



MARTINEZ
WINES

Famously Independent



NOBLE ROT

The newsletter of
Martinez Fine Wine

Christmas 2001



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Inside: New Wines... Christmas malt... Christmas opening hours... Christmas Claret... Christmas port... Christmas beers... Christmas deliveries... Corporate Christmas... Speciality rums... Exceptionally fine wine... More events... er, we did mention Christmas didn't we...?



Welcome to another festive Noble Rot. Don't they come quickly? Hot on the heels of our November issue comes another goodie-laden edition of your favourite wine periodical, with some choice drops of adult-orientated beverages to satisfy those seasonal cravings. We've already got the schedule for your sherry, port or fizz planned as we've got a selection that'll make whatever you're eating taste that bit better, whether its Stilton or Stollen. What better to soothe those frazzled nerves after queuing up for four hours for that last Harry Potter toilet-roll holder than a gentle glass of Late Bottled Vintage port or warming cup of glühwein? Have a quiet perusal over a glass of something seasonal, then roll on down to Martinez and get the

Christmas Malt...

We think we've found a brilliant bargain for all you fans of the great Scottish spirit; whether it's for yourself or to give away this is a real steal. **Bruichladdich 10 year old Islay malt whisky (£17.99)** must rate as one of the best value malts we've ever come across. Despite it's peaty aroma it has a wonderfully elegant quality with a smooth feel and classic Islay character that lingers beautifully on the





On the shelf...

With temperatures falling and the accent on festivities we've focussed our attention on wines that'll add something extra to your winter drinking. Expect to see the following choice bottles appear imminently.

Herdade do Esporao's Roupeiro (£7.95 for 50cl) from Portugal is an oddball white from the Alentejo region. A big, rich and rounded number with a fruity nose of melon, peach and honey, a palate to match plus a long spicy finish. Try something different with your turkey this year!

Making a welcome return to Martinez are some delights from Eden Valley's **Mountadam Vineyard** in Australia. We were so impressed with Adam Wynn's wines at a recent Mountadam promotion in Leeds that we've grabbed a few bottles. His **David Wynn Chardonnay 1999 (£7.99)** is a fresh-styled white with no oak used, allowing the fruit to dominate proceedings. It's a top value drop that is lovely by itself or with white meat or fish. The **Mountadam Chardonnay 1998 (£12.99)** is as good as it ever was. Rich, round and with a ripple of fresh fruits this is blue chip Aussie Chardonnay but with a more serious quality factor than many we know. Let's not forget that it was David Wynn who was one of the original pioneers of Australian Chardonnay; how well that tradition is shown here. Last up is the truly fantastic **Mountadam Merlot 1997 (£17.99)** which has an immense structure while still managing to stay somewhat elegant. Its spicy plum-driven core is tantalisingly held together by smooth tannins and a finish that is simply stunning. There can't be many better Australian Merlots than this stuff.

Spanish wine is a big seller at this time of year and we can never get enough Rioja to satisfy people's Christmas cravings. It's a fine foil for turkey; don't be convinced by that "white meat = white wine" argument – turkey is robust enough to take on even full-bodied red wines. So we greet back into Martinez a new shipment of **Marques de Riscal Reserva 1997 (£10.99)**, a wine that is best described by its note on the label 'a ripe, fruity bouquet and a lingering oaky flavour'.

Quite so but there's more to it than that – this is benchmark Rioja and is still one of the best buys around. **Marques de Riscal Rueda 2000 (£5.49)** is a great wine to lift the palate when there's all that rich food around. Fresh and zesty and with a terrific clean feel it's good value and good drinking. And don't forget the staggering **Baron de Chirel Rioja Reserva**

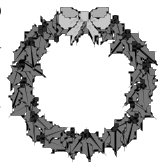


1995 (£32.95) which still takes some beating. More akin to First Growth Claret this stuff has more power, structure and balance than almost any other Spanish red we know.

From the ever trendy Priorat region we are delighted to return the immense **Rotllan Tora Reserva 1996 (£7.99)** to the shelf. A very big wine with classic Spanish Grenache spice and a rich vegetal vein that can almost be described , and we don't apologise for saying so, as 'dung-ish'! Fantastic!

Complex Italian reds are represented by the incredible **La Grola 1998 (£14.99)** from **Allegrini**. It's amazingly concentrated with endless layers of flavour and could be the wine to return the La Grola vineyard to the top of the Valpolicella pile. Quality of fruit and care in the winery sets this apart from the rest – its exceptionally smooth character was noted as being 'velvety'. Too right!

Take a look at the shelves to plan your Christmas drinking. If you need advice on food and wine matches we are only too happy to help. Why not pop down to Martinez and start your festivities sooner rather than later?



Celebrate with some exceptionally fine wine this Christmas...

