from this leading estate. This wine has plenty of Pinot structure and mineral drive, the addition of a little Chardonnay bringing a little extra elegance and lift. Very aromatic notes of sun-dried fruits, yeasty (baked bread) and biscuity. Hint of hawthorn berry, pearskin with mineral lick and a warm savoury note too on the finish with toasted hazelnut shavings. Great length and finesse.

Grand Mailly Brut Nature	70.00
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Champagne Jacques Lassaigue

The south-facing vines here give a delicious, vibrantly fruity (hints of grapefruit/mango) mineral champagne. Viticulture is organic and natural yeasts only are used. It is made 70% from 2005 with 30% oak aged 2004 reserve wine, and was disgorged with 5g/l of dosage in October 2007.

Les Vignes de Montgueux, Blanc de Blancs Brut NV	63.00
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Champagne Cédric Bouchard

A champagne with excellent weight and balance exuding delicate fragrances of flowers and beguiling red berry fruits with a mineral imprint from the limestone-clay soil. Made from just 1.45 hectares of 32 year old vines, it comes from the 2006 vintage, was cuve aged, and disgorged without dosage in April 2008.

Inflorescence, Blanc de Noirs Brut	68.00
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SPARKLING

2007 Gutturnio Vivace, La Stoppa – <i>Emilia-Romagna</i>	27.00
N.V. Prosecco di Conegliano, Casa Coste Piane – <i>Veneto</i>	28.50
2009 Trebbiano Frizzante, Camillo Donati – <i>Emilia</i>	31.50
N.V. Vouvray Pet Nat Moustillant, Catherine Breton – <i>Loire</i>	33.00
N.V. Pet Nat P'tit Chemin, Benoit Courault – <i>Loire</i>	36.00
2009 Saumur Brut, Bulles de Roche, Thierry Germain – <i>Loire</i>	36.50
2009 Malvasia Rosa Frizzante, Camillo Donati- <i>Emilia</i>	32.00

FRENCH ORGANIC CIDERS

Château de Hauteville, Eric Bordelet

Wonderful artisan ciders and a delicious poiré (perry) from biodynamically farmed orchards – covering roughly nineteen hectares – situated in southern Normandy where the Domfrontais extends between the boundaries of the Mayenne and the Orne. The land is composed of schists and sedimentary rocks dating back to the pre-Cambrian period three million years ago. The granite and broken schists form a complex soil and sub-soil that provides the foundation for the terrain. The ciders have more apples than you can shake your pommes-pommes at (roughly forty) and are fermented in barrels before a secondary fermentation in the bottle. The pears come from 300 year old trees grown on granitic soils. The drink is delicate (3%) and quite delicious, a champagne amongst perries.

	75cl
2009 Sidre Brut	14.00
2009 Sydre Argelette	21.00
2010 Poiré Granit	29.00

APERITIFS

	25ml
Pastis Janot, Provence	4.00
	100ml
Floc de Gascogne, Juglaron	5.75

BEERS

Camden Town Brewery-Camden, London

	330ml
Hell's Lager	3.50
Camden Wheat	3.50

Kernell Brewery - Tower Bridge, London

	350ml
Pale Ale	5.00
India Pale Ale (IPA)	5.00

SHERRIES & SIMILAR

Herederos de Argueso, Sanlucar di Barrameda

375ml 100ml

Manzanilla Las Medallas – 37.5cl

13.00 4.50

Bodegas Sanchez Romate, Jerez

Amontillado NPU

6.50

Palo Cortado Regente

7.50

Oloroso Don Jose

6.50

Bodega Emilio Hidalgo, Jerez

A Bodega founded in the 1870s by Emilio Hidalgo. The Hidalgo family think of their sherries more as table wines than fortified wines. The wines are elegant and complex and match a wider variety of foods than many typical sherries. The component sherries in this untypical fino are an average age of 15 years which accounts for its rich golden and intense flavour of roasted almonds. Stunningly complex this wine would be perfect with smoked eel.

The Amontillado is quite simply one of the greatest sherries we have ever tasted. Imagine notes of cooked walnuts, orange peel, dried figs, toffee, cream, warm wood and spices (cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg and cloves among others). The finish lasts forever. Nibble some hard cheese with this and contemplate timeless wonder.

75ml

Especial Fino, La Panesa

7.00

El Tresillo 1874 Amontillado

15.00

Marco de Bartoli, Sicilia

De Bartoli's take on the original dry Marsala is aged using the fractional blending method known as solera, made famous in Jerez. Using a battery of progressively smaller casks, De Bartoli continually "tops up" his oldest wines with wines from the next-oldest vintage, with the newest wines going in the largest cask at the end of the battery. Vecchio Samperi is more than 40 years old, with the smoky, nutty complexity of a fine sherry. But Vecchio Samperi is unfortified, just as all Marsala was before the British came along towards the end of the 18th century and added spirit to it. The wine (from Grillo) is dry, intense and mellow with flavours of chestnuts, brazil nuts and orange peel. Brilliant stuff.

100ml

Vecchio Samperi Vino Liqueroso – 50cl

62.00 12.50

Nantes to Nevers – The Journey of the Loire...

Or the other way around. The journey begins in the Auvergne in central France and finishes 1000 km further on in the Atlantic. There are four major zones: Pays Nantais, the home of Muscadet and the fresh, leesy wines that are so brilliant with shellfish. Anjou & Saumur are where the Chenin grape flourishes. This can be sparkling, dry, moelleux or fabulously sweet. Touraine is a melting pot of varieties and styles: there are many great examples of Chenin and also some fine Sauvignons, a grape that comes into its own in the Central Vineyards of Sancerre & Pouilly-Fumé and their satellite appellations.

Domaine Jo Landron, Muscadet

Not quite Muscadet sans lie, but certainly simplicity in a glass. Milky-toned with hints of greengage and then a crisp chalkiness finishing with that typical Muscadet saltiness.

2011 Muscadet Nouveau 19.00

Domaine Guy Allion, Touraine

Ripe yet crisp Sauvignon reminiscent of elderflower and blackcurrant.

2010 Sauvignon de Touraine 24.00

Domaine Pierre Luneau, Muscadet

Muscadet reaches its metaphorical and literal peak in the wines of Pierre Luneau and his family, a grower who works a lot on the yeast lees ensuring surprisingly rich, mouthfilling style of Muscadet. Possessor already of superb single and cru locations, they have now brought a spectacular new vineyard on stream. Planted on the exposed slopes of a hill that rises steeply out of the marshes the vines are on a fascinating iron-rich serpentite and magnetite soils caused by gradual metamorphic transformations. This terroir imparts terrific complexity to the wine which is initially taut with cool oyster-shell notes before unveiling more complex aromas of salt butter, gorse blossom and river stone and a palate bound together by soothing acidity. Truly the DRC of Melon de Bourgogne, the 1er Mousquetaire of Muscadet.

2008 Muscadet "Butte de la Roche" de Pierre-Marie 30.00

Domaine Catherine & Pierre Breton, Vouvray

This is what Chenin is all about. Smell the beeswax on the nose, taste the quince and crunchy pear flecked with almonds before the sinewy acidity releases and sends the flavours to all corners of the mouth. Breton's wines have that sublime balance of fruit and mineral tension.

2010 Vouvray sec "La Dilettante" 30.50

Domaine St Nicolas, Thierry Michon, Fiefs-Vendéen

Working on schist and silex a flint stone's throw away from the Atlantic, Thierry is the prophet of biodynamics in this tiny viticultural area. His vineyards never see a non-organic product. He raises his own cows simply for the manure they produce which he religiously spreads between the vines. A blend of Chenin, Chardonnay and Grolleau Gris from clay schist soils Les Clous has beautifully distinctive aromas of the forest and the sea, and flavours of candied fruit with a wet rock element. It finishes almost dry and has the hallmark refreshing acidity of cool-climate wines. Thierry's wines encapsulate the life of brine.

2010 Vin de Brem, Cuvée Les Clous 32.50

La Coulée d'Ambrosia, Jean-François Chêne, Layon

A 4 ha estate on limestone clay soils with schists and silex in Beaulieu sur Layon, practising and certified for organic viticulture since 2005. Now Jean-François is well along on the road to biodynamics. He specialises in Chenin in all shapes and sizes and loves to make a "Jura-style" wine under a yeast veil. This is his lovely user-friendly, basket-of-fruit-wine, a flavoursome apple compote wine for easy-drinking.

2008 Paniers de Fruits 34.00

Nantes to Nevers – The Journey of the Loire continued...

I have forgotten to tell you, Reader, that Jacques never went anywhere without a gourd filled with the best wine, which used to hang from the pommel of his saddle. Every time his master interrupted him with a question that was a little long he would unfasten his gourd, throw back his head, raise the gourd above it and pour a stream of its contents into his mouth, only putting it back when his master had stopped speaking. I have also forgotten to tell you that in moments which required reflection his first impulse was to ask his gourd. Were it a matter of resolving a moral question., discussing an event, choosing one road rather than another, beginning, continuing or abandoning a transaction, weighing up the advantages or disadvantages of a political matter, a commercial or financial speculation, the wisdom or folly of a law... his first word was, "Let us consult the gourd", and his last word, "That is the opinion of the gourd and my own".
Jacques The Fatalist – Diderot (presumably the origin of the expression "Gourd help me"?)

Domaine Agnès & René Mosse, Anjou

..toutefois l'absorption de 184646 bouteilles de vin d'Anjou ne rendit pas sa langue moins habile...Rabelais

Agnes and René owned a wine bar/shop in Tours before embarking on their apprenticeship to become vigneron. They studied under Puzelat and Chaussard (q.v.) before buying their estate in the Coteaux-du-Layon area of Anjou. The vines are planted on a mixture of slate and sandstone over decomposed schist and the Mosses work the land with biodynamic preparations. Vinification is slow and natural in old barrels. Straw-yellow in colour with aromas of apples, herbs, hay and pollen this is wonderfully mouthfilling Chenin equally adept in the fish and chicken departments.

2010 Anjou Blanc

37.00

Domaine Damien Laureau, Savennières

Wine has been made in the fields that Domaine Laureau currently occupy, on the edge of the city of Angers, since the middle ages. To the west of Angers, on the north bank of the Loire river, it is possible to create probably the most intellectually engaging, ageworthy Chenin Blanc in the world. The nose of Les Genêts offers acacia honey, marzipan and lanolin whilst the palate is all mulching apples, honey and beeswax.

1999 Savennières "Les Genêts"

37.00

Thierry Puzelat, Touraine

Crazy old-vine, mutant, magical Sauvignon Blanc, so ripe it turns into an image of abundant floral extract dipped in honey and grapefruit marmalade. The mid amber colour hints at skin contact whilst the nose develops from an initial display of primary fruit to reveal some deep, nutty tones. A playful palette (sic) of apples, figs and green plums interspersed with fennel and herbs and finishing on aromas of dry honey and earth. The wine picks up spice from the lees and has a waxy/warm butter quality suggestive of malolactic fermentation and is additionally mellowed by its passage in old barrels.

2010 Buisson Pouilleux Vieilles Vignes

38.00

Domaine Frantz Saumon, Montlouis

The Montlouis is smooth with herby, appley fruit kept fresh with high acidity. Lovely nose of clover and wild honey over quinces and ripe apricots, velvety texture in a mouth with a touch of sweetness. Just off- dry but fresh, pure and linear. Romorantin is renowned for its high acidity though the nose does not betray it, with its lemon rind and spice. But it's a driving force on the palate which shows crunchy, tart even, green apple, tempered by a savoury edge and a fine, nutty spine. Rolling not angular acidity makes for a long, lip-smacking, bone dry finish. Lovely depth of flavour and taffeta richness.

2010 Romorantin

39.50

Domaine Sébastien Riffault, Sancerre

Unfiltered, unfinned Sancerre. What's it like? What isn't it like might be the easier question. If you fancy a trot around a green paddock then this is probably not your garden centre bag of grass-cuttings Sauvignon; if you prefer a thunderous gallop through wild forests and murky thickets, then this turbid yeasty wine will lead you to all manner of unexpected places.

2008 Sancerre blanc "Akméniné"

45.50

Nantes to Nevers – The Journey of the Loire continued...

Plus mon Loyre Gaulois, que le Tybre Latin,
Plus mon petit Lyre, que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin la douceur Angevin

Joachim du Bellay

Domaine Alexandre Bain, Pouilly-Fumé

Unusual style of Pouilly harvested late, aged in old barrels and bottled without filtration and only a minimum of sulphur. Buttercup yellow and sporting very attractive aromas of pink grapefruit and ripe kiwi. The palate encompasses flavours of quince and pear with just a hint of crystallised sweets and the mouth is warm, mellow, a touch sweet and almost spicy on the finish.

2010 Pouilly-Fumé

47.50

Les Vignes Herbel, Nadège Lelandais & Laurent Herbel, Anjou

Les Vignes Herbel is the project of Laurent Herbel and Nadège Lelandais who started in 2005 and now have a three-hectare parcel of vines at Rochefort-sur-Loire called La Pointe on a terroir of purple schist and clay. This includes 1.4 ha of Chenin Blanc planted in 1920 and 1.6 ha of Cabernet (70% Franc and 30% Sauvignon) planted in 1974. They farm organically and biodynamically. La Pointe Chenin 1921 is a true vin de garde with a long élevage in wood. A beautiful wine that expresses the potential of the Chenin. Earthy and rich with a great balance of sweet fruit, acid and minerality.

2008 "La Pointe Chenin Vieilles Vignes de 1920"

49.00

Domaine Stéphane Bernaudeau, Anjou

80-year-old low-yielding Chenin vines. Grapes are first pressed then fermented in (used) oak barrels for twelve months. Stéphane allows a partial malolactic intentionally in order to conserve the wine's acidity. The wine is then aged for twelve months in used oak barrels, is neither filtered, nor fined and given a small amount of sulphur. So where does this sit in our Chenin pantheon? Roasted almonds leading into beeswax, some sweet apples and quinces opening out to reveal some beautiful aromas and flavours of fresh cut pineapple and honey. Sumptuous and rich with a suggestion of waxed apples, herbs and cheese, a touch of wood tannin grip. A profound wine.

2009 Vin de France "Terres Blanches"

53.50

The quick Chenin check list (no tongue-twister intended)

Vouvray sec La Dilettante, Catherine & Pierre Breton – *tender, mellow, just off-dry*
Savennières Les Genêts, Domaine Laureau – *mature golden Chenin, sherry notes, cider apples and truffle*
Paniers des Fruits, La Coulée d'Ambrosia – *easy-drinking, apple compote flavours*
Vin de France, Stéphane Bernaudeau – *ripe pears & apples, cloves, vanilla, thrilling acidity*
Anjou Blanc, Dne Agnès & René Mosse – *rich mouthfilling Chenin, bright, natural, orchard explosion*
La Pointe Vieilles Vignes de Chenin 1920, Les Vignes Herbel – *dry, pure, touch of sherry, very long*

Rhône to Roussillon...

These Mediterranean wines have a warmth and richness to them and seem to absorb floral and herbal notes from the garrigue and sun-bleached stone that surrounds or is a constituent part of the vineyards in the Languedoc and the Rhône. The grape varieties interpret the terroir aptly, from the soft, cushioned Grenache Blanc to the herb-and- sweet-hay scented Roussanne and the familiar honeysuckle aromas of Viognier.

That which is not slightly distorted lacks sensible appeal; from which it follows that irregularity — that is to say, the unexpected, surprise and astonishment, are an essential part and characteristic of beauty.

BAUDELAIRE

Château de la Mirande, Joseph Albajan, Languedoc

From an old domaine overlooking the Etang de Thau this classic dry Picpoul is a right oyster-doisterer with green fruits and herbs. Resinous, ample mouthfeel with savoury flavours of iodine, yellow plum and pepper.

2010 Picpoul de Pinet 21.00

Château Mourgues du Grès, Anne & François Collard, Languedoc

From a cool microclimate a blend of white Grenache, Roussanne & Vermentino. Fresh and fruity: white flowers and citrus.

2010 Costières de Nîmes blanc "Galets Dorés" 23.50

Domaine de Majas, Roussillon

An equal blend of Macabeu-Rolle organically farmed and fermented with native yeasts and minimal intervention resulting in freshness of fruit and lively minerality. Tangy and flavoursome with lime peel notes and dried fruits (pears, apricots) and garrigue herbs .

2010 Vin de Pays des Cotes Catalanes 28.00

Les Foulards Rouge, Jean-François Nicq, Roussillon

Zip sulphites, zip filtration, zip fining. This does what it says on the label, literally destroying one's thirst with its saline, crushed mineral and citric zing. It practically fizzes onto the tongue like a bouncy Txacoli. A blend of Muscat, Macabeu and Grenache Blanc, but I doubt you would be able to tell.

2010 Vin de Table La Soif du Mal Blanc 31.50

Les Champs Libres, Dard & Souhaut, Ardèche

No lard-di-da numbers these but 'umble natural wines co-scripted by the René Jean Dard and Hervé Souhaut. The proof is in the cheerful drinking. The white Lard is a choice Grenache Blanc, golden-yellow and vinous; fleshy fruits dominate the nose and mouth, in particular, poached pears and roasted pineapple. The finish is opulent, waxy and spicy.

