

COMPLIMENTARY

Vini

Wines of Distinction

**MA VIE FRANÇAISE:  
RAYMOND BLANC**

the experience matters

ISSUE:

#009

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Matthen Clark

# Welcome to **Vini#009**

## Contributors

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**Simon Jerrome**  
Head of Wine Buying



The theme of this issue is love and if there is anything you will learn from this issue is that we at Matthew Clark really love our wine and really enjoy working in the wine industry. Not only will you discover that we have a real love of wine but so does top chef Raymond Blanc. We have an exclusive interview with Raymond, getting to know him and how his love for wine and food started at a young age.

Aside from composing the latest edition of Vini, we have been busy sourcing brand new arrivals to our wine range, including a delightful Malbec from Alpasión. In this issue we get to know Alpasión and their Malbec a little better. We also discover exactly why they named a row of vines after us!

So as the days wane, the nights close in and the trees don their vibrant hues let's crack open that bottle of wine and toast to Autumn arriving.

Cheers!

Matthew Clark | Vini | Autumn 2016

 @MatthewClarkLtd

### Bottle Prices

The codes listed next to wines are our product codes which can be used to purchase wines. Prices quoted are list bottle price. These are correct at time of print but may be subject to change without notice.

### Brought to you by the wine geeks at Matthew Clark



**Roger Jones** has held a Michelin star for 10 years at his restaurant; The Harrow at Little Bedwyn, highly noted for its 1,000 bin Wine List that has won

every UK Wine Award. Roger is also a wine journalist, being the Wine Consultant for The Caterer Magazine, and contributes to Decanter, Glass of Bubbly, Harpers and The Buyer. He has also sat on the Decanter World Wine Awards for the last 8 years, judges Germany Top 50 and sits on The Moët Sommelier of the Year Judging Panel.



**Judith Nicholson** as Wine Buying Co-Ordinator Judith is involved in every step of getting the wine from the supplier to the customer. She has

worked in the wine trade since 2009 and can't imagine being in any other industry. In particular, she loves discovering new wines and introducing them to others.



**Susan McCraith** MW has over 25 years' experience in the wine industry. Her first job was in Bordeaux and from there she went to Cognac and was taught

how to taste while working for Hennessy. Back here, she became a Director at Howells of Bristol winning the Vintners' Scholarship followed by the Royer Guillet cup for the top Diploma mark and passing the Master of Wine examination first time round with an award for the top dissertation.



**Simon Haywood** began his career at university where he worked for Oddbins. Since then, apart from a short break selling computers (which he tells

us was very dull) he's always worked with wine. Whilst he's spent the majority of the last 26 years marketing wine, he's also clocked up a few years as a Sommelier, working in kitchens and managing retail wine stores.



**Andrew Falk** is our new Wine Development Specialist for the North West. Having grown up in a family with strong links to the trade, Andy also

developed a passion for wine and completed his WSET Diploma in 2013. Before joining Matthew Clark, Andy spent a number of years at Majestic Wine. He cites being half way up the Andes during his pilgrimage to Machu Picchu as one of his most unusual places where he has enjoyed a glass of wine.



**Zeren Wilson** has spent 14 years in the wine trade, most recently selling wine to London restaurants. He has written for various magazines including

Christie's Magazine, Noble Rot, The London Magazine, Completely London, Caterer, Ocado, and the Evening Standard food magazine, and also consults on restaurant wine lists. He runs [www.bittenandwritten.com](http://www.bittenandwritten.com)

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# THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE

We often forget that wine producers are essentially farmers, it's all too easy to get swept up in romantic notions, beautiful scenery, the dream of owning a vineyard (you know you have) whilst conveniently dismissing the hard graft involved, the mercy of mother nature, the demands of the market place.

Here we talk with some of our beloved wine producers to discover the trials and tribulations of making wine and why they'd never do anything else.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to have one of the greatest 'jobs' in the world, not just the wine world. I get paid to travel to incredible places, working with some of the best vineyards and most historic wineries in the world.

On top of that, I am fortunate to work with some of the most inspiring, creative and fun teams in the wine business. I have an office in Barcelona and Napa with many 'temporary' airport offices in between. I am responsible for seven wineries in Spain, one in Napa and one in Mendoza. These combined wineries have over 1,000 years of wine making history, five of which are over 100 years.

What's not to love? All I ever wanted to do as a child, (from age 10) was be a winemaker, to make some of the best wines in the world. I am not a winemaker who likes to be making just Chardonnay and Cabernet, ABC. When the job at Codorniu Raventos came up I was very excited, I would be able to make Malbec in Mendoza, Tempranillo in Rioja and Ribera del Duero and Garnatxa in Priorat and many more varieties and styles from Cava to Albariño.

How do I cope with all the complexity that this brings? I focus on my great team, on continual learning and always striving to make great wines and ... I give thanks daily.

**Arthur O'Connor**  
Director of Winemaking  
at Codorniu

**What's not to love?**  
**All I ever wanted to do as a child, (from age 10) was be a winemaker, to make some of the best wines in the world.**

Vintage is always a demanding intense time, a time of hope and celebration of the creation of wines that are truly special.

It's the most fun, creative, passionate part of the year. It is also the time where an entire year's production can hang on a knife edge balance. As farmers we watch the weather constantly hoping it will not destroy our year's work with rain or frost at the wrong time. Even more challenging when you are making wines at the highest level is the pressure, almost unique to wine, of getting the picking timing absolutely correct due to its ultimate control on the flavour of the wines we want to make.

In the 'new world' the winemaker is free to decide when to pick when they want and it can be one of the most stressful decisions. Under-ripe grapes will yield thin green wine, over-ripe grapes will be heavy and high in alcohol. I only get one chance per year to make Te Kairanga wines, there is no going back on the decision.

When you love the wines you make, making that decision is even more important but also that little bit easier as you know you will do your best.

**John Kavanagh**  
Chief Winemaker at Te Kairanga

**"It all started with love... Once upon a time, Mr and Mrs Béres heard about a vineyard for sale in the Tokaji Wine Region.**

They had never planned to own a winery, but felt true respect for the Hungarian winemakers and loved Hungarian wines. Especially the wines of historical Tokaji. Once they arrived to the village of Erdőbénye, stood on the hillside and looked down at the picturesque landscape, they felt it was love at first sight ... since then 15 years have passed by.

From this love grew Béres Winery; the vineyards, the building, the wines, the team. It was not always easy – agriculture never is! You never know what comes next. But, this is also the beauty of the whole thing. The feeling that we are always in the hands of God. And, thanks to God, our love of Tokaji is growing together with the grapes every year!"

**Melinda Béres**  
Winemaker and owner  
of Béres Winery

**I remember in 2000, Dad crushed and pressed some Pinot Noir and it had the typical high acidity needed for sparkling and so that is what he decided to make.**

I wasn't there during the harvest but when I came back from Singapore, I remember tasting this amazingly refreshing wine, with a strawberry and raspberry character. That taste experience has stuck in my mind ever since, I just thought this isn't what I taste in other wines, but it is brilliant. It is the thing I appreciate most about working with Pinot Noir in England. It tastes like this every year.

**Sam Lindo**  
Winemaker and owner  
of Camel Valley

**Welcome to the weird world of nature and vines. We have recently experienced a very strange phenomenon in one of our oldest vineyard parcels.**

We know for a fact that this has been an active vineyard which has been worked consistently for at least 400 years and suddenly it is growing giant boulders in the soil. Have aliens arrived at night to plant these boulders in our fields? It's an unlikely explanation, but given the size of these rocks and my belief that Newton was onto something important when an apple fell onto his head. It begs the question, how does a 200 kg rock rise through the soil when gravitational law says it should be going in the other direction?

Apparently there is a more scientific explanation for this phenomenon which sadly does not involve aliens. It's called 'frost heaving'. Freezing temperatures penetrate the soil from top to bottom and the stone is a better conductor than its surrounding soil and therefore a pillar of soil under each rock will freeze more quickly than the surrounding soil. The freezing process actually continues by sourcing water from outside the pillar creating an ice lens. Since water expands when it freezes this ice lens will lift the rock relative to the surrounding soil. Over time and we are talking a very long time the rock will move towards the surface where it becomes a big nuisance for the vine grower.

I am currently on the look out for someone locally who needs rocks for some hard landscaping!

**Sean Allison**  
Owner of Chateau du Seuil

# A kiss from a, **ROSE**

*If you are looking for another Provence Rosé to try, why not consider these featured wines.*



**Mirabeau Rosé**  
26976 – £10.01

Mostly Grenache with Syrah and Cinsault, rosé-pink with wild strawberry, raspberry and redcurrant aromas.

AWARD – Trophy 'Best Value Rose' & Gold Medal IWC 2016

Popular culture traditionally viewed rosé as a 'girl's night out' drink, but in reality a soar in Provence Rosé sales is proving that it is becoming a fashionable drink for all.

Arguably, nothing beats a refreshing rosé on a relaxing afternoon. Dry and elegant with fresh fruit aromas, Provence Rosé is wonderfully versatile and can be enjoyed as an aperitif, or with an impressive array of dishes, from seafood to chicken; which can no doubt attribute to this style's recent success.

Research by Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins de Provence recently concluded that sales of Provence Rosé wines dramatically rose in the UK last year by 37%. Estandon Wines have even touted that Provence Rosé could be as successful as Champagne in the next 10 years! However Provence wasn't always famous for its rosé, they were in fact made by default rather than intention.

But today, with its distinctive colour, it has become the go-to rosé wine.

New to rosé? Why not try **26976 Mirabeau Rosé, Côtes de Provence**. It's wild strawberry and raspberry aromas with zesty apple flavours make for a good introduction to rosé. This light and dry wine is best served chilled alongside goats cheese, shellfish or simply by itself. Made by gently pressing red grapes so that just enough colour and flavour is extracted before the juice is separated from its skins for fermentation. Mmmm C'est bon ça!

**Rosé, what's not to love?**



**Mirabeau Pure Rosé**  
29258 – £10.29

From some of the highest vineyards in Cotes de Provence; Provençal, herbaceous flavours meld well with hints of grapefruit, cherry and orange blossom and a refreshing minerality.



**Estandon Lumiere de Provence**  
31582 – £7.86

From Coteaux Varois en Provence, 15 miles north of Toulon, here its cooler and grapes ripen slower. A delicious salmon-pink colour with aromas of peach and strawberry and a refreshing finish.



**Estandon Héritage Rosé**  
31579 – £8.13

Grown at the foothills of the Massif des Maures on sunny slopes, salmon-pink with lychee-coloured hues with aromas of peach and pear.



**Estandon Légende Rosé**  
31581 – £13.11

Only a few hundred cases are made each year – Vermentino adds freshness to the rich Grenache, syrah blend.



**Château La Gordonne Rosé, Vérité du Terroir**  
25028 – £11.48

Made from the classic Provence rosé blend of Grenache Syrah and Cinsault its delicious aroma of fresh strawberries make it the perfect aperitif!



**Château La Gordonne Rosé, La Chapelle Gordonne**  
31643 – £19.36

From vineyards planted high up in the hills in a natural amphitheatre. Rich with apricot, grapefruit and strawberry notes.

# MA VIE FRANÇAISE

*For five years we have been trading with Raymond Blanc's restaurant's -Brasserie Blanc. Offering authentic French food on the High Street across 18 outlets, they have been busy re-furbishing all of the Brasserie Blanc restaurants with work completing in July.*

Matthew Clark supply 61 wines to Brasserie Blanc, 8 exclusively for the group. Catching up with Raymond, we were left in no doubt as to his continuing passion and real love for both food and wine... Santé!

***Your parents taught you to cook and appreciate food and wine at a young age, tell us more about this***

My papa was a great gardener and grew the food for the whole family or together we gathered from the local forests. My mother was a great cook and she wasted nothing; she created special family moments and wonderful meals from very simple ingredients mostly grown locally. She was (and still is) my inspiration.

I was brought up between two of the great regions of France, the rugged Jura with its wonderful Trousseau and Vin Jaunes and the elegant Burgundy – without question home to the best Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. In these areas, most of the wines are organic and naturally made. When I was growing up there was always a barrel in our cellar and it was my job as a little boy to go down to the cellar and come back up with a carafe for the table.

My memories of that are so vivid. The cellar was also home to the harvest from the garden vegetables; the smell in there was incredible. The whole winter supply of vegetables lay down there – the beetroot, potatoes, parsnips so earthy, covered in sacks and the shelves bowing under the weight of hundreds of pickles in jars. All of this lit by a single dangling yellow light – so evocative.

As was typical in rural France, I was given wine from a young age – as syrup was so expensive and we were so poor we would instead be given a sweet drink made with a small amount of wine with sugar and water. Each year the ratio of wine to water would change until, at 14, I was allowed a glass of pure wine. When they say that for the French wine is in our blood, then they are right. It is at the heart of us, at the heart of our family and our culture, of course taken in moderation and chosen well.

*continued overleaf...*



**What is your wine of choice when relaxing at home?**

Generally I love a Pinot Noir. At Brasserie Blanc we have a lovely Pinot Noir from Domaine Begude, a winery established by James and Kathryn Kingslake, a British couple who realised a dream and with that dream came this delicious organic wine at a good price. It is a true Pinot Noir with a wonderful nose, a delicate fruit, a pale colour and low tannins. In the winter give me a rich, spicy Syrah any time.

**What wine do you normally use in your cooking?**

My rules have not changed in 40 years – never use expensive wines, any book that recommends using a top of the range wine for me is wrong. For cooking you need something dry and light not oaky if you are using white wine; something thick, rich, deep crimson and cheap if you are using red.

