

Wine Talk: July 2013

The newsletter of Living Wines: Edition 37

Having just introduced Marc Pesnot to Australia, we're also looking forward to the arrival two more new producers later this month. Our next shipment has wines from new Jura producer (Domaine de l'Octavin), with some unique interpretations of Jura classics. We'll also be receiving our first shipment of wines from Mylène Bru in the Languedoc – more about both of these producers below.

Meanwhile, we've been on the road – in Sydney and Melbourne and on Monday July 22 will be in Adelaide for a trade tasting.

We have designed a number of special packs this month to give our retail customers a chance to sample some of our favourite wines that are drinking well at present.

Two of the packs are from producers who have been with us from the beginning. It is sometimes tempting to only drink the latest offerings from new producers, but we always remind ourselves that there is a good reason why we have chosen every one of our producers and we keep going back to try their wines and to enjoy them as much as we always have.

The first pack this month is from one of our favourite Loire producers – Domaine de la Garrelière. Their wines have been very popular in Australia and we have put together a pack of their best recent releases. We have also designed a pack of red wines from Domaine Saint Nicolas. The wines of Thierry Michon are always popular and this pack will introduce you to a range of his wines, some of which have some age.

We also have a six pack of very interesting reds and a six pack of delicious whites for you and also a pack of wines from the length and breadth of Burgundy.

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 Adelaide Tasting

We are looking forward to a special trade tasting in Adelaide on the 22nd of July when we will be joined by Matt Young and Linda Wiss from Black Market Sake, Andrew Guard from Andrew Guard Wine Imports, Piero Tantini from Godot Wines and local winemaker Abel Gibson from Ruggabellus Wines. If you are in the trade and would like an invitation to attend send us an email (wine@livingwines.com.au) and we will send you the details.

In August we will be visiting both Sydney and Melbourne once our new shipment arrives so if you would like us to call in to see you at your restaurant, café, bar or wine shop, send us an email and we'll organise a time to visit.

New Arrivals: Domaine de l'Octavin



Alice and Charles prepare for a tasting with us

We are eagerly looking forward to the imminent arrival of the Jura wines from Domaine de l'Octavin which are lovingly crafted by Alice Bouvot and Charles Dagand in their Arbois winery using organic grapes from their vineyards scattered around the outskirts of that beautiful town.

The vineyards are certified organic by Demeter as are their winemaking methods. There are absolutely no additions to their wine. It is fermented grape juice with the fermentation carried out by the indigenous yeasts. They add no sulphur at any stage.

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They produce a bewildering array of wines in their tiny winery. Some are classical Jura wines such as their Pamina Chardonnay or their Dorabella Poulsard while others are fascinating wines with a 'twist' such as their Culrond Poulsard which is vinified as a white wine even though the grapes are red or their Zerlina where they blend Trousseau with Pinot Noir.

They are also producing a stunning Vin Jaune (called Cherubin) of which we have been lucky enough to receive a small allocation. The label is very non-Jura!



Octavin Vin Jaune Cherubin 2006

New Arrivals: Mylène Bru



Mylène's vineyard at sunrise

Mylène Bru runs a small biodynamic vineyard of breathtaking beauty in the mountains behind the Mediterranean port of Sete in the commune of Saint-Pargoire. Here she grows Grenache, Syrah, Carignan and Cinsault with small amounts of a very rare grape from the Rhone called Aubun, Marselan and Tempranillo.

She also has a plot of 50 year old Chasselas which is very unusual for the Languedoc. From this grape she makes a delicate white wine which she calls Lady Chasselas.



Mylène in her plot of Chasselas

Chasselas is better known in the Haute-Savoie in eastern France, in the obscure appellation of Pouilly-sur-Loire in the Loire Valley near Sancerre where it is the only permissible grape variety, and in Switzerland.

The wind can be quite strong here so the vines are kept close to the ground and many are left as 'bush' vines without any supporting wires. This is reasonably common in the Languedoc.

In addition to the Lady Chasselas, Mylène makes three cuvées of red wine namely Violet du Mars (named after a book about an artist from Belgium) which is 100% Grenache, Far-Ouest which is a blend of all of her red grape varieties, Rita (named after her grandmother) and is made from old-vine Carignan. These are all very expressive wines in which you can literally taste the 'garrigue', the local name for the herbs that dominate the vineyard.

In the next newsletter we will have a special pack of Mylène's wines.

New Arrivals: Domaine de la Paonnerie

We are pleased to also be receiving another shipment from the Carol and Jacques at Domaine de la Paonnerie. On our most recent trip to France we spent an interesting day visiting each of their vineyards which are spread out across almost 50 kilometres on the northern edge of the Loire mid-way between Angers and Nantes.

