

SUMMER 2018

WINE TOURISM MAG

• THE BIGGEST MAGAZINE ABOUT WINE TOURISM •

EMILIANA
VINEYARDS, THE
WORLD'S LARGEST
ORGANIC WINERY

DISCOVER THE
REGION OF
VALTELLINA

THE ELEGANCE,
FINESSE AND
BALANCE OF
ANTINORI WINES

WINE TOURIS M MAG

WINE TOURISM MAG

SUMMER 2018

COVER IMAGE

MICHAEL MCDUFF

EDITORIAL

MICHAEL MCDUFF EDITOR

JOANIE METIVIER HEAD WRITER

CONTRIBUTORS

BENOÎT LEFÈVRE

CLAUDE LALONDE

ANA GALLEGOS

KRISTINE MANSUY

MARKETING & ADVERTISING

JOANIE METIVIER

CONTACT@JOANIEMETIVIER.COM

WWW.WINETOURISMMAG.COM

CONTACT@JOANIEMETIVIER.COM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



05 Editor's Note

Vinho Verde Feature

06 Aphros wine – A natural pioneer

17 Aveleda
- The giant is taking steps for the image of Vinho Verde

30 A&D wines

Champagne Feature

14 A visit at Champagne De Venoge

27 A visit at Champagne Ruinart

34 A visit at Champagne Deutz

38 A visit at Champagne Bollinger



08 The wines of Malta island



12 Emiliana Vineyards, the world's largest organic winery

18 Discover the region of Valtellina

21 Enric Soler: xarel-lo for making great white wines



**24 Château Ducru- Beaucaillou
The Gem of St-Julien**

**28 The elegance, finesse and
balance of Antinori wines**



32 Domaine Des Salamandres

36 Negondos vineyard

29 M. Chapoutier



EDITOR'S NOTE

Not just another press trip

I was lucky enough to be invited to Vinho Verde by the Comissão de Viticultura da Região dos Vinhos Verdes and Sopexa. We were 12 journalists from Canada and the United States to participate in this wonderful adventure.

Our guide from the commission

Gonçalo Rowett Rodrigues is a very professional young man and quite funny actually. He assisted us in our discovery of the different vineyard between the hills of Vinho Verde. The CVRVV is an interprofessional body whose purpose to represent the interests of the professions involved in the production and trade of the “Vinho Verde” Designation of Origin (DO) and the Indication Geographic (GI) «Minho».

Sopexa

Sopexa is a marketing agency specialize in food and drink business. The company represent the interests of many food products and beverages, including wines and spirits. They organize wonderful press trip, like this one, for professional around the world.

It was a wonderful experience and I want to personally thank Sopexa and the Vinho Verde region for this tour. We even had the chance to talk with the Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa!



Aphros wine

A NATURAL PIONEER

Since 2003, Vasco Croft has set out to resurrect his family estate that was almost abandoned. He's pushed further the resurrection in turning the whole 20 hectares of vines and chestnut orchards into a sanctuary of sustainable practice, biodynamic and positive energetisation. Silver haired, naturally serene, former Architect, Vasco is one of the pioneers of biodynamic farming and wine making in Portugal and especially in Vinho Verde.

Loureiro and Vinhão have grown in these vineyards for centuries and are still the main focus of the wines. Along the reductive, sustainable practices in the vineyards, Vasco advocates for a reversion towards traditional, medieval winemaking techniques by relying as little as possible on technology.

By Joanie Metivier

Photo by Michael McDuff



The Phaunus line of wines was born from this idea and a research on old winemaking methods. They were able to track down some old Talha amphorae from the south of Portugal. After being picked and pressed by hand, the wine is merely, purely left to age and ferment in these gigantic beeswax lined amphorae. This is supposedly, exactly how wines were made a thousand year ago, with no electricity, no temperature control (except opening the doors) and with as little handling as possible.

THE TRUTH IS IN THE WINES

which are impressive and
absolutely stunning in every way

I know these types of practice and natural wines are controversial. I'm not myself a fervent defender of this type of approach that is often pushed to eccentric and almost esoteric limits. However, like the more than famous latin quote says: "In Vino Veritas". The truth is in the wines which are impressive and absolutely stunning in every way. Every doubt that I might have gotten just disappeared at the first sip. Thank you Vasco for opening my eyes.



PHOTOS:
VINO2TRAVEL

THE WINES OF MALTA

TEXT AND PHOTO BY:
BENOÎT LEFÈVRE

Even the most knowledgeable wine lover will probably never have tasted a wine from Malta. Almost all the wine produced is consumed on site by the Maltese and the horde of tourists in search of sun that sweeps the island year-round. Only a small amount of Maltese wine production is destined for export or to a few rich foreign customers. I enjoyed a short stay on the island to discover the wines of Malta and a world of wine still unknown!