2010 Lard des Choix Blanc 33.00

Clos Fantine, Famille Andrieu, Languedoc

Nowt-taken-out Terret Blanc. The Terret vines are 90 years old, yields are 15hl/ha with a strict selection. Intense dry white with mix of cider apple, vermouth and honey aromatics and incredibly pure citrus-flecked palate. Carafe it, turn down the lights and let it have its wicked way with you.

2009 Valcabrières Blanc 43.50

Domaine Romaneaux-Destezet, Béatrice & Hervé Souhaut, Ardèche

From biodynamic vineyards on granitic soils a beautifully subtle wine with aromas of white flowers, herbs and grass leading into a palate of dried citrus and apple and delicate garrigue notes on the finish.

2010 Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche Viognier/Roussanne 43.50

Rhône to Roussillon continued...

An example of early food and wine matching advice from a wine merchant in (the caves of) Lascaux: Bison with white wine, Mastodon with red wine.

Oberon Kant's Big Book of Wine

White wine is but a drop in the ocean in terms of production in the Med. In the northern Rhône we find some Marsanne and Roussanne, and of course, Condrieu is the home for the Viognier grape in all its aromatic, spicy glory. Into the southern Rhône whites tend to be field blends of anything that going: Clairette, Bourboulenc and Vermentino (sometimes known as Rolle) feature strongly. These are distinctive, vinous wines, sometimes oily in texture with more than a whiff of lime-flower and garrigue herbs. As we move into the Languedoc towards the Roussillon we find the aforementioned grapes plus Muscat (in dry and sweet incarnations) as well as the Catalan grapes: Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris and Macabeu. There are some terrific whites in the Roussillon; here, incredibly low yields from ancient vines allied to terrific terroir produce wines with striking power but also surprising balance – minerality is the key.

Clos du Gravillas, Nicole & John Bojanowski, Languedoc

Gris is good as Gordon Gecko might have said, specifically Grenache Gris from very old vines. 12 months resting on the fine lees. Dry and rich, with a good balance of green apple and mineral flavours, and an elegant mouth feel, L'Inattendu is perfect for accompanying a fish dish or even a strong cheese (Comte is suggested). There is lovely custard apple fruit allied to dried apricot, vanilla, garrigue notes of herbs and all sorts of ginger and white pepper on the finish. The warmth of the alcohol does not detract but rounds the mouth; it is a textural wine with the reverberating minerality of terroir from those hot stones which characterise the Gravillas terroir.

2010 Minervois Blanc "L'Inattendu" 45.50

Domaine Le Casot des Mailloles, Banyuls

Wild, wild wine. Mad wine. Almost amber in colour and slightly hazy it has that warming aroma of fermenting cider apples. There's bite and texture aplenty, and, although rich, it is as mineral as the stones out of which these bleached old vines grow...

2008 Tir à Blanc, Grenache Blanc/Macabeu 48.50

Domaine Les Eminades, Paticia & Luc Bettoni, Languedoc

Saint Chinian appellation has extended to whites only five years ago and for less than 5% of all productions. This St. Chinian is a blend of 80% Grenache 20% Marsanne matured in barrels for eleven months on the fine lees with a malolactic fermentation. It is all about nutty fruit, creamy texture and long finish.

2010 Saint Chinian Blanc "Montmajou" 55.00

Domaine Matassa, Roussillon

Made by Tom Lubbe this is another biodynamic, low sulphur wine which amply demonstrates why the Roussillon is one of the most exciting wine regions in France. Hugely smoky, salty, savoury and mineral with strong resinous notes (terebinth) Matassa Blanc is made from old Grenache Gris and Maccabeu and contrives to be rich (yet only 13%) and elegant at the same time, a Goliath with a stonking nose and twinkling toes. (Professional tasting note).

2008 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes Blanc 58.00

Domaine Stéphane Othéguy, Rhône

Viognier reaches its most eloquent and elegant expression in Condrieu in the northern Rhône. This Condrieu is produced from a tiny 0.2 ha vineyard near the medieval town of Malleval. Full-bodied, powerful and aromatic with aromas of lime-blossom and honeysuckle, vinous and spicy with vanillin notes, dried citrus fruits and apricots and a flinty finish.

2009 Condrieu 70.00

The Eastern Borders – From Alsace to the Alps

Linking the great aromatic wines of Alsace (to the lesser known ones of Luxembourg) to Jura with its extraordinary history and unabashed pride in traditional oxidative white wines (or vins jaunes) to the crystalline purity and elegance of the wines from vines that nestle in the foothills of the Alps ("whose vast walls have pinnacle in clouds their snowy scalps") such as Savoie and Valle d'Aosta (which we've annexed from Italian rule).

Cave de Morgex et de la Salle, Valle d'Aosta

In the shadow of Mont Blanc these are some of the highest vineyards in Europe and the home of extreme viticulture. This is the home of the frost-and-snow-resistant Prié Blanc grape a.k.a Blanc de Morgex. Straw-yellow in colour, with pale green nuances, its bouquet evokes mountain herbs with notes of fresh hay. Hawthorn, broom, lemon, almond, and apple-skin jostle delicately on the nose whilst the acidity scythes across the palate like freshly waxed skis. This has all the charm of an apple-cheeked Heidi being pursued across an Alpine meadow by a malevolent Renault Mégane.

2010 Blanc de Morgex "Rayon" 25.50

Domaine Bruno Lupin, Savoie

Roussette de Savoie is also known as Altesse. Pear, gingerbread, spice and honey with a touch of nougat. The acidity of the wine combined with the crunchy minerality is the taste equivalent of let your tongue roller skate down a glacier.

2010 Roussette de Savoie "Cru Frangy" 26.00

Domaine Audrey & Christian Binner, Alsace

The Binner family has owned vines in Alsace since 1770 and today they practice organic and biodynamic agriculture, neither fine nor filter the wine, use only natural yeasts, use minimal sulphur, etc... All the wines are aged in 100 year old big foudres. The Pinot Gris is a powerhouse; the product of an exceptionally long fermentation and made from late harvested grapes. Golden colour, intensely mouthfilling with notes of plum jam, apricot and greengage, sweet and spicy finish. Les Saveurs is a blend of Sylvaner, Auxerrois, Gewurztraminer and Pinot Gris; it is surprisingly vinous with flavours of apples, poached pears and grapefruit.

2009 Les Saveurs 26.50
2009 Riesling d'Ammerschwih 30.50
1995 Pinot Gris Cuvée Beatrice 52.00

Domaine Pierre Frick, Jean-Pierre Frick, Alsace

At the forefront of the biodynamic movement Jean-Pierre Frick makes wines that are scrupulously natural. From promoting biodiversity in the vineyard to hand harvesting all the grapes to using little and even no sulphur during the winemaking to ageing in large old oak casks, Jean-Pierre aspires to capture the essence of the grape and also the flavour of the terroir. His Chasselas (the grape originates in Switzerland), vinified without the addition of sulphur, is left on the lees. It is quite vinous reminiscent of greengage, mirabelle plums and dried banana. The Riesling is dry with hints of blackcurrant bud, tobacco and mineral – impressively lively in the mouth. The Riesling Grand cru is a wine of considerable complexity and develops intriguingly in the glass. Notes here of praline, vanilla and mineral; it opens to reveal yellow fruits and menthol and has a long, fresh, almost salty finish with flickering minerality.

2009 Chasselas Vinifié Sans Soufre 29.00
2004 Riesling Bihl 31.50
2009 Riesling Grand cru "Vorbourg" 43.50

Domaine Albert Mann, Jacky Barthelme, Alsace

Organic estate making limpid wines of delightful freshness. Apple, white pear, spice, mineral and wax integrate within a sinewy structure. The Schlossberg from one of the best crus in Alsace, has wonderful intensity with high volume fruit and magnificent minerality. These wines are different to the Frick (see above) with the accent on the fruit rather than the funk.

2009 Riesling Tradition 32.50
2009 Riesling Grand cru "Schlossberg" 58.00

Domaine Mathis Bastian, Luxembourg

"On a clear day, from the terrace you can't see Luxembourg at all... this is because a tree is in the way" (Alan Coren)

Bonny Mosel Riesling from the other side of the river. Pale yellow with green tints, chalky mineral notes, clean citrus flavours (lime), quite steely, finishing just off dry.

2009 Riesling Grand Premier Cru 35.00

The Eastern Borders – From Alsace to the Alps

"Hills peep over hills/Alps on Alps arise..."

I remember at Chamouni – in the very eyes of Mont Blanc – hearing another woman – English also – exclaim to her party – "did you ever see any thing more *rural*".

Lord Byron, Journal entry for September 17, 1816.

Domaine Belluard, Haute-Savoie

Dominique Belluard is the defender of the forgotten Gringet grape in the terroir of Mont Blanc. Biodynamic viticulture, fermentation in egg-shaped cement vats on the native yeasts. As glacial as a Hitchcock heroine with aromas of white flowers and jasmine, citrus-edged with a hint of white peach, jasmine and violet and a twist of aniseed to finish. "Grandes Jorasses", meanwhile, is named after a spectacular peak, located on the east ridge of the Mont Blanc Massif. This wine combines the aromatic definition of Riesling with the almost luscious mouthfeel of a Pinot Gris. It is yellow gold with notes of yellow-fleshed peaches, apricot nectar, honey and fresh ginger, an almost oily texture (something of pine resin?) and mellow yet delineated acidity. The grape variety is Altesse aka Roussette de Savoie.

2009 Vin de Savoie-Ayze Gringet "Les Alpes"	36.00
2008 Vin de Savoie-Ayze "Grandes Jorasses"	39.00

Domaine Daniel Dugois, Arbois

This authentic Savagnin (the traditional grape of Jura), deriving its salty-sherry like flavours from a period of brief period of ageing under a veil of thick yeast, tastes of bruised apples, fresh walnut, vanilla and caramel. Watch out also for amazing aromas of fresh curry powder with fenugreek to the fore. Delicious lemony acidity makes this a joy to drink. Try as an alternative to sherry or an accompaniment to cheese.

2007 Arbois Savagnin	44.00
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Les Crêtes, Costantino Charrère, Val d'Aosta

Have Vacherin, need white of pristine freshness. The Petite Arvine is a variety that grows on the Swiss borders. It expresses superbly the fragrance of meadows: think broom, jasmine and yellow flowers with fine ripe grapefruit citrus and a cool, lithe minerality.

2010 Petite Arvine "Vigne Champorette"	45.00
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Domaine Jean-François Ganevat, Côtes du Jura

Old vines, unfiltered and unsulphured these amazingly pure Chardonnays are pale gold with scents of honey, quinces and white flowers. The main difference is the age of the vines (Grusse en Billat is old, but Grandes Teppes is from 85-100 year old vines, a veritable grand-daddy). What wines! From 20hl/ha (c'est la folie) Ganevat achieves intensity with drinkability. Part ageing in old foudres (big barrels) gives these Chardonnays their distinctiveness. An example of "Jura-prudence" would be the decision to switch from Burgundy to these wines. The Savagnin, from a wonderful terroir, provides a fascinating contrast to the example of Daniel Dugois (see below). This is more mineral with a lemony streak underpinning the yeastiness.

2008 Chardonnay, Grusse en Billat	48.00
2008 Savagnin Ouillé Chalasses Marne	59.50
2003 Vin Jaune Savagnin Vert – 62cl	61.00

Domaine Emmanuel Houillon, Arbois

Emmanuel Houillon is the pope of purity. Organic viticulture allied to wild yeast ferments and zero sulphur makes for seriously natural wines. This has delicate flavours and aromas of mushrooms, wet earth, toasted nuts, honey, and faded flowers whilst retaining fantastic freshness.

2003 Arbois Pupillin Savagnin – 50cl	49.50
2007 Arbois Pupillin blanc Savagnin/Chardonnay	63.00

Périgord to the Pyrenees – The Atlantic Influence

From the borders of Bordeaux to the Basque country these are wines that are strongly influenced by the Atlantic. Long growing seasons ensure a balance of ripe fruit and refreshing acidity. Here is also a treasure trove of interesting indigenous grape varieties: Sémillon and Muscadelle (Bergerac); Mauzac and Ondenc (Gaillac) and Gros & Petit Manseng, Courbu and Arrufiac (Pacherenc, Jurançon and Irouléguay).

Domaine de Ménard, Gascogne

Racy Gascon blend of Gros Manseng and Ugni Blanc, elegant and aromatic, with beautifully defined citrus flavours of lemon and grapefruit and mineral notes of chalk and seashell

2010 Côtes de Gascogne, Cuvée Marine 17.00

Château Tour des Gendres, Luc de Conti, Bergerac

Luc de Conti works biodynamically amongst the vines. He is also a prolific practitioner of batonnage which helps to enrich his wines. This blend of Sémillon, Sauvignon and Muscadelle has notes of peach and apricot with ginger and white pepper and a nice limey twang to finish.

2010 Bergerac blanc "Cuvée des Conti" 24.00

Clos Lapeyre, Jean-Bernard Larrieu, Jurançon

An energetic breath of Pyrenean freshness. The straight sec is 100% Gros Manseng with thrilling grapefruit acidity that ricochets around the mouth. The vitatge vielh (old vines in Occitan) is an extraordinary blend of Gros, Petit Manseng and Courbu. Golden colour, marzipan and sugared pink grapefruit on the nose, thoroughly exotic hints of coconut and mango in the mouth with brilliant, bracing pineapple-flecked acidity.

2010 Jurançon sec 25.00
2008 Jurançon sec, "vitatge vielh" 32.50

Domaine les Tres Cantous, Bernard Plageoles, Gaillac

The Plageoles have resurrected the reputation of the Ondenc ancient variety. Aromas of quince, cider apple and gingerbread, hint of sherry on the nose, soft and mellow in the mouth. One for the collectors of grape arcana. Mauzac is somewhat of a Plageoles specialty. This dry version is delicate and tastes of apples, limes and a hint of almonds.

2008 Ondenc sec 31.00

Domaine des Causse-Marines, Patrice Lescarret, Gaillac

A fascinating Gaillacoise cocktail of native grapes: Mauzac, Loin de l'Oeil and Ondenc Les Greilles exhibits fragrant apple-blossom aromas and vibrant fruit. Floral, fruity and herbal it is understated and yet happily satisfying with good length and rich pulpy mouthfeel.

2008 Gaillac blanc "Les Greilles" 34.00

Domaine Arretxea, Michel & Thérèse Riouspeyrou, Irouléguay

Biodynamic. Gros & Petit Manseng and Courbu. Rich, waxy pearfruit, bright acidity and vibrant minerality, almost profound. Decant and drink with pleasure to appease the fleas that tease in the Pyrenees.

2010 Irouléguay blanc "Hegoxuri" 52.00

White Burgundy

Outside you may hear the great gusts as they go
By Foy, by Duerne, and the hills of Lerraulx,
But the rain he may rain, and the wind he may blow,
If the Devil's above there's good liquor below.
So it abound,
Pass it around,
Burgundy's Burgundy all the year round.

(Hilaire Belloc – Drinking Song, On The Excellence of Burgundy)

Domaine du Corps de Garde, Ghislaine et Jean-Hugues Goisot

Racy, green and nerveux – the best Aligoté in the Yonne (and a damn good one in the Hither)

2010 Bourgogne-Aligoté 29.00

Domaine Parize & Fils

A rich brew of quince, honeydew and acacia – lovely Givry which doesn't see a stave of oak

2010 Givry blanc « Champ Pourrot » 32.00

Domaine Arnaud Combiere

Naked, terroir-driven Chardonnay, being unoaked with a delicate nose of yellow apples releasing into a beautifully crisp palate with notes of almond-butter and citrus.

2010 Saint-Véran « Les Mandeliers » 32.50

Domaine de la Cadette

The Melon (same grape as Muscadet) has a pale lemon-yellow colour, a bright, clean nose, a zingy palate reminiscent of lime-zest and oyster shell and just a hint of ginger and white pepper from the yeast lees. Oysters and smoked fish, beware; this wine has your number and is coming to get you. La Saulnier vineyard is a beautiful parcel of land situated on an old road once used by salt smugglers, who extracted contraband salt from the water at the nearby "Fontaines Salées". This wine was bottled in March 2010 after spending approximately six months in vats. It has a liveliness and freshness that is very appealing for such an elegant wine. Think Chablis. Then think Chablis again.

2010 Melon de Bourgogne 33.00

2009 Bourgogne Blanc « Les Saulniers » 35.00

Domaine Philippe & Gérard Valette

With lovely intensity of colour it bequeaths aromas of white flowers, hazelnuts and grapefruit – in the mouth the wine combines richness, tension and acidity and a sensation of powerful minerality. The Viré-Clessé has smoky pear and baked apple aromas, with baking spices and anise building with aeration. Deep and chewy, with concentrated orchard fruit flavours and bitter lime zest on the close. This really clings to the palate.