Generally for white wine, boil for 30 seconds to remove as much alcohol as possible before adding to the dish; for red and marinades you need to reduce by 50% to enrich the character and the depth of the fruit. Allow this to become tepid before adding to the meat. There you will experience an extraordinary exchange of flavour and colour between food and wine

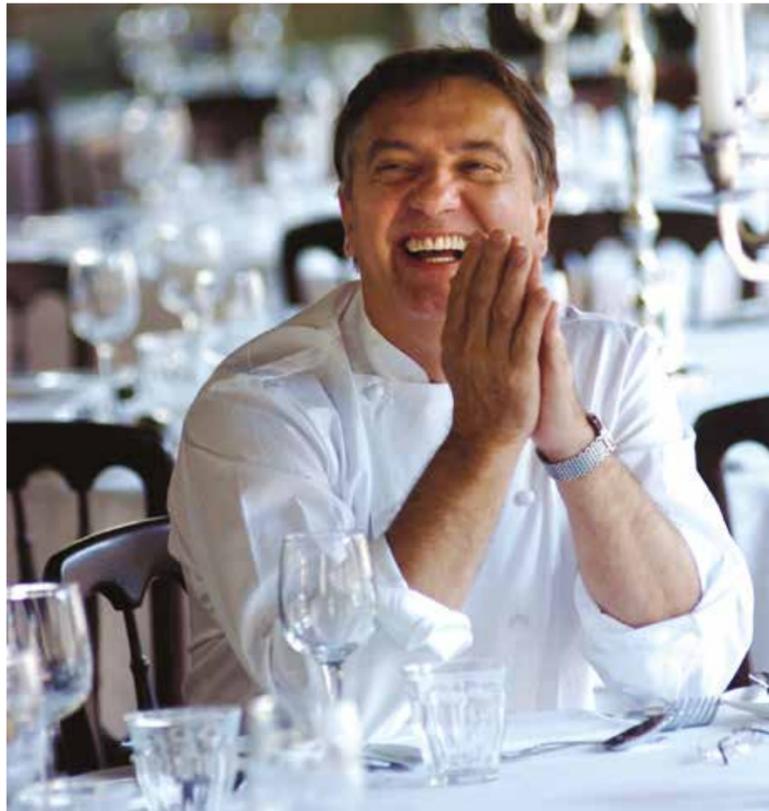
**What styles of wine do you normally like to drink?**

I like all wines from all over the world, it's probably easier to say what I don't like and that would be the newer style, oaky whites. For me they are too sweet and lack real character. Likewise some of the new reds are too oaky and jammy for my palate. I like to taste the flavour of the grape and the terroir where they come from.

**Tell us about a wine which reminds you of a particularly nostalgic situation?**

So this would be a Guigal Côte-Rôtie. This wine is totally connected to my first real wine experience (other than the wines I drank with the family as a child). I was 15 years old and had been selling wild mushrooms that I gathered close to home. I soon realised that you got a better price if you sold to restaurants so by the end of the autumn I was very rich, my pockets were full. As I walked home I passed a restaurant in my home town and the smells that were coming out were unbelievably intoxicating – so in I went.

The sommelier looked me up and down – which didn't take very long as I was very small and probably looked much younger than my age. I asked what was cooking and ordered a plate of veal kidneys cooked in Hermitage red wine – my first ever gourmet meal. Although I was very tiny, the sommelier understood my passion and partnered my dish with the Guigal Côte-Rôtie. Just a half bottle but I came out a little drunk. I was enriched by the experience but of course poorer in terms of the money in my trouser pockets.



Raymond Blanc's new book *Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons* is out in October. It's a personal tour of his legendary hotel and restaurant, featuring over 120 recipes from his award-winning kitchens. (Bloomsbury, Hardback: £50, Special Edition Hardback: £250)

At this moment I realised the difference between my mother's cuisine and haute cuisine – the layers, the flavours and the craft. I think it was that moment where that food and that wine sealed my destiny.

...I would love to tell you about an experience I had when drinking a 1949 Vin Jaune from Jacques Puffeney but maybe some other time!

**Do you have any slightly different food and wine combinations which on paper would never look right but actually tastes amazing?**

With the risk of upsetting a LOT of people I truly believe that red wine with cheese is the worst possible combination. They hate each other! The tannins of the red wine fight with the lactic acid in the cheese so I would always choose a dry white and probably from my Jura region. Here's a treat; try two year old Comte cheese and a delicious Vin Jaune – arguably, the best combination in the world.

Another tradition is red wine with meat, white with fish – mostly this seems to work well but sometimes there is a better combination. With a meaty white fish like turbot or hake, I enjoy a light red such as a Gamay or Pinot Noir. It is vital to grill the fish for this flavour combination to truly work: take the turbot, bar mark it, lay it on dry fennel, thyme, and rosemary etc, splash of olive oil then roast and enjoy with a light red.

**Where is the best place you have ever eaten in France?**

Of course I could give you a list of all the Michelin star places I have been to but I would rather tell you about a very humble place in my home town; Le Vin et L'Assiette on Rue Battant in Besançon. It is run by the chef and his wife who have an authentic and quite amazing 15th century cellar with incredible wines. They match their simple, local food with these sensational bottles. The first thing I do when I get off the train (even before I rush home to kiss my dear 94 year old mum) is take a glass of wine with Chef Bernard at this very special little restaurant.

**What is your favourite French ingredient?**

Garlic – of course. Roasted, deep fried, confit you name it, I'll eat it. Garlic is a medicine cabinet in a tiny and beautiful package, it's divine.

**You grew up in eastern France, how does this influence your cooking?**

In eastern France, the philosophy of terroir is strong – there is much emphasis on the values of family, provenance and the true love of food. Food is not just there to fill the belly but it connects you with your home, your village, your culture, your history – it makes you who you are.



**FOOD & WINE PAIRING**

**Roast pheasant in a bag**

Why not try Raymond's easy roast pheasant in a bag recipe. Guaranteed great results, and a delicious festive alternative for those that are tired of turkey.

Serve with potato rosti, pumpkin and blackcurrant, sauce for a gorgeous winter dish.

**The ingredients:**

- 4g Game seasoning
- A hen pheasant of approx 700g (or a 1kg cock pheasant)
- 25g butter
- A roasting bag
- 50ml water
- 50ml port, reduced by half
- A spring of thyme
- A roasting tin

**The recipe:**

- Preheat a convection oven to 75°C
- In a heavy-bottomed frying pan over a low heat, very gently brown the bird all over in foaming butter. This should take approximately 5 minutes or until golden.
- Sprinkle the bird with game seasoning.
- Place the browned pheasant in the roasting bag, and the bag onto the roasting tin.
- Add the water, reduced port and the sprig of thyme.
- Seal the bag with a tie.
- Cook the 700g hen pheasant for 3 hours at 75°C. Allow 4 hours for a 1kg cock pheasant.
- Remove the tie and strain any juices through a fine chinoise, or muslin-lined sieve. You should have around 130ml.
- Reduce the cooking juices by around half to leave a perfect jus.
- Remove the meat from the bird and decorate with roast winter vegetables.
- Pour over the jus and serve immediately. Enjoy!



Visit [www.brasserieblanc.com](http://www.brasserieblanc.com) to see their menus and locations



**Château du Seuil, Graves Rouge**  
11175 – £14.91\*

**Simon says...**

There are plenty of options when it comes to matching wine with Raymond Blanc's slow roasted pheasant; either a rich white or not too full-bodied red would work well. If plumping for a white, make sure it can keep pace with the myriad of flavours on the plate.

An oaked Chardonnay would work well, the vanilla spice from new oak complementing the cinnamon and star anise in the game seasoning and matching the overall richness of the dish.

However, the port reduction element alongside a chill in the air makes me reach for a red and in this case it's from Bordeaux. **Château du Seuil, Graves Rouge** is made by Kiwi Sean Alison, from a 50/50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, most of which come from the estates organically certified vineyards, the balance from vineyards they farm sustainably.

Elegant and concentrated, with notes of spice from the new oak it is aged in, it has a juicy dark fruit character and a refreshing finish to both match the weight of the dish and the preserved blackcurrants.

**Simon Haywood**

\*Bottle list price

# BADET CLEMENT

Last month I was lucky enough to attend the opening of the new Badet Clement winery at Monze Cazes in the Languedoc.

By Judith Nicholson



The Aude Valley



The citadel at Carcassonne

Upper Aude Valley. As you would expect, this wine is full of crunchy red fruit and hints of flint. It has aromas of ripe cherry and raspberry, a hint of loam, violet and dark chocolate. The fairly high acidity matches the ripe fruit and structured tannins well, with a lovely elegant finish.

Following the trip around the vineyards we were able to take a tour of the new winery in Monze Cazes before the opening night party. The new winery has been designed with two ideas in mind. One to be able to boost its production by five times more than their existing winery. It has a 50,000 hl capacity with tanks from 25hl all the way up to 500hl. This allows for vinification of everything from large wine brands, own labels depending on the market, and precise vinification of the premium level Chardonnay

and Pinot Noir wines that they will also be focusing on.

Following a tour of the winery, we were able to taste a full range of the Badet Clement wine range, including the excellent Abbots and Delaunay range – The **Alto Stratus Carignan** and the **Boréas Faugeres**.

We were also treated the next day to the tour of the Citadel in Carcassonne and a trip down the Canal du Midi, learning how both have affected the history of the Languedoc region.

Badet Clement, working with Abbots & Delaunay have a fantastic new winery and new vineyards in order to work on their latest project, and I can't wait to taste the new wines that will be vinified there.



**Zephyr Chardonnay** (31834) £16.36\*



**Solaire Pinot Noir** (32866) £17.10\*



**Alto Stratus Carignan** (31832) £15.65\*



**Boréas Faugeres** (31833) £15.65\*

\*Bottle list price

Badet Clement is owned by husband and wife team Laurent and Catherine Delaunay, a partnership of marriage and of wine that has been going for over 20 years. Starting off as Burgundy Negociants, they have slowly expanded into the Languedoc region. Firstly with Abbots & Delaunay, a partnership between Laurent and the wine maker Nerida Abbots and now with the opening of the new winery and the acquisition of the Domaine de la Metairie d'Alon vineyards, along with several other vineyards in Limoux, Corbieres and Minervois.

Laurent explained during the opening that what they want to do is showcase what else Languedoc is capable of, bringing their

Burgundian expertise into growing Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and that Languedoc has the soils and climate to produce exceptional wines from these varieties.

They are already demonstrating this with two of their wines – the Zephyr Chardonnay from Limoux which is a blend of several different vineyards, and the Solaire Pinot Noir from the Domaine de la Metairie d'Alon, a single vineyard bottling. During the trip we were able to take a 4x4 trip around the new vineyards, and were able to taste both of the new vintages of the wines in the vineyards where they were grown, with Laurent talking us through the wines. This was a fantastic idea for the trip,

really bringing the wines to life and allowing us to appreciate how the climate and soils affect the wines.

The **Zephyr Chardonnay** is used to showcase the different terroirs of Limoux, with the vineyard we were tasting in (The Aude Valley) known for giving it minerality and structure. The two other vineyards (Autan terroir and Mediterranean terroir), are known for bringing floral aromas and ripe fruit to the blend. It has lovely aromas of apricot and preserved lemons, with a hint of vanilla spice, and a really racy minerality that zings on the tongue.

The **Solaire Pinot Noir** is used to show the expression of the single vineyard, from the



Canal du Midi



**Andrew Falk**  
Wine Development  
Specialist

Having spent the last six years in the wine trade, I feel lucky to be able to spend my days thinking, talking and writing about such a wonderful subject and sharing the pleasures that come with it.

With the success and continued growth of our #DiscoverLoveInspire tastings this year, I have decided to look at the theme of love for my selections. This has come not just through my love for

the wines, but also through the stories behind them. The love and passion shown by the producers and their care, attention and dedication to producing unique wines representative of their individual terroirs, all to excite and delight us drinkers. I hope you enjoy my selections and discover some new loves too.

Cheers!

# Starter for 10

07 08 09  
04 05 06  
01 02 03

# 02

**Passori Rosso, Veneto**  
28229 – £9.40\*

Passori is a blend of juicy, ripe and plummy Merlot with local Corvina, a grape best known for producing Amarone. It is naturally high in acidity and possesses classically Italian sour cherry aromas which work perfectly in tandem with its Gallic partner. The grapes undergo a traditional practice of being left on the vines at harvest to dry, concentrating the flavours of the final wine. It beautifully balances the classical Veneto flavours with the style and appeal of modern wines the world over. For the price, it's hard to find a wine as rich and complex as this. With a soft yet voluptuous mouthfeel and a spicy finish you'd be forgiven for thinking you were drinking something twice the price.



# 04

**Bay of Fires Riesling, Tasmania**  
29190 – £10.43\*

Hailing from the up-and-coming region of Tasmania this is a real devil of a wine. And if that dodgy pun isn't enough to convince you then I don't know what will! Australia is usually synonymous with big, brash and bold flavours but Tasmania, an island situated 150 miles south of the mainland, bucks this trend taking advantage of its cooler, coastal climate to ripen aromatic white varieties such as this delicious Riesling. Penny Jones, Senior Winemaker, was born and bred in Tasmania. She uses her extensive knowledge of the climate and topography to get the most of each varietal, blending grapes from across the island's premium regions to achieve a balanced wine with outstanding quality. Dry with an intense lime character, hints of florality and a gloriously crisp finish. A great partner to South East Asian cuisine.



