

Wine List

Autumn-Winter 2009-10

Six years, twelve lists, time moves so fast. This autumn-winter edition has been compiled with the help of my friend Hamish Anderson. As wine buyer for the Tate Galleries nationwide (Tate Britain has won many accolades for its historic wine list), Hamish tastes bucket loads of wine and is therefore well placed to assess quality, value and what's interesting. He has also written a best selling wine guide 'Vino', is a columnist for The Saturday Telegraph magazine and our resident guest speaker for our wine and food evenings that run from September to May. We have an excellent programme this year, so please ask for information.

I'd like to draw your attention to our new Jing Tea which Hamish put us onto. Jing offers definitive examples of Asia's greatest teas, grown in time honoured gardens, skillfully hand-processed then vacuum-packed at source for unmatched freshness. There are different leaves & infusions served in individual glass teapots.

Also, Calvors, a new lager on tap and intriguingly, one of the few lagers brewed in the UK and the only one brewed in Suffolk. For all its novelty, Calvors is a serious beer. Made by Alec Williamson on his family's farm near Coddham, Ipswich, it is clean, refined, hoppy, a really polished beer ideal as a thirst quencher or with food.

Salute, Piers



This autumn's Liberty Wines tasting was held at a thoroughly wet Oval Cricket Ground, stark contrast to the general weather this September but ideal to get me thinking what additions could be made to the list this autumn with its bounty of game, nuts, mushrooms and root vegetables. I have sought bolder reds and also weightier whites to pair with lighter game dishes, chicken and pork.

Some assume that weightier whites automatically mean oak, but not so in the case of our new **Viognier/Chardonnay** from **Zuccardi (Bin. 420)**, **Pecorino** from **Gran Sasso (Bin. 424)**, or the delicious **Poggiotondo Bianco (Bin. 423)**, just prolonged lees contact for weight and length. From the reds I want structure, depth, robustness, best encapsulated by **A Mano Negroamaro**, a familiar producer to you for their Fiano/Greco and Primitivo. A highly undervalued grape, I believe this wine delivers more bang for its buck than its fabled Primitivo which I hope you won't miss....too much.

Others to watch out for include rounded Bobal from **Bodega Mustiguillo (Bin. 528)**, earthy cabernet from **Majella** in Coonawarra (**Bin. 523**) and while light on the palate, the haunting and mysterious Central Otago Pinot Noir from **Wild Earth (Bin. 529)**. All of these are ideal to pair with the hearty dishes that will appear on the menu in the next few months – game stews, roast birds and slow cooked joints of beef with gratins of root vegetables.

The number in brackets after a wine gives an indication of its weight, 1 for the lightest 10 for the heaviest.

Wines by the GLASS and CARAFE are featured on the last two pages.

All our wines are available to drink in the comfort of your own home, please ask the bar staff for an **off sales price list** or purchase them direct from our shop, Victoria's Plums. And finally, keep an eye on our website for dates of our very popular Wine & Food Tasting evenings.

Wines By The Glass & Carafe

Aperitif

- 601. Fino, Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £3⁵⁰ 125ml Gl
 Finos are slightly fuller in style than Manzanilla. So not only are they a wonderful aperitif (try with almonds), but the wines' versatility make it a perfect accompaniment to a range of dishes throughout a meal.
- 604. Cream Sherry, Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £3⁰⁰ 100ml
 Gl Cream Sherry is a dry wine (fino) blended with a very sweet one (Pedro Ximénez) to create a decadently viscous glass full of candied fruit, molasses and nuts. A great cold weather aperitif or try it with hard British cheeses.
- 602. Manzanilla Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £3⁵⁰ 125ml
 Gl Manzanilla is matured in the town of Sanlúcar on the coast. It is here that it gets its distinctive salty tang. This is one of my favourite drinks on the planet sipped with half a dozen native Colchester oysters.

**For Sparkling Wine by the glass, please ask a member of bar staff which one is available.
 We change it each week to give you a taste of something new.**

White

Full Bodied, Good For Food, Some With Oak

- 418. 2008 Grillo, Villa Tonino, Sicily, Italy (7)** £10⁵⁰ 500ml
 Cf Grillo is a white grape native to Sicily. It is rich and waxy, good with chicken and heavier fish dishes. £3⁹⁰ 175ml Gl
- 419. 2008 Rioja 'Barrel Fermented', Luis Cañas, Spain (7)** £11⁷⁰ 500ml Cf
 White Rioja has been transformed in recent years. The key to this wine is the creamy, butterscotch flavours of the oak are balanced by a fresh acidity. Drink with chicken and powerful fish dishes. £4⁴⁰ 175ml Gl
- 420. 2008 Familia Zuccardi, Serie 'A', Chardonnay/Viognier (7)** £12 500ml Cf
 This unusual blend of peachy Viognier and ripe citrusy, rounded Chardonnay is perfect as an aperitif or with richer white meats. £4⁵⁰ 175ml Gl
- 423. 2008 Poggiotondo Bianco IGT di Toscana, Cerreto Guidi, Italy (7)** £12 500ml Cf
 A blend of three native Tuscan varieties, this displays the structure of the Trebbiano, the intense aromatics of Malvasia and the freshness and elegance of Vermentino. £4⁴⁰ 175ml Gl

Medium Weight, Floral, Aromatic

- 404. 2008 'The Opportunist', One Chain Vineyards, South Australia (4)** £9⁴⁰ 500ml Cf
 Much of Aussie wine at this price point is soul-destroyingly awful. This is a stunner; juicy, succulent and with a refreshing cut of acidity it would be perfect with one of Ugo's spring vegetable risottos. £3⁵⁰ 175ml Gl
- 422. 2008 Chenin Blanc, Liberty Fairtrade, Paarl, South Africa (6)** £10⁷⁰ 500ml Cf
 Dry, lifted and minerally with good weight and a lovely balance of freshness and vibrancy of fruit. £4 175ml
- 408. 2008 Fiano/Greco, A Mano, Puglia, Italy (6)** £12 500ml
 Cf Good whites from Puglia are few and far between. This is floral & citrus with underlying minerality. £4⁵⁰ 175ml Gl
- 413. 2008 Grüner Veltliner, Domaine Wachau, Wachau, Austria (5)** £12 500ml
 Cf Fresh, fruity and youthful, classic Grüner with aromas of white pepper and grapefruit. £4⁴⁰ 175ml
 Gl

