

The Black Rat

Wine List

Our Wines by the Glass

Sparkling Wines

- | | | |
|---|---|--------|
| 1 | Prosecco 'Borgo del Col Alto'
Cuiegliano, Italy | £ 6.00 |
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Champagne

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|---|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 3 | Champagne Vauban Frères Brut | £ 9.50 |
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White Wines

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|-----|--|--------|
| 108 | Colombard Chardonnay 'Duc de Chapelle'
Côtes de Gascogne | £ 5.50 |
| 116 | Pinot Grigio 'San Antonio'
Veneto, Italy | £ 6.00 |
| 124 | Sauvignon Blanc 'La Playa'
Colchagua Valley, Chile | £ 5.50 |
| 126 | Sauvignon Semillon Chateau des Eyssards
Bergerac, France | £ 6.00 |

Rosé Wine

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| 201 | Pinot Grigio Rosé 'il Barco'
Veneto, Italy | £ 6.00 |
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Red Wines

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| 303 | Beaujolais Villages
Château de Nety | £ 5.50 |
| 307 | Cabernet Merlot 'Duc de Chapelle'
Vin de Pays de l'Aude | £ 5.00 |
| 330 | Pinot Noir 'Totara Hill'
East Coast Vineyards, New Zealand | £ 8.00 |
| 337 | Shiraz Geoff Merrill
McLaren Vale, Australia | £ 6.50 |

Half Bottles

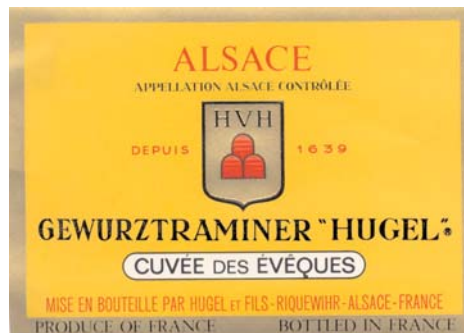
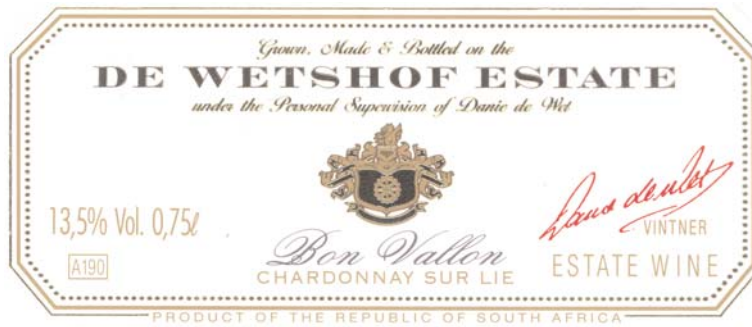
White Wines

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|------------|--|----------------|
| 103 | Chablis
Domaine Alain Gautheron | £ 19.00 |
| 112 | Gewürztraminer
Hugel et Fils | £ 19.00 |
| 121 | Sancerre
Domaine Merlin Cherrier | £ 21.00 |

Red Wines

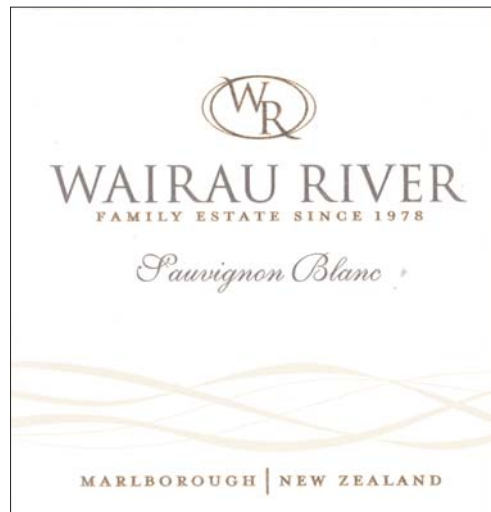
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| 301 | Amarone della Valpolicella
Tommasi, Veneto, Italy | £ 39.50 |
| 306 | Brouilly 'Vieilles Vignes' 'Cuvée de la Bruyère'
Domaine Dubost | £ 16.00 |
| 312 | Chateau Gachon
Montagne, St Emilion | £ 21.00 |
| 321 | Crozes Hermitage 'la Matiniere'
Domaine Ferraton Pere et Fils | £ 19.00 |
| 334 | Rioja Crianza Bodegas Aldeanueva
Rioja, Spain | £ 15.00 |





