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Wine Talk: August 2011

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 22

It is always exciting when a shipment arrives from France with wines from Fanny Sabre of Beaune. The delightful and hard-working Fanny is a conscientious and dedicated winemaker who learned to make wine under the tutelage of Burgundian icon Philippe Pacalet.

She makes wines like they used to be in that part of the world. Her wines are the antithesis of 'Parkerised' wines. They are light, they are perfumed, they are delicate and they 'dance on your tongue'.

This month we have three special packs for you. One is a very simple pack – 5 bottles of the Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge and one bottle of her Aloxe-Corton. We have assembled a mixed pack of reds and whites from the Loire Valley for our six pack called Loire Favourites. We also have a 6 pack of sparkling wines for you to celebrate the imminent onset of spring.

We were going to have a repeat of the Gahier six pack, however his Jura wines have proved to be so popular that the entire shipment has been sold thanks to some of the high profile Sydney restaurants and wine bars, as well as Garagistes in Hobart. We are currently in communication with Michel to see if we can score some more of the dwindling stocks.

Remember that the special packs attract a 15% discount instead of a 10% discount, so if you order a special pack you really are getting a special deal (not that a 10% discount for most wines and free freight on your own selection isn't a good arrangement too)!

There is a link to our order form for these packs and any other wines at the end of this newsletter. But there's no need to use the order form. Just send us an email listing the wines and/or packs you would like to order if that suits you better. We'll confirm the price by return email before processing your order.

News from Living Wines

Arrival of Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge



Last year the Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Rouge was one of our wines that disappeared from the shelves rapidly, much of it to wine bars in Sydney and also to retail buyers who were searching for a more feminine, subtle Burgundies.

Well, this year's allocation has now arrived!

We totally admire the work that Fanny puts into her wines. She makes her wine naturally, fermenting with indigenous yeasts, and is following on the work of her mentor Philippe Pacalet who makes beautiful Burgundy wines and has taught Fanny how to do the same.

We also like the fact that her winery is within the ramparts of Beaune, the central town in Burgundy. When we visit her we walk a block or two from where we are staying, knock on the big, anonymous door and there she is!

See the information about the special six pack of her delicious wines below.

The natural wine tsunami hits Sydney

Natural wines are now 'de rigueur' in Sydney. Restaurants and wine bars are falling over themselves to list natural wines. Now, when we go to Sydney we can design our entire trip around dining in restaurants that feature natural wines on their list. Quay, Bentley, Ivy, Felix, Fix St James, Buzo, The Wine Library, Ten William Street, Love Tilly Devine, the fabulous 121BC, the Duke and many more are discovering the joys of these delicious wines.

Imminent arrivals

We are delighted to have a number of old favourites arriving next week. The 2010 vintage of Mauvais Temps and, a new wine called l'Altre from Nicolas Carmarans in the Aveyron will be here. The l'Altre is made from one of our favourite grapes, Fer Servadou, also known as Mansois. Nicolas is widely known in France for his 'gulpable' red wines which grace the lists at many Paris wine bars.

We will also be receiving an exciting shipment from René and Agnès Mosse. This week René shared the stage with Iñaki Aizpitarte from Le Chateaubriand at the MAD Foodcamp 2011, an extraordinary symposium, organised by Noma's René Redzepi. We will be getting a range of his reds and whites (he makes extraordinary whites from Chenin Blanc), but we are very excited about the slightly sweet, slightly pink sparkling wine called Moussamousettes that was all the rage in Paris this summer. This is a light delicate wine made in the Petillant Naturel style. Pricing will be available soon.

In the meantime, thanks to Morgan McGlone, who was lucky enough to be at the MAD Foodcamp, who allowed us to share this photo of René with Iñaki Aizpitarte. It's no coincidence they were on stage together. Le Chateaubriand is one of the Mosses' best customers. That's René on the left. No need for a translation of the topic.



We will also be receiving the 2010 vintage of the Domaine St Nicolas Les Clous white wine from Fiefs Vendéens that many of you have enjoyed in the past. We are very impressed with the 2010 vintage – it is one of the best yet. There's also more of the delicious Gammes en May, which will be great for spring and small quantities of Le Poiré and the other prestige cuvées.