Crisp, Light And No Oak

- 401. 2008 Bella Modella, IGT Veneto, Italy (2)** £9 500ml Cf
 A beautifully, light, vibrant white to be appreciated for its zesty, citrus character and refreshing quality. £3³⁰ 175ml Gl
- 409. 2008 Vinho Verde, Quinta da Aveleda, Portugal (2)** £10³⁰ 500ml
 Cf A fabulously fresh, grapey, herbal wine – low in alcohol and ridiculously easy to drink. £3⁹⁰ 175ml Gl

- 402. 2008 Verdicchio di Matelica, Cantine Belisario, Italy (4)** £11⁷⁰ 500ml
 Cf A subtle Verdicchio with flavours of white fruits pear, dried herbs and a distinct mineral edge. £4⁴⁰ 175ml GI
- 405. 2008 Sauvignon de Touraine, Marquis de Rochemont, Chenonceau, France (4)** £12⁷⁰ 500ml Cf
 A modern, new world style of Sauvignon while retaining the mineral qualities of the Touraine. Lively, citrus and passion fruit aromas followed by zippy, crisp acidity with good length. Just what you want to get you going. £4⁷⁰ 175ml GI

Wines By The Glass & Carafe

Rosé

- 301. 2008 Syrah Rosé, Santa Rosa, Mendoza, Argentina (8)** £9⁷⁰ 500ml Cf
This delicious Argentinean rosé is laden with soft red fruits and laced with a hint of spice. £3⁶⁰ 175ml GI
- 303. 2008 Artadi Artazuri Garnacha, Navarra Rosé (6)** £12 500ml
Cf Full flavored and ripe with lots of crushed red fruits. A bit of spice and pepper on the end makes it ideal for £4⁵⁰ 175ml
GI
pastas or risottos or light game dishes.
- 302. 2008 Chiantello, Ca'dei Frati, Veneto, Italy (5)** £16 500ml Cf
We discovered this wine on a trip to Italy a couple of years ago. We have to fight for enough £6 175ml GI
of stock to list throughout the summer. Delicate, restrained and full of minerality.

Red

Full-bodied

- 519. 2007 Garnacha, La Multa, Navarra, Spain (8)** £9⁷⁰ 500ml Cf
This is the best value wine that has found its way into my glass in 2009. A hugely concentrated, spicy, £3⁶⁵ 175ml GI
silky brooding number fashioned from ancient Garnacha vines.
- 515. 2007 Bonarda, Colonia Las Liebres, Mendoza, Argentina (7)** £10⁴⁰ 500ml Cf
Bonarda is a grape that originates from northern Italy where it struggles to get ripe and make any wine £3⁹⁰ 175ml GI
of note. Argentina though, has unlocked its potential. Full of black fruits and chocolate.
- 517. 2007 Negroamaro, A Mano, Puglia, Italy (8)** £12 500ml
Cf
Tremendous depth of black/red colour, plummy and chocolate aromas give way to a rich, powerful structure that £4⁵⁰ 175ml GI
while robust, is balanced by good tannins and depth.
- 521. 2007 Château Lancyre 'La Coste d'Aleyrac', Pic St Loup, Languedoc, France (8)** £12⁴⁰ 500ml Cf
This is a blend of two southern French stalwarts, Syrah and Grenache. The former supplies spice and £4⁶⁵ 175ml GI
leather to the wine, the latter silky fruit. It has more finesse than many burly southern reds.

Medium Bodied, Good With Food

- 507. 2008 Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Il Faggio, Abruzzo, Italy (6)** £10 500ml Cf
The red wines of Abruzzo have undergone a transformation in the last five years. Gone are the overly £3⁷⁵ 175ml GI
rustic flavours & in their place are juicy, mid-weight, perfumed wines like this that are outstanding value.
Drink on its own, with hard cheese or cured meats.
- 509. 2008 Sangiovese di Toscana 'Poggio de Sasso', Cantina di Montalcino, Italy (7)** £11 500ml Cf
Montalcino is famous for Brunello, see Bin 107, one of Italy's most expensive wines. This is made from £4¹⁵ 175ml GI
the same grape, grown just outside the region; juicy with flavours of black cherries and dried herbs.
- 510. 2007 Château La Tour de Beraud, Costières de Nîmes, France (6)** £11 500ml Cf
The south of France is undoubtedly turning out many of France's most interesting and best value reds. £4¹⁵ 175ml GI
This blend of Grenache, Syrah and Carignan is full of sweet fruits and spice.
- 516. 2006 Armador Merlot, Odfjell, Maipo Valley, Chile (7)** £11⁷⁰ 500ml
Cf
This juicy plummy Merlot has all the upfront charm you want from this grape but also has good £4⁴⁰ 175ml GI
structure to keep it focused.

Lighter Reds

- 501. 2008 Centelleo, Tempranillo, La Mancha, Spain (4)** £9 500ml
Cf
A ripe, juicy Tempranillo baked in the sun of La Mancha to give sweet jammy fruit with hints of spice. £3³⁰ 175ml GI
Deliciously supple & succulent. Excellent on its own but equally likes lamb chops & slightly spiced dishes.
- 502. 2007 Nostros Pinot Noir Reserva, Vina Indomita, Casablanca, Chile (3)** £9⁷⁰ 500ml Cf A
light, fragrant red made from grapes grown in the cooler Casablanca region of Chile. Bright, wild strawberry £3⁶⁰ 175ml GI
and raspberry fruits dominate a soft, supple palate which leads through to a gentle, warming finish. This wine
really delivers a simple, rounded glass ideal for lunch or early evening.
- 527. 2008 Valpolicella, Allegrini, Veneto, Italy (4)** £13⁴⁰ 500ml

Cf

The ludicrous Italian wine laws dictate that now this is bottled with a screw cap (the best thing for it), it can no longer be called the superior Classico. The 2007 is on form with far more focus and fresh black fruits than ever, drink lightly chilled with some cured meat.

