

KOT Selections Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2019

Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of the KOT Selections Quarterly Newsletter.

We hope that 2019 has started out well for you; we are writing this the day after Yuan Xiao, as the Lion dancers are shaking off their costumes and the echoes of drum performances are fading into fond memories.

Many of our clients have reported successful Chinese New Year periods; heart-felt congratulations to you, and let's move onwards and upwards. KOT Selections is delighted to support you in your missions to provide the best gastronomic experiences that Singapore has to offer.

Contents

A - Arrivals

B - Brief

C - Comment &

Coverage

D - Detour

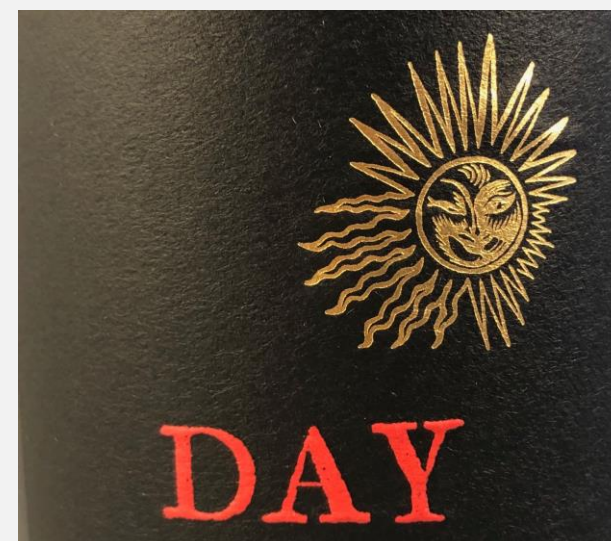
E - Events

F - Finish

Arrivals

2016 Day El Diablo Vineyard Zinfandel

Ehren Jordan's pet project at Day Zinfandel is also underpinned by the same focus on cool climate sites and terroir-driven wines as Failla. The second vintage of collaboration between Ehren and El Diablo's owner-founder, Hector Garcia, this is a stunning, meaty and minty big-food Zin from the Russian River Valley AVA.



\$65



Bordelet Nouvelle Vague

Pioneering *cidriculteur* Eric Bordelet is best known for his genre-defining *sidres* and *poirés*, so the *Nouvelle Vague* might come as a surprise. With its balance of sugar and gorgeous apple compote, it's a wonderfully integrated entry-level cider that sets the bar high for the rest of Eric's artisanal range. Dangerously easy to drink, at 5.5% ABV you'll be forgiven for letting this make an afternoon appearance.

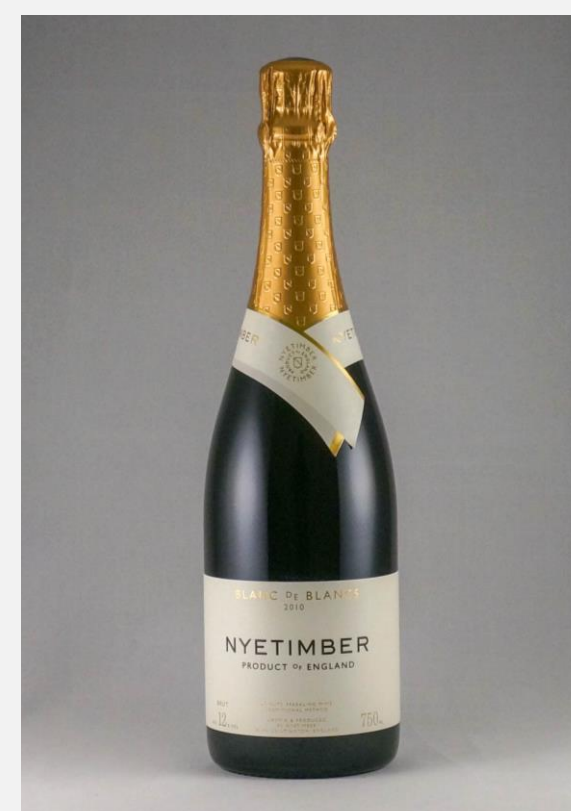
Available in 33cl bottles or 20 litre kegs.

