



MARTINEZ
FINE WINE

NOBLE ROT CHRISTMAS 1999

The newsletter of
Martinez Fine Wine



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What's in store...

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Exclusive offers
Seasonal Beers
Glassware
Christmas Port
Gift packaging
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hours

Ready for the relatives? Because here we are again at the most festive point of the calendar, and its time to think about other folks palates as well as your own. So remember to smile affectionately at Auntie Gladys as she helps herself to yet another glass of your prized Lustau Palo Cortado Sherry, and thank Uncle Roger for his invaluable assistance in the kitchen as he generously pours the last of the 1970 Vega Sicilia into the gravy... But seriously, its not all about drinking the expensive stuff, as many of our new wines illustrate. We have several new arrivals that won't squeeze your wallets – there's

quite enough extra expenditure at Christmas already. You will, however, find a few very special bottles at Martinez this year – fine Vintage Port, top quality Burgundy and rare Portuguese wines are just some of the more exotic bottles on offer. As well as that we've made sure your gift bottles will look both individual as well as attractive with some new packaging we had designed especially for us. Plus our Harrogate shop has moved into the cheese market, so you can now sort out your Port and Stilton with the minimum of fuss, as well as being able to buy hampers to suit all budgets. So, without further ado, here's what's happening at Yorkshire's brightest independent

wine merchant this Christmas...

Shelf talk...

New in is **George Darriaud's Chardonnay 1997** (£3.99), a Vin de Pays des Coteaux des Baronnies, and a marvellous wine for the money. Lots of Chardonnay character, and with a classy feel normally associated with wines at around double the price. A genuine steal.

For those who consider Burgundian wines a touch pricey we have two bargains from **Moillard**. The **1997 red** (£7.99) is riddled with crushed black fruit and cherry flavours – a lovely fruit driven wine. The **1998 white** (£6.99) is low crop Chardonnay, with classic textures a hint of nutty oak. Both are no-nonsense honest Burgundy and present elegance at an affordable price.

The excellent **Stonier Pinot Noir 1996** (£11.99), from Australia's Mornington Peninsular in Victoria, has come our way. Its neither New World fruit driven nor particularly Burgundian, but exhibits lovely black cherry flavours and integrated structure, and is a good entry point for Pinot.

Gigondas 'Les Pallieres' 1995 (£11.95) is a small Estate owned by the legendary Domaine Vieux Telegraph. Richly flavoured, but lighter and more peppery than would be expected, it's nicely mature and presents a bit of a bargain.

Due in mid December is **Padthaway Estate's Eliza Pinot Noir/Chardonnay** (£10.99) sparkler. A lively bottle of fizz, with great yeast and bread flavours and aromas. It's great for those who like to celebrate with something from the New World, and top value too.

Jancis Robinson described **Kumeu River's 'Mate's Vineyard' Chardonnay 1998** (£16.95) as the greatest New Zealand Chardonnay she had ever tasted. Now you can try it for yourself, as we have limited stocks of this magnificent wine. Its powerful, but with a stunning concentration and sophistication that takes some beating. Rich and inviting it will reward further keeping. Don't forget the straight Kumeu River Chardonnay is also available...

New Zealand's **Vavasour Vineyard** make several outstanding wines, and we are delighted to present two of them. The **Awatere Valley Chardonnay 1998** (£9.95) combines power and elegance. Those

classic textures and rich tropical fruit flavours are in abundance, and the wine shows genuine class. This has lots of life left in it, but is delicious already. We've also got their **Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc 1997** (£12.99), which is really the flagship of the winery. It's got that superb New Zealand fruit presence, but adds an attractive hint of nuttiness provided by fermentation in old French barrels. It's ready to go, but will improve over the next 2 years.

A fabulous value Kiwi white is due to hit the shelves any day now...

Matua Waimauku's Chenin Blanc/Chardonnay 1997 (£5.75) is a super wine, with a nice fresh feel about it, and displaying lots of the tasty aspects associated with each of the grapes it contains. One of those 'great with food, just as great without' type wines.

A cracking match for the sandwiches you make with your left over turkey would be **Klein Konstantia's Sauvignon Blanc 1998** (£8.25) from South Africa. Positively brimming with ripe fruit, and with an impressive finish, this will add a welcome tingle to your taste buds on Boxing Day.

And finally, for your Christmas pudding, we can't recommend **Miranda's Golden Botrytis 1996** (£8.25) too highly. It has that tremendous marmalade character that we associate with botrytis, as

Domaine Capion – Exclusive to Martinez in Yorkshire

This superb Domaine, situated in the Herault region next door to the famous Mas de Daumas Gassac estate, is owned by Adrian Buhrer, the wine producer from the South African Saxenburg Estate. No expense has been spared to turn Domaine Capion into one of the very best in the region. We will be offering three 100% oak aged wines - a **Cabernet Sauvignon**, a **Merlot** and a **Syrah**. All present stunning value at £5.99 a bottle. Also available will be an almost pure Syrah, but with the addition of 5% Grenache, labelled '**Les Juges**' (£11.95). This is a real beauty, and something which would give Hermitage and Cote Rotie producers sleepless nights (it's around half the price!). In the New Year watch out for a 100% barrel fermented Chardonnay/Viognier special release called '**Les Glaciers**'. Altogether a wonderful estate which combines Old World style with New World fruit admirably. Do try these wines – we think they are a revelation. Those who do will be heartily rewarded.

