



MARTINEZ
FINE WINE

NOBLE ROT

The newsletter of Martinez

Fine Wine.

Christmas 2000



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Seasonal contents: Champagne deal... Opening times... Christmas tastings... Lustau Winter Sherry packs... Oil and Vinegar Packs... Kiwi Exclusive... Christmas Port... Final delivery dates... Christmas Ales... Witticisms... and wine!



Well well well... It only seems like a few weeks ago that we were packing away the tinsel and plastic holly, yet here we are again, that chilly time of year when the TV guides are actually read for the first time, vacuum



cleaners are permanently clogged up with pine needles and the eat-too-many-nuts season begins. So its with rosy cheeks, telly remote, bagless vacuum cleaners and designer nutcrackers at the ready that we welcome you to the latest Noble Rot, which is filled with goodies galore, all ideally suited for the current season. So you can stop worrying about how to please those fussy friends of yours – here at Martinez we can provide something for all your tippie fancying loved ones. We've got wines that make the umpteenth round of turkey sandwiches palatable, ports with which to wash down those nuts, and sherry that will make you perceive those screaming children as cherub-faced angels. You'll find some great offers as well as a few superb new wines on the shelf with which you can celebrate the festivities. Have a read and then check out the stock for yourself – we're ready and waiting...

Finally may we take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support over the year, and to wish everyone a tremendous Christmas and New Year... Your very good health!



A quick tip of the hat to Vavasour Vineyard's **Glenn Thomas** and The Farsyde Restaurant's **Gavin Beedham**, who contrived to serve some of the greatest food and wine matches imaginable last month at our gourmet evening in Ilkley. Highlights were the *goat's cheese and Sauvignon Blanc* combination, and the *pancetta wrapped leg of duck served with Pinot Noir*. Thanks to all who came (and waddled home in a rather contented fashion!).



If you need something tasty to round off your festive meals then don't forget that both our Ilkley and Harrogate shops stock a fine selection of **Paxton and Whitfield** cheese, biscuits and preserves, plus our excellent Vibona range of oils, olives, vinegars and nuts. Always popular at this time of year (and not just with us!)... Its also worth mentioning that we can provide hampers if you want to give a loved one something really special. These can be made up to suit a variety of budgets, and can have just about any mixture of wine, pickles, oil and foods. Please ring our Ilkley or Harrogate shops for more details.

Interest in **Domaine Capion**



continues to grow, but that's something we knew would happen. This small property is responsible for some of the very best value wines we've ever come across, and they certainly made the most of southern France's great 1998 vintage. Sadly there is only so much to go round, and the superb '98 reds are starting to run out. We will, of course, be getting more stock of Domaine Capion, albeit a different vintage and not until March, but if you've enjoyed the current vintage then now is the time to grab what remains before its all gone. The '99 whites are also pretty impressive, but these too are becoming comparatively hard to find. Don't be disappointed this Christmas – make sure your stock of Capion is healthy enough to keep your holiday guests happy!

After the excitement of the Millennium



last year the Champagne producers put their prices up in March. Undeterred, and determined to serve our customers well, we've knocked a pound off a bottle of Laurent Perrier non-vintage Champagne. Don't say we don't look after you! £22.95 to those who are up for it!

A Martinez New Zealand Exclusive!

Hold onto your hats because we are about to take delivery of one of the greatest New Zealand reds we have ever tasted. The snappily titled **Winslow Turikirae Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc Reserve 1998 (£19.95)** won



the *International Wine and Spirit* gold medal for a Cabernet blend, and we've got the entire UK allocation! Suffice to say that there were quite a few larger wine merchants highly miffed at this news. But we're rather pleased with ourselves, of course. You may know of New Zealand's fantastic 1998 vintage, and this mouthful of cassis and blackcurrant fruit, beautifully integrated oak and round tannins made the best of the ideal conditions. With the accent more on deep and powerful structure rather than gushy fruit, it has the cedar and tobacco aftertaste of classed growth claret rather than a New World red. Its obviously very limited, so grab yourself some while you've got the chance. And you won't find it anywhere else!

Port storm...

After the considerable popularity of last year's Christmas ports from Krohn we've decided to go with the flow and serve up the same again with a couple of others to ponder over. Choose from about the best value ports we know, **Ambassador Ruby (£6.99)** and **Rio Torto Vintage Character (£10.95)**, through **two superb LBV's, 1995 (£11.95) and 1987 (£15.95)** up to the truly marvellous **Colheitas: 1965 (£47.95), 1963 (£49.95) and 1957 (£56.95)**. All but the Ruby come in a posh wooden gift box and make for great gifts. We've also added the superb **Niepoort Ruby (£7.99)** just so those fans of quality ruby have the option of something special to go with their stilton. And don't forget that we stock a very fine selection of Niepoort's other port too; Niepoort gift boxes are also available.

