

BIBENDUM TIMES

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A REGIONAL FRANCE REFRESH

Meet some of our new French producers reclaiming 'terroir'

In an increasingly digital world, it's heartening to come across people with a profound connection to the earth and to their craft – the latest additions to the Bibendum family possess just that. Whether from Jura, Burgundy or the Loire, they are characterised by a deep desire to create an honest expression of their respective terroirs, by promoting biodiversity in the vineyard and taking a hands-off approach in the winery.

Our French wine buyer Robert Mathias says: "Our new French producers each share a strong pride for their region and their region's history."

Their work is based on a respect for the land and an ambition to communicate a sense of place through their wines."

With customers increasingly interested in the provenance and sustainable credentials of what they're consuming, it's a great time to introduce you to some of the latest additions to our French portfolio.



Chateau Guiraud, Bordeaux



Domaine Marc Delienne, Beaujolais

Domaine de la Pinte Jura

Biodynamic Jura

The special thing about Domaine de la Pinte is the soil. Savagnin loves the blue marl clay surrounding the domaine, while red grapes do fantastically well in the areas of red clay. Pierre Martin manages things these days and is a firm believer in biodynamics, which helps loosen these tough clay soils so the vines can get the nutrients they need.

"A biodynamic estate is a living organism where every element is important: the soil, the plant, and the work of humans. This is the very definition of terroir."

Pierre Martin, *Domaine de la Pinte*

Domaine Marc Delienne Beaujolais

Stripped-back Fleurie

After quitting his job in Paris, Marc Delienne studied winemaking, before buying some vines in Fleurie. In the vineyard it's all about biodiversity among his 40-80-year-old vines, while in the cellar it's a stripped-back approach that gives us these powerful expressions of Fleurie.

Domaine Bruno Dubois Loire

A haven for birds, bats and bees

Before settling in Saumur-Champigny, Bruno Dubois worked at Domaine Lapierre in Morgon, where his passion for organics and non-interventionist winemaking was born. Bruno's vineyards

are inter-planted with native brush and trees, while bird houses, bat shelters and bee hives are dotted around the estate.

Maison Caroline Lestime Burgundy

Exploring her own creativity in Burgundy

Daughter of vigneron Jean-Noel Gagnard, Caroline Lestime still makes the wines at her father's domaine, but started 'Maison Caroline Lestime' in 2016 as a way to explore her own creativity and forge her own identity. She buys grapes from a variety of small growers, to vinify separately and explore the variety of flavours her local terroir has to offer.

"I try to reflect the terroir in my wines, to bring the terroir into the glass."

Caroline Lestime, *Maison Caroline Lestime*

Chateau Guiraud Bordeaux

Pioneers of organic Sauternes

In 2011 Chateau Guiraud became the first Grand Cru Classe to be certified organic. Today you can find special nesting hives dotted around the vineyard to encourage a huge variety of pollinating insects and spiders. The wines are classically balanced, with body and texture from the Semillon, and wonderful aromatics and minerality from their Sauvignon Blanc.

Take a look at our website to find out more about these exciting new producers or ask your Account Manager if you'd like to try any of their wines.



Bibendum in Ireland

A wealth of opportunities across the Irish Sea

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Wine Minds apprentices

Sam Ameye and Romain de Courcy spill the beans on their experience so far

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Bibendum & Cubitt House

Why passion, premiumisation and people are key

Find out more on page 07

HEMCGROWN TALENT

We're delighted to unveil two new additions to our English portfolio

Albourne Estate and Fitz come from two ends of the English winemaking spectrum and we're very excited to be welcoming them both. With Albourne we have small production, terroir-focussed wines, while Fitz is all about fun, fruit and fizz!

English wine buyer Jamie Avenell says: "I am super excited to be adding these two new producers to our portfolio. I've admired Albourne for some time for their quality wines, and fantastic packaging. And Fitz brings something entirely different to the category, both in style and price point."



Alison Nightingale, Albourne Estate



Fitz

ALBOURNE ESTATE

Meet Alison Nightingale

The vineyard and winery at Albourne are run by co-owner Alison Nightingale. A former high-flying marketer, Alison decided to escape the politics and pressure of juggling corporate life with the demands of a young family to pursue something more fulfilling. After studying viticulture and winemaking part-time at Plumpton College, she took the plunge by acquiring 10ha of vines in Sussex, where her wines have already received international acclaim – IWC Silver for her Blanc de Blancs and IWSC Silver for her Blanc de Noirs. With lots of new and experimental plans in the pipeline, we're excited to have her on board!

How to grow the best grapes in Sussex

Production at Albourne's south-facing Sussex vineyards is kept deliberately small to enable meticulous attention to detail. All the grapes are grown sustainably on site, where the slopes and soils provide excellent drainage, low frost risk and maximum sun exposure – all critical factors to ensure the grapes reach optimum ripeness at this northerly latitude. Currently, they grow seven grape varieties: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier for the sparkling wines; Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir, Bacchus and Ortega for the still wines.

"As a winery producing wine only from our own grapes, we're focussed on quality and on innovation. We're constantly looking at new ideas and better ways of doing things."

Alison Nightingale, Albourne Estate

FITZ

England's first Charmat sparkling wine

And now for something completely different... Against the backdrop of the burgeoning English sparkling wine industry, three enthusiasts saw a gap for something a little bit friendlier – for both palate and wallet. And so the idea for English Charmat method wine was born. The Charmat method, as well as being a quicker way of fermenting the wine, gives the wines a fresher and more easy-drinking style, which appeals to a lot of fizz fans. The intention was to offer an approachable wine for any occasion.

What the word 'Fitz' really means...