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They are producing more and more cuvées without sulphur as their fruit is so good and their winemaking approach so meticulous it is not needed.

There will be a couple of changes as they have decided (like so many other winemakers) to move outside the appellation system, so will no longer be labelling their white wine as Muscadet. Rather it will be released as a Vin de France, but it is still the same Melon de Bourgogne made in the same way as before.

We have had such a good reaction to their Grolleau (Groslot) that we have ordered more of this intriguing wine again.

We also have the new vintage of Anjou Village Cabernet Franc and good stocks of the 2012 Coteaux d’Ancenis Gamay called Simplement Gamay.



They will be here in the next couple of weeks.

Pack 1: Garrelière Loire 6 pack



This six pack of three whites and three reds is from the perennially popular Domaine de la Garrelière which is situated just south of the city of Tours. The estate is certified biodynamic and the wines are all naturally fermented and the only addition is a small amount of sulphur.

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.

Domaine de la Garrelière Vin de France Gamay Sans Tra La La 2011 (2 bottles) – This old favourite is made from 100% Gamay and is fermented naturally without the 'help' of commercial yeasts. It is fresh, lively, full of flavour and, above all, delicious. Good for drinking anytime, anywhere.

Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Blanc 2011 – This entry-level wine from the Touraine appellation is made from 100% Sauvignon Blanc. The Sauvignon Blanc provides the characteristic aromas and taste profiles that you expect from wines made from this grape in the Loire Valley. This vintage is particularly delicious with clean, fresh, vibrant flavours and a long finish.

Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Rouge 2010 – This entry-level wine is made from 100% Cabernet Franc. The Touraine Le Rouge is a biodynamic wine that shows why people in the Loire drink Cabernet Franc. The wine is smooth and elegant, has a beautiful perfume and is very low in sulphur.

Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Le Chenin 2011 – This lovely wine is made from 100% Chenin Blanc, a grape which reaches its highest expression in the Loire Valley. The clay and limestone soils seem to coax even more flavour from the 20 year old vines of Chenin to produce elegant wines with great flavour.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$176 but the pack price is \$149.60 including freight.

Pack 2: Domaine St Nicolas red wine 6 Pack



Domaine St Nicolas has been with us almost from the beginning. The biodynamic vineyards slope to the Atlantic Ocean and are cooled by the afternoon breezes. Thierry Michon makes clean, precise, flavourful wines that last for a long time. Some of these wines have been cellared until Thierry thinks they have reached optimal time for drinking.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Reflets Rouge 2011 – This was the first wine we ever tried from Domaine Saint Nicolas and we were hugely impressed with the quality. It is dominated by Pinot Noir in this vintage but also has some Gamay, Negrette and Cabernet Franc blended in as well. It is an elegant wine with good structure.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Gammes en May Rouge 2011 – The Domaine Saint Nicolas Gamme en May is a light, refreshing and delicious pure Gamay red wine. It is great for summer drinking served slightly chilled. Thierry Michon does not always make a pure Gamay, but the quality of the fruit in 2011 is, again, exceptional.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cabaret Rouge 2009 – This is a wine made from pure Cabernet Franc that has been aged in barriques for a year. This is a particularly good example of a Loire Cabernet Franc. It is a great food wine which is drinking very nicely now.

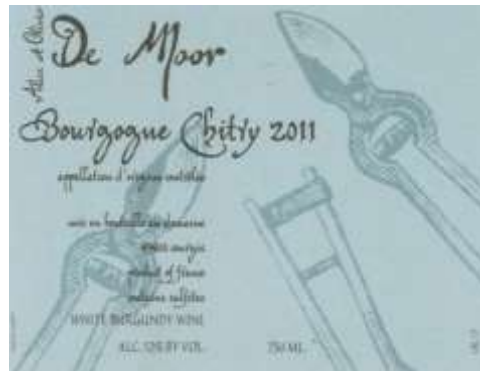
Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cuvee Jacques Rouge 2007 – This silky cuvee is named after Thierry's grandfather and is a blend of Pinot Noir (85%) and Cabernet Franc (15%). It was aged in barriques for 18 months prior to bottling.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens Cuvee Le Poiré 2007 – This is an intriguing wine made from an intriguing grape (100% Negrette). The colour is deep red and the flavour has hints of cherries and plums and an intense spiciness. One reviewer referred to it as 'brooding and primary'. It is a great, full-flavoured, intense wine.