£5 175ml GI

Desert Island Wines

Below are a few wines that Hamish and I would gladly sell our wives and mothers for. We have simply added a £10 cash margin (many establishments would triple the cost and then add VAT), as we would like people to drink them rather than stare at them longingly. If you would like the reds decanted to help open them up, please ask, we would be more than happy to oblige.

White

- 106. 2007 Polish Hill Riesling, Grosset, Clare Valley, Australia** £30 Bt
Jeff Grosset's Polish Hill vineyard produces Australia's iconic Riesling and is one of the great examples of this grape worldwide. It usually takes a few years to show at its best, however 2007 is tasting absolutely fabulous young. Freshly cut limes, flowers and an intense, mineral palate add up to a blockbuster wine. This is as good a young Polish Hills as I have ever tried.
- 101. 2006 'Piere' Sauvignon Blanc, Vie di Romans, Isonzo, Italy** £32 Bt
One of the great bottles of Sauvignon. Unoaked, it shows great ripeness, with herbaceous flavours, stone fruits and a long, rich finish. The perfect white to tackle meat like chicken, pork and veal.
- 105. 2006 Meursault 'Les Clous', Jean-Claude Boisset, Côte de Beaune, Burgundy** £40 Bt
My admiration for this firm's young winemaker, Grègory Patriat, grows with each vintage. He is equally adept at making red as white (see bin 506), but whatever the colour the wines bear the stamp of the region they are grown in. So this is a typically rich Meursault, but amongst all the weight is a beautifully refreshing acidity. Drink with chicken, runny cheese or langoustine.
- 109. 2006 'Kevin John' Margaret River Chardonnay, Cullen, Australia** £42 Bt
Cullen are the pioneering winemakers in Margaret River, first planting commercial vines in 1966 and then becoming Australia's first fully carbon neutral winery in 2007. This wine is so named in honour of its founder and of all the new world chardonnay's I've tried, this is the most poised, beguiling, elegant and pure of all. I'd happily drink it with some buttery roast chicken, quail or partridge or scallops and other mild seafood.

Red (we can decant these for you)

- 103. 2005 Chianti Classico Riserva 'Vigneto Rancia', Felsina Berardenga, Tuscany, Italy** £37⁵⁰ Bt
To my mind Felsina always make some of Tuscany's finest offerings. It is a powerful, but at the same time, elegant expression of Sangiovese. My first port of call for food would be any type of pork.
- 104. 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, Domaine A, Tasmania** £38 Bt
Many thought Peter Althaus (Domaine A's owner) mad when he planted Cabernet in Tasmania as most did not believe it would get ripe. Twenty years later and he regularly produces finely crafted, complex Cabernet with an Old World feel, that the critics drool over. Stellar stuff, but be sure to give it twenty minutes in the decanter
- 107. 2001 Brunello di Montalcino, Poggio San Polo, Tuscany, Italy** £40 Bt
Brunello di Montalcino is a small area south of Siena. Their reputation (and price) has burgeoned in recent years. 2001 was an excellent year that fashioned sumptuous, muscular, rich wines. Decant and drink with roast red meats.
- 102. 2001 Montsalvat, Cellers de la Cartoixa, Priorat, Spain** £38 Bt
We were in Spain and visited this remote, wild region. This unique wine is produced from ancient vines on steep hillsides that look impossible to cultivate anything on. They are characterised by rich, sweet fruits, spice and a stony minerality. This is a brooding, earthy, complex wine, stunning with slow-cooked lamb.
- 108. 2004 Barolo 'Margheria', Massolino, Serralunga d'Alba, Italy** £52 Bt
2004 is already being talked of as a 'once in a lifetime vintage' in Piemonte. The best are among the finest versions of young Nebbiolo I have tried. Most are designed for the long haul, however Massolino makes his in a forward, approachable style. This is perfumed, savoury and is packed full of ripe fruits like red cherries. Give it 20 minutes in the decanter and drink with roast pork or veal.

Aperitif

What can I do to persuade you that sherry is the most underrated and best value wine from anywhere in the world, as where else could you taste one of the region's greatest producers, Colosia, for so little? Probably not much, but try first two below and your eyes will be opened. Both are bone dry and un-oxidised – there is no better drink to kick-start your taste buds before a meal. Note our sherry comes in a proper serving (125ml) rather than the paltry amount many serve.

- 601. Fino, Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £21 Bt
Fino's are slightly fuller in style than Manzanilla. So not only are they a wonderful aperitif (try them with salted almonds), but the wines' versatility make a bottle the perfect accompaniment to a range of dishes throughout a meal. £3⁵⁰ 125ml GI
- 602. Manzanilla, Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £21 Bt
Manzanilla is matured in the town of Sanlucar on the coast. It is here that it gets its distinctive salty tang. This is one of my favourite drinks on the planet and supped with half a dozen native Colchester oysters would be my last meal of choice. £3⁵⁰ 125ml GI
- 604. Cream Sherry, Bodegas Gutiérrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** £22 Bt
Cream Sherry is a dry wine (Fino) blended with a very sweet one (Pedro Ximénez) to create a decadently viscous glass full of candied fruit, molasses and nuts. A great cold weather aperitif or try it with hard British cheeses. £3⁰⁰ 100ml GI

Sparkling & Champagne

We are used to drinking sparkling wine as an aperitif in the UK. Nothing wrong with that, as it fills the role of palate awakener perfectly. However the best stuff works wonderfully with food. Think of it as top quality white wine that happens to have bubbles in it. So try Champagne with simple cooked fish, shellfish and best of all oysters. Fizzy rosé gets a special mention for its affinity with salmon.