But while the grapes are grown in England and the wine is made by an English winemaker in Worthing, Sussex, it cannot be called English sparkling wine (only 'sparkling wine'), as it hasn't been

made using the traditional method. And this is where the name comes in. 'Fitzroy' was an Anglo-Norman name meaning 'son of the king', usually given to an illegitimate son or daughter of the king. As the 'bastard child of English sparkling wine' (their words) they felt the name was fitting, and so 'Fitz' was born.

"My philosophy behind Fitz is to use the best grape varieties from around the UK for our fresh, fruit-forward, fun and approachable fizz."

Dan Cahill, Fitz

With English Wine Week coming up in May, it could be the perfect opportunity to explore the increasing diversity of the English wine category and offer your customers a range of styles and price points.

Speak to your Account Manager to find out more.



Albourne Estate Multi Vintage

As its name suggests, this wine is made from selected base wines from multiple vintages to produce an approachable and immediately-enjoyable style. It is made from Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier using the traditional method and spends a minimum of 36 months on lees. Open and expressive, the wine is packed with aromas of sweet baked bread, dried apricots, nuts and candied citrus peel.



Fitz English Charmat NV

Fitz is made using the Charmat method, a production technique most associated with the production of Prosecco. It is made from Chardonnay along with a mixture of aromatic varieties that thrive in the English climate, such as Seyval Blanc, Reichensteiner and Madeliene Angevine. The resulting wines are fruit driven, easy-drinking and approachable in style.

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

Introducing six talented new producers from Germany, Spain, New Zealand and the USA

Weingut Robert Weil Germany

Where Riesling rules supreme

Weingut Robert Weil is a real 'Riesling Chateau'. Come harvest, the grapes are hand-selected and picked during a mammoth 17 passes through the vineyard, spanning 8-10 weeks. After gentle whole-cluster pressing, natural sedimentation is used to fine the must. The resulting wines are elegant, rich and exude class.

"Weil Rieslings are elegant and fruit-driven as well as complex and concentrated."

Wilhelm Weil, Weingut Robert Weil



Weingut Robert Weil

Ronsel do Sil Spain

Native varieties from Ribeira Sacra

Maria Jose Yravedra's 2ha of vineyards, brim with local grape varieties. The name comes from 'ronsel', which is the furrow left by a boat when it sails on water. In this way, Ronsel do Sil aims to leave its mark of passion and respect for the landscape and wine culture of Ribeira Sacra.



Maria Jose Yravedra, Ronsel do Sil



Cuevas de Arom

Cuevas de Arom Spain

New wave, elegant Garnacha

Set up by three friends, Cuevas de Arom use grapes from dry-farmed, old-bush Garnacha in Aragon. The aim of this experimental winery was to make a more elegant style of Garnacha. They experiment with anything, from whole bunch fermentation to varying amounts of skin contact and extraction, to make wines of incredible depth and freshness.



Las Moradas de San Martín

Las Moradas de San Martín Spain

100-year old Garnacha vines in D.O. Madrid

Las Moradas de San Martín is set in a unique landscape, surrounded by pine woods, holm oaks, juniper and rock rose. The 100-year-old Garnacha vines grow in sub-volcanic rock, granite and sand, which give the wines their essence: depth and length balanced with natural acidity. The wines are subtle and elegant while maintaining a lively freshness.

Kelly Washington Wines New Zealand

Exploring sub-regionality in Marlborough and Central Otago

Husband and wife winemaking team, Simon Kelly and Tamra Kelly-Washington, source a diverse range of parcels from trusted organic growers in Marlborough and Central Otago, with a particular focus on high-density planting and old, high-altitude vines. Their aim in every bottle is to showcase the sub-regionality of New Zealand's wine growing regions.



Kelly Washington Wines

"I think that, as we could never be in a position to buy our own vineyards, we are really fortunate to be able to work with like-minded growers who take a real pride in what they produce"

Tamra Kelly-Washington



Kelly Washington Wines



Ironstone

Ironstone USA

A real family business

It was by growing sweet cherries that John Kautz first began to see the potential in Lodi's unique micro-climate. Then in 1989, this crop-farmer-turned-grape-grower took the plunge and decided to build his own winery. Today the whole family is involved in the business, with John (now 88) still an active participant and overseer.



Ironstone

"Working in a family business is great. Everything I do, I am doing for my family. We work hard and we believe in what we are doing."

Joan Kautz (daughter of founder John Kautz), Ironstone

BIBENDUM IN IRELAND

A wealth of opportunities across the Irish Sea

A flourishing wine scene signals huge opportunities for growth on the island of Ireland, and Bibendum will be partnering with Irish wine merchant Gilbeys to make the most of it.

We caught up with Duncan Millar, head of wine for C&C in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, to find out what customers can look forward to.

Who are Gilbeys?

Dating back to the 1850s, the Gilbeys brand is a cornerstone of the Irish wine trade. Their extensive knowledge of the market is based on decades of experience and a talented team of regional sales representatives.

Why partner with Bibendum?

The opportunity with Bibendum lies in gaining access to an extensive and varied portfolio which spans the globe. For Gilbeys Sales Director Duncan Millar, the partnership is about opening new doors. "Bibendum's portfolio offers a huge variety of countries of origin that you don't really find in Ireland. Access to these wines gives us the opportunity to expand conversations with luxury hotels, Michelin-star restaurants and premium, wine-led venues."

"Through partnership with Bibendum, we're hoping to increase the business we do on the island of Ireland – doubling the wine business over the next three years. We're excited about bringing Bibendum's core values and culture to our own wine business," he says.

What's in it for customers?

The benefit to new and existing customers lies in the combination of Gilbeys' existing distribution network and service, with added wines from Bibendum! A bespoke selection from Bibendum's portfolio will be housed in Gilbeys' bonded warehouse in Dublin, where wines can be ordered for next day delivery to any of their regional satellite depots. Gilbeys customer Shiva Gautam (Montys of Kathmandu) says, "I'm looking forward to having access to the vast portfolio that Bibendum carries".