The shipment also has tiny quantities of Dominique Derain's burgundies, including, from the 2010 vintage the great-value La Combe Blanc and les Riaux Rouge Burgognes and the St-Aubin "En Vesvau" Blanc. From the 2009 vintage, we have been allocated St-Aubin "Le Ban" Rouge, Mercurey, Pommard and Gevrey-Chambertin.

And last, but by no means least, a shipment of Jura wines from Philippe Bornard is also arriving. No Vin Jaune in this shipment but there will be a small supply of the oxidative Les Marnes made from Savagnin, as well as all our other favourites. And this shipment is the first time we've been allocated some 'Ca Va Bien', his petillant naturel made with Savagnin.

James Henry takes Paris by storm

We have written about James Henry before when he was cooking at Peppermint Bay in Tasmania. He is now the head chef at the slightly offbeat Au Passage in the 11th in Paris. This restaurant is receiving glowing reviews from the key bloggers in Paris such as Alex Lebrano and review Web sites such as Le Fooding which has awarded Au Passage its 'plate and fork' symbol reserved for the best of the best. And, of course, the wine list is totally natural.

Wine bars in regional France

We know that many of our readers travel to France regularly. Readers often ask for tips about where to try the types of wines we import when they are in France.

It is simple in Paris. Just use our recommendations for restaurants and wine bars that we keep up-to-date on our Paris guide at:

http://www.foodtourist.com/City_Guides/Paris_France/restaurants.htm

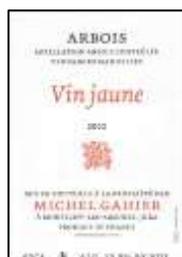
Outside Paris however there are many great places to try. We have enjoyed restaurants and wine bars throughout France that only serve natural wines even in the most obscure towns. Highlights have been Aux Crieurs de Vin in **Troyes** in Champagne country, Les Becs à Vin in **Orleans** in the Loire Valley, Le Temps des Vendages in the sprawling city of **Toulouse**, Chai Christine Cannac in the hills behind Beziers in the remote town of **Bedarieux**, Vigne en Foule in the ancient town of **Gaillac** where you can find the stunning wines of Patrice Lascaret from Causse Marines that we are so delighted to be importing, Le Cercle Rouge in **Angers** the hot bed of natural wines from the Loire, Le Tourne au Verre in **Cairanne** in the southern Rhone where we can always drink one of the amazing Sancerre wines of Edmund Vatan, Restaurant des Sports in the Beaujolais village of **Fleurie** and the funky Le Bonheur Suit Son Cours in a back street in the Roman town of **Vaison-la-Romaine** which we always visit whenever we are in the area. Many of these places are also able to sell wines to take away.

Let us choose

Over 60% of our retail customers are content to sit back and let us choose a pack for them. They simply send us an email (wine@livingwines.com.au) saying how many bottles they would like, the average price and the style and colour of wines they prefer and we do the rest!

We choose a selection of the wines that we think are delicious and which fit within your price range. We'll give you a 10% discount on any 6 pack we invent for you.

Cheese and wine pairing



We have been delighted recently to see a pairing of a glass of the Michel Gahier Vin Jaune with a serving of aged Appenzeller cheese at Garagistes in Hobart. It is so good to be able to try this rare wine by the glass. Vin Jaune is made in the Jura by storing wine made from the Savagnin grape in barrels for a minimum of 6 years and three months without topping them up. As time passes the wine evaporates through the pores of the barrel and the volume reduces significantly. A 'veil' of yeast forms on the surface and offers some protection for the oxygen, preventing it from turning to vinegar. The resultant wine is rich, concentrated, incredibly complex, oxidative (like a sherry) and very, very addictive.

In the Jura it is common for it to be drunk with a course of Comté cheese. In this case it is being served with Appenzeller which is made over the border in Switzerland but in a similar style. It is a hard cows milk cheese made from raw milk. As it ages it develops a nutty characteristic and this is precisely the characteristic we find in the Vin Jaune, so the match is perfect.

As a footnote, we believe that white wine is often a much better accompaniment for cheese as the delicacy of the wine does not overpower the flavours of the cheese. Drinking big red wines with cheese often sees the cheese overpowered rather than enhanced.

Pack 1: Fanny Sabre 6 Pack



Fanny Sabre has a number of vineyards around the town of Beaune including the appellations of Pommard, Beaune, Savigny-les-Beaune, Aloxe-Corton, Volnay and Meursault. We visited her in May and secured an allocation of her Bourgogne Rouge and small quantities of some other appellations.

