

# TUSCANY

STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

Plus

In the Pink: Ten Rosés

The Superb Cape Wines of Chamonix

Summer Dozen: Fresh Whites



# Tuscany

## The soul of Sangiovese (plus Bordeaux interlopers)

In ten years we have never focussed on Italian wines in our lists, but on a trip to Tuscany last autumn I underwent a Damascene conversion. I made two great discoveries: first, that Sangiovese is a great grape; and second, that Tuscan wine needn't be horribly expensive to be awfully good. This overcame my long-held prejudices (based, I am ashamed to say, on consumption in my youth of too many coarse, thin, acidic and tannic examples) against the grape. So I returned in February on a typical SVS wine hunt: I started with the big annual fair in Montalcino, the aptly named *Benvenuto Brunello*, drove east to nearby Montepulciano, north into the Chianti Classico zone, and then west to the coast.

There is a fascinating dialogue going on in Tuscany between Sangiovese and the two principal French interlopers, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon (along with Syrah and even some Pinot Noir). During the last two decades the Bordeaux grapes seemed to be taking over. Chianti (and even Brunello di Montalcino) was being adulterated with Merlot and Cab; and all the critical running was being made by the so-called Super Tuscans such as the Cabernet-based Sassicaia and Solaia, or the Merlot-based Masseto. However, in recent years Sangiovese, a grape pretty much unique to central and southern Italy, has made a huge comeback. This follows a greater understanding that it is a very fickle grape to grow: it needs heat (almost all Sangiovese is grown south of the Arno), but it doesn't like humidity, so it prefers south-facing slopes and the ventilation from wind which altitude brings; it needs a long growing season, being early to bud but late to ripen; it demands very calcareous soils to give its best; and it needs low-fertility soils to avoid excessive yields. Secondly, there is more appreciation that one needs the right clones of Sangiovese, with a move away from the bigger, over-productive Sangiovese Grosso.



The big volume Sangiovese-based wine is, of course, Chianti. There's no question that a lot of Chianti is still not much fun to drink: we do commend ours. With Chianti Classico one is on surer ground. This much smaller DOCG, only delimited in 1995, occupies the rolling and often wooded hills between Florence and Siena. Many of the vineyards are quite high - up to 700m. -and that brings finesse and freshness to the wines. Further south in Montepulciano, and especially Montalcino, protected by Monte Amiata, the climate is warmer and Sangiovese shows more power and higher alcohol levels.

So what are the virtues of this Tuscan grape in the glass? For me, Sangiovese is comparable to Pinot

Noir as a truly great food wine. It has many similarities: pale colour; red and black cherry fruit; highish acidity, and splendidly Pinot-like aromatics. But wholly distinctive to Sangiovese is that it often fairly swiftly develops a particular savoury flavour: sometimes this emerges as notes of grilled meat, gravy and cooked mushrooms, but at a subtler level one could compare it to *umami*, the Japanese term for the fifth basic taste (after sweet, sour, bitter and salty). This savouriness makes Sangiovese a truly wonderful partner to most meat dishes - whether the local Chianina beef, hare or wild boar, or the more mundane meats we consume here.

Several local growers I met think Tuscany's fascination with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot is over: they anticipate the withdrawal of some over-priced super-Tuscans. But there's no doubt that the Bordeaux varieties can produce delicious wines in the right sites, notably on the coast near Bolgheri. Sadly I found that the wines I tasted from growers there with vines on the slightly dull coastal plain did not meet the required SVS price-to-quality ratio. However, just north of Bolgheri is the little-known DOC of Montescudaio, where I found some wonderful Mediterranean Merlot and Cabernet at half the price.

Simon Taylor  
June 2012

## Mixed Cases

All red wines, all two bottles of each of the six wines listed, with a discount of at least 7.5%

### Tuscan Taster £104.50

#### Code TUS112

Fattoria San Pancrazio, Chianti, 2009  
Bichi Borghesi, Chianti Colli Senesi, 2009  
Campomarzo, Toscana Rosso IGT, 2010  
Cennatoio, Innominato, Toscana Rosso, IGT, 2010  
Marchesi Ginori Lisci, Campordigno, Merlot, Montescudaio, 2009  
Val delle Rose, Morellino di Scansano, 2009

