

Les Caves De Pyrene

Les Caves Newsletter - April - 1st Edition

HOT News!!

Stranger than fiction

The latest example of passing off fraudulent wine to a Californian company was uncovered recently in South West France. In “L’Affaire de Syranot de Bergerac” as it is known, bog standard Merlot has been adulterated by large dollops of grand cru Burgundy and Hermitage. “If I wanted elegance I would have bought a Fabergé egg,” fumed one Merlot-phile.

Champagne: radical new harvest rules

Apparently 40% of the money will be left on the vine and fewer bubbles will be allowed in each bottle.

Name of a Name!

Three wine competitions have merged into one, which will now be known as the Decanter International Competition of Wine And Drink: DICWAD

**Natural Wine on Radio 4’s Food & Drink*

**Natural Wine Fortnight*

**RIP Marco De Bartoli*

**The Moronic Inferno*

**Simply Natural: Non-Philosophical Musings*

**Natural Wine – A Blogger’s Tuppence Hap’worth*

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**Bodega Cecchin – Argy Without The Bargy*

It's my fourth newsletter in a month. That's practically an armful, I hear Tony Hancock saying. Where do you find the time, people frequently ask me? Between the rosemary and the marjoram on the spice rack, is my invariable reply.

Natural Wine on Radio 4's Food Programme

Just finished listening to Food & Drink covering that subject that is so dear to our hearts. The programme was elegantly knitted together. Sheila Dillon is a perennial class act. Isabelle Legeron, our advocate in the studio, was clear, eloquent and persuasive in defining natural wine in simple terms and ably balancing the practical with the passionate. It is important to maintain a reasonableness in one's passion, something I am prone to forget. I hate my voice; I always sound somewhat effete and nasal - as if I am filtering my utterances through a Bolivian nose flute. Luca Roagna provided the timbre of the terroir . twittering birdsong in the background, salad from the vineyard floor and a melting Italian accent whilst Pierre Jancou, steeped in the lore of wine bars, spoke with elegant authority. Fiona Beckett and myself tasted cloudy Fiano and Roagna's Asili Barbaresco to the sound of crashing crockery in Terroirs.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zq9vp>

Natural Wine Fortnight

Over one hundred restaurants participating and counting. From Cornwall to Glasgow, from humble bar to Michelin garlanded fine dining, you will be able to drink natural wines by the glass for at least a fortnight. Revolutions are all about taking small steps... Many, many thanks to those who are supporting this initiative.

Ciao Marco!



Marco De Bartoli, the heart and an engine of Sicilian wine's return to quality in recent decades, has passed away at a young 66 years old. As volcanic in temperament as he was passionate about Sicily and its wines, Bartoli broke with the Marsala establishment including his own family in the 1980s to make small production fine Marsala's with nearly extinct traditional methods and became an inspiration for young Sicilian winemakers.

Life may be fleeting but great Marsalas such as those produced by De Bartoli, are eternal. One particular elixir, the Vecchio Samperi, ranks for me with the greatest of solera wines.

Vecchio Samperi, an example of the rare Vergine/Soleras style, is aged using the fractional blending method known as solera, made famous in Jerez. Using a battery of progressively smaller casks, De Bartoli continually tops up his oldest wines with wines from the next-oldest vintage, with the newest wines going in the largest cask at the end of the battery. Vecchio Samperi is more than 40 years old, with the smoky, nutty complexity of a fine sherry. But Vecchio Samperi is unfortified, just as all Marsala was before the British came along towards the end of the 18th century and added spirit to it. The wine, made from Grillo, is dry, intense and mellow with flavours of chestnuts, brazil nuts and orange peel. Try it with aged pecorino cheeses, or maybe slightly chilled alongside some shellfish or other seafood as an aperitif. It is a rare treasure in the world of wine and is described by Marco as a *Vino Liquoroso secco*. When you drink the wine you almost feel as if you are imbibing the wisdom of centuries.

The Moronic Inferno: A Rant

Just I would imagine that some winemakers would die for their art, F & B managers should go the gallows defending their philistinism.