# 03

**Rapitalà Chardonnay 'Grand Cru', Sicily**  
23160 – £17.80\*

Rapitalà was developed in the early 1970s by Frenchman Hugues Bernard de la Gatinais and his wife Gigi Guarrasi. The estate combines their love and passion for both French and local varieties with a terroir-focused approach to generate simply stunning results. Cool coastal breezes and 300-600m altitude help to produce the highest quality grapes. Hand-harvesting and the use of oak barrels results in a rich, yet elegant and pure Chardonnay with notes of pineapple, melon and creamy yet understated vanilla spice. One of the best I've tasted to date!



# 05

**Chapel Down Brut Three Graces, England**  
27177 – £21.68\*

English Sparkling Wine might not have the same catchy name like its competitors Champagne, Prosecco and Cava but this hasn't held it back. Chapel Down have been making wines since the 1970s and have built up an exciting range of both still and sparkling wines. However, the Three Graces takes the biscuit for me. Talking of biscuits – this wine spends at least three years ageing on its yeast lees providing a subtle yet substantial aroma of biscuit or brioche associated with the very finest sparkling wines. A blend of the three classic Champagne varieties (55% Pinot Noir, 37% Chardonnay and 8% Pinot Meunier) it stands up to anything France has to offer with complex and rich flavours of lemon, baked apple and strawberry mingling with bready and yeastiness on the long finish.



\*Bottle list price

08

**Château La  
Gordonne Rosé,  
Vérité du Terroir,  
Côtes de Provence**  
25028 – £11.48\*

Provençal rosé has captured the hearts of modern wine drinkers. Made with local grapes Grenache, Syrah and Cinsault - three powerhouse red varieties - but vinified to create an elegant, crisp and refreshing rosé. The area around Château La Gordonne has been recognised for its grape growing potential going all the way back to the Romans. The stony, well-drained soils along with the warm climate moderated by the cooling Mistral winds provide the perfect environment for high quality, healthy grapes. Light red fruit aromas combine with hints of herbs and violets on the palate to create a complex yet drinkable wine.



10

**Meiomi Pinot Noir,  
California**  
31065 – £14.29\*

Pinot Noir has a reputation for being difficult to grow, especially in warmer climates. When not done right it can produce either overly light, insipid wines or over-extracted jammy flavours which create a lack of balance. California, although warm, benefits hugely from the cooling influences of the Pacific. Coastal areas are fed by refreshing winds and/or dense fog to bring the overall temperature down and make it the ideal stomping ground for the thin-skinned and temperamental Pinot. Meiomi, which translates as coast from the indigenous languages of the region, is a blend from the cooler parts of coastal Monterey, Sonoma and Santa Barbara. It retains the grapes' natural acidity and fresh fruit flavours of strawberry and raspberry, mingling vanilla oak notes with soft, supple tannins to produce a delightfully approachable and elegant wine.



09

**Starve Dog Lane,  
Pinot Gris, Australia**  
29266 – £10.19\*

Starve Dog Lane pursue natural freshness and purity of fruit in their wine and they've achieved that here with aplomb. Grapes grown in the Adelaide Hills region of South Australia are picked at optimum ripeness to produce a richer, more intense style with pear, quince and lychee aromas. A refreshing finish leaves you longing for a second glass - give into temptation!



07

**Esporão Reserva Tinto,  
Portugal**  
27944 – £17.03\*

The Esporão Estate was established in 1267 and values the traditions of the region and its grape-growing history. With over 200 indigenous varieties planted in their vineyards and overseen by 2012 Portuguese Winemaker of the Year David Baverstock, Esporão have paired that history with modern winemaking techniques to wonderful effect. A superb blend of 40% Aragonez (aka Tempranillo), 40% Trincadeira, 10% Alicante Bouschet and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, the palate demonstrates the sheer class that indigenous Portuguese varieties can show in the right hands. A nose of ripe red fruit and blackcurrant, sprinkles of herbs from the Trincadeira and a tannic backbone provided by the Cabernet Sauvignon mingle beautifully with well-judged oak ageing to give a complex and clean vanilla and toast finish.



06

**Alexander vs The Ham  
Factory, Pesquera del  
Duero**  
30332 – £18.14\*

What I love about this wine, and all of Casa Rojo's range for that matter, is how it engages consumers. My first thought whenever I see a wine with a funky or unusual label is a mixture of intrigue and concern, the concern being - "Why do they need the label to stand out so much, what's wrong with the juice?". Well, I can assure you there's nothing wrong with the juice going into Casa Rojo wines. The Alexander vs The Ham Factory comes from one of my favourite winemaking areas, Ribera del Duero, exceeding expectations to produce a delightfully rich and powerful wine. Made from 100% Tinto Fino, the local name for Tempranillo, it has seen 18 months ageing in French and American oak barrels. Packed with black cherry, damsons, spicy vanilla and toasted oak flavours, it's one to get closely acquainted with at your next steak night.



# GRAPE VARIETIES WE *Love* TO HATE

**It's almost inevitable that when grapes or wine styles build overall appeal with the general public typically the immediate response from those working in the wine trade is to seek something different to drink - how can we enjoy this now when "gasp" other people are starting to like it? How dare they?**

**We, 'the people in the know' must immediately start championing something else to convince consumers that we still know what we're talking about (or so we think) and aren't subscribers to general trends. But in reality should we hold back from this course of action?**

This all started with the ABC (Anything but Chardonnay) movement in the late 1990s during which it would have been so easy to forget how special this grape variety really is. Perhaps Burgundy should for once be thankful that the French appellation authorities wouldn't allow the grape variety on the label, hence the number of times we've all heard someone say 'I hate Chardonnay and ten seconds later order a glass of Chablis.'

It's easy to forget that wines with the 'C' word didn't really exist until about 30 years ago and after reaching a lofty peak in the 1980s and 90s it waned in consumer popularity; despite new world producers planting Chardonnay en

masse, the trends were shifting towards lighter crisper whites and red wines. The dominant oak of new world Chardonnays put off many a connoisseur who sought fresher alternatives, so ubiquitous was the term ABC that it even gets a mention in Jancis Robinsons' Oxford Companion to wine.

Though despite all this negative talk, Chardonnay is still in the top six of planted varieties in the world and never really fell out of favour. Of course, there's always the odd detractor, but considering the claims that Chardonnay was passé it seems quite a few people were drinking it in secret because millions of people all over the world continued to consume it.

The latest WSTA report has Chardonnay as the most popular grape variety in the On-Trade and the third most popular in the Off-Trade.

There's a grape variety we're thinking of that's currently heading down this very same track and the catchphrase this time around will be ABS, 'Anything but Sauvignon.' Negativity surrounding Sauvignon Blanc is already quite marked amongst many in the trade (Glera will be next!) which is a great shame - we need to be mindful that consumers absolutely love it and if it provides an entry point for introducing people to wine then we should be embracing this and not trying to make

our friends, family or customers feel bad for loving it! It's very easy to write something off when it's everywhere and we all want to be seen to be consuming and purchasing something different to be ahead of the trend for the next big thing.

When you taste a really good example of Sauvignon Blanc, something truly exceptional, you are reminded just why it's so popular in the first place ... you wouldn't want a repetition of what happened to sales of Merlot in the US when the character Miles in the film Sideways declared ...

**"I AM NOT DRINKING ANY F\*~\*~\*G MERLOT!"**

Sadly that's the end... though it would be easy to go on.

Do we love Sauvignon Blanc? I mean do we really love it? If you asked a regular punter in bars, pubs and restaurants around the country, the answer would be an almost unequivocal YES, yet I sense more than a trace of sniffy snobbery amongst the trade, something which has been rumbling for a while now.

I'm thinking primarily of sommeliers and their restaurant lists here: plenty of sommeliers will refuse to put one on by the glass, the main reasoning often given that 'it's all people will ever order'. I've seen lists where a more brutal margin is applied to a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, simply because they know it's a knee-jerk order for many customers ... punishment for ordering a popular category. Wow.

I had lunch with a wine bar owner recently and fancied trying a Sancerre from a producer I was unfamiliar with, and also the moment seemed right: a blistering hot day, a window seat, dressed crab incoming – a perfect Sauvignon Blanc moment? "I don't drink Sauvignon", my dining partner sombrely intoned. That was that.

We drank a dry German Riesling instead (the current darling of sommeliers everywhere), and very good it was too. But Sauvignon Blanc had lost the day ... but hang on a minute. Here we have a varietal that most wine lists would never dare to omit. Last year a survey by Laithwaites Wine collated the opinions of thousands of customers and found the varietal trumped all the rest in every part of the UK apart from Berkshire: kapow, take that all ye unbelievers. In the resulting follow-on press pieces, The Telegraph's wine writer Victoria Moore wasn't surprised at the findings, summing it up perfectly:

**"We drink £600 million pounds worth of it a year. People love it for its freshness and brightness – the grass and citrus, that lovely, cold gulp, like sticking your head out of a car window on a hot day."**

# A perennial sweetheart

By Zeren Wilson

**The flip-side to the sommelier snootiness is that it's the white wine that many (indeed most) consumers reach for first, whether it's in a bar, pub, restaurant, or simply unwinding with at home after work.**

So what is it that makes it so irresistible on such a grand scale? There's no doubt that the most important inadvertent PR job for the grape was instigated by the founding of Marlborough's Cloudy Bay by Dave Hohnen in 1985, at a time when the UK had recently begun to taste more of the big flavoured delights coming from Australia, driven by a nascent Oddbins, with New Zealand and the rest of the New World hot on its heels.

For many drinkers this was undoubtedly a time when varietals really came to the fore, emblazoned on the front of bottles in a way the Old World had not yet embraced: how many people knew which grape was making their Sancerre and Pouilly Fumé before this time? Probably a disconcertingly low proportion. Even those who had enjoyed these wines from the Loire would appreciate that suddenly Sauvignon had taken on a new guise, a thrilling interpretation brimming with a whole new flavour spectrum: tropical fruit notes, passion fruit, mango, guava and more, alongside the familiar herbaceous profile and perky acidity. New Zealand became a massive flag bearer for the varietal and we lapped it up.

While this Brave New World style heralded a promising new dawn, Sauvignon Blanc's intrinsic qualities, from the more restrained European examples through to the full throttle wines from the New World, press a lot of the right buttons when it comes to a glass of white wine: mouth-wateringly high acidity that cleanses and refreshes, making it a killer partner for food; ticking the 'dry' category on a list with aplomb; aromatics that often leap from the glass, making it a real 'crowd pleaser'.

**"Sauvignon Blanc bangs you in the mouth – like an old peasant with his wooden shoe. The Sauvignon is the whipper snapper. It's not solid enough. It's violent, it's sharp, it bites, it cries. It's like a ferocious dog you keep on a leash."**

Jean Troisgros, Restaurateur

**And yet...as with every varietal, the characteristics the same grape can display on different terroirs, on different continents, with wildly differing temperature fluctuations and growing conditions, holds enough interest to captivate any wine lover.**

South Africa has managed to command some kind of 'halfway house' between the more pungent New Zealand styles and the leaner, quieter, more mineral 'cut-grass, blackcurrant leaf, gooseberry and cat's piss' examples from the Loire Valley (and we mean that in a caring way, of course) – I still remember the thrill of discovering Boekenhoutsklouf's Porcupine Ridge label not long after joining Oddbins in 2003, and fell in love with their Sauvignon Blanc: I must have single handedly sold pallets of the stuff, a cracking wine for £7-8 (£5-6 back then) that always delivers.

The next mini-epiphany happened while working for independent merchant The Winery in Little Venice. Loire Sauvignons from hitherto unexplored appellations (for me, anyway): Quincy! Reuilly! Côteaux de Giennois! What fresh merriment is this? Again, I had been hooked in by a different interpretation of a grape I had been told time and again was a 'one trick pony'. If there's a style which has never sucked me in, it's the 'Fumé Blanc' beloved of some Californian winemakers, the heavy slap of oak often creating a blowsy, gawky, sweeter style of Sauvignon.

Then there's the experience of the grape jiving against another in a blend, the delicate Semillon/Sauvignon blends from Bordeaux, or thrilling examples coming from Western Australia from producers such as Vasse-Felix and Cape Mentelle: again, it was Oddbins who first opened the gateway to these wines for me.

Eventually the search for 'profound' Sauvignon Blanc leads the wine professional/nerd/geek/lover to the Pouilly Fumés of the legendary Didier Dagenneau, wines like 'Silex' having attained cult recognition with prices to match, and a recognition that in the right hands, it's possible to produce profound wines which also have the ability to age and hang around for a few years, rather than always being drunk in the first flush of youthful exuberance.

I remember having eye wideningly good Sancerres from Henri Bourgeois, Domaine Vacheron, and Jean-Max Roger. Each time a thought popped into mind of "why don't I drink more Sancerre?" It would have happened at that thwarted lunch before being 'Sancerre Blocked'.

There are white varietals which are currently more beloved amongst the trade, that's for sure: Riesling in all its chameleon forms from bone dry to lusciously sweet; Chenin Blanc for the same reasons. From here we sweep into the adoration (quite rightly) of indigenous varietals from around the world...Italy's Friulano and Vitovska; Savoie's Altesse, Chasselas and Savagnin; Hungary's Hárslevelű and Furmint... we're all guilty for dashing into the arms of these various new lovers.