What's the plan?

Bibendum will be launching in the Republic of Ireland as 'Gilbeys with Bibendum', and in Northern Ireland as 'Bibendum', in spring 2019, with tasting events in Cork, Galway, Dublin and Belfast during the first week of April.

"Bibendum's portfolio offers a huge variety of countries of origin that you don't really find in Ireland. Access to these wines gives us the opportunity to expand conversations with luxury hotels, Michelin-star restaurants and premium, wine-led venues."



The Irish wine scene

We asked Gilbeys national On Trade wine manager, Therese O'Toole, to tell us what people are drinking across the Irish Sea.

How do people drink wine in Ireland?

79% of wine purchased is in the Off Trade compared to 21% in the On Trade. White wine dominates, with 50% market share.

Has the market changed in recent years?

There has been a move away from quarter bottles to wines by the glass, and we're seeing a more sophisticated wine offering in pubs and gastro pubs, as consumers become more knowledgeable.

We are also seeing an uplift from house wines to more premium wines in the market, especially in the Dublin region. Magnums are also becoming more popular with group reservations and offer some theatre at the table.

What are the wine list staples?

Chilean wine is the number one country purchased in the Off Trade and this is also represented in the On Trade, especially for functions and as house wine.

Wine lists are becoming more diverse though, with fewer Sauvignon Blancs and more interesting varieties like Picpoul, Albarino, Assyrtiko, Negroamaro and Tannat starting to appear.

What are people starting to get into?

The market is looking for more organic, biodynamic and vegan offerings to add to their wine lists, while also looking for wines from smaller, boutique wine producers.

How do you see the wine scene continuing to evolve over the next few years?

I think that the On Trade will continue to grow in wine sales, with outlets offering a more diverse wine list. I could also see organic and biodynamic wines continuing to gain market share. We've also seen increasing interest in rosé in the last few years, with a variety of interesting styles being offered to the consumer.



The Temple Bar, Dublin

IN THE HOT SEAT WITH OUR WINE MINDS APPRENTICES

Sam Ameys and Romain de Courcy spill the beans on their experience so far



Argento



Argento



Journays End



Journays End

Last year, we launched our Wine Minds programme and Wine Minds apprenticeship to support emerging industry talent. Following the applications last September, we selected Sam Ameys (Bar Swift, Soho) and Romain de Courcy (Gazelle, Mayfair) to be our first ever apprentices – and what a jam packed few months of trips, tastings and masterclasses they've had! With their overseas internships just around the corner, we caught up with them to see how they've been enjoying the experience so far.

ROMAIN DE COURCY

Where are you going for your harvest internship?

I am very lucky to have been invited by Argento for the harvest in Mendoza. I had the chance to try one of their wines at a dinner in London which made me thirsty for more.

What are you most looking forward to about the trip?

I am ready to roll up my sleeves and fully appreciate all the effort that goes into making outstanding wine! I am also keen to learn about the way people live in the region, their heritage and how this goes into the wine they make.

What have you enjoyed most about being an apprentice?

Spending time with winemakers has been a unique opportunity to hear first-hand about their philosophy and practices in the vineyard.

What do you like about the industry?

I love unexpected questions or requests; it may be stressful, but it keeps me on my toes. The customers some might

call 'difficult' are often my favourite. There is nothing as rewarding as turning a tough situation around and getting people to have an amazing time.

What's your favourite drink on the list at Gazelle?

The Petite Merveille is an aromatic twist on a French 75 with grapefruit-infused gin, lemon, sugar and topped with Champagne in a short, frozen glass. It is inspired by the eponymous perfume by Hermes and is the perfect pre-dinner drink or late-night pick-me-up.

How do you wind down after a busy shift?

At work we usually crack open a few beers and talk about changing the world. It's a great way to bring the floor, bar and kitchen staff together as a family.

SAM AMEYS

producers, but also the people at Bibendum. It's amazing to hang out and learn from everyone!

Where will you be heading for your harvest internship?

I'll be going to Journey's End in Stellenbosch. As I'm from Belgium, the language barrier shouldn't be too hard as Afrikaans is derived from Dutch. I've never been to the country, so I'm very excited to go!

What are you most looking forward to about the trip?

I've never done a harvest, so the technical challenge excites me. But I think getting to live with the family that makes the wine is what I'm most looking forward to.

What advice would you give to someone who was thinking of embarking on a career in hospitality?

Keep a clear head and don't burn out within the first 5 years. Yes, it is fun and

engaging, but that doesn't mean that 60 hours a week is good for you. Take your time and set your own pace. Leave room in your schedule for personal time. And always be willing to learn!

What's your favourite drink on the list at Swift?

It fluctuates day by day, but I'll often recommend the Piccolina as my favourite – a delicious aperitif consisting of amontillado sherry, white port and fig.

How do you wind down after a busy shift?

I've always preferred taking the bus home over the tube or a cab, as it gives me the time and space to unwind, think about the day and read a book. It's important to clear your head if you've been talking for 10 hours straight. I always make sure I eat something decent before going to bed too. Occasionally I skip a meal during the day, so I make sure I've at least had some proper food.

We'll be opening applications to be the next Wine Minds apprentice over the following months, so keep an eye out! But in the meantime, sign up to the Wine Minds programme for exclusive tastings, masterclasses and events. Just email Christina at cschneider@bibendum-wine.co.uk for more details.

HOW TO SELL ENGLISH Sparkling WINE

By Tom Surgey

Ridgeview's Tom Surgey's top tips to make English Sparkling Wine work on your list



Tom Surgey, Ridgeview

Bubbling away on the market since the early noughties, English Sparkling Wine has become a hot topic of conversation in the wine trade in recent years. The quality level has never been better and we are bombarded by the message that English Sparkling Wine is here, it's THE thing and it's essential you get involved.