Domaine Saint Nicolas Fiefs Vendéens La Grande Pièce Rouge 2004 – This is one of the domaine's prestige red wine and is made from pure Pinot Noir from vines that are at least 25 years old and that provide very low yields (<30 hectolitres per hectare). It is already elegant and refined but will continue to improve with age. It is a sensible 13% alcohol.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$247 but the pack price is \$209.95 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!

Domaine de Moor Bourgogne Chitry 2011 – Chitry is a white wine appellation that lies adjacent to the Chablis appellation and shares with it the wonderful limestone terroir. Those in the know snap up this wine as it has all the characteristics of a Chablis but at a lower price. It is a pure Chardonnay and is classified as a Burgundy Village wine (the village being Chitry).

Domaine Belluard Vin de Savoie Blanc Gringet Les Alpes 2010 – This beautiful white wine is made from 100% Gringet, a traditional, indigenous grape of the Savoie region. The wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts and only a tiny amount of sulphur is used. The alcohol level is 12%.

Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay La Châtelaine 2011 – La Châtelaine is one of Domaine de la Cadette's best cuvées and is made from Chardonnay. The wine comes from grapes from the vineyards on the pretty south-facing slopes of the Vézelay hills. The grapes are harvested by hand and then fermented naturally in vats (80%) and old barrels (20%).

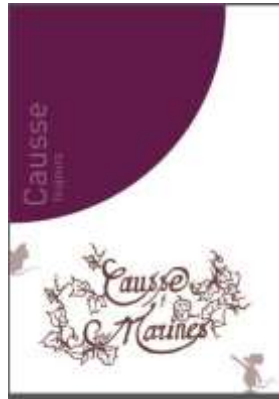
Domaine de la Garrelière Touraine Cendrillon 2011 – The Cendrillon (Cinderella) is made from 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Chardonnay. Just 30% of the Sauvignon Blanc spent some time in oak to provide additional complexity. This is a fascinating wine for us. It opens up in the glass to reveal a complexity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

Domaine Vincent Carême Vouvray Sec 2011 – The Sec is a dry white wine that displays notes of pear and wild peaches. From interesting flint soils in both Vouvray and Noizay, it has a generous palate and displays rich fruitiness and citrus overtones. It is a wine for drinking now.

Philippe Bornard Côtes du Jura Savagnin Ouillé Les Chassagnes 2008 – This lovely wine is made from 100% Savagnin. It has been made with a slight oxidative edge which gives it a beautiful, nutty, savoury, umami quality that makes for compelling drinking.

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$225 but the pack price is **\$191.25 including freight.**

Pack 4: Red wine selection 6 pack



This month we have assembled a great selection of interesting red wines for you from all parts of France. 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 Jacquerie 2011 Sans Soufre – This wine is a blend of 66% Cabernet Franc and 34% Cabernet Sauvignon picked from the Clos de la Jacquerie which the Carroget's own exclusively. It is unsulphured.

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: Burgundy Selection 6 Pack



This selection lines up three whites and three reds from the Burgundy region. They range from Vézelay in the north to Saint Aubin which lies about ten kilometres south of Beaune.

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.

Sextant (Julien Altaber) Bourgogne Blanc 2011 – This 100% Chardonnay is from a talented young winemaker who has worked with Dominique Derain for many years. There is an elegance and complexity in this wine that is very appealing.

Domaine de la Cadette Bourgogne Vézelay Les Saulniers 2011 – This wine was bottled in March 2012 after spending approximately six months in stainless steel vats. It has a liveliness and freshness that is very appealing for such an elegant wine. The finish is very long and interesting.

Domaine Montanet-Thoden Bourgogne Cuvée Garance Rouge 2011 – This red burgundy is from the Vézelay region where the fossilised limestone soils that are found here give the wines a lively minerality. The grapes for this wine are hand-picked from the small plots of vines, destemmed, fermented with native yeasts and matured in old barrels.

Catherine & Dominique Derain St-Aubin Le Ban Rouge 2010 – This is a lovely wine with an appealing cherry and strawberry fruit flavour, a core of acidity, great freshness, an underlying spiciness and perfect balance. The 2010 reflects the vintage which was not as hot as 2009 but which encouraged slow but steady growth in the vineyard leading to wines with good structure and length.

Sextant (Julien Altaber) Bourgogne Rouge 2011 – This wine belies its humble Bourgogne Rouge tag. It is a silky Pinot with elegance and structure that comes from the impeccable fruit that Julien nurtures. We like it a lot!

The RRP for this selection of 6 bottles of wine is \$244 but the pack price is \$207.40 including freight.

Grape variety: Prunelard

Prunelard (also written as Prunelart) was an important grape variety in the Gaillac region of France in the Middle Ages when the red wines of this area were predominantly made using this grape.

