



**MARTINEZ
WINES**

Famously Independent

NOBLE ROT

THE NEWSLETTER OF MARTINEZ WINES

Easter 2005

We Are Open All of Easter Weekend!

Welcome back readers. Rumour has it that thanks to Royal Mail none of our previous five editions reached members of the public, so despite all our hard work in writing these past Noble Rots, this looks to be a comeback special. For those of you who are regular visitors to our shop, you will have noticed some of the changes that have recently occurred. For others, this issue of our celebrated in-house magazine will hopefully conjure colourful and wondrous memories of Martinez and all its employees.

The company still profits from the unsurpassed knowledge of Julian 'the grand master' Martinez, and sprightly John 'the tactful one' Trobridge. We also welcome three new members of staff. Apologies to those of you who have had to deal with our resident southerner, Ed 'the idiot' Hoad, but the pain stops here as we bid him farewell at the end of March, wish him luck, and ask him NOT to return to the north until his immigration papers have been certified.

I feel it would be unwise to give the other new staff nicknames at this point in the proceedings, since we have only just finished interviewing. David James (not to be mistaken for 'calamity' James of Manchester), who joined us earlier this month, will be taking over the duties of Shop Manager from young master Hoad when he leaves, and Jan Osinski will be looking to coax the best out of the company in his role as Sales Administrator.

In This Issue:

The Noble Rot Comeback Special!!

In this edition: Wines with Turkey... Chateau Musar...

South African Wines... Opening Times...

Meet our staff...!



Easter Eating

Easter weekend is looming (for some this will come as a timely reminder that you gave something up for lent), and panic is brewing amongst homes all over the country. You see, the Easter turkey may be traditional, but you haven't found the right wine to accompany this awkward bird. Sancerre? Chablis? Sauvignon Blanc? These white wines, the traditional accompaniments to white meat, do little to improve the taste and texture of the meat

As taste is so subjective, we can only advise. This, however, is one thing Martinez excels at. Our suggestions for wines to be drunk with turkey may surprise many, but hear us out; we have not gone mad, and are not trying to ruin Easter for the whole family.

Take the meat itself; there is little to look forward to since it is so dry, drab and bland. So we must choose a wine to endow this characterless bird with some character. How? I propose wine; red wine.

Choose a red wine with a little less tannin but with a little bit a weight to it; a Beaujolais or Burgundy, a light merlot or Rioja. If you like a bit of spice to your wine, an Australian Shiraz might be your best bet. Whichever you choose, sit back, forget that red wine definitely doesn't go with white meat, and enjoy the implausible pairing.

Five Red Wines for White Meat

Andes Peaks Merlot, Chile, 2003 (£4.99)

This is a medium bodied, unoaked Chilean merlot with plenty to offer at the price point. Lighter in style than many merlots, it is an appealing plum-orientated wine with a fresh feel. It remains one of our fastest movers on the wholesale market and in the shop. Perfect for turkey because it is not particularly tannic or acidic, and the flavours will compliment a bland meat.

Cerro Anon Crianza, Spain, 2002 (£6.49)

For those who like a little bit of oak in their red wine. This is an excellent, fruity Rioja with a lot to offer. Fine aromas of rich black fruit and spices. Round and well-balanced with a persistent finish. The spice will make turkey a little more interesting, but it has a little less than the Omrah Shiraz.

Omrah Shiraz, Australia, 2002 (£8.75)

This is a medium to full bodied Shiraz. The nose is a complex array of spices and berries. Raspberries and mulberries are combined with hints of white pepper. Sweet berry fruits combine beautifully with the spice. Hints of liquorice add complexity to the finish. This is the heaviest option on our list, and won't be to everyone's tastes.

Ladoix Vieilles Vignes, Burgundy, 2001 (£12.99)

Now on to the top of our range, the two French reds. This is from one of the lesser known Burgundian villages, which produces good value reds. The vineyard is known for its lighter style of wines, but this holds some seriously deep fruit character. The Pinot Noir grape in the Ladoix is soft and fruity, with agricultural hints, and very little tannin.

