

Wine Talk: August 2013

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 38

This month we have seven special packs for you, including two packs of hard-to-find magnums that we have in stock. There are only a few of the magnum packs so we expect them to disappear quite quickly.

We have been watching the stocks of Domaine de l'Octavin and Mylène Bru, which arrived recently disappearing out the door. We are also pleased to announce the imminent arrival of another new producer – this time from the Roussillon area close to the Spanish border. We have been lucky to be able to offer the fascinating wines from Jolly Ferriol who produce interesting white and red wines as well as traditional lines such as Muscat de Rivesaltes. They also do a great Pet Nat of which we will receive good stocks and a very rare rancio of which we'll have hardly any stocks!

But back to the Special Packs. The first is from our most recent arrivals from Domaine de l'Octavin in the Jura and Mylène Bru in the Languedoc. These wines (especially the Octavin) are in very short supply so this is probably the only opportunity for our newsletter subscribers to try some of their offerings.

We have also put together a six pack that features the Grenache grape with some very interesting wines showing the many facets of this grape variety. We also have a white pack and a red pack for you and then a pack of more 'out there' natural wines for those of you who want to experience some of the different tastes and textures including whites that have had extended skin contact.

The two magnum packs round out the offering. One is comprised of two Octavin magnums and one from Mylène Bru and the other consists of three magnums from Axel Prüfer.

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!

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.

Living Wines News: New Arrivals

We have been delighted with the reaction to our new arrivals this month. The Domaine de l'Octavin wines from the Jura are proving to be particularly popular. Most of the wines from this domaine are very low in alcohol (from 9.8% to 11% for most of them, with a couple going a little higher) and have seen no sulphur at any stage of the production. They are therefore living, interesting, exciting wines to try. We are offering a special pack with three of the wines for you to sample along with three from another new arrival, Mylène Bru from the Languedoc. Her wines are extremely pure and pretty and made from interesting grapes such as Chasselas and Carignan (among others).

We also have new stocks of the amazing Melon de Bourgogne from La Paonnerie – this used to be labelled as a Muscadet but, like many of our winemakers, Agnès and Jacques have released it as a Vin de France this year as the style of wine doesn't really fit the appellation as they do not add any sulphur to the cuvée.

The wines of Mylène Bru



Last month we wrote about the beautiful Languedoc vineyards of our new supplier, Mylène Bru who tends her vines in the mountains inland from the coastal town of Sète near the small village of Saint Pargoire.

The wines are now in our warehouse. We love their elegance. In this area, because of the heat, wines can often be big and jammy – not so these elegant beauties due to the strong winds that keep the area cool and the north and north-west exposure of the vineyards.

We have four wines from her. The lovely, crisp white called Lady Chasselas made from the Chasselas grape variety (see story in this newsletter), Far Ouest which is a field blend of many different red grapes, Violet de Mars which is an oh so pretty 100% Grenache and Rita, a beautiful expression of the Carignan grape which thrives in this region.

Some of these wines are included in the New Arrivals pack and the White Wine pack this month. If you want to try then all we will make up a pack of six for you and give you a 10% discount. There is also a magnum of Lady Chasselas in the magnum offer this month (see below).

The wines of Domaine de l'Octavin



Last month we gave you an insight into the vineyards and winemaking methods of Alice and Charles from Domaine de l'Octavin in the Jura. Their fruit is of such high quality and their dedication to hand-picking and hand-sorting the grapes so strong that only the very best fruit is used in their wines and therefore the need to use sulphur goes away. No sulphur is used at any time in the winemaking process and none is added to the bottle.

Everyone who has tasted their wines comments on the vibrancy – these are living wines! Not only is there no sulphur added; the wines are also very low in alcohol, with one at only 9.8%!

We have included three lovely bottles of their wine in the New Arrivals Six Pack on offer this month.

Magnum offers

We have also kept back a few rare magnums of the Octavin wine so that we can offer a Magnum Three Pack to newsletter subscribers this month. This includes a magnum of the Trousseau des Corvées and the very rare Chardonnay Carbonique from Octavin and a magnum of the Lady Chasselas from Mylène Bru.