2010 Mâcon-Villages 35.00

Clos des Vignes du Maynes, Julien Guillot

Complex natural wine made with no addition of sulphur. Fermentation is in barrels with wild yeast. The wine is left on the lees and aged eleven months. Its striking appearance may be described as a lovely pale gold. Initially, the nose releases voluptuous aromas of exotic fruit and white flowers (acacia). Once it has opened up, the bouquet evolves and notes of citrus fruit and pineapple may be distinguished along with pollen, truffle and grilled almond. Macon plus-plus.

2009 Mâcon-Cruzille "Aragonite" 44.50

White Burgundy continued...

"You needn't tell me that a man who doesn't love oysters and asparagus and good wines has got a soul, or a stomach either. He's simply got the instinct for being unhappy highly developed."
Clovis, in "The Match-Maker" (Saki)

Château de Béru

Vines on a bed of clay and limestone sprinkled with fossilized oyster shells, the most classic Chablis terroir you can find. On his eight hectare vineyards nestling on the slopes of the Chablis Grand Cru foothills Eric de Béru produces a golden Chablis of mature roundness and delicacy lifted with minerality.

2009 Chablis 45.00

Domaine de Chassorney, Frédéric Cossard

Fred Cossard's tiny 4-hectare estate in the heart of Saint-Romain. As he says himself: "90% of the wine is made in the vineyard". These are beautiful, crystal-pure Chardonnays with marked minerality and lemon acidity. Bigotes is named after a Jacques Brel ditty. The tears of limestone are converted into a tight-corseted, ascetic white. There's nothing spare in this wine, the palate is virtually sliced with a lemony (or liminy) snickersnee of acidity and the merest flicker of vanilla and toasted nut highlights rather than contrasts the edginess of the wine.

2007 Bourgogne Blanc "Bigotes" 46.50

Domaine Hubert Lamy

Olivier (son of Hubert) Lamy seeks to make stylish wines that are refined and racy, and which underscore St. Aubin's mineral character. La Princée is bready on the nose with clean, crisp, peach-kernel and lime-fruited aromas emerging. Lovely freshness and cleanness on the palate.

2008 Saint-Aubin Blanc "La Princée" 52.50

Domaine Henri Buisson

Meursault "Les Chevalières" is from 60 year old vines on marl, limestone terroir. The grapes are hand harvested and there is a further selection on the sorting table. After a 50% de-stemming and light crushing the wine ferments on the indigenous yeasts before being matured for twelve months on the lees in French oak barrel, 20% of which are new. Les Chevalières is pale gold in colour shot through with green flecks. This ripe, harmonious Meursault has well integrated oak aromas richly layering the floral, apple bouquet with nuances of butter, green almond and toasted bread. The silky, mouth-filling texture is tantalizing and very long.

2009 Mersault Les Chevalières 68.00

Domaine Bzikot

Silky, finely-constructed palate revealing fresh butter, hazelnut and fresh fruits and also a lovely citrus freshness to round off.

2008 Puligny-Montrachet 1er cru "Perrières" 70.00

Frédéric Cossard

Narvaux is a very high-altitude, steep-sloped, stony-soiled site in Meursault. While not a premier cru, it is nestled above Meursault-Genévrières, one of the mightiest vineyards in the appellation. Cossard typically aims for a style that reflects the lighter, more mineral style of wines from this terroir and this Narvaux has vim and vigour a-plenty. The Chassagne is more on the white flesh fruit with delicious undertones of puréed chestnuts and churned butter tied together with a ribbon of lemony acidity. Cossard lets the wild yeasts to do their work and allows the wines to express their potential in an admirably understated way.

2007 Meursault "Narvaux" 74.00

2007 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er cru "Abbaye Morgeot" 85.00

ITALIAN WHITES

From the Swiss Borders to Slovenia – Northern Italy

White wines influenced by the proximity of the western Alps and Dolomites. In Alto-Adige, also known as the Sud-Tirol, the white wines are highly aromatic yet also mineral at the same time. Planted on steep slopes here are some the best examples of Sylvaner, Gewürztraminer and Veltliner in the world. In Friuli many growers are working biodynamically in the vineyard with wild yeast ferments and prolonged skin contact to make wines that are amber in colour with rich mouthfeel and delicate spiciness.

Southern Italy and the Islands

Cool microclimates, maritime proximity and planting at altitude benefits a bewildering array of interesting grape varieties (Vermentino, Verdicchio, Greco, Fiano, Falanghina and Inzolia amongst others). These varieties, when made in a traditional fashion, and not slathered in oak or neutralised by cold fermentation, have delicious, subtle flavours and are the perfect accompaniment to a wide range of seafood.

San Lorenzo, Natalino Crognaletti, Marche

Brilliant little wine that scours every taste bud on the tongue with electrifying acidity. Natalino's Verdicchio is a pale yellow wine with greenish tones and a delicate scent of country herbs and apple; its taste has a fresh lime trace which makes this wine particularly fragrant and it finishes in the mouth with flavours of dried spice.

2010 Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi "Gino" 23.00

Ciu Ciu, Marche

Golden organic wine with nose of broom & apple-blossom, secondary notes of hazelnut and plum followed by a hint of vanilla. The Pecorino grape is named not after the cheese, but supposedly after the local sheep who enjoyed munching on it!

2010 Offida Pecorino "Le Merlettaie" 24.50

Matthia Barzaghi, Toscana

Mattia has been farming the estate organically since he established it in 2007 and has since moved towards biodynamics. He loves animals - he and his wife share the estate with two cats, a dog, two horses, and two donkeys, not to mention the farm animals: they keep a rare breed of pig: 'Cinta Senese' that provides the organic ham and salami which they sell in their farm shop, and also a little-known breed of sheep called Camerun. This is Vernaccia that you want with seafood: salty, creamy, nutty, tangy with that typical dry restraint. It has the crunch of iceberg lettuce and is as cool as the other side of your pillow.

2010 Vernaccia di San Gimignano "Impronta" 30.00

Vittoria Bera, Piemonte

The "Arcese" is a pleasant fusion, but not confusion, of three Piemontese indigenous white grape varieties: Favorita, Arneis and Cortese, a blend that works to balance aroma, texture and acidity to excellent effect. A churn of yeast, peach skin, almond blossom and smoky minerals. The palate is alive, prickly, cidery and tangy – drinking it is like attaching electrodes to your taste buds.

2009 Vino Bianco "Arcese" 33.00

Arianna Occhipinti, Sicilia

The cepage for the SP 68 Bianco is two obscure Sicilian varieties: Zibibbo (a regional name for Muscat of Alexandria) and Albanella. Zibibbo doo-dah. The nose offers notes of white flowers, pink grapefruit, lychee, fresh oregano, and spice. It's a deeply aromatic wine that is surprisingly light on the palate (11.5% alcohol). There's some maceration on the skins, so you'll get a bit of tannin on the finish along with an intriguing olive-y note.

2010 SP 68 Bianco 33.00

Azienda Agricola Colombaia, Toscana

From a small estate of 4ha only, this white is made of Trebbiano and Malvasia. It's light, mineral, subtle and sapid. Three days maceration on skins give it a unique aromatic profile.

2008 Bianco Toscano I.G.T. 37.50

Italian whites continued...

Benjamin Zidarich, Friuli

A biodynamic grower with a tiny estate with vineyards on Slovenian border. An effusion of spices, pears, jasmine and flowers, Zidarich's Vitovska has a rosy, cidery haze to it and enticing aromas of yellow cherries, apples, pears and smoke. In the mouth it is dense, yet not heavy at all, honeyed yet dry and packed full of mineral flavours.

2009 Vitovska 40.00

Kuenhof, Peter Pliger, Alto-Adige

This biodynamic Veltliner would give any Austrian version a run for its money. The wine offers the very essence of freshly cut apple, sappy yet very smooth, and complemented by layers of citrus and tropical fruits. An undercurrent of chalk and woodsmoke lingers on the palate, giving this elegant wine an added sense of structure. If ever a wine embodied the glorious tension between stone, sun, soil and water this is it.

2009 Grüner Veltliner 41.50

Dinavolo, AA Denavolo, Emilia-Romagna

The grapes are a lairy lot. 25% Malvasia di Candia Aromatico, 25% Marsanne (called Champagne locally although I can't believe that), 25% Ortrugo and 25% of an unidentified grape variety. Ignorance is bliss here and sod the DNA fingerprinting. The juice is intense yellow in colour, fleshy and high in acidity and its wines have a good alcohol level. Four months' maceration on the skins is followed by a year in tank. There is no wood. The length of maceration varies according to the richness of the vintage. Cloudy tangerine colour, initially some tiny bubbles beading on the rim. Floral (apricot blossom), but also suggestive of cider apples and red pears, clean, textured, vinous with a good yeasty bite, warm fruitskins, beeswax, dry cinnamon, oatmeal and apple acidity to complete the wine. Amazingly youthful and not just alive, actually living.

2008 Dinavolo Bianco 42.00

COS, Giusto Occhipinti, Sicilia

This pure low sulphur Grecaiuco is fermented in Giare (terracotta pots) and exhibits delicate notes of almond and straw, and some of that citrus quality. On the palate it is brisk and decisive, with a concentrated fruit quality that has a real tell-tale Italian bitter almond, or even Campari-like edge, to cool pear and lemon fruit. Where are the clams? Send in the clams.

2010 Pithos Bianco 42.50

Tenuta Grillo, Rita & Guido Zampaglione, Piemonte

Baccabianca is crazy Cortese with 30 plus days of skin contact giving the amber colour and grippiness adding texture and complexity to a wine which is all about nuance – gentle orchard fruits, herbs, dried spice and minerals. Like tiny wild apricots rolled in volcanic soil. So much more interesting than many sulphur-rich attenuated Gavi di Gavis – so pretentious they named them twice.

2006 Baccabianca 45.00

Tenute Dettori, Sardegna

This Vermentino wine from Romangia, made without chemicals or preservatives (apart from a homeopathic dose of sulphur) and after a resting period in cement vat is bottled, unfiltered and unclarified. Its colour is more cloudy amber than yellow; mind you there is not a hint of oxidation on the nose, nor on the palate. This is a fabulous wine; funky and captivating, revealing overripe citrus on the nose with hints of roasted almonds. On the palate is it rich, textured and fennel-oily with a real grainy grip. The citrus, mainly grapefruit pith with a touch of apple-skin by now, returns and flavours of ripe figs develop along with delicate nuances of flowers, ginger beer and granitic minerals.

2006 Dettori Bianco 48.00

La Stoppa, Emilia-Romagna

This amber-hued wine is the result of long skin contact with the grapes. Warm, spicy nose redolent of ripe apricots, some peppery spice and even a hint of grape skin tannin!

2007 Malvasia Ageno 49.50

Italian whites continued...

Dario Princic, Friuli

Princic is a purist without doubt and one who inhabits the wilder shores of biodynamia! But his wines are terrific. Jakot is the Tocai grape which we must now call Friulano. Long maceration takes the colour from the skins and gives this wine its peach-toned hues. The wine remains on the yeast lees acquiring flavour and yet it is remarkably pretty. Delicious.

2009 Jakot

51.50

I Vigneri, Salvo Foti, Sicilia

Salvo Foti is one of the most important winemakers and wine personalities in Sicily. Vinujanca is 50% Riesling Renano, 20% Greco with the remaining a mixture of Minella Bianca and Carricante from a recently replanted vineyard at 1,200 metres above sea level on the volcanic outcrops in the Etna region. A natural wine where all the work in the vineyard is done with traditional tools and the vinification - with wild yeasts - is in huge barrels at ambient temperature. Lemon-yellow with glints of gold, Vinujanca's initial impression is of incredible saltiness followed by vivid slanting Riesling lemon rind and lime zest notes surging into liquefied minerals. As it warms up in the glass, however, the wine opens up and mutates, unveiling powerful balsamic notes, fermented apples, baked bread and smoke - all held together by reverberating acidity. That the wine embraces these contradictory flavours and textures, and moves back and forth between them, signifies that it is a living wine.

2009 Vinujanca Bianco

56.50

San Lorenzo, Natalino Crognaletti, Marche

Nosing this you receive the impact of warm, bready aromas and the distinctive cut of iodine; the palate reinforces this and there are some nice hints of citrus peel and nut lingering around. Fantastic long finish; the acidity sashays around your mouth for some time and thrums your gums in a friendly fashion. If it's a ten year Verdicchio it's barely out of nappies.

2002 Marche Bianco

65.00

Edoardo Valentini, Abruzzo

The lowly Trebbiano grape, overcropped everywhere across Italy, becomes world-quality, refined, and ageworthy in Edoardo Valentini's (and now Francesco's) hands in Abruzzo. This wine shows a kaleidoscope of flavours that are creamy and crisp at once, ranging from freshly toasted hazelnuts to coconut shavings. This amazing, ever-changing white requires careful nurturing.

2003 Trebbiano d'Abruzzo

66.00

Honorary Iberian White(s)!

It was the ancient mariner
He stoppeth one in three
He looked me up, he looked me down
And then he said to me

I've scoured across the seven seas
I've hunted high and low
To source new grape varieties
To enter in a show

So bring forth a glass of Galician wine
To slake my salty thirst
Quick! A tumbler of Albarino, good fellow -
My albatross is about to burst!

Bodegas Ameztoi, Bodegas Ameztoi

From Bilbao to San Sebastian Basque Txacoli (or Chacoli) made from the native Hondarrabi Zuri, is served in the pinxtos bars poured with great panache from a great height into small tumblers. The pink-tinted liquid turns chalky-white, foams and eventually settles, retaining a lively spritz. The best wines are produced around the fishing village of Getaria where the vineyards are cut into incredibly steep terraced slopes overlooking the Bay of Biscay. The taste of Txacoli, well, to quote Dick Swiveller in the Old Curiosity Shop, it can't be tasted in a sip. It should be a back of the throat job, waiting for that jolting appley sourness to kick in. Gird your loins with some Cantabrian anchovies, stuffed pimentos or smoked fish and let the Txac attack!

2010 Txacoli de Guetaria	26.50
2010 Txacoli de Guetaria Rosado	26.50

Bodega Cauzon, Ramon Saavedra, Granada

Cauzon may sound like a race of inimical aliens from Star Trek: Voyager, but is in fact, a highly intelligent natural life form from Planet Granada. This is a totally natural wine. No oak is used and the wine is bottled without filtration or sulphur. The blend is 30% Sauvignon Blanc, 30% Viognier, 30% Chardonnay and 10% Torrontés. Although the vines are young the wine has considerable depth. Cauzon has a golden colour with slight cloudiness. Complex nose with the Viognier initially to the fore with fresh pear notes backed by honey with touches of sweet spice and ginger. The mouth is fascinating conveying apple, peach and white pepper, with nice acidity contributing to a long finish.

2009 Cauzon Blanco	39.50
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Bodega Barranco Oscuro, Manuel Valenzela, Granada

Barranco Oscuro is located near the village of Cádiz in the Sierra de la Contraviesa in the heart of the beautiful Alpujarra mountain range, South-East Andalucía, in Southern Spain. These are some of the highest vineyards in mainland Europe, up to 1,400m and from them one can see the sea (and Africa!) as well as the Iberian peninsula's highest mountain range, the Sierra Nevada, and its highest mountain, the Mulhacén. Tres Uvas comprises Vigiiega, Vermentino and Viognier in equal parts and its rich golden colour seems to hold the light hinting at pelagic depths. The complex nose is floral with ripe fruits, sweet spices, baked apple, medlar, yellow plum and some sherry notes. On decanting, the wine develops fresher citrus character. On the palate Tres Uvas is full bodied but not heavy, with ripe, almost bruised apple fruit, pearskin, hot ginger beer, malt, liquorice and intriguing curry spice (fenugreek and mustard seed). The finish is spectacular with amontillado sherry mixed with lemon citrus and concentrated mineral salts – the manages to be dry, savoury, warm, spicy and unbelievably moreish.

2008 Tres Uvas	59.50
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ROSÉ

"... when he opened the heavy door, the warm swallows of rosemary and wine, olive and garlic soared out of there, and their wings fluttered over my nose until I grew dizzy with pleasure".

Meir Shaley, Four Meals

Thomas et Cecile Carteron, Provence

The spirit of Provence, pale, crystalline and limpid. The nose is pretty, unveiling floral aromas of bergamot and sweet jasmine as well as bouquet of exotic and red berry fruits, whilst the palate picks up notes of mango and lychee with a more savoury edge of peach-stone and citrus.

2010 Côtes de Provence Rosé, Cuvée Elégance

22.50

Château Plaisance, Marc Penavayre, Fronton

75% Negrette; 20% Syrah; 5% Cabernet Franc. Bright pink hue, aromas of white flower, sweet currant, morello cherry and ribena. Good balance, harmonious and long.

2010 Côtes du Frontonnais Rosé

23.50

Château Hermitage Saint-Martin, Guillaume Enzo Fayard, Provence

If the sharp thorn produces delicate rosés (with apologies to Ovid) then G. Enzo Fayard is one pure prickle. The wine has a limpid pink hue, and real brilliance. With an exotic nose of guava and grapefruit and a fresh, lively palate with citrus fruits and apricot notes this admirable rosé pairs twinklingly with seafood la plancha and fish soup.

2009 Côtes de Provence Grande Cuvée "Enzo"

34.00

Amber wines, their dotty friends & lovable relations...