The initials F & B stand, in my experience, for Fornicating Blackmailers. There may be some nice ones around but those I've encountered have become ethically withered by the depredations of their job which induces a kind of bever-rage, the irrational desire to induce apoplexy in your drinks suppliers. Negotiation for the common and garden f & b means take it or leave it, whilst servicing an account revolves mainly around blandishments and bribes. They live by the sacred god of (gross - sic) gross profit and they are even-handed only in that they seek to screw their suppliers and customers in equal measure in order to fulfil the terms of their numerical contracts.

Common courtesy may dictate that you should never be arrogant nor treat your suppliers with impunity, but f & bs hold thumbscrews whilst shaking hands. Naturally, and over time, if you live by the bottom line, your sensibilities are corrupted; you become incapable of understanding business in the round and see everything in £££ and ppp and nothing in terms of real return (customer/supplier relationships, for example). Customers reward quality, value for money and service; the f & b, however, can see a shortcut without wanting to take it thereby compromising quality and ultimately settling for the lowest common denominator. If it is the difference between an excellent house champagne at a reasonable price or a mediocre champagne with some cash, there is invariably one default option. Taste is not a consideration.

Some scientists claim that hydrogen, because it is so plentiful, is the basic building block of the universe. I dispute that. I say there is more stupidity than hydrogen, and that is the basic building block of the universe. ~Frank Zappa

As a supplier we exist to touch the hem of money from the garment that we have sewn with our largesse. The greed of f & bs is perverse, for by insisting that everyone shrinks their margins, it becomes unprofitable for small quality-driven companies to conduct business with such accounts, and then they can happily bleed the big brands dry, which is after all their purpose in life. There are enough companies, alas, whose avowed agenda is to buy business at whatever the cost and whose complicity in these shenanigans invariably queers the pitch for other suppliers.

To those who assert that f & b managers are a necessary evil my modest proposal is ~~not~~ let none of them be missed. A swift cull would ensure the gaiety of nations, credit controllers would bounce to work with a song on their lips and a gleam in their eye and wine merchants would work more harmoniously and constructively with their customers. Generosity is at its most forthcoming when freely given; the threatening demand for charity goes against the grain. If you have only ever worked within the margins - in every sense of the word - you will always lack the imagination and empathy to stimulate business. Truly, this is a breed of person that knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Natural Wine Philosophy: Non Philosophical Musings

What is your personal philosophy, Lucy asks Charlie Brown. He thinks for a moment: %life is like an ice cream cone . you have to lick it one day at a time.+

When asked what he thought of the French Revolution, the Chinese premier allegedly replied that it was too early to judge.

The Chinese vision of their civilization covers thousands of years, whereas ours covers a few centuries. The story made me reflect on our society - the instant gratification demands plus demands for innovations and change to be evaluated even before they are adequately developed.

Wine has been made for 8,000 years give or take. I don't suppose in ye early days in the Caucasus people were going around and saying: %this stuff sure is natural+ (Why do I imagine that Georgians have broad southern American accents?) Natural wine is not a short-term quick-fix philosophical trend but a simple artisan way of doing things. Or, in another sense it is about making do with you have got. Throughout the history of humanity progress has been always associated with doing more and more, making things easier (theoretically), defining, refining and technically improving. Now we have machines to do the work for us. Depersonalising the winemaking process is the ultimate "refinement!. I like to think that the best natural wines are made with tons of patience, a wedge of human intuition and a massive shrug of the shoulders.

Despite that there are still vigneronns who make a wine for the kitchen . a super-fresh, bubbling liquid that is alive . in a jug, the beaker of the warm south. This wine is for the grower, family and friends, for pleasure; the thought of some distant tasting panel analysing it chemically and passing judgement is so removed from the spirit of natural enterprise. These are the wines we want to find, living, breathing, oh-so-fresh, nourishing and digestible.

To protect against fraud and to ensure a certain quality wine became subject to analysis and evaluation. Labelling became as important as the liquid inside the bottle; appellation laws had to be adhered to, certain denominator standards upheld. This may have been done with the best of intentions but as a result wines started to be made to appeal to taste of consumer panels. At some point wine became a product and therefore had to be %product-worthy+.

With this in mind winemakers began to view wine in terms of the means of production and see grapes not as the juice of the vintage or as transmitters of terroir, but rather as the building blocks (I use the term advisedly) of something specific, a wine profile.