White Wines

100	Albariño Rais Baixas Condes de Albarei, Spain	£ 27.00
101	Chablis	magnum: £ 64.95
102	Domaine Alain Gautheron	bottles: £ 34.50
103		half: £ 19.00
104	Chardonnay Unwooded Sur Lie De Wetshof Estate, Robertson, South Africa	£ 26.50
105	Chardonnay Geoff Merrill McLaren Vale, Australia	£ 21.50
106	Chardonnay 'Night Harvest' R H Phillips, Dunnigan Hills, California	£ 24.50
107	Chenin Blanc Backsberg Western Cape, South Africa	£ 23.00
108	Colombard Chardonnay 'Duc de Chapelle' Côtes de Gascogne	£ 19.00 glass: £ 5.50
109	Corton Charlemagne Grand Cru Domaine Vincent Girardin	£ 99.00
110	Frascati Superiore Fontella Latium, Italy	£ 19.00
111	Gavi di Gavi 'Cá da Bosio' Terredavino, Piedmont, Italy	£ 28.00
112	Gewürztraminer Hugel et Fils	£ 33.00 half: £ 19.00
113	Mâcon Fuissé Domaine Auvigue	£ 27.00
114	Meursault 1er Cru 'Blagny' Domaine Michel Bouzereau et Fils	£ 75.00
115	Muscadet Côtes de Grandlieu Sur Lie 'Cuvée Prestige' Luc Choblet	£ 23.50
116	Pinot Grigio 'San Antonio' Veneto, Italy	£ 20.00 glass: £ 6.00
117	Pinot Gris 'Astrolabe' Simon Waghorn, Marlborough, NZ	£ 32.50

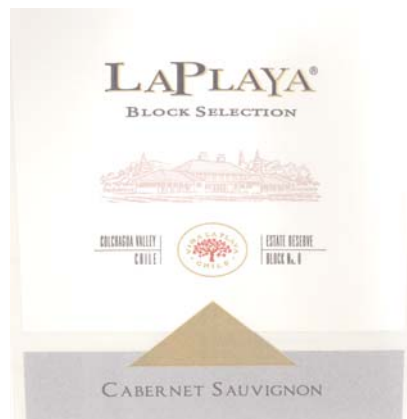
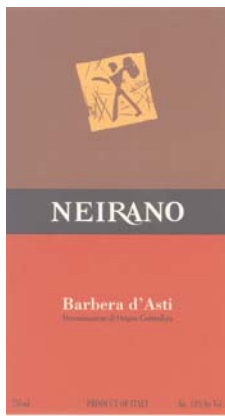


White Wines

118	Pouilly Fuissé 'les Crays' Domaine Auvigue	£ 29.50
119	Puligny Montrachet Domaine Jean Pascal	£ 59.95
120	Dry Riesling 'single vineyard' Simon Waghorn, Marlborough, NZ	£ 32.00
121	Sancerre	£ 33.00
122	Domaine Merlin Cherrier	half: £ 21.00
123	Sauvignon Blanc 'Awatere Valley' Simon Waghorn, Marlborough, NZ	£ 35.00
124	Sauvignon Blanc 'La Playa' Colchagua Valley, Chile	£ 19.00 glass: £ 5.50
125	Sauvignon Blanc Wairau River Marlborough, New Zealand	£ 27.00
126	Sauvignon Semillon Chateau des Eyssards Bergerac, France	£ 19.50 glass: £ 6.00
127	Viognier Domaine de Pennautier, Lorgery	£ 20.00

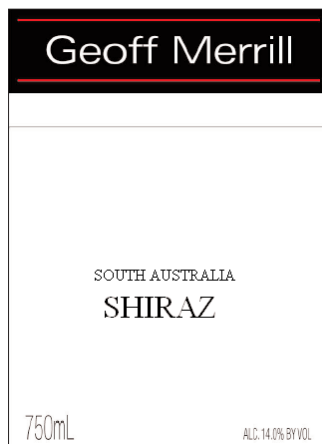
Rosé Wines

200	Cabernet Rosé Domaine de la Grande Courtade	£ 19.00
201	Pinot Grigio Rosé 'il Barco' Veneto, Italy	£ 21.00 glass: £ 6.00
202	Pinotage Rosé Laibach Stellenbosch, South Africa	£ 23.50