Jaufrette Chateauneuf du Pape, Rhone, 1998 (£18.99)

As you would expect from a good chateauneuf this wine is rich and complex but underpinned with that elegant velvety texture that is the hallmark.

Ripe, jammy fruits, hints of cedarwood and tobacco. The palate structure confirms the nose; a dark core of fruit with layer upon layer of secondary and tertiary flavours such as spice pepper, etc etc.

All Black? More like all white!

Everyone knows the reputation of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, but people struggle to pick out more than a handful of good quality, well priced New Zealand reds. We have two that are worthy of your palates; **Waipara West Ram Paddock Red** (1999) is a Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot and a lovely little drink at £9.75 a bottle. **Alpha Domus Pinot Noir** (2002, £12.99) is wonderfully fruity with tones of raspberry and cherry inviting enough to tantalise any taste buds.

However, the main aim of this article is to draw you attention to the latest additions to the All White team, namely Tolaga Bay Unoaked Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. I will spare you tasting notes since should you honour us with a visit on the 8, 9, or 10 April you will be able to sample these products and make your views known.

Tolaga Bay Tasting 8th, 9th and 10th April.

Our Favourite South African Imports!

Some of our readers will have taken the (slightly lower-brow compared to Noble Rot) Saturday Telegraph on the 12th February 2005. Included with the paper was a travel guide to South Africa, with a section on the wines and wineries of the area. Within this double page spread lay the map to the holy grail of South African fine wine; a list of six of the finest wines the country has to offer.

We at Martinez believe we could have saved the good people at the aforesaid daily newspaper a deal of trouble and money, had they simply asked us for our highly professional opinion (we stock four they deigned to mention, and two of their list, but The Telegraph scoring two out of six on our prestigious scale isn't bad going for such a commercial publication).

Fans of our range of South African wines will already have discovered a wealth of variety and quality amongst that section. For those cultural philistines who have deigned South Africa's wines unworthy of their attention, take note of the following tasting notes. We can promise that you will enjoy something from the list.

In the white corner:

Wetvrede Gewurztraminer, 2003 £6.49

This Gewurz must be experienced. It has a veritable plethora of aromas that assault the nose, although mainly dominated by litchis and lime juice. The litchis are again prevalent on the palate, but with the rose petals, perfume and a little bit of spice. This is a white wine expansive enough to accompany spicy dishes such as Thai and Indian foods.

Bouchard Finlayson Walker Bay Sauvignon Blanc, 2004 £8.99

A very well made Sauvignon Blanc which holds its own against our New Zealand wines. It holds all the tropical fruits you would expect, and has a fresh, crisp, lingering finish. A riper style of Sauvignon, this is more tropical than grassy and more delicate than overpowering, with pure fruit tones and good balance. The perfect bottle of wine for a fine spring evening.

Hamilton Russell Chardonnay, 2003 £14.99

This estate is undoubtedly producing some of South Africa's finest wines, faithfully reflecting their Cape terroir. A classic, elegant Chardonnay with ripe fruit and rich, toasty oak and nutty flavours. Full and rich on the palate with a savoury edge. This is one of the top six South African wines as featured in the Daily Telegraph, and is worthy of its awards.

In the red corner:

Rustenburg Brampton Old Vines Red, 2002 £6.75

I don't see anyone complaining about the quality of this wine, especially at the price point. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc endow the wine with aromas of blackberries and plums. These follow through to a richly spiced palate, with chocolate and mocha adding complexity to the long finish. A perfect partner for char-grilled meat and Mediterranean dishes.

Mischa Shiraz, 2002 £9.99

A stunning wine showing intense Shiraz smoke and pepper on the nose highlighted by beautiful hints of cherry and red currant. You may even detect a port aroma. The palate is densely fruited with excellent structure and length. We believe this is one of the best sub £10 bottles of Shiraz around at the moment.

Rustenburg Peter Barlow Cabernet Sauvignon, 1999 £22.99

The name of this wine pays tribute to the man that recognised the growing potential of Rustenburg. Violets, mint, coffee and blackberry dominate the aroma, carrying to the palate, where they combine with smooth layers of fine-grained tannin. If planning to drink in the near future than it will need a decent opening beforehand; if looking to cellar, it will drink best in around thirteen years' time.