We can talk about the wines themselves another time. Any time you like. What I want to do here is consider how to sell it. What makes it a roaring success on list? Which it can, and deserves to be.

It takes more than just great wine

The sparkling section is a heavily contested area on any list and there already is a well-established player... To operate in the same sphere and win the listing, English Sparkling Wine has had to learn quickly and get professional. The top producers understand that standard of service, price-to-quality ratio and consistency of supply are non-negotiable. Producers increasingly appreciate the requirements of the trade and know that it takes more than just great wine to make a success. Whether that's in a pub or in a Michelin star restaurant.

"English Sparkling Wines have gained a well-deserved reputation and identity among consumers, driven by award-winning producers. At Wright Brothers we love to champion British brands and offer locally sourced products where possible, but above all, English Sparkling Wine delivers the quality that we enjoy with our oysters and seafood." *Ivan Ruiz, Wright Brothers*

Picking the right price point

England's cool climate necessitates a dedication to quality and hands-on production, which is in itself a good thing, but it does put the final product in the premium category. That said, there are a range of price-points to fit the needs of your customers, whether it's pouring fizz or an aspirational top-tier bottle. English Sparkling Wine can be a great house fizz but consider making it a stepping stone between entry-level Prosecco and higher-priced Champagne to give more focus on the sparkling section and invite customers to enjoy a higher quality experience.

Just open a bottle!

Get the bottle open, and serve it by the glass. These are hand-sold wines, bringing an opportunity for a restaurant to express their passion for wine. Pamela McKellar, co-owner of Brighton's Gingerman Group was an early adopter. "We've been serving Ridgeview for twenty years. In the early days we loved it so much we decided to take Champagne off our list as a by-the-glass option and only pour Ridgeview. A few customers weren't amused, but once they tried their free sample they soon became fans."

"Our customers are incredibly curious and love to know the history and provenance of a wine. There's a great story to tell."

Ben McKellar, Gingerman Group

Hop on a train and get in the vineyard

Staff confidence is key and the vineyards are local, so get down there! Easy access to the wineries brings a unique opportunity to bring English Sparkling Wine into your overall wine training. Barworks' Mike Harrington agrees. "Key to its success across our group has been the engagement of our staff. With the producers being so close to London, we have been able to take staff to the winery, and really raise the confidence and knowledge of our teams."

What does the future hold?

The future is in increasing the range. Choosing two or three producers to have on list creates a visible, prominent section. The Doyle Collection's Anne McHale MW is ahead of this curve. "For me, the main positive is that we are debunking the myth that England can't produce world-class wine! I think it's really special to offer guests the chance to realise that for themselves by having such a wide choice of quality examples in the Coral Room. I love the idea that we are encouraging them to explore something new."

BIBENDUM & CUBITT HOUSE

Why passion, premiumisation and people are key



The Coach Makers Arms, Cubitt House



Tony Gualtieri
Cubitt House
Managing Director

"We care deeply about who we work with, so wanted a partner that supports our philosophy, and that can help instil the passion for the product with our team, as well as bring the offering to life with our guests. I really felt that Bibendum would be able to do this..."

Cubitt House's 'farm-to-fork', or 'grape-to-glass', philosophy is one that we share, which is why we're so pleased to be entering 2019 as their new wine partner! It's an exciting time to be listing premium, interesting wines as consumers are increasingly starting to drink outside the box...

Cubitt House has five eclectic, cosy and locally run pubs in the heart of London. We're working together to bring interesting, delicious wines with a story to the bustling communities where the pubs are located, providing a range of not only premium, but great value wines that suit their modern British cuisine and home-from-home vibe. We caught up with Cubitt House Managing Director Tony Gualtieri to find out more about the pubs and what this year has in store.

Tell us more about the philosophy of your pubs.

We have a very simple mantra – locally sourced, carefully crafted, expertly delivered. We buy the best produce we can, sourced in the UK, look after it well, and ensure our well-trained teams deliver it to the guest with best in class service. Sustainability is important to us, so we're very proud to be one of the SRA (Sustainable Restaurant Association) 3-star rated founding members.

"We have a very simple mantra – locally sourced, carefully crafted, expertly delivered."

What challenges have you faced since you joined the business?

I've been with the business for one year, and in that time, it's been all about recruiting, retaining and developing the best talent. There is no doubt that it has become harder to recruit in the industry, as the number of applicants for roles has diminished significantly, so people are the challenge that we focus our efforts on.

What is it about Cubitt House that brings your customers back?

Our pubs are housed in uniquely-restored, beautiful buildings nestled in great

London neighbourhoods – being an active part of the community definitely gets people back through the door. Essentially, customers like our upmarket but down to earth atmosphere which is nurtured by our team, who are well trained, knowledgeable and passionate about what we deliver.

We're delighted to be your new wine supplier, why did you choose Bibendum?

We care deeply about who we work with, so wanted a partner that supports our philosophy, and that can help instil the passion for the product with our team, as well as bring the offering to life with our guests. I really felt that Bibendum would be able to do this, with their carefully selected wine producers, their training resource for our staff, and their ability to share the excitement for the wines with our guests, by inviting winemakers to come to our pubs and meet them.

Premiumisation has been the focus while we've worked together on compiling your list. What factors have been key in your mind while selecting the new offering?

Picking winemakers with a story and a passion that mirrors Cubitt House was paramount. This makes it really easy to get my team passionate about the changes

to the list. We also look to be relevant to customers' changing needs and therefore we invested in Coravin to ensure our by-the-glass range is as extensive as possible, to reflect changing customer habits to drink less, but better quality.