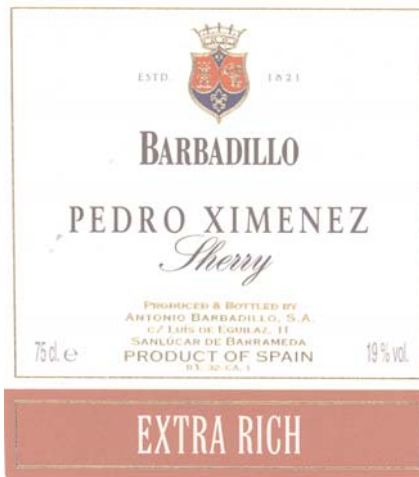
Red Wines

300	Amarone della Valpolicella	£ 70.00
301	Tommasi, Veneto, Italy	half: £ 39.50
302	Barbera d'Asti Superiore Tenuta Neirano Piedmont, Italy	£ 19.00
303	Beaujolais Villages Château de Nety	£ 19.00 glass: £ 5.50
304	Beaune 1er Cru 'les Champs Pimont' Domaine des Clos	£ 46.00
305	Brouilly 'Vieilles Vignes' 'Cuvée de la Bruyère'	£ 30.00
306	Domaine Dubost	half: £ 16.00
307	Cabernet Merlot 'Duc de Chapelle' Vin de Pays de l'Aude	£ 19.00 glass: £ 5.50
308	Cabernet Sauvignon 'Five Ashes Vineyard' Hamelin Bay, Western Australia	£ 33.50
309	Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve 'La Playa' Colchagua Valley, Chile	£ 21.00
310	Château Batailley 5me Cru Classé, Pauillac	£ 71.50
311	Château de Fonbel Grand Cru St Emilion	£ 55.00
312	Chateau Gachon Montagne, St Emilion	half: £ 21.00
313	Château Gruaud Larose 2003 2me Cru Classé, St Julien	£ 115.00
314	Château Talbot 4me Cru Classé, St Julien	£ 105.00
315	Château Tanesse Premieres Cotes de Bordeaux	£ 24.00
316	Châteauneuf du Pape Domaine du Grand Tinel	£ 41.00
317	Chianti Classico 'la Lellera' Vicchiomaggio, Tuscany, Italy	£ 24.00
318	Côte de Nuits Villages Joseph Drouhin	£ 37.50



Red Wines

319	Côtes du Rhône Domaine de l'Amandine	£ 22.50
320	Crozes Ermitage 'le Grand Courtil' Ferraton Père et Fils	£ 51.00
321	Crozes Hermitage 'la Matiniere' Domaine Ferraton Pere et Fils	half: £ 19.00
322	Frank Phelan St Estephe 2005 2nd wine of Ch Phelan Ségur	£ 57.00
323	Gevrey Chambertin 'Vieilles Vignes' Domaine Geantet-Pansiot	£ 73.00
324	Malbec Reserve 'Valle Perdido' Patagonia, Argentina	£ 33.00
325	Merlot Reserve 'La Playa' Colchagua Valley, Chile	£ 21.00
326	Moulin à Vent Domaine de la Passion	32.50
327	Navarra Reserva Bodegas Asensio Navarra, Spain	£ 26.50
328	Nuits St Georges 'Vieilles Vignes' Domaine Alain Michelot	£ 57.50
329	Pinot Noir Reserve 'Sol y Sombra' Vina La Playa, Colchagua Valley, Chile	£ 22.00
330	Pinot Noir 'Totara Hill' East Coast Vineyards, New Zealand	£ 28.00 glass: £ 8.00
331	Pinotage Laibach Stellenbosch, South Africa	£ 29.00
332	Rioja Crianza Bodegas Aldeanueva	magnum: £ 48.50
333	Rioja, Spain	bottle: £ 23.00
334		half: £ 15.00
335	Rioja Reserva Marqués de Riscal, Spain	£ 32.50
336	Ripasso della Valpolicella Tommasi Veneto, Italy	£ 33.00
337	Shiraz Geoff Merrill McLaren Vale, Australia	£ 24.50 glass: £ 7.00
338	Vosne Romanée 1er Cru 'les Chaumes' Domaine Jean Tardy	£ 98.50
339	Zinfandel 'Beyers Ranch' Wente Brothers, Livermore Valley, California	£ 28.00



Dessert Wines

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| 400 | Banyuls ‘Oak Aged Reserve’
‘Cornet et Cie’ | 75cl: £ 42.00
glass: £ 5.50 |
| 401 | Noble One De Bortoli
New South Wales, Australia | 37.5cl: £ 38.50
glass: £ 8.50 |
| 402 | Pedro Ximenez Bodegas Barbadillo
Jerez, Spain | 75cl: £ 37.00
glass: £ 5.00 |
| 403 | Red Muscadel Rietvallei Estate
Robertson, South Africa | 75cl: £ 27.00
glass: £ 4.75 |
| 404 | Saussignac Cuvee Flavie
Château des Eyssards Bergerac | 50cl: £ 30.00
glass: £ 4.50 |

Port

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| 405 | Taylors Special Ruby | 50ml: £ 4.50 |
| 406 | Fonseca Late Bottled Vintage | 50ml: £ 5.50 |
| 407 | Taylors Quinta de Vargellas Vintage | 50ml: £ 8.00 |