- 201. Miret Rosado Reserva NV, Cava, Spain** £17⁵⁰ Bt
Ignore the old fashioned, retro label and dive into this thoroughly modern example of pink Cava. It bursts with red fruits, such as strawberries, raspberries and red currants – a steal for the price.
- 202. Prosecco Spumante, Ca'Morlin, Conegliano e Valdobbiadene, Veneto, Italy** £25 Bt
A region that usually disappoints, this is a wonderful soft, easy-drinking glass of fizz.
- 207. Chapel Down Brut NV, Kent, England** £28 Bt
English sparkling wine is starting to build up a head of steam. Top brands regularly beat big names of Champagne in blind tastings and recently a champagne house has planted vines near Dorking. Floral, refreshing and infinitely better than bargain basement Champagne.
- 206. 2004 Cuvee dei Frati Brut, Lugana, Italy** £28 Bt
A superb, traditional method sparkler that has nicely developed flavours on the nose and a good richness of palate. The Dal Cero family have transformed their property on the shores of Lake Garda over the past decade into a model Italian estate - this and Bin 302 are the very essence of it.
- 203. Cremant d'Alsace Brut, Blanc de Blancs, Domaine Pfister, Alsace, France** £29⁵⁰ Bt
This is made by the same expensive production method that Champagne uses and is often the fizz champagne growers drink. It is a pale yellow colour with a dense, very fine mousse lasting to the very last sip in the glass. With notes of brioche, it has a light, fresh palate and is ideal for accompanying food or as an aperitif.
- 204. 2004 Clover Hill Brut, Pipers River, Tasmania, Australia** £29 Bt
Tasmania is one of the coolest growing regions in Australia and so perfect for the production of sparkling wine. This creamy, complex fizz should have the Champenoise seriously worried, as it is streets ahead of anything Champagne can produce at this price
- 205. Devaux, Cuvée Rosé NV, Ay, Champagne, France** £45 Bt
I could drink this till the cows come home. An alluring pink hue and flavours of macerated strawberries add up to one of the finest sparkling rosés' around.

Rosé

Rose sales have rocketed over the last few years as both the consumer and importantly winemakers take it more seriously. The lighter styles are great palate cleansers before a meal and can happily be drunk with grilled vegetables and salads. The heavier versions are best with food, so think about rich fish dishes and chicken – they are particularly useful at standing up to anything with a high level of spice in it.

- 301. 2008 Syrah Rosé, Santa Rosa, Mendoza, Argentina (8)** **£14⁵⁰** Bt
This delicious Argentinean rose is laden with soft red fruits and laced with a hint of spice. Lovely on its own but it easily has enough weight to tackle some cured ham or poached salmon.
- 303. 2008 Artadi Artazuri Garnacha, Navarra Rosé (6)** **£15⁵⁰** Bt
I picked this up at a bin end sale so is excellent value and ideal as we move into autumn. This rosé is full flavored and ripe with lots of crushed red fruits. A bit of spice and pepper at end makes it ideal for pastas or risottos or light game dishes.
- 304. 2008 Domaine du Pujol Rosé, Coteaux du Languedoc, France (8)** **£19⁵⁰** Bt
Delicate raspberry scented rosé from the south of France. Drink on its own or with summer salads.
- 302. 2008 Chiaretto, Ca'dei Frati, Veneto, Italy (5)** **£24** Bt
We discovered this wine on a trip to Italy a couple of years ago. We have to fight for enough of stock to list throughout the summer. The latest vintage is the best yet. Delicate, restrained and full of minerality.

White

Full Bodied, Good with Food, Some with Oak

The term 'oaked' refers to wine that has been matured in an oak barrel for a period of time before being bottled. This process adds weight, complexity and cost (each 225 litre barrel costs around £500). There has been lots of negative press lately about wines being too oaky. Don't let this lead you to think all oaked wines are bad, they are not and indeed most of the world's greatest and most expensive wines will be oaked. They do though need to be matched carefully with food. The richer wines go with chicken, veal, rich fish dishes and anything lightly smoked. They also love creamy sauces or pastas. Oaky wines hate spicy food.

- 418. 2008 Grillo, Villa Tonino, Sicily, Italy (7)** £15⁵⁰ Bt
Grillo is a white grape native to Sicily. It is rich and waxy, good with chicken and heavier fish dishes.
- 419. 2008 Rioja 'Barrel Fermented', Luis Cañas, Spain (7)** £17⁵⁰ Bt
Rioja has been transformed and modernised in recent years. The wines to have benefited most from this new outlook are the whites. The key to this wine is the creamy, butterscotch flavours of the oak are balanced by a fresh acidity. Drink with chicken and powerful fish dishes
- 423. 2008 Poggiotondo Bianco IGT di Toscana, Cerreto Guidi, Italy (7)** £17⁵⁰ Bt
This area is half way between Pisa and Florence and produces wines of great depth and power and lovely perfumes. A blend of three native Tuscan varieties, this displays the structure of the Trebbiano, the intense aromatics of Malvasia and the freshness and elegance of Vermentino. Unoaked to maximise freshness, lees contact adds texture and complexity.
- 420. 2008 Familia Zuccardi, Serie 'A', Chardonnay/Viognier (7)** £18 Bt
I have huge admiration for the wines produced by this forward thinking winery, See also Bin 522. The unique climate in the foothills of the Andes help produce wines of excellent aromas, ripe, rich fruit and complexity. This unusual blend of peachy Viognier and ripe citrusy, rounded Chardonnay is perfect as an aperitif or with richer white meats.
- 424. 2007 St Véran, Domaine Fussiacus, Mâconnais, Burgundy, France (7)** £24 Bt
2007 was a cracking white Burgundy vintage, producing rich expressive wines. Classically in France you might drink this with some roast chicken or pungent cheese, but it is just at home with a creamy mushroom risotto.
- 427. 2008 Pecorino IGT Terre di Chieti, Gran Sasso, Ortona, Italy (8)** £20⁵⁰ Bt
The pecorino grape is relatively rare with only about 300 hectares planted in the Abruzzi and Marches. Its name is derived from the fact that a bunch of Pecorino grapes is a similar shape to a sheep's head. Fresh and clean with nutty, almond characteristics on the nose, it is dry, tangy and savoury with lovely length. Ideal as an aperitif or with creamy, rich pasta or risotto dishes.
- 421. 2007 Lugana 'Brolettino', Ca' dei Frati, Veneto, Italy (8)** £26⁵⁰ Bt
Made a stones throw from Lake Garda this is a stunning single vineyard wine from Lugana's top producer. Fermented in oak barrels, its rich, honeysuckle character is balanced by an elegant minerality. Drink it with grilled pork chops or soft cheeses.
- 417. 2005 Suckfizzle Sauvignon/Semillon, Margaret River, W. Australia (8)** £29 Bt
Blends of Semillon and Sauvignon are a speciality of Australia, although the idea originates from the dry white wines of Bordeaux. This is different to many of its counterparts as the wine has been matured in oak barrels. Rich and complex with flavours of dried herbs, spice and ripe tropical fruits. Be quick, this wine is regarded as the finest of its type from Oz and has a cult following, supplies are unlikely to last all the year round. Drink it with pork, chicken and veal.