**But let's take a moment to linger on thoughts of some of the most serendipitous wine matches on the planet... Sancerre plucked from an ice bucket alongside spanking fresh oysters with a squeeze of lemon; cool climate Adelaide Hills Sauvignon with mackerel straight off the barbecue and chargrilled squid; any Loire with goat's cheese; dressed crab with Pouilly Fumé, Sancerre, Quincy, Reuilly and friends.**

Trends and fashions come and go, but there's a reason the varietal in question is still being lapped up with an eager thirst by drinkers across the world. If one of the primary goals for sipping a chilled glass of white is refreshment, Sauvignon's ability to slake a ferocious thirst on a warm summer's day is up there with the best of them.

Good winemakers make good wines in bad vintages, a well worn truism. In the same spirit, good winemakers can coax the best qualities out of their grapes by decisions made in the vineyard and in the cellar, and can tame that 'ferocious dog' until it is eating biscuits from its owners hand. There's a Sauvignon out there for all of us: yes, even us snobby types chasing the 'next hot grape' on the block. Next time, I'll be a bit firmer with my lunch date. Sancerre dammit, Sancerre...

Derided, kicked to the kerb, oh so 'uncool'? Does Sauvignon Blanc have an image problem? Does it need a makeover and a clever re-brand? Did we fall out of love with one of the most popular varietals on the planet?

Nope x 4. It ain't going anywhere. Sauvignon Blanc, we still love you. Always and forever.

# PRESENT YOUR CASE:

## ON-TRADE VS. OFF-TRADE

With wine comes passion, and with passion comes opinion, closely followed by heated debate and arguing your point to death! Continuing our new series, we look at some of the issues facing the world of wine and give two people pretty clued up on the subject a chance to voice their opinion.

This edition we ask:

What do you love most about your industry: On-Trade vs. Off-Trade?



### ON-TRADE

**Roger Jones** – Michelin starred restaurateur, wine journalist and a panellist at the Decanter World Wine Awards discusses why he prefers the On-Trade.

**With all the political demise and unrest in the UK in recent months it would be nice to highlight the positives of working together. The benefits that both sides would have promoting a togetherness but I have been challenged to showcase the wonderful On-Trade and why the public love us.**

The main benefit that the consumer gets from the On-Trade is that the product, whether it is wine, beer or spirits are served in its optimum condition. We cannot always let the public be responsible or be sensible enough to deliver the product in the style that it was intended. Delivering the product at the optimum temperature, in the correct glass with the suitable components seems an easy chore but just look what happens when you let the public get some responsibility for example voting a dog to win Britain's Got Talent and voting us out of Europe!

The On-Trade, especially in restaurants, have the ability to enhance the drinking experience by correctly matching food with wine, we also have the huge advantage of allowing consumers to enjoy a much larger selection of wines over an evening without the need for consumers to have their own Coravin or Enomatic preservation systems at home.

I would strongly argue that you get a more professional advice and service in the On-Trade, which has to be good as the consumer is drinking the product in front of you. We are also in a far better position to ensure that the wine is perfect (not corked, oxidized or tainted) prior to serving it.

We have the consumer in our hands for a much longer period than the Off-Trade, sometimes for 3 or 4 hours compared to a fleeting visit into an off license. This gives us plenty of time to up sell and show off our products. Historically the On-Trade offers a better range and offers wines that have been aged, saving the consumer money and time. I often ponder why the Off-Trade does not offer vertical vintage listings of wines rather than offering only the latest release.

'Independents' in the Off-Trade perform a sterling job, especially those that have stacked their shops with Enomatic and WineEmotion preservation machines and provide 'snacks' for their customers. I would suggest that the 'Independents' such as Vagabonds and The Sampler are more of an On/Off-Trade and have the best of both worlds, just as we have always retailed wines out of our restaurant.

Supermarkets fail to excite or engage enough with the consumer. Wine promotion in supermarkets on the whole is all about cost cutting and rarely about quality or upselling. Rarely do they hold comparative tastings, which would encourage consumer to diversify and step up a level, and they certainly do not 'bring back that loving feeling' after visiting the drinks aisle.

Working in the On-Trade has so many lovely benefits, but the best is to get customers to allow you to develop their wine knowledge and consumption. They are always thankful to have ticked that box and tried something new.



### OFF-TRADE

**Susan McCraith** – Master of Wine with over 25 years' experience in the wine industry discusses why she has a particular love of the Off-Trade.

**The 'Off-Trade' is where consumers buy wines which are consumed off the premises, generally at home or at a friend's house. The Off-Trade covers a multitude of outlets from supermarkets to wine warehouses to specialist wine and spirit merchants and online wine clubs.**

The great thing these days is that you can taste a wine that you like in a restaurant or bar, take a photo of the label and look it up in [winersearcher.com](http://winersearcher.com) or snap it in the Vivino app and find out where to buy it or have a case delivered to your door. You can even buy wine on Amazon these days.

The number of wines available to consumers in the UK Off-Trade is literally mind-boggling – thousands of wines are available covering all styles, grape varieties, countries and prices. From classic Bordeaux to Austrian Blauer Zweigelt – the wine world is literally your oyster and because there are so many wine retailers competing with each other prices are jolly keen too.

How do you navigate through all this choice? Unless you are a connoisseur and know what you're looking for then you need advice. Rather like asking the sommelier in a restaurant, you'll seek a recommendation from someone whose advice you trust.

This could be a journalist's top tip from a weekend paper, an expert review, talking to the Manager of your local high street wine merchant or browsing the peer reviews on a website. Savvy shoppers will hunt out the bargains too and buy from different sources.

The Off-Trade is certainly learning from the On-Trade where people 'experience' a wine and are providing more opportunities to 'try before you buy' (as you can at Wine Rack stores) and some even have wines available by the glass. Conversely some restaurants (e.g. M Restaurant) also sell wines so you can buy a bottle to take home. This shows how the On/Off-Trades are working more closely together than ever before to cover every possible drinking occasion.

#### What's your opinion?

Have you been swayed by either side? Get in touch on Twitter and voice your opinion @MatthewClarkLtd



### **Sara Magee**

The Little Brasserie Company

Wine unashamedly constitutes a large part of my life. I've travelled the world touring various vineyards and wineries (I literally had to be dragged away from a three-week tour of Tuscany) and I'm steadily working through the ever-increasing variety now available in the UK.

Apart from the numerous types of wine that I love – a smooth rioja, a flavourful Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc (the list is endless), I also enjoy the different kinds of a glass of wine. When you grab a glass of a nameless white wine from the fridge as you get ready for a dinner out, a mammoth glass of red by the fire, a sneaky glass of Prosecco with lunch – I truly love them all.

However, the most pleasing thing about wine for me is its unifying ability. At home, we don't pour out individual glasses of wine and scurry off to various corners of the house. A bottle of wine is shared, discussed, enjoyed over dinner, continued after dinner. We top up each others' glasses and new bottles are opened during the evening as a matter of course. Whilst travelling, I've enjoyed some of the best days of my life with perfect strangers. We didn't even share a language just a love for a thoroughly good glass of wine.

Serving wine in my restaurant gives me endless amounts of pleasure and pride. I feel privileged that I can share a passion whilst I'm at work. I enjoy every second of designing a new wine list (obviously I try them all). I invite as many friends and family to the restaurant as I can to try and gauge a wider opinion but I'm learning to trust my own judgement a lot more these days.

I particularly like sharing upcoming wines with more regular customers and, nearer the end of the process, I spend a lot of time training the team. The success of a new wine list is always evident when a waiter or waitress's enthusiasm about a wine is transferred to a customer.

Responses to wine fascinate me. Time and time again I have seen a young palate accurately identify the subtleties of a wine that more experienced wine-lovers miss. I love seeing someone new to wine at the beginning of their journey. Every now and then I come across a kindred spirit and I enjoy enquiring after their favourites, scribbling down details and looking forward to trying something new!

### **Mark Aylwin**

Matthew Clark

My love of wine, is closely related to my love of great food. I can't think of an occasion where I have enjoyed a really memorable meal, without wine playing a part. I particularly love wine when I travel; I like nothing more than eating a local speciality, with wine from that region.

I am no expert, but have always had an interest; I did my WSET Certificate and Higher Certificate (as it was then), nearly 30 years ago and have retained an interest ever since. It has always been an ambition of mine to be more closely involved in the trade, so I jumped at the chance to join Conviviality



and to lead Matthew Clark. There is no better industry to be in; the passion shown is infectious and the hard work is always rewarded with a great glass of wine... Salute!



### **Mark Calver**

Hatch Mansfield

I think that the wine industry has to be one of the best businesses to be in. It is full of individual characters with a deep knowledge and passion for an agricultural product. The other bonus is that grapes tend to grow in very special places around the world and I am lucky enough to have visited many of these. It still amazes me that around 1 kilo of grapes can make a bottle of something

so special that people will pay thousands of pounds for it! Something like Le Montrachet from Burgundy would be an example of this.

I got in to the industry by accident, having been introduced to wine in the early 1980s by a great little wine bar in Lark Lane Liverpool called Keith's, when I was studying Physical Education at University. I then taught for a while until I saw and advert for a job at Grants of St James's I was so lucky to get that job, I knew nothing about wine, they trained me and well, here I am today!



### **Simon Haywood**

Matthew Clark

As a species we aren't blessed with too many senses – our windows to the world – I love wine because it provides an opportunity to employ all of them, particularly if it's the sound of a Champagne cork being released! I enjoy thinking about the balance in a wine, between the taste elements, and the struggle to nail down illusive aromas.

I love the wine industry it's full of art and science, opinion and agreement, and alongside every dull spreadsheet there is the prospect of another wine to try.

My Dad loved to make wine in the 1970s, whilst he never made 'Peapod Burgundy' as Tom Good did in 'The Good Life', I certainly remember him using parsnip, carrot and dandelion alongside the ubiquitous and hard won blackberry fruit. I think it may have been the Sunday afternoon blackberry picking marathons that started me on the wine road.

# Why do you love wine?

This is the question I have been asking wine enthusiasts as I am fascinated to know why and what they love so much about wine and the industry. I wanted to uncover if there was a particular story, memory or individual wine which has provoked such an engagement to the mind, heart and soul. Read on to find out what the answer to my question was from different people across the wine industry.

**By Jacqueline Cameron**

### **Judith Nicholson**

Matthew Clark

I love wine and the wine industry because it is constantly changing. There is always something new to try, another region or grape variety to discover, and it never stops being exciting.

The industry is great because it is full of like-minded folk, who are always willing to try something a bit different and happy to talk about it!



**“The wine industry is constantly changing. There is always something new to try...”**



### **Roger Jones**

Wine Writer

I love the wine industry as you meet such a cross section of lovely colleagues who become friends. It also goes hand in hand with great food which is helpful if you are a chef with a Michelin star.

I was very lucky at an early age in my career, whilst being Head Chef for State Banquets for the Queen at The Guildhall in the City we would test wines with food to find suitable balances and of course these were great wines even for a 21 year old Welsh lad.

### **The Mysterious One**

TERRE BIANCHE TORBATO DI ALGHERO, SELLA & MOSCA 23497 (£10.76\*)

Made from the Torbato grape and named after the Terre Bianche vineyard, with its white chalky soils on which the grape thrives, this is a rare and mysterious wine; the grape is thought to have been brought by Phoenicians to Sardinia from Catalonia. Today it is found only on the Sella & Mosca estate. Pale straw-yellow with golden tones; it shows a rich, elegant, mineral palate with zesty grapefruit, dried herb and floral aromas.



## **Sardinia**



150 miles off the west coast of mainland Italy you'll find Sardinia, its diversity of terroir offers plenty of choice, these are two of our favourites.

### **The Complicated One**

TANCA FARRÀ ALGHERO, SELLA & MOSCA 23501 (£14.66\*)

A blend of Cannonau and Cabernet Sauvignon grown in the Tanca Farrà area in the south-eastern part of Sella & Mosca's estate. Separate fermentations and three years oak ageing sum up the vinification. Shows a complex, mature-fruit character on the nose with herbaceous and developed, spicy notes. The palate is full-bodied with a smooth, Cabernet-fruit resonance.



## **Sicily**



Italy's southern most region and the largest island in the Mediterranean. Grapes have been grown here as far back as the 8th century B.C. due to its near-perfect vine-growing conditions.



### **The Daredevil**

CHARDONNAY 'GRAND CRU' TERRE SICILIANE, RAPITALÀ 23160 (£17.80\*)

Straight Chardonnay made from grapes grown in high vineyards, about 450 metres above sea level, where the altitude's cooling influence allows for a long ripening period when the grapes develop their flavour. Aromas of rich Sicilian fruit reminiscent of honeydew melon and tropical fruits like pineapple and greengage with notes of vanilla from a period of oak ageing.

# **Love Island**

**Meet our very own island romantics, you'll be sure to find one you'll love!**

## **New Zealand**



Famous for its Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, the north and south islands of New Zealand offer a wealth of other varieties to fall in love with.



### **The Adventurer**

TE AWA LEFT FIELD ALBARIÑO, GISBOURNE 29080 (£10.78\*)

Albariño ripens well in the warmth and sunshine of the Gisbourne region of New Zealand's North Island. Grapes are hand-harvested from the Brian Tietjin & Bushmere vineyards and whole bunch pressed prior to fermentation. The nose shows aromas of citrus flowers, melon and peach; the palate shows some richness and weight, and is backed by stone fruit and lime on the finish.