We are also offering a Magnum Three Pack from Axel Prüfer from the Languedoc which includes two vintages (2010 and 2011) of the very popular Avanti Popolo (made from Carignan) and the rare La Peur du Rouge 2011 which is an incredibly complex and pure Chardonnay. La Peur du Rouge is only available in magnum.

Pack 1: New arrivals 6 pack



This six pack is made up of a selection of the exciting recent arrivals from the Jura and Languedoc. This is very special offer that, due to limited stocks, is unlikely to be repeated.

Domaine de l'Octavin Arbois Rouge Zerlina 2011 – This wine is a blend of Pinot Noir and Trousseau grapes sourced from the «En Curon» vineyard. The grapes were destemmed in the vineyard and the two grape varieties were co-fermented. This wine was raised in tanks and has seen no oak. The result is a pale, limpid wine that is delicate, refined, complex, intriguing and definitely, defiantly different.

Domaine de l'Octavin Arbois Blanc Chardonnay Pamina 2010 – This wine is 100% Chardonnay made from grapes sourced from the «La Mailloche» vineyard. There is a pleasant level of oxidative quality in this beautifully balanced wine that displays hazelnuts and sherry aromas alongside a zing of citrus and vibrant minerality.

Domaine de l'Octavin Vin de France Trousseau Les Corvées 2012 – This wine is a Trousseau where the alcohol level is only 9.8% which is less than the required 10% for it to gain appellation status. This is a fascinating wine. It has the colour of a rose but the weight and texture of a red wine making it a very versatile food wine.

Mylène Bru Vin de Table Lady Chasselas Blanc 2012 –The Chasselas vines are at least 50 years old and face East North East. This variety is almost unknown in this region so this is a very rare wine, but one of some delicacy. The clay/limestone soils give the wine a persistent minerality that is very appealing. The finish is quite dry.

Mylène Bru Coteaux du Languedoc Far-Ouest Rouge 2011 – This wine is a blend of all the red grapes in Mylène's vineyard so it has some Grenache, Syrah, Carignan and Cinsault but might also have a little Marselan and Aubun (an obscure grape from the Vaucluse) depending on the vintage.

Mylène Bru Vin de Table Violet de Mars Rouge 2012 – This wine was named after a book by a Belgian painter who was inspired by Japanese art. This delightful wine is made from 100% Grenache. No sulphur has been added to this wine in this vintage.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$263 but the pack price is \$223.55 including freight.

Pack 2: Grenache 6 Pack



Grenache is a fascinating grape variety that is grown right around the southern part of France from Roussillon, through the Languedoc and around into Provence. It has many expressions ranging from big, robust wines to elegant, light, ethereal, intriguing masterpieces. We have selected 6 wines that will show off the many faces of this chameleon.

Mylène Bru Vin de Table Violet de Mars Rouge 2012 – This elegant, pretty wine was named after a book by a Belgian painter. This delightful, elegant wine is made from 100% Grenache. No sulphur has been added to this wine in this vintage.

Saint Jean du Barroux Cotes du Ventoux Oligocene Red 2004 – This robust wine is made from Grenache, Syrah, Carignan and Cinsault which come from vines that are harvested at extremely low yields. Philippe prefers to use concrete and enamel for maturation. Only 5% of the wine is treated with 10 year old barrels.

Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Les Lendemain qui Chantent 2011 – This is a beautiful and quite restrained wine (in the sense that it is elegant rather than exuberant) made from 25 year old 100% Grenache vines. It exhibits very soft tannins and lovely herbal and flower aromas. It is Axel's leading cuvée!

Domaine Milan Sans Soufre Ajouté Rouge 2010 – This wine is an interesting red wine made from the whole bunch fermentation and carbonic maceration for 5 days of Grenache, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Mourvèdre. The average age of the vines is 16 years and the vines grow in calcareous soils over a substrate of blue shale. No sulphur has been added at any stage.

Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Fou du Roi 2011 – This wine is a blend of 30% of each of Grenache Noir, Cinsault and Carignan and 10% of Cabernet Sauvignon. It displays cherry on the nose and has an elegance and vibrancy that is very appealing. It tastes alive! It has good tannin structure which will help as it ages.