The Addam's family, mainly Pugsley (plus friends and odd relations) of white wines, spanning the spectrum from burnished gold, to churned butter yellow, through amber and copper – some as hazy as a lava lamp. The vinification in old barrels at ambient temperatures and a gentle exposure to air allows a controlled oxidation introducing fascinating secondary aromas of honey, truffle, earth and spice. Meanwhile, this is a historic tradition in the Jura (as well as Jerez, Sardegna and Marsala) of ageing wines for several years under a veil of yeast (flor).

In northern Italy, in particular, many growers like to keep the grape skins in contact with the juice to extract colour and even tannin. The resultant wines are complex and aromatic and merit being served not too cold and in a carafe.

2008 Sancerre blanc « Akméniné » Domaine Sébastien Riffault - Loire 45.50

Unfiltered, unfinned Sancerre. What's it like? What isn't it like might be the easier question. If you fancy a trot around a green paddock then this is probably not your garden centre bag of grass-cuttings Sauvignon; if you prefer a thunderous gallop through wild forests and murky thickets, then this turbid yeasty wine will lead you to all manner of unexpected places.

2008 Tir à Blanc, Grenache Blanc/Macabeu, Le Casot de Mailloles - Roussillon 48.50

Wild, wild wine. Mad wine. Almost amber in colour and slightly hazy it has that warming aroma of fermenting cider apples. There's bite and texture aplenty, and, although rich, it is as mineral as the stones out of which these bleached old vines grow...

2008 Savagnin Ouillé Chalasses Marne, Jean-François Ganevat - Jura 59.50

Savagnin, from a wonderful terroir, provides a fascinating contrast to the example of Daniel Dugois (see below). This is more mineral with a lemony streak underpinning the yeastiness.

2003 Vin Jaune Savagnin, Jean-François Ganevat – 62cl - Jura 61.00

Savagnin aged under the yeast veil for seven years and it still possesses a piercing youthfulness. Hints of yogurt, lemon butter, shaved almond and a panoply of dried spices.

2005 Arbois Savagnin, Daniel Dugois - Jura 44.00

This authentic Savagnin (the traditional grape of Jura), deriving its salty-sherry like flavours from a period of brief period of ageing under a veil of thick yeast, tastes of bruised apples, fresh walnut, vanilla and caramel. Watch out also for amazing aromas of fresh curry powder with fenugreek to the fore.

2003 Arbois Pupillin Savagnin, Emmanuel Houillon – 50cl - Jura 49.50

2007 Arbois Pupillin blanc Savagnin/Chardonnay, Emmanuel Houillon - Jura 63.00

Emmanuel Houillon is the pope of purity. Organic viticulture allied to wild yeast ferments and zero sulphur makes for seriously natural wines. This has delicate flavours and aromas of mushrooms, wet earth, toasted nuts, honey, and faded flowers whilst retaining fantastic freshness.

2006 Dettori Bianco, Tenute Dettori - Sardegna 48.00

On the palate it is rich, textured and fennel-oily with a real grainy grip. The citrus, mainly grapefruit pith with a touch of apple-skin by now, returns and flavours of ripe figs develop along with delicate nuances of flowers, ginger beer and granitic minerals

2006 Baccabianca, Tenuta Grillo, Rita & Guido Zampaglione – Piemonte 45.00

Baccabianca is crazy Cortese with 30 plus days of skin contact giving the amber colour and grippiness adding texture and complexity to a wine which is all about nuance – gentle orchard fruits, herbs, dried spice and minerals. Like tiny wild apricots rolled in volcanic soil. So much more interesting than many sulphur-rich attenuated Gavi di Gavis – so pretentious they named them twice.

2009 Vitovska, Benjamin Vitovska - Friuli 40.00

A biodynamic grower with a tiny estate with vineyards on Slovenian border. An effusion of spices, pears, jasmine and flowers, Zidarich's Vitovska has a rosy, cidery haze to it and enticing aromas of yellow cherries, apples, pears and smoke. In the mouth it is dense, yet not heavy at all, honeyed yet dry and packed full of mineral flavours.

Amber wines, their dotty friends & lovable relations cont...

2006 Malvasia Ageno, La Stoppa - Emilia

49.50

This amber-hued wine is the result of long skin contact with the grapes. Warm, spicy nose redolent of ripe apricots, some peppery spice and even a hint of grape skin tannin!

2007 Vino Bianco Jakot, Dario Princic - Friuli

51.50

Princic is a purist without doubt and one who inhabits the wilder shores of biodynamia! But his wines are terrific. Jakot is the Tocai grape which we must now call Friulano. Long maceration takes the colour from the skins and gives this wine its peach-toned hues. The wine remains on the yeast lees acquiring flavour and yet it is remarkably pretty. Delicious.

NV Vecchio Samperi Ventennale, Vino Liquoroso Marco de Bartoli - Sicilia

62.00

De Bartoli's take on the original dry Marsala is aged using the fractional blending method known as solera, made famous in Jerez. Using a battery of progressively smaller casks, De Bartoli continually "tops up" his oldest wines with wines from the next-oldest vintage, with the newest wines going in the largest cask at the end of the battery. Vecchio Samperi is more than 40 years old, with the smoky, nutty complexity of a fine sherry. But Vecchio Samperi is unfortified, just as all Marsala was before the British came along towards the end of the 18th century and added spirit to it. The wine (from Grillo) is dry, intense and mellow with flavours of chestnuts, brazil nuts and orange peel. Brilliant stuff.

2008 Dinavolo, AA Denavolo - Emilia-Romagna

42.00

The grapes are a lairy lot. 25% Malvasia di Candia Aromatico, 25% Marsanne (called Champagne locally although I can't believe that), 25% Ortrugo and 25% of an unidentified grape variety. Ignorance is bliss here and sod the DNA fingerprinting. The juice is intense yellow in colour, fleshy and high in acidity and its wines have a good alcohol level. Four months' maceration on the skins is followed by a year in tank. There is no wood. The length of maceration varies according to the richness of the vintage. Cloudy tangerine colour, initially some tiny bubbles beading on the rim. Floral (apricot blossom), but also suggestive of cider apples and red pears, clean, textured, vinous with a good yeasty bite, warm fruitskins, beeswax, dry cinnamon, oatmeal and apple acidity to complete the wine. Amazingly youthful and not just alive, actually living.

2002 Trebbiano d'Abruzzo, Edoardo Valentini - Abruzzo

66.00

The lowly Trebbiano grape, overcropped everywhere across Italy, becomes world-quality, refined, and ageworthy in Edoardo Valentini's (and now Francesco's) hands in Abruzzo. This wine shows a kaleidoscope of flavours that are creamy and crisp at once, ranging from freshly toasted hazelnuts to coconut shavings. This amazing, ever-changing white requires careful nurturing.

NEW WORLD - WHITES

Craig Hawkins, Swartland, South Africa

Craig is making uncompromisingly pure Chenin with amazing vivacity and attack with that fresh apple bite you are always looking for from the grape. There is a wonderful underlying minerality that gives the wine its essential composure. The wine is made from old bush vines on granitic soils, fermented on the wild yeasts and aged on the lees before bottling without filtration, fining and no sulphur.

2009 Testalonga El Bandito "Cortez"

54.25

Pyramid Valley, Mike & Claudia Weersing, North Canterbury

Mike and Claudia have managed these vineyards biodynamically from the very beginning, doing so by hand for the first two tractor-less years. This is a labour of love and of perfection: plant density is the highest in New Zealand, yields austere, and the vineyard environment - embracing soils and plants and animals and insects and above all, people - is lavished with care. Field of Fire Chardonnay (the name derives from a weed called twitch) has a glorious nose of baked peach, pate brisée, and yellow flowers - acacia and fennel blossom. Also a comfortable note of warm cornbread. Lush on entry, but quickly turns streamlined, from stony acidity and girdling phenolics: great volume and energy, condensing and accelerating on the palate.

2009 Fields of Fire Chardonnay

69.00

NEW WORLD – REDS

Bodega Cecchin, Mendoza, Argentina

Strict adherence to organic methods in the vineyard is not undermined by larding on the oak; the intention here is to represent the terroir and capture the essence of the fruit. The Malbec, a grape that Argentina has successfully appropriated, is made without the addition of sulphur and contrasts to the lavish, extractive, chocolate-cakey numbers that most wineries seem to churn out. Here one notices the acidity of the grape along with savoury red fruits, liquorice & fennel.

2008 Malbec sin sulfita

25.00

Tom Belford, Yarra Glen, Australia

Single vineyard Syrah not Shiraz – 100% carbonic maceration (à la Beaujolaise), some whole bunches, no sulphur added until just prior to bottling and just a smidge then. It's got a slightly reductive, empyreumatic nose at first, but that blows off and a perfume of bright fruit and spice takes over. The palate is fresh and nervy with good persistence. Think wood-smoke, think tapenade, think balsam, bay and ladle on the cracked black pepper. The real deal.

2010 Bobar Syrah

46.00

Anton von Klopper, Adelaide Hills, Australia

"Immediately we are seduced wild flowers and roses surround a fading camp fire, wet humus, underneath your soul the smell, simmered purity, waking up outdoors in a valley, nearby a stream, whispering with eucalypt forests and morning stroked sunshine, dazzled the campfire sighs its last breath. " Tasting c/o Sam Hughes, Natural Selection Theory.

A fresh eloquent Pinot, buoyant and primary, earth and flowers swathed in an aura of sensuality. Pleasure. Anton makes beautiful, linear, natural Pinot from his own (and his friends') biodynamically farmed tiny vineyards. Wild vines, wild yeasts, wild child...

2010 Monomeith Pinot Noir

62.00

FRENCH REDS

Anjou to Auvergne – From Elegant Cabernet Franc to Mountain Gamay

Gustave Flaubert, author of *Madame Bovary*, once wrote of the Loire valley: "The wind is mild without voluptuousness, the sun soft without ardour; the whole landscape pretty, varied in its monotony, light, gracious, but of a beauty which caresses without captivating, which charms without seducing, and which, in a word, has more common sense than grandeur and more spirit than poetry. It is France."

Clos des Roche Blanche, Catherine Roussel & Didier Barrouillet, Touraine

A beautiful natural wine that is fresh, utterly vibrant and charming beyond belief. Throbbing with healthy purple, the flavours are clean and crunchy, the palate full of sap and zip with a trace of graphite minerality bringing the wine to an exhilarating close. This is real grapes-to-bottle stuff. Cabernet Franc-Côt, since you ask.

2010 Pif (Cab Franc/Côt) 24.50

Domaine du Moulin, Isabelle & Hervé Villemade, Cheverny

Domaine du Moulin is located in Cour-Cheverny. This Cheverny is a silky, seductive blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay. A lovely sense of freshness on the palate with some musky, floral notes pure wild cherry and plum fruits with a touch of redcurrant lift.

2010 Cheverny Rouge 24.50

Domaine Maupertuis, Auvergne

This is a Gamay as nature intended, organic, unfiltered and unsulphured, as prickly as a hedgehog with ants in his pants, a dark pickled damson strut across the tongue. Drink with alacrity with Tome de Cantal.

2009 Vin de Table Gamay d'Auvergne "Pierres Noires" 26.00

Domaine des Roches-Neuves, Thierry Germain, Saumur

A blend of 33 vineyard plots all vinified separately the classic Saumur-Champigny has a lovely dark red colour with blueish tints, ripe smoky berry fruit and a gentle peppery finish.

2010 Saumur-Champigny 27.50

Domaine de la Garrelière, François Plouzeau, Touraine

François and Pascaline Plouzeau tend their 50 acres of biodynamic vineyards, near the village of Richelieu just to the south of Tours. The vineyards at Domaine de la Garrelière have been certified organic by Ecocert and biodynamic by biodyvin. They started working the land here (the estate once belonged to the Duc de Richelieu) in the 1970's, slowly bringing it back to life after many years of conventional farming and have quickly become one of the rising stars of the region. Yields are low – around 40hl/ha in a region where 60 hl/ha is closer to the norm and the vineyards are on south-east facing slopes with limestone and clay soils. The wines are made very naturally...harvested by hand, natural yeasts and carbonic maceration....minimal sulphur is used in the wine-making process. Le Rouge is a generous yet fluid Cab Franc, the kind of wine that glues a meal together from soup to nuts.

2009 Le Rouge, Domaine de la Garrelière 28.00

Noella Morantin, Touraine

La Boudinerie" is the name for her Vin de Soif, a thirst wine going with cochonailles, boudin and saucisson. Yes, it does what it says on the label. La Boudinerie is the name of the farm that Noella rents and where the chai is located. The old land-register name was la Closerie de la Tesnière but it changed for some unknown reason in the 19th century to la Boudinerie. This remarkably lovely Gamay is purple, intensely fruity and surprisingly spicy with some herbaceous- sappy characters glimpsing through, the longer it breathes the more delicate red fruits become visible. Essence of cinnamon mingling with peppermint, strawberry and raspberry. This wine exudes vibrancy in every way and is truly a pleasure to drink. It was bottled with zero sulphur added, natch...

2010 "La Boudinerie" 28.50

Anjou to Auvergne – From Elegant Cabernet Franc to Mountain Gamay cont...

"The tangy, expressive, stalky Cabernet Franc, capable of seeming both playful and fruity in some moods, darker and even a touch forbidding in others, though without really ever preparing to challenge the peaks or plumb the abysses (of sensation, of expectation) which grander and more ambitious wines inhabit as their landscape."

John Lanchester – The Debt To Pleasure

Domaine Sébastien David, Bourgueil

Youth's a stuff that will endure and summer's here again with gouleyant reds such as the chillable, unfiltered Saint-Nicolas de Bourgueil "Hurluberlu". Eschewing chemicals and working without sulphur in the winery he makes a gratifying aromatic red. The wine looks as if it has just been born, being ribena-hued, exuberantly fresh, brimming with cherry and cranberry goodness and a lively wriggle of liquorice. It is sapid, savoury, moreish and delicious.

2009 Saint-Nicolas de Bourgueil "Hurluberlu" 29.00

Domaine de Montrieux, Emile Hérédia, Coteaux du Vendomois

Old vines Pineau d'Aunis. Remarkable aromas catch your attention as soon as you bring your nose to the glass: A whiff of white pepper is quickly followed by a lovely minerality reminiscent of rainwater washing over limestone. Fresh strawberries follow, ripe and sweet, leading into a tart, bone-dry red-berry flavour that's light-bodied but mouth-filling.

2007 Coteaux du Vendomois 29.00

Domaine Benoit Courault, Anjou

This Cabernet Franc/Grolleau blend (60/40) from old vines is unoaked, unfiltered, unfinned and unsulphured. A piffing 11.5% means that you can drink a magnum before the neo-Prohibitionists and their witchfinder generals cotton on to what you are doing. In short, this is a profoundly delicious wine that doesn't need to be profound.

2010 Vin de France Tabeneaux Rouge 30.00

Domaine Chahut et Prodiges, Grégory Leclerc, Amboise

There are no edges on this most natural of wines; what you smell is what you get. The Grolleau is nature red in tooth and claw. Hazy red colour, fermented red fruits on the nose, sappy wild hedgerow fruits with a lovely herbal quality and yeasty-spicy finish.

2008 Coup de Canon 30.50

Domaine Cousin-Leduc, Olivier Cousin, Anjou

Who's the Daddy long legs? Olivier Cousin is – aka the wild man of Anjou. If you only drink one biodynamic old vines Grolleau then we heartily recommend this. Striking aromas of violets, cherries and earth. Lively and refreshing on the palate with extraordinary flavours of apples and medlars and return of the earthy notes. Serve cool or chilled for maximum deliciousness. The Cabernet Franc has thick, juicy, grungy damson-and-herb fruit; it is cut from a totally different cloth from its "cousin" the Grolleau. This needs the carafe and a few slices of sausage. The Gamay is no himbo – refreshingly earthy.

2010 Gamay 32.50
2007 Cabernet Franc Vieilles Vignes 40.00

La Coulée d'Ambrosia, Jean-François Chene, Layon

The name is a nod and a wink to Anjou rouge but Jean-François has opted out of appellation when the board asked him to add sulphur in his wines for stability. This cheeky wine, from 60 year old Cab Franc vines, is whole bunch fermented at coolish temperature to bring out the latent fruitiness. A pleasure wine.

2010 Vin de France "Les Joues Rouges" 33.00

Thierry Puzelat, Touraine

In Cot We Trust is Malbec sauvage, sans filtration and sans sulphur. Bacon fat, marmite and leather, smoked meat – this wine wears its guts for garters. Puzelat has, not unnaturally, been described as the "Pope of unsulphured wine". Well, we're glad he believes in the living Cot. The Pinot Noir acts as the mad monk in this scenario. It is a lean and hungry specimen with the colour of cranberry juice with the smell of fermenting redcurrants, but actually carries deceptive weight under its flowing robes.

2009 Touraine rouge "In Côt We Trust" 34.00

Anjou to Auvergne – From Elegant Cabernet Franc to Mountain Gamay cont...

Terroir – poetically revisited...