LOCATION AND CLIMATE

Malta consists of an archipelago of 7 islands, only 3 of which are inhabited, about 100 kilometers south of Sicily and about 300 kilometers north of Tunisia. The main island, Malta, and the second island, Gozo, comprise just over 800 hectares of vineyards. The climate is Mediterranean with very hot and dry summers (the little rainfall is concentrated between September and the end of March). Irrigation is therefore required to grow vines. The climate of Malta is much more favorable to red wine production, but the Maltese prefer to drink white wine, because of the heat.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Wine production on this small Mediterranean island goes back as far as the Phoenicians time. The Romans, then the Knights of the Order of St. John, continued the tradition. If wine production goes back more than two millennia, the wine industry has always been very modest because of the size of the island. Malta is a very densely populated island with few agricultural spaces. It was not until the 1970s that the wine industry was modernized and international grape varieties were gradually planted.

GRAPE VARIETIES ?

In Malta, more than twenty international grape varieties are grown. Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot, Chardonnay, among others, are favored by winemakers. There are nevertheless two local curiosities, the girgentina in white and the gellewza in red. Nobody agrees on the origin of these two grape varieties. The girgentina gives very light wines with a lot of acidity. It is often assembled with chardonnay to give it more structure. As for the gellewza, it is a very light-colored variety, often uninteresting when vinified alone. It is usually used in blends with Syrah or Cabernet, or made into cheap sparkling rosé.



THE CHALLENGES OF MALTESE WINE INDUSTRY

The island wine producers may face many challenges. First, the lack of space. The archipelago of Malta is very small and finding land to plant new vineyards is a puzzle. There are many winemakers, but very few producers. So, we often find many small plots and winemakers had to be encouraged to produce quality grapes. The oenologists of the main wineries are therefore constantly on the road to ensure the good culture of the vines.

The other challenge is climate. In some places, several months can pass without a drop of rain. Because of this drought, vines constantly need irrigation so that it doesn't suffer too much. At harvest time, it is so hot that you have to start at dusk and finish around 10:30 – 11:00. At Meridiana Wine Estate, for example, refrigerated trucks are even rented for harvest to ensure that the grapes reach the winery in optimal conditions. It's also not easy to recruit skilled pickers for harvest as the work is difficult.

Finally, the last problem related to the wine industry in Malta is the cost. Here, production costs are high because everything is imported: machinery, chemicals, bottles, corks, barrels, etc



WHICH PRODUCERS TO VISIT?

In Malta, there are many small winemakers, but only a few producers. Marsovin and Delicata are the two giants of the island, followed Meridiana Wine Estate, and then some producers, especially on the island of Gozo, like Ta 'Mena, Tal-Massar and Bacchus.

MARSOVIN

Created in 1919, Marsovin is one of the oldest wine producers on the island. The annual production reaches almost two million bottles. Marsovin owns a little over 20 hectares and also buys grapes from around 300 Maltese winemakers, who represent 200 hectares of vines. The visit of their cellar located in Paola, the port area, is a must. More than 100,000 bottles and 220 oak barrels are stored there. It also produces an effervescent wine made according to the traditional method, the Cassar of Malta (probably one of the only ones of its kind in the Mediterranean basin!). marsovin.com



MERIDIANA WINE ESTATE

In 1989, Mark Miceli-Farrugia bought a former military airport, a 19-hectare site on which he decided to plant numerous international grape varieties. Meridiana Wine Estate joined in 1992 the famous Italian family Antinori. The estate produces the Isis cuvée, a fermented chardonnay in steel vats. One of the best white wines on the island. I also liked their Vermentino and Merlot. meridiana.com.mt



DELICATA

Second largest producer in volume after Marsovin, Delicata has been producing wine since 1907. The particularity of the house is that it does not own any vineyard. It vinifies grapes from 380 vintners on the island, representing approximately 130 hectares of vines. Their superb cellar is located in Paola, in a building dating back to the 17th century, built at the time of the Knights of the Order of St. John. delicata.com





Emiliana Vineyards

THE WORLD'S LARGEST
ORGANIC WINERY

By Ana Gallegos

When it comes to organic farming, Chile is a natural. Chile's pristine environment offers exceptional growing conditions in which to nurture world-class organic wines. Flanked by the Andes to the east and the Pacific to the west, this long, narrow, remote land enjoys a geography and climate uniquely well suited to organic farming.

Located in Chile's main wine valleys, Emiliana is characterized by producing only organic and biodynamic wines, so that helps to preserve the natural life balance, human beings and the environment. Founded in 1986 by Chile's Guilisasti family, Emiliana Vineyards is a privately owned initiative, in 2003 vintage Gê marked the release of South America's first ever certified biodynamic wine.

The Guilisastis are not newcomers to winemaking and can point to a long and proud tradition of winemaking through their involvement in the management of the world-renowned Concha y Toro label. Fittingly, the current generation has named its latest enterprise in honor of 19th-century matriarch, Doña Emiliana Subercasseaux de Concha y Toro (wife of Concha y Toro's esteemed founder, Don Melchor). Emiliana is, however, separate and apart from Concha y Toro, with its own vineyards, wineries, winemakers and distinctive winemaking philosophy.

The progressive conversion of Emiliana's estate vineyards began in the mid-1990s. Today, Emiliana has a total of 1.256,75 hectares (922,4 company owned and 334,35 comes from growers) of vineyards in the Limarí, Casablanca, Maipo, Cachapoal, Colchagua, and Bio-Bio Valleys. Collectively, Emiliana constitutes the single largest source of estate-grown organic wines in the world.