Saint Jean du Barroux Ventoux La Source Rouge 2008 – This is Philippe Gimel's entry level wine. It comprises 70% Grenache, 25% Carignan and 5% Cinsault. The yields for this wine are around 30 hectolitres per hectare and the grapes are all hand picked and then 100% destemmed. Maceration extends over 7 days.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$234 but the pack price is \$198.90 including freight.

Pack 3: White wine selection 6 pack



This month we have assembled a great selection of classic white wines for you from all parts of France. Each of the wines we have chosen shares a common characteristic – they are all very food friendly!

Mylène Bru Vin de Table Lady Chasselas Blanc 2012 – The Chasselas vines are at least 50 years old and face East North East. This variety is almost unknown in this region so this is a very rare wine, but one of some delicacy. The clay/limestone soils give the wine a persistent minerality that is very appealing. The finish is quite dry.

Causse Marines Gaillac Les Greilles 2011 – Les Greilles is a classy white wine blended from local Gaillac grapes Mauzac and Loin-de-l’Oeil with a little Muscadelle thrown in. It is a perfect aperitif wine as well as being an ideal accompaniment for a range of foods such as charcuterie, including cured meats and a many spicy foods.

Domaine du Moulin Cheverny Blanc Domaine 2011 – This is a favourite both for its flavour and its value-for-money. It is actually quite an elegant, refined wine that is perfect with a range of foods including seafood, cheese and white meats. A blend of 70% Sauvignon Blanc and 30% Chardonnay this wine is only produced in small quantities from vines that are between 18 and 24 years old.

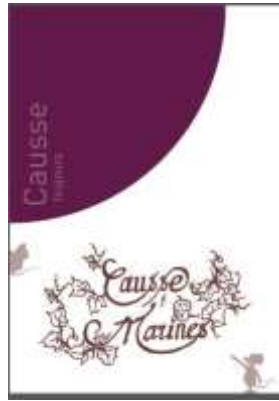
Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Cendrillon 2011 – The Cendrillon (Cinderella) is made from 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Chardonnay. Just 30% of the Sauvignon Blanc spent some time in oak to provide additional complexity. This is a fascinating wine for us. It opens up in the glass to reveal a complexity that belies its price.

Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Blanc 2011 – The Fanny Sabre Bourgogne Blanc is always a hot favourite. It is made from 100% Chardonnay sourced from her vineyards around the city of Beaune. It is an elegant, flavour-packed wine which has seen no new oak. It lingers on the palate and matches beautifully with a range of foods.

Domaine Mosse Savennières Blanc 2010 – The Savennières appellation occupies a small area (only 150 hectares) just south of the city of Angers. Some of the great wines of France are produced here. This is a dry wine style made from Chenin Blanc.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$208 but the pack price is \$176.80 including freight.

Pack 4: Red wine selection 6 pack



This month we have repeated the great selection of interesting red wines for you from all parts of France because of the popularity of this pack last month. We have selected wines that are good for drinking now rather than cellaring although some, like the Fleurie, will benefit from cellaring but we think it is lovely drinking right now!

Philippe Bernard Arbois Pupillin Ploussard Point Barre 2011 – The Point Barre is made from the Poulsard (aka Ploussard) grape and is a light, delicate almost translucent red wine that gives off aromas of red currants, citrus and saddle leather with a touch of cinnamon. There is a purity and silkiness to this wine that makes it quite ethereal. It matches with just about any food you care to think of.

Terres Dorées (Jean-Paul Brun) Fleurie 2010 – This wine is much stronger than the average Fleurie however the berry fruits and cherry fruits are there and the long, lingering, mineral finish is very appealing. This 'cru' Beaujolais is complex, elegant and very drinkable.

Domaine du Moulin Vin de Pays du Loir et Cher Pivoine Rouge 2011 – 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 only a little additional sulphur added so it is a fresh, lively expression of the terroir and the Malbec fruit.