The vines and the wine it produces are two great mysteries. Alone in the vegetable kingdom, the vine makes the true savour of the earth intelligible to man. With what fidelity it makes the translation! It senses, then expresses, in its clusters of fruits the secrets of the soil. The flint, through the vine, tells us that it is living, fusible, a giver of nourishment. Only in wine does the ungrateful chalk pour out its tears...

(Colette – Earliest Wine Memories)

Clos du Tue-Boeuf, Jean-Marie & Thierry Puzelat, Cheverny

Since the Middle Ages, there have been records about the lieu-dit "le Tue-Boeuf" and its excellent wines which were enjoyed by the local nobility and the kings of France. The family name Puzelat is mentioned in 15th century documents. This is a blend of 75% Cot & 25% Gamay and definitely earns its wacky wine moniker. Very earthy, even meaty red with extremely bright fruit such as plum, spice, fresh herbs with ash and wood notes. Dusty, earthy, minerally, complex and savoury. Bear in mind this wine and its idiosyncratic nom-du-guerre when you next exclaim "I could murder a steak". La Guerrierie smells and tastes as if it has slaughtered quite a lot of beef in its time and knows where the bodies are buried.

2009 Vin de Table "La Guerrierie" 34.50

Domaine Catherine & Pierre Breton, Bourgueil

Trinch! is the sound of two glasses chinking and this deliciously cherry-fresh, savoury-peppery organic Bourgueil will have you smacking your lips appreciatively. Great with terrine and just delicious with fish. As someone said aptly: "It goes with food and conversation". The Chinon "Beaumont" is complex, weaving dark berries, wild herbs and minerality. Slightly hazy red in the glass, it initially gives up earthy, briary, brambly black currant, blackberry and blueberry flavours and aromas, with excellent structure and good heft and presence; the earth and underbrush linger longest on the finish.

2010 Bourgueil "Trinch!" 35.00
2010 Chinon "Beaumont" 40.00
1993 Bourgueil "Perrières" 61.00

Domaine Stéphane Bernaudeau, Anjou

La Chantelée is a cheeky blend of 50% Gamay, 50% Grolleau from 25 yr old vines on mixed soils of sand, gravel and schist. After a maceration of eight days the wine undergoes an ambient fermentation of eleven months (whole bunch). Stéphane observes that "it's the wine that decides on the temperature of the fermentation". No filtration, no fining, no sulphur, eleven months in used oak barrels. Utterly agreeable tasty red wine with the thirst dial firmly set to quench. Red and bramble fruits (with the prickles left in), a healthy score of acidity and a little Co2 lurking underneath. Responds well to chilling.

2009 VdT "La Chantelée" 35.00

Les Cailloux du Paradis, Claude & Etienne Courtois, Touraine

L'Icaunais means inhabitant of the Yonne. There were once 9,000 hectares of this grape known as Gascon in the Yonne (Northern Burgundy) before phylloxera. According to the official records of the varieties surfaces, as of 1988, there were only 3 hectares of Gascon left in the whole world. Yields are naturally low and the wine spends between 18 and 24 months in old futs. The mouth is bold, savoury and mineral and the length is terrific.

2010 L'Icaunais 46.50

Domaine Sébastien Riffault, Sancerre

When Thoreau said: "We need the tonic of wildness", he might have been talking about the Sancerres of Seb Riffault. A ruddy, slightly cloudy, untamed Pinot Noir this smells of wild fruit and combines ripeness with astringency. From the vine to the bottle a thoroughly natural wine.

2009 Sancerre Rouge "Raudonas" 49.75

A Quick Tour of "Real Beaujolais"

"Beaujolais is nature with its fragrances, its light, its infinity, evening rest and morning enthusiasm."

Jules Chauvet

Our love of Parisian wine bars and our desire to capture the spirit of drinking moreish wine led us to reassess the Gamay grape and the Beaujolais region. The grape itself has lived in the shade of Pinot Noir. In July 1395, the Duke of Burgundy, Philippe the Bold, outlawed the cultivation of Gamay as being "a very bad and disloyal plant"- due in part to the variety occupying land that could be used for the more "elegant" Pinot Noir. 60 years later, Philippe the Good, issued another edict against Gamay in which he stated the reasoning for the ban is that "The Dukes of Burgundy are known as the lords of the best wines in Christendom. We will maintain our reputation". The edicts had the affect of pushing Gamay plantings southward, out of the main region of Burgundy and into the granite based soils of Beaujolais where the grape thrived. Had we been around Philippe the Most Excellent would have issued an edict that Gamay was where Le Bang for Buck was at.

Domaine de la Plaigne, Cécile & Gilles Roux

Good punchy Beaujolais packed with red cherries and redcurrants. The perfect charcuterie wine.

2010 Beaujolais-Villages 23.00

Château Cambon

Eighty year old vines, fantastic terroir and attention to detail in the vinification transforms this from Beau-lollipop wine to très Beau-jolly. In two words it's fan-tastic. Limpid ruby-red colour, a puree of summer fruit flavours (redcurrants and cranberries to the fore) on the nose and in the mouth, followed by a beautiful, almost haunting earthiness reminiscent of soil and stones after a spring rain.

2010 Beaujolais 26.00

Domaine Damien Coquelet

Georges Descombes' son-in-law, Damien Coquelet makes this cherubic Chiroubles. The wine is in the same idiom as those above in terms of viticulture, wild yeast ferment and winemaking method and tastes delightfully natural. With its pure and inviting nose, nice minerality with bright fruit (cherry, cranberry and plum) and a hint of liquorice it is an earthy and floral cru Beaujolais and quite complex in the mouth. Balanced, delicious with toothsome acidity, a wine you can drink throughout the year with flesh or fowl.

2009 Chiroubles 31.50

Domaine Georges Descombes

Georges makes unfiltered and unfinned wine with terrific intensity in Villie à-Morgon, farms organically (using a little copper and sulphur) throughout his 15 hectares of vineyards scattered in Brouilly, Morgon, Chiroubles and Beaujolais-Villages. This Régnié possesses transparent violet purple colour with immediate fresh violet, cassis and sweet raspberry smells and more than a hint of earthiness. This wine is all fresh fruit on the palate, tinged with salt and underlain by leather notes in a manner more familiar from a cru like Moulin-à-Vent. This finishes with ample fruit, but a surprising and impressive emphasis on the mineral and carnal.

2008 Régnié 34.00

Domaine Jean Foillard

Unfiltered Morgon from a natural winemaker. Cloudy ruby red with aromas that boom happily out of the glass, notably kirsch, rhubarb and sweet blackberries; there's a fugitive bouquet of warm earth, stones and dried spice. The Classique is lighter, the Côte du Py (a famous slope of crumbling schist rock called terre pourrie) richer, more exotic and mineral.

2010 Morgon Classique 35.00
2009 Morgon Côte du Py 45.50

A Quick Tour of "Real Beaujolais"

The Beaujolais revolution started with Jules Chauvet. Chauvet was a rare combination of winemaker, research chemist, and supremely gifted taster. He argued for naturalness in wine from a position of scientific expertise and immense practical experience. And he didn't just argue for natural wine. He explained exactly how to make it. His few published works have become textbooks for young natural winemakers.

Marcel Lapierre was highly influenced by Chauvet and his brilliant wines in turn influenced a group of young growers including Foillard, Lapalu and Descombes.

Domaine Yvon Métras

This is no ordinary Fleurie. This is Yvon Métras Fleurie. Forward nose of bright cherries, spice and earth, with an underlying sweetness and some subtly tarry notes. The palate is smooth, seamless and really elegant with a delicious earthy, mineral core to the fruit holding everything in lovely tension. Yum. As for the Beaujolais the expression "gouleyant" might have been invented to describe this marvellously quaffable wine

2009 Beaujolais	36.00
2010 Fleurie Printemps	43.50

Domaine Jean-Claude Lapalu

70 year old vines on granitic soils – wines of amazing purity and mineral concentration. Brouilly, but not as we know it, Jim. Croix des Rameaux is even darker and more structured than its punchy baby brother, and while it may also display plenty of red (and black) berries, the aromas are much wilder with more minerality and complexity. Rameaux may remind one of the Rhône.

2009 Brouilly "Croix des Rameaux"	47.50
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Domaine Marcel Lapierre

Marcel Lapierre (who died recently) is one of Beaujolais' legends and has a wonderful touch with his wines. This has beautifully pure old vine fruit, enhanced by 6 months ageing in casks from Prieuré-Roch in Burgundy. No sulphur was used during the élevage. The baby Gamay is a redcurrant jam jamboree, simple, fruity and soothing...

2009 Morgon	49.00
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From the Vosges Mountains to the French Alps – France's Eastern Flank

A small selection of oddities from the vinicultural road less travelled. These reds are influenced by the proximate mountains; pale, almost translucent they have approachable tannins but the bite of high acidity and the grip of pure minerality. A delightful change of tempo if you are accustomed to the richer, oakier things in life...

Le dernier repas

A mon dernier repas
Je veux voir mes frères
Et mes chiens et mes chats
Et le bord de la mer
A mon dernier repas
Je veux voir mes voisins
Et puis quelques Chinois
En guise de cousins
Et je veux qu'on y boive
En plus du vin de messe
De ce vin si joli
Qu'on buvait en Arbois...

Jacques Brel

Domaine de la Tournelle, Evelyne & Pascal Clairet, Arbois

Evelyne and Pascal sing sonorously from the natural wine hymn sheet. Work in the vineyard is rigorous, massale selection, scrupulously ensuring the balance of the vine by canopy management, no pesticides, only organic manures, a little Bordeaux mixture otherwise biodynamic preparations, manual harvest in small boxes and severe triage, soft pressing of whole bunches, vinification without sulphur where possible (and low doses otherwise), indigenous yeast ferment and elevage on the lees. Wines are bottled unfiltered and unfinned with just a touch of sulphur. Uva Arbosiana is Ploussard from clay and marne soils. It is bright, pale and oh-so-fresh, a tart palate-tickler. Now get a load of this: demi-sec fuzzy-cloudy pink Pet Nat from Ploussard. You like zum zuyder? This will fit the bill; it is pure fun, hilariously refreshing; it feels like it is still fermenting in the glass (and perhaps it is).

2010 Uva Arbosiana 32.00

Cantina di Barro, Valle d'Aosta

Petit Rouge is the name of the grape variety that flourishes on the steep Monte Torrette adjacent to Mont Blanc. The wine is deliciously vibrant with flavours of blackberries, currants and a nice stony freshness. Not dissimilar to a good cru Beaujolais.

2009 Petit Rouge 34.00

Domaine Jean-François Ganevat, Côtes du Jura

Biodynamic grower making old vines Pinot with minimal interventions. This is a truly ethereal wine. The Trousseau is from old vines grown on blue marne soils; it is understated initially with a hint of wild cherry and redcurrant and some musky notes in the background. The finish of this Trousseau is organdie-fine and marked by redcurrant and red apple skin crunchy acidity. Sleuths of recondite grapes, clap the deerstalker on your noggin, scrape out a few tunes on your trusty strad, forego the customary seven percent solution, for the game is afoot. Check out this mystery Jurassic gang. Ampelographical archivists will lick their lips over indigenous oddities such as Petit Béclan, Gros Béclan, Gueuche (white and red), Seyve-Villard, Corbeau, Portugais Bleu, Enfariné, Argant (that's what he has the most) which lead the roll call With its amusing label of a bloke sponging liquid from a beer mug this vin glouglou (9.5%) is best served chilled to highlight and enhance the bombinating cherry clafoutis and pomegranate juice aromas and flavours - behind which lurk bubbly-yeasty notes (imagine the smell of earth after rain).

2009 Vin de Table "J'en Veux !!! " 39.00
2009 Trousseau, "Plein Sud" Sans Soufre 41.50
2009 Pinot Noir "Cuvee Julien" Sans Soufre 52.00

From the Vosges Mountains to the French Alps – France's Eastern Flank cont...

Grown in Jura since the 13th century Poulsard's names are legion: ploussard, peloussard, pulsard, polozard, mesclé dans l'Ain. What an enchanting oddity! Such colour – pale colour with flickering orange, a mad bouquet with plenty of sous-bois and fruits (cherries and strawberries) in eaux de vie. A silk 'n' spice trail in the mouth: redcurrants, bilberries and rhubarb tied up with liquorice shoelaces. The wine's high acidity gives it fair ageing potential. It would excellent paired with the many regional cheeses.

Domaine Pierre Frick, Pfaffenheim, Alsace

Vinified without sulphur this Pinot Noir conveys beautiful discreet aromas of cassis, griotte cherries, grenadine and spice. Very savoury. A wine which prefers to be served cool, if not chilled.

2008 Pinot Noir Strangenberg Vinifié Sans Soufre

42.25

Dne Pierre Bornard, Arbois

Point Barre is Ploussard and that's the end of the argument (a very rough translation of the French colloquialism). Or all wine and no bull. Your first hint that something interesting is going on is the nose of the wine; notes of spicy strawberries and spiced apples tease your nostrils. The body is medium to full with a delicious midpalate of acidity that pricks your senses. The core of the wine has an earthy, barnyard character, but one that is wrapped in fruity, pink grapefruit and a candied cherry and pomegranate finish. It's delicious and startling, and balances a tightrope between earth and fruit.

2009 Ploussard Point Barre

51.50

Côte-Rôtie to Corsica – "Garrigue & Maquis"

"the sun-baked, cicada-loud, ageless country of scrub and terraced hills... the archetypal Mediterranean landscape of rock & olive, wild thyme, vineyards, light".

Jigsaw – Sybille Bedford

A journey that begins in the Northern Rhône where Syrah most eloquently expresses itself into the warmer South where the Grenache Noir grape dominates the blends, assisted by Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault amongst others. The best known appellation is Châteauneuf-du-Pape – the wines are warm and expansive, sun-baked and herbal. Great wines can also be found in Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Rasteau and Cairanne. Côtes du Rhône can be anything from humble juicy wine for quaffing to powerful, unfiltered red exploding with flavour.

Château Saint Cyrgues, Guy de Mercurio, Rhône

Syrah-Grenache blend. Lovely inky red colour, nose of violets and warm berry fruit and a twist of pepper on the finish.

2009 Vin de Pays du Gard "Saint Cirice" 17.00

Château Mourgues du Grès, Anne & François Collard, Rhône

Young Syrah complemented by Grenache, Carignan and Mourvèdre. Purple red colour, warm nose of black and red confit fruits, mure and cassis on the palate with bitter liquorice and roast herbs.

2010 Costières de Nîmes rouge "Les Galets" 24.00

Mas de Libian, Famille Thibon, Rhône

Hélène Thibon (with her family, and Comtoir workhorse, Nestor) make deliciously fruity wines in the southern Ardèche. Bout d'Zan refers to bits of liquorice; it was also a nickname for Helene's father in his youth alluding to his small stature and tanned skin. Now it refers to the liquorice flavour of the wine. The wine is vinified without sulphur and 30% of it spends seven months in foudres. A velvety Côtes du Rhône unfurling sweet aromas of violets and cool-rooted red flowers leading into a palate of black cherry, peppery spice, earthy notes, and did I mention the liquorice?

2010 Côtes du Rhône "Bout d'Zan" 24.25

Le Raisin et l'Ange. Gilles Azzoni, Rhône

Le Raisin et L'Ange is isolated in the beautiful Ardèche mountains on shallow limestone clay soils, partly on slopes and partly on river banks. Gilles Azzoni's philosophy is to accompany the grapes and the wine, not to impose a specific transformation on them. He works naturally from the vines to the bottle (no added SO₂). Brân, according to Gilles, is the spirit of the crow or the raven in Celtic culture, and represents clarity, transparency, whiteness, part of his feeling what wine should be "pur, natur et dur". The wine is a blend of 40% Merlot with 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Grenache Noir & 10% Alicante. A country wine: impetuous, indomitable, tonic and vital...

2010 Vin de Table "Brân" 27.00

Domaine Le Mazel, Ardèche

Cuvée Briand is a dark ruby red Grenache with a pronounced nose of savoury, tarragon, herbes de provence, vanilla pod, peppercorns and smoke. It has a fresh attack in the mouth, sour cherry acidity, liquorice fruit, dried herbs and pleasing astringency. The spirit of the land.

2010 Cuvée Briand 30.00

Domaine Gramenon, Michèle Aubery-Laurent, Rhône

Fermented without any sulphur dioxide and bottled unfiltered, the Sierra du Sud is a pure joy, a perfumed, delicate Syrah.

2010 Côtes du Rhône "Sierra du Sud" 39.00

Côte-Rôtie to Corsica – "Garrigue & Maquis" continued...

(For wisdom ever echoes Nature's voice – Juvenal trans. Samuel Johnson)

Domaine Romaneaux-Destezet, Béatrice & Hervé Souhaut, Ardèche

The Souteronne nose billows out of the glass to reveal fresh red and dark fruits. The palate is something else – this is a truly superb Gamay with a lovely mineral edge as if granite had melted seamlessly into a wine. The young vines Syrah is junior Saint-Joseph. It is joyously light (11.7%!), a delightful quiet riot of violet, rose, peppery cherries and soothing acidity. The Saint-Joseph is wonderfully pure Syrah: deep black cherry and juicy plum flavours mesh with candied violets and cool strawberry tones dominate on the finish.

