



MARTINEZ
WINES

Famously Independent

NOBLE ROT

The newsletter of Marti-
nez Fine Wine
Summer 2002



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Mountadam Dinner at Guellers Restaurant in Leeds.

TWO NIGHTS! Tuesday, Wednesday September 17th and 18th.

We're proud to announce **two** fantastic Martinez gourmet nights due to take place in Leeds in September. We've secured the services of our old friend, winemaker **Adam Wynn**, who runs the **Mountadam Winery** in South Australia. Adam's wines have been matched with the cuisine of **Guellers Restaurant** which we think is a candidate for the best dining experience in Yorkshire and Adam will introduce each wine that's featured in the menu. We've sat down with **Simon Gueller**, renowned Michelin-starred chef, as well as having lengthy correspondence with Adam and have carefully prepared an excellent menu that brings out the best of both food and wine. What should be one of the gastronomic highlights of the Martinez calendar has already started attracting serious interest. So much so in fact that even before we'd worked out the menu, which wines to serve or how much to charge per ticket the event was nearing capacity (we're not kidding!). Because of this **we've managed to reserve Guellers for a second night!** So you can choose when you'd like to come but please don't delay too much as bookings are increasing every day. Tickets are priced at £80 per person. Please contact your nearest Martinez shop to secure yourself a ticket before the greedy staff at Martinez claim all the places!



MOUNTADAM

Please Note: This is a set menu. If you are vegetarian or have any other dietary requirements please let us know in advance as no alternatives will be available on the night.

On the shelf...

We had the usual arguments about who got to take which sample home with them at our recent staff tasting and the success rate of wines we accepted was high, particularly from Italy. There's wines that really suit the summer months and a few others we just couldn't resist which taste good at any time of the year. Here is a selection of super new wines that are either in stock now or due in during the next couple of weeks. **Have a look at the back page to see when you can sample the new range at our summer tastings...**



Its always worth starting with an aperitif and what better than Champagne? **Moutard Grande Cuvée N.V. (£14.99)** is a nicely priced *Blanc de Noir* sparkler (made from Pinot Noir only) and what a refreshing drop it is. The weight of the red grapes is really noticeable and a terrific strawberry mood sets the taste buds tingling. Still on Pinot Noir we've taken delivery of the marvellous **Sancerre Rosé (£14.99)** from **Comte Lafond**. A nose of delicately crushed rose petals, hints of violets and Pinot strawberries on the palate with long, long length with a smattering of acidity on the finish to leave the palate fresh. Moving into Burgundy we've got a fine pair from one of our favourite producers, the excellent **Vallet Frères**. Their **Bourgogne Blanc 2000 (£9.99)** has hot wax and lemons on the nose and is full-bodied with excellent wood spice and loads of fruit held in check by minerals and ripe acidity. The well-defined oak nods towards Australia rather nicely too. Add to that their wonderful **Gevrey-Chambertin 1998 (£21.99)**, which has a powerful nose of raspberry ripple ice cream (oh yes!). The palate is gentle yet sophisticated with highly complex flavours of red cherries, spice and freshly ground pepper. Its considerable power is somewhat deceptive as everything is so well balanced.

Crossing into Portugal it's nice to see a couple of wines from an excellent producer, **Vinhos Sogrape**, (who make our Grao Vasco white).



First up is their **Duque de Viseu 2001 (£5.99)**. With a zippy nose of almonds and nettles, this medium weight white has a lovely full palate with positive fruit extraction and a clean, fresh finish. It's a classic summer drop. Their **Dao Reserva 1997 (£9.49)** has an excellent fruity nose, with damsons and mulberries wrapped in spices on the palate and a strong gamey flavour on the finish.

Over to Italy... Our search for another good budget- priced Tuscan red has ended with the discovery of **Poggiano's Chianti 2000 (£5.99)**.



Not content with basic quality, this beauty is currant-scented, nicely spiced and designed for easy quaffing (and no basket on the bottle either!). Lots of Valpolicella is thin, bland and rather uninteresting; not so the excellent **Montresor Valpolicella Classico 2000 (£6.99)**. A rich red and black cherry nose that is nicely reflected on the palate,

with lots of good ripeness that encapsulates the unmistakable feel of a classic Italian red. Because Puglia isn't one of the better known Italian regions quite a few bottles offer great value for money and **Palazzi Negro Amaro 2000 (£3.99)** is most definitely one of them. Plums and dark berries dominate but there's fine depth and ripeness with a good spicy finish.



From Trentino comes a big chocolatey number, **Ca Vit's Quattro Vicariati 1997 (£7.49)**, which is made from Cabernet and Merlot. Lots of big fruit flavours overlaid with just the right amount of oak; velvety smooth and long, long lasting on the palate. Customers of ours will undoubtedly have come across our **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano** from **Le Casalte** and now we would like to introduce its little brother, the very tasty **Rosso di Montepulciano 1999 (£8.49)**. It's made from mainly Sangiovese and has a wonderful dollop of oak on the nose intertwined with red cherries. There's a strong fruity character, good tannic structure (without being excessively tannic) and a nice round feel. Ideal with grilled red meats or a barbecue (if we ever get any summer...Ed). Finally on Italy there's **Alasia's Nebbiolo (£7.49)**; we try to avoid using the phrase 'bitter cherries' when describing big Italian reds but it fits this wine so well that we couldn't help it! A very impressive drop, with a huge palate of tar, redcurrants and meaty flavours held in check by a firm tannic structure and full body. Poor man's Barolo...