Medium Weight, Floral, Aromatic

These are lovely food wines as they have more weight than the above, but are generally not oaked (for an explanation of ‘oaked’ see the previous page). These fragrant wines are wonderful paired with fish dishes that have aromatic herbs like fennel. They are also excellent at standing up to strong spices and the heat of chilli.

- 404. 2008 ‘The Opportunist’, One Chain Vineyards, South Australia (6) £14 Bt**
I got a shock when I first tried this bottle as much of Aussie wine at this price point is soul-destroyingly awful. This is a stunner; juicy, succulent and with a refreshing cut of acidity it would be perfect with one of Ugo’s spring vegetable risottos.
- 422. 2008 Chenin Blanc, Liberty Fairtrade, Paarl, South Africa (6) £16 Bt**
A Fairtrade project between Liberty Wines and Charles Back of Fairview where the growers need to be paid a minimum fair price for their grapes and a premium is paid to a fund that is then used to improve social conditions for the farmers. It is easy to support such values when a wine delivers – dry, lifted and minerally with good weight and a lovely balance of freshness and vibrancy of fruit.
- 413. 2008 Grüner Veltliner, Domaine Wachau, Wachau, Austria (5) £17⁵⁰ Bt**
Austria has moved some way from the low quality bulk days c. 1985 to smaller scale, higher quality wine production, partly thanks to strict wine laws that are revered worldwide. Wachau has always been an important cooperative with access to the countries finest vineyards. This wine won best Austrian Wine at the International Wine Challenge. Fresh, fruity and youthful, classic Grüner with aromas of white pepper and grapefruit.
- 408. 2008 Fiano/Greco, A Mano, Puglia, Italy (6) £18 Bt**
Good whites from Puglia are few and far between. It is floral and citrus with an underlying minerality, a lovely aperitif or try it with grilled fish.
- 410. 2008 Sannio Falanghina, Vesevo, Campania, Italy (6) £19⁵⁰ Bt**
Falanghina makes scented, nutty wine and this example also has a satisfying mineral character to it. A great food all rounder, it’s wonderful with simple risottos and pastas.
- 411. 2008 Yealands Estate, Viognier, Marlborough, New Zealand (6) £21⁵⁰ Bt**
Yealands Estate is exposed to some of the toughest growing conditions in Marlborough – high sunshine, wind, cool nights and low rainfall. Thus the berries produced here are small, thick-skinned and intensely flavoured. This Viognier shows textured layers of white peach, nectarine and spice with a luscious, elegant mouth feel. It is surprisingly refreshing and will work well with dishes with chilli or mild heat.
- 412. 2007 Pinot Gris, Lalla Gully, Tasmania, Australia (6) £22 Bt**
Tasmania’s climate is cool; this makes it perfect for the production of aromatic varieties like Riesling and Pinot Gris. This peachy, creamy wine is lovely on its own, or try with dishes with chilli or spices.
- 416. 2008 Soave Classico, Leonildo Pieropan, Veneto, Italy (5) £20⁵⁰ Bt**
Forget all you previous experiences with Soave, particularly the £3.99 bottles of plonk that has destroyed the region’s reputation. Pieropan is one of the few who concentrate on the superior Garganega grape and fly the flag for the area. Fragrant, with pronounced citrus flavours, it is an intriguing and great value glass of wine. Drink with grilled vegetables or aromatic chicken dishes.
- 415. 2007 Pinot Grigio ‘Ramato’, Specogna, Colli Orientali, Italy (5) £26 Bt**
When the Pinot Grigio grape is fully ripe its skin takes on a pink hue. If these skins are then soaked with the juice of the grapes after crushing some of the colour is extracted, hence the copper tones to this wine. This ‘Ramato’ style has far more depth of flavour than most insipid versions of the grape.
- 414. 2008 Zephyr Sauvignon Blanc, Kerseley Estate, Marlborough, New Zealand (6) £21 Bt**
New Zealand’s winemakers are increasingly looking at ways to add greater complexity to Sauvignon. Hence this has all the pungent, gooseberry and passion fruit flavours you would expect but also a rich, textured palate that adds real length of flavour.

Crisp, Light And No Oak

This section is the best place to look if you are after an aperitif or are planning on drinking some wine, but not having a meal. When thinking about food these steely wines tend to go best with things that have delicate flavours. Match them with a strongly flavoured dish and you might well find that the wine is lost with your food.

