



Wine Talk: May 2009

The newsletter of Terroir Wines

Welcome to May edition of Wine Talk, Terroir Wines' newsletter. This month we offer two six packs from the Cotes du Ventoux so you can get ready for the Tour de France in which the last stage before Paris will be a mountain climb up the massive Mont Ventoux which can be clearly seen from both Chateau Unang and Saint Jean du Barroux.

Terroir Wines' May update...

Current specials for the onset of winter are ...

The **Chateau Unang Winter red 6-Pack**, which has 2 bottles of the elegant Côtes du Ventoux La Source 2006 red, 1 bottle of the sumptuous La Croix 2005 and 3 bottles of the entry level St Gabriel 2007 which was favourably reviewed by Graeme Phillips recently. **This pack is keenly priced at \$165.60 including freight (it is normally \$184 plus freight).**

The **Philippe Gimel Saint Jean du Barroux red 6-Pack**, which has 6 bottles of the intense, complex and daring Côtes du Ventoux Oligocene 2004 red that Robert Parker is talking about becoming a new cult wine (see the story on our recent visit to Philippe's vineyard). **This pack is priced at \$297 including freight (it is normally \$330 plus freight).**

The pricing for new and re-ordered wines from the last shipment is ...

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|--|----------|
| Chateau Unang La Croix 2005 | \$ 50.00 |
| Chateau Unang Carignan St Gabriel 2007 | \$ 24.00 |
| Chateau Unang La Source 2006 | \$ 31.00 |
| Chateau Unang Rose 2007 | \$ 24.00 |
| St Jean du Barroux Oligocene Red 2004 | \$ 55.00 |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Les Charmes 2007 | \$ 36.00 |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Côte du Py Reserve 2007 | \$ 42.00 |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Côte du Py 2007 | \$ 40.00 |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Bull'Go sparkling | \$ 38.00 |

Any 6 pack of the above wines attracts a 10% discount. And contact us for **wholesale prices** if you have a liquor licence and would like to buy any of these wines.

To order, send an email to wine@terroirwines.com.au telling us what you'd like and we'll invoice you for the wine. You can also phone us on (03) 6224 1236.

A visit to Philippe Gimel's vineyard and winery

We have long been fans of Philippe Gimel's wines. That is why we are importing these iconic, fascinating, complex reds and whites into Australia. We had tried his wines while we were visiting Provence.

However we hadn't seen the vineyards, so on our most recent trip we determined to redress this omission. Numerous phone calls to Philippe had set dates and changed them because of adverse weather conditions. There was lots of autumnal Provençal rain.

On a cool autumn day in April while we were busy working in our Provençal house, Philippe finally rang to say the vineyard was dry enough for us to visit. We were delighted and after a brief meeting outside Caromb's local pub, we set off to Le Barroux along bumpy gravel roads to find his vineyards.

We had absolutely no idea of what awaited us. We stopped at the bottom of the hill where his vines follow old terraces. He talked to us about the geology of the area, he talked about the soil, he talked about the climate, he talked about the terroir. He pointed to Mont Ventoux and talked about its effect upon the climate. He pointed to the Dentelles and talked about their shielding effect. We started to realise how serious he was about vineyard management and wine production!

We got in our cars again and drove on narrow, rutted, storm-damaged roads towards the top of the hill to the stunning spot where Philippe intends to build his winery and visitor centre. We looked to the east and the top of Mont Ventoux complete with a snow capping was visible. We looked west and the dramatic Dentelles de Montmirail with their lacy, craggy peaks were looming. In between these icons, the castle of Le Barroux, the third dramatic element on Philippe's wine label was clearly in view.

We were facing north. Surely the vines would not get enough sun? This was about to be explained.



Perhaps we should first tell you a bit about Philippe. He is no ordinary winemaker. He is a perfectionist. He is obsessive. Some of this may have been influenced by his time with the famous Claude Papin in the Loire. He then moved on to be one of the winemakers at Chateau de Beaucastel in nearby Chateauneuf-du-Pape – in fact many commentators have compared the power of his wines to those of the more famous neighbour.