Domaine de Causse Marines Vin de France Causse Toujours 1102 – The Causse Toujours is a special cuvee that was created in 2011 because the yield from the Syrah plot was so low that it was not possible to make the Sept Souris which is always made from 100% Syrah. This wine is made from the Syrah which provides silkiness, spice and body and some Prunelart.

Domaine la Paonnerie Anjou Villages La Jacques 2011 Sans Soufre – This wine is a blend of 66% Cabernet Franc and 34% Cabernet Sauvignon picked from the Clos de la Jacques which the Carroget's own exclusively. It is un sulphured.

Sextant Bourgogne Rouge 2011 – This wine belies its humble Bourgogne Rouge tag. It is a silky Pinot with some elegance and structure. The grapes are sourced from Julien's vineyards near the town of Saint Aubin. We like it a lot!

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$230 but the pack price is \$195.50 including freight.

Pack 5: “Daringly Different” Selection 6 Pack



We are finding that more and more of our customers like to explore wines that are different to those of the mainstream. They want wines that are a bit funky, a bit oxidised or made from a grape that they have never tried before. That is why we have put together this selection of fantastic wines that are outside the mainstream.

Bainbridge and Cathcart Vin de France Les Jongleurs 2011– This is a dry Chenin Blanc made from 60 year old vines from near Faye d'Anjou where the soil is sandy. Old vine Chenin is a real treat as there is a complexity in the wine that cannot be achieved from young vines. The wine is quite dry and is low in alcohol.

Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Un Pas de Côté 2011 – Un Pas de Côté is a dark purple wine that has a beautiful, soft tannin structure with complexity coming from the blend of grapes used. This year it is 40% Merlot, 40% Grenache and 20% of a blend of Cinsault, Aramon and Carignan. The vines grow on granitic quartz soils.

Marc Pesnot (Domaine de la Sénéchalière) Vin de France Miss Terre 2011 – The vines for this cuvee are from 50 years old to 80 years old providing the wine with additional complexity. But there is a major difference to this wine and that is because Marc allows it to go through malolactic fermentation thus producing softer lactic acids rather than the more astringent malic acids.

Domaine la Paonnerie Vin de France Voila du Gros Lot 2012 – This wine is made from 100% Groslot Gris grown in granitic soils. The juice is left in contact with the skins until the colour has been extracted, therefore it could be classed as an ‘orange’ wine except that the skin contact produces a colour closer to pink. This is a light, lively delicious wine with layers of intrigue.

Domaine de l’Octavin Arbois Rouge Zerlina 2011 – This fascinating wine is a blend of Pinot Noir and Trousseau grapes. The grapes were co-fermented then raised in tanks and the wine has seen no oak. The result is a pale, limpid wine that is delicate, refined, complex, intriguing and definitely, defiantly different.

Domaine Milan Sans Soufre Ajouté Rouge 2010 – This wine is made from 5 days of whole bunch carbonic maceration with the grape varieties Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvedre, Cinsault and Cabernet Sauvignon and it only spends 8 months in old barriques. No filtration or fining has been applied to this wine and only indigenous yeasts have been used to ferment the grapes.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$223 but the pack price is **\$189.55 including freight.**

Pack 6: New Arrivals Magnum 3 Pack



We love offering these magnum packs because they are ideal if you have a party coming up and want to display generosity of spirit to your guests. People get a real buzz out of being poured a wine from a magnum. It turns an ordinary event into a very special event.

This pack comprises two magnums from Domaine de l'Octavin in the Jura and one from Mylène Bru in the Languedoc.

Domaine de l'Octavin Arbois Blanc Chardonnay carbonique 2010 – A Chardonnay made from grapes sourced from the « La Mailloche» vineyard and which has undergone carbonic maceration for three months before being matured in old barrels. This long period in contact with the skins has produced a wine of great complexity, with layer after layer of flavour coming through.

Domaine de l'Octavin Vin de France Trousseau Les Corvées 2012 – This wine is a Trousseau made from grapes sourced from a number of local vineyards. Notice that this is a Vin de France rather than being under the Arbois appellation. The reason is that the alcohol level is only 9.8% which is less than the required minimum of 10%. This is a fascinating wine. It has the colour of a rose but the weight and texture of a red wine making it a very versatile food wine but also perfect as an aperitif.