Genuine ignorance is... profitable because it is likely to be accompanied by humility, curiosity, and open mindedness; whereas ability to repeat catch-phrases, cant terms, familiar propositions, gives the conceit of learning and coats the mind with varnish waterproof to new ideas. ~John Dewey

I like to think that natural wine appeals to a kind of genuine ignorance, it tests the simple proposition that wine was and can still be a naturally pleasurable drink free of dozens of allowable additives. It attracts the open-minded; those who give these wines a go are *wine explorers*.

Pierre Jancou (Racine) says that he opened a wine bar so that he could drink the wines that he enjoyed. Natural wines, simple food well-sourced and well cooked,

attracts like-minded people. It is not a movement in the structured sense, it is word of mouth, word of blog, exchange of experience. The only philosophy I've read (other than poetical musings by certain enthusiastic growers and proponents) have been from an embryonic counter-cultural movement of individuals whose sole purpose in life might be to scoff at anything that finds favour. As anyone who has read Alice Feiring or Joe Dressner, or glanced at my tongue-in-cheek natural wine manifesto, will realise we don't take kindly to people grafting their prejudices onto us. We are saying that natural wine is a good and healthy and generous %embiggens the soul+ to borrow from the Simpsons, not that all wines vinified in the name of natural wine are good. I am equally dubious about conferring an aesthetic to natural wine . you might as well say %Pinot Noir is a great grape+ In the hands of the right person.

Natural wine should contain a drink warning. People interested in this subject should drink more (and better) and think less.

Natural Wine: Ideology vs Practice

Came across a very interesting blog on natural wines. I can't remember where I read it, alas. He makes an extensive academic argument, but cutting to the chase:

1. Man makes the wines
2. Natural wines are small scale and individual
3. The ethical/idealist dimension of natural wines is a distraction
4. Good natural wines show that the grower has understood the inextricable relationship between man and his environment

There are good natural wines and bad natural wines. You can assess these wines analytically and personally just like any other. The best naturalists don't just want to make ethical wines, they also want to make good wines. For the best naturalists, making a good wine also means making wine that distinctly expresses aspects of both the grapes and their environment that we otherwise cannot experience. Hence enters the idea of symbiosis – naturalists are trying to create a symbiotic relationship between themselves and the environment in which their grapes are grown and then fermented into wine. It is not a question of dominance – either of man over nature or of nature over man. Rather, it is a question of learning from that which eludes our desires to categorize and to essentialize. To me, the best natural wines capture the elusive mystery of the natural world in a way that other wines don't. They do this by dialing back all of the modern wine making techniques that have proliferated across the world and come to dominate agriculture and wine making and by, in a sense, starting from scratch.

If we do very little to the grapes, then we can see their potential more clearly. It is for this reason, I believe, that most of the best naturalists are actually incredibly empirical. They test and experiment and take risks in order to discover potentials in their grapes that no one else has discovered. It is for this reason I believe that naturalists could end up being the most important forward thinkers in wine: they believe in their subject and they want it to teach them rather than for them to dominate and control it. This is a radical shift away from current wine making practices. Are the results perfect? Not at all. But they are almost always interesting and the best are constantly progressing and learning with each vintage. This is why we can't define natural wines: they have not yet defined themselves.

Natural wine empiricism? (You gotta be kiddingme . Ed)

Top 100 IGP (Vin de Pays) Tasting

Kindly invited by Tim Atkin to be one of the judges at the IGP Top One Hundred Tasting the other week. It is an occasion full of camaraderie and banter (tasters are referred to as the Thiol king (Rabid Redox) or asked how the Ballad of Reading Gaol is going) and more than a soupçon of bewilderment. Howç The Bursar, Jay-Douche... (you figure it out)

IGP is the new classification for Vin de Pays. Even as someone within the wine trade, I find it confusing and doesnç exactly roll off the tongue. IGP *de coup d'oeil en blanc*

Tasted several flights or as many as digressions and digestion would permit. The preliminary objective on the first day was to put through 200 wines, ergo to cull the weaker brethren. These are just snapshots of snapshots so first impressions are as valid as deep analysis.

The slaughter was swift and painless. The wines will always suffer in certain respects; to a So2 Nazi like myself a just-bottled wine may scream with free sulphur and I call it as I see it (as I taste it). There is an argument that one should taste beyond the embryonic state and try to imagine the sulphur binding with the wine in a benevolent universe. Truth to tell dory may become hunky, and dodgy aromas will blow off, equally they may become more pronounced whereupon a miasmic veil descends over the wine.