Seasonal Ale Alert – Worts In Store...

Quite a few new arrivals from specialist and regional brewers have arrived since the last update.

Leading the pack is **Easy Rider** (£1.90), produced by Kelham Island from finest Dennis Hop-pers and born-to-be-wild yeasts. A Brondo beer you'll get kind of Fonda of. Vroom vroom! (that's quite enough...)

Hot on their tail is Black Dog Brewery's **Rhats** (£1.90). This strong, dark malty ale from Whitby is based on the Dracula legend, (Rhats being the Count's faithful hound) so they're hot on their tales as well.

Flying in at 12 o'clock is **Hurricane Ale** (£2.20). This limited edition beer has been commissioned by the RAF Association 'Welfare Fund' (30p from each bottle sold will be donated to the fund) to commemorate next year's 60th anniversary of the battle Of Britain. It was created by Hambleton Ales to be reminiscent of the full flavoured beers of W.W.II.

Mil-Ale-Nium Gifts

Christmas usually takes up a fair few bit of shelf space, and now we've got to make room for Millennium marketing wheezes.

So alongside seasonal favourites such as **Rudolph's Revenge** (£2.05) and **Shepherd Neams 1999 Vintage Ale** (£2.25), why not try these:

Cains Chocolate Ale is a traditional Pale Ale flavoured using rich dark chocolate. Surprisingly enough it tastes like a smooth bitter with chocolate characters, and offers a different angle to beer drinking as well as making a rather tasty stocking filler.

Also from Cains we have a gift-packed **Millennium Ale**, a lovely light hoppy beer with a full and charismatic aroma.

And finally, if millennium significance brings to mind Nietzsche's aphorism 'What? You search? ...seek zeros!' and that Y2K has all the charm of anal lubricant, then look no further than **T*G*I*A*O*B* (Thank Goodness It's All Over Beer)** (£2.05) from our friends at Cropton Brewery. As the countdown progresses, T*F*, as it will be known to us on 01/01/00, says it all. Cheers...

Gluhwein... a classic winter warmer.

Those who appreciate the central heating effect of mulled wine will welcome the return of our **Gluhwein** (£5.75 per litre bottle), which removes the need for all that fiddling about with sliced oranges and those little mulled wine sachets, as this bottle has everything already done for you. Just heat and drink to feel as if you're sitting in front of a roaring fire. But don't miss out as this stuff usually runs out well before Christmas...



Designer Wine Glasses – a great gift for the discerning wine drinker

Riedel is the last word in quality glassware (so much so that the monstrous Hannibal Lecter character is observed buying Riedel glasses in Thomas Harris' latest book). We've been selling these beautiful top quality crystal designs for a while now, and still feel they are worth their high reputation. Drop in to one of our shops and have a look at the range we stock.

For the more budget-minded wine drinker we think that Schott's new **Diva** range are hard to beat. Choose from 4 elegant designs – White Wine, Champagne, Bordeaux and Burgundy. The 2 big red wine glasses are based on the Riedel shapes, and work very well indeed.

Riedel's designs are made from high quality lead crystal and prices start at £11 a stem. The Schott glasses are made from a new especially tough crystal, which means that you can dishwasher them with confidence, and

****Special Seasonal Offer****

Three bottles of the deliciously spicy Marques de Aragon (normally £3.75 each) for a ten-

Christmas Port

Our Port for Christmas 1999 is Krohn 'Rio Torte' Vintage Character (£10.99), which comes in a smart wooden box with clear Perspex lid to show off the delights contained within. Not only does it look cool, it tastes absolutely delicious. A fabulous drop of quality fruit-driven Port, with a lovely round feel and excellent finish. What could be better than a glass of Port with your Stilton (now found in our Harrogate shop – see elsewhere), or just on its own after the big meal? (And if you're feeling extra generous it makes a very nice gift too!). Don't forget that we stock many other wonderful Ports too...

Christmas Tastings

This year we thought we'd have a couple of unhurried tastings over a few days. This means that we will have about half a dozen wines for you to try on Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th December, with two more days the following week (Friday 10th and Saturday 11th). So why not check out what's tickling our taste buds this Christmas.

GIFT PACKS

Rather than just selling standard patterned gift boxes, we've decided that this Christmas we'd design our own. So pop along to a Martinez shop and take a look at some very handsome packs, with the Martinez logo proudly emblazoned on the side. They come in 2 & 3 bottle sizes, look very posh and are just perfect for those awkward to wrap drinkable presents. What's more, you can also purchase an outer case that makes them great for mail order gifts.