### **The Serious One**

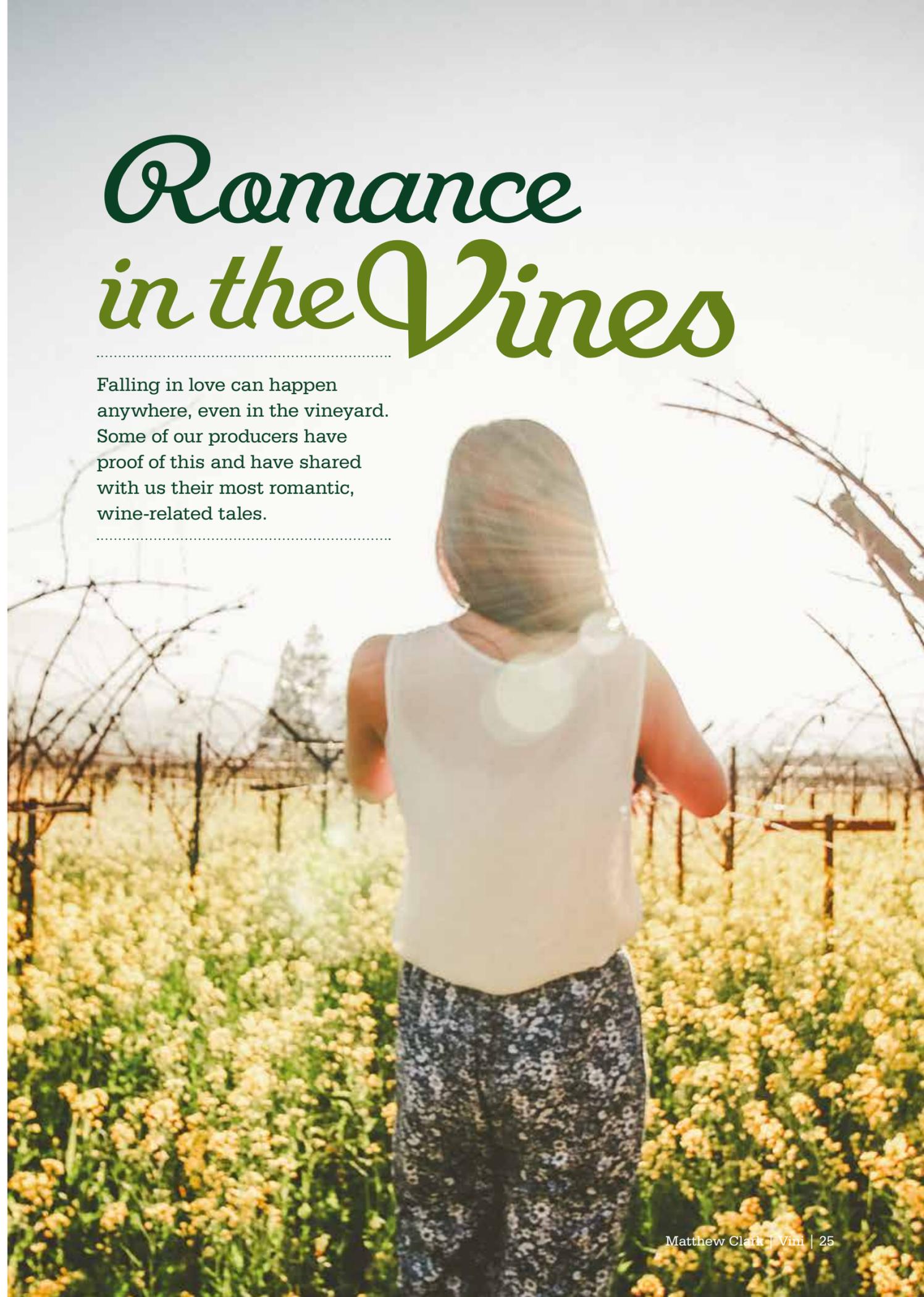
VAVASOUR PINOT NOIR, AWATERE VALLEY 25551 (£12.87\*)

The Pinot Noir grapes come from 'the favourite block' so named to reflect the warmer microclimate of the site; an area preferred by the livestock in winter prior to the land being planted to vines in the 1980s. To extract optimum colour, flavour and tannin, traditional Burgundian hand-plunging techniques are employed during fermentation. A luscious and aromatic wine, which features black cherry, plum and anise spice.

\*Bottle list price

# **Romance in the Vines**

Falling in love can happen anywhere, even in the vineyard. Some of our producers have proof of this and have shared with us their most romantic, wine-related tales.



*"For love, you can change your plans"*

2 years ago, Laure (pictured) came back to the cellar one afternoon after visiting Domaine de Lorient (her new estate in St Péray) and told me, her eyes full of stars : "I fell in love".



I answered "with who?" and she said "not with who, but with where!" She couldn't imagine living somewhere else, even if it seemed such a snap decision. For love, you can change your plans and decide to settle where your heart is beating and where you know you were made for!

**Jean Luc, Colombo**  
Owner and Winemaker

*"We decided two things: get married and found Casa Rojo."*



For the last 20 years, I have been involved in wine in different ways. From the beginning I had a dream; create wines different from all the wines existing in the market, wines that respect the tradition and the quality, but with a strong personality and rebellious communication. What were the wineries doing? Adding sugar, adding bubbles or just making funky labels with poor quality wine inside. When Laura and I met, we had the same feeling, the same idea, and then we decided two things; get married and found Casa Rojo.

**José Luis, Casa Rojo**

*"Son of a Sherry winemaker proposing marriage in Rioja"*



I proposed marriage to my wife in a small village close to Viña Real, located in a high altitude point viewing a landscape full of old vineyards with orange-red-yellow colours in autumn, funnily enough, I was a young man raised in Jerez, son of a Sherry winemaker proposing marriage in Rioja... I hope Mum does not disinherit me!

**Carlos Delage**  
Export Manager, Vina Real

*"The truth was revealed and my world turned upside down."*

I knew it was love when I couldn't live with the guilt anymore. Looking back, I was just living a lie. All the time I was going behind closed doors and hiding away the facts. Then finally came the day I was caught red



handed by my family and friends, the truth was revealed and my world turned upside down. What started off as quite innocent foray had ended up as an obsession. A 1987 Villa Maria Merlot had ended my relationship with beer on the dinner table and started my life long affair with Wine. The rest as they say is history!

**Nick Piccone**  
Villa Maria

*"Everyone shared it as a symbol of joining cultures."*

Earlier this year, our white and sparkling winemaker Nic Bowen and his now wife Julia got married at our Yeenunga vineyard, where we source Eileen Hardy Shiraz - it was absolutely beautiful. They started a new tradition, as Julia is German, so Nic's Dad Rob Bowen (previously Houghton Chief Winemaker), and Julia's father each opened a bottle of their favourite wine from their own country, a WA Cabernet for Rob and a German Riesling, and everyone shared it as a symbol of joining cultures.



Hardy, Australia

*"It was complete love at first sight!"*

I once made an urgent delivery of wine to a restaurant where Julie was working during the summer and it was complete love at first sight! We haven't left each other since, it will be 13 years together and in love this summer, Julie even joined me to be part of the Laballe adventure in 2009!



**Cyril Laudet, Winemaker,**  
Domaine Laballe

*"With beautiful results it was true love"*

There was always infatuation... many before had proven the great heights that could be reached, but the moment I realised that Hawkes Bay Chardonnay could be left alone to ferment naturally, with nothing to add, little to do and with beautiful results it was true love. March 2004

**Hugh Crichton**  
Vidal



*"Unpredictable, fresh and magical"*

Love is complex. People are complex. Champagne makes things sometimes easier. Love should not be a goal but its quest yes. I love life in all its dimension, what it brings and more importantly what it will bring tomorrow ... life, love ... are a bit like Champagne bubbles: unpredictable, fresh and magical.

**Clovis Taittinger**  
Director Champagne, Taittinger

## Romance in the Vines

*"Nowadays she also works in the wine trade so no one does the ham!"*

I met my wife at Contino in 1998 when she used to work for the Iberican association in Madrid with Joselito, Romero Carvajal, Navidul... a great relationship. She used to do the Iberican ham and myself the wine, nowadays she works also in the wine trade so no one does the ham!

**Jesus Madrazo**  
Winemaker, Contino in Rioja



*"A magical moment"*

A magical moment at the mythic 24 Hours of Le Mans. Sharing a glass of Pouilly Fumé la Cuvée du Troncsec 2015 with Team Principal Signatech Alpine, Philippe Sinault in the VIP Alpine Stand, June 2016

**Catherine Corbeau-Mellot**  
President, Joseph Mellot



*"What is stronger than love? Passion!"*

What is stronger than love? Passion! And with people and patience it is what we are trying to catch in our bottles of wines.

**Frederic Barnier**  
Cellar Master, Louis Jadot



*"And that is how I met Letitia."*

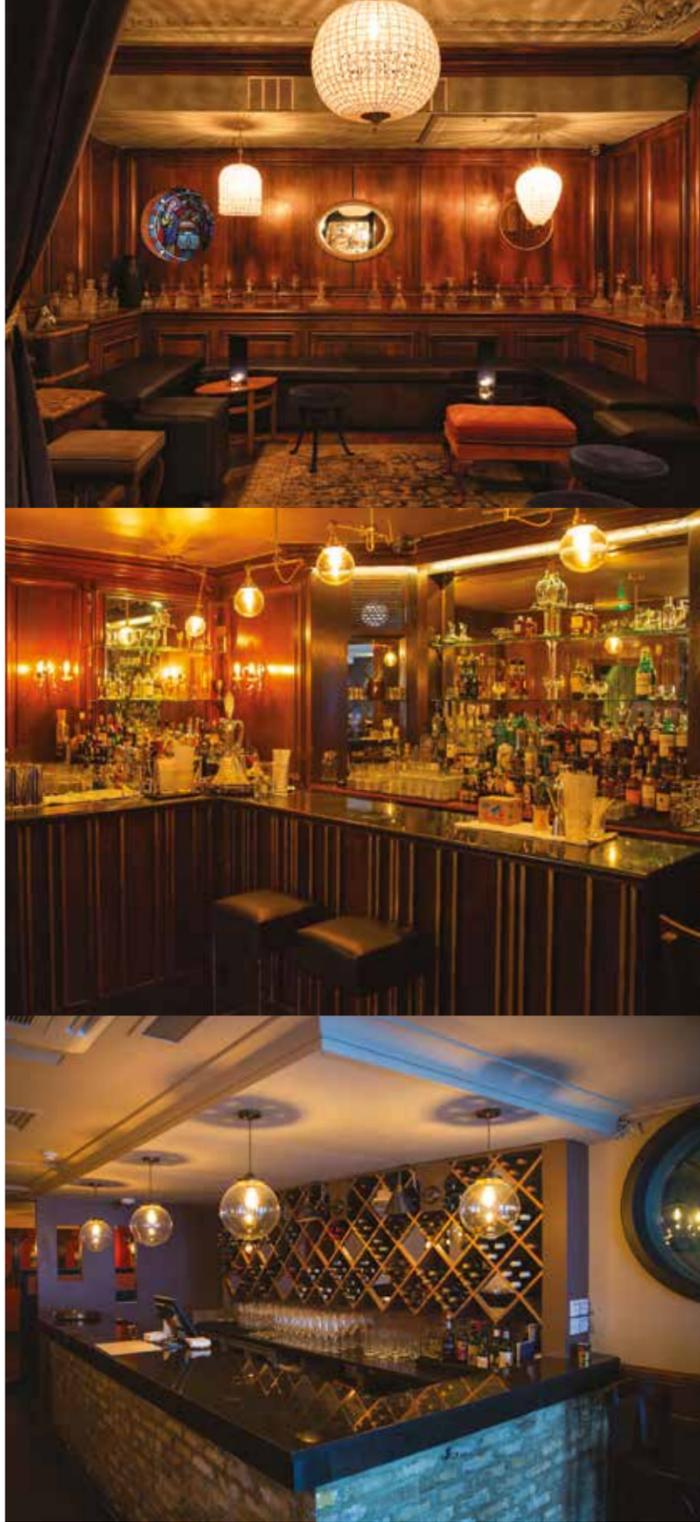
I met my wife in Bordeaux in 1999 when I worked vintage at Michel Rolland's Le Bon Pasteur. At the time I became friends with the winemaker as he was willing and able to speak English. He was dating my (now) wife's sister at the time so he invited me to go out with them and that is how I met Letitia.

**Francisco Baettig**  
Cellar Master, Vina Errazuriz



# DEVOTED TO THE TRADE

Creating and re-invigorating love of the trade



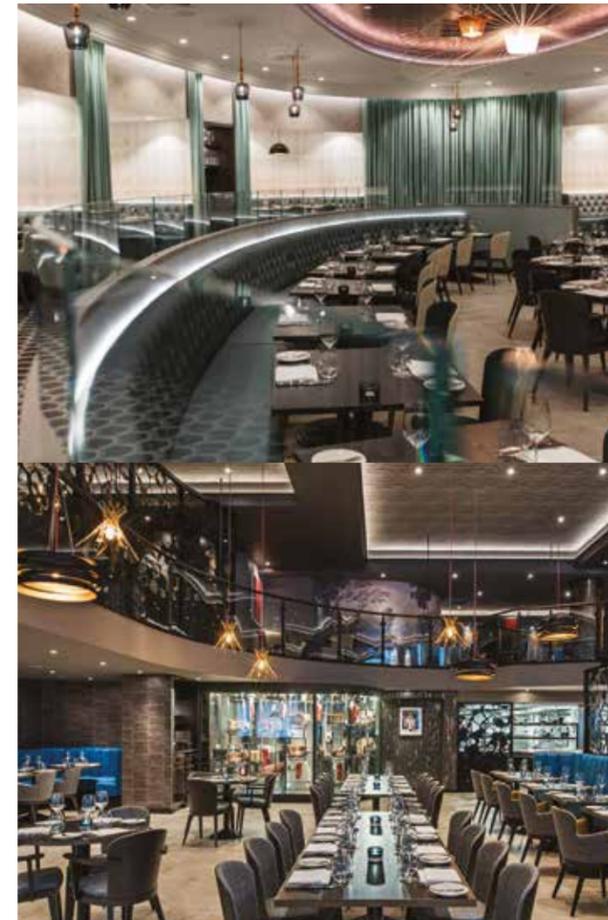
## 20 UNDER £20 AT 68 AND BOSTON

68 and Boston – a wine (68) and cocktail (Boston) bar in Soho has launched its wine list with every wine priced at £6.50 a glass, £17 a carafe and £20 a bottle. And it's a list of seriously good-value-for-money wines. The bar is a venture between three bar professionals – two from the cocktail world and one from the wine side. The wine list flat pricing encourages trial, taking away the hang up of cost and associated risk.