My criterion for marking the wine is *would I drink it?*+*Pour ma gueule* has to be *pour everyone's gueule*, how can I possibly recommend it? There is a band of likeability just above inoffensiveness which, for me, will allow the wine to progress to the next stage and Iç prepared to temper my strong personal preferences by noting the technical proficiency of the winemaking. Having said that with less expensive wines I expect to taste less winemaking; fruit at the front, frubbles nowhere. My palate squirms when I taste clumsy chemical intervention.

A good panel will entertain a good humoured exchange of views. Each of us brings our individual baggage to the tasting and the process of blind tasting followed by collective bargaining helps to calibrate peopleç palates.

Much of the final decision-making concerns how strongly someone feels about a particular wine. Many of the wines are not meant to move us, but where there is a glimmer of individuality, of freshness, of terroir then one would go to the barricades to defend them. There is an evolutionary dialecticism which leads towards a kind of truth. Some of the disagreements are never teased out and it is also the nature of the beast that wines that no-one particularly cares for can sneak up and win trophies . as happened yesterday.

Few wines excited us on the first day of judging. The general mass were functional while a handful stood out for their quirkiness: a Cinsault, a Syrah with a hint of reduction, a Grenache blend with brett and sweat. Very few wines were faulty. Sauvignons were correct, some at the passionfruit end of the spectrum, some more redolent of stewed asparagus . flavours conferred by flavoured yeasts. Viogniers were a disappointment . too many desiccated wines lacking in aroma, honey and properly oily fruit. Roses were not bad; I quite like the Grenache Gris, but its innate reductiveness as a rule does not sit so well with the style of wine, stripping it of pleasure. A range of unpleasant stalky Pinot Noirs illustrated why this tricky grape should be planted in regions where it stands a chance of achieving a balanced maturity. Most examples had an unhealthy muddy colour, burnt fruit aromas and stewed tea flavours. Merlot, alas, fared not much better and tasted quite similar. The

banker grapes are normally Syrah and Grenache (and blends thereof) and provided a solid enough finish.

There were rather too many examples of technical tropes designed to flesh out the essential hollowness of the wines. Chips with everything . with or without vinegar.

Gong-ho!

On the second day there were some very good wines and the tasting format came into its own, sifting and challenging, focusing more intently on every wine. Here you observe the quality of the tasting and also the quality of the judging which, although the judges are a pretty self-confident lot, they also have the humility to go back and re-examine wine in the light of the comments of others. On two or three occasions I changed my opinion of a wine. Sometimes when you taste you have the previous wine still in your mouth, some residual acid, tannin or sulphur skews the palate and you need to be guided back.

Big panel tastings are a mosaic of opinion, however, and the final truth is not that the best wines invariably win the trophies, but that the wines that perform best on the two days, in the opinions of the majority of the well-qualified judges, win trophies. As they say with the football premier league the final table does not lie.

Up Jacob's Creek Without Rowing Paraphernalia

Richard Littlejohn couldn't make it up (like he normally does). Someone is selling fake Jacob's Creek Chardonnay and it's not the Californian buyers of La Bicyclette who are the unwitting victims of the fraud in this case. Probably, because it is pretty difficult to confuse Chardonnay with Pinot Noir. Apparently, discerning buyers have discerned that what's in the bottle doesn't match the label. As someone said when told someone had died: 'How could they tell?' Some mischievous wags have suggested that the wine was offensively better than JC, others pointed to the fact that Australia was missing one of its many 'A's on the back label,. The main question for me is why? I understand forging champagne, generic Burgundy and Bordeaux, but a relatively inexpensive brand. Has the world gone mad?

Anforak

Anhedonia

Anaphora

Aphorism

Anachronism

Anfora

Anfora Wines: Giare-Giare

An amphora experience:

There was a moment of hush as Stalin's barber cleared away the topsoil and scraped off the clay. He paused like a priest about to confer the sacraments. Only the lid remained. He stood and, so as to underline the drama of the occasion, trod deliberately around its circumference. I edged closer and willed him to take the final step.

As the lid came away, a raspberry haze rose from the ground and was swept away on the breeze. A crimson mirror reflected the scudding clouds - 400 litres of fresh young wine.