What are your thoughts on the current restaurant climate in the UK?

I think it will continue to be a challenging environment. Too much competition came into the market, and cost inflation has made it difficult to stay guest focused. Both these things can lead operators to make the wrong short-term decisions. I think that staying true to your core values, as difficult as that can be at times, is imperative to your long-term success.

What exciting prospects have you got for 2019?

As a business, we are looking to carefully grow, and as each of our sites is unique, it's exciting to look at adding a distinctive new addition to the 'family' during the year. With the core business we are doing lots of investment in systems to make us more efficient and stronger, so we can focus on what really matters in terms of enhancing guest experience. A new website for each pub is also due to go live in the spring.

NEW WAVE AUSTRALIA

By Richard Siddle

Following a trip and tasting tour Down Under, Richard Siddle reports on how Australia's alternative wine scene is hitting the mainstream

Australians are world famous for being laid back. In fact, they are pretty proud of it. Things happen for a reason Down Under – and in their own time. But then it's hard to be rushing around chasing your own tail when it's so hot for much of the year.

Which is a pretty good way to understand and appreciate the big changes taking place in the premium Australian wine scene. You don't need to travel to the other side of the world to know Australian wines at the top end are changing, and changing fast.

Richard is an award-winning business journalist. Former editor of Harpers Wine & Spirit he now runs his own website (The-Buyer.net), looking at trends and analysis of the premium On Trade. He also produces a fortnightly insights newsletter on the global wine industry called Grapevine for the London Wine Fair. You can follow him on twitter at @richardsiddle.

Say goodbye to the fruit bomb

Gone – or at least going – are the big, rich, fruit bomb, oak-laden wines that arguably helped Australia make its name in its initial heyday of the 1980s and 1990s. Instead we are seeing the lighter, brighter, fresher, fruit-forward, acid-driven wines that are so common throughout the world, and the ones consumers are increasingly turning to.

Wines to drink in the Australian sun

Australia has collectively woken up to the kind of wines that are best suited to the climate where they are being made, and it's what goes best with a largely Asian-inspired cuisine.

Sipping a light, refreshing, fruity wine simply makes sense when you have the sun beating down on you for most of the year.

This is not a fad, but a nationwide revolution taking place in the mid to premium end of the Australian wine industry. It crucially covers the growing number of producers who are returning to the minimum intervention winemaking practices that earlier generations used to follow. This was the way to make wine before the emphasis switched to what you put into them to keep them stable and clean, rather than producing what the vines naturally allowed you to make.

With a focus on lightness, elegance and drinkability, winemakers are looking to pick earlier, and do everything they can to maintain acidity, ripeness, texture and flavour in the grapes. They are also holding on to their skins, using open and natural

ferments and yeasts, gently basket pressing the grapes and then ageing them in large wood neutral formats.

There's more to Australia than Shiraz and Chardonnay

Central to this change in winemaking styles has been the introduction, or at least wider use, of non-traditional Australian grape varieties, particularly from Italy, Greece and across the Mediterranean. As Colin McBryde of Some Young Punks explains: "There is definitely an avid interest by a lot of the grape growing and winemaking community to look to varieties that can grow well under what is becoming more stringent conditions."

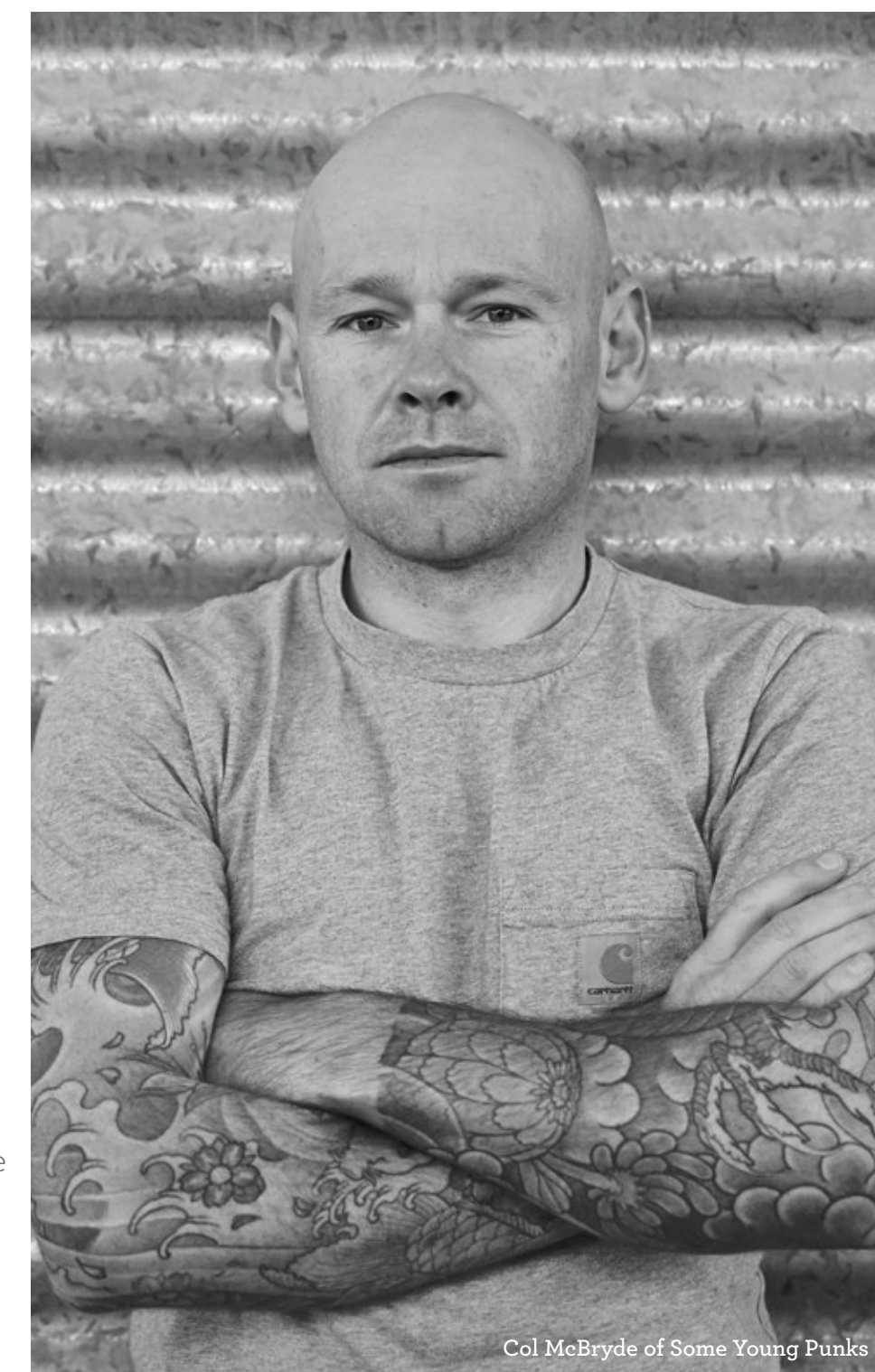
But this is not an overnight phenomenon in Australia. These varieties have been used in the country for decades, albeit only in small pockets, and usually by growers whose families emigrated from those countries.