Straight on to dessert then... Austrian wines can be wonderful, as this double from **Sepp Moser** demonstrates. His **Weissburgunder Beereauslese 1999 (£10.99 37.5cl)** shows pure melon and grapefruit on the nose with rich nectarines on the palate. There's mind-boggling concentration and a finish you can taste for hours. For fans of stickies this is essential. Unless of course you grab his **Chardonnay Trockenbeereauslese 1998 (£14.99 37.5cl)**. Honey, lemons, toffee apples and caramel are just a few of the characters you can find. It's taken many years for wine drinkers to get over the stupidity of a very small minority of Austrian winemakers (or car mechanics? Antifreeze Ed). The advantage Austrian wines have over their German counterparts is that they tend to be a fraction of the price, so buy this with confidence as it's absolutely superb.

And finally we welcome the mother of all stickies in the form of **Bodegas Toro Albala's PX Sherry (£9.75 37.5cl)**. This positively reeks of heavy duty Christmas cake (without the icing!). Ridiculously viscous and the colour of liquorice, it's amazingly powerful stuff with loads of raisins, prunes, toffee, caramel and just about anything else sweet and sticky you can think of. Utterly decadent and completely irresistible.



The outstanding 2000 Port vintage... an advanced purchase offer

It seems that the magnificent 2000 vintage enjoyed in Bordeaux has been well reflected in the Douro. The wines have very serious potential, with intense berried-fruit aromas and excellent full-bodied structure which is great news for Port fans.



Early bud burst courtesy of the endless sunshine from early winter until the spring was followed by rain and cold temperatures in April and May. The vines were slow in flowering as a consequence and fruit set was somewhat poor. This meant that only a very small harvest was expected as yields were naturally low. Sunny conditions in the summer with a few cooling rain showers made for good fruit development and the very hot weather in September led to the grapes being in almost perfect condition by the time harvesting began. The weather stayed ideal during picking and by the time the fruit reached the presses there were indications that the vintage had very serious potential; yields were low, sugar content high and grape quality excellent. The finest wines of the 2000 vintage will require 15-25 years cellaring to enjoy them at their best.



We have chosen eight ports from 2000. Many of you will have read about Niepoort 2000 in a previous edition of Noble Rot. Because of the relative frenzy surrounding Niepoort we've been completely over-subscribed and sadly there is none available as it sold out well in advance. Here is our selection of port from the 2000 vintage. *N.B. Prices are quoted including duty and VAT. This means that there are **no additional charges** to pay when the wines arrive.*

Dow's (£39.99 per bottle)

Yields were low all over the Douro but even more so at Dow's; at Senhora de Ribeira the yields were down to an incredible 385g per vine! This rates as among the lowest yields of any of the world's great vineyards. The ideal weather conditions during harvest were particularly noticeable at Dow's and the fruit was in perfect condition when it reached the winery. The wine is deeply concentrated with a huge, yet very smooth, structure and surprisingly rounded tannins. The traditional character of Dow's port



tends to be very slightly drier than many of the other great houses and that classic Dow's style is beautifully represented here.

Graham's (£43.99 per bottle)

The first vintage from the remodelled winery, and what a start! A higher percentage of grape varieties Touriga Francesa and Touriga Nacional from the outstanding Vila Velha vineyard, coupled with some very high quality old vine lots selected from Vale de Malhadas in the Upper Douro add concentration and depth to the blend. For many this is quintessential Graham's; smooth, rich, plum-fruited and long with a clean yet persistent finish.



Warre's (£39.99 per bottle)

Again the low yields dominated proceedings with at least one vineyard experiencing record lows – only 420g per vine at Cavadinha. Concentration was therefore very high and because of the low juice to skin ratio extraction of flavour, tannin and colour were all outstanding.

A firm tannic structure drenched in ripe dark fruit, a sweet uncloying finish and lingering aftertaste made this one of the highlights of our recent tasting.



Quinta do Vesuvio (£42.99 per bottle)

One of the few remaining properties still using the traditional granite lagares (a sort of trough for pressing and fermenting grapes). Because of the concentration of the fruit extracting the juice took a great deal more effort than normal, and a 50-strong team was employed to work the lagares.



The resultant wine is superb. Incredibly dark in colour, sumptuously rich in character with a firm-fruited structure, strong tannins and an extraordinarily aromatic nose. The 2000 is considered one of the very finest wines ever to emerge from the property.

Quinta de Roriz (£32.99 per bottle)

Picking at Roriz normally begins earlier than at other properties in the Douro, this year remarkably so, in mid-September, yet the fruit was just about perfect – sweet, thick-skinned and ripe.