- 401. 2008 Bella Modella, IGT Veneto, Italy (2) £13⁵⁰ Bt**
A beautifully, light, vibrant white to be appreciated for its zesty, citrus character and refreshing quality
- 426. 2008 'G' Garganega, Alpha Zeta, Veneto, Italy (3) £15 Bt**
Garganega is the grape responsible for fashioning the best Soave (see bin 416). This is a classic example of the variety – delicate, fragrant and crisp.
- 409. 2008 Vinho Verde, Quinta da Aveleda, Portugal (2) £15⁵⁰ Bt**
Vinho Verde is at last awakening – the vast majority of the wines are still thin and acidic. However, good producers, like Aveleda, make fabulously fresh, grapey, herbal wines – low in alcohol and ridiculously easy to drink.
- 403. 2008 Picpoul de Pinet, Domaine La Croix Gratiot, Languedoc, France (4) £16⁵⁰ Bt**
If you have ever been to the south of France during the summer you will know that it is a struggle to find a refreshing white to drink on a hot day, hence the popularity of rosé. Picpoul de Pinet is the answer, its flavours of green apples, herbs and minerals make it the perfect thirst quencher and partner to shellfish. Totally refreshing!
- 402. 2008 Verdicchio di Matelica, Cantine Belisario, Italy (4) £17⁵⁰ Bt**
This particular region produces subtle Verdicchio with flavours of white fruits pear, dried herbs and a distinct mineral edge. A wonderful aperitif or try with simple pasta dishes.
- 405. 2008 Sauvignon de Touraine, Marquis de Rochemont, Chenonceau, France (4) £19 Bt**
This was one of the finds at Liberty's recent tasting. A modern, new world style of Sauvignon while retaining the mineral qualities of the Touraine. Lively, citrus and passion fruit aromas followed by zippy, crisp acidity with good length. Just what you want to get you going.
- 407. 2006 Pinot Bianco, Franz Haas, Alto Adige, Italy (5) £21⁵⁰ Bt**
Let's not beat around the bush, this is the finest example I have ever tried of this grape (and that includes everything the Alsations turn out under the guise of Pinot Blanc). Franz Haas is a genius making pristine, multi-faceted wines. Drink it with richer fish dishes; some grilled bream would be perfect.
- 406. 2008 Gavi di Gavi 'Vigneti Lugarara', La Giustiniana, Piemonte, Italy (4) £25 Bt**
Gavi is deeply fashionable in Italy and therefore most of the producers in this small region have little trouble selling their wares – this is not conducive to making the best possible wine. La Giustiniana buck the trend and are fastidious in the vineyard and winery. It is floral and refreshing; I like to drink it as an aperitif or with shellfish.
- 428. 2008 Roero Arneis 'San Michele', Deltetto, Piemonte, Italy (4) £24⁵⁰ Bt**
Known as 'little rascal' by the Piemontese for its trickiness to grow, arneis is grown in the hills of Roero, northwest of Alba. It has also done quite well in California. Soft and well-balanced with notes of vanilla and apple. Fresh, clean and elegant with good length and a zingy, floral finish.
- 425. 2008 Chablis 1er Cru Montmain, Denis Race, Burgundy, France (5) £28 Bt**
1er Cru Chablis comes from the best vineyard sites situated around the village itself. The extra exposure the grapes get to the sun lends the wines additional weight. Denis Race has fashioned a ripe glass of Chardonnay that is cut through with the region's trademark minerality.

Red

Full-bodied

Big rich styles of wine are some of the hardest to get right with food. I never like to prescribe to people what they can and can't drink with their meal. The only rule of food and wine matching is that if you like it, then the combination is a success. Having said that if you drink some of the heavier wines below with a beautiful piece of fish caught in Mersea that morning, you will be doing Ugo's cooking and more importantly the dead fish, a disservice! So think big wines, big food flavours to match.

- 519. 2007 Garnacha, La Multa, Navarra, Spain (8)** £14⁵⁰ Bt
This is the best value wine that has found its way into my glass in 2009. Made by Master of Wine Norrel Roberston, it is a hugely concentrated, spicy, silky brooding number fashioned from ancient Garnacha vines. Drink with barbequed or grilled red meats, preferably very rare.
- 515. 2007 Bonarda, Colonia Las Liebres, Mendoza, Argentina (7)** £15⁵⁰ Bt
Bonarda is a grape that originates from northern Italy where it struggles to get ripe and make any wine of note. Argentina though, has unlocked its potential. Full of black fruits and chocolate it is one of the best value wines on the list.
- 517. 2007 Negroamaro, A Mano, Puglia, Italy (8)** £18 Bt
This offering from A Mano has replaced a long standing favourite, which I know, is going to bring me lots of stick, that is, until you have tasted this. Negroamaro is a highly undervalued variety, which, delivers more character and earthiness than its former Primitivo thus ideal for winter. Tremendous depth of black/red colour, plummy and chocolate aromas give way to a rich, powerful structure that while robust, is balanced by good tannins and depth. Sold?
- 518. 2007 Beneventano Aglianico, Vesevo, Campania, Italy (8)** £17⁵⁰ Bt
Only Italy can produce something this downright interesting at this price point. Campania is in the south of Italy so you would expect this to be a very hot region. Not so, the altitude and proximity to the sea make for some of the latest harvest dates in Italy. Aglianico is the grape and has a fearsome reputation for power and tannins. This though is an intense, meaty wine but with supple tannins. Drink with all rustic meat dishes.
- 521. 2006 Château Lancyre 'La Coste d'Aleyrac', Pic St Loup, Languedoc, France (8)** £18⁵⁰ Bt
This is a blend of two southern French stalwarts, Syrah and Grenache. The former supplies spice and leather to the wine, the latter silky fruit. It has more finesse than many burly southern reds. Drink it with braised red meats.
- 520. 2006 Barbera, Agnostinelli, Paarl, South Africa (8)** £22 Bt
Charles Back is one of the pioneers of modern South African wine. His main label, Fairview, produce many of the country's finest bottles. What really sets him apart is his desire to innovate (not something the South African wine industry is renowned for). Hence we have here one of the first Barbera's from the Cape. Perfumed, full of plums and chocolate it also retains the grapes trademark acidity. Try with strong hard cheese or steak.
- 528. 2007 'Mestizaje', Bodega Mustiguillo, Utiel-Requena, Spain (7)** £22 Bt
This has been a long standing favorite at home but I have always fretted about putting it on the list due to the difficulty you might have in pronouncing it. Fear not – MES-TI-ZAC-HEY. From the area northwest of Valencia, this winery is a champion of the local Bobal grape. Intensely perfumed, it is powerful and concentrate, the robust tannins softened by vanilla, strawberry and cassis. The chunky, fleshy Bobal character is given finesse the Tempranillo and Cabernet blend. When you see Ugo's slow cooked Oxtail dish, choose this.
- 522. 2006 'Q' Malbec, Familia Zuccardi, Mendoza, Argentina (8)** £26⁵⁰ Bt
The Zuccardi family make a huge selection of very high quality wines; the 'Q' range is their flagship. Malbec is Argentina's signature red variety; they are full bodied and meaty, with the best like this one having a lovely fragrant side.