The barber took his ladle and scooped out the first glass and handed it to me. I raised it to my mouth and drank. It was a moment of magical intensity. "It's saperavi," he said, referring to the grape, which in Georgian means pigment. It was densely red and cool and stained my lips like blood.

Georgia and its vineyards had taken over a corner of my mind.

Rob Parsons . BBC From Our Own Correspondent

How does it benefit the wine to be fermented in amphora? Undoubtedly, it does have an effect . the choice of fermentation vessel, its shape, size and substance, all contribute to the final flavour of the wine.

We are not just talking about amphora versus oak. New oak is not involved in this particular discussion . it can be assumed that the wine leaches flavours from the wood and that there is an art (and science) in coopering and winemaking to ensure that the flavours are duly integrated into the wine improving (or adding seasoning, shall we say) the overall flavour. Or not. Old barrels, even those used on several occasions, confer something to the wine, a texture, a shape. These barrels may allow the wine to breathe; oxidation can happen or is sometimes sought according to the style of the wine. Stainless steel is the most popular medium; temperature control being a weapon in the winemaker's armoury.

So why amphora? I think those growers who have moved away from oak and steel are looking for a less-aggressive medium to ferment and raise their wines. Whereas in ancient times amphora were the natural vessel of choice, now it is a conscious, and one might say philosophical, decision to use clay jars.

Amphorae are still widely employed in Georgian and certain eastern European countries.

The ancient Greeks and Romans fermented their wine in large clay containers (dolia) with a capacity of several thousand litres and often partially buried in the ground. For aging and transport, the wine condensate (love that word) was sealed in terracotta amphorae.

The Romans, after filling the vessels with wine, sealed these amphorae, using a thick layer of olive oil at the top. As the wine was released from the bottom, for their enjoyment, the layer at the top would spread outward. As it did that, it would continue to cover the top of the amphora, keeping all oxygen out. (Hence, the need for a thick layer of olive oil.) . see Natural Selection Theory.

A similar technique for production is now in experimental use by a handful of new winemakers in part as an aspect of the "natural wine" and "slow food" movements. The results have in many cases been extremely good. There's no doubt that fermentation in terracotta can yield new and very fine wine characteristics.



Josko Gravner, one of the foremost innovators in the use of terracotta vessels for grape fermentation, is an esteemed and innovative Friulian winemaker whose vineyards lie in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region of north-eastern Italy straddling the Italian/Slovenian border. From 2001 onwards, he has used huge bees wax-lined giare made in Georgia and buried in the ground. The resulting white wines drink more like reds: deeply flavourful, dark in colour and tannic. His three wines are Ribolla, Breg and Rosso Gravner (all IGT Venezia Giulia). The Breg white wine is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling Italico, Chardonnay and Pinot Grigio. The Ribolla wine comes from the autochthonous Ribolla Gialla varietal. Rosso Gravner is a blend of merlot and cabernet sauvignon. The reviews are mixed - some rate his whites as the best in Italy, others are sceptical.

While Gravner has found his perfect medium in the amphora, he will continue to experiment with various elements of the process. The maceration and aging periods, in particular, vary by vintage, yet they reflect Gravner's intention to continually experiment with lengthier timeframes. The maceration period - which is conducted on the skins - is a minimum of seven months.

The ground has all the life you need to give birth to grapes,+Gravner says. %A vine needs the earth to make a grape. Once you have that grape, you need the earth again to make the wine.+

At Azienda Agricola Cos at Bastonaca, Vittoria, SE Sicily , fermentation is carried out in terracotta giare of 250 and 400 litres. The wine is made from 40% Frappato di Vittoria and 60% Nero d'Avola (a varietal native to Sicily), and bottled as "Pithos" (the Greek name for amphora). The wine is gorgeously soft and aromatic. Giusto also makes a white wine from 100% Grecanico with a certain amount of skin contact.



Az. Agr. Frank Cornelissen, located on the slopes of Mount Etna is another Sicilian property using terracotta giare during fermentation. The grapes are fermented and aged according to ancient traditions in terracotta giare of 400 litres, buried up to the neck in the cellar in ground volcanic rock. Their first label is "Magma", and the red is made using Nerello Mascalese grapes.