With yields even lower than had been predicted concentration was fantastic and again the teams treading the grapes had to work very hard. The port itself is wonderfully aromatic with a dizzy cocktail of red and black fruits very apparent. A massive structure of tannin and lots more fruit is held together nicely by very good acidity.



Gould Campbell (£32.99 per bottle)

Another classic that benefited from the high proportion of skins to must as a result of the low yields. The fruit harvest began reasonably early (on September 21st) with exceptionally ripe grapes showing fine promise. The nose is fabulous – all raspberries and black plums, and the concentrated chocolaty palate, with its rich, bold tannins and cedar wood finish, is exemplary.



Smith Woodhouse (£32.99 per bottle)

An outstanding effort, with fruit picked later for optimum ripeness. The grapes showed enormous concentration and power and the folks at Smith Woodhouse are very excited at the wine they've produced. The small quantities made are bursting with rich tannins and high complexity and bode very well indeed for long-term cellaring.



Niepoort Secundum (£35.99 per bottle)

The second vintage of Secundum is better than many other houses' main label vintage port – that's without question. The grapes, all of which were hand-harvested, are sourced from very old vineyards (with a comparative youngster mixed in for a bit of vibrancy) and were trodden and fermented in lagares according to tradition. The wine itself shows lots of Niepoort character – power, purity of fruit and charm but with a little more of a soft edge than its big brother, and should drink a little earlier than Niepoort.



Quinta do Passadouro (£35.99 per bottle)

Again old vines and low yields are what makes Passadouro 2000 special. Although under the control of Niepoort Passadouro does not, contrary to belief, form the basis for vintage Niepoort. It has its own character and that's how Dirk Niepoort wants it to remain. The 2000 is absolutely stunning and Dirk regards it as the finest quality of fruit he's known there since he started running the estate in 1991. This has led to a very elegant style of port that has even been described as possessing 'femininity' as well as beauty. Softer than its peers with a warmth that makes it very attractive already, we'd recommend a decade of cellar development for the full image to appear.

QUINTA DO PASSADOURO

A very special en primeur Sauternes offer...

You may well have read about the fantastic vintage in Sauternes in 2001. We all know about the superb 2000 vintage for red Bordeaux but Sauternes didn't fare nearly as well. But now it's the turn of the sticky sweet whites to excel. **James Suckling** of the USA's *Wine Spectator* said "...the sweet whites in Sauternes and Barsac are said to resemble those from the legendary 1990 vintage" and **Jean Michel Cazes** of **Château Lynch-Bages** admired the 2001 Sauternes as follows: "...perfect conditions for a glorious harvest, not seen since 1990..."

We've secured a very small amount of **Château de Malle 2001**, a property that's been a favourite of ours for some time. Vines are an average of 40 years old, and the soils at de Malle are a perfect blend of limestone and gravel. Over to Mr. Suckling again, who describes the 2001 release as "*Like crushed dried pineapples and apricots, with honey and spices. Full-bodied and superthick, yet spicy and sweet. Fabulous finish.*" He goes on to award it a dizzy **95-100 points!** We can't add much to that!

If you'd like to order some of this nectar get in touch as soon as you can as there isn't too much of it. The cost is £28.99 per bottle, which includes duty and vat, so there are **no additional charges to pay when the wine arrives.**





The Martinez Summer Tastings – A great opportunity to taste our new range...

Here's a chance for you to try a selection of wines described in this issue – it'll give you a chance to get your summer drinking completely sorted as well as being rather enjoyable! **Admission to these tastings is free**, so make a

note in your diary and pop down to your local Martinez shop and get glugging. We're sure you'll find something interesting...

Ilkley – Sunday August 4th – Noon – 5 p.m.

Harrogate – Tuesday August 6th – 6.30 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Horsforth – Thursday August 8th – 6.30 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Jacquesson Champagne and Music night at Harewood House

Many thanks to everyone who came along to our sparkling musical evening in May. We had a lot of fun as well as learning quite a bit about champagne. We'd like to thank brothers **Alex and Oliver Hunt** who delivered a fine selection of drinking songs ranging from Mozart to Monty Python (oh yes!), **Paxton and Whitfield** for matching the cheese so well with the champagnes, and **Michael Mackenzie** of Mayfair Cellars who took charge of the event and told us all about Jacquesson and the ins and outs of making champagne. We'd also like to add that we raised over £250 for Lady Harewood's charity, the *Huntington's Disease Association*, and that's down to the generosity of those who attended. Thank you!

A fine selection of Jacquesson is available from Martinez, including some of the very rare Grand Vin Signature cuvées that were among the highlights of the evening...



35 The Grove,
Ilkley,
LS29 9NJ
01943 603241

87 Town Street,
Horsforth,
LS18 5BP
0113 281 8989

editor@martinez.co.uk
www.martinez.co.uk



MARTINEZ
WINES

Famously Independent

The Ginnel,
Harrogate,
HG1 2RB
01423 501783

Eclectic
36 Kirkland
Kendal
LA9 5AD
01539 736184