### Terroirs of Tuscany £127.00

#### Code TUS212

Fattoria San Pancrazio, Chianti, 2009  
Cennatoio, All'Omo Il Vino, Sangiovese Toscano, IGT, 2010  
Talosa, Rosso di Montepulciano, 2010  
Col di Lamo, Rosso di Montalcino, 2009  
Val delle Rose, Morellino di Scansano, 2009  
Marchesi Ginori Lisci, Macchion del Lupo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Montescudaio, 2008

### Soul of Sangiovese £192.00

#### Code TUS312

Fattoria San Pancrazio, Chianti Classico, 2009  
Cennatoio, All'Omo Il Vino, Sangiovese Toscano, IGT, 2010  
Cennatoio, Chianti Classico, 2010  
Talosa, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva, 2006  
Talosa, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Filai Lunghi, 2007  
Col di Lamo, Brunello di Montalcino, 2007



## Chianti

### Fattoria San Pancrazio, San Pancrazio, near San Casciano

Not many wine estates are mentioned in documents dated to 1248: at that point the land here belonged to the wealthy Florentine Gianfiglizzi family (Florence lies some 25kms north-east). Now Simone Priami - tall, distinguished, greying at the temples - is in charge here, with his wife Valentina Masti, whose family bought the estate in 1978. Their land straddles the border between Chianti - where they have 22 hectares of vines - and Chianti Classico, where they own just 6 hectares. Soils are pretty consistent: very gravelly, quite light and calcareous.

The family's Chianti stood head and shoulders above any other example I tasted on this trip. Simone told me that his Chianti has twice been the Slow Wine best value Chianti over recent years. The Chianti Classico also garners plenty of praise. See the details of vinification below, and note that all wines include only indigenous grapes. All the wines show some of that characteristic Sangiovese savouriness in their aromatics.

#### Chianti, 2009, 13°

**Bottle £8.95 Case £102.03 Code SNP109**

**Magnum £18.95 Case [6 x 150cl.] £108.02 Code SNP909**

100% Sangiovese, unoaked. Bright, youthful tone. Raspberryish scent, mixed with hints of herbs and leafiness. Generous sharp red and black cherry fruit. This attractively combines vivacity with considerable creaminess and flesh. Splendid aromatics, and finishes so well, with that lively fruit returning with a flourish. Now-2014

## Chianti Classico, 2009, 13.5°

**Bottle £14.75 Case £168.15 Code SNP309**

95% Sangiovese, 5% Colorino, all aged in old (2nd and 3rd fill) French oak barrels. Thrilling aromas: black fruit - with a cassis note - smoky, spiced by mint and nutmeg. Intense black fruit attack, juicy Morello cherries, very ripe (black fruit pastilles?), backed by savoury (bacon?) hints. Fine supporting tannins: this will keep well. This wine earned two glasses in the 2012 **Gambero Rosso** guide to Italian wine, and won four stars in **Decanter** last August. "Hallmark Chianti Classico with floral and baby powder aromas. Succulent candied cherry flavours and silky texture. Fantastic length. Drink 2012-2017 \*\*\*\*", Kerin O'Keefe, Chianti Classico 2008 & 2009, **Decanter** magazine, August 2011. Now-2016

## Chianti Classico Riserva, 2009, 14°

**Bottle £22.95 Case £261.63 Code SNP409**

90% Sangiovese, 5% of each of Canaiolo and Colorino, each year from the same small parcels on very stony and calcareous soils. 16 months in new 600 litre barrels. More closed, but if dumb on the nose, the attack is glorious: very pure, very ripe berries spiced with cinnamon. Showing delightful primary fruit, this is accessible, but you should really keep this. 2013-2019

## Tenuta Bichi Borghesi, Monteriggioni

Although over 400 hectares in total, this estate has just 30 hectares of vines on slopes in the Val d'Elsa just north-west of Siena. We have been selling their wine for the last two years, to much approval, and the 2009 is perhaps gutsier than previous vintages.

## Chianti Colli Senesi, 2009, 13°

**Bottle £9.25 Case £105.45 Code BIC109**

Made from 80% Sangiovese with 20% Canaiolo, aged in vats and large seasoned casks. Medium deep ruby colour, with fresh strawberry and bramble notes on the nose. Generous red and black fruit supported by classic Tuscan structure. Now-2013





## Cennatoio, Panzano

Cennatoio, owned by the Alessi family for three generations, sits amidst steeply pitched vineyards a kilometre or so outside Panzano, in the heart of the Chianti Classico zone, almost exactly half way between Florence and Siena. Panzano, set in an amphitheatre of vineyards is, arguably, at the very top of the tree in Chianti Classico. Interestingly, the whole grape-growing community there has embraced organic viticulture, and, along with almost all estates, Cennatoio has been worked organically for several years, and is in the process of becoming certified.