To underscore their commitment to making world-class organic wines, the Guilisasti family recruited consulting enologist Alvaro Espinoza to oversee the project. A visionary who is regarded as one of the world's premier authorities on organic, biodynamic and eco-balanced wines, Espinoza works closely with Emiliana's resident winemaker, Noelia Orts since 2011, on Emiliana's entire range of award-winning labels. Emiliana's three winemaking facilities are located in Los Robles and Palmeras in the Colchagua and in the Maipo Valley.





A VISIT AT CHAMPAGNE DE VENOGE

By Joanie Metivier

Photo : Michael Mcduff

Probably the most stand-out characteristic of de Venoge is the decanting carafe shaped unique bottle. Although, this particularity has been a considerable quality to bring the Champagne house to fame, it is obviously not limited to a visual aspect. Champagne de Venoge has been driven by a commercial approach for a long time. De Venoge benefited from nobles, aristocrats, “people” and gentlefolks clients around the world and such lovers of the house that they became true worldwide ambassadors for the brand.

The house’s founder, Henri-Marc de Venoge left his native Switzerland exactly for a commercial enterprise which brought him to Aÿ in 1825, opening a wine trade counter, still not a proper Champagne house until 1837. Since the very start, champagne de Venoge was innovative. First illustrated label was a Revolution started by De Venoge. Instead of the then handwritten label only stating name and vintage, a very golden and bright red label illustrating bottles and bunches of grapes. An extremely extensive collection of old labels, from the house, others and unsure, mysterious origin is one of the treasures preciously kept in the manor.

The products may be separated in three ranges. The Cordon bleu non-vintage judicious expression of the houses style is a blend of the three varieties with abundance of Pinot noir, thus vinosity and roundness. It was a symbol of nobility at its creation in 1864, referring both to the Venoge river and the Saint-esprit order, famous French knighthood. The Champagne des Princes has the famous looking bottles. Also historic cuvees, it was produced again since 2000. The prestige Cuvée of de venoge, Louis XV, is also in the rounded shape but transparent bottle. It’s a sophisticated delicacy, royal in appearance and taste. Other cuvees includes the vin du paradis, historic, unchanged and exotic driven for dessert Champagne. Also, the “20 ans” aged for 20 years and a coteaux champenois.



While all the big houses on the avenue tends to appear very closed up and unwelcoming, De Venoge on the contrary has their gates wide open!



LES SUITES 33 DE VENOGÉ

In terms of tourism, Epernay has everything to please. There's history, there's magical landscapes, there's fancy castles and houses. However, to deal with tourism, the choice of hospitality or restaurants is quite limited. So much that most visitors tend to make a day trip from Paris and go back right away. They would probably change their mind if they knew they could stay within the walls of the prestigious Champagne de Venoge house which recently opened guest rooms in the ancient and historic but fully renovated outbuildings and a whole apartment to rent on the second floor of their tasting room.

I had the chance to stay in the apartment which was, I confess, maybe a bit excessive for two people. It's a great feeling to stay just a foot away from the actual castle, right on the Avenue de champagne, one of the most expensive streets in the world. You can sip a glass of Champagne on the porch of the castle or wander in the lovely yard to find old scribbling from the occupancy of WW2 on the garden walls.

It's neither a hotel nor a private house. It's neither a guest house nor an inn. It's unique and lovely. While all the big houses on the avenue tends to appear very closed up and unwelcoming, De Venoge on the contrary has their gates wide open for public. Beside the rooms, they have the tasting room called the Écurie. It actually was real stables before and the apartment was the hay shed just above. Now it looks nothing like it with a very modern and colourful style. You have the chance to taste the house's Champagne but also Mister Gilles de la Bassetière, president director general, private collection including majorly old Armagnacs and a big selection of Whiskies. Pair it with the tapas-like plates and bites and your good for an awesome time.



Aveleda - The giant of Vinho Verde

BY JOANIE METIVIER

PHOTO: MICHAEL MCDUFF

In the array of Vinho Verde brands, Aveleda is one of the biggest, if not the biggest of them all. It is a huge business and one of the first in the region to reach such commercial status. Since its creation in 1870, the company has succeeded in staying family owned and is now at the 5th generation. The Guedes family is closely linked to the Vinho Verde production and history. They've been part of the regions innovation in their own way. For example, Aveleda was the first estate to bring extensive use of vine organization in rows instead of pergolas, thus, greatly enhancing efficiency.

Obviously, from an estate producing a total of 17 million bottles per year including the #1 sold Vinho Verde in the world: the Casal Garcias labels, I had some factory-style expectations.

I was partially right, as we arrived, we could see rows of humongous stainless steel vats and we knew we were at the right place. However, everything afterwards was a completely different world. The generous and gorgeous garden hides some unique treasures and follies such as a giant 200 years old Eucalyptus tree and a Manueline Window from the 16th century where D. João IV was supposedly pronounced king. Also, once in a while between the diversity of trees, plants and flowers, we would get a glimpse of the infinite rows of vines surrounding the estate.

The contrast that I felt on site was also present in the wines. As I was expecting some simple mass market wines, I was astonished to discover that their premium wines are nothing close to simple and easy but instead truly unique and characterful.