It's refreshing and their customers are encouraged to try things they may not have taken the risk on. As people's thirst for knowledge continues, 68 and Boston are providing easy access to new things - the flat wine pricing allows customers to try wines with an open mind and an un-afraid wallet.

We have spent some time with a few of our inspirational customers, finding out what they are doing to keep their love affair with the On-Trade going.

“ Drama is a truly unique experience which is driven by the creative mindset behind its engine. ”



## M RESTAURANTS... NAKED FOR MALBEC DAY

CEO Martin Williams and Director of Wine, Zack Charilaou, have built the largest collection of Malbec in Europe with over 100 labels listed. In order to draw attention to this and the fantastic grape, the pair were outside the M Wine Store and their M Victoria St venue stomping grapes for charity on World Malbec Day and offered 25% off all Malbec during the month of April. Not a shy pair, to start the day they were naked apart from two rather large bottles of Malbec! Martin pledged to match Instagram likes of the 'naked stomp' photo pound for pound to be donated to the Head and Neck Cancer Foundation.

During their month of Malbec Madness, M also screened Argentine films, gave their guests the chance to crush grapes and taste some top Argentine produce all matched with Argentine wines – over 1000 guests dined on a special four courses / four Malbec's menu. It was a month of innovative activity and fun that got people talking and returning to the same venue as there was always a different angle and focus.

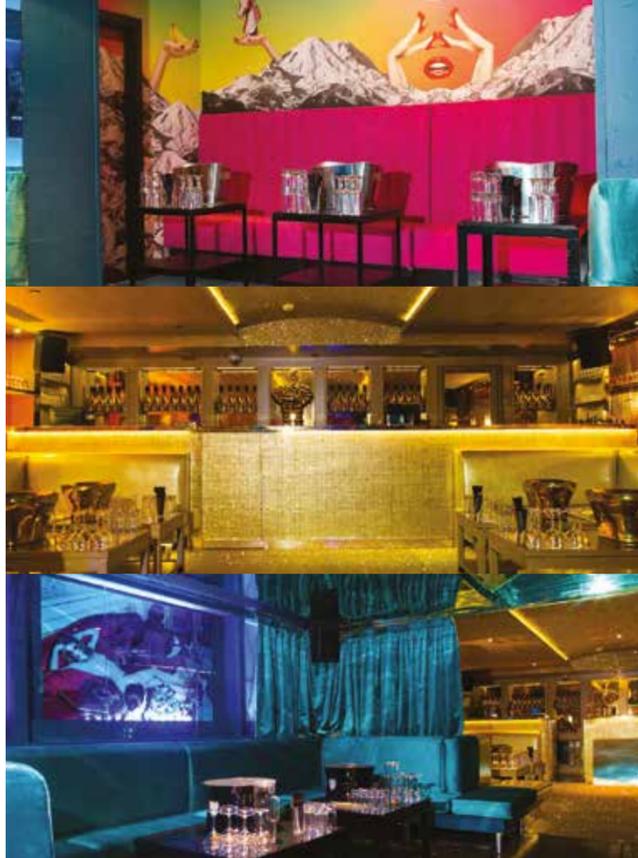
With over 100 wines available by the glass through use of Enomatic machines and Coravin, M encourages guests to find a new love. Creating a premium dining environment was key in a world of casual dining and Martin wanted to deliver a premium dining experience- food being served on shovels and drinks from jam jars. Upgrading what you can do at home is what the On-Trade should be about!

Martin says:

“ We have spent a lot of time refining our wine range, working tirelessly with Matthew Clark to source wines that are the finest of their type at a range of both accessible and aspirational price points for both M Wine Store and both the Grill and Raw restaurants in M Victoria Street.

Matthew Clark have helped us create arguably the most exciting fine wine offering in a wine retail store in London along with a wine list which brings the greatest wines from around the world (regardless of price point) for our guests enjoyment. ”





## MARRIOTT SHAKING UP THE FACE OF HOTEL DINING...

Hotel dining and bars may not always inspire you to 'dine in'. Marriott are set to change this, starting with the rooftop terrace at Park Lane. Most people in the UK love the summer months and cling on to every last bit of sunlight on the few warm, bright days that we might get. It can be a double edged sword for the On-Trade.

Marriott Park Lane had no such outside space, until a competition within the Marriott estate last year gave them funds to re-vamp their roof space. On a small budget they created a pop up called Roofnic – inspired by the idea of a roof-top picnic. Think grass, pallet beds and glass panel to see right the way down Oxford Street, combined with school style bench seating and an undercover area. Roofnic was a huge success!

This year, they have re-invented themselves to ensure people have a different reason to come back. Focusing on outstanding drinks, innovative serves and food to match. The launch of Notch in May, sees Japanese inspired dining with wine in bags, cocktails in cans and schooners of craft beer. The concept is simple, the execution fantastic. We spoke to Notch Founder Harry Eames...

**What do you think people love about Notch?** Notch is different from other bars in the area. Our goal was simple: to be very approachable with absolutely no pretension, and to provide great food, drink and vibes for nice people.

**How did you create the concept and what customer feedback are you getting?** The concepts come from creating spaces we want to enjoy, I wouldn't say we try to follow trends, more the philosophy of success coming through something you enjoy, we live and breathe each project and it tends to grow organically from start to finish. The feedback is great. People seem to love the industrial playground feel (especially the swings). We received a lot of excitement about the cocktails in tuna cans and the food being an improvement on last year.

**What makes people love what you are doing?** The fact that we aren't trying to re-invent the wheel. As I said before, we place our focus on the product and the environment. The staff are friendly, the drinks are consistent and of high quality and the food is killer. Pair that with the unique location and relaxed vibe, and you're onto a winner.

## CREATING SOME DRAMA...

The London club scene is extremely competitive. If you don't keep it interesting, you will be closing your doors and saying goodbye to the billionaires, a-listers (to welcome z-listers) and paparazzi in a flash – people fall out of love quickly in this scene.

Whisky Mist (Hilton Park Lane) was frequented by Harry and Wills, had a-listers regularly falling out of the doors at 4am, but in the fast paced club world, people need to see change.

As soon as the doors shut, the Hilton owned club rebranded and relaunched. New staff, new PR, new drinks, new look and new focus on attracting the high end clientele that it once had. An eclectic mix of clientele and an ever changing theatre with an impressive wine and Champagne offer.

DRAMA focuses on Champagne sales, the theatre they deliver is what makes them different. Starting bottle wars (groups trying to outdo each other with more impressive rounds of fizz and magnums of spirits) delivered by dancers, fire eaters and numerous different and creative ways of bringing DRAMA to each and every serve.

Anthony Worrall Hiltons Senior F&B Director for UK and Europe is a huge fan and says...

“DRAMA is a truly unique experience which is driven by the creative mindset behind its engine. Every night is a memorable utopia scattered with beautiful people and lavish art, with revellers returning to experience our coveted drama queens who put on a different performance every night.

The concept was created by the fusion of an un-exemplified ingenious element to the table, resulting in an irrefutable cocktail which customers have vocally praised throughout its opening year.”



# Ones to watch

## Vacheron Sancerre Blanc 27150 £19.61\*

If it was a New Zealand Pinot Noir that made me fall in love with wine, it was a Loire Sauvignon that made me interested in wine, when I attended a talk about how soil types can affect grapes and the wines. Vacheron are particularly good at this – they have 3 vineyards with different soils of chalk, flint and pebbles and they vinify the grapes of each separately before blending to achieve the best style. Their Sancerre has some lees maturation which intensifies the flavours on the palate – citrus fruits, gooseberry and minerality all shine through. It has lovely racy acidity and a long elegant finish.



## Ceres Composition Pinot Noir 28360 £17.49\*

It was a New Zealand Pinot Noir from Central Otago that made me fall in love with wine, and they are still some of my favourite wines to drink. Central Otago is the most southerly wine region in the world, but has a climate very similar to Burgundy, and the long, slow ripening season means that Pinot Noir can reach its best. Ceres only make 250 cases of Pinot Noir a year, and the scarcity of it makes me appreciate it even more! With lovely ripe cherry and plums on the nose, it comes alive on the palate, with crunch red cherry and raspberry, silky smooth tannins and a touch of spicy oak on the finish.

## Primus Carmenera 31599 £10.22\*

I got this job with a presentation about Chilean Carmenera, so it has to be on the list! Apart from that fact, I love a well-made Chilean Carmenera. Producers are really starting to get into their stride now and are able to show the grape to their best advantage, and it flourishes in the Chilean vineyards. The grapes for the Primus are grown in Marchigue, a sub-region of Colchagua, and the warm climate means these grapes produce a rich, ripe wine, with luscious flavours of plum and cassis, dried fig, and rich spices on the finish.



## Bollinger Special Cuvée Brut 11072 £43.12\*

When I finished my WSET diploma exams, I only requested that there be a bottle of this waiting for me when I got home. Having visited there three years ago, Bollinger holds a special place in my heart, and the fact their Champagne is fantastic only helps that! The Cuvée Brut is a Pinot dominated blend, mainly using grapes from Grand Cru vineyards. Full-bodied in style with a rich, bready character, hints of red fruit from the Pinot Noir and delicate, light bubbles.

I've written many articles on my picks of Ones to Watch, from ones to pick for a romantic night in, to those with hidden heritage. But I've never done one on the specific wines that I love – the ones that I would take on a desert island with me, or choose if I could only drink one wine (or five!) forever.

So with a Vini that is focusing on love I finally get to do that, and pick the wines that got me interested, and keep me interested in wine.

By Judith Nicholson

## Remoissenet Pere et Fils Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru Les Combettes 31285 £51.47\*

I've known the Remoissenet wines for years, and was so excited when we listed them. They make stunning Burgundian wines, and they make stunning Puligny Montrachet, which is always one of my favourite appellations in Burgundy. The Les Combettes sits at the same height on the hill as the Grand Cru vineyards, and is able to produce fantastic wines. With lovely ripe citrus and stone fruit and that steely minerality that the vineyards are famed for, I could drink this all day.



# Demystifying Wine

Most industries suffer from it, and the wine trade is not immune, the use of buzzwords, jargon and unexplained technical terms can exclude the reader or listener from the conversation. Yet these words and expressions are generally being used to add value to the conversation.

By Simon Haywood



In Vini we look to clarify what some of these words and expressions mean with respect to wine; this time we address, with the help of some winemakers, the term ‘terroir’.

A definition of ‘terroir’ would be a good place to start when contemplating its meaning, although this is not an easy definition to track down. The best translations of this French word, hint at a ‘sense of place’; with words such as ‘region’, ‘land’, ‘soil’, ‘vine’ and ‘climate’ being employed. A key tenet of terroir, is the belief that the combination of soil, climate and vine will lead to the production of a particular grape, which will be unique to the plot of land it is grown on. Whilst researching this piece, I was amused to see that the concept was being applied to the production of oysters, the term being used was ‘merroir’ – ‘like terroir but more watery’ reported The Washington Post.

However, there are other factors, such as winery-specific vinification techniques or local microbiomes - which influence the wine if wild fermentations are employed, that blur and complicate an understanding of terroir.

**We asked a few of our winemaking friends about their views on the subject; we asked whether they believed in the concept of terroir and how it influenced their approach.**

**Philippe Zinck of Domaine Zinck** has been responsible for producing his excellent Alsation wines from his Eguisheim winery for nearly two decades. Since 2011 the grapes have been farmed on the estate organically. Philippe is convinced that, ‘terroir is stronger and exerts more influence on the wine than any modern winemaking techniques’, expanding on this he states, ‘Terroir is a stamp of the soil where the vine is planted, it gives a unique identity to the wine; it’s what I like about wine, terroir influences the sophistication, texture and length of the palate. Without a doubt the best wines are all built from a good terroir – terroir puts emotion in a wine.’

**Luis Sottommayor** is the Chief Winemaker of Sogrape Douro, he heads up a team that makes Sandeman port. He sees terroir as the impact the environment has on the wine that can be made, stating, ‘For us in the Douro, wines are blends between different expositions, altitudes and varieties so all of the Douro has a unique terroir.’ He sees it as the responsibility of the viticulturalists to bring optimally ripe grapes to the winery, so that wines that reflect the Douro’s diversity can be reflected in ‘exceptionally well-balanced wines.’

Over 5000 miles south of the Douro, **Andrea Freeborough**, Winemaker at Nederburg in South Africa see things similarly, ‘Terroir is a crucial part of winemaking. Being in the fortunate position of being able to source from a number of different terroirs, enables us to produce wines that are rich and complex, as each building block in the blends we put together reflects a unique sense of place, with its own unique set of aromas and flavours.’