Her wines are eagerly awaited everywhere and she graces the lists of many famous restaurants including Noma in Copenhagen.

This is a six pack consisting of **5 bottles** of her delicate, complex, perfumed **Fanny Sabre Bourgogne 2010 Pinot Noir**. The 2010 is somewhat stronger than the delicate, pale 2009 that we loved so much, but when we tried this one at her winery we were very impressed.

There is also one bottle of the **Fanny Sabre Aloxe-Corton 2008** which is a classic Burgundy of immense charm.

The RRP for this selection is \$270 but the pack price is \$229.50

Pack 2: Sparkling wine 6 Pack



Terres Dorees (Jean-Paul Brun) FRV100 - This Gamay-based sparkling, slightly pink wine made in the pétillant naturel style is very low in alcohol at only 7.5%. The low-alcohol, however, does not detract from its interesting flavour of berry fruits and minerals coming from the granitic soils. It is slightly sweet making it a perfect aperitif.

Michel Gahier Vin de Table Vin Mousseux de Qualité - The Gahier Vin Mousseux de Qualité is a lovely sparkling wine which is made from Chardonnay in the Methode Traditionnelle style. It makes for a great aperitif and also is a very good food wine. It has a very light bead and yeasty overtones, that characteristic Jura expression and a long, lingering finish.

Terres Dorées Crémant de Bourgogne Charme Blanc de Blancs (2 bottles) - Crémants are sparkling wines made outside the Champagne region of France. This is a particularly fine example of the genre being made from Chardonnay. The Crémant has a fine bead, yeasty aromas and a long, dry savoury finish. This is a great substitute for Champagne at a much lower price.

Domaine Belluard Vin de Savoie Ayse Brut 2007 - A lovely sparkling wine made from 100% Gringet, a traditional and very rare grape of the Savoie region. It displays both finesse and minerality and can be drunk as an aperitif or throughout a meal and even with dessert if required. It is a fine sparkling wine. The alcohol level is 12%.

Domaine Belluard Vin de Savoie Ayse Mont-Blanc Méthode Traditionnelle Brut-Zéro 2006 - A lovely sparkling wine made from 100% Gringet, a traditional grape of the Savoie region and nominated as a grape for sparkling and still wines in the Vin de Savoie appellation. It displays both finesse and minerality and can be drunk as an aperitif or throughout a meal and even with dessert if required. It is a fine sparkling wine. This wine is matured for longer than the standard Brut.

This selection normally sells for a RRP of \$218 but the pack price is \$185.30.

Pack 3: Loire Favourites – 6 bottle Pack



This pack represents some of our favourite wine makers from the Loire Valley.

Domaine Mosse Anjou Le Bonnes Blanches 2008 - This is a famous white wine from Rene and Agnes Mosse. It is a white wine made from 100% Chenin Blanc picked from their Bonnes Blanches vineyard. The grapes are from a 2.5 hectare plot of 35 years old vines and the yield is very low at only 20 hectolitres per hectare. There is a very small amount of residual sugar while still finishing dry.

Domaine du Moulin Vin de Pays du Loir et Cher Pivoine Rouge 2008 – The Pivoine is an exciting addition to our selection from Herve Villemade's Domaine du Moulin range. Made from 90% Malbec (called Côt in the Loire) and 10% Gamay this wine has had no additional sulphur added so it is a fresh, lively expression of the terroir and the Malbec fruit.

La Paonnerie Muscadet Coteaux de Loire 2009 - The wine is made from 100% Melon de Bourgogne. In Australia we often see wines from Muscadet but rarely from the Coteaux de Loire appellation. This is a small area near the city of Angers where some delicious versions of this wine are produced. The wine is fermented with natural yeasts and is neither filtered or fined.

Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Carabas Blanc 2008 - The label on this wine reflects Carabas, the prince from the beloved Puss in Boots fable. The wine is one of our favourites. It is delicate, elegant and very satisfying. There is some residual sweetness here making it a perfect aperitif. This wine is made from Chenin Blanc and a little Sauvignon Blanc.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Reflets Rouge 2009 - This was the first wine we ever tried from Domaine Saint Nicolas and we were hugely impressed with the quality. We didn't realise that it was Thierry Michon's entry level wine! It is a blend of Gamay, Pinot Noir, Negrette and Cabernet Franc.