If you really want to push the boat out this year or have someone dear in mind who deserves something very special for Christmas then have a look at our Fine and Rare Wine List which is available from any Martinez shop. These are super scarce bottles, often only in quantities of one or two, from top vintages and estates. To give a few examples we currently have in stock the following:

Croft 1945 Vintage Port, Warres 1966 Vintage Port, Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 1986 (in magnum), Chateau Margaux 1945, Chateau Lafite-Rothschild 1948, Chateau Mouton-Rothschild 1953, Chateau Mouton-Rothschild 1988, Chateau Lynch-Bages 1959, Glen Rothes 1961 Single Malt Whisky, Dailuaine 1974 Single Malt Whisky.

It's fair to say that these aren't exactly 'bargain basement' bottles but their reputation has ensured many of them a place in history as classics.



Christmas Claret

This is the ultimate time of year to drink Claret for many of us and with that in mind we've found some excellent bottles for everyone to enjoy.



Chateau Cardus (£6.99) has moved on to the **1998** vintage and it's still a top value wine with essences of cedar and cassis mingling on the palate and that big Médoc structure. **Chateau la Cardonne 1996 (£10.95)** is a step up, with bigger concentration, higher complexity and a smooth feel in the mouth. At the top of the tree sits **La Reserve de Leo-ville-Barton 1997 (£18.75)** which has opened up into a very attractive wine with loads of Saint-Julien character – strong bouquet, firm body and great finesse. Some excellent 1997's were made and we think this is one of the better value Clarets available.



Riedel Glassware, Vergelegen and Hamilton Russell wines at Harewood – a triumphant night!

*A big thank-you goes out to everyone who came along to what proved to be an extraordinary evening in November. We are most grateful to guest speakers **Yair Hajdu, Marcia Waters (Master of Wine) and Anthony Hamilton-Russell**, who showed how selecting the right glass for your wine really does make a difference as well as letting us all know some of the finer details about the wines themselves. Apart from the fact that the wines were absolutely delicious we thought Riedel's new **Vinum Extreme** range were truly astonishing in the way they focussed the wines' flavours and aromas. From the first wine (Vergelegen's Reserve Sauvignon 2001) we were captivated and convinced of the impact the Sauvignon glass made. Yair had to hush the audience to continue speaking such was the volume of whispers and murmurs of disbelief at what people were witnessing! On top of all this we managed to raise over £500 for the **Huntington's Disease Association**, of which Lady Harewood is patron – many thanks to everyone who contributed so generously to a little-known charity.*

For those who didn't come along you can obtain a variety of the Riedel range from all four Martinez shops, from glasses to decanters – they make perfect Christmas gifts. This includes the Vinum Extreme range which was so effectively shown at Harewood.

There's also both Hamilton-Russell wines on the shelf – we anticipate a de-

Bremerton at Farsyde – yet another sell-out event!



Were you one of the lucky 50 customers who attended the dinner at the **Farsyde Restaurant** in Ilkley? A range of **Bremerton wines** was matched with a menu prepared by chef **Gavin Beedham**. The result was an outstanding meal that showed off the skills not only of Gavin but also **Rebecca Willson** (wine maker at Bremerton) to the full.

If you couldn't come along here is the menu, just to tempt your taste-buds:

Canapés - Claude Cazals Grand Cru Champagne

Terrine of Monkfish, Scallops & Lobster - Bremerton Verdelho, 2001

Shoulder of braised Lamb - Bremerton Young Vine Shiraz, 1997

Selection of cheeses: - Bremerton Old Adam Shiraz, 1998

Mango Mousse with Cantaloupe Melon - Bremerton Botrytis Chenin Blanc, 1997

During the meal we were entertained by Rebecca Willson who described the wines and their production. This brought an interesting 'thank-you' from the floor on behalf of those present, which included one interesting comment along the lines of 'How can a young upstart like you (Rebecca Willson) produce such outstanding wines?' (Bremerton is a small family-run business headed by the mother and father with 2 sisters in their twenties responsible for wine-making and marketing!).

For those who didn't attend, don't worry; these wines can be obtained (except the Botrytis – we've already drunk the entire UK allocation!) from our shops. Choose from the **2001 Verdelho (£7.99)**, **1997 Cabernet Shiraz Merlot blend (£8.75)**, **1997 Young Vine Shiraz (£8.99)**, **1998 Old Adam Shiraz (£13.99)**.

Christmas beer...

Just to ensure your Christmas froths over we've taken delivery of **Cropton Brewery's Rudolph's Revenge (£2.05)** once again. This pungent and aromatic bitter is a perfect ale for winter. Full of hoppy character its fruity edge makes it something a little special...



Added to that the traditional **Shepherd's Neame Christmas Ale (£2.15)** is due in. Nicely described by the brewers themselves as being 'robust, warming, and with intense depth of character' this is a fabulous winter thirst-quencher. Grab them while stocks last...