TEXT & PHOTOS BY BENOIT LEFÈVRE

Discover the region of Valtellina

With majestic terraced vineyards at the foot of the Alps, a rich gastronomy that highlights local products, and the multitude of outdoor activities it offers, Valtellina is without a doubt one of the most beautiful regions in Italy, but also one of the most unknown.

The Valtellina region is located at the northern end of Lombardy near the Swiss border. This valley that follows the course of the Adda River is bounded on the west by Lake Como and on the east by the Bormio massif.





OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Nature and sports lovers will not be disappointed. Hiking, cycling, climbing, rafting, paragliding, skiing, canyoning, mountain biking, you will be spoiled for choice to fill up with fresh air from the mountains! Valtellina is home to the fabulous Stelvio National Park, one of the largest protected natural reserves in Europe. In the region you will find lots of ski resorts and more than 300 kilometers of ski slopes. Trekking lovers can also opt for the beautiful trails of Orobie Valtellinesi Regional Park.

The small town of Sondrio, Valtellina's main city, is located in the center of the valley. It could be an excellent starting point to spread throughout the region. Perched on the heights of Sondrio, the ruins of Castel Grumello are not to be missed. You will find one of the most beautiful panoramas on the Sondrio Valley.

Mountain landscape near Valmalenco
Balneotherapy enthusiasts can visit the small spa town of Bormio. They can relax in hot outdoor baths with a breathtaking view of the mountains. In Bormio, take the opportunity to visit the Braulio liqueur factory and enjoy ice cream and desserts flavored with this herb liqueur, whose recipe is secretly kept ...



WINE TOURISM

You can't visit Valtellina region without drinking a nice glass of Nebbiolo, called here Chiavennasca. Vine has been cultivated for centuries and a hike through the vineyards is an experience worth seeing. Take the opportunity to visit one or two producers, who will tell you about the region's beautiful wine history and the challenges of growing grapes. Due to the topography and the cultivation of terraced vines, no mechanization is possible. From the maintenance of the vines to the harvest, everything is done by hand!

The Valtellina Wine Trail passes through the region's superb wine-growing landscapes.

GASTRONOMY

Oenological destination it is, but also gastronomic! Valtellina is an agricultural region where you may find many cheeses and meat specialties. The cheeses of the region, based on cow's milk, are called bitto and casera. Scimudin, meanwhile, is most often made from goat's milk. To taste Valtellina cheeses, we advise you to go to the Fratelli Ciaponni store, which has one of the most beautiful selections of cheeses from all over the region.

Bresaola della Valtellina is a salami made of beef, salted and then dried, and eaten raw. Salting lasts between 10 and 20 days and drying between 2 and 4 months at a temperature between 20 and 30C. Today, the vast majority of bresaola is manufactured industrially, and the meat is imported mainly from Argentina and Brazil. Instead, turn to artisanal bresaola made with beef grown in alpine pastures. The most emblematic culinary specialty of Valtellina is without a doubt the pizzoccheri, dark pasta made from buckwheat flour. Pizzoccheri are traditionally prepared with casera cheese, a lot of butter and cabbage. A mountain dish to proscribe if you're on a diet! Guarantor of tradition, the Academy of Pizzochero di Teglio jealously guard the authentic recipe of pizzoccheri ...

The sciatt, meanwhile, is a delicious donut of buckwheat flour stuffed with casera cheese.



ENRIC SOLER: XAREL-LO FOR MAKING GREAT WHITE WINES

Enric Soler is known for making some of the best white wines in Catalonia. Produced in very small quantities (from 7 to 8,000 bottles a year), his wines are praised by critics. During a recent stay in Barcelona, I visited Enric to talk about his project. I had the chance to discover his magnificent white wines.

On the death of his grandfather in 2003, Enric Soler inherited a small vineyard of xarel-lo in the village of Sabanells Font Rubi in the appellation Penedès. This sommelier professor in Barcelona decided to start producing wines.

The land on which the Enric vineyard is located was an airport used by the revolutionary troops during the Spanish Civil War. At the end of the war in 1945, vineyards were replanted. The old vines of xarel-lo that Enric inherited from his grandfather are about 70 years old.

Converting the vineyard to biodynamics

When he recovered the 0.89 hectare family vineyard, the vines were programmed to produce a lot of grapes and soils saturated with pesticides. In 2004, Enric Soler decided to convert the vineyard to biodynamics. Enric refutes the marketing side that leads several areas to convert to biodynamics. If he made this choice, it is primarily to rehabilitate his vines to a less intensive agriculture. Moreover, during difficult years, he found that his vineyard has suffered less than those of his neighbors, because the vineyard has adapted better to weather conditions.

In 2011, Enric Soler planted an extra hectare of xarel-lo on clay soils at 400 meters above sea level. Everyone told him that xarel-lo would not grow well at such an altitude. He nevertheless planted it and managed brilliantly to prove the opposite. All the grapes coming from this young vineyard are used in the elaboration of his Espanyalluchs cuvée

Only one grape variety featured: xarel-lo

The Catalan region of Penedès is a plateau landlocked between the mountains of Montserrat in the north, the Cordillera prelitoral, the sierra litoral and the Mediterranean Sea. It is, in surface area, the largest appellation of Catalonia. Its altitude varies between 250 and 800 meters. The climate is Mediterranean with 500 to 600 millimeters of rainfall per year.