As we walked along the vineyard terraces Philippe excitedly showed us every plant (including Ventoux orchids and wild asparagus) that share space with the vines along with almond, cherry, walnut and pear trees among many others.

He explained how he nourishes the soil and attracts a diversity of both plant and animal life.



Wild boar roam the property at night but they are not fenced off because they dig in the ground and aerate the soil. Only preparations approved by Demeter are applied.

At every point he was able to explain the age of the rocks (his red is called Oligocene because the red vines grow on rocks from that period).

We then went to his winery where over thirty tanks and

barrels of wine line the walls. He then started explaining the differences and the treatment given to each. We started tasting and this proceeded for four hours. We were told why he doesn't use any new barrels – he doesn't want the oak to obscure the beautiful fruit flavours. He explained his use of concrete tanks – it lets the wine breathe. He showed us the difference between the huge 2003, the powerful 2004 (the one currently on sale) and the more elegant but still profound 2005 and 2006 which will be released progressively over the coming years. We also tried tank samples of the more recent vintages.

It was a magic day spent with a man of passion and enthusiasm. It was so interesting and so compelling that we all forgot to have lunch!

www.saintjeandubarroux.com

Jean Marc Burgaud listed at Pierre Gagnaire!

We spent an enjoyable afternoon in Ville-Morgon visiting Jean Marc Burgaud whose Morgon wines are being snapped up (the Jean Marc Burgaud 'James' sold out the week it arrived).

He was very generous with his time and opened a number of back vintages so that we could understand how well these perfectly-structured wines age.

He also proudly told us that his wines have been added to the wine list of one of France's greatest restaurants, Pierre Gagnaire. In fact, in the week before the visit we went to an up-and-coming restaurant in Paris (Le Gaigne), and there on the bench was the Jean-Marc Burgaud Cote de Py, so his wines are certainly being noticed in that city.

Our new suppliers

We have been very fortunate to be able to source wines from a number of new suppliers in the Loire Valley and a new supplier in the southern Rhone. These wines will arrive in August so pricing will not be known until then.

Domaine Saint Nicolas is a vineyard that lies very close to the Atlantic Ocean in the Vendée area of France just below where the Loire spills into the Atlantic (not too far from the city of Nantes). Very few people know about the Fiefs Vendéens appellation or the wines produced here but winemaker Thierry Michon is becoming a cult figure in Paris and the United States for his precise winemaking skills and his vineyard practices which are certified as biodynamic. His wines are on the wine list at the prestigious Le Grand Vefour in Paris, for

example. He produces both red and white wines and we are particularly impressed with his Pinot Noir range.

Domaine Stéphane Guion is a small estate in the Bourgueil appellation that lies between the cities of Tours and Angers. This is a red wine only appellation where the wines are based on either Cabernet Franc or Cabernet Sauvignon but local winemakers invariably favour Cabernet Franc. Stéphane was the first to adopt organic viticulture in this area and he only produces two wines – the Cuvée and the Prestige Cuvée. These wines will sell for a very reasonable price.

Domaine de la Garrelière is another biodynamic estate just south of Tours run by Francois and Pascaline Plouzeau. Both Wine Spectator and Robert Parker in the United States have rated their wines highly. We love their Cendrillon (Cinderella) which is made from 90% Sauvignon Blanc and 10% Chardonnay and their Touraine Gamay Sans Tra-La La.

Domaine du Moulin is where Hervé Villemade makes exceptional wines that can be found in many of the natural wine bars in Paris such as the wonderful Racines. We will be bringing in a wine that is intriguing because of its rarity. It is from the tiny appellation of Cour Cheverny near Tours where the only permitted grape in Romorantin – a grape that was originally planted by the Romans in Burgundy. Hervé also makes some fine Sauvignon Blanc wines and red wines made from a blend of Pinot Noir and Gamay.

Domaine Daniel Chotard produces classic Sancerre whites and reds in a beautiful area to the west of the village of Sancerre. We are particularly pleased with the elegant Cuvée Marie Henri but think you will also be surprised by the quality of red which is made from Pinot Noir.