\$8 / \$250

2013 Nyetimber Blanc de Blancs

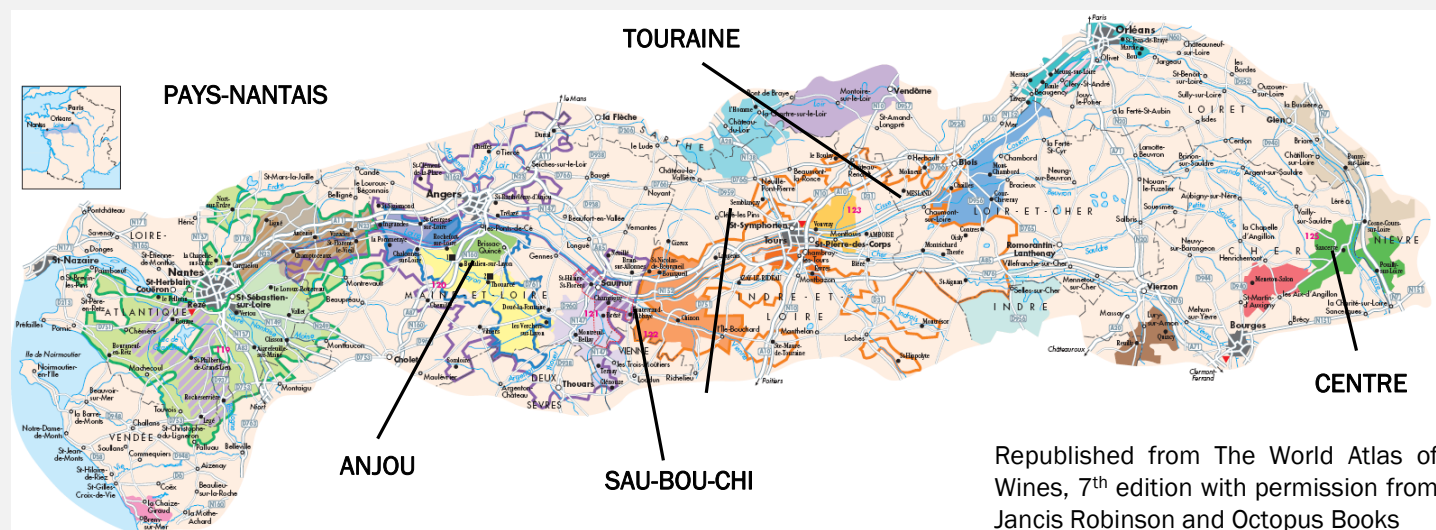
We're very excited for the impending rollover from the 2010 Blanc de Blancs to the new 2013 vintage. With 5 years before disgorgement, this is a fabulously integrated wine that could be laid down for up to 20 years for a stunning profile of butterscotch and hazelnut. Made only from Sussex fruit, this is a wonderful example of why pioneering Nyetimber is garnering a reputation as the *crème de la crème* of English sparkling wine.

\$80



Brief

The Loire Valley is the spiritual centre of our portfolio, with a stunning diversity of delicious, balanced and interesting wines along France's longest river. We journey from its mouth to one of its sources in this season's brief, as a prelude to showcasing these wines in April's trade tastings.



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PAYS-NANTAIS

The Pays-Nantais is centred on the maritime city of Nantes, and stretches inland from where the River Loire empties into the Atlantic Ocean to the east of Ingrandes. It was historically a red wine-producing region, until the severe winter of 1709 (which killed off many vines), and when demand for a neutral base white wine (to supply distillers in Holland) led to the widespread plantation of Melon de Bourgogne, which is better

known as Muscadet.

That same neutrality has allowed Muscadet, at its best, to be a vivid expression of otherwise subtle geological differences. The rich loam and clay topsoils of the region disguise their complex origins in the ancient *Massif Armoricaïn*. Wherever the granite is quartz-rich, Muscadet is saline and crystalline; with more feldspar, it takes on density without losing verve. On gneiss and orthogneiss, especially in warm vintages, Melon de Bourgogne harks back to its roots further east. Schist and mica-schist provide both richness of texture and mineral tension. And the dark gabbro outcrops around Clisson and Gorges produce the most primeval wines of all, Ur-Muscadets which whisper of rocks and oceans.

ANJOU

Three rivers define the Anjou – the Loire, Layon and Aubance, the latter two snaking their way through the *coteaux* to join the first just west of Angers. While Cabernet Franc, Gamay, Grolleau Noir and Gris, Pineau d'Aunis are all planted on the Paleozoic schist which dominates the

landscape, Chenin Blanc is the undisputed queen of the Anjou, producing long-lived, imposing whites. Savennières, north of the Loire, produces powerful, regal whites which require patience in the cellar and at the table. South of the Loire, sweet wines are more common in the exceptional microclimates along the Layon and Aubance, where the steep banks are protected from the southerly winds, and retain enough moisture close to harvest time to aid the onset of botrytis.

SAU-BOU-CHI

We depart from convention by treating Saumur, Bourgueil (and St-Nicolas de Bourgueil) and Chinon as a single sub-region; Saumur is usually grouped with Anjou to the west, and the other appellations with Touraine to the east. It is an area of transitions – from the Touraine's chalk to Anjou's ancient rocks, from the continental climate of the centre to the softer maritime weather of the coast – and of conflict – between the Celtic tribes of Andes and Turones in ancient days, and the Plantagenets and Capetians more recently.

Contents

A - Arrivals

B - Brief

C – Comment &
Coverage

D - Detour

E - Events

F - Finish



The region is best known for its elegant, supple Cabernet Franc, where a warm climate allows the fruit to ripen. There is a further distinction between vineyards on the chalky slopes and the alluvial plains closer to the river, with the former typically producing longer-lived, more powerful wines. The whites, made from Chenin Blanc, are remarkable, combining the finesse of Vouvray and the power of Anjou, and not as famous (or pricey) as they used to be.