The engaging Emiliano Alessi gave me a tour of the property. The vineyards are remarkable: on such steep slopes there is considerable variation in altitude and therefore temperature between top and bottom: accordingly the fast-ripening Merlot is grown at the top, Sangiovese in the middle and the later ripening Cabernet on the warmest lower sites. Most vineyards are south-facing and very well-exposed. The small cellar (the family only have 10 hectares of their own vines) includes a *vinsaneria*, a well-ventilated loft where, in the centre, bunches of grapes can be hung on hooks to dry in the autumn, whilst, at the sides of the room, there are numerous small and often odd-shaped barrels containing Vin Santo from previous harvests. From several delectable examples we chose a 1999 vintage.

Emiliano adorns his bottles with a startling variety of labels from the very traditional (the Campomarzo and the Chianti Classico, the latter featuring an eighteenth century drawing of dining drinkers) to the eccentrically modern: that for Inominato is wildly multicoloured and All'Omo il Vino is marked by a jewelled image of arms flanked by cherubs.... Only in Italy!

### Campomarzo, Toscana Rosso IGT, 2010, 13°

**Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code CEN110**

90% Sangiovese and 10% Merlot, and includes some wine in the blend not from the estate. Deep, youthful colour. Scent of candied cherries and crushed red fruit. Ripe, juicy, and honest, with a pinch of tannins. Blackcurranty and substantial, this makes a perfect accompaniment to pasta in a robust sauce. Now-2014

## **Innominato, Toscana Rosso, IGT, 2010, 13°**

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code CEN210**

The “nameless” wine is a blend of 70% Sangiovese and 15% of each of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Soft purple. Aromas of red fruit and cloves. Charmingly pretty cherry, redcurrant and strawberry character, crunchy, a little wild and vibrant. Hints of fresh mint and herbs. With mild tannins and refreshing acidity, this would be lovely with roast pork or chicken. Now-2015

## **All’Omo Il Vino, Sangiovese Toscano, IGT, 2010, 13°**

**Bottle £11.25 Case £128.25 Code CEN310**

“Man and Wine” is 100% Sangiovese, unoaked. Fragrant, black-fruited aromas, cassis and mildly floral. Plush and well-textured, showing black plums and berries, and even a hint of figs. Ripe, velvety tannins. Very long. Now-2015

## **Chianti Classico, 2010, 13°**

**Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code CEN410**

95% old clones of Sangiovese Grosso with 5% Colorino, aged in large, traditional Slovenian oak *botte*. Very perfumed, with scents of pure red fruit and flowers. Light, refined palate, exhibiting raspberry, redcurrant and cherry flavours, almost akin to jellied red fruits, alongside the merest coffee note from the oak. Elegant and pretty. This has ageing potential too. So approachable now but perhaps best late 2012-2017.

## **Vin Santo del Chianti Classico, 1999, 16.5°**

**50cl. Bottle £15.50 Case [12 x 50cl.] £176.70 Code CEN699**

From Malvasia and Trebbiano grapes. Mid gold. Raisin and caramel aromas, with a sherry-like note of oxidation. Fresh and delicious flavours of caramelised oranges, with vanilla and smoke. Very persistent. Delectable, and very fairly priced for a wine of this age. Now-2020.



# Montepulciano

## Talosa, Montepulciano

In terms of reputation the wines of Montepulciano, a DOC since 1980, rank somewhere in between those of Chianti Classico and Montalcino, although the “Nobile” adjective was only added by an astute piece of marketing in the 1920s. Talosa, owned by the Roman Jacorossi family, is a medium-sized estate, among the 70 or so growers in Montepulciano, with thirty-two hectares of vines just north of the town near Pietrose. I discovered their Rosso last year in an *oenoteca* in Montalcino, and later tasted with them in their extraordinary cellars in the centre of this precipitous hill-side town. The visit starts in a shop just below the square, and ends three storeys down (via an Etruscan tomb) in a vaulted cellar opening onto a cliff face. From a range of wines we present three: a well-priced Rosso, two vintages of their splendid Riserva, one for drinking now and one more for keeping, and a small production *Vino Nobile*, the Filai Lunghi, only made in very good vintages, a showy selection of the best Sangiovese aged in French oak.