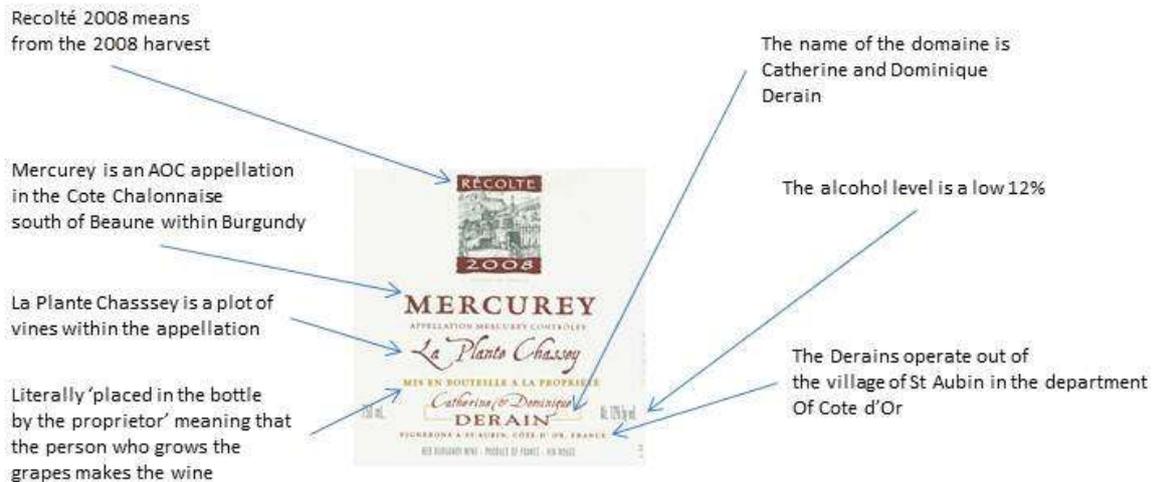
Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Cuvee Cinabre Rouge 2008 - This flavoursome red is made from a small plot of biodynamically-tended Cabernet Franc vines that are more than 25 years old. The wine is smooth and elegant and weighs in at 12.5% alcohol. Only minimal sulphur has been used.

The RRP for this selection of 6 wines is \$223 but the pack price is a very reasonable \$189.55

French wine labels explained: Derain Mercurey

Dominique Derain is a classic Burgundian winemaker who has enthusiastically taken on the making of natural wines. He is a strong believer in healthy soils and careful winemaking to ensure that the wine reflects the terroir from which it has been derived. He uses no chemicals in the vineyard or in the winery except for low doses of sulphur at bottling.

This explanation is based on the label for his Mercurey wine from the Cote Chalonnaise.



Aloxe-Corton wine appellation

Aloxe-Corton is a wine appellation in the Burgundy region of France which produces some of the finest red wines of the area from the Pinot Noir grape. It is located in the northern part of the Cote de Beaune right on the slopes of the most famous hill in Burgundy, the hill of Corton with its instantly recognisable tree covered summit. Wines bearing the name of Aloxe-Corton must be made from grapes grown in the communes of Aloxe-Corton, Ladoix-Serrigny or Pernand-Vergelesses.

It has been a formal appellation for a long time having been promoted to AOC status in 1938. There are thirteen 'climats' or vineyards that are classified as Premier Cru in this appellation.

Both red and white wines are permitted here. White wines are principally made from Chardonnay but they may have up to 10% of Pinot Blanc added. These are very rare as preference is given to red wines here. In fact there are only 1.7 hectares of white grape vines in this appellation.

Red wines are made from Pinot Noir but may have a little Chardonnay or Pinot Blanc or Pinot Gris as well. The appellation extends over 117 hectares and produces over 400 hectolitres of red wine and 80 hectolitres of white wine.

The word Aloxe is pronounced "Aloss".



A lovely example of a wine from this appellation is the Fanny Sabre Aloxe-Corton Rouge which is part of the Fanny Sabre six pack on offer this month.

Living Wines Order Form

You can simply send us an email to order wines, but if you would like to use the form to check prices or availability, click on the link below.

http://www.livingwines.com.au/Catalogue/Order_Form_Current_2011.pdf