On the subject of Niepoort, a few lucky Harrogate customers were able to attend a tutored tasting by **Dirk Niepoort** himself in mid-November. It all happened at very short notice, but those fortunate folks able to attend were treated to a dazzling array of white port, Colheitas, LBVs and vintage port. Thanks to all who came, as well as Ray and Danny from Raymond Reynolds, and most of all to Dirk, who taught us all much more than we thought we already knew...



On the shelf...

There are a few new wines we'd like to introduce you to – we think we've found some fantastic value bottles which will delight your palate and pocket alike...

Our **Vin de Pays Merlot** from the **UCOVIA co-operative** in the south of France has been a big hit with just about everyone. It's now bottled under our own label, **Theta**, and remains a genuine bargain at **£3.99**. The good news is that we've found several other delicious wines from the same people that are fantastic value. Lighter styled whites are perfect for lifting the palate after all that rich food at Christmas, so first up is the terrifically zesty **1999 Sauvignon Blanc (£3.99)**, which has an excellent fresh feel, and is a harmonious combination of fruit and minerals. The **1999 Chardonnay (£4.75)** is a well-crafted creamy white, with good tropical fruit aspects and some nicely integrated oak.

Following our rave write-ups for the wines of South Africa's **Boekenhoutskloof**, we are delighted to present **Porcupine Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon 1999 (£5.99)**, which is made by the same people. It's a quality find, with structure, fruit and superb balance.

Good claret is excellent stuff almost any time, but when the weather is somewhat on the cold side its even better. **Chateau Marsau 1997 (£10.75)** is from the trendy Fronsac region and is very nice stuff indeed.

With a terrific herbs and dark fruited nose, its bold character is expressed rather well in a complex palate of cigars, damsons and blackcurrants.

We've mentioned France's excellent 1998 vintage more than once, but at the very top of the tree sits right-bank Bordeaux. Many regard this as good as 1990 and 1982, which are both milestones. And from St. Emilion we've got the mega **Chateau Cotes du Rol 1998 (£13.95)**. This Merlot-orientated wine is truly outstanding. Its cedarwood and cassis character is enhanced by plum, tobacco and truffle aspects, and the ripe tannins ensure a long life ahead if required. Guaranteed to impress and delight the most discerning of palates.

The Alsatian region of France has always been one of the most underrated areas we know. People just don't drink enough of the stuff in our opinion. So our quest to get more folks to join us in our appreciation of this picturesque region continues in the form of **Bruno Sorg**, whose **Tokay Pinot Gris Vieilles Vignes 1997 (£12.95)** is a truly massive wine. With its intense perfume of citrus peel, and rich palate of caramel, spice

and candied lemon peel, it is a full-bodied white to dream of. Try it with some washed rind cheese for the full effect, but allow a couple of hours breathing time for the wine to open up. We also have the **Bruno Sorg Eichberg Grand Cru Gewürztraminer 1998 (£13.95)** which is a mass of lychees and crushed rose petals, and whose extraordinary flavour takes some beating. These are very special wines and should be treated with respect and love! Finally from France we have some good value wines from Burgundy. **Edmund Cornu's Ladoix 1996 (£11.95)** is from a village just north of Aloxe-Corton. The wine itself is very nice stuff – it's a lighter red Burgundy and has tasty aspects of fresh raspberries and cherries, and as its got a little bottle age its nice and soft and ripe for drinking. From the same producer there's also a **Chorey-les-Beaune 'Les Bons Ores' 1997 (£13.95)**, with a sweet, musky nose, and lovely mouth-filling Pinot fruit which develops chocolatey notes after about half an hour. Its a great example of the very friendly 1997 vintage and would go down very nicely with your turkey.

A couple of excellent new wines from Australia have arrived. **Shaw and Smith** have been making some serious quality wines for many years, and we're very pleased to have them at Martinez. Their **Unoaked Chardonnay 1998 (£9.95)** is a star, with an excellent meeting of New and Old World styles. The fruit is beautifully restrained, with a mineral-based flavour running through the wine and powerful feel on the finish. We also have their **Sauvignon Blanc 2000 (£9.95)**, which must rank as a candidate for Australia's very finest Sauvignon. Its everything you want from this zesty grape – fresh, fruity and with the characteristic Sauvignon 'zip'. Both are outstanding wines, and come highly recommended.

Still on Australia there's a strapping red from Western Australia in the form of **Plantagenet's Mount Barker Shiraz 1997 (£14.75)**. Its full of rich spicy fruit and cloves, and is a terrific winter warmer that would suit roast meats.

Finally we come to Argentina, who have been championing the Torrontes grape for as long as we can remember, and **Michel Torino's Torrontes de Cafayate 1999 (£5.99)** is a real beauty. Intensely aromatic, with gorgeous aromas of apricot and peach blossom that carry onto the palate. We also have this excellent winery's **Merlot 1999 (£5.99)**, which is a real crowd pleaser – lots of ripe dark fruit and an attractive smooth character. Also available is a great value **Malbec 1999 (5.99)**, which is very nicely put together indeed, and shows just why Argen-



Christmas Ales...

