



# NOBLE ROT

The newsletter of  
Martinez Fine Wine.

May 2000



## **WINE AND FOOD EVENTS IN MAY AND JUNE GEOFF WEAVER AND EMILIO LUSTAU SHERRY**

We've a couple of events lined up which we expect to appeal to a wide range of our customers. We're delighted to welcome Geoff Weaver to Ilkley on 24th May when he will be speaking about his range of wines from the cool climate of the Adelaide Hills in Australia.. We'll be matching a number of his wines with dinner at our Ilkley shop's near neighbour, Tubby Wadlow's restaurant.

At the same venue, this time on 7th June, we are linking up with the Emilio Lustau Almacenista Sherry Club to present a tutored tasting of some of the world's finest sherries. Again details of both events are being finalised as we go to press. Jim Bird at our Ilkley shop – 10943 603241 can take bookings .

### **DRINKING MORE SAVES YOU MONEY**

In 1997 we reduced the price of our house wine, Cuvee Jean Paul from £3.25 to £2.99 a bottle, passing on the benefits of the strength of sterling. Customers spotted a bargain. Sales increased so we shipped more and subsequent price rises from the winery were absorbed by us because we were able to reduce the unit cost of our transport. This year's duty increase has also been absorbed.

We are Wine Merchants who believe that "Fine" should refer to good, not expensive. We try to stock wines that represent great quality relative to their price. CJP is a consistently good value for money wine. It still costs £2.99 a bottle and it remains a bargain. The motto here is that the more you drink the cheaper it gets!



We've beefed up our South African section recently, partly as a result of Phil, our director in Harrogate, visiting the Cape in February and March. He's found some superb wines, and they're now in stock. First up are two tasty reds from the **Valley Manor** winery, of Wellington. We have their **1998**

**Merlot (£5.99)**, which is classically plum driven, and their **1998 Cabernet Sauvignon (£5.99)**, a cassis orientated drop. They both make good easy drinking and really are excellent value. **Altydgedacht**, of Durbanville, sent us some truly excellent bottles, and we're delighted to add them to our blooming Cape selection. We have their **1998 Chardonnay (£7.99)**, which is nice and big, and has a lovely appley character running through the wine, and is rated as one of the winery's finest yet. Add to that a **1999 Sauvignon Blanc**, which has lots of sherry zip to it, but with excellent tropical fruit flavours – gooseberries and guavas dominate – and a persistent dry finish. On the red front we also have the **Ashanti Cabernet Sauvignon 1995 (£8.99)**, which is well structured, fragrant and highly individual, and drinks very nicely, although it has the power to cellar if required. Still on South African reds, we've got two wines from one of the country's brightest rising stars in the form of **Veenwouden**, which is a name to remember. Described as the country's answer to California's Screaming Eagle estate (whose wines sell for about \$500 a bottle!), this is a relatively new winery, and no expense has been spared to make it one of the very best. From the very highest quality (and very expensive) oak barrels through to the low intense yields, these wines really are special. We have their **1997 Merlot (£14.95)**, which is serious stuff – 2 years barrel maturation makes the wine dense and spicy, whilst retaining a supple and succulent feel, and with great ageing potential. Their **1997 Classic (£14.95)** is a Bordeaux blend. Its beautifully balanced and has, as SA wine guru John Platter puts it, 'a voluptuously textured finish'. Ready

**VINTAGE NOTES** :Whilst bad winemakers can still make a pig's ear of a wine whatever the weather, some parts of the world have recently enjoyed particular climactic success. On early showings, 1999 has seen Kiwi Sauvignon Blanc return to form; 1998 is likely to have been one of the best vintages in the Rhone and Southern France for some time, 1997 was a stonker for vintage port and Italian reds. 1999 also looks very very good for Argentinean reds.

ON WITH THE TASTING : Lest anyone think that we only taste wines from South Africa, some other areas of the world are also showing afresh what they can do. Portugal's reputation for tasty wines at attractive prices is further enhanced by **Vinhas do Carneiro 1996 (£5.49)**. From the Estremadura region, this is a charming, full-flavoured fruity number – silky, but with backbone.

In Spain we will be needing to keep an eye on Rioja prices – they seem destined to climb and we will have some hard buying decisions to make before the end of the year. In the meantime, **Marques de Murrieta** is a name that commands attention among many of you. There are few who would dispute this Bodega as the masters of white Rioja, and their **Single Vineyard Capellania 1995 (£8.95)** is a glorious drop of golden nectar – sherry and coconut characters combine beautifully, then finish with hints of creamy vanilla. The red version, now also a single vineyard bottling (Prado Lagar) is equally powerful (£13.95).

New Zealand's Sauvignon Blancs are as popular as ever, and **Goldwater's-Dog Point Sauvignon 1999 (£7.99)**, from the Marlborough region, will be welcome sight for those who appreciate a real whiff of cat's pee/arm-pit. It is a great gooseberry and passion fruit cocktail. Its got a terrific fruit presence and is beautifully balanced too. Whilst we're in the land of the long white cloud we'd like to introduce you to a range of wines from **Matua Valley** of Hawke's Bay. We will shortly have their **1999 Sauvignon (£5.99)**, which is a fresh and fruity little number, with a marvellous tingle on the finish. Their **1997 Chardonnay (£8.99)** is creamy and complex, with lashings of ripe fruit, elegant vanilla and toasted nuts. We also have the **Matua Valley Cabernet/Merlot 1998 (£6.49)**, which has a rich vein of sweet fruit and a nice finish to match. It just goes to show that vintage really does make a difference.

**WHITHER CALIFORNIA AT UNDER A TENNER?** At tasting after tasting samples of wines from California are swilled around, gargled with and spat out. On each occasion hope triumphs over expectation. Another dull and expensive bottle bites the dust. But we are made of stern stuff. The search will go on. One day we will find something from California that's got character and charm, something that's just that bit different, something that could sell for less than £10 a bottle.

[www.leavingthe20thcentury.com](http://www.leavingthe20thcentury.com)

With all the hype over Internet sales, many have been wondering how we will respond to the threat. What stands us apart from those other long established players in the game such as



Virgin or Wow Wines? With an eye for the main chance, and our feet planted firmly in tradition we have what we think is a winning idea. It's called THE SHOP. We realise that this is a touch revolutionary and that it stands current thinking on its head.

But then we've never been shy when it comes to running ahead of the pack. The advantages?

\*Interactive : a unique opportunity to talk face to face and communicate verbally. You can ask questions and get an immediate reply.

\*Visual : call inside and browse our shelves, look at maps, dusty old bottles etc

\*Convenient: just come along and take away what you want when you want. No waiting in at home for a delivery van.

So convinced are we that the future is claret not orange all we have to do is rename our shops

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