Domaine Catherine le Goeuil is in the southern Rhone near the village of Cairanne which lies not too far from Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Catherine is a very thoughtful winemaker who produces only one cuvée called Cuvée Léa Felsch which is an elegant red wine of considerable complexity. We first tried this Cote du Rhone at Les Pupos wine bar in Paris and contacted Catherine the next day as we were so impressed with her wine.

So August will be a busy month when the shipment arrives. More information about the individual wines is available of the Terroir Wines web site (www.terroirwines.com.au).

Restaurant Review: London's Terroirs Wine Bar



Last month we wrote about a crazy wine bar in New York that we visited last November. On our way back from France this year we dropped into a similarly named and similarly themed place in the centre of London just behind London's Trafalgar Square. If you are interested in the new wave 'natural' wines of France then this is a great place to get started.

Terroirs is a wine bar in the heart of London specialising in natural wines from France and beyond. There are some excellent wines available by the glass and an extensive and well-documented list for ordering by the bottle.

There is also a short menu of clever food items available to complement the wines such as thin slices of very good ventresche with cornichons.

In fact the charcuterie is a feature here with key items such as prosciutto made from rare breed Cinta Senese pigs from Tuscany or Jamon di Teruel from Aragon in Spain among others.

You can also have a full meal at one of the tables if you like and order dishes such as Piperade Basquaise with Chorizo or a white onion and cider soup to start and then move on to a braised shoulder of lamb with couscous or slow cooked pork belly with chick peas and morcilla sausage and then finish with a pannacotta or an apricot and almond tart.

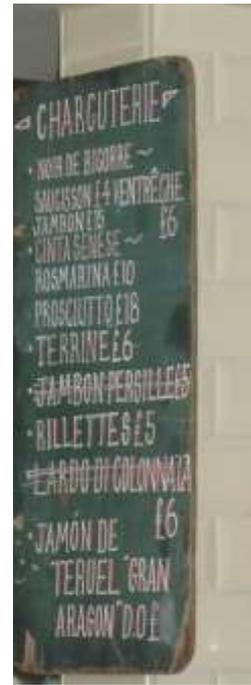
From the wines available by the glass we were amazed at the quality of a Domaine de la Chevalerie Cuvee Binette Bourgueil. We love the Cabernet Franc wines from this mid-Loire appellation, but this one took us by surprise. It was just so good and so fresh that we would have ordered a



bottle if time had permitted.

We also tried an earthy

Grolleau from Olivier Cousin, one of the stars of the natural wine movement. This rare grape produces funky wines with a 'barnyard' smell but this



one was interesting nevertheless. Cousin markets it as a Vin de Table.

You will find Terroirs at 5 William IV Street right in the heart of Charing Cross, London just near Trafalgar Square.

Grape of the month: Gamay

Gamay is a purple grape variety used particularly for the production of the interesting Beaujolais wines that are found north of Lyon in France.

The grape originated in the Middle East, possibly in Syria and was first planted around the village of Gamay further north in the middle of the Burgundy appellation. It did not thrive here and plantings further south were more successful.

This grape reaches its highest expression around the small village of Ville-Morgon, particularly on the hill called Cotes du Py. Many of the wines of Jean Marc Burgaud come from this area.

Sorrenberg in Australia produces a particularly fine example of Gamay and there are some interesting wines produced from Gamay in the Loire Valley. One of our new suppliers is Domaine de la Garreliere and they produce an appealing Gamay called 'Gamay Sans Tra La La' which will be available soon through Terroir Wines.

Interpreting French wine labels

One of the keys that unlocks your understanding of French wines is some knowledge of the regions and, within those, the appellations of France. A region such as Burgundy has literally dozens of appellations within it such as Corton-Charlemagne, Batard-Montrachet and Chitry. Unlike Australia, grape varieties are rarely displayed on wine labels in France. You simply have to know that in Burgundy it is most likely that a red wine will be made

from 100% Pinot Noir and a white wine from 100% Chardonnay. However there are some other grape varieties such as Aligote, Sauvignon Blanc and Melon de Bourgogne permitted in some of the appellations.