### **Rosso di Montepulciano, 2010, 13°**

**Bottle £11.50 Case £131.10 Code TAK110**

From the estate's younger vines of Sangiovese, with 15% mixed between Merlot and local Canaiolo and Mammolo. Pale soft crimson. Gentle aromas of red fruit, earth, spice and flowers. Vibrant raspberry and cherry attack. Lively and powerful - this really grows on the palate. Complex notes of meat, spice, mint and liquorice. Well-judged tannins to keep it going. This style of aromatic, graceful wine is such a good food match for any fine meat dish. Now-2015

### **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva, 2006, 14°**

**Bottle £15.95 Case £193.23 Code TAK306**

100% old vine Sangiovese, aged for three years in traditional large old oak *botte*. Mellow tone. Mature aromas of cooked red fruit with nutmeg and cinnamon. Sour black cherries and blackberries. Well-textured - lots of fat from the old vines. Ready now. Two glasses in the 2012 **Gambero Rosso** guide. Now-2015

### **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva, 2007, 14°**

**Bottle £19.95 Case £216.03 Code TAK307**

Ample aromas, with liqueur cherries dominant. Hugely energetic, with generous tannins almost covered by layers of black cherries. Creamily rich. Very long, and the finish too shows that same cherry tone. Huge potential. Also two glasses in the 2012 **Gambero Rosso** guide; but, more importantly, we have just heard that this has just won one of the rare gold medals in the **Decanter** World Wine Awards. Best 2013-2017

### **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Filai Lunghi, 2007, 14.5°**

**Bottle £21.50 Case £245.10 Code TAK407**

All Sangiovese, from hand-selected bunches. Part in new barrels, part in second fill. Very deep colour. Wonderful nose: toast and pure crushed fruits. Exuberantly ripe, showing red and black cherry and raspberry, with rich liqueur hints nicely balanced by good acidity. Plenty of mocha oak influence showing now, but that will integrate. This is crafted in a modern idiom, extrovert and exciting. Again, two glasses in the **Gambero Rosso** guide. Now-2017

# Montalcino

## Col di Lamo, Torrenieri

Brunello di Montalcino stands at the summit of Sangiovese-based Tuscan wines. Here the quality of the local Sangiovese clone, known as Brunello (although there does seem some confusion as to whether this is the same as the less-regarded Sangiovese Grosso) has long been recognised, but the area's reputation has rocketed since the 1960s as the richness and ageing ability of Brunello became apparent. There has therefore been a huge expansion of the vineyards, although from a tiny base: even now only about 1200 hectares are planted. According to the DOCG rules (often revisited), Brunello has to be aged in barrel for two years and a further two years in bottle before being released; and it has to be 100% Sangiovese, although there have been recently been a series of scandals regarding the inclusion of Cabernet and Merlot in some producers' Brunello.



The Neri family vineyards lie at Torrenieri, just east of Montalcino. After the death of her father in 1991 the young Gianna Neri, a law graduate, chose to follow his lead in making wine. She split the vineyards with her brother, and from 1997 she has been bottling her own wines.

Torrenieri is relatively low in altitude, at 250-300 metres, so there's no problem ripening the Sangiovese Grosso here, as there can be in certain sites around Montalcino. Soils are sandstone and clay, with some of the *alberese*, the limestone-rich, schistous land which Sangiovese loves. As a result these are very ripe, fleshy and well-textured wines. The Rosso is splendidly expressive and excellent to drink now, but the Brunello has the power and structure to demand ageing. We have just heard that Gianna's Brunello has been very highly rated indeed in a tasting of over 150 Brunellos from the 2007 vintage in **Decanter** magazine, earning 4 stars and coming in 15th amidst much more expensive company.

Just one note of warning: don't let Gianna's orange labels put you off trying these superb wines.

### **Rosso di Montalcino, 2009, 13.5°**

**Bottle £14.95 Case £170.43 Code CDL109**

Soft tone. Aromas of raspberry liqueur and cinnamon. This is so immediately impressive: supple, velvety and fleshy. There's plenty of grip too; and spice and liquorice punctuating the voluptuous fruit. Terrific length. Now-2015

### **Brunello di Montalcino, 2007, 14°**

**Bottle £27.50 Case £313.50 Code CDL307**

Deep tone, with a softening rim. The nose doesn't give away a lot right now, but in the mouth it's so distinctively Italian, with rich brambly flavours, lots of ripe tannin, fine acid and savoury touches. This expands on the palate - it's a big, powerful wine. Late 2012-2017

# The Coast

## Val delle Rose, near Grosseto

Morellino is the name for the clone of Sangiovese grown in the Maremma around Scansano near the southern Tuscan coast, east and south of Grosseto - and it makes a consistently good wine, all ripe cherries and elegance. Val delle Rose is the local arm of the rather grand Florentine Cecchi family estates. A very smart new winery has been constructed, amidst the blocks of vines spread on the rolling hills within sight of the sea. The 2010 vintage will follow.