Christmas Ports...

Following the popularity of both **Niepoort** and **Krohn** over the last two Christmas seasons we're sticking with both these houses and their suppliers.



On top of the regular selection we stock we're also due to receive the following for the stilton brigade:

Petre's 1990 Vintage (£19.99) is an earlier drinker, with nice fruit cake and chocolate notes – it's a little lighter than many which gives it an attractive elegant character. Perfect for Christmas celebrations as it's opening up beautifully at the moment.

Krohn's Quinta do Retiro Novo 1997 (£16.99) is a lighter-styled tasty fruitcake-driven single quinta port with excellent early drinking possibilities but capable of some ageing. Quite a mouthful (so to speak!).

For the fans of serious vintage tawnies we present **Krohn's 1958 Colheita (£59.99)**, a truly awesome tawny with incredible depth and variety of flavours such as walnuts, spice and raisins, and with length that'll probably go on well into 2002! Its seniority in the world of Colheitas is unquestioned and the almost Madeira-like qualities set it apart as an exceptional bottle indeed. Save it for those extra special occasions or give it away to your very, very best friend (but try and hang around until they open it!).

Stocks are more limited than usual, particularly of the Colheita, so don't take too long about making that important decision. And don't forget to have a browse through the excellent selection of other Niepoort and Krohn ports that we stock. Prices start at just £6.99.

Delivery dates – your last chance!

If you need any wine or Martinez gifts delivering nationally please note that the latest date we can accept orders for guaranteed delivery before Christmas Day is **Monday December 17th**.



Corporate Christmas Orders

As usual we're offering a highly competitive selection of gifts to reward your hard-working employees. Should you require a copy of our gift brochure please contact any Martinez shop who will be happy to supply you with a copy.





A Warm Windy Welcome – Speciality Rums!

Along with many of our customers we have a great interest in malt whiskies, with their different characters and complexities. It was, therefore, a welcome discovery to find, at a recent tasting, that rum can be enjoyed in the same vein.

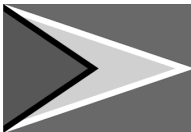
Like their whisky counterparts rum has two variations: commercial – blended from a continuous still, akin to grain whiskies – and, of interest to us, from a pot still, which is the distillation method used for malt whiskies and cognacs. In common with their more appreciated cousins the shape of the vessel and the need to mature the spirit in cask influences and differentiates the taste of the product.

We have decided, as a start, to stock two classic rums. **Port Morant (Demerera) 12 year old (£34.99)** comes from the last Guyanese vat still. This produces a fuller style though still soft and rounded by comparison. It has a pale straw colour, fruity nose with slight sweetness and a classic aniseed twist.



The **Rockley Still (Barbados) (£34.99)** is from one of the island's last two remaining pot stills and has spent 12 years in oak cask. It's golden yellow in colour with an aromatic nose – reminiscent of an Islay whisky but with a herbal rather than a peaty nose. A leathery tack-room nose leads into a slightly peppery palate and a lovely long finish.

Lastly we have a blended rum, the **Caribbean Collection (£18.99)**, predominantly from Demerara pot stills with less oak ageing. This is golden in colour with a toffee, burnt-sugar nose but with a light and clean finish – ideal for mixing (if you must!)



So if you're looking for something different for your pre- or post-prandial tot or to cosy up in front of the fire with then give these distinctive spirits a try; samples should be available in our shops.

Remember that we sell a selection of packaging for those bottles you don't want to drink yourself (strange as it may sound!). There's budget-priced cardboard boxes for 1,2,3 and 6 bottles, with solid wooden boxes for the grander gift also available in the same sizes.



Martinez Christmas opening hours:

Please note the following opening hours over the holiday period:

December 25th – Closed

December 26th – Closed

December 27th – 29th – Open as usual

December 30th – Open 12 – 4 p.m.

December 31st – Open 12 – 4 p.m.

January 1st – Closed

January 2nd – Closed

January 3rd – Closed

January 4th onwards – Open as usual

We should also point out that we're



To finish off our festive issue we normally dig out a couple of good quotes.

Here we go...

"It is better for pearls to pass through the lips of swine than good wine to pass through the lips of the indifferent"

Mark Luedtke

"In water one sees one's own face; but in wine, one beholds the heart of another."

*An Old French proverb
courtesy of Bob Higgins*

Finally a pair of goodies from a couple of fictional folks...

"I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret."
Basil Fawltly

"My dear girl, there are some things that just aren't done, such as drinking Dom Perignon '53 above the temperature of 38 degrees Fahrenheit. That's just as bad as listening to the Beatles without earmuffs!"
James Bond in Goldfinger (1964)

Any comments, changes of address, feedback, news, views and general winespeak should be addressed to the editor at the following email address, or via one of the shops:

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