Ever tried Australian Sangiovese or Tempranillo?

The difference now is that producers across the country are latching on to how well the likes of Sangiovese and Tempranillo are suited to the growing conditions in their respective regions.

It is encouraging younger winemakers to move and go to different areas of the country to make their wine.

The fact these varieties have not been tried in most areas of the country is creating a 'give it a go' culture among a new breed of winemakers.



Col McBryde of Some Young Punks



Some Young Punks

Canberra, for example, is fast being seen as having the ideal hot-day and cold-night growing conditions for more alternative varieties, like Assyrtiko and Aglianico, and attracting a new type of winemaker as a result.

The new wave scene

Helping to drive these changes are winemakers who are coming together to share ideas and experiences and help give a real voice to this new wave, alternative scene. Groups like the Artisans of Barossa, the Basket Range in the Adelaide Hills and the Young Guns in Margaret River.

Col of Some Young Punks says working with varieties like Nero D'Avola and Sangiovese "has helped create a great buoyancy of new wines, brands, and a whole new realm of people to share and disseminate information with. We're not trying to emulate these varieties in their native place, merely draw inspiration and make something that hopefully resembles varietal typicity, but with an Australian

style, and diligent respect to where the fruit was grown," he says.

Why do Mediterranean varieties do so well in Australia?

Peter Schell of Spinifex Wines says he works with Mediterranean varieties like Mataro and Grenache Gris because they have done so well in the Barossa region for some 150 years. "That's what attracted me here," he says. Now he is looking at different grapes like Vermentino because it is "so heat resistant and holds onto its acidity and freshness. Vermentino is such a sustainable grape to grow here," he says. "But it will take us 20 years to determine the best way to work with these varieties. It is also making us re-assess the varieties we already have here and how we are handling them."

Peter believes the changes taking place are down to a combination of factors including climate change, but also a willingness among winemakers to "control flavours" in their wine through viticultural techniques,

pruning, irrigation and when they are picking their grapes. "We are, for example, picking three weeks earlier than we used to and doing more punch downs in the winery," he says.

John Hughes has built his whole business, Rieslingfreak, around just that one variety that he makes and sources from the Clare and Eden Valleys and Polish Hill River, and "would not work with any other variety,"

He thinks "Gruner Veltiner will have a good chance of being the next popular variety in Australia."

A new lease of life for Australia's grape growers

These winemakers often don't own any vines themselves, but are seeking out growers that have the grapes they are looking for. It is, in turn, giving those growers a new lease of life. Since the great wine glut in Australia in the late 2000s many growers have struggled to make ends meet, forced to take whatever price the bulk market would allow for their grapes. Now younger winemakers keen to make wine differently are offering them a separate, more premium market for them to work with.

It would be a mistake to think it was only at the fringes of the main Australian wine industry where minimum intervention winemaking and alternative wines are coming through. Some of the country's biggest and most prestigious names have been making wine in this way for decades, it's only now there is so much more emphasis on how a wine is made that it is coming to the fore.



John Hughes of Rieslingfreak



Peter Schell of Spinifex Wines



Peter Schell of Spinifex Wines

THE FRENCH Artists

From modernists to minimalists, we're championing some of France's unsung winemaking heroes

We have an amazing range of producers throughout France crafting exciting, unique and above all, delicious wines, each staying true to their terroir while pushing the boundaries in pursuit of perfection. Bibendum buyer Robert Mathias takes us on a journey to discover more...

How is wine connected to art?

Harmony, depth, balance... these are all ways we describe wine, and also ways we describe art. And like art, the experience of drinking wine is more than the sum of its parts.

Wine is a unique expression of a time and a place through the lens of a particular producer. While producers make wine in vastly different environments, with different techniques and approaches that are sometimes wildly contrasting, each is an expression of a specific time and place.

Our French Artists programme

The aim of the French Artists programme is to shed light on a number of our excellent producers who embody exactly this. While they might go about their winemaking in different ways, they all produce something just a little bit 'different'. That is, something especially artistic and uniquely connected to nature and their environment.

Chablis to flood your senses

The wines of Didier Picq, for example, are some of the best in Chablis, understated but serious, pure and elegant, refined and textured. I can't get enough of them. It's wine like this that doesn't shout for your attention; it quietly beckons you until, all of a sudden, it floods your senses leaving you all too ready for the next sip.