### **Morellino di Scansano, 2009, 13.5°**

**Bottle £10.50 Case £119.70 Code VDR109**

About 90% Morellino (Sangiovese) with 10% local varieties. Just rounded by five months in old barrels. Scent of fresh black fruit with cinnamon and coffee. Black cherry core, ripe but light and mildly spicy. Silky, very subtle tannins. Very long, perfumed, black-fruited finish. Now-2014

## Marchesi Ginori Lisci, Ponteginori

It was getting dark when I wound my way up the long hill from the Cecina river at Ponteginori to an amazing millennium-old hamlet, which has belonged to the Ginori Lisci family since the 16th century. I was met by winemaker Ken Lenzi, and, rather to my surprise, given the ancient setting, a range of wholly modern wines. Ken used to be part of the team at the famed Ornellaia, but left, as he puts it, because he wanted to make wines for people to drink, not invest in. He has worked at this estate for four years, and one can see in these recent vintages the refinement he is now delivering. The one white here is delightfully fresh and fruity. The reds, benefiting from a little micro-oxygenation, are given minimal handling and moderate oak: the result is wines from Bordeaux varieties that are elegant and gentle, yet recognizably Mediterranean.

Few people here in Britain have heard of the twenty years old DOC of Montescudaio, which lies between the coast and Volterra. There's not a lot of wine produced here, indeed, only a score of growers, but this area seems to have great potential. It's cooler in the Cecina valley than at the more famed vineyards on the coast at Bolgheri, and the quality of the Cabernet and Merlot grown here on the well-drained gravel, sand and clay soils on the terraces near the river, is impressive.

### **Virgola, Costa Toscana Bianco, IGT, 2011, 13°**

**Bottle £9.50 Case £108.30 Code MGL611**

90% Vermentino and 10% Viognier: the latter gives appealing apricot and floral hints to the more grapefruit, pear and herbal palate of the Vermentino. So Italian: with the merest almondy hint and considerable grip, this is crisp and delightfully refreshing, a perfect summer wine. Now-2013

### **Bacìo, Toscana Rosato, IGT, 2011, 14°**

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code MGL511**

From Merlot and Sangiovese. Bright red cherry hue. Generous ripe strawberry fruit. This is a full-flavoured dry rosé, perfect for a barbecue. Now-2013

## Campordigno, Merlot, Montescudaio, 2009, 13.5°

**Bottle £9.95 Case £113.43 Code MGL109**

Half is aged in large *botte*, and half is left in stainless steel. This includes some Sangiovese. Ruby tone. Scents of primary red fruit and vanilla. A fragrant, berried heart. Hints of dried fruit and herbs are redolent of its warm origins. Beautifully textured, with satisfying tannins. Soft, melting red and black fruit finish. A winner, and we also worked hard to negotiate to keep this under £10 a bottle! Now-2015

## Macchion del Lupo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Montescudaio, 2008, 14°

**Bottle £11.75 Case £133.95 Code MGL308**

Including a little Sangiovese, this receives 8 months ageing in small old oak barrels. Ripe red and black fruit. As with the Merlot, the light and juicy flavours of blackberries and currants are backed by darker prune-like hints. Long, perfumed finish. This reminds me a little of older vintages of Mas de Daumas Gassac. It builds well. *"Sweet, ripe Cabernet fruit nose with a distinctive smokiness and tangy mineral quality that returns on the palate. Soft tannins, plum fruit and a savoury finish. \*\*\*\*"*, Richard Baudain's top 10 coastal Tuscans in **Decanter**, Italy 2012 supplement. Now-2015

## Castello Ginori, Merlot, Montescudaio, 2008, 14°

**Bottle £15.95 Case £181.83 Code MGL408**

The top wine here used to be a blend, but Ken has changed it to 100% Merlot, intending it to be, as he mischievously says, "a little Masseto", referring to the cult Ornellaia Merlot which sells for £300 a bottle! Deep and opaque. Bordeaux-like aromas - cigar box and black fruit - precede a much more southern expression, with the blackcurrant character showing tapenade and liquorice. Considerable rustic charm balanced with silky tannins and fine aromatics. Now-2016



## In the Pink: Ten Rosés

Our best-sellers, summer after summer, are always from the south of France; to these we add two from Bordeaux, plus Cabernet Franc and Pinot Noir rosés from the Loire and a Rhône-inspired example from the Cape. See also the full-bodied Italian rosé from Marchesi Ginori Lisci on page 10.