**José ‘Pepe’ Galante**, Chief Winemaker at Salentein, sees the concept of terroir as, ‘the interaction between soil, climate and man.’ Our vineyards in Mendoza’s Uco Valley in central Argentina have alluvial soils that are made up of materials from the Andes: stony, with a prominent presence of limestone. It is very heterogeneous soil, giving us a variety of configurations within short distances of each other. Our climate is continental, generally cold and dry with over 300 days on sunshine. As a result of these unique conditions of soil and climate, we, the viticultural community of Mendoza, had to carry out our own research to find the best grape stock and optimum viticultural techniques, including canopy management, to produce the distinctive character of the region’s internationally renowned Mendoza Malbecs.

I suppose we shouldn’t be surprised to hear similar views on the subject from winemakers around the world, each appreciating the effect of terroir on the wines they produce; after all the mantra, ‘great wine is made in the vineyard’ is well known.

# Cellar Door

Alpasión Malbec is brand new to Matthew Clark this Autumn. Alpasión is derived from the Spanish words for soul (alma) and passion (pasión), their goal is to make the best possible wine according to sustainable organic standards.

We caught up with them to learn more about them and how their wines are produced on their vineyard in Mendoza, Argentina

**Tell us more about how a few people with soul and passion for wine got together to create honest and iconic wines together?**

The original six investors in Alpasión took The Challenge of Leadership course together at INSEAD Business School in Fontainebleau, France. Over the course of the class participants share many personal and emotional experiences with each other and the six grew close through all of that. In the hopes of keeping up their friendship outside of the course they one day decided – over a few bottles of wine – to make a dream come true by making beautiful wines together. And that's how Alpasión came to be.

**What's the story behind the quirky label?**

Since these early days we've grown to 50 investors all of whom are friends – or friends of friends – of the original six founders. Our labels feature the fingerprints and signatures of our owners because the people and friendships behind the project are central to who we are. We wanted to be sure to convey the personal and hands-on nature of the project through the label. Plus, we only make wines which we can be proud of so we're happy to sign our names to the bottle!

**Is it true you named a row of vines after us?**

Yes, it's true! Given our roots we really value the relationships we have with our different suppliers, importers, etc. We appreciate the work everyone does, that contributes to the project's success and want to honour that by bringing our partners into the folds of our business in different ways. For us it is all about personal, long-term relationships.

**To achieve the goals of having innovative and sustainable wines you have hired the talented wine maker, Karim Mussi Saffi. Can you expand on the team's approach?**

We believe deeply in the importance of terroir and are dedicated to making honest wines – wines that reflect the soil's true and unique identity. For us, it's all about honouring the natural process of winemaking, about listening to and responding to nature's messages in order to make wines that are an honest reflection of what's been given to us. This thinking is central to our project and is reflected in both our early decisions and the ongoing, day-to-day management of the vineyard and winemaking process.

For example, we did a thorough soil study before planting to make sure we make the most out of the soil's natural composition and diversity. The resulting wines are the best expression of the terroir they come from.

**We're excited to be listing the Alpasión Malbec this October - how would you describe it?**

The Alpasión Malbec is our flagship wine. The 2011 vintage was awarded 90 Parker Points and the 2012 was awarded a Gold Medal by Decanter. It is a pure, rich, fruity wine that expresses the goodness of the soil and climate of the Uco Valley. Its aroma presents red and dark fruit with a hint of minerality that keeps it fresh, while the ten months of aging in French oak barrels adds a spicy complexity with hues of vanilla and

smoke. Its mouthfeel is silky and concentrated, and combines ripe fruitiness with round and supple tannins. It can be enjoyed now or aged for up to ten years. It's a truly beautiful wine.

**What is your favourite wine and food pairing with this Malbec?**

Alpasión Malbec is truly at its best when paired with traditional Argentine churrasco or grilled meats such as flank, sirloin or skirt steak but really it can work with all kinds of meats including lamb and pork – and also hearty stews.

**The theme of this issue is "love", what do you love most about this industry?**

There's so much to love about the wine business but I would have to say the thing that I love the most is that it encourages a real appreciation and respect for nature.

As I mentioned earlier, for us, winemaking is all about listening to and responding to nature's messages, which presents so many interesting challenges and opportunities that you don't encounter in other businesses. It has a way of humbling you ... I also like the fact that there are no real 'wrong answers' in wine. It is all about personal preferences, tastes, moments and experiences.

**If you had one paragraph or sentence to convince people to try Alpasión Malbec what would you say?**

There's a saying that the best wines are the ones we drink with friends and for us at Alpasión that is our essence, our goal was to do just that – make quality wines we could share with each other as friends. And now, we feel honoured and lucky to be able to share our wines with the rest of the world. Alpasión is meant to be enjoyed with friends and by people who have a shared passion for friendship, good food and great wines. We hope you and your friends enjoy it as much as we do. Cheers!

# GENERATION Y-WINE

**A recent international study by VINEXPO has shown that in the UK young adults are slowly becoming more familiar with wine, but there is still a lack of general acceptance within the younger generations. They feel put off from experimenting with wine out of a fear of its complexity.**

**Yet, at Matthew Clark and within the industry there are many new faces from Generation Y popping up who have developed that real love and understanding of wine.**

**We have asked some of them to provide us with insight into what made them develop that bond with wine, which may inspire more of the younger generation.**



Wine at first taste was not something to fall in love with and I suspect that many have a similar experience but don't care to admit it. I'm of course referring to an introduction which may or may not have been before the legal age, sat around the Christmas table and being poured a glass of my mother's favourite Sauvignon Blanc to enjoy with the turkey. As with so many distinctive flavours that we later grow to cherish, wine isn't always the easiest to enjoy with a youthful palate.

I'm sure some people much more intelligent than I will be able to explain why it is that as the years go by we grow to crave flavours previously shunned, but I doubt I'm an exception, as time has progressed I've found myself charmed by the depth of flavours and of course the joy of the world's most celebrated drink.

.....  
Luke Siddall



Before joining Matthew Clark I didn't enjoy wine, I think I wasn't aware or didn't understand how much knowledge there was around it. The process of making it, the different regions/countries where they are grown and how the location of the vines can affect the grapes growing. After doing my WSET and getting to taste a range of different wines, learning about how to taste wine and food pairing certain types with certain food my interest really started to peak, I started to enjoy drinking wine and learning about it.

After completing the first level, I have started to order wine when I am at a restaurant, having dinner or helping out friends when they are ordering a wine. I'm really enjoying the Paco and Lola Albarino at the moment, I find it a really crisp wine with lots of green apple and very refreshing. It goes great with fish too!

.....  
Sam Bryce



Since day one at University, when I heard about the opportunity to go to South Africa to study wine as part of the curriculum, I was sold. When I had my first wine class I knew straight away that I wanted to learn as much as I possibly could. My wine journey started in 2012, spending 6 months in South Africa studying wine in the sun while, of course, enjoying this wonderful beverage with friends every day! After receiving my Diploma in 2012, I have now taken on the challenge to complete the Master of Wine programme in South Africa. I love wine and the wine industry because of its diversity.

Every wine tells a different story, each glass gives hints about the terroir and the process it has gone through. Wine can enhance a food experience and food can make wine taste better. Not only do wine and food match, wine and people go better together! It is a drink to share and a drink to enjoy!

.....  
Jacqueline de Leeuw



Alpasión Malbec  
32074 £16.90\*

\*Bottle list price

# What has Wine Expression® ever done for us?

By **Simon Haywood**

In the last edition of Vini, we explored the reasoning behind Wine Expression and the whole issue of why arranging wine lists by style can lead to sales of better wines; delivering more profit to an outlet and enhancing the consumer's experience.

## Part 2

It's well known, that the UK has one of the world's highest fixed-rate taxation levies on wine and that consumers, without any sensible information, will default to a low-cost distress purchases. In this scenario where consumers are focusing on purchasing products more by price, they are rewarded with poorer value as more of the products 'cost' is actually tax. Wine Expression can help with constructing lists that provide much more direction to the consumer.

### Food and Wine Pairing

One of the advantages of categorising a wine by structure and flavour, is that it provides a food and wine pairing opportunity. Whilst food and wine matching is a subjective field, most with an interest would agree that, light whites with shellfish and big reds with rare steak are good starting points.

Providing a category description, on a list arranged by style, gives quite a bit of direction to the consumer. For example, zesty, herbaceous or aromatic whites, could be described with the following category heading – great with white fish, chicken and other white meat dishes, particularly when cooked with green herbs or in light creamy sauces. The most aromatic and less-dry wines work well with lightly-spiced dishes.

### Menu engineering

Wine Expression has a key role to play in menu engineering; providing a structure the consumer sees as helpful, allows for strong communication cues to be employed.

Whilst in simple terms, the goal of menu engineering can be defined as, increasing the profitability per guest, it also offers the opportunity to encourage repeat business. In an era of 'dine in for £10', the encouragement of consumers to leave the comfort of the home, to eat and drink in public, has to be driven by a different, higher-quality experience.

By encouraging trial of better wines and making wine a quality driver in the restaurant or bar, an improvement in both short and medium-term footfall can be achieved.

### Smaller lists

There are two solutions for the construction of smaller lists.

The first is to employ the Wine Expression icons; these can be used within a list of, say, four to six whites and a similar number of reds. In this case it doesn't really matter if there is only one wine for a particular category, as one is not sacrificing too much space on the list to have another line in the Wine Expression key.

A list arranged by style, however, can look a little strange with a style category populated by just a single wine. In this case one or two of the categories could be amalgamated or the odd wine could be moved to the next best category – rather like food and wine pairing there is a certain level of subjectivity involved.

It's worth remembering at this point, that we are trying to provide the consumer with the best information possible, to allow them to make a 'risk-free' purchase – as under these conditions they will spend more on a better wine.

### Training

One of the major advantages of a wine list arranged by style, with food and wine matching notes is that it becomes very useful as a training aid, not only with staff members, guests also learn and begin to appreciate how easy it is to navigate the wine list.

The list, complemented with staff training built around how the restaurant or bar promotes wine, will ensure that waiting staff are confident of the offering. Usually, this confidence results in higher sales figures, as recommendations are made and relaxed guests make decisions based on quality rather than price.

# Reds and dessert wines



## Light, bright, fresh reds

These reds are light-bodied, their tannin and alcohol levels are relatively low and their profile often shows plenty of freshness, making the red fruit flavours vibrant and forward. It's this freshness of fruit and lightness of body that provides the best direction to food pairing; Mediterranean dishes, with tomato, light meats, charcuterie and even lightly spiced dishes all work well.



## Juicy, medium-bodied, fruit-led reds

This category is populated by wines made from grapes that have seen plenty of sunshine, often from the 'new world', they are generally medium-bodied with plenty of ripe, primary fruit flavours, both red and black fruit. With their fruit-driven outlook, they partner dishes that have plenty of flavour and would enjoy a fruity embrace. Both light and dark meats, with fruity, BBQ or mustard sauces, work well, the wines fruity nature holds up well with moderate to hot Indian dishes.



## Spicy, peppery, warming reds

These wines have a noticeably spicy edge to them, they may well have plenty of fruit flavours as well. Usually, the spice flavours come from the grapes the wine is made from; grapes like Shiraz, Malbec, Barbera and Zinfandel quite often produce wines with a spicy flavour profile. These wines partner spicy dishes, such as chilli con carne or penne arrabiata well, enhancing the heat; they can also add a touch of spice to simply cooked red meat dishes such as roast lamb or char-grilled steak.



## Sophisticated, polished, complex reds

A new category, introduced to elaborate on the existing four; it features wines that are primarily from the 'old world', or cool-climate regions of countries with warmer climates. With a pronounced freshness and complexity that can only come from expert winemaking using high-quality grapes they are very at home in a fine-dining setting.



## Oaked, intense, concentrated reds

Blockbuster reds, with high levels of everything; ripe fruit, tannin, acidity and alcohol, these are rich and intensely flavoured and have spent some time maturing in oak. They are often made from grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, or even Malbec and Shiraz if considered too full-bodied for the 'spicy' category. Partner with full-flavoured dishes, such as roasted duck, boar, venison or with rich beef and lamb dishes; hearty or even creamy sauces.



## Refreshing, racy, medium-sweet whites

The freshest, most racy, medium-sweet to sweet whites fall into this Wine Expression category; their positive acidity levels often temper the wines sugar content making them seem less sweet. Generally with an ABV of 12.5% or below they tend to come from cooler climates and be made from grapes like Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc. They work well with lighter desserts and those based around a fresh fruit ingredient.



## Luscious, rich, sticky wines

The richest and sweetest tasting wines, which are also the most full-bodied; of course, they do have enough acidity to carry this luscious sweetness; they may have ABV's up to or even beyond 15%. As well as being great partners for a wide spectrum of cheese types, they will partner heavier and richer desserts well. They work with fruit as an ingredient, as long as the sweetness levels of wine and dish are well matched: Sauternes and tarte tatin being a great example.



### Valpolicella Classico, Bolla 12004 £9.00\*

Made from Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara grapes, grown in the heart of the hilly area of Valpolicella. Fermented and matured in stainless steel, to preserve a fresh fruity style with ripe tannins. Fragrant aromas of cherry, redcurrant and blackberry, with a hint of black pepper and walnut. It is light to medium-bodied in style with soft tannins and pure fruit flavours.



### Red Knot Grenache-Shiraz-Mourvèdre, McLaren Vale 29204 £9.70\*

Enticing primary aromas of dark cherry, raspberry and roses are highlighted with deeper notes of liquorice and chocolate. The mid-palate overflows with ripe strawberry and cherry flavours. The juicy Grenache, making up about three quarters of the blend, is complemented and structurally enhanced by the darker berry flavours and ripe tannins of the Shiraz (21%) and Mourvèdre (7%).