If you see a wine from the Loire region and it is a white wine then it is likely to be made from Chenin Blanc if it is the western section but there is increasing use of Sauvignon Blanc as you go up-river towards Sancerre. There are also exceptions such as near Tours where there is an appellation called Cour-Cheverny that uses only the obscure Romorantin grape (which originally same from Burgundy but is no longer used there). Red wines from the Loire are usually made from Cabernet Franc in the west and increasingly use Pinot Noir and Gamay as you get closer to Burgundy. Thus the appellation of Sancerre which is in the Loire but not very far from Burgundy uses a mix of Pinot Noir and Gamay in the red wines produced there.

The southern Rhone, on the other hand, is quite different. You really have to know each individual supplier to know what grapes make up the wine because there are so many grape varieties permitted. In fact in the Chateauneuf-du-Pape appellation there are thirteen different grape varieties allowed. However, if it is a red wine you can confidently bet that there will be a significant amount of either Grenache or Syrah (Shiraz) or both with supporting acts such as Mourvèdre and Counoise. Further south in the coastal Bandol appellation the red wines are made entirely from Mourvèdre.

On the Terroir Wines web site (www.terroirwines.com.au) if you follow the links to the producers on the left side of the screen then you can see each wine described and the grape varieties will be mentioned in the description.

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Order Form

Name:

Street:

Suburb: Postcode: State:

Telephone: Email:

| Special newsletter selection | Price inc GST | Number | Sub-total |
|---|----------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Chateau Unang Winter Red 6-Pack | \$165.60 | | |
| Philippe Gimel Saint Jean du Barroux Red 6-Pack | \$297.00 | | |
| Compose your own selection | Price per single bottle | | |
| Chateau Unang Cotes du Ventoux White 2007 | \$20 | | |
| Chateau Unang Cuvee Adeline Cotes du Ventoux White 2006 | \$30 | | |
| Chateau Unang Cotes du Ventoux 2007 Rose | \$24 | | |
| Chateau Unang Cotes du Ventoux 2006 Red | \$21 | | |
| Chateau Unang La Source Cotes du Ventoux 2006 Red | \$31 | | |
| Chateau Unang La Croix Cotes du Ventoux 2006 Red | \$50 | | |
| Chateau Unang Carignan St Gabriel 2007 | \$24 | | |
| Cuvee le Cascavel Cotes du Ventoux Red | \$23 | | |
| Domaine de Cascavel Cuvee les Amidyves Cotes du Ventoux Red | \$32 | | |
| Caravinserrail In Fine Cotes du Ventoux 2007 White | \$17 | SOLD OUT | |
| Caravinserrail In Fine Cotes du Ventoux 2007 Red | \$17 | | |
| Domaine des Grands Devers Cotes du Rhone White | \$25 | | |
| Domaine des Grands Devers Cotes du Rhone Red | \$19 | | |
| Domaine des Grands Devers Cotes du Rhone Villages Valreas Red | \$28 | | |
| Domaine des Grands Devers Cotes du Rhone Villages Visan Red | \$26 | | |
| St Jean du Barroux Oligocene Red 2004 | \$55 | | |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Les Charmes 2007 | \$36 | | |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Côte du Py Reserve 2007 | \$42 | | |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Côte du Py 2007 | \$40 | | |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Morgon Côte du Py James 2007 | \$57 | SOLD OUT | |
| Jean Marc Burgaud Bull'Go sparkling | \$ 38.00 | | |
| | | Total | |

Note: Please send your order to wine@terroirwines.com.au, post it to GPO Box 2160, Hobart, 7001, Tasmania or Fax to 03 62247552. We will then contact you to discuss payment arrangements. You can pay by credit card, cheque or direct bank deposit.

If you order your wines in lots of 12 (they can be mixed) we will pay the freight charges. The two special six packs will be sent freight free within Australia. If freight costs apply, we'll contact you and let you know how much it will be is before processing your order.