ALBARIÑO

Albariño is the white varietal which dominates the vineyard plantings of Galicia on Spain's Atlantic coast. It is ideally adapted to the harsh wet climate, yielding fresh elegant wines with a captivating floral bouquet and peach flavours and racy acidity. It is believed that Albariño is a distant relative to the Riesling grape having found its way to Galicia with German pilgrims making the trip to Santiago di Compostella. It is a good natural accompaniment to the rich variety of Atlantic seafood. Following the Atlantic coastline south of Galicia, the Portuguese Minho region grows the same variety, known locally as Alvarinho, which is used in the region's Vinho Verde wines. It is often bottled with a youthful spritz and lemony acidity. The ability to ripen in cool, rainy climates makes Albariño suitable to the more exposed vineyards of New Zealand and California, where it has been recently established. The first wines to appear have been greeted with enthusiasm.



ALIGOTÉ

The second white variety of Burgundy and still widely planted in the south of the region, particularly on the higher slopes. It has a well-rounded, slightly steely characteristic with fresh acidity. A broad structure and bright acidity combines to offer attractive drinking at an earlier age than Chardonnay. Aligoté is not usually aged in oak but does pick up some yeast lees character. It is the classic base for the Burgundian aperitif 'Kir' when mixed with a dash of Cassis di Dijon. Outside Burgundy there are very few Aligoté plantings of note.



CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Perhaps the most successfully adapted quality red grape variety that has been planted within most of the warmer wine regions of the world. Cabernet Sauvignon has a cassis and earthy character, often with elements of mint, smoke and pencil leads. Usually oak aged to add complexity, it is well structured and firmly balanced with a tannic backbone that can be softened by blending with Merlot (for fruit and ripeness) and Cabernet Franc (for colour) as it is in the Médoc region of Bordeaux. Warmer regions, including the Languedoc, Australia and Chile, achieve a riper, softer style of Cabernet that does not require blending, however Bordeaux style blends often contribute complexity and finesse.



CARMENÈRE

Carmenère helped make the reputations of many great châteaux of Bordeaux, but it was difficult to grow and gave low yields. Relatively little was replanted, but before it had been uprooted from Bordeaux in the late 1800s, Carmenère had already made the trip to South America along with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. The protected environment of Chile makes it a fruit grower's paradise. Isolated by the Andes to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the west and the world's driest desert to the north, it has escaped the hazards of mildew and Phylloxera. There is little requirement to spray against disease and therefore Chile's vines have remained ungrafted since the Spanish conquistadores planted the first vineyards in the mid 16th century. This unique grape variety brought over from France prior to the 1860's found its niche in Chile, and has become nearly extinct in other parts of the world. The old vines of Apalta and surrounding Colchagua Valley is the variety's best known stronghold. It makes supple, medium-bodied wine with a spicy burst of green peppercorn and ripe red fruit. A great match for spicy sauces, strong cheeses and red meats. The inclusion of Carmenère in a blend brings restraint to the exuberance of Chilean Cabernet Sauvignon. It has a robust and slightly earthy character, which creates a classic Bordeaux-like structure with more prominent tannins and greater complexity. Perhaps this was how Bordeaux tasted in the early 1800s?



CHARDONNAY

The most adaptable and widespread international grape variety, which is simultaneously responsible for some of the world's most fabulous and expensive white table wines and sparkling wines, and for much of the often mediocre commercial wine. The Chardonnay vine grows successfully in most winemaking regions of the world: from the south of England and Champagne to the hot, arid regions of Australia and California. Chardonnay has few dominant characteristics of its own (butter, melon, hazelnut perhaps?) but it offers the perfect medium for environmental and winemaking influences to impart their character upon the finished wine. Un-oaked Chardonnay from Chablis and Mâcon can be richly influenced by the limestone mineral soils and provide a balance to crisp, green apple flavours yet in northern Italy it is a clean lemony flavour influenced by altitude. The weight and structure of Chardonnay allows toasted or charred oak to impart a smoky, vanilla or coconut influence when the wine is fermented and aged in oak barrels or has been infused with toasted oak fragments for a less subtle effect. Price is an indication whether oak barrel or oak chips have been used. If the spent fermentation yeast remains in contact with the maturing wine before bottling, a bready or biscuity flavour is achieved. Chardonnay is influenced this way, known as 'sur lees', to give complexity whilst retaining elegance. Champagne is traditionally made 'sur lees' and, increasingly, un-oaked New World Chardonnays are made this way. However, the great white Burgundies of the Côte d'Or (Montrachet, Corton Charlemagne, Meursault etc) are often highly complex wines, beautifully balanced and influenced by all of these factors.