We welcome back the **Cropton Brewery's Rudolph's Revenge**, which, with its wintry character and hoppy aroma, seems to be a favourite of everyone at Christmas. The same goes for **Shepherd Neame's Christmas Ale**, which is made with a different recipe every year, and this year's is as good as ever. From the acclaimed Goose Eye brewery we've decided to stock the imaginatively named **Wonky Donkey**. Don't worry, it's not another example of cross species Mad Cow Disease but a light straw coloured ale (4.3%), very hoppy with a sweetish fruity finish. One for the kiddies stocking!



Make sure you're well oiled and pickled this Christmas!



You don't *have* to give alcohol to your loved ones this year – why not go for a nicely packaged wooden box with top quality oil and red wine vinegar instead? We have two different packs to choose from, and they are as follows. **L'Estournell's Extra Virgin Organic Olive Oil (375ml)** and **Garnacha Tinto Fine Wine Vinegar (375ml) (£8.99)** will be familiar to many as we've been selling this fabulous stuff for ages. We also have **Lerida's Extra Virgin Olive Oil (500ml)** and **Red Wine Vinegar (500ml) (£11.99)**. L'Estournell's olive oil is made from cold-pressed olives to produce an oil of delicate colour and aroma. Lerida olive oil is from green olives gathered at the start of the harvest to give an impeccable fruity flavour. The vinegars are made using only wine from the red Grenache grape. Both come in attractive wooden boxes with Perspex lids and make excellent gifts for the discerning salad dresser.



*Please note that if you require any wine delivered this Christmas, and you wish to be certain of its arrival before the big day, the last day we can take orders is **Monday 18th December**. Prices start at*

Corporate Services.

Should anyone require our corporate services this Christmas please contact your local Martinez shop for details of our corporate brochure which contains some very attractive packages for your employees.



Sherry Season

Spain's favourite aperitif is one of the most popular drinks at Christmas time, and just to make sure that Sherry lovers are well-represented we've secured a small parcel of the *Almacenista Club's* Emilio Lustau winter Sherry packs. These continue to win over non-Sherry drinkers, but then we are talking about a candidate for the very finest producer in Jerez. The packs consist of 6 half bottles, and every one has is an International Wine Challenge medal winner. The selection has been carefully chosen to reflect the time of year, so even on the rocks this little lot should give a feeling of warmth and comfort. The packs, which retail at £45 (+£5.95 P+P if delivered), consist of three Lustau Almacenistas and three Lustau Solera Reservas, comprising of one bottle of each of the following:

Manzanilla Amontillado Almacenista Cuevas Jurado

Amontillado del Puerto Almacenista Gonzalez Obregon

Palo Cortado Almacenista Vides

'San Emilio' Pedro Ximenez

Don Nuno Dry Oloroso

'Emilin' Moscatel

We're sticking to what we said in last year's Christmas Noble Rot – this is too good to give away, and can be the one moment you get to spoil your-



Christmas Tasting...

We like to show our customers a few wines that we think particularly suitable for the current season, and this event will take place in Ilkley, Harrogate and Horsforth on

Sunday December 3rd. The idea is to plan your Christmas drinking in advance so you get to taste the wines we think you should drink over the holiday. Why not pop along and have a slurp? We'll be there to give any advice you might need, and to tell you about the wines on offer.

A man is walking through central France, when it starts to rain heavily. He rushes into the nearest wine shop and asks for something to cheer him up. The French wine merchant looks at the state of the drenched man and says 'Well, I think you should have a Macon'. *Ho ho*





35 The Grove,
Ilkley.
01943-603241

20-22 Powell Street,
Halifax.
01422-320022



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87 Town Street,
Horsforth.
0113-281-8989

The Ginnel,
Harrogate.
01423-501783



Sir Hercules Langreish, on being asked, 'Have you finished all that Port (three bottles) without assistance?' answered, 'No – not quite that; I had the assistance of a bottle of Madeira'.

-Charles Tovey, Wit, Wisdom and Morals, Distilled from Bacchus

'Grudge myself good wine? As soon as grudge my horse corn'.

-Thackeray

'There are no good wines, only good bottles.'

-French proverb

'I'm only a beer teetotaller, not a Champagne teetotaller.'

G. K. Chesterton, Candida

Finally a couple of quotes of a rather more sensible nature...

'The hand that lifts the cup that "cheers" should not be used to shift the gears'.

-Anon

'Glasses can make driving a lot safer. Provided they're worn and not emptied'.



Martinez Christmas opening times...

We like to offer customers a little additional time to complete their busy shopping schedules, and for that reason we are open on Sundays throughout December until Christmas (Halifax will open on 17th/24th). This Christmas and New Year our schedule is as follows:

Christmas Eve – Open

Christmas Day – Closed

Boxing Day – Closed

December 27th – Closed

December 28th – Open

December 29th – Open

December 30th – Open

New Year's Eve – Open

New Year's Day – Closed

January 2nd – Closed

January 3rd – Closed

January 4th – Open

January 5th – Open

January 6th – Open