Full-bodied....continued

- 523. 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon, Majella, Coonawarra, South Australia (8) £28 Bt**
Coonawarra is famed for its terra rossa soils, strikingly red, they fashion some of Australia's most individual wines. This offering from Majella has all the black fruits and tobacco you want but are framed by dusty, soft tannins so typical of the region. Drink with grilled red meats and well worth decanting.
- 524. 2002 Rioja Reserva 'Seleccion de la Familia', Luis Cañas, Spain (7) £29 Bt**
A reserva wine is specially selected to represent the epitome of great Rioja. Dark garnet red colour with a pronounced nose of ripe strawberries and plums. Deep, rich and savoury with well integrated tannins, elegant silky fruit and subtle oak.
- 525. 2006 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Avignonesi, Tuscany, Italy (8) £31 Bt**
Vino Nobile is a region that has been left in the shade by its illustrious neighbour to the west, Brunello di Montalcino. This is good news for us drinkers as where most Brunello is now overpriced, Vino Nobile is conspicuously under-valued. This is made mostly from Sangiovese, one of Chianti's main grapes. The 2005 vintage combines ripeness with great elegance.
- 526. 2005 The Bad Impersonator Shiraz, Two Hands, Barossa South Australia (9) £35 Bt**
Two Hands started in 1999 and in a short space of time have established itself as one of Australia's most coveted wineries. This is typical Barossa, full-bodied, with lots of chocolate, plum and leather flavours. However, it is distinguished from the competitors by a lightness of touch that somehow manages to make what is a very rich wine, taste elegant. Think big chunks of red meat.

Medium Bodied, Good With Food

Like its white counterpart this section contains the most food-friendly styles of wine. All the bottles below have the requisite fruit weight but balancing acidity and structure to work with a broad range of dishes. In general these wines work with most meat dishes, but ones that don't have really rich concentrated sauces. Mild hard cheeses also a winner.

- 507. 2008 Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Il Faggio, Abruzzo, Italy (6) £15 Bt**
The red wines of Abruzzo have undergone a transformation in the last five years. Gone are the overly rustic flavours & in their place are juicy, mid-weight, perfumed wines like this that are outstanding value. Drink on its own, with milk hard cheese or cured meats.
- 508. 2008 Nero d'Avola, Villa Tonino, Sicily, Italy (6) £15⁵⁰ Bt**
Nero d'Avola is one of Sicily's finest red varieties. It is fleshy and accessible with a distinctly earthy quality adding real character. Drink it with red meat, cooked rare.
- 509. 2007 Sangiovese di Toscana 'Poggio de Sasso', Cantina di Montalcino, Italy (7) £16⁵⁰ Bt**
Montalcino is famous for Brunello see Bin 107, one of Italy's most expensive and red wines. This is made from the same grape, grown just outside the region; juicy with flavours of black cherries and dried herbs, it is great with pork.
- 516. 2006 Armador Merlot, Odfjell, Maipo Valley, Chile (7) £17⁵⁰ Bt**
Odfjell is a small (rare in Chile) estate owned by a Norwegian and makes exemplary wine. This juicy plummy Merlot has all the upfront charm you want from this grape but also has good structure to keep it focused.
- 510. 2007 Château La Tour de Beraud, Costières de Nîmes, France (6) £16⁵⁰ Bt**
The south of France is undoubtedly turning out many of France's most interesting and best value reds. This blend of Grenache, Syrah and Carignan is full of sweet fruits and spice. It works with a range of hearty meat dishes – think about rustic stews.
- 511. 2007 Chianti, Cantine Leonardo, Tuscany, Italy (6) £18 Bt**
Cheap Chianti is usually awful, designed for an undemanding home market. Cantine Leonardo is a model of how a big producer in the region should be run. The main grape is Sangiovese and this wine is full of its herbal, slightly rustic but eminently drinkable character. It has great acidity and thus counters the fattiness of pork superbly.
- 512. 2005 Azamor, Alentejo, Portugal (7) £18 Bt**
A perfect example of why Portugal is currently producing many of Europe's most interesting reds. From right down in the south, this is a rich savoury blend of international grapes like Syrah and indigenous varieties such as Touriga Franca.
- 514. 2007 Moratel (Merlot, Cabernet, Toroldego), Cesconi, Trentino, Italy (6) £25 Bt**
Trentino is in the north of Italy close to the border with Austria. Its cool vineyards are justly famous for its whites, but they also fashion complex, restrained reds. This mid-weight cedary, smoky wine is great with red meats or hard cheese.
- 513. 2006 Chianti Rufina Riserva 'Bucerchiale', Selvapiana, Tuscany, Italy (7) £29 Bt**
Selvapiana produce stunning, modern Chianti. The Rufina region is one of the cooler zones in the area, which results in rich wines with balance and purity. The result is an intense wine full of dark cherries, cloves and a finish that goes on and on. Perfect with slow-cooked pork dishes and hard cheeses.

Lighter Red and Pinot Noir

After years of big blockbuster reds with high alcohol and lots of oak being in fashion, recently there has been resurgence in interest at the lighter end of the spectrum. This is good news as these styles of wine are particularly versatile with food. Additionally if you want some red with fish or indeed without food altogether, then this is the section to make your choice from. I am an unashamed Pinot Noir freak, with its haunting fragrance and ability to fill the mouth with flavour yet remain light and elegant, so please check out Boisset's Savigny and ask for some soft gooey cheese.