### Chalk Hill Luna Shiraz, McLaren Vale 31255 £9.96\*

Made from Shiraz with a small amount, about 5%, of Barbera. A rich, deep purple coloured wine, the nose shows dark raspberry fruit with floral notes and a touch of savoury earthiness; the palate shows crunchy red-berry fruit with hints of chocolate, coffee and cracked pepper spice. The fruit was sourced from three low-yielding vineyards in McLaren Vale, the vines being between 25 to 45 years old.



### Chorey-lès-Beaune, Remoissenet Père & Fils 31529 £19.27\*

Chorey-lès-Beaune lies on the lower slopes of the Côte de Beaune; it has mixed soils with limestone-marls and calcium-rich gravels. Its near neighbours are Aloxe-Corton and Savigny-lès-Beaune to the north and west and Beaune to the south. Fermented and aged in French oak barrels, about a third new; the wine shows a typically generous and approachable palate, laced with subtle, delicate tannins.



### Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Bois de Pied Redal, Organic, Ogier 27188 £17.50\*

The vineyard of Pied Redal, with its pebble and sandy soils, is cultivated without any weed-killers or pesticides and certified organic. The blend is mainly Grenache, with Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Shows dark fruit flavours, such as black cherry and blackcurrant, spiced with liquorice and aromatic herbs; the palate is full-bodied with fine-grained tannins which give it a smooth finish.



### Nederburg Winemaker's Reserve Noble Late Harvest (37.5cl) 24581 £10.99\*

Dominated by Chenin Blanc, it has about 25% of the Muscat de Frontignan grape in the blend, this wine is heavily influenced by the presence of Botrytis affected grapes. Brilliant gold, with lime-green highlights; it shows aromas of fresh pineapple, dried apricots with floral and spice notes. This wine regularly wins top awards: Gold at the IWC 2009 for the 2008 vintage; whilst the 2009 won the IWC Western Cape Botrytis Trophy in 2010.



### Château du Seuil, Cérons (50cl) 13321 £13.48\*

The tiny appellation of Cérons borders the northern side of Sauternes and benefits from autumnal mists, which encourage the development of Botrytis. Made using the same labour-intensive methods as Sauternes, with individual grape selection from the bunches, followed by a partial vinification in French oak barrels. The result is a rich, luscious wine with a pronounced honeyed bouquet and fresh, citrus flavours.



If you are currently employing Wine Expression to communicate with your customers and have a wine list arranged by style, share your experiences at #WYLLW

# Award winning wines

We're really proud of the wines our buyers find and source here at Matthew Clark. Whilst we love them and know they are good, Awards Season is always a tense time to check that everyone else does too! This year has been our best year yet for awards, really showing the quality of our wines, from entry level right up to premium.

This has been highlighted by winning Fine Wine Merchant of the Year at the Sommelier Wine Awards and by our highest number of awards yet. Below we've picked our top 10 award winning wines to showcase, there really is something for everyone here.



## Four Trophies at the International Wine Challenge 2016

**Chimney Rock Cabernet Sauvignon – 27479 (£49.56\*)**  
Awards: Californian Cabernet Sauvignon Trophy, Napa Cabernet Trophy, International Cabernet Trophy, USA Red Trophy

The Chimney Rock Cabernet Sauvignon has shown why it regularly gets 90+ Parker Points here. From Stags Leap district in Napa Valley, this area is famous for Cabernet Sauvignon, although it has only been planted there for about 50 years. It was awarded the 1st AVA based on soil type in 1989. Showing ripe red berry and blackcurrants on the nose and palate, it is balanced, elegant, not over-ripe and everything a Californian Cabernet Sauvignon should be.



## Three Medals at the Sommelier Wine Awards

**Plan de Dieu, Côtes du Rhône Villages, Ogier – 27187 (£9.11\*)**  
Awards: Food Match Trophy - Roast Chicken, Critic's Choice, Gold Medal

Ogier the Dane is a legendary character said to have fought alongside the Emperor Charlemagne in the late 8th century. It is believed that he stopped off in the Massif Central after a battle in the Basque Country and made the Rhône Valley his home, bringing the name Ogier to the region. This multi-award winner is a blend of Grenache and Syrah, with an abundance of red fruit and soft spice with silky tannins and a touch of pepper-spice and cocoa on the finish.

## Platinum Best in Show at the Decanter World Wine Awards

**Errázuriz Aconcagua Costa Sauvignon Blanc – 23234 (£11.28\*)**

Instead of Trophies, Decanter award a Platinum Medal, and Best in Show only goes to the very best wines in the world. This Sauvignon Blanc is grown in the Manzanar Vineyard that Errázuriz own, and is only 7.5 miles away from the Pacific Ocean. This means the grapes really benefit from the cooling influence that the ocean brings, allowing them a longer, slower ripening period. Lees ageing for three months allows for more of the varietal character to be extracted, leading to an exceptional wine with aromas of citrus fruits, passion fruit, and a hint of green chilli. The palate is slightly weighty from the lees, but with piercing acidity and great minerality to balance this.

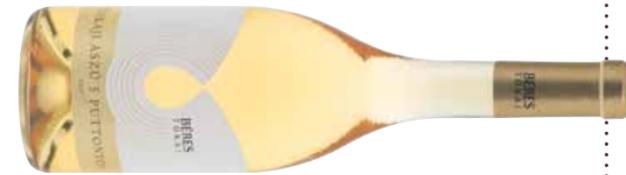
## Platinum Best in Show at the Decanter World Wine Awards

**Villa Maria Reserva Pinot Noir – 12049 (£19.45\*)**

Villa Maria was founded by Sir George Fistonich, who in 1961, took out a bank loan and borrowed some money from his family so that he could lease some land. His only wine making experience was that he came from a typical Croatian family who often made their own wine at home. He planted one acre of vines and took an oath to make the best quality wine that he could. The cool climate of the Marlborough region has been identified as one of the best regions in New Zealand for Pinot Noir. Grapes from vineyards in the Wairau and Awatere valleys is aged for ten months in a mixture of new and one year old French oak barrels. Its rich and silky palate shows all the signs of a top quality Pinot Noir.



\*Bottle list price



## Best Hungarian Sweet Wine Trophy at the International Wine Challenge

**Béres Tokaji Aszú 5 Puttonyos – 29128 (£28.63\*)**

Tokaji is renowned as the famous sweet wine of Hungary, as has been growing in popularity in recent years. It has one of the oldest classification systems in the wine world, introduced in 1730, classifying the wines by the Residual Sugar in the grapes. 5 Puttonyos means it has 120 grams per litre of residual sugar, and as an Aszú wine it has to also be made with the Furmint grape and aged in barrels for 18 months before release. As you would expect, this wine is lusciously sweet, with lovely notes of honey, candid orange peel and a touch of cinnamon spice. It is balanced perfectly by racy acidity on the finish.



## Gold at the Sommelier Wine Awards

**Daciana Sauvignon Blanc - 29007 (£6.20\*)**

The Daciana Sauvignon Blanc is the first ever Romanian wine to win Gold at the Sommelier Wine Awards, and really shows how far the country is developing in wine making. Made by the Cramele Recas Winery, based in the Banat region on the border with Serbia, it is one of the best developed wineries in the country, and has undergone extensive replanting so that international varieties sit alongside native grapes. The Sauvignon Blanc has bright acidity, with passion fruit, kiwi and lemon on the palate, and hint of spiciness on the finish.

## Gold at International Wine Challenge and Sommelier Wine Awards

**Bay of Fires Pinot Gris – 29189 (£11.08\*)**

Gold at two of the main Wine Awards really shows how good this wine and how far Tasmanian wine has come. Tasmania used to be overlooked by Australia as a wine region, but its cool climate means it is ideal for growing certain grape varieties, and Pinot Gris flourishes here. The wine uses a mix of grapes from the East Coast with a slightly warmer maritime climate, and the cooler Coal River Valley near the Capital; Hobart. This Pinot Gris has a slightly off dry palate, with a rich mouth, balanced by good acidity. It has peach, melon and apricot on the palate, and just a hint of creaminess.



## Gold Medal at the Decanter World Wine Awards

**Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc – 12098 (£7.33\*)**

At Kleine Zalze, the winemaking team believe that the key to selling wine in the On-Trade is to understand how the wine must behave on the restaurant floor. Owning their own hotel and restaurant gives them plenty of opportunity to practise. Grapes to produce this rich Chenin are hand harvested from some of the oldest vines on the Stellenbosch estate. Aromas of tropical, peach and lychee fruit with hints of honey with subtle hints of oak from the partial barrel fermentation and ageing. This Chenin has great length of fruit on the palate and a creamy mouth feel, with an elegant acidity in the background.



## Gold Medal at the Sommelier Wine Awards

**Te Awa Left Field Albariño – 29080 (£10.78\*)**

From vineyards in Gisborne on New Zealand's North Island, where Albariño ripens well in the warmth and sunshine; Te Awa, meaning 'River of God' is a reference to the mysterious subterranean streams over which many of the vineyards are situated. Gorgeous aromas of citrus fruit along with melon and peach, with a palate that shows some richness and weight, backed by stone fruit and lime on the finish.



## Silver Medal at the Sommelier Wine Awards

**Starve Dog Lane Cabernet Sauvignon – 29263 (£10.90\*)**

The Clare Valley region is interesting in that some areas are cool enough to produce pristine Riesling, whilst others are warm enough to fully ripen Shiraz and Cabernet. The grapes for this full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon come from vineyards in the South of Clare Valley. An intense mix of blueberry and cassis aromas with minty notes and chocolate on the nose. These aromas continue onto the well-structured palate with fruit, acidity and tannins in harmony.

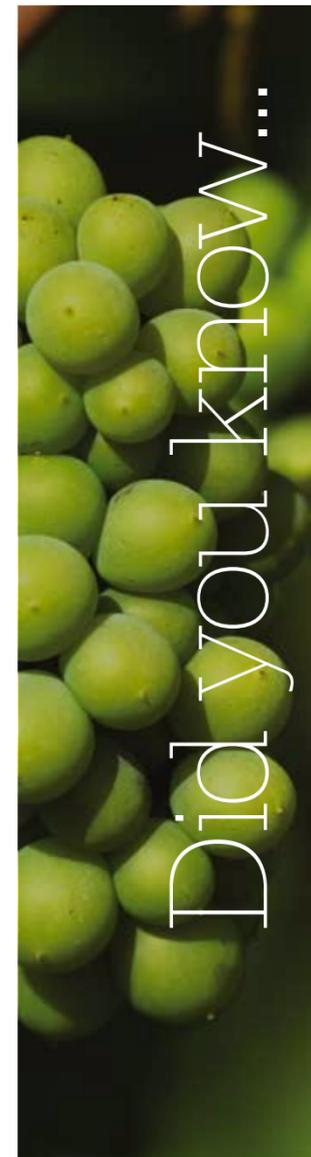


# The Vini Jukebox

What's been on the Wine  
Juke Box at Vini HQ...

This time round tying in with the love theme, we have got some classic love songs in amongst our favourite vino related tunes, tissues at the ready!

1. **Poison and Wine** – The Civil Wars
2. **I will always love you** – Whitney Houston
3. **Cracklin' Rosie** – Neil Diamond
4. **Strawberry Wine** – Deana Carter
5. **This Charming Man** – The Smiths
6. **Ho Hey** – The Lumineers
7. **Better Together** – Jack Johnson
8. **Lilac Wine** – Jeff Buckley
9. **Champagne Supernova** – Oasis
10. **Tiny Bubbles** – Don Ho



**Did you know...**

- We've got a dedicated team of Wine Development Specialists who spend every day working with our customers to develop their wine offering – tasting, training and show casing new wines and so much more!
- We've won "Best National Wine supplier" in the PMA's Publican Choice Awards
- Did you know we have over 400 wines which are exclusive to the On-Trade
- We were voted "Best Drinks Supplier" in the Chefs' Choice Awards 2015
- We won "Fine Wine Merchant of the Year" at the 2016 Sommelier Wine Awards
- We offer a free menu engineering service for our customers
- We won over 750 awards for our wine range in 2016
- We have over 4000 products for you to choose from
- We ensure every member of our sales team are put through WSET training
- Wine on premise UK 2014 awarded us "Distributor of the year"
- We offer next day delivery if you order before 1pm
- You can get your statements and invoices online
- We have over 100 ciders to choose from
- We offer single bottle picking
- We offer free delivery
- You can place your orders online



## If, like us, all this talk of divine wines has made you thirsty for a glass...

Why not tweet us [@MatthewClarkLtd](#) and tell us [#WhyYouLoveWine](#) [#WYWLW](#)

...for the chance to win a mixed case of delicious treats from some of our suppliers featured in this edition.

**Entry closes 30th November 2016**, winner to be announced via Twitter on 1st December 2016.

Do you have passion, enthusiasm or something interesting to share with the wine geeks?

Would you like to share the success of your outlet with our readers?

Want to share how your passion for wine began?

Do you have a wine hero in your outlet you'd like to put forward for a feature in Vini?

Get in touch

Get in touch with us via social media:



Give us a bell on:  
0344 822 3910

Or drop us a line at:  
[winesofdistinction@matthewclark.co.uk](mailto:winesofdistinction@matthewclark.co.uk)

vini- a combining form meaning  
“wine”: viniculture, vinification  
[Latin *vīni-*, comb. form of *vīnum*]

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Vinification is the production of wine,  
starting with selection of the grapes  
or other produce and ending  
with bottling the finished wine

*Matthew Clark*

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the experience matters