The Penedès is especially known for the production of cava, the famous Spanish sparkling wine. Of the 28,000 hectares of vines in the appellation, 22,000 are for the production of cava. The almost two hectares of Enric appear almost anecdotal in an area where the properties have on average between 20 and 30 hectares of vines.





“What’s interesting about xarel-lo is that depending on the producer and the soil on which it grows it can produce very different wines” – Enric Soler, winemaker

The xarel-lo enters the blend of cava with other varieties such as parrellada, macabeu and sometimes chardonnay and malvasia. On the other hand, xarel-lo is increasingly vinified alone for the production of still white wines.

When worked at low yield, xarel-lo can give exceptional expressions of fruitiness and minerality. It often develops aromas of white flowers, almond, citrus and quince. It is also very suitable for aging in oak barrels.

The wines of Enric Soler

In winemaking, Enric Soler works in the most natural way possible. All wines are aged in barrels for 8 to 9 months. Enric nevertheless uses barrels of various ages to give very different profiles to his wines. His goal is to make the terroir speak for each of his wines.

I have a great memory of my visit to Enric. An ultra-friendly person and a passionate winemaker. And especially white wines of incredible purity and finesse. Thank you again Enric for this warm welcome! And I hope to come back soon to visit you!



Château Ducru-Beaucaillou

A RESPECTED SUPER-SECOND
THAT'S STILL UNDERRATED.

Passing across Saint-Julien and Beychevelle, there's one Château that stand out a lot, Château Ducru-Beaucaillou. It is perched on the slight hill where the sun shines the most, overlooking the river and the stone castle is just breathtaking. I mean, even more than the hundreds of other castles in the region. It has the honour to be one of the 14 second growths from the 1855 classification, but it is also considered as one of the rare “super seconds”. Now that's a title that is appealing to me. My experience there as a modest visitor was quite a revelation and added a strong sense of place to the identity of this great wine. Why did no one told me about how truly fantastic this was going to be. I wasn't ready.

By Joanie Metivier
Photo : Michael McDuff



I arrived ever so slightly late, some would say fashionably but I'm normally rooting for right on time. I was greeted by a very cheerful mister wearing a bright yellow apron. I learned rapidly that it was in fact Mr. René Lusseau, cellar master, accomplished winemaker and a product of the Médoc. He seemed to have something to say on every little detail. I know about the trouble he had with his Barrel cap supplier, the name of each worker that we crossed on our guided path, the perfect spots for pictures, that the lighted cat art in the barrel room did help to get rid of small unwanted visitor, the age of each tree, why he liked the traditional candles in the barrel room, etc. This man is a fun burst of information.

Here's some of it.

Five families have succeeded as owners of the estate. As early as the 13th century, the Bergeron family was already receiving visitors at the estate and built a good reputation. In 1795, the estate was sold to Bertrand Ducru who gave his name to the estate along with the "beaux cailloux" or nice rocks just in between gravel and pebbles that are the basis of the terroir. The next reign was the Johnson family. Nathaniel Johnson with the help of Ernest David, the manager of the Left Bank estate, created the first solution to the recurrent Bordeaux mildew problem. It is now known as "Bouillie bordelaise". It was with a broken heart that he sold the estate to the Desbarats family after the economic crash of 1929. The Desbarats only kept the property for twelve years, unable to bring it back to its previous reputable state.

The fifth and last family to own Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is the Borie Family. They also own Chateau Grand Puy Lacoste, Château Haut Batailley in Pauillac, Lalande-Borie produced from a vineyard purchased from Lagrange in the 70s as well as other vineyards in the region. Bruno Eugène Borie has joined his father in 1994 in the management team of the wine company. He was also Chairman of the “Conseil des grands crus classés” from 1997 to 1999.

Mister Borie, Master of the Castle is one of the few owners that uses the estate as habitation. The huge Palace has this homey feel to it. During my visit, he made a perfect grand entrance by slowly coming down the noble outdoor stairs towards us. He likes to meet and greet personally every visitor when possible as a perfectly suitable host. We had a discussion on the situation of the estate, its evolution, his passion and some politics thrown in there. Well, the late Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau did pay the estate a visit before, apparently a good friend of the family.

A little while prior Bruno Borie came in charge of the estate, there was a big TCA contamination. In the cellars, all the bottles from 1986 up to 1994 were contaminated and destroyed. All other vintages remaining have been recorked to stay in perfect condition. It is now a problem of the past but still feel like a fresh wound when Mr. Lusseau talks about it.

Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is an admirable example of the St-Julien appellation with the luxury of a widespread representation of its terroir. Château Lalande-Borie, also part of the Borie group is located on the west façade. It is truly a soft, fresh and stylish accessible wine; Croix de Beaucaillou is at the epicenter of the appellation Saint-Julien to be considered as an ambitious terroir wine and not a second wine; and of course, the Grand vin wearing the bright yellow iconic color.

Overall, Château Ducru-Beaucaillou stands out, yes for its beauty and quality, but furthermore for the rather Un-Bordeaux-Like proprietors. This estate will remain in my heart as welcoming, merry, down to earth, the actual rocky earth and ever so special. It's magical when you can add a big dose of personality to an already great wine.