It then almost disappeared from the area during the phylloxera outbreak until only a few hectares survived (official figures are 1.5 hectares in 1998).

Recently, however, some passionate vigneron (such as Plageoles and Lescarret) have re-established old Gaillac varieties such as Ondenc, Jurancon Noir, Prunelard and Loin de l'œil and now wine is, once again, featuring this interesting red grape. Not that there is a lot – in 1996 the area had increased to 7 hectares only, but by 2010 there were at least 15 hectares under cultivation.

Prunelard is actually one of the parents of Malbec (known in the Loire region as Côt). The name comes from the fact that the skin of the grape looks very like the skin of a plum.

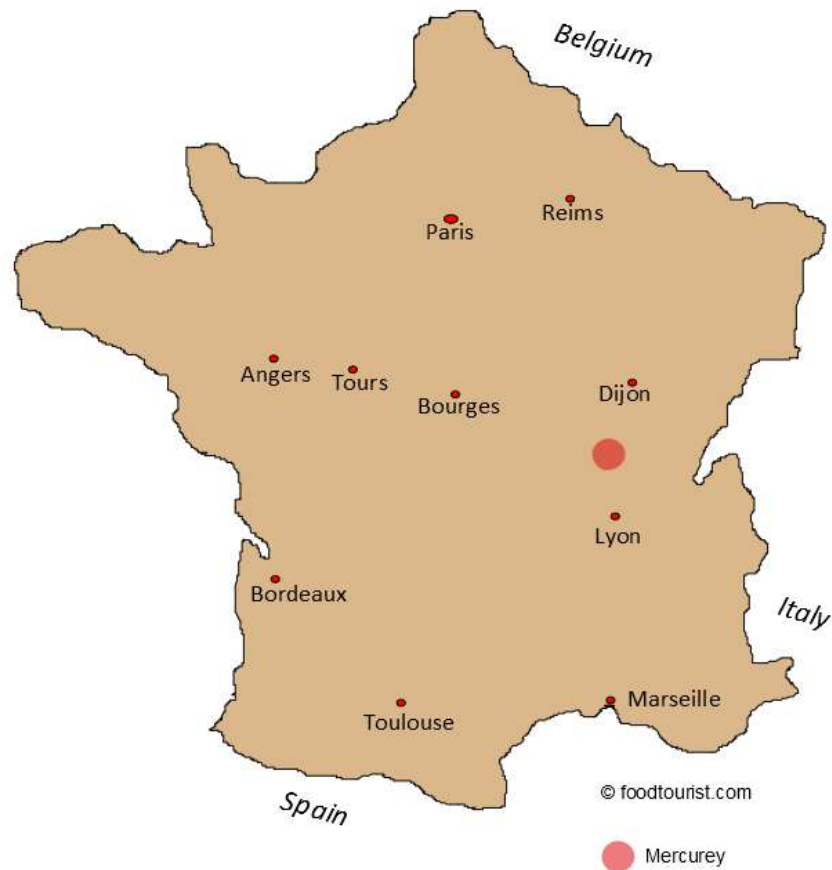
Until recently, according to Jancis Robinson in her latest book *Wine Grapes*, “Prunelard is only recommended in the Tarn and is not permitted in any appellation wine”. However, in the latest AOC decree for Gaillac, the grape has been included in the permitted varieties once again along with better known varieties such as Duras and Fer Servadou, however it cannot exceed 10% of the blend.



The Causse Marines Causse Toujours 1102 is made from Syrah (Shiraz) and Prunelard. Since the Prunelard exceeds 10% of the blend it cannot be labelled as Gaillac AOC. However this is a very interesting wine which has an intriguing spice note.

Appellation: Mercurey

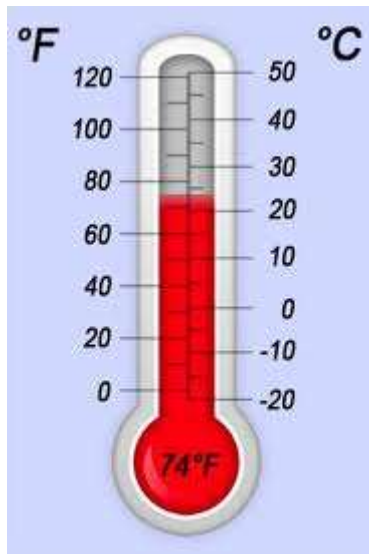
Mercurey is a wine appellation in the Cote Chalonnaise region of Burgundy which lies south of the city of Beaune, covering the communes of Mercurey and Saint-Martin-sous-Montaigu which lie below Rully and above Givry.