### **Mas de Canal Rosé, IGP Pays d'Oc, France, 2011, 12.5° [Screwcap]**

**Bottle £6.50 Case £74.10 Code VIC511**

From Grenache and Cinsaut, crafted in the Provençale style, pale coloured, light and refreshing. Pale clear pink with a hint of onion skin. Light scent of berries. A refreshing mouthful of strawberry and cranberry. Nothing complicated, just a well-made, dry rosé perfect for parties or daily consumption all summer.

### **Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Rosé, France, 2011, 12°**

**Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code HAP511**

A rosé carefully put together from halves of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon grown in the far east of Bordeaux towards Bergerac. Pretty scent of crushed berries, with a hint of boiled sweets. Fractionally off-dry - and all the more charming for it - crisp rosé, full of crunchy red fruits and perfect for enjoying on its own.

### **Château La Grave, Minervois Rosé, Expression, France, 2011, 13°**

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code GRV411**

Year on year this wine, from Syrah and Grenache grown by the Orosquette family in the Minervois, is our best-selling rosé. Pale in tone, in the Provençale style, it offers pretty red fruit so is enjoyable as an aperitif yet also dry enough to accompany food. Light salmon pink. Perfume of raspberries. Surprisingly intense gush of red fruit, very moreish, all the memories of Mediterranean sunshine in a glass.



## **Preignes, Grenache Rosé, IGP Pays d'Oc, France, 2011, 12.5°**

**Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code PRF511**

A new introduction: Grenache rosé of real delicacy and purity. Star-bright very pale salmon pink. A joyous nose redolent of summer pudding, with very ripe red currants and raspberries marking the palate. Assured weight and texture: a delight.

## **Secateurs Rosé, Coastal Region, South Africa, 2011, 13.5° [Screwcap]**

**Bottle £8.75 Case £99.75 Code BAD511**

From Cinsaut, Shiraz and Grenache, this dry rosé is full-flavoured, a wine to accompany spiced seafood or a fish barbecue. It's Adi Badenhorst's take on a southern Rhône rosé such as a Tavel. Bright pink. Gorgeous, seductive mouthful of red berries with a hint of white peach. Offering great depth of cherry and berry fruit, this shows considerable weight and power.

## **Château Les Combes, Bordeaux Rosé, France, 2011, 12.5°**

**Bottle £8.95 Case £102.03 Code GRC511**

Young Fred Borderie's deliciously creamy rosé, from Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, the latter saignée, i.e. juice drawn off a vat of crushed bunches of Cabernet grapes in the early stages of maceration. Pretty scent of cherries, lightly candied. Ample flavour, all cherries, strawberries and cream. This is a harmonious, dry rosé - perfect for picnics (cold poached salmon comes to mind).

## **Les Quatre Tours, Coteaux d'Aix en Provence Rosé, Signature, France, 2011, 13.5°**

**Bottle £9.25 Case £105.45 Code QUA511**

This fairly-priced Provençale blend of Grenache, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, has become a firm favourite - with a lot of repeat orders - among those who like the characteristic Riviera style: pale colour, lots of fruit and considerable elegance. Pale salmon pink. Poised and smooth, delivering a fresh palate of peach, melon and plum, with satisfying weight and a fine dry finish. Nice length too. This is so complete and delicious.

## **Domaine du Météore, Faugères Rosé, Les Léonides, 2011, 13.5°**

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code MET511**

From Grenache with Cinsaut and a little Syrah. Vibrant salmon pink. Fresh and mineral, with redcurrant, red cherry and strawberry fruit, allied to a finesse and perfume which derives from the schistous soils in the Faugères hills. Dry, and offering enough stuffing to accompany food well.

## **Wilfrid Rousse, Chinon Rosé de Saignée, 2011, 12°**

**Bottle £9.95 Case £113.43 Code ROT511**

A pure Cabernet Franc from Wilfrid Rousse, our young master in Chinon. As his vineyards have now completed three years in conversion this wine is now certified organic. The colour of wild salmon. Open and mildly savoury nose with summer fruit aromas. Crunchy red cherry fruit and silky texture, this is dry and extremely food friendly.