A visit at Champagne Ruinart

By Joanie Metivier Photos: Michael McDuff

Champagne Ruinart, as the first established Champagne house in 1729, is quite unique. The House was founded by Nicolas Ruinart whose uncle, a Benedictine monk, Dom Thierry Ruinart had an intuition. He felt that the new “wine with bubbles”, developed in his native Champagne was promised a bright future. This was one year after a Royal Decree in 1728 whereby Louis XV gave his consent for sparkling wines to be shipped. In the mid-18th century, Ruinart acquired chalk quarries just outside of Reims. It is now the very well-known Crayères classified as a historical monument by the UNESCO in 1931. Frédéric Panaïotis is the cellar master since 2007 and it is under the shade of the LVMH group that Ruinart has developed its very own style and personality famous for its Blanc de Blancs, with its distinctive and quite beautiful bottle shape.



After crossing the house’s lobby and art room we took the dim-lighted stairs downward towards the poetic chalk cellars stretching 8 kilometers in length. In comparison to the manicured garden and very luxurious buildings upstairs, the caves had a rough life, with the harsh marks of picks and chisels still visible in spots, intricate marks, scribbles and engravings from World War I, when locals hid in these humid cache when Reims was nearly razed by German shelling. Of course, along those scars, there are stored bottles, ocean worth of dormant Champagne just waiting to be ready. One of the recent decision of Mister Panaïotis was to reinstate traditional corks with the metal clamp for all of the Dom Ruinart bottles. Changes has yet to be seen in the final products, but the idea is to get a more rustic feel to the elaborate and extended ageing.



Antinori

– Te Duce Proficio

THE ELEGANCE, FINESSE AND
BALANCE OF ANTINORI WINES

The Antinori family has been making wine for 26 generations since 1385. It is the 10th oldest family business in Italy and one of the most important wine companies. Its roots are in Tuscany, but over time the company has expanded and is now represented in several regions of Italy in Umbria, Puglia, Piedmont, Lombardy and Italy and in other countries and regions such as Napa Valley, Washington State, Chile and Hungary.

Although they are perceived as being traditional, Antinori has been a pioneer in the integration of international grape varieties in the making of its wines which has been the cornerstone of its success with its Bolgheri wines. As Marchese Piero Antinori likes to say: “Our ancient roots play an important role in what we do but they have never hindered our spirit of innovation”.

By Claude Lalonde

Today, the company is managed by Albiera Antinori along with his sisters Allegra and Alessia who are directly involved in the company. Marchese Piero is now the honorary president of the company. “We have demonstrated, over the years, that in Tuscany and in Umbria there was the possibility of producing excellent wines, widely recognized at an international level, which showed both elegance and finesse while maintaining their original character. Our library contains many volumes, but for us it is not rich enough. We have a mission that has not yet been entirely carried out, something that drives us to express the vast potential of our vineyards and to reconcile new discoveries yet to be disclosed with the patrimony of Tuscan style. A patrimony which includes tradition, culture, agriculture, art, and literature all of which represents the identity of the Marchesi Antinori company. One of our main strengths is the fact that we are Tuscan or, if you prefer, our fundamentally Tuscan character”, says Piero Antinori.: Piero Antinori.

During a recent trip to Italy, I made sure to visit the new Antinori winery which is located in Tuscany, in San Casciano near Florence. And what a visit it was ! First, the architecture is simply breathtaking! The contours and shape of the buildings are in perfect harmony with the landscape. From the highway you know that the winery is there, but you can't really see it as it blends so well with nature. And the visit was in a class by itself and the guides were quite knowledgeable. Well, I tested them with a few questions...and you know what&? They really knew their stuff. And the wines...well I must say I have always been an Antinori fan. Anyway, if you ever go to Tuscany, make sure you visit the new Antinori winery.



BY JOANIE METIVIER
PHOTO: MICHAEL MCDUFF



A & D WINES

Located in the sub-region of Baião, on top of the hill, overlooking the valley with a clear distinction between the Douro and the Vinho Verde, A&D wines is one hell of a gorgeous estate.

Quinta de Santa Teresa was acquired in 2015 by Alexandre Gomes and his wife Dialina, two passionate engineers. With the casa de Arrabalde and Quinta dos Espinhoso that they already owned, it's a total of 45 ha which they completely transformed in a short amount of time into A&D wines project. Dialina remembers when they first arrived, at the estate, before any organic process was triggered, it was lifeless and weeded. Now, the estate is lush, filled with a diversity of flowers and animals. Infrastructures are now being put in place to encourage wine tourism and make the most of this unique location.

THE HOME OF AVESSO

They even found a more than 200 years old Avesso Vine. Baião being the home of this superb and rich variety which is gaining popularity especially as a monovarietal. It's not the only old vines of the estate and they are a very important part of the A&D style. Besides the local Avesso, the whole Monólogo serie, the newest references from the estate since 2015, showcase singular unique parcels with specific varieties, including Arinto, Chardonnay, Malvasia Fina and Sauvignon Blanc.