TOURAINE

The Touraine is a fractal of the Loire, a quilt of tributaries, undulations and villages thrown over a bed of chalk. The tufting is different in each appellation: scattered sand and gravel along the river, loam on the plateau, silex in the north and rich clay to the east. Long considered the garden of France for its natural bounty (and beauty), it's home to a veritable *vinifera* cornucopia.

In the main appellations along the Loire, one can find both crunchy, minerally Cabernet Franc and tender yet strong Chenin Blanc, but strike out to the tributaries and the varieties remain stubbornly diverse.

There's spicy, perfumed Pineau d'Aunis everywhere; intense, Romorantin in Cour-Cheverny, not to mention fruity, fun Grolleau. Malbec, called Côt locally, is less tannic and more refined in this climate; Gamay, with a touch more spine than in Beaujolais; Chardonnay is almost always unoaked and the better for it. To the east, vineyards are given over to fragrant Sauvignon Blanc, and silky, high-toned Pinot Noir.

CENTRE

More than any other part of the Loire, the wines of the Centre have swayed to the dictates of Parisians' fickle tastebuds – from steely, green Sauvignon of the 1970s meant to be gulped while

dragging on a Gitanes, listening to Gainsbourg or Brel, to the equally thirst-quenching Pinot Noir (rosé and red) that populated countless wine lists in the 1980s, to the enzymed and yeasted New World wannabes of the 1990s, the winemakers here have managed to keep demand and prices high by adapting to the Parisian (and global) thirst for instant-gratification beverages.

But there is a different *Vignobles du Centre*, one that shares more than just chalk bedrock and soft weather with its less preening neighbours in the Touraine and Auvergne. It is populated by a mix of stubborn traditionalists and a band of young, exciting (and excitable) vigneron who see the potential in this region's vineyards and vines. Both groups are less beholden to Parisians and fashion than the large estates, and work organically (if not biodynamically)

Contents

A - Arrivals

B - Brief

C – Comment &

Coverage

D - Detour

E - Events

F - Finish

Comment & Coverage

Last week we woke up to the tail-end of Twitter-downpour (not quite a storm, and if you want to be pedantic, it was actually on Facebook) surrounding a review of Eric Texier's 2017 Côtes du Rhône Chat Fou by none other than Gabrielle Union.

Depending on your age bracket, you might recognise Gabrielle from Hollywood toe-tappers like *Bring It On*, or *10 Things I Hate About You*. Those of you who don't have time for late-1990s rom-coms may instead recognise her as Obama's appointee on the

National Advisory Committee for Violence Against Women.

In February 2019, Gabrielle used her voice and platform to speak for an excellent new cause. In a video posted by [Women's Health](#), Gabrielle unwinds some of the hype around natural wines and proclaims Eric's Chat Fou as her favourite red, natural wine in the flight. While we agree with Gabrielle's assessment of the "sneaky suspicious cat" on the label, we would also shout from the rooftops about the wine's unadulterated cherry notes.



Detour

While we're playing the Game of Rhônes this March, a glass of Châteauneuf-du-Pape should take the edge off waiting for the final season of Game of Thrones, airing on 15th April. Forget the lack of seasons in Singapore, and the foreignness of the catchy phrase, "Winter is Coming". Wrap up in a fleecy blanket and fill up a banquet-worthy goblet.

In between the battles and betrayals, you might be gripped by a very different sort of conflict. France has taken something of a beating in the early rounds of the Six Nations Championship, so they'll be fighting hard in the coming weeks.

You could try yelling "Allez les bleus," at the House of Arryn, but we're unsure they will

understand. Instead, we're pretty sure that Rhône-boy and doyen of the French international side, Émile Ntamack (born and bred in Lyon) would appreciate being toasted with a dram from Eric Texier, whose winery in Charnay is a mere 30-minute drive away from Ntamack's home-town.

Events

MARCH	
4 th	Eric Texier
11 th	Domaines du Trapadis <i>and</i> Charvin
18 th	Château de Trinquedel <i>and</i> Domaine des Bernardins
25 th	Domaine Alain Graillot

Thank you to all our trade clients who have been attending trade tastings throughout January and February. A gentle reminder that we will be accepting pre-orders on all wines featured in trade tastings for the next two weeks following the trade tasting. Subsequently, we will not be able to guarantee availability in Singapore.

Contents

A - Arrivals

B - Brief

C - Comment & Coverage

D - Detour

E - Events

F - Finish

In **April** we will be focussing on the first tranche of new arrivals from the **Loire**. Keep your eyes peeled for the second tranche of Loire arrivals, due in August 2019.

In **May**, we will be delighted to welcome brand-new winegrowers from **Italy**, and new arrivals from our trusted winegrowers in the **Alsace**.

Finish

While we value a long finish in our wines, we prefer a pithy finish to the newsletter.

If you're looking for a producer in a league of their Rhône, we suggest you keep your eyes peeled in the coming weeks. For now, we're tight-lipped but we Mauves secured a precious allocation from a cult-producer... This is Syrah-tainly going to be

snapped up quickly, so we recommend keeping your finger on the buzzer. You won't want to be out in the cold like St.-Joseph Bloggs having missed out on this unique chance.

Rest assured, there have been Gonons-on at KOT that we're Pierre-ing to announce soon.