- 501. 2007 Centelleo, Tempranillo, La Mancha, Spain (4)** £13⁵⁰ Bt
A ripe, juicy Tempranillo baked in the sun of La Mancha to give sweet jammy fruit with hints of spice. Deliciously supple & succulent. Excellent on its own but equally likes lamb chops & slightly spiced dishes.
- 502. 2007 Nostros Pinot Noir Reserva, Vina Indomita, Casablanca, Chile (3)** £14⁵⁰ Bt A
light, fragrant red made from grapes grown in the cooler Casablanca region of Chile. Bright, wild strawberry and raspberry fruits dominate a soft, supple palate which leads through to a gentle, warming finish. This wine really delivers a simple, rounded glass ideal for lunch or early evening.
- 527. 2008 Valpolicella, Allegrini, Veneto, Italy (4)** £20 Bt
The ludicrous Italian wine laws dictate that now this is bottled with a screw cap (the best thing for it), it can no longer be called the superior Valpolicella Classico. It is ironic because the preceding couple of vintages had dipped in quality. The 2007 is right back on form with far more focus and fresh black fruits than ever. Try drinking it lightly chilled with some cured meat.
- 503. 2006 Saumur 'Cuvée Thierry Germain', Loire Valley, France (2)** £21 Bt
I cannot think of another French region that has improved its wines so dramatically in the past ten years than Loire reds. A new generation of winemakers has mastered making juicy, attractive Cabernet Franc in this marginal climate. This can be lightly chilled and drunk with soft smelly cheese, cold meats and chicken.
- 504. 2008 Pinot Noir, Innocent Bystander, Yarra Valley, Victoria, Oz (5)** £22 Bt
Australians have been expending enormous energy in trying to crack the trickiest vinous riddle of all. How to grow great Pinot Noir outside Burgundy? In the cooler areas like the Yarra valley the results are now very promising. This is a bargain and manages to capture the juicy, fragrant charms of the grape while retaining its poise and elegance.
- 505. 2008 Brouilly, Château de Pierreux, Beaujolais, France (5)** £23 Bt
Beaujolais is still getting over the damage 'Beaujolais Nouveau' did to its image. Being unfashionable has its advantages, as the wines are conspicuously undervalued. Brouilly is more structured than Fleurie and Pierreux one of its best producers. Black fruits, minerals and a touch of spice all combine to produce a very serious glass for the price.
- 506. 2003 Savigny-Lès-Beaune, 1er Cru 'Les Hauts Jarrons', Jean-Claude Boisset, Burgundy, France (5)** £32⁵⁰ Bt
Anyone who remembers the weather in 2003 will wonder how this can be any good. The scorching temperatures and one of the earliest harvests on record when it is known that while Pinot Noir ripens early, it still needs time on the vine to develop its many nuances. What it has produced, especially under the guidance of head viticulture Grégory Patriat, is a wine ready for drinking now, unlike the more closed 2004 and 2005s which I have bought some of to sell in the next year or two.
- 529. 2007 Central Otago Pinot Noir, Wild Earth, Bannockburn, New Zealand (5)** £30 Bt
From its breathtaking position on the South Island, amongst dramatic mountains, gorges and lakes, Otago is one of the fastest growing wine regions in the world. The growth in both volume and price of New Zealand wine is down its consistency with Pinot Noir now almost as synonymous as Sauvignon Blanc. This is richly textured with layers of dark fruit, spices and appealing warmth. It is ideal for mid-winter drinking with or without food.

Afterwards

Sweet Wine

- 603. 2007 Torrontés Tardío, Familia Zuccardi, Mendoza, Argentina (4)** **£14** 50cl Bt
 Torrontes is a grape with similar characteristics to Muscat, so this is a floral, grapey glass
 £4 125ml
 GI
 of sweet wine best drunk with fruit deserts.
- 605. Pedro Ximénez, Bodegas Guitierrez Colosia, Sherry, Spain** **£5⁹⁰** 100ml GI
 The colour and consistency of motor oil. Dried raisin-like grapes are turned into a vinous, decadent, delight.
 Try with chocolate pudding or pour over vanilla ice cream.
- 606. 2006 ‘For Love or Money’ Cane Cut Semillon, Two Hands, Barossa Valley** **£30** 50cl Bt
Western Australia
 Made from Semillon left on the vines but with the canes cut when fully ripe to slowly dehydrate and concentrate.
 The resulting wine is rich gold in colour, powerfully aromatic with hints of pear and honey. It explodes across a core
 of sweet fruit that rolls along the palate and finishes with a sweet yet savoury complexity. Try with pannacotta or soft
 blue cheese.
- 607. 2003 ‘Le Colombare’, Recioto di Soave, Pieropan, Soave, Italy** **£25** 50cl Bt
 The grapes in this are dried on straw mats for about 5 months following harvest. Its rich,
 luscious fruit has flavours of almonds & hazelnuts that linger for ages.
- 608. 2004 Moscato Rosa, Franz Haas, Alto Adige, Italy** **£25** 37.5cl Bt
 On our 2004 sojourn around northern Italy the producer we were most impressed with was Franz Haas.
 I can just about guarantee you will have never tasted anything like this. It smells of rose petals and tastes like a
 decadent Muscat (a white grape), but is actually a sweet red wine. Bonkers but fantastic.

Port

- 610. 10 Year Old Tawny, Quinta do Infantado, Douro Valley, Portugal** **£24** 37.5cl Bt
 Ten years in a barrel produces and altogether different beast to the other heavier styles of port. Mid-weight, £6⁵⁰ 100ml GI
 nutty and complex. As you would expect great with cheese, but also try with chocolate puddings
- 611. 2000 Vintage Port, Quinta de Ventozelo, Douro Valley, Portugal** **£25** 37.5cl Bt We tend
 to drink our vintage port well aged in the UK – nothing wrong with that, but a British peculiarity.
 The Portuguese quaff them right through their life span. An ideal treat to finish the meal.

Eau de Vie, Digestive

Cognac Ferrand, Reserve 20 Year Old	35ml	50ml
Armagnac Cerbois, XO Grand Bas Armagnac 20 Year Old	£5	£7 ¹⁵
Calvados Daron, Fine 100% Pays d’Auge, 5 Year Old	£4 ⁵⁰	£5 ⁷⁰
£4 ⁵⁰	£3 ²⁵	
Limoncello, Capri Natura, Italy		£2
£2 ⁹⁰		
Grappa di Moscato, Pilzer, Italy	£2 ⁹⁰	£4 ¹⁵

Also ask for our excellent selection of fine and rare malt whiskeys.