CHENIN BLANC

The Chenin Blanc is a versatile white grape variety that produces dry, sweet, dessert and sparkling wines in its home environment, the Loire Valley. Best known for the off-dry table wines of Vouvray, Anjou and Saumur but these wine are being re-invented by progressive winemakers achieving success with aromatic dry interpretations and sensitively oak matured Chenin Blancs. The variety has a wide palette of flavours ranging from pear, apple, melon, tropical fruits to woolly, mineral and damp dog! It is marked by high acidity, and therefore the ability to make good base wine for the sparkling Cremant wines of the Loire.



Although there are few plantings in Europe outside the Loire, the variety has been widely planted in the New World. Chenin Blanc that has been grown in hotter climates retains its natural acidity. In South Africa (where it has been known as Steen in the past) it is successful in producing dry white table wines. Well made examples exhibit almost Sauvignon-like lemon and grassy aromatics and zingy fresh palate. In Argentina, Australia and New Zealand Chenin plays a less prominent solo role but works well in combination with Chardonnay, Viognier and Sauvignon.

CORTESE

The Cortese variety is almost exclusively cultivated in the Piemonte region of northwest Italy, and in particular around the town of Gavi and in the Colli Tortonesi. It offers restrained, clean characteristics, with aromas of pear and lemon and a well-defined acidity. It gains a more complex character when planted in the central zone of Gavi di Gavi, where the soils impart a perfumed mineral character adding complexity to lively aromas of ripe fruit and flowers. Cortese is usually un-oaked but extended lees contact can impart hints of vanilla and bread.



There are few established Cortese vineyards outside Italy, it's geographical distribution limited to a few notable sites in Australia and California, where it loses some acidity and gains weight. Fresh, young Cortese wine drinks well as an accompaniment to freshwater fish, seafood and risottos.

GAMAY

Gamay is inextricably associated with the red wines of Beaujolais. As the only authorised red variety, it is widely planted as freestanding 'bush vines' on the sand and granite stone soils across the hilly Beaujolais region, south of Macon. Most Beaujolais is made by the 'maceration carbonique' fermentation, which minimises the tannins and ensures an early drinking red with deep purple colour and aromatic bouquet of summer fruits, fruit gums and lactic acidity. Cru Beaujolais is planted on richer granite soils and often made by a traditional fermentation. It is distinguished by a more profound mineral content backed by rich aromas of violets and cherry, full palate with typical vibrant summer berry fruit and finishes with supple tannins. Some producers also experiment with a period of oak cask ageing.



Outside Beaujolais, the only significant vineyard area traditionally planted with Gamay is in the central Loire Valley although a little 'Gamay Beaujolais' is planted in California. The Loire Gamay grapes make fleshy, aromatic red wine with juicy fruit flavours, gentle tannins and all the ripeness of a Cru Beaujolais although the acidity can be more apparent in cooler vintages. Touraine produces the best examples.

GEWURZTRAMINER

Although it supposedly originated in Tramin, northern Italy, this pink skinned grape variety is synonymous with the distinctly perfumed, aromatic dry white wines of Alsace. Lychees, Turkish Delights and rose petals are all typical aromas. The Alsace 'Grand Cru' rated vineyards, which are rich with limestone and marl, produce full-bodied, long-lived Gewürztraminer with exceptional, floral perfume and good concentration of peach and mineral. Examples from the Alpine regions of northern Italy are less powerful but fresh and fragrant nonetheless.



German Gewürztraminer (from the Pfalz in particular) is likely to exhibit delicate peachy aromatics with more weight on the palate and can retain some balancing natural sweetness. Austrian and Slovenian examples are drier whilst outside Europe, New Zealand and Oregon are perhaps the most successful surrogate homes, with examples of Alsace-like intensity, although it is scattered throughout the wine regions of the New World.

Producers in Alsace, Germany and Austria also make late harvested dessert Gewürztraminer, sometimes affected by noble rot. Alsace 'Vendange Tardive' is an intense late picked wine made from very ripe grapes left on the vine into autumn to concentrate the sugars and aromas of rose, jasmine and exotic fruits.

GRENACHE / GARNACHA

Grown across the south of France, Spain and increasingly in the New World, Grenache thrives in warm conditions to provide black cherry flavours, with mineral and boiled sweets character. The alcohol levels must be high (above 12.5%) in order to extract the ripe flavours from the grape, resulting in great powerful wines, which have soft tannins and mature early. Old bush vine Grenache from the southern Rhône and South Australia can have an extra dimension and incredible intensity of flavour. When blended with Syrah, the result is a compelling rounded spicy wine that has better tannins and added complexity. It is used to soften and add weight when blended with Tempranillo in Rioja. It is also a variety that can yield rosé wines with full flavour and relatively high alcohol levels.