BAIÃO IS WHERE THE DOURO REGION MEETS VINHO VERDE





Domaine Des Salamandres

I discovered Domaine Des Salamandres this fall at The Magog-Orford harvest party. The complexity and authenticity of the products convinced me of visiting the farm and meeting the people behind these beautiful nectars.

A Story of Passion and Innovation

On a beautiful plot tucked in the hills of Cover Hill in Hemmingford, Denise Lavoie and Sylvain Haut cultivate pears of the Flemish, Bosc, and Bartlett varieties, along with the grape varieties Geisenheim, Frontenac (black and grey), Seyval and Vidal.

What started out as a passion project transformed itself into a family business, then into one of the best-regarded perries producing domains in Québec, all the while remaining small-scale. Their daughters Karelle and Camylle have recently joined the domain.

By Kristine Mansuy

Photo: Andrée-Anne Larochelle



Sylvain, previously from La Face Cachée de la Pomme (Domaine Neige), managed to develop a strong expertise in agriculture as well as wine and sweet cider elaboration. Driven by passion, it's this flair and talent that launched him into the creation of pear-derived products. His partner Denise is behind him on this adventure. Their vision and tireless work allowed them to bring these high quality products into the market.

Since 2014, Christian Barthomeuf (Clos Saragnat) has been their consulting œnologist and their products have been naturally made (with no added yeast) since 2012. Since the formation of this collaboration, Sylvain and Denise are proudly and enormously encouraged by the evolution of the wines, drawing closer every day to the domain they envision and have always wanted to share. Both the vineyard and the orchard are cultivated with the utmost respect for nature.

The results of the team's know-how speak for themselves. Every product is unique and boasts a refinement that will have people talking. On top of producing perries, ice wines, mistelles and late-harvested wines, they compose elegant dry white wines. There's plenty of love to go around, but my heart belongs to the Vidal sec 2016 (scents of honey, pear and fresh parsley; striking minerality, reminiscent of Austrian wines) and to the pear wine Poiré Plat 2015 (honey wine style), quite simply without precedent among its type!

Stay tuned... Denise and Sylvain won't stop now. Bold ideas are still coming their way: the Riesling variety will soon join the stellar lineup of this property. The Domaine Des Salamandres never ceases to amaze with their innovation and desire to do things right.

A splendid encounter with people of inspiring simplicity and great generosity; wine-making artisans dedicated to their conviction and passion who reaches out to us with their exceptional products.

Cheers!



A VISIT AT CHAMPAGNE DEUTZ

By Joanie metivier
Photos: Michael Mcduff

Champagne is something truly unique in many ways. There's an aura and mood surrounding this name that is both precise and mysterious at the same time. It's a mythic and exciting product that reached impressive distinction and status. This prominence has affected the appellation but also brands in a more specific ways. The truth is behind its unique character, the champagne hides a mosaic of micro-terroirs, a vast array of definite styles and overall a multifaceted personality. What is the true differentiation between a bottle and another? What is the authentic spirit and world of each of the prestigious houses?

Give out love for Champagne Deutz, it deserves it. Even one of their Prestige cuvée is called Amour de Deutz. Often considered as "the best kept secret of Champagne", the same could be said of the lovely, charming castle in the center of Aÿ. Champagne Deutz, one of the founding members of the Syndicat des Grandes Marques, was established in 1882 by William Deutz et Hubert Geldermann and remained in the same very central location in Aÿ ever since. It was bearing both name at first, Deutz-Gelbermann. The house is celebrating its 180th anniversary this year but doesn't have one wrinkle on its image.

Overall, the style is an agile and skilled balance between the depth and character the best pinot noirs Aÿ can provide and the elegance and enlightening aspect of Chardonnay. It shows a knowledge of the different Grand cru and Premier cru terroirs and thrives from interesting long-term relationships with their quality growers and producers within specific and beneficial locations. With land ownership being so costly and hard to acquire because of competition, houses that didn't start out as big owners don't really have a choice but to turn out to the thousands of producers. This special relation between Maisons and growers is at the very basis of the regions history and unity.



The Deutz style is a dense and tense one, definitely destined to connoisseurs and appreciative of distinction and finesse. Between the brut Classic, which has been revisited to become one of the most appreciated non-vintage brut of the big houses, especially among sommeliers to which the marketing is targeted, and the polished sheen of the special Amour de Deutz. In all the products, there's an unspoken sophistication, tension joined by the impressive quality level and complexity, yet with a very approachable and silky texture.

An Agile and skilled balance



Deutz obviously have a traditional approach, yet with its blend of all styles and general outstanding quality it still appeal to every market, consumers of every age, the new wave of sommeliers as well as the established, and every wine lovers out there.



NEGONDOS VINEYARD

Nowadays, approximately 8 to 10% of the world's vineyards are organic and this phenomenon is in strong growth, but let's go back 25 years. Who was talking about organic wine? And, here in 1993, a couple from Quebec (Mario Plante and Carole Desrochers) put themselves in the lead to produce the first organic wines in Quebec. Organic means: no synthetic chemicals, sulphite limitation, much more manual labor and many other quite compelling implications. Exceptional beings with strong, well-grounded beliefs are needed to do what they have done and continue after 25 years. They are true pioneers!