Mylène Bru Vin de Table Lady Chasselas Blanc 2012 – The plot where Mylène has her Chasselas vines is a site of amazing beauty. There is a long view over the short-cropped vines to the mountains beyond. The vines are at least 50 years old and face East North East. Chasselas is almost unknown in this region so this is a very rare wine, but one of some delicacy and with a really lovely mouth-feel. The clay and limestone soils give the wine a persistent minerality that is very appealing. The finish is quite dry.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$280 but the pack price is **\$238 including freight.**

Pack 7: Axel Prüfer Magnum 3 Pack



We just love Axel's wines. There is a purity about them which reflects the great respect that he accords to his vines and vineyards. His vineyards are deep within forests so that no sprays from farms can touch his vines. He does not use sulphur in the winemaking process to keep his wines vibrant and alive. We are pleased to be able to offer a few magnums of the **La Peur du Rouge** Chardonnay which is an intriguing wine of considerable complexity.

Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Avanti Popolo 2010 (Magnum) – Avanti Popolo is a lighter style of wine when compared to the Fou du Roi. Named after a revolutionary Italian cry of 'Forward People' this wine made from 100% Carignan looks quite light but has very good depth of flavour. Axel is a fastidious winemaker and refuses to add anything to his wine or take anything out of it. So, no filtering, no fining, no added yeast and no enzymes or sugar. The vines grow on granitic quartz soils and the minerality is pronounced.

Le Temps des Cerises Vin de Table Avanti Popolo 2011 (Magnum) – As per the 2010 vintage but perhaps displaying a little more elegance.

Le Temps de Cerises La Peur du Rouge 2011 (Magnum) – This incredibly complex Chardonnay is like no other we have ever tried (except perhaps the incredible Chardonnays produced by Michel Gahier in the Jura). It is packed with minerality and is totally expressive of the vineyard from which the fruit has been derived. Only a wine made from perfect fruit grown without sprays, irrigation and artificial fertilisers could possibly taste like this.

The RRP for this selection of 3 magnums of wine is \$161 but the pack price is \$136.85 including freight.

Grape variety: Chasselas

Chasselas is a grape variety that is widely grown in Switzerland (where it is called Gutedel and Fendant) with some spilling over into France in appellations such as Crépy which is just over the border from Geneva and Vin de Savoie Marignan, Ripaille and Marin which are also in this area. Chasselas also is used in blended white wine in Alsace. The famous French ampelographer Pierre Galet believed that Chasselas was native to Switzerland.

There is also a little known appellation in the Loire called Pouilly-sur-Loire in the Loire Valley region of France adjoining its more famous cousin, Pouilly-Fume. It lies north east of the city of Bourges and comprises 7 communes (Garchy, Mesves-sur-Loire, Pouilly-sur-Loire, Saint-Andelain, Saint-Laurent, Saint-Martin-sur-Nohain and Tracy-sur-Loire) on the right bank of the Loire in the Nièvre département.

As it is situated in the Upper Loire area, you might expect to find wines based on the Sauvignon Blanc grape. However this is not the case as here white wines are produced only from the Chasselas grape variety. The extent of the plantings is quite small with less than fifty hectares being devoted to this grape.

To some extent this appellation reflects a previous era when Chasselas was a much more widely planted grape in the Loire. Even Sancerre, where Sauvignon Blanc now reigns supreme, used to have Chasselas as the dominant white grape. Chasselas was ravaged in Sancerre by the Phylloxera outbreak in the nineteenth century and afterwards locals found that Sauvignon Blanc grafted better onto the American rootstock that was being used.

The grapes are quite large (see photo below) which makes it also a popular table grape. It is particularly widely grown in Turkey for this purpose.