NEBBIOLO

As the grape variety responsible for some of Italy's finest red wines, Nebbiolo is surprisingly absent beyond the region of Piemonte in northwest Italy. It is literally translated as 'the misty one' as when ripening, it is shrouded in the autumn mists on the exposed hillsides of the Langhe. The towns of Barolo and Barbaresco, southeast of Turin, give their names to the most famous and highly prized rendition of Nebbiolo, although Alba, Gattinara and Spanna represent reliable, early drinking versions.



Nebbiolo wines can be tannic and long-lived, developing evocative characteristics of tar, tobacco, violets, roses, truffle, leather and mineral. Traditional handling of Nebbiolo involves extended aging in large cask and bottling when mature. Modern thinking suggests a short period in oak barrique followed by maturation in bottle will emphasise the fruit and oak balance to better effect. Both styles have their devotees and are readily available. Elsewhere, Italian immigrants have established Nebbiolo vineyards as far a field as Argentina, Mexico and Australia with mixed success. They can be less firmly structured with sweeter fruit than the Italian counterpart

PINOT GRIS / GRIGIO

Pinot Gris is one of the premier grape varieties of Alsace, where it has been known as Tokay, and, as Pinot Grigio it is the most ubiquitous variety of northern and Adriatic Italy. In warm vintages it produces rich aromatic, earthy wines with peach and apricot nuances and a nutty, oily palate. Grown at altitude in northern Italy, this variety retains fresh acidity, is less weighty but offers easy drinking. The New World is increasingly successful with Pinot Gris, especially across both North and South Islands in New Zealand and also in small pockets of Australia and Argentina. It is often picked early to gain lemony acidity yet achieves high natural sugar levels. It can also be kept on its lees for 6 weeks to maximise aromas and tropical greengage flavours. Although it is classified as a white grape variety, some clones of Pinot Gris (in northern Italy) have a copper toned skin that allows the production of pale rosé wines.



PINOT NOIR

This fussy, fickle and challenging varietal is equally infuriating and captivating for the winemaker and vigneron. It produces thin-skinned grapes, which are more susceptible to sunburn, hail, rot and disease than most varieties, therefore its handling and vineyard location require careful consideration. Pinot Noir is the variety responsible for the great red wines of Burgundy, planted in the iron rich red soils of the Côte d'Or and aged in oak barrel. It also plays a support role as a blending partner in Champagne and provides some light and elegant red Loire wines (Sancerre in particular).



When it is good, Pinot Noir can have deeply perfumed aromas with notes of black cherry, redcurrant, summer fruit and plenty of power, spice and a silky balance. Grown in excessive heat it becomes sweet and unbalanced, too cold and wet during ripening and traces of rot and bruising can remain in the wine. The cool coastal districts of California and Oregon and New Zealand's Central Otago and Marlborough regions have proved the most successful challengers to Burgundy. The Languedoc, Corsica, Tasmania and Patagonia in Argentina all show promise.

PINOTAGE

The creation of South African Prof. Perold in 1925, Pinotage combines the supple Burgundian character of Pinot Noir with the more rustic and assertive traits of Cinsault from which the variety was crossed. In South Africa where it has become recognised as the Cape's speciality wine, Pinotage can produce a wide variety of wine styles and qualities including port style and sparkling wines. Pinotage made for early drinking has juicy berry fruits, raspberry scent and sweet flavours. It can be fleshy, full-bodied, ripe and with a velvety smoothness and soft powerful finish. Until a few years ago, most Pinotage was made fairly dry, lean and earthy with a dusty or rustic character. Riper harvesting, smaller yields and the use of oak maturation has broadened the appeal of the variety. Dry rosé made from Pinotage retains the varietal's attractive red berry aromas.



There have been significant plantings of Pinotage in New Zealand where it is now losing favour. A New Zealand Pinotage tends to exhibit dusty, mineral flavours and light, easy drinking structure.

RIESLING

Much loved by the Victorians, Riesling was once considered the finest of all white wines. Happily, it is once again slowly returning to favour after many years of decline. Riesling is without doubt a noble variety that can yield intense wines marked by aromas of lemon, petrol, lime zest, elderflower and minerals, and balanced by high acidity and varying sweetness. The best examples can capture the special mineral quality of the vineyard soils; Germany's Mosel Valley imparts slatey, siliceous mineral flavours, while the granite and sandstone of Alsace are reflected in dry, opulent wines. The off-dry Kabinett and Spatlese wines from Germany retain the alluring characteristics and offer lower levels of alcohol than most table wines.