2010 Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche "Souteronne"	36.50
2010 Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche Syrah	41.00

Dne Milan, Henri Milan, St Remy de Provence

After seeing the light (and Claude Bourguignon) in 1996, Henri Milan and colleagues, Kad and Sebastien have been following biodynamic practice. Florian thinks the nose greets the palate like an old friend. We're not sure about that, but we can tell you it is a bundle of Grenache and Syrah with backing by a little Cinsault and Cabernet Sauvignon. The nose is all about the ripe cherry and on the palate surprisingly elegant spicy liquorice with a perfectly balanced acidity.

2007 Les Baux de Provence	41.00
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Les Champs Libres, Dard et Souhaut, Rhône

The Fougoune strips off and reveals those beautifully eloquent primary Syrah aromas: sweet violets, orange blossom, juicy black olives and silky blueberry fruit mingled in the glass. In terms of drinkability let's just say that the gradient of the glass projecting the wine down one's throat steepens appreciably

2009 Crozes-Hermitage "Fougoune"	44.00
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Domaine de la Tour du Bon, Provence

The organic Tour du Bon estate, located in the extreme north-west of the Bandol appellation, faces the sea. This garrigue-scented landscape is washed with a very special, fantastic, dazzling light, so often captured by the world's great painters. Here the dry wind from the north flirts gently with the southern breeze. The blend of this wine is 55% Mourvèdre, 25% Grenache, 15% Cinsault, 5% Carignan. It has great aromatic complexity associated with the three or four grape varieties it contains. A high proportion of Grenache lends cherry notes as a counterpoint to the spicy, pepper accents of Mourvèdre, with Cinsault uniting the whole. On the palate, the tannic framework can be powerful in youth, mellowing to silky meatiness with age.

2007 Bandol Rouge	45.00
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Comte Abbattucci, Corsica

Since 2000, the Count Abbattucci works in the vineyards according to the diurnal rhythms of the sun, the moon and the planets. You are the type to read your horoscope every day in the tube? Then, you are even more likely to fall in love with this delicious blend of Sciaccarellu and nNellucciu : a spicy and peppery star in the biodynamic firmament.

2008 Faustine rouge	52.00
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Domaine Dard et Ribo, Rhône

The Saint-Joseph, from vines on decomposed granitic soils, is round and smoky with notes of blackberry, leather and olives. As the growers say: "What we like is natural wine because it's alive, wine that does not necessarily have to be kept – just drunk and drunk again." You may think it is infanticide to drink a 2009 Hermitage but Dard et Ribo's is always upfront and personal with beautiful savage fruit and supple tannins.

*A lush-kept plush-capped sloe
Will, mouthed to flesh-burst,
Gush! — flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet,
Brim, in a flash, full!*

2009 Saint-Joseph Rouge	57.00
2009 Hermitage Rouge	70.00

Côte-Rôtie to Corsica – "Garrigue & Maquis" continued...

Here nature was simple and kindly, giving an impression of rusticity, both genuine and poetic, blossoming a world away from our contrived idylls, with no reference to the universe of ideas, self-generated, the pure product of chance.

Balzac – The Wild Ass's Skin

Domaine Hauvette, Dominique Hauvette, Baux de Provence

This is a seriously bosky infusion of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache, but what gives the wine its superb individuality and paregoric purity is an adherence to biodynamic principles in the vineyard for qualitative reasons. The culture biologique involves spraying distillations of herbs instead of insecticides, ploughing back leaf cuttings to aerate the bauxite-rich soil. The wine is rich in natural aromas: the classic bouquet des garrigues of lavender, rosemary and thyme as well as more animal nuances of smoked beef and reduced gravy. The palate is gripping; like all great wines there seems to be something different in every mouthful.

2004 Mas Hauvette, Coteaux des Baux 59.00

Domaine Franck Balthazar, Rhône

From a couple of hectares of low-yielding old Syrah vines (up to 90 years old) grown on granitic slopes. Seductive perfume of red and dark berries, kirsch, lavender and violet, with a bright iron-mineral element. Spicy cherry and blackcurrant flavours combine richness and sinewy-sappy vivacity, picking up exotic floral pastilles on the finish. This has wonderful freshness and finishing cut. A wine that sings for your supper.

2008 Cornas "Chaillot" 62.00

Domaine Stéphane Othéguy, Rhône

Natural Côte-Rôtie from organic vineyards vinified in cement betons with wild yeasts. The nose develops with notes of burnt wood, violets and blackberries and exhibits a kind of cool smokiness. The mouth embracing theses flavours, is vital and tonic, and displays a dynamic minerality. A very pretty Côte-Rôtie, fresh and stylish, naturally expressing the terroir.

2008 Côte-Rôtie 67.50

Pic Saint Loup to Perpignan – The Mediterranean Arc

There comes a time in life when one begins to prize young wine. On a Southern shore there is a string of round, wicker-covered demijohns always kept in store for me. One grape harvest fills them to the brim, then the next grape harvest, finding them empty once more, in its turn fills them up again... do not disdain these wines because they give such quick returns: they are clear, dry, various, they flow easily from the throat to the kidneys and scarcely pause a moment there. Even when it is of a warmer constitution, down there, if the day is a really hot one, we think nothing of drinking down a good pint of this particular wine, for it refreshes you and leaves a double taste behind, of muscat and cedarwood.

(Colette – Earliest Wine Memories)

The Languedoc, for our purposes, begins around Montpellier, where Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre dominate the wines. In recent years appellations have begun to forge their particular identity, but even within those appellations there are myriad different microclimates helping to influence the style and flavour of the wine. As one moves towards Roussillon, old Carignan (combined with other varieties) takes precedence lending the wines from this wild and varied geological scrapyard a strong, earthy personality. It is natural to find winemakers in this region working without chemicals in the vineyards and with a determination to preserve the character of their very individual terroirs.

Domaine des Moulines, Saumade Frères, Languedoc

Beautifully assembled, with just a whisper of garrigue, this Merlot is impeccably balanced, both elegant and pure. A sweet nose of bright red cherries opens to a plush, soft, round mouth of black fruits, fresh plums and blackberries and more cherries, with easy tannins and a bright acidity. Monsieur Saumade recommends this wine with gigot of lamb with cepes.

2008 Vin de Pays de l'Hérault, Merlot

18.50

Domaine Thierry Navarre, Languedoc

I know your lady does not love her husband. / I am sure of that, and at her late being here / She gave strange oeillades and most speaking looks / To noble Edmond. — William Shakespeare, King Lear IV.iv

An organic wine from an impossibly beautiful estate Languedoc from a grape variety that I have only just heard of and clocking in at 11.5% would have to be the rankst pair of pantaloons to garner my disapproval. The Oeillades is the gnat's spats; another traditional variety of the Languedoc it is a close cousin to the Cinsault grape. This is a vrai wine of the country, limber, fresh, all in the fruit, all in the glancing moment, naturally vibrant. Definitely worth a second glance (or oeillade as we say in the Languedoc).

2010 Vin d'Oeillades

27.50

Domaine de Majas, Roussillon

Cabernet Franc. In the Roussillon? Unsuspend your disbelief for this toothsome number from organically grown grapes and low yields has lifted aromas of blueberries and red cherries seasoned by a smattering of pepper.

2009 Vin de Pays des Cotes Catalanes "Métairie Brugens"

28.00

Domaine des Foulards Rouge, Jean-François Nicq, Roussillon

Described as "Défenseur des vins de fruit, de plaisir et de terroir" Jean-François Nicq makes unsulphured wines from tiny yields on shattered granitic soils, wines that have a biting mineral edge and the most refreshing purity. Octobre is his harvest wine, a nouveau nouveau wine, made from Syrah. It is the juice straight from the vine to your glass – do not pass go, do not collect sulphur... Les Vilains is pale red Carignan from old vines and microscopic yields. The carbonic maceration and gentle extraction cannot entirely disguise the herbal, rustic nature of the beast (or the variety). As with the other Jean-François Nicq's wines this is very drinkable.

2010 Vin de Table "Octobre"

28.50

2007 Vin de Table "Les Vilains"

38.50

Domaine du Bout du Monde, Edouard Lafitte, Roussillon

L'Echappée Belle is composed of 55% Lledoner Pelut (a hairy old cousin of Grenache which sounds like a Welsh lamb kebab served with Indian rice), 40% Carignan et 5% Syrah, on a mainly schistous terroir which confers the freshness and dynamic fruitiness to the wine. The nose is elegant, exudes pretty aromas of black fruits with a suggestion of gaminess, a bonbon full of minerality with a crunchy, suave palate.

2009 L'Echappée Belle

28.75

Pic Saint Loup to Perpignan – The Mediterranean Arc continued...

"I don't like the word winemaker. It doesn't mean anything to me. You make shoes; you don't make wine. I prefer to call myself a "wine helper" You help the wine make itself. That's how I consider my job. That's the way to keep a low profile – under nature, under the climate, under the fruit. Wine is a great gift."

Louis Barruol – quoted in The New France – Andrew Jefford

Clos du Gravillas, Nicole & John Bojanowski, Languedoc

The crickets (Grillons) are under the stones (and everywhere else, late at night, under the stars and the clear black sky). This organic six grape blend includes Carignan, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Counoise amongst others and shows hints of ripe raspberry and blackberry fruit, with a liquoricey, mineral edge. The palate is savoury and dense with lots of ripe red fruits cloaked in a minerally, taut structure.

2009 Sous Les Cailloux des Grillons 29.00

Domaine Maxime Magnon, Languedoc

Carignan on schist/Grenache blend. This jolly purple red hails from the border of the Corbières/Fitou appellations. Maxime Magnon, the so-called gentle rebel, his jersey cow Camomille and nine sheep (at last count), nurture the vines as nature intended. Jam-packed with earthy ripe berry fruits, this is a summer fruit pudding of a wine. Drinking it lightly chilled is not only not frowned upon, but positively encouraged.

2009 Corbières "Rozeta" 33.00

Dne Jean-Baptiste Sénat, Languedoc

Beautifully natural, almost elegant wines from a region that normally specialises in blockbusters. Vinification takes place with minimal intervention in a mixture of large and small casks (stored underground): natural yeasts, no fining, no filtration and only a tiny bit of sulphur are the recipe for living and drinkable wines. Mais Où Est Donc Ornica is a blend of the energetic Mourvèdre (60%) and Grenache (40%). A more powerful effort reminiscent of macerated fruits and dark spices and one that requires a haunch of meat or several. Once tasted you should never forget your French pronouns.

2010 Minervois "Mais Où Est Donc Ornica" 37.00

Domaine Bruno Duchêne, Banyuls

Bruno works organically on the steep slopes jutting up from the Mediterranean. This particular cuvée is made from a blend of 90% Grenache, 10% Carignan vines grown on schistous terroir. After manual harvest and selection there is 10-15 day maceration with wild yeast whole bunch ferment in 26hl wooden vats. The wine is neither filtered nor fined. Called La Luna in reference to the name of Bruno's beloved mongrel setter crossed with French mountain sheep dog who died at the age of 14 in 2009. La Luna is full-bodied with warm strawberry and cherry cola aromas and confit fruits on the palate.

2009 Vin de Table "La Luna" 39.50

Domaine Olivier Pithon, Roussillon

Brilliant aromatic blend with notes of juniper and clove, sweet red and blackberries balanced by exuberant acidity and firm minerality.

2008 Côtes du Roussillon "Cuvée Laïs" 43.25

Fontédicto, Bernard & Cécile Bellahsen, Roussillon

One man, one woman, one horse. Terroir: fossilised oyster shells. Biodynamic. Minimal interventions. Pure Carignan – fresh bay leaves, wild mint, "savage" fruit and fine minerality.

2007 Vin de Table "Pirouette" 48.00

Pic Saint Loup to Perpignan – The Mediterranean Arc continued...

MINERVE

A jutting outcrop of burnished stone blotted against the blue of the sky, perched like the ark of the deluge on the spur of a plateau, precarious on the brink of the twofold precipice of the Cesse and of the Brian, a village above and beyond the world, ruling with fierce pride over a desert of brush and stones, scarred with gorges, pitted with caves, dotted here and there with ancient dolmens and isolated farmsteads, a steep steppe where the sun strikes, incandescent, against the dreaming spires and where the cruel light plays strange tricks upon the eyes – mirages that recall to life the hunters of prehistory, the march of Roman legions, the sly shades of visigothic archdeacons and of rapacious feudaries, the fearful fires of a vengeful Simon de Monfort and the horrors of charring human flesh and yet, through the clouds of acrid smoke one can, it seems, descry the dulcet features of fair young damsels, sprung from the lays of Ramon de Miraval, and, in their midst, the manly form of Raymond Roger Trencavel.

(Adapted from Maurice Chauvet. Translation by David Bond.)

Dne Le Casot des Mailloles, Alain Castex & Ghislaine Magnier, Banyuls

Tiny vineyards, incredibly steep slopes (you have to hang on for dear life when you walk amongst the vines) and minuscule yields. A blend of Carignan, Mourvèdre and some Grenache. If ever a wine tasted of black olives, wild herbs and almost salty Mediterranean breezes, then this red hits those aromatic buttons. It's as if lamb was invented for it.

2007 La Poudre d'Escampette

49.00

Mas de Daumas Gassac, Famille Guibert, Languedoc

The elegance of Gassac (made from 80% Cab Sauv) derives from the vines which are cooled by mountain air at night. The result? Dark ruby red wine with purple tints, fragrant nose of blackcurrants and blackberries with subtle garrigue notes of dried herbs (bay, thyme), roasted notes of tar and coffee. Long finish with fine-grained tannins, silky and spicy.

2009 Mas de Daumas Rouge

57.00

Bergerac to the Basque Country (inc. Bordeaux) – The Atlantic Influence

A land dominated by great rivers. Notable among these is the Dordogne which runs into the Gironde and around which the vineyards of Bergerac and its satellite appellations are clustered. The Garonne rises south of Toulouse skirts Fronton, flows through Agen (where the prunes come from) and runs through the appellations of Buzet and Marmandais. The Lot carves gorges through Marcillac and Cahors before joining the Garonne. The River Tarn bisects precisely the appellations of Fronton and Gaillac. Further west in Gascony is the Gers and moving into Béarn the Gave d'Oloron and the Gave de Pau whilst the Adour, which rises in the foothills of the Pyrenees, winds north through the rolling hills of Vic-Bilh and joins the Nive to finish in Bayonne.

A land also of long wine history, strong tradition of local cuisine, diverse terroirs and exciting indigenous grape varieties. Rustic Fer Servadou, juicy Duras and floral Mauzac noir. In Marcillac Fer is known as Mansois and makes delicious savoury wines with plenty of refreshing acidity. Cahors is the spiritual home of the Malbec grape – it can be inky and rich or lighter with notes of fennel and liquorice. Fronton is renowned for the Négrette grape, characterised by its juicy morello cherry fruit. Négrette is normally partnered in blends with Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. Madiran is all about the Tannat grape – these are strikingly rich and powerful food wines. Irouléguay also contains Tannat usually tempered by cool Cabernet Franc and minty Cabernet Sauvignon.

Domaine d'Escausses, Denis Balaran, Gaillac

Fer Servadou blended with Duras: peppery cherry fruit to the fore, juicy and approachable – a vin du soif.

2010 Gaillac rouge "Cuvée des Drilles" 19.50

Chateau Tour des Gendres, Luc de Conti, Bergerac

Merlot-Malbec blend Dark red colour with violet tints. Expansive, warm nose of wild strawberries and myrtille with smoked notes and spice. Supple in the mouth with thick juicy fruit reinforcing the aromas found on the nose.

2010 Bergerac Rouge "Le Classique" 21.50

Domaine du Cros, Philippe Teulier, Marcillac

Lo Sang del Pais – surely the perfect definition of terroir? This Marcillac (from the Mansois grape) is joyous amalgam of soft berry notes, lovely inky fruits with a touch of mineral and refreshing staleness that keeps one coming back for more.

2010 Marcillac "Lo Sang Del Pais" 22.50

Domaine Elian da Ros, Marmande

Da Ros, who worked with Zind-Humbrecht, is a proponent of biodynamics and natural wines. Abouriou is hardly ever seen other than in blends with the better known "noble" varieties. Aromas of violets and black cherry lead to a palate is lean and crisp, moving towards juicy fruit. It's more pepper than tannin, more savoury than sweet, and there's a very agreeable prickle combined with earthy minerality that carries the wine easily over the tongue. This tart, almost unassuming and refreshing number is a veritable thirst-quenching Margarita of light red wines and a master of duck rillettes. Yes, it stalks - like a stalky thing.

2009 Abouriou 30.50

Domaine du Pech, Magali Tissot & Ludovic Bonnelle, Buzet

Wonderfully hearty biodynamic (distillations of herbs and plants are used in the vineyard to treat the vines) red, a blend of three main Bordeaux varieties, a good mulch of red plums, cherries and gravelly goodness. A wine of "russet yeas and honest kersey noes".