## **Cherrier et Fils, Sancerre Rosé, France, 2010, 13°**

**Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code ROS310**

The Cherrier family's rosé, from 100% Pinot Noir, always has more depth of fruit than some Sancerre rosés. This style is hugely popular in Parisian bistros - which sadly drives up the price. Clear bright pink. Bottled early to capture the maximum aromas. With pure, fine strawberry and raspberry fruit, this is delightfully balanced and attractive.

# Cape Chamonix, Franschhoek

The arrival of our latest shipment from the Cape prompts a focus on the splendid wines of Cape Chamonix. In our humble opinion, this estate ranks with Vergelegen as one of the top two estates in South Africa right now. The youthful-looking Gottfried Mocke, who starred at our tasting last autumn at the South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, has been winemaker here since 2001, which makes him a veteran by Cape standards. He trained in Germany (with visits to Burgundy), but has additional experience at Trevallon in Provence and Rex Hill in Oregon. The estate owns vineyards above the town running from 380 to 600 metres in altitude, which lends some freshness in the Cape heat.

Gottfried doesn't make a handful of fantastically expensive wines. Instead **every** wine from this estate is of terrific quality: all are excellent examples of their respective grapes or styles; and all represent value for money. (For example the Reserve Chardonnay and Pinot Noir could be matched against any examples from the New World at the same price). A measure of our regard for Chamonix is that (outside the weirdly fragmented estates of Burgundy) we don't ship seven wines from any other estate in the world: and as a result our prices are pretty sharp too.

## Blanc, Franschhoek, 2010, 13° [Screwcap]

**Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code CHX510**

A blend of Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc, and a zippy little number, showing ripe citrus fruit with a liquorice twist. Fresh and appealing, very attractive aperitif. Now-2012

## Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, Franschhoek, 2010, 13.5°

**Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code CHX610**

Including about 12% Semillon, all barrel fermented (part by whole bunch), about a third undergoing malolactic in barrel; and then left on its lees in barrel, 30% new, for eleven months. This is a complex style of Sauvignon, intended to mature in the manner of a white Bordeaux: Jancis Robinson calls it a "lively, long-term wine". Scent of cream, citrus, hawthorn blossom and toasty oak. Right now, showing a lot of oak, but there's abundant creamy volume and notes of gooseberry with more exotic fruit hints - sharp pineapple and pink grapefruit. Showing grip and texture, this has great potential for keeping too. Now-2014

## Reserve Chardonnay Franschhoek, 2010, 13.5°

**Bottle £15.50 Case £176.70 Code CHX710**

14 months in barrel, 90% new. Is this the best vintage yet of this top New World Chardonnay? Cream, oatmeal and citrus scents, lightly honeyed. Very ripe citrus, with a tangerine note akin to a Premier Cru wine from Rully. Fresh but wonderfully rich and full-flavoured, with well-integrated oak. Exuberant, but will age well too. Now-2015

## Rouge, Franschhoek, 2009, 14°

**Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code CHX109**

A Bordeaux blend based on Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec with a little Petit Verdot, aged in old barrels: Gottfried thinks it's the Malbec in the blend that really lifts it. Red fruit nose, lightly smoky. Lively red fruit and coffee palate, fleshy, well-textured, totally clean, and still a bargain for the quality. Now-2013

## Greywacke Pinotage, Franschoek, 2008, 14°

**Bottle £12.50 Case £142.50 Code CHX408**

A Pinotage with real class and ageing potential, named after a type of sandstone derived soil quite common in the Cape. Gottfried leaves some bunches cut but hanging in the vineyard and then adds these in a ripasso manner to promote a second fermentation. Ageing is in French oak, 40% new. Lifted aromas, with cloves. Vibrant red cherry, raspberry and blackberry attack, intensely bittersweet. Very smooth, ripe tannins. Still young, but suave. Quite akin to a fine Zinfandel, and as such excellent with steak: bring on the barbecue! Now-2015