Fashionable Austrian Rieslings are clean and dry with finesse and classic elderflower and mineral character. Much interest has been inspired by the dry lemony Rieslings of Australia, whilst the fashion is for slightly sweeter, though just as intense Rieslings from New Zealand. Characteristics of Aussie Rieslings are the high levels of well-balanced acidity, which greatly contribute to the extraordinary ageing potential. Riesling also produces stunning dessert wines from late harvests of shrivelled grapes and by the selection of grapes that have been concentrated by the dehydrating action of noble rot. Dry Riesling combines particularly well with foods including steamed fish, white meats and Oriental cuisine. The sweeter German Spatlese and Auslese Rieslings work with shellfish, pickled vegetables and creamy dishes.

SANGIOVESE

There are many variant clones of Sangiovese (or 'Saint Jove'), which account for the inconsistent style and quality of wine produced under the name. Well-known high quality clones of Sangiovese include Sangiovese Grosso, Brunello and Morellino. Sangiovese often appears to have an orange hue and typical savoury flavours including bitter chocolate, orange peel, leather and mineral. Its heartland is Tuscany and in particular the wines of Chianti, but it is often blended with small proportions of Colorino, Mammolo and Canaiolo and increasingly with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Neighbouring regions Umbria and Emilia-Romagna produce similar reds from Sangiovese but they are often lighter weight and less complex. Grown in the warmer climate of Southern Italy and Sicily it is full bodied (high in alcohol), with good ripe fruit and an orange zest finish, ideal as a partner to game and ripe cheeses.



Italian immigrants have established Sangiovese vines where they have settled in California, Australia and, in particular, Argentina. These plantings give variable quality but can be very fruity with hints of raspberry, blackberry and leather, refreshing with very supple tannins and a fruity finish. Recent plantings at Mayfield Winery in the cool Orange region of NSW have already succeeded with supple, easy drinking wine with soft tannins and plenty of fruit.

SAUVIGNON BLANC

We don't seem to be able to get enough of Sauvignon Blanc, the fashionable white variety of the moment. It makes instantly identifiable wine with aromas ranging from elderflower, nettles, grass cuttings, asparagus, kiwi fruit, gooseberries and blackcurrant leaf, it is also dry and refreshing with a steely acidity. The Loire Valley produces France's best Sauvignon Blanc in the form of Sancerre and Pouilly Fumé, where the flint and chalk soils can impart a mineral character. Gascogne, southwest France and northern Italy offer fresh but less complex examples. Sauvignon Blanc has found a natural affinity with the stony soils and cool climate of New Zealand's South Island. The exotically fragrant Marlborough Sauvignons are consistently fine examples.



In warmer climates these exuberant qualities are less well defined. Often Chilean Sauvignon includes the related but rather bland variety Sauvignonasse variety. New plantings of the true Sauvignon clone in Chile's cool Casablanca and Leyda Valleys are producing pungently aromatic and crisp wines. South African Sauvignon is improving rapidly with coastal plantings and better winemaking and represents terrific value.

Sauvignon Blanc that has a proportion of oak maturation is often referred to as 'Fumé'. A small proportion adds a touch of weight and a smoky component. In Bordeaux it can develop an exotic vanilla richness after maturation in new oak. Under humid conditions, Sauvignon is affected by noble rot, which concentrates the grape sugars and, combined with Sémillon, creates the great dessert wines of Sauternes and some terrific sweet wines from the New World.

SYRAH / SHIRAZ

The Syrah grape, as it is known in the Rhône Valley, is the classic variety of the dark, spicy tannic northern Rhône reds (Hermitage, Cornas, Côte Rôtie etc) where it thrives on granite soils. In the southern Rhône appellations (Châteauneuf du Pape, Vacqueyras, Gigondas etc) its raw strength is softened by the addition of Grenache and a host of lesser-known regional varieties that play a supporting role.



Typically, Syrah shows a very deep almost black colour and has concentrated aromas of dark berry fruits, liquorice, peppers, game and subtle vanillin oak and firm tannins. The extract and tough tannins found in youthful Syrah allow a long and graceful ageing potential. In Australia, where it is more frequently referred to as the Shiraz grape, it has adapted successfully to every wine region, coping well with heat to give more sweet flavours and offers earlier drinking but no less intensity. The experience of Australian growers who have succeeded with the variety in difficult conditions has encouraged many new plantings in similar conditions in Sicily, Argentina and New Zealand's North Island.

TEMPRANILLO / TINTO RORIZ

Tempranillo is an Iberian speciality, widely grown in Spain, where it is the major component used to make their most famous red wines; Rioja, Ribera del Duero and Navarra. It makes elegant wines, concentrated with summer fruits and savoury character that is complemented by the vanilla essence imparted by ageing in toasted oak barrels.



It is often found as part of a blend, with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot to give an element of Bordeaux character to Navarra, and with Garnacha to soften and flesh out Rioja. Known as Tinto Roriz in Portugal, it is one of a number of dark, thick-skinned varieties that grow in the northern Portuguese wine regions including the Douro where it is used to make Port. Tempranillo is found to a lesser extent in Argentina and Australia but never finds the same quality, lacking depth of flavour.