2004 VdT "Le Pech Abuse" 31.50

Domaine Causse-Marines, Patrice Lescarret, Gaillac

Braucol, Duras, Syrah and Prunelart – the authentic flavour of Gaillac: a medley of berry aromas pepped up with pepper and spice.

2008 Gaillac Rouge "Peyrouzelles" 33.50

Bergerac to the Basque Country (inc. Bordeaux) – The Atlantic Influence

Domaine Cosse-Maisonneuve, Cahors

A blend of Malbec and Merlot (80%/20%) this sanguine biodynamic Cahors oozes black liquorice and juicy meat aromas although retains the classic upper notes of rose petals, mint and fennel. A member of the "I want cassoulet" brigade.

2007 Cahors, Le Combal 36.00

Domaine Nicolas Carmarans, Aveyron

Nicolas (Nico) Carmarans, restaurateur and vigneron, a man who looks like he wrestles bears and then eats them for breakfast, has vines in planted on the decomposed granites high in the northern Aveyron. As he says himself "I want to make wines that I like to drink". The Mauvais Temps (meaning rotten weather) is the good bad time had by all, ridiculously sapid and savoury and made with the 30% Négret de Banhars (Nicolas has 1,500 of the 2,500 vines still planted), 60% Fer Servadou 10% of the two Cabs.

2009 Mauvais Temps 39.00

Château le Puy, Famille Amoreau, Bordeaux

The Amoreau family has been living and working on the unique terroirs of Chateau Le Puy since 1610. Working the vines, preserving the soil and producing quality wines has always been the main motivation of the generations that have worked at Chateau Le Puy over the years and this estate pioneered biodynamics in Bordeaux. The Duc is rich with ripe red and black fruit and velvety tannins. This 100% Merlot is a blessing in the sea of overextracted and woody wines that dominate this region.

2008 Duc de Nauves 39.50

Domaine Bernard & Myriam Plageoles, Gaillac

The chattering of hens' teeth alerts one to another rare grape variety c/o Gaillac archivists the Plageoles who rescued Mauzac Noir from obscurity. Prunelart, a very old variety once thought to be extinct but later discovered by Plageoles growing unloved, untended to, and unnamed. To me, Prunelart is a magical thing, a gift from the past: in our age of increasing homogeneity and taste-alike wine, here is a wonderfully odd and archaic grape. Prunelart only exists because a figure like Plageoles cares enough about his patrimony to it back to life, and bothers do make an honest, natural wine from it.

2009 Prunelart 42.00

Château Lassolle, Stéphanie Roussel, Marmande

Made from a blend of the traditional local varieties (the two Cabernets, Merlot, Syrah, Fer, Cot and Arbouriou) this wine ticks all our natural wine boxes. Stéphanie's aim is to respect terroir and typicity – low yields from biodynamically tended vines, fermentation with indigenous yeasts and zero filtration produce characterful fruit-driven reds. The Petit Lassolle reminds one of myrtle and blackberry with a hint of chocolate on the finish.

2005 Côtes du Marmandais, "Petit Lassolle" 49.50

Red Burgundy

"... the odour of Burgundy, and the smell of French sauces, and the sight of clean napkins and long loaves, knocked as a very welcome visitor at the door of our inner man."

JEROME K. JEROME
Three Men in a Boat

Pinot Noir ranges from the traditional pale, cranberry, garnet (Burgundy) colour versus more modern extractive styles in the new world wherein the wines are dark red, almost plumskin-hued. It may exhibit the most amazing array of primary aromas of violets, freesia, roses... cherries, raspberries, redcurrants, cranberries to beetroot, plum, black cherry; clove, cinnamon, liquorice. Texturally: velvety, silky, satin are good descriptors. Time in the bottle lends secondary and tertiary aromas... grilled mushrooms, truffle, undergrowth, farmyard... Burgundy can be enchanting, sense-lathering or plain infuriating – it is invariably a sensory adventure...

Domaine de la Cadette, Jean & Catherine Montanet

Small organic estate in Vézelay (northern Burgundy) making pale, mineral Burgundies throbbing and throbbing with acidity. The Cuvée L'Emitage provides an opportunity to sample the César grape, a variety of supposedly Mediterranean origin. This is angular and rustic with plenty of bite. Garance is a pretty wine with cool cherrystone fruit. If you like your Pinot on the sprightly side this is for you.

2010 Bourgogne Rouge "Cuvée L'Hermitage" 36.00

Domaine du Corps de Garde, Ghislaine et Jean-Hugues Goisot

The Goisots have been working naturally since 1993. This wine touches the hem of nature. The purity of the nose delights – a gentle perfume suggesting dried flowers and red fruits. The attack is angular and mineral with the fruit racing along the tongue.

2008 Bourgogne Pinot Noir "Corps de Garde" 38.00

Domaine Bart

Engaging little wine that "plays the flute rather than the trumpet" as the saying goes. Fruity and forward it conveys a delicious fruit medley of morello cherries, strawberries and rhubarb with a bit of pruney development.

2009 Marsannay, Les Finottes 39.00

Clos des Vignes du Maynes, Julien Guillot

One of the first biodynamic estates in France which is still making wines of terrific purity from low yields. The Macon, pure Gamay, unveils aromas of musk, as well as cooked cherries, and delightfully juggles notes of sandalwood and an aromatic array of red berries, whilst the Bourgogne Rouge is bursting with red berries and pervaded by notes of macerated blackcurrants.

2009 Macon-Cruzille Rouge 39.75
2009 Bourgogne Rouge 41.50

Domaine de Chassorney, Frédéric Cossard

The nose of the Bourgogne Bedeau is very fine, almost restrained and yet certainly and pertinently Pinot Noir. It is reassuringly pale in colour and aromatically there are suggestions of stonefruit, flint and red berry and secondary notes of seasoned wood. The palate is lively and sapid, the fruit complemented and held in check by the stony elegance of the minerality. The Savigny is delicate and pure, the expression of flowers and stones, wines that will linger on the tongue and in the memory.

2007 Bourgogne rouge "Bedeau" 43.50
2007 Savigny-les-Beaune "Gollardes" 59.00
2006 Nuits-Saint-Georges 1er cru "Argillières" 76.50

Red Burgundy continued...

"...the most romantic of wines, with so voluptuous a perfume, so sweet an edge, and so powerful a punch that, like falling in love, they make the blood run hot and the soul wax embarrassingly poetic." Yer bet.

Much modern Burgundy is overwrought and excessive fatness, sweetness, extraction, bitterness, alcohol or wood holds back the very essence of the wine and causes our tongues to negotiate superimposed textures and flavours. Natural winemakers favour a more fluid style of Pinot sliding vibrantly over the tongue, one that teases and constantly enchants and leaves everything to the imagination.

The last word about Burgundy should go to Anthony Bourdain, who, in his Les Halles Cookbook, writes forcefully about cote de boeuf: "Serve it with French fried potatoes and a staggeringly expensive bottle of Burgundy in a cheap glass. Just to show them who's the daddy."

Domaine Catherine & Dominique Derain

The jovial Dominique Derain makes thrilling low sulphur wines from old biodynamically-tended vines (100 years old). 85% Pinot Noir, 15% Pinot Beurot (an ancient Burgundy varietal). There is a silky nature to this Mercurey giving it a supple mouthfeel and a detailed range of raspberry and cherry fruit with a touch of pomegranate. It has lovely spice notes and touch of lavender on the nose. Striking elegance, complexity and length. The slope (Le Ban) in the Saint-Aubin has an eastern exposure and the soil is lime-clay with brown gravel. This is a model Cote de Beaune wine expressing red flowers (roses, cherry-blossom) and then in the mouth cascades of stone fruit supported by lively, lacy acidity. A gem.

2008 Saint-Aubin "Le Ban"	51.00
2007 Mercurey Rouge "La Plante Chassey"	62.50

Dne Jean Javillier

Jean Javillier has 7.5 hectares in the famous village of Meursault in the Côte de Beaune. He converted to organic farming in 1972, something unheard of locally in those days. Today his sons Alain and Thierry run the domaine. It took the family almost fifteen years to effectively grasp how to farm and make wine organically although they have been certified since 1976. The soils are fertilised with compost made up of organic fertilisers – a mixture of horse and cow dung. The minimum number of treatments are used in the vineyard (sulphur for oidium and copper for mildew) and yields are limited to 35-45 hl/ha. The cuvaision is relatively brief about twelve days with natural yeasts. The wines stay in tonneaux or cement tanks for 12-15 months before bottling. The Pommard is very pretty, a vermilion-hued Burgundy with delicate aromas of framboise and mure, soft yet rich tannins. The wine is always flattering in its infancy, on the floral side

2009 Pommard 1er cru	55.00
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Frédéric Cossard

Cossard's Burgundies are very natural and beautifully eloquent expressions of the nuances of great Pinot Noir. This Nuits has notes of wild raspberries and forest fruits, hints of undergrowth and very fine tannins. It is wonderfully delicate. The Volnay and Beaune are equally delicious. These are wines that sing for your supper.

2009 Volnay	58.00
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Philippe Pacalet

This Gevrey-Chambertin is from limestone-rich, organically farmed vines and aged for sixteen months on the lees. It is fresh, fragrant and mineral with musky red and black fruits. Although young it is light and luminously pure. It has the tension of a great wine with the seductiveness of one that you would drink with huge pleasure. The Ruchottes is brimming with power and suggestive of sandalwood, mint, tar, wild roses and orange peel. It has incredible length and grip. It is what Pacalet might describe as a Cistercian wine, one characterised by monkish austerity and restraint!

2009 Gevrey-Chambertin	67.00
2007 Ruchottes-Chambertin	132.00

ITALIAN RED

Italy – North and South

Ciu Ciu, Marche

A rustic ruby-hued blend of Montepulciano and Sangiovese with aromas of ripe red fruits, liquorice root and vanilla. The wine is soft and smooth in the mouth with a hint of plumskin to give it edge and touch of dried herbs and astringency on the finish.

2010 Rosso Piceno Superiore "Bacchus" 19.50

Antonio Camillo, Maremma, Toscana

The grape is the indigenous Ciliegolo, the vines are old and this is delicious wine made very much on the fruit. It bubbles juicily with cherry, raspberry and blueberry seasoned by caraway and dry thyme. In the mouth it is fresh, youthful and mineral with a pleasing (ripe) tannic structure.

2009 Maremma Rosso "Principio" 23.00

Gatti Lorenzo, Veneto

Lorenzo Gatti is an artisan producer who makes a few hundred bottles of simple country wine. This is a slightly cloudy buzzsaw-scratchy, rasping framboise frizzer, a pricklepine of fruit sand-paper with a crunchfest of rubbery-smoky, melted minerals to finish. Gatti's Raboso comes close to that idealised condition of a devil-may-care wine that gives a Gallic pouf! (or the Italian equivalent) in the face of critical judgment. "Take me as I am", it seems to say, "drink me, don't think about me, and preferably with a sliver or several of bona fide salami". Check out the abv: 11%. Another in our pantheon of less is more.

2008 Raboso Marca Trevigiana 27.50

Cascina degli Ulivi, Stefano Bellotti, Piemonte

A "vino da tavola" blend of mostly Barbera and Dolcetto, hand harvested and fermented in large oak "botti" and bottles with minimal sulphur. The wine is fresh and lively bursting with dark berry flavours. Very deep youthful purple/garnet colour. Big nose of prunes, river stones, blackberries, dark chocolate, and a touch of brown spices. In the mouth, the wine is smooth, round and fruity with a nicely balanced acid/tannin structure, and a crunchy, pulpy texture with vivid flavours of red plums and faded roses. Beautiful ripe strawberry fruit on the tart finish. A solid and honest wine and if it doesn't actually beg for food it certainly puts in a polite request for it.

2010 Bellotti Rosso 28.00

Fatalone, Puglia

This organic Primitivo cuts to the chase with its sweet tobacco scent and flavours of sour black cherry, mussel plum and toffee. A smooth, warm, balanced red it finishes on an aftertaste of toasted almond, typical of the Primitivo of Gioia del Colle. Recommended with lamb cooked with garlic, rosemary and Primitivo – natch. During the maturation the savage yeast is soothed by the "diffusion of new age sounds in the cellar".

2007 Primitivo Gioia del Colle 28.50

Vittorio Bera, Piemonte

From old vines grown on very steep slopes, with rigorous organic viticulture & with wild yeast ferment these are Barberas red in tooth and claw. The effervescent Le Verrane is blueberry fruit incarnate and ever so wild. These "Barberians" clamour to be guzzled...

2009 Barbera "Le Verrane" 29.50

COS, Giusto Occhipinti, Sicilia

Pithos means amphora and refers to the fact that the wine is fermented in terracotta jars. Exquisite Cerasuolo - the identity of the Frappato is marked on the nose with exuberant expression of violets and raspberry blossom, whilst the Nero d'Avola comes through in the mouth which is floral, warm and supple, the berry fruit flavours complemented by soft tannins. Biodynamic, unfiltered, unfinned – natural wine. For sheer gratification there are few wines to beat the perfumed Frappato: notes of freesias and wild roses, hints of Turkish delight, softest of tannins.

2010 Frappato 32.50

2010 "Pithos" Cerasuolo di Vittoria 42.00

Italian Reds continued...

"... when he opened the heavy door, the warm swallows of rosemary and wine, olive and garlic soared out of there, and their wings fluttered over my nose until I grew dizzy with pleasure".

Meir Shaley, Four Meals

Valli Unite, Costa Vescovato, Piemonte

A young Dolcetto with lively acidity, bitter cherry notes, clean and vibrant. As all the Valli Unite wines no sulphite added...no compromise.

2009 Terragno 33.50

Vino di Anna, Anna Martens, Sicilia

The red grape of choice here is Nerello Mascalese supplemented by a field blend of all manner of red and white grapes including Nerello Cappuccio and Alicante. Nerello combines a certain muscularity with good acid structure from the poor, ash-rich soils. Jeudi 15 is described as a peasant wine and made in a way to enhance drinkability. The wine is pale Burgundy-red and wafts gentle aromas of bruised strawberries, baked tamarind, morello cherries and balsam. It has very appealing sapidity in the mouth reminiscent of cranberry and pomegranate before revealing background terroir notes of pepper, roast bay, mushroom and cooked earth with some firm tannins.

2010 Etna Rosso "Jeudi 15" 34.00

Monte di Grazia, Campania

A delicious peculiarity. Consider 120 year old vines from ungrafted vines unaffected by phylloxera. The organic methods used at Monte di Grazia also further limit the yields. The red grape, Tintore di Tramonti (90%), (the remainder being Piediroso) is grown almost exclusively in the Monte Lattari Valley and belongs to the Teinturier family. The flesh and the juice of these grapes are red in colour. The anthocyanin pigments accumulate in the grape berry itself. Ageing is brief and takes place in big barrels followed by a further twelve months in bottle before release. Sulphur is never added to the wine. This Rosso is dark in colour, almost black-violet. The nose is very inviting with bright cherry and stalky dark fruits. Plum, spice and lots of dark fruits, with a succulent red and dark fruit palate and that hallmark freshness. The impression you get when smelling a wine just finishing fermentation with notes of hay.

2008 Monte di Grazia Rosso 35.00

AA Trinchero, Piemonte

One of the oldest estates in Asti. The Trincheros make traditional Barbera and a spiffing Grignolino. This wine derives its name from the Piemontese dialect word grignole, which means grape seeds. Intense, refined and floral. Notes of cranberry, strawberries and roses with a finish of spice reminiscent of autumn.

2007 Grignolino d'Asti 36.75

Elisabetta Foradori, Trentino

Elisabetta Foradori is the doyenne of the Teroldego grape and has taken the grape to new levels. An advocate of biodynamic viticulture, she makes wines of striking purity, filled with blackberry and blackcurrant fruit and underpinned by almost graphite minerality.

2008 Teroldego Rotaliano 36.75

Monte dall'Ora, Carlo Venturini & Alessandra Zantedeshi, Venetie

The Venturinis are firm adherents to biodynamic principles. As such, they encourage the growth of biodiversity by planting herbs such as rosemary and lavender in the summer, whose fragrant blooms are attractive to bees; and sowing cereals in the winter, whose roots move and aerate the soil. In addition, the Alessandra and Carlo have emphasized traditional and native grape varieties wherever possible. All the wines are blends of Corvina, Corvinone, Rondinella, Molinara and Oseleta. Fermentation is spontaneous with indigenous yeasts and extraction is gentle giving wines of gentle, cherry-fruited elegance.

2008 Valpolicella Classico Superiore "Camporengo" 37.00
2006 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico 70.00

Italian Reds continued...

...stories about [the German composer Johannes] Brahms's rudeness and wit amused me in particular. For instance, I loved the one about how a great wine connoisseur invited the composer to dinner. 'This is the Brahms of my cellar,' he said to his guests, producing a dust-covered bottle and pouring some into the master's glass. Brahms looked first at the colour of the wine, then sniffed its bouquet, finally took a sip, and put the glass down without saying a word. 'Don't you like it?' asked the host. 'Hmm,' Brahms muttered. 'Better bring your Beethoven!'

Arthur Rubinstein

Cantine di Orgosolo Urulu Sardegna

An organic Cannonau with an intense, slightly ethereal, rich, fragrant, floral bouquet reminiscent of mature plums, blackberries, wild berries and old rose with suggestions of aromatic wood and spices.

