

Dear Wine Lovers

Here we are in a week which includes both Midsummers Day, Father's Day, English Wine week and International Widows Day- a heady combination to celebrate or be aware of!

English Wine Week is both supported and created by WineGB. There is still just time to follow this on WineGB's Instagram, Titter and Facebook pages it runs until 28 June. There are virtual tours, tastings and seminars. Of the 500 wine producers in England and Wales, Surrey boasts 14 vineyards, whilst that more than doubles in Hampshire where there are 37. The WineGB website also has an article to celebrate father daughter/son teams working together in various vineyards, including Albury where Nick Wenman works with his daughter Lucy Letley. Support for local wineries and businesses has never been so vital if we want to retain them, and you can enjoy some great wines in the process.

Given so many excuses to celebrate, **The Independent** has highlighted a number of English sparkling wines.

Producers you will doubtless be familiar with are **Camel Valley**, based in

Cornwall which has been making wine since 1989, and is run by husband and wife duo, Bob and Annie. Their success includes award winning wines are sold at Waitrose and high-end restaurants including; Rick Stein's chain, as well as Le Manoir aux Quatre Saisons, Fortnum and Mason and Hakkasan. They even export to Japan. They collaborated with Raymond Blanc to produce an exclusive Rose Brut, available only at the vineyard or Le Manoir which I personally would recommend. Their *Camel Valley Atlantic dry 2018* (Camel Valley, £13.95) is reported to be full on, dry with citrus and green fruit flavours.

Although **Chapel Down** is based in Kent they source their grapes both locally and from Hampshire and Essex. Their sparkling *bacchus* (£11.99 Waitrose) is highly rated and affordable, made using the traditional Prosecco method. It is said to be easy drinking, fresh and vibrant. "Summer in a glass".

Closer to home the Hampshire-based, family-run winery, **Black Chalk**, specialises in sparkling wine using locally grown grapes. Chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier are used to produce *Black Chalk classic 2015* (Black Chalk £35).

Also close by is **Denbies** which is also one of the earlier wine producers having been started in 1984 is now open of the biggest producers in the UK with 627 acres. Their *botrytis ortega* (Denbies £60, half bottle) is not inexpensive, but is reputed to be an exquisite dessert wine. They are also stocked by Sainsbury's.

The **Davenport** vineyard, established in 1991 and organic since 2000 has good eco credentials. The winery uses solar power, natural corks and lightweight bottles, no plastic packaging and recycled boxes. Their *Davenport limney estate 2014* (Davenport Vineyards £27) is described as having a lovely softness, with citrusy aromas and hints of buttery yeast and notes of baked apples and lemon peel.

The **Roebuck Estates** near Petworth is responsible for the multiple award-winning *Roebuck Estate classic cuvee 2014* (Roebuck Estates £35) , a pale straw-coloured sparkling wine which has won multiple awards and accolades. We are promised delicate bubbles and a great balance, overall a wine that is rich and sophisticated.

For three generations of the **Bolney** family the bacchus grape has been both successful and important. Their *lychgate bacchus* (Bolney £14.99) delivers notes of gooseberry and elderflower, sweet pineapple and grapefruit.

Meanwhile **Nyetimber classic cuvee** (Waitrose £36.99) from pinot noir, chardonnay and pinot meunier grapes grown in Sussex, Hampshire and Kent has notes of almond, honey pastry and baked apples.

Another family run South Downs vineyard is **Ridgeview** and they produce **Fitzrovia rose** (Waitrose £35), using traditional champagne methods. Their wines are regularly served at Buckingham Palace, apparently including President Obama during his visit. This salmon coloured sparkling wine is chardonnay heavy, vibrant and creamy and promises raspberry citrus and honey.

[see The Independent for the full article]

I have to admit I had never been aware of International Widows Day until hearing it mentioned on Thought for the Day on Radio 4. It was first observed in 2011 having been formally adopted by the United Nations General Assembly the previous year. Prior to that it had been established by The Looba Foundation in India in memory of Shrimati Pushpa Wati Loomba who was widowed is still felt today, and she is ed in 1954. The idea was to care for widows and their children and to bring about a change in culture and attitudes that discriminate against them. Promoting awareness of the problems that widowhood brings and acknowledging the courage and determination of these women has been its focus. The theme this year is equalising women's rights.