We'll also have our usual selection of nifty wooden boxes, for those extra special presents. These are obtainable in 1, 2, 3 and 6 bottle sizes, and one bonus of these tougher boxes is that your loved one is left with a great place to keep their pencils afterwards...

SHERRY: CHRISTMAS MIXED

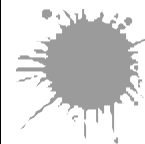
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When you've got all the presents for everyone else, don't forget to look after number one. We think there's far too much generosity at Christmas and the Lustau selection of 6 half bottles of sweet, sticky and festive sherry is just too good to give away. So we recommend that you find yourself a nice quiet corner and consider which of the delightful contents you fancy drinking first. The choice runs from Pedro Ximenez 'San Emilio', Old East India, and Moscatel 'Emilin', in the sweeter style to the rich and dry selection of Manzanilla Oloroso, Oloroso Pata de Gallina and Gran Reserva Emperatriz Eugenia Very Rare Oloroso. If you only treat yourself only once this Christmas then don't miss this limited offer. The 6 pack is £34.95 and comes complete with full tasting notes for all the en-



It's not all wine and spirits! More gift ideas, and the introduction of cheese to our Harrogate shop...

Regulars may be familiar with the superb oils and vinegars available from Martinez. L'Estournell's oils are of the highest quality; add to that the marvellous olives, caper berries, balsamic vinegar, saffron and organic fruit juices that we sell and you have the makings of a tasty canapé selection. So what could be missing? Well we've decided to branch out in a new (and complementary) direction. The Harrogate branch is the first of our shops to start selling **Paxton and Whitfield** cheeses and preserves. So if you want some fine Stilton to go with that vintage port you've just purchased then look no further, because you can now obtain both from under the same roof. And we won't stop with Stilton – should you need a chunk of Cheddar, Camembert or even a dash of pickle or some pate then take a look at the other delicious products that are now available. There are also have a selection of hampers containing cheese, wine and preserves, priced to suit most budgets, which you can either assemble yourself, or leave it to us. They may be just be what you need this Christmas.



We recently came across an amusing article in the national press about a wine spa in Bordeaux. ‘Vino-therapy’ is the latest thing apparently – one simply lets the staff spray you with a jet of claret, and mulled wine massages are also available. Apparently the 2day course is a good way of shedding the pounds, so we presume that swallowing isn’t allowed. It’s not simple plonk that is used but Chateau Smith Haut-Lafite (no vintage is specified), but then the health spa is situated within the grounds of the chateau. The surprising thing is that the spa is fully booked until next spring – with Americans heading the queue, such is their fervent enthusiasm for the health-giving properties of the red stuff.

If you went in for vino-therapy, what wine would you choose, and why? A prize of something fizzy (in a bottle – not sprayed!) to the most amusing answer...



‘The best use of bad wine is to drive away poor relations’
-French proverb (and a good one for Christmas we think!)



Delivery Dates:

If you would like us to deliver wine to your loved ones please note that the latest date we can do this is **December 20th**. Any orders placed after this date will not be delivered before Christmas. Prices are still just **£9.95 for up to 12 bottles** (although a weight surcharge may apply), and a **further £5.99 for the next 12 bottles** to the same

One rather quiet afternoon we found ourselves wondering how many grape varieties (or indeed wine terms) are palindromic. We managed to get as far as *Tannat* before we couldn’t think of any more. If anyone else can we’ll think of a suitable prize. Come on! There must be another one somewhere out there!

NOW HERE’S A THOUGHT. A recent study of 36,000 Frenchmen by Reuters of Chicago, has discovered that wine drinkers are less at risk of dying from all causes than either beer drinkers or non-drinkers... (pass the corkscrew someone!)

*36 The Grove,
Ilkley.
01943-603241



The Ginnel,
Harrogate.
01423-501783

87 Town Street,
Horsforth.
0113-281-8989

20-22 Powell Street,
Halifax.
01422-320022

*In a previous Noble Rot we mentioned that the Ilkley shop is due to move. That time is almost upon us and we'd like you all to know that as of January 1st 2000 we'll be the proud residents of 35A The Grove, Ilkley (no change to the phone number). Not the most complicated of number changes, but please bear in mind that the new shop is on the other side of the road and further west. We'll see you there!

The Martinez Wine Festival – Fun for the serious wine fan!

Here's something for you to put in your new diaries. Make sure you've some space next spring because we will be holding a wine festival over several weeks. Each shop will be focused on in turn, and the idea is to present a variety of wines. All the facts and figures are still being worked on as we go to print, but it promises to be a very exciting event. Watch this space for more

Christmas and New Year opening dates:

We will be open on Sundays throughout December from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Halifax closed December 5th). Please note that we will be closed on the following dates:

December 25th-26th (inclusive) 1999

January 1st-5th (inclusive) 2000

May we take this opportunity to not only thank all our customers for your continued support, but also to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