2008 Urulu 40.50

Fattoria San Lorenzo, Natalino Crognaletti, Marche

Delightful intriguing wine from yields of one bunch per vine, is fermented dry, has a snappy, rasping personality with roses, aniseed and damsons to the fore. A beautiful, very natural wine recommended lightly chilled.

2007 Lacrima di Morra d'Alba "Vigna Paradiso" 44.00

AA Panevino, Gianfranco Manca, Sardegna

Gianfranco Manca, former breadmaker, is a beautiful man. His love for the vines is so strong that he says he feels a particular relationship with each one. Furthermore, he thinks the vines tell him what to do with the grapes. He works biodynamically and naturally; every year he changes the names of his wines according to the dictates of the vintage. 2009 was a torrid vintage but he managed to make three wines from his ancient Cannonau vines. Each wine is named after the position of the barrel in the cellar. I think this one was on the left hand side as you go in. That's poetry. In Kussas is wild and spicy with notes of caramelised oranges, plums, tamarind and fruitcake...

2009 In Kussas Intendu A Manu' e Manca 46.00

Tenuta Grillo, Guido & Rita Zampaglione, Piemonte

Instantly appealing Dolcetto, oozing violets, black fruits, liquorice, and parma ham. The fruit is great, the tannins velvety and there is a bitter black cherry rasp to the finish that taps your taste buds on the shoulder and reminds them that lack of food is not a credible option.

2006 Pratoasciutto 47.50

Fulvio Bressan, Friuli

Intense in its warm velvety colour and flavour, Bressan's ruby red Schioppettino presents a full fruity mesh of wild blackberries, raspberries, strawberries and blueberries and that typical Friulian rasp with an almost graphite-mineral finish

2006 Schioppettino 48.50

Benjamin Zidarich, Friuli

Teran or Terrano is a particular version of the Refosco grape. This is brilliant with its fresh, almost wet-slate nose with hints of wild red berries and brambly fruit. Terrific belt of acidity reinforced by mineral stoniness (soils in this part of Friuli are very high in iron), red cherry fruit, lingering finish. It's just ridiculously drinkable.

2008 Teran 50.00

Podere Le Boncie, Giovanna Morganti, Toscana

Sangiovese blended with other local grape varieties. Giovanna's Chianti is almost Burgundian in style; the quality of fruit derives from meticulous attention in the vineyard and a desire to see the wine reflect the nature of the vintage. Totally unfiltered and unfinned.

2006 Chianti Classico Le Trame 51.50

Italian Reds continued...

Massa Vecchia, Fabrizio Niccolaini, Toscana

Fabrizio is one of the founding members of Vini Veri, a small group of Italian growers dedicated to making "true wines". Massa Vecchia is a tiny Tuscan estate that still ploughs their land with oxen. A red, earthy blend made from Alicante & Sangiovese. Beauty and the beast rolled into one.

2006 Rosso Maremma Toscana "La Querciola" 54.00

Il Paradiso di Manfredi, Toscana

Everything you hope for great Sangiovese displaying wicked wild cherry fruit along with notes of herbs, leather, liquorice, pepper and spice and nascent prune, tar and tobacco aromas. It's so savoury that the food you are thinking of cooks and present itself at the table.

2004 Brunello di Montalcino 72.00

AA Roagna I Paglieri, Piemonte

Traditional, beautifully eloquent expositions of the noble Nebbiolo grape made by Luca Roagna, the fourth generation of this family. The Barbaresco Pajé is a deep, pure and soil-driven wine that offers fine depth of black fruit, strong signatures of terroir, notes of liquorice and fresh herbs and a judicious base of tarriness. On the palate it is full-bodied and structured, with firm, well-integrated tannins. The Barolo is a touch more robust and shows some red fruity character to go along with its core of black cherry fruit, anise, autumnal soil tones, tar and woodsmoke. Asili is one of the great cru vineyards of Barbaresco. It is aromatic and seductive immediately, with lovely dried cherry, dried flowers and spices on the nose, medium ruby garnet in colour, expressive, pure and focused on the palate. Seamless, integrated, and intriguing, understated and impressive at the same time, finishing with a warm, satisfying glow that lingers on. Molto bravo.

2004 Barbaresco Asili 77.00

1998 Barbaresco Pajé Riserva 80.00

Honorary Iberian Reds!

There is a small but burgeoning natural wine movement in Spain. Manuel Valenzuela began the trend at Barranco Oscuro in the mountains above Granada and his friends and acolytes have carried the baton. There are many organic and biodynamic vineyards throughout Spain and fantastic terroir but, more often than not, the heavy hand of the winemaker masks the potential of the wine with a battery of (clumsy) tricks and tropes.

Usabiaga, Gonzalo Grijalba, Rioja

Gonzalo is passionate about biodiversity. He follows the lunar cycle in vineyard and the winery. In the end Gran Cerdo is all about the purest expression of fruit with whole bunch fermentation, no filtration, no stabilization and minimal sulphur. The wine has real character, all the juicy elements of Tempranillo, with no dirty oak to mask its charm. It has a natural way about it but with no funkiness. With its cherry-red, purplish, and brilliant colour Gran Cerdo reveals primary notes of fresh fruit, strawberries, raspberries, cherries and violets with clean mineral tones from the granite.

2010 Gran Cerdo Tempranillo

18.00

Bodega Cauzon, Ramon Saavedra, Granada

Mozuelo is Ramon's version of a joven wine made from a 50/50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Beautifully fresh and gulpable despite the alcohol, a wine without any additives whatsoever.

2010 Mozuelo Tinto

33.50

Naranjuez, Antonio Vilchez, Granada

Granada tierra soñada por mi.
Mi cantar se vuelve gitano cuando es para ti.

Augustin Lara

Naranjuez lies on the northern slopes of the Sierra Nevada – Spain's highest mountain range - in the province of Granada in south-east Spain. The winery is in the village of Marchal and the vineyards are at 900 m altitude on the banks of the Alhama river. Winemaking is artisanal, using only wild yeasts and no sulphur. The wines are not filtered or fined. Prisa Mata is a blend of Tempranillo (45%), Cabernet Franc (15%), Cabernet Sauvignon (15%), Merlot (10%), Pinot Noir (10%) and Garnacha (5%). Aromas of violets and wild cherries lead to pronounced roast meat flavours dusted with herbs and pepper, a hint of bitter chocolate finishing with fresh acidity. The wine seems to attain its balance in the glass and ultimately possesses a beautiful natural quality that makes it so hard to resist.

2006 Prisa Mata

59.50

Sweet Wines

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light.

Matthew Arnold

Bottle 100ml

Les Clos de Paulilles, Estelle Dauré, Banyuls

France's answer to port comes from raisined Grenache Noir, but it is nowhere as heady. Very much on the fruit with summer pudding flavours of berries, notes of mocha and coffee, dried herbs, prune and caramel. Try with blue cheese.

2008 Banyuls Rimage – 50cl 25.50 5.50

Clos Lapeyre, Jean-Bernard Larrieu, Jurançon

Magendia is Occitan for the best and we can't think of much better than this. This sainted nectar comes from 100% Petit Manseng harvested in November. Beautiful candied fruits, pineapple, pink grapefruit and coconut bound together by the most delicious acidity

2007 Jurançon, La Magendia de Lapeyre – 37.5cl 27.50 7.50

Domaine Vincent Ogereau, Loire

Silky Chenin from part botrytis and part raisined grapes. Think linden leaf mixed with acacia honey, whilst lemon balm and citrus peel confit adds depth and liveliness. The wine glides effortlessly across the palate.

2009 Coteaux du Layon Saint-Lambert – 75cl 32.50 5.00

Domaine des Causse-Marine, Patrice Lescarret, Gaillac

A five way blend of indigenous varieties, natural viticulture – dried fruits, figs, apricot and quince. Superb wine with foie gras.

2010 Gaillac Doux "Grains de Folie Douce" -50cl 33.50

Vittoria Bera, Piemonte

A fabulous start (or end) to any meal this organic Moscato from one of the oldest vineyards in Asti offers more in terms of flesh and softness than effervescence, combining melon, orange peel and sage on the nose. In the mouth, it is moderately sweet and would complement richer desserts.

2010 Moscato d'Asti, Vittoria Bera – 75cl 34.50 7.00 (125ml)

Hatzidakis, Santorini

Because you like extraordinary things here is a wine made from 500 year old ungrafted vines grown on the sand and volcanic ash of Santorini. After harvesting the grapes are laid out to raisin in the sun, before undergoing a slow 60-day fermentation in stainless steel tanks and subsequent five year ageing in old barrels. With 11 per cent alcohol, this naturally sweet red is made from the truly venerable Voudomato grape yields a delicious, sweet, herby, sappy, wild cherry-scented dessert wine.

2008 Voudomato – 37.5cl 47.00

Marco de Bartoli, Sicilia

Made from the Grillo grape this is what Marsala is all about. Aged in botti (large oak casks) and traditional chestnut barrels the wine develops its complexity by means of a solera system. Preserved lemons and cooked oranges give way to a delicious nuttiness with the acidity returning to cleanse the mouth.

Marsala Superiore 10 year old – 50cl 48.50 9.90

Sweet Wines continued...

Bottle 100ml

Bodegas Sanchez Romate, Jerez de la Frontera

Made from the Pedro Ximénez (PX) grape, this wine has a beautiful dark mahogany colour with shades of topaz and amber. It has a powerful bouquet, oozing heady aromas of concentrated raisins, dates, figs, coffee and Christmas spices, finished with a glorious taste of sweet, plump, cooked fruit.

Pedro Ximénez "Cardinel Cisneros" Reserva Especiala - 75cl 52.00 7.50

Massa Vecchia, Fabrizio Niccolaini, Toscana

Traditionally made Aleatico from very small yields. The grapes are dried before fermentation. The Aleatico is part of the Muscat family and the aromas are grapey: notes of sweet violets and roses as well as blackberries with a hint of earthy plum on the finish. Mad, impertinent but brilliant.

2006 Passito Rosso Maremma Toscana - 37.5cl 54.50 14.50

Domaine Les Tres Cantous, Robert & Bernard Plageoles

From the obscure Ondenc ("the grape which gave Gaillac its past glories") in vintages when the grapes shrivel and raisin in the warm autumn winds. The style: similar to a Beerenauslese or a Tokaji, contriving to be sweet, yet subtly fresh: bruléed autumn apples and pears flecked with syrup and persistent elegant finish hinting at walnuts. Stunning liquid tarte tatin.

2005 Vin d'Autan de Plageoles - 50cl 59.50

Domaine de la Tournelle, Jura

This unique and fascinating wine, made with 100% Savagnin dried on hay clays for a minimum of six weeks and then aged in barrels for three years given richness and complexity with aromas of dried fruit and warm spices.

2004 Vin de Paille 65.00

Domaine Jean-Pierre Frick, Alsace

Gorgeous and predictably unctuous wine from nobly-rotten late harvested grapes fermented and aged in giant oak foudres.

2001 Riesling Grand cru Steinert Selection de Grains Nobles – 37.5cl 66.00

SELECTION OF MAGNUMS

Sparkling & Champagne

Prosecco di Conegliano, Casa Coste Piane	62.00
Champagne Philipponnat Royale Réserve	98.00
Champagne Philipponnat Rosée	123.00
Ruinart Blanc de Blancs	160.00

Whites

2006 Jurançon vitatge vielh, Clos Lapeyre – <i>Pyrenées</i>	83.00
2010 Montlouis Minerale +, Domaine Frantz Saumon – <i>Loire</i>	87.00
2008 Sancerre Akméniné, Sébastien Riffault – <i>Loire</i>	88.00
2006 Viré-Clessé, Domaine Philippe Valette – <i>Burgundy</i>	92.00
2007 Chardonnay, Cuvée Marguerite, J-F Ganevat – <i>Côtes du Jura</i>	97.00
2009 Saint-Romain "Clos du Cerisier", Domaine de Chassorney - <i>Burgundy</i>	99.50
2006 Vino Bianco Pinot Grigio, Dario Princic – <i>Friuli</i>	99.50

Reds

2008 Marcillac vieilles vignes, Domaine du Cros – <i>South West France</i>	57.00
2005 Coteaux du Vendomois, Domaine de Montrieux – <i>Loire</i>	61.00
2008 Le Cousin, Grolleau vieilles vignes, Domaine Cousin-Leduc – <i>Loire</i>	65.00
2008 Pinot Noir, Cuvée Béatrice, Audrey & Christian Binner – <i>Alsace</i>	96.00
2009 Bourgogne Rouge "Cuvée Garance", Catherine Montanet – <i>Burgundy</i>	84.00
2008 L'Anglore aux Foulards Rouges – <i>Roussillon</i>	85.00
2008 Trousseau "Sous La Roche" Sans Souffre, Domaine Ganevat – <i>Jura</i>	98.00
2006 Chianti Classico "Le Trame", Podere Le Boncie – <i>Toscana</i>	98.50
2009 Brouilly, Croix des Rameaux, Jean-Claude Lapalu – <i>Beaujolais</i>	99.00
2009 Crozes-Hermitage, Dard et Ribo – <i>Rhône</i>	99.50
2007 Mas de Daumas Gassac, Famille Guibert – <i>Languedoc</i>	108.00
2004 Granato, Elisabetta Foradori – <i>Trentino</i>	115.00
2009 Saint-Joseph Rouge, Cuvée Saint-Epine, Romaneaux-Destezet – <i>Rhône</i>	116.00
1998 Barolo Riserva "La Rocca & La Pira", AA Roagna – <i>Piemonte</i>	158.00

Distillerie Artisanale, Maison Laurent Cazottes

These are "haute de vies" from a distillerie artisanale. Made without sulphur, artificial yeasts or enzymes, Laurent Cazottes lets nature do the talking. It is all about picking the fruits when they have reached optimal maturity - that is to say (in the case of pears) when they have dropped to the ground. Cazottes sources the best pears either from the organic orchards of friends or from his own biodynamic ones. 12 tonnes of pears realise a mere 2,000 bottles. The work is a labour of love: the cores, the pips and the stems are removed to preserve the maximum aromatic flavour of the pears. The juice is fermented for six weeks in tank to transform the sugars into alcohol. All this confers an unctuousness and richness to the final eau de vie. La Reine Claude Dorée (greengage) is a heavenly drink; everything is removed from the fruit except the flesh and skin and the long, slow fermentation brings out beautiful, subtle aromas of the fruit.

Everything is manual and done according to ancient tradition. Noix Vertes are green walnuts macerated in red wine, a fabulous accompaniment to cheese or chocolate. Fleurs du Sureau is elderflower, the aromas are complex, herbs, flowers and raisins mingle seamlessly. The liqueurs are equally dramatic: Prunelle is sloe berries macerated for 6 months in sugar syrup before distillation, whilst Coing Sauvage is wild quince and Guignes et Guins are wild cherries.

	50ml
2009 Aperitif du Fleurs de Sureau	4.80
2010 Aperitif aux Noix Vertes	4.50
2005 Liqueur de Coing Sauvage	5.10
2010 Liqueur de Prunelle	7.50
2006 Liqueurs des Guignes et Guins	8.00
25ml	
2006 Goutte de Poire Williams Passerillé	6.75
2007 Goutte de Mauzac Rosé	6.75
2006 Goutte de Reine-Claude Dorée	6.75

Armagnac

Darroze	25ml
Reserve Darroze "10 ans d'Age"	4.25
1995 Domaine au Martin	5.50
1992 Domaine de Pounon	6.00
1987 Domaine de Jouanchicot	6.50
1962 Château de Gaube	16.75
1961 Bas Armagnac – Baron de Sigognac	20.50

Cognac	25ml
Cognac Maxime Trijol Grande Champagne VSOP	4.25
Ragnaud-Sabourin Reserve Speciale Alliance No 20	6.75
Edgar Leyrat Lot 71 Chai de la Distillerie	9.50

Calvados	25ml
Calvados Berneroy XO	3.75
Calvados Domaine Dupont Hors d'Age	5.25
1977 Calvados Domaine Dupont	13.75
1968 Calvados Domfrontais Isidore Lemorton	15.50

Eaux de vie	25ml
Eaux de Vie de Vieille Prune d'Alsace, Miclo	4.25
Eaux de Vie de Poire William Grande Reserve, Miclo, Alsace	4.50
Eau de Vie de Mas de Daumas Gassac, Famille Guibert, Languedoc	4.75
1991 Marc de Bourgogne Vieille Réserve, Clos des Vignes du Maynes	5.25

Grappa di Friuli, Bepe Tosolini	25ml
Grappa di Moscato	3.75
Most di Fragolino, Aquavita de Friuli	6.50
Grappa di Tocai Stagionato in Barrique di Castagno	8.50

Rums	50ml
J. Bally Rhum Ambré, Martinique	6.25
1990 Guyana Plantation Rum	8.00

Whisky

One whisky is all right, two is too much, three is too few.
Highland saying

	25ml
1999 Laphroaig	4.25
1992 Caol Ila	5.25
Glenfarclas 21 year old	6.75