The problems encountered by widows are certainly not new. One woman who stood out as showing courage, determination and inspiration in widowhood was Barbe-Nicole Clicquot, the first woman to run a Champagne house. Eschewing the traditional role of women in the nineteenth century as wives and mothers she took on her husband's business when she was widowed at the age of twenty seven. Her vision and influence is still felt today. Some of the technical innovations she introduced continue to be relevant today.

She used a landmark harvest in 1810 to produce the first vintage wine, and then again the following year a vintage which bore the iconic "Year of the Comet" label.

Amongst other things we should thank her for introducing both pink champagne and also developing the riddling rack process for mass production. She also pursued brave business opportunities when she sent wines to the cellars of the Russian nobility despite the blockade following the Napoleonic wars. "Grande Dame of Champagne" is a well deserved epithet for Veuve Clicquot.

### **Snippets and tasters**

The fact that shops are now re opening, albeit only as much as social distancing allows, and that pubs and restaurants will be following soon is most welcome. It will be interesting to see how much our habits have changed during the lockdown. It is still not clear when wine forays abroad will become feasible once more, I know that some of you are keen to get back to this. Meanwhile here is a brief round up of some of the wine related happenings as we emerge from lockdown.

### **Wine Society**

- Now accepting new members again.
- Their website features honestly priced wines from £5.95/bottle.

### **Laithwaites**

- Bookings are being taken for their London Roadshow on November 6-7th.

## Decanter magazine reports

- China have secured their first conviction for a counterfeiter displaying fake Bordeaux at a trade fair. The perpetrator has been given a prison sentence and a fine.
- Kingscote English wine estate in West Sussex is for sale. Expensive though it is (£6.7 million) it is described as being 'ready to go' and two and a half times cheaper than a French vineyard within an appellation zone.
- Olivier Krug grew up experiencing a strong association between music and wine. This is an area which is beginning to be studied. In a Zoom interview, reflecting on champagne grapes, Olivier Krug comments "Chardonnay is more the violins, this backbone of freshness. Pinot Noir will be more the bass, the trombones giving structure [and] maturity" Whilst he likens the Pinot Meunier to the funfair :You hear a tin-ting-ting, or a trumpet from time to time". Krug will provide music pairings for the specific champagne which can be accessed by entering the ID code on the bottle into the free Krug app and website.



## Waitrose

- Cramele Recas, the Romanian wine exporter, is launching its first wines into stores.
- English and Welsh wine sales have increased 40% year on year. They are adding five new English wines to their list : two from Oxney organic and Rathfinny Cradle Valley and one from Beacon Down. These are exclusive to Waitrose, the first national retailer to stock them.
- Their summer drinks magazine is available now online.
- Always worth checking out their '25% off' offers.

## Sainsbury's

These caught my eye, but there are a number of other offers available.

Moet Chandon Imperial Brut Non Vintage : £30 [save £7]

Lanson Black Label Non Vintage :

£25 [save £10]

AScheri Gavi de Gavi :

£13 [save £3]

Miraval Cotes de Provence Rose :

£16 [save £3]

La Terrasse Rose Pays d'oc (150 cl) ...

£16 [save £4]

Graham's Malvedos Vintage Port :

£23 [save £5]

### Majestic

- Majestic Wine recently teamed up with Deliveroo to roll out 30-minute wine, spirits and champagne deliveries. Initially this involved 30 stores but that has now increased to 80. Unfortunately the nearest participating stores to us is Cheam, Kingston and Southampton.
- Their summer sale, with up to 40% off, ends on 6 July. **NB all are priced as part of mixed six**  
Examples are:

Ara 'Sightlines' Sauvignon Blanc 2018, Malborough : £7.99 [save £5]

Chateau Faviere 2016 , Bordeaux Supérieur : £9.99 [save £7]

Rioja Crianza 2017, Begonia ... £6.99 [save £5]

Chateau Bel-Orme Tronquoy de Lavande 2006, Haut Medoc : £9.99 [save £10]

Q Cabernet Sauvignon Alexander Valley : £13.78 [save £9.21]

Making Tracks Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 : £5.99 [save £4]

### Footnote

Sips and tips is intended to be informal and inclusive, so feedback/tasting notes on any of the above would be most welcome.

Let me know what wine you have most enjoyed during lockdown, and why.

Is there anything else you would like to be included?



Keep distancing, keep safe and hope to see you soon

Cheers

Jane Moberly

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