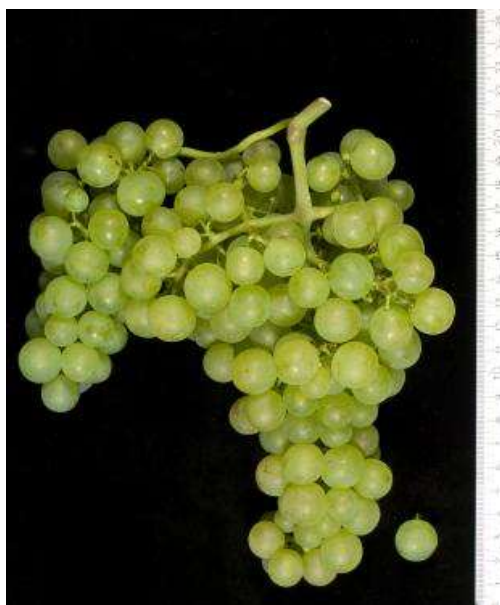


Photo courtesy of Vitis International Variety Catalogue

It is a hardy grape that seems to thrive in cold climates with some viticulturists suggesting that it could be an ideal grape to grow in England.

Wine Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

When we visited the Renaissance des Appellations trade show in Angers this year we met Myléne Bru from the Languedoc (see the July newsletter for more information about this wonderful producer). We were surprised to find that she has a parcel of 50 year old Chasselas vines – a grape variety that is unheard of in this region for making wine.

Myléne makes a crisp, dry, but mouth-filling white from the Chasselas grape variety near the village of Saint Pargoire which is situated in the mountains behind the seaside town of Sète.



This wine is available in our New Arrivals six pack this month and also our White Wine six pack.

Appellation: Touraine

We have written about the Touraine appellation before, however two events made us revisit this Loire Valley appellation centered on the city of Tours.

The first was the publication of an article by Alice Feiring¹ who was rightly bemoaning the downgrading of the local Pineau d’Aunis grape variety under the new rules of the Touraine appellation. The second was a discussion held with some sommeliers recently about why so many natural winemakers are leaving the appellation system and issuing their wines as Vin de France instead.

Let’s take Alice’s article first. We have for a long time been very keen on the idea of trying wines made from grapes that are indigenous to a particular region. In the Touraine, we love the Menu Pineau grape (also known as Arbois or Orbois) which is a white grape that is particularly good for making sparkling wines. One of our wines from this area is the Domaine du Moulin Vin de Table Bulle Blanche which is made from Menu Pineau and which always sells out very quickly when it arrives in Australia.

We also love the grape that was the subject of Alice’s article, namely Pineau d’Aunis. This grape is responsible for some beautiful red wines and sparkling rosé wine from this area. For example, the Domaine du Moulin Vin de Table Bulle Rosé which is made from Pinot Noir and Pineau d’Aunis is a lively, flavoursome beauty. And Thierry Puzelat makes a great still red from this grape.

¹ <http://www.alicefeiring.com/blog/2013/08/pineau-daunis-loire-aoc.html>

Wine Talk – the newsletter of Living Wines

From 2016 only Sauvignon Blanc will be permitted as the principal white grape with the INAO giving preference to a wine style which is more 'international', namely aromatic Sauvignon Blanc! A little Sauvignon Gris will be able to be used provided it is less than 20% of the blend.

For the red wines Gamay will take on more prominence as will Malbec (Côt) to the east of Tours and Cabernet Franc to the west of Tours. It will not be possible to release a Touraine wine made from Pineau d'Aunis or the lovely Grolleau Noir. Gamay will have its own Touraine denomination, Touraine Gamay, provided Gamay comprises at least 85% of the blend.

So, it is no wonder that many natural winemakers who invariably favour the local grape varieties feel that they can no longer meet the requirements of the appellations because their customers want wines made from grapes varieties such as Menu Pineau, Pineau d'Aunis and Grolleau Noir.

Another wine that will have to change is the Domaine de la Garrelière Le Chenin. This has always been released under the Touraine appellation, but Chenin Blanc is no longer a principal white grape so a 100% Chenin Blanc will no longer qualify. However, Chenin Blanc will be allowed in Touraine Mesland, Touraine Amboise and Touraine Azay-le-Rideau but these are restricted to a very small geographic area of the Touraine.

How to order

You can order any of these packs by sending us an email to wine@livingwines.com.au

Or for other wines you can use our order form.

http://www.livingwines.com.au/Catalogue/Order_Form_Current_2013.pdf