Castello di Lispida near Padua was converted from a monastery into a country residence and winery during the 18 C.. Towards the end of the 50's, the castle's wine-making activity was given a new lease of life by planting new vines and working to develop and conserve pre-industrial wine-making methods. This included underground amphorae made entirely from terracotta where the fermentation and fining of the wine takes place. This was one of the first Italian wines made using the winemaking methods of the Romans.



Elisabetta Foradori has just made her maiden voyage with amphorae in Trentino. Fontanasanta is white wine from the indigenous Nosiolo grape. Two reds have also been vinified in terracotta.

Philippe and Alain Viret, owners of Domaine Viret at Saint Maurice/Eygues in France, have also been inspired to experiment with 420 litre dolia by the quality of the Sicilian wines they tasted that had been stored in amphorae.

These wines are like a strange and beautiful language; difficult to understand unless you listen closely, and are willing to accept a certain amount of mystery. Technoids dislike Gravner's wines, for example, and Cornelissen invites ridicule and praise in equal measure. To me these are reductive positions - if your argument is that extreme wine shouldn't exist then you are truly hogging the whitewash in the middle of the road.

The clay amphora is at the end of a process which starts in the vineyard returns wine gently to its roots. The soil shapes the vine, the soil can shape the wine is the philosophical and poetical underpinning of the idea. There is nothing wrong with searching for unity and harmony; out of the abstract comes something tangible and living. Virtually, all the wines I have tried which have been in amphora are extraordinary, not simply because of the amphora but that the amphora is one piece in the natural wine mosaic.



Bodega Cecchin - Argy without Bargy (whatever that means)

How often do I mention the New World in these newsletters? I even call it the New World, for goodness sake, like some prelapsarian wine fogey. I am pleased to say that after years of searching we are beginning to find the spirit of invention and a

sense of excitement in countries like Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. You have to dig deep to find the small growers, but the artisan mentality exists everywhere if you look hard enough.

The 78 ha estate (spread over three vineyards) was founded in 1959 located in Maipù, Mendoza and has been in the hands of the Cecchin family since its founding in 1959. Oscar Alberto Cecchin is the third generation at its helm today. The first members of the Cecchin family came to Argentina from Italy in 1910 and found work from 1927 in the local vineyards. Then in 1959, Jorge and Pedro Cecchin fulfilled their dream of owning some land, acquiring 11 hectares of vineyards and olives, including the winery dating from 1901.

The crops in all three of the estates that make up Bodega Cecchin have been certified for organic farming as of 2005. Bodega Cecchin's handling and processing in the winery is also certified as organic from 2005, so its wines are subsequently certified organic. Bodega Cecchin also farms biodynamically, but only in a small portion of the vineyards (just 2 hectares in each of the three estates). They own not only vineyards planted with a wide range of different grape varieties, but also peach and apricot orchards, olive groves and walnut and almond groves. The planting of these different crops being necessary to comply with the rules stipulated by the Organic certifying agency O I A (Organización Internacional Agropecuaria)- its purpose is to strengthen the biodiversity found at the domaine. Chemicals have never been used at the domaine, this is possible to verify thanks to carefully-preserved records of the viticultural methods employed at the domaine ever since its purchase by Jorge and Pedro Cecchin in 1959 this tradition of record-keeping is still maintained scrupulously. The vineyards in use today were originally planted in 1923, the pattern of vine rows is very ancient: the space between each of the vine rows is still as narrow as in 1923 because at that time tractors were not used in Mendoza to work the vineyards.

The consequence of this is that this estate is still worked with horses, as it was in 1923

Carlos Fernanda Vega, the winemaker, says: "We do not use selected yeasts because the wines are made with the intention that they be a true expression of the terroir found at our vineyards in Maipù."

Harvest is manual in small baskets. Grapes are de-stemmed for the alcoholic fermentation which takes place in 120 hl (12000 litre) cement tanks, coated on the inside with epoxy. This particular size and type of cement tank is used by Bodega Cecchin for many of the stages of vinification of most of the wines.

The Carignan is fresh with soft berry fruit and a soulful rusticity whereas the Cabernet is green in the nicest sense of the word all dark hedgerow fruits with a crunchy finale. The Malbec without sulphur is a delicious savoury wine. Eucalyptus, hay, teacake jostle the nostrils, the wine is earthy and peppery with a liquorice twist, a lovely contrast to the majority of plumptious Argentinean Malbec gaffests.