Please note: we did actually enjoy the above article in the Telegraph and disparaging it to make Martinez look better is childish, but is condonable for the sake of a good article!

A Taste of South Africa

To follow on from the above South Africa article, we will have a range of Morgenhof wines open for you to savour between Good Friday and Easter Monday 2005.

Chenin Blanc 2003 (£7.99)

Chardonnay 2003 (£8.49)

Merlot 2001 (£11.75)

Premier Selection 1999 (£13.99)

Bargains from the Bekaa

Recently, our attention has been drawn to the Middle East for all the wrong reasons; namely the bombing of Beirut. However, the BBC had deemed Lebanon a safe and beautiful country to visit only a few days before, in their program *Holiday 2005*. Also featured was a short interview with Serge Hochar, the owner and chief winemaker of Chateau Musar.

Fear not, for I am not about to embark on a sentimental journey documenting the troubles of making wine in the Bekaa valley amid bombs and bullets. Instead, I intend to concentrate fully on the wines, since Musar is famous for these rather than the war. Wine must be tasted on its merits rather than its history.

To celebrate the release of Musar 98, the latest vintage, Martinez Wines are offering a discount of 10% (no further discount!) across the range. Those that know and follow the wines have affection for the deep, dark, earthy tones, and the firm, tannic structure. These wines age beautifully, so you'd be best off starting your Musar experience with the 95 vintage (£15.99 less discount).

We also stock Musar's second string, the Hochar range, which consists of a red, a white and a rose wine. If you are looking for something that little bit different, or are interested in Musar but not at the price, why not try a bottle of one of these to see if Lebanese wine is for you.

Tasting Notes Musar 1995

One of the deepest, most complex wines from Musar in several years. Packed with smooth tannins, this full bodied wine is redolent with aromas and flavors of cedar wood, black currants, wild berries and vanilla. With fine balance and structure, the wine is approachable now but promises to cellar until 2010. As the wine develops, look for a bit of browning around the rim and the development of tobacco, mocha and leather aromas.

Bargain Brews!

To correspond with our new opening times (overleaf), Martinez will be offering the following lagers at fantastic prices:

San Miguel 330ml bottles: 8 for £6

Stella Artois 500ml cans: 8 for £7.50

Carling 500ml cans: 8 for £6

Rolling Rock 275ml bottles: 8 for £5

Carlsberg 275ml bottles: 10 for £5

Offer of the month: Isole e Olena Chianti Classico 2002.

We have recently managed to secure a fantastic price on one of our favourite Italian wine, allowing us to retail Isole e Olena Chianti Classico 2002 (normally £14.75) at £9.99 (no further discount!). This opportunity will remain for a limited time, and on limited stock, so get in quickly!

85% Sangiovese, 10% Canaiolo, and 5% Syrah combine to produce a light but brilliant ruby colour, with an alluring, Pinot-like nose and soft accessible fruit on the palate. The richness of the fruit continues to provide good length. What is more it is made organically! This will blow away any poor predispositions of Italian wine; those of you who claim not to enjoy Chianti will change your minds, those who do will be suitably impressed.

New Arrivals

Winston Hill Syrah Rose, USA, 2003

A slightly off dry rose with a lot of summer fruits making this an ideal wine to quaff on summer evening and winter nights alike.

Champ de Grenet, Bordeaux, 2001

A merlot based claret that is excellent for the price. We were missing lower price clarets, but with this wine and another of a similar price on the way we are now well stocked.

Two new wines from **Urban Oak** (Argentina, 2003) will be appearing soon. Both wines (5.99) offer deep berry fruits, the **Tempranillo** slightly softer with richer fruits, the **Malbec** with a great deal of spice and incredible length.

Opening Times Spring/Summer 2005

Monday 10am-8pm

Tuesday 10am-8pm

Wednesday 10am-8pm

Thursday 10am-9pm

Friday 10am-9pm

Saturday 9.30am-6pm

Sunday 1pm-6pm

Please direct any complaints you have from Noble Rot Easter 2005 to
Ed 'the idiot' Hoad, c/o Surrey, The South.



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