Mario and Pauline, after trying to make wine from Californian grapes, bought expropriated land in Mirabel "a land woven of rocks" of 2 hectares (imagine it was necessary to remove 110 trucks of rocks before planting the vines) and get into organic wine. But at the beginning, it was not easy because Quebec organic expertise was virtually non-existent or really embryonic. There was a bit of expertise and experimentation in France but the weather conditions in Quebec are very different, so the advices were not necessarily applicable.

By Claude Lalonde

This land, Mario chose it according to various sources of soil analysis, the level of slopes and according to the micro-climate of the region. He has studied the various grape varieties, the number of sun units needed to bring the grapes to perfect ripening and the orientation of the soil. He decided to focus on rustic and semi-rustic vines (Seyval, Cayuga etc.) which will prove to be the most judicious choice. For him, no *Vitis Vinifera* (so-called noble grapes such as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, etc) because climatic conditions cannot allow, according to him, a good ripening of the grapes. In addition, the geo-textiles used to protect them from the cold must be discarded after 5 to 7 years, which is not very organic according to Mario.

They do everything themselves on their vineyard and are completely autonomous. While I spoke with Mario, Carole jumped on her tractor to go to work on the vineyard. In the morning, around 5-6 o'clock the same day, Mario carried out a biological treatment of his vines to control diseases. All vinification is done by them. For them, it's really a way of life.

They make wines to their liking. They now have 3 hectares and make 10,000 bottles of wine (80% in white and 20% in red) with their 10,000 vines. They mainly use Seyval, Cayuga, Marquette (which makes the wine fun according to Mario) and some other grape varieties. But, if it were only for him, it would only be white because they are the most appreciated wines. Their yields are quite low, which is a guarantee of quality. They bring a lot of importance to the maturity of their grapes and we see it when we taste them. The wines are handled as little as possible, the work is done by gravity, the filtration is minimal and the use of sulphites is reduced to a minimum. All their wines are selling well and quite fast besides that! Already, only a few of their wines remained with relatively limited quantities. You have to go earlier in the year to get some. Especially, if you want to get your hands on bottles of Julep (Their super good orange wine). They only produce 2,000 bottles per year.

Négondos vineyard in Mirabel –

**The first organic
vineyard in Quebec is
to celebrate its 25th
anniversary!**





A visit at Champagne Bollinger

BY JOANIE METIVIER

PHOTO MICHAEL MCDUFF

Champagne Bollinger is often associated with glamour, celebrity and class. Partially because of the hype around its long-term relationship and exclusivity with James Bond, but also the events and general marketing approach. It is a celebrity Champagne filled with character without any doubts. But besides these star relationship and prestigious fans, Bollinger also has its very own history and style defined both by its legacy, its founder and own singularities. From the Bollinger dynasty, Madame Elizabeth Bollinger, and the image of her cycling through the vineyards is a proper descriptive for the house's story. This strong businesswoman, witty and cheerful, was the character pushing toward innovation such as the original R.D. cuvée but also the reason the house was so late to create their own Rosé cuvée.

With a backbone made of Pinot Noir and a specific style preserved by their exceptional reserve wines collection, in magnums please, and of course, the revealed and outspoken use of wood, the Bollinger style is incredibly bold. Professions and savoir-faire are so important to Bollinger that an on-site Tonnelier workshop ensures the maintenance of the precious barrels. Full-time riddlers are in charge of part of the production in a traditional way. It's a classical approach with a memory of time and method. Wherever ancestral techniques have proved to guarantee the highest quality, they are preserved however challenging this choice might prove from natural corks to the very particular Non-grafted vines grown in the traditional en foule layering system of les Vieilles Vignes Françaises.

M. CHAPOUTIER

FAC & SPERA - DO & HOPE

This is the motto of the family who is now renowned worldwide for much more than its wines. The house is a representation of respect and audacity with values that are pushed forward into each and every decision. Hermitage is truly a special place. Not only is it breath-taking but you can feel the community around it and the work that is put in every parcel, every step, and every vine on the hill. It is the first place the sun reach in the morning and the last place it leaves. We stayed on top of hermitage waiting for the sunset but had to wait forever since the sun and heat kept on forever.

Hermitage is the only place in the world where the four geological ages are visible from afar starting with granite from the primary time. This offers a diversity of terroir in a very limited space that is unique and can't be found anywhere else. Even with the Prestige of the region and it being the birthplace of the very fashionable syrah, some producers are confessing having trouble selling hermitage wines. It's hard to pinpoint the reason; it may be from lack of modernism or impactful marketing, from how emerging and very dynamic Côte-Rotie has become lately or from the ever growing international market. Hermitage is still and will stay a special iconic place representing the heart of northern Rhône but there will be place for other region to shine like Saint-Joseph with its incredible age worthy whites.

This is the parcel "les greffieux" from Domaine Chapoutier. This was the very first day of the harvest and dozens of cheerful pickers were arriving with buckets and smiles to work under the shining sun.

According to Michel Chapoutier: «to propose an appellation d'origine contrôlée is to propose above all an expression of the terroir». This man has a strong respect for the terroir, the soil and the pure expression of vines. This is why he started working on Biodynamics as soon as 1991. It was one of the first decisions he made when he took the head of the estate in 1990.