## Reserve Pinot Noir, Franschoek, 2009, 13.5°

**Bottle £15.50 Case £176.70  
Code CHX309**

The Reserve Pinot Noir is from the higher vineyards, at 500-600 metres of altitude and facing south-south west, so cooler. Fermented with a proportion of the stalks in open top concrete fermenters, as in Burgundy, and then into Allier oak, 60% new. Clear, mid ruby. Aromas of black fruit, oak and a hint of iodine. Gorgeous wave of raspberries and strawberries, with mocha. Splendid flesh and smooth tannins. Very extrovert: top New World Pinot by any standards. *"Ripe but elegant fresh cherry fruit nose, which is subtly spicy and sappy. The palate shows rich cherry and berry fruit with notes of herbs, iodine and spice. A rich but elegant style. 93/100"*, Jamie Goode, [www.wineanorak.com](http://www.wineanorak.com), 13th January 2011. Now-2015



## Reserve Pinot Noir, Franschoek, 2010, 13.5°

**Bottle £15.75 Case £179.55 Code CHX310**

A slightly higher proportion of new oak barrels this vintage. This has been awarded the top accolade of *Red Wine of the Year* in the definitive **Platter** 2012 guide to South African wines. *"Pinot Noir 2010 \*\*\*\*\* our Red Wine of the Year, shows savoury cedar whiffs, with bright cherry and strawberry aromas powering through a tealeaf cigarbox spice. Plush tannins, sweet berry notes integrated 80% new French oak; natural ferment. Even more vibrant than finely managed 09"*. Now-2017

## Troika, Franschoek, 2009, 14°

**Bottle £15.75 Case £179.55 Code CHX2069**

54% Cabernet Franc, 36% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot, given 24 months in new barrels: three grapes, hence the name. This wine has become more expensive, but the quality has increased too: the core shows really ripe Cabernet Franc, fleshy and perfumed, but with plenty of power and grip from the Cabernet Sauvignon too. This is structured to keep. Now-2015

## Summer Dozen £75.85 Code SUMWHIT12

A mixed dozen of three bottles of each of the wines below, with a 10% discount on the bottle prices.

### Fresh Whites

Here are four fresh and fragrant whites perfect for drinking this summer. All are unoaked. Buy a dozen of any for 7.5% off, or the mixed case at the top of the page with a 10% discount.

#### Ca' di Ponti, Grillo, IGT Sicily, Italy, 2011, 13.5° [Screwcap]

**Bottle £5.95 Case (with 7.5% discount) £66.05 Code PON111**

The obscurity of the Grillo grape has not stopped this becoming surprisingly popular. The key is that it retains freshness and character even in the Sicilian summer. Gently floral aroma. Appealingly fruity style - juicy melons with citrus - but also subtly almondy, and with refreshing bite too.

#### Château Haut Plaisance, Bordeaux Blanc, France, 2011, 12°

**Bottle £6.95 Case (with 7.5% discount) £77.15 Code HAP111**

From M. Tramier's small vineyards at Pineuilh, east of Bordeaux towards Bergerac, this is a blend of 75% Semillon and 25% Sauvignon from vines averaging a healthy 35 years of age, There's a pleasant scent of white flowers, followed by a fresh, easy-drinking mouthful of green apples. This has attractive texture for a wine at this price, and it makes for perfect summer drinking.

#### La Puerta, Torrontés, Famatina Valley, Argentina, 2011, 13°

**Bottle £7.25 Case (with 7.5% discount) £80.48 Code PUE111**

Put the Torrontés vine in miserably sterile soil, in the near desert conditions of the high altiplano in Argentina's remote north-west and some miracle happens: the grapes produce a wonderfully fragrant and floral wine. Torrontes always has a lovely floral perfume, jasmine here. Exotic fruit - apricots and lychees with limeflower. Scented finish. Fractionally off-dry, this makes a lovely apéritif.

#### Bon Cap, The Ruins Sauvignon Blanc, Eilandia, South Africa, 2010, 13° [Screwcap]

**Bottle £7.95 Case (with 7.5% discount) £88.25 Code BON610**

Bon Cap (= Good Cape), appears as a shining green oasis amidst a scrubby, dirt brown and barren landscape. The estate is certified organic - very dry conditions, isolation from other vineyards, and plenty of wind help. The Sauvignon Blanc is grown on a very calcareous vineyard, perfect for the variety. Crisply green-fruited - lemon and lime - with a hint of smokiness. Excellent value for this bright and mineral example.

**Telephone: 01962 712351 Fax: 01962 717545**

**Email: [sales@stonevine.co.uk](mailto:sales@stonevine.co.uk) Website: [www.stonevine.co.uk](http://www.stonevine.co.uk)**

**No. 13 Humphrey Farms, Hazeley Road, Twyford, Hampshire, SO21 1QA**