This appellation is unusual because white wines can be made here from 100% Pinot Gris as well as Chardonnay. Red wines are made from Pinot Noir but a little Chardonnay can be added provided it does not exceed 15%.

The Catherine & Dominique Derain **Mercurey La Plante Chassey** is an interesting cuvée from this appellation because it has a small amount of Pinot Beurot (Malvoisie, Pinot Gris) blended with the dominant Pinot Noir. La Plante Chassey is a south-east slope with clay soil that lies within the Mercurey commune. The grapes for this wine are harvested by hand and the wine is fermented in wooden vats before being transferred to old wooden barrels for 18 months. The wine is not fined or filtered before bottling. When you taste this wine you will discern notes of cherries raspberries and citrus peel and some herbaciousness. You will also notice the length of the finish. It has a lovely silkiness and earthiness about it that we find very appealing. We still have examples from 2008, 2009, and 2011.

A note about wine serving temperatures



It was interesting to come across a wine list in the United States recently where there was a dedicated section devoted to chilled red wines. This fits nicely with the line we have been pushing for many years – namely that, in Australia, we serve our white wines too cold and our red wines too warm.

The first dragon that needs slaying is the one about serving red wines at 'room temperature'. In a country such as Australia this provides us the latitude to serve red wines anywhere between two degrees Centigrade (winter in Tasmania) and fifty degrees Centigrade (summer in the Simpson desert).

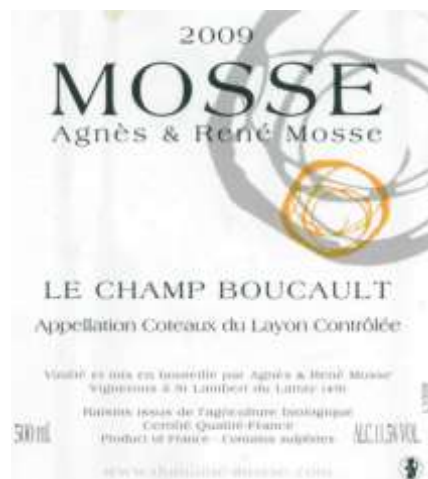
Most restaurants in Australia maintain the temperature at over twenty degrees, but areas near an open kitchen can be much higher than that. Also lights can lead to a local increase in temperature – we were in a restaurant recently where the red wines were stored along a wall and a large feature light was shining on the bottles making them warm to the touch! Apart from the fact that these wines could be ruined after a couple of weeks of such treatment we had to ask for the wine to be placed in an ice bucket to bring it down to an acceptable temperature.

So what is a good temperature for serving wines? The answer is that it depends on the style of wine you are drinking.

If you are drinking a white wine or a rosé then we recommend a serving temperature of around 10 to 12 degrees Centigrade. If it is significantly colder than this then the molecules that cause you to smell the aromas in the wine will not become volatile.

The exception is a sweet wine such as a Sauterne or a Coteaux du Layon which should be served colder because of their high sugar levels which become even more pronounced as the temperature increases.

It is actually slightly more complicated than that with sweet wines because it also depends on the acidity of the wine. For example the Domaine Mosse Coteaux du Layon Le Champ Boucault is a sweet Chenin Blanc from the Loire Valley. The sugar level is reasonably high at 130 g/l (although in this appellation the sugar levels can reach into the mid-200s) but there is also a beautiful streak of acidity which balances out the sweetness and allows it to be served closer to the same temperatures as a dry white wine.



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With red wines the serving temperature depends of the style and the grape variety. We find that almost all of the red wines we drink benefit from a serving temperature between 12 degrees Centigrade and 18 degrees Centigrade.

Lighter style reds really benefit from lower serving temperatures. We have a light Gamay from the Fiefs Vendéens appellation (it's in the Domaine St Nicolas special pack this month) which we always chill down to at least 14 degrees before drinking as we do to some others such as the Domaine du Moulin Domaine Rouge made from Pinot Noir and Gamay or Nicolas Carmarans' wines. Red wines from Burgundy also fall into this category as do the lovely light reds from the Jura made from Trousseau and Plousard.

Heavier reds (which we don't drink very often) can be served at slightly higher temperatures to disguise the bitter notes which show through more at lower temperatures. But we still wouldn't serve them at more than 18 degrees.

Then, of course, there are the orange wines that we all hear so much about these days. We strongly believe that these should not be served at the same temperature as white wines because there are so many flavour compounds derived from the extended skin contact that are masked if the temperature is too low. So we recommend somewhere between 14 degrees to 18 degrees depending on the amount of skin contact. The more skin contact the higher the temperature that seems to be the sweet spot.

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