The Cotes du Rhone's best kept secret

Getting to know each winemaker, occasionally they let slip small details that shed new light onto the story of each wine. None more so than veteran winemaker (and octogenarian) Pierre Dumazet. His wines, from some of the oldest vines of the appellation, are unashamedly classic in style, but he has been working in a biodynamic direction for decades. The wines are regal, confident and classical. His Cotes du Rhone Blanc must be one of the best kept secrets of the appellation – but no more! Incidentally, we've known Pierre and his family for well over 30 years.

Each producer in this series has a unique story we are proud to share. Some might be called modernists, some neo-classicists, some minimalists. All of them have a unique respect for terroir, for nature and for producing wine that is more than just the sum of its parts. Wine that is art.

Wine is a unique expression of a time and a place through the lens of a particular producer.

To learn more about these special producers, and to find out how you can get involved, check out the French Artists guide on our website or contact your Account Manager for details.



THERE'S MORE TO GERMANY THAN RIESLING

Our training team explore preconception-smashing wines from Mosel, Rheinhessen, Baden and Nahe.

How does the VDP classification work? Do the Germans drink as much sweet Riesling as we think they do? German Cabernet Sauvignon... WHAT!?

Bibendum's training team wanted answers. So last September our resident gang of wine geeks hopped on a flight to Frankfurt for a 3-day whirlwind excursion. On their quest for knowledge they travelled from the meandering Mosel to the edge of the Black Forest, dropping in to pick our producers' brains along the way. Bibendum Wine Educator, Jamie Barrow, tells us more.



DAY ONE:

Getting to grips with Riesling in the Mosel

So where to start? Well, in order to get our bearings it had to be with Riesling, the great grape of Germany. And if you're looking for great Riesling, there's no better place to find it than at Markus Molitor in the Middle Mosel.

Setting up shop in their immaculately renovated tasting room, we were treated to a dazzling array of wines which revealed several surprises. Oxidation in the winemaking process is a friend at Molitor, adding a level of stability beyond anything we believed possible. Some of the wines we tried had been opened and kept in the fridge for months prior to our arrival!

Riesling was front-and-centre here, but Molitor is far from a one-trick pony. I was particularly blown away by a trio of dry Pinot Blancs, which were delightfully fresh and aromatic, with a lovely textural quality from time spent in oak.

In answer to one of our pressing questions, we were told that the German market prefers drier wines and so most of Molitor's sweeter styles are destined for export. Who'd have thought it!



The Tasting Room, Markus Molitor



Markus Molitor

DAY TWO:

Catching up with Rheinhessen's non-conformist

The following day we travelled South and East to the Rheinhessen, where dramatic riverside slopes were replaced with gently undulating countryside. At Peth-Wetz, we were greeted by Christian and Maja Luise Peth in their discreet and charming winery.

The shift in focus from Molitor was arresting, with non-native varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot being a unique selling point for this non-conformist producer.

We sampled their Sauvignon Blanc, which had a lovely Bacchus-esque nose of hedgerow flowers and white pepper. Apparently Sauvignon has been grown historically in Germany under the name Muscat Sylvaner, which was news to us!

The Bordeaux-style reds were also a revelation. Full-bodied, dense, and chock-full of spicy dark fruit and toasty oak nuances.

Our next destination was Weingut Kopp, on the edge of the Black Forest in Baden, where (first things first) we drank in the glorious views from the top of the Fegenwaldchen vineyard, glass of Sekt in hand.

That evening, we were treated to a marvellous spread of bread, cheeses and the obligatory cured meats to accompany our wine tasting. Fabulous Pinot Blancs and Rieslings soon moved on to the more experimental aspects of Kopp's portfolio, including an oily, fragrant amphora-fermented Viognier and a Pinot Gris with enough skin contact to turn it a luminescent salmon-pink. Finally we moved onto the Spatburgunders for which Baden is famed, which were every bit as silky, elegant and complex as we'd hoped.



Christian Peth of Peth-Wetz

DAY THREE:

Wine nerd heaven!

Our final destination took us back north to Nahe, and the family-run winery of Joh. Bapt. Schafer.

Our tasting here was possibly the most academic of our trip, but every bit as enjoyable for a bunch of wine nerds like us! The Pradikat system was revealed in all its logical glory, as we tasted wines from the same vineyards and vintage, but with varying degrees of ripeness. We also grilled Sebastian Schafer on the classifications of the Association of German Pradikat Wine Estates (VDP). Think of the Burgundian premier cru and grand cru classifications, and you've basically got it!



Joh. Bapt. Schafer.

WHISKEY THE 'AMERICAN' WAY

What happens when you taste well-known brands without knowing what they are?



We invited a panel of industry experts to join Bibendum's Christina Schneider at Soho bar Milroy's, for the latest in our spirits-based 'Explorer Series' events.

The idea behind the series is to see what happens when you remove the marketing, packaging and preconceptions around famous brands. By tasting totally blind we remove the focus on branding and get back to the good stuff: what's actually in the bottle.

Round one: Straight up

The first round involved tasting four flights of straight American whiskey. 20 in total, which put our experts' palates through their paces!

Some of the favourites included Wild Turkey, which Zita Tari (Milk & Honey) described as tasting like "honey water and orange blossom", and Knob Creek, which Christina (Bibendum) scored a 9/10, describing it as "bally and spicy - very grown up".

Round two: Shaken and stirred

Round two involved mixing the same brands from round one into classic cocktails. Our experts tried a series of Bourbon Old-Fashioneds and Rye Sazeracs.

Wild Turkey did well in this round too, with James Mills (Mint Gun Club) enjoying hints of "nutmeg and mace".

The conclusion? Well known brands can still surprise us

If we learnt anything at the end of the tasting, it's that people's tastes for whiskey are incredibly diverse. Some of our bartenders wanted heat, body and spice - others wanted delicacy, fragrance and freshness. These differences in palates were clearly reflected in everyone's scoring on the day.

Were our panel surprised by the results? Not particularly, but many were happy to see old favourites match (and surpass) expectations, while others were surprised by some of the brands that they pour every day.

...if we've learnt anything, it's that people's tastes for whiskey is incredibly diverse.

Christina's favourite whiskey drink

Scofflaw

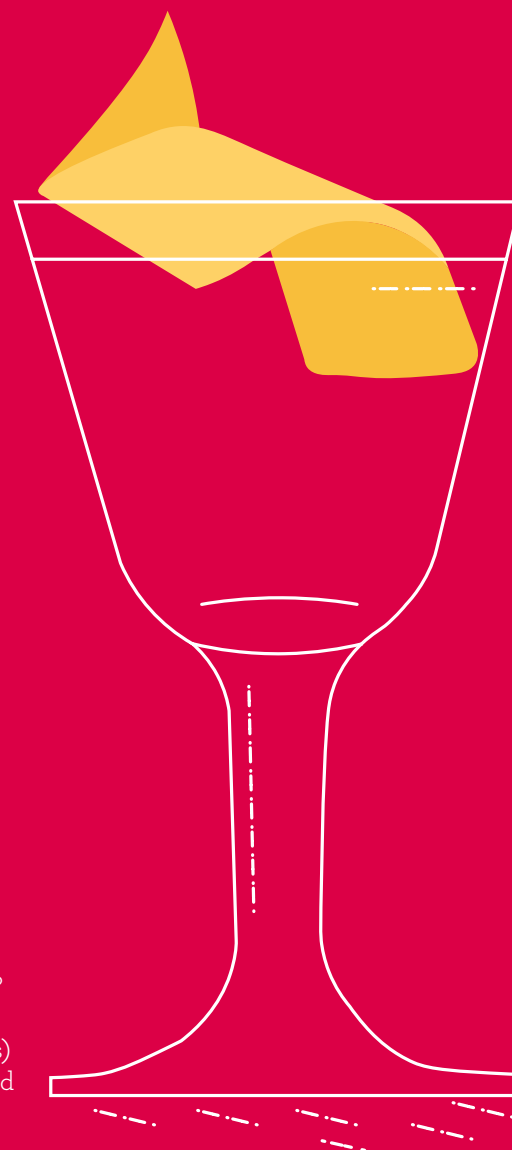
A feistier take on a classic from Henry's New York Bar in Paris.

Ingredients

45ml	Straight rye whiskey (or high rye bourbon), bottled in bond
20ml	Dry vermouth
15ml	Fresh lemon juice
15ml	Grenadine
1 dash	Orange bitters

Serve

Up with a lemon twist



Explorer Series

Bibendum are as passionate about premium spirits as we are about great wines. So why not head to the Explorer Series section of our website to find out more about some of our favourite white rums, vermouths and American whiskeys. Go to bibendum-wine.co.uk/explorer-series/

We run our Explorer Series events throughout the year. So keep your eyes on our website or follow us on Twitter and Instagram @bibendumwine for details of the next event.

A ROUND OF APPLAUSE

Celebrating our award-winning producers



Spier

Stellenbosch, South Africa

Being named International Wine & Spirit Competition (IWSC) South African Wine Producer of the Year was the cherry on top for Spier, following a remarkable 2018. With gold awards at the Sommelier Wine Awards (SWA) for their Signature Chenin Blanc 2017 and 21 Gables Pinotage, as well as Critics Choice for the latter, they also took home the IWSC Chenin Blanc Trophy 2018 and Sauvignon Blanc Trophy 2018 for their 21 Gables Chenin Blanc 2016 and 21 Gables Sauvignon Blanc 2017 respectively.



Argento

Mendoza, Argentina

Argento took home two gold medals for their Reserve Cabernet Franc 2016 and Reserve Organic Malbec 2015 at the Women's Wine & Spirits Awards 2018, the only Argentinean producer to receive gold.



Ridgeview

Sussex, England

Ridgeview received the coveted IWSC Winemaker of the Year Trophy 2018, as well as IWSC English Wine Producer of the Year 2018. They picked up three awards at the Champagne and Sparkling World Wine Championships 2018 (CSWWC) - gold for their Rosé de Noirs 2014, and two silver medals for their 2014 Blanc de Blancs and Blanc de Noirs.



Santa Rita

Chile

Tim Atkin MW awarded the Santa Rita Casa Real 2014 96 points, with the IWSC 2018 also awarding it gold outstanding. They took home a further two silver and two bronze medals from the International Wine Challenge (IWC) too.



La Chablisienne

Chablis, France

La Chablisienne had a very successful run at the IWSC 2018, picking up not only a gold for their Chablis Grand Cru Chateau Grenouilles 2014 and silver for the 1er Cru Vaillons 2015, but also the overall IWSC French Wine Producer of the Year.



Stellenrust

Stellenbosch, South Africa

In the Decanter World Wine Awards 2018, Stellenrust's Chenin Blanc 2017 received gold and 95 points. They swept 6 silver medals at the IWSC 2018, including a silver outstanding award for the 53 Barrel Fermented Chenin Blanc 2017.



Bisol

Prosecco, Italy

Bisol prove there's more to Prosecco than meets the eye. They were awarded the IWC Italian Sparkling Wine Trophy for their Cartizze Valdobbiadene Superior, with the same wine also receiving gold at the SWA.

Awards can be a useful guide for helping customers decide which wine to pick from your list. So ask your Account Manager for more information about any of the wines on this page, or about other award-winning wines from our portfolio.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION



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