VIOGNIER

The tiny appellation of Condrieu in the northern Rhône, has long been the guardian of the Viognier varietal making its figurehead wine. The aromatic Viognier variety is both subtle and seductive exhibiting fragrant peach, honeysuckle and apricot aromas. The palate can be rich and weighty and is often marked by exotic fruit flavours, almond and fresh acidity.



Viognier's recently restored fashionable status has driven a rapid expansion of plantings worldwide. It enjoys a relatively warm climate but it remains a shy varietal that yields small crops and is difficult to achieve a perfect balanced wine. Chile, California, South Africa and Australia have all succeeded with Viognier, but much of the best value Viognier heralds from new plantings in the Languedoc. When blended, Viognier adds fragrance and complexity to the likes of Chenin Blanc or Chardonnay. Viognier can also help lift the bouquet and add finesse to red wines made from Syrah (or Shiraz). A small proportion included in the blend prior to fermentation adds to the captivating aromatics of Côte Rôtie and Australian Shiraz.

ZINFANDEL

Regarded as native to California, Zinfandel was originally introduced amongst unidentified European cuttings. Its true identity has yet to be confirmed; Plavac from Croatia perhaps or Zierfandler from Austria are claimed as source material? But Primitivo from southern Italy is possibly Zinfandel's closest relative. Zinfandel is ideally suited to warmer viticultural regions of California and the odd planting in Chile and Australia. It is admired for its rich, concentrated red fruit character and gentle, unobtrusive tannins. Sometimes the high natural grape sugars can lead to high alcohol levels and a spicity character. The commercial, usually off dry, White Zinfandel is a pink wine made to offer simple, easy drinking.



Alexander Valley's 'Sin Zin' is altogether a more demanding red wine with hallmark flavours of blackberry, raspberry and spice. Ridge Vineyards have championed serious California Zinfandel sourced from low yielding old vineyards and made with the structure and complexity of fine Bordeaux.

Grape Varieties of the World

A Brief Interpretation

		Typical Example
	<u>WHITE GRAPES</u>	
	<u>Crisp Dry</u>	
Muscadet	fresh, liquorice, often with yeasty lees character	<i>Muscadet</i>
Trebbiano / Ugni Blanc	lemony, uncomplicated, easy drinking	<i>Italy</i>
Colombard	zesty, citrus, mouthfilling	<i>S. Africa</i>
	<u>Aromatic</u>	
Gewurztraminer	spicy, perfumed, lychee and exotic fruits, dry finish	<i>Alsace</i>
Sauvignon Blanc	herbaceous, asparagus & gooseberry aromas, fresh citric acidity	<i>N. Zealand</i>
Riesling	lemon, petrol, mineral, firm acidity	<i>S. Australia</i>
Viognier	peachy, perfumed, rounded	<i>Condrieu</i>
	<u>Soft Mid Bodied</u>	
Chenin Blanc	honey, apples, firm crisp acidity, sometimes a touch of sweetness	<i>S. Africa</i>
Pinot Blanc	rounded, generous	<i>Alsace</i>
Pinot Grigio	nutty, oily, steely, mineral	<i>Italy</i>
Chardonnay (unoaked)	appley, creamy, steely, mineral	<i>Chablis</i>
Marsanne	honeysuckle, apricot	<i>Rhone</i>
	<u>Rich & Full Bodied</u>	
Verdicchio	soft, velvety, pear and ripe melon	<i>Italy</i>
Chardonnay	buttery, rich with exotic fruits, vanilla and spice	<i>Burgundy</i>
Semillon	toasty and voluptuous	<i>Australia</i>
	<u>RED GRAPES</u>	
	<u>Light & Fruity</u>	
Gamay	summer fruits, fruit gums, soft palate	<i>Beaujolais</i>
Cabernet Franc	violets, pencil shavings, leafy, moderate acidity and tannins	<i>Chinon</i>
	<u>Smooth, Mid Bodied</u>	
Pinotage	aromatic, cherry, rustic	<i>S. Africa</i>
Merlot	plummy, raisiny, a hint of sweetness, plump and soft	<i>Chile</i>
Pinot Noir	cherries, raspberries, velvety, elegant	<i>Burgundy</i>
Sangiovese	bitter chocolate, orange peel, leather	<i>Italy</i>
Tempranillo	warm, earthy, liquorice	<i>Spain</i>
	<u>Full Bodied & Spicy</u>	
Grenache / Garnacha	black cherry, boiled sweets, powerful	<i>Spain</i>
Mouvedre	wild herbs, spices, leather	<i>Rhone</i>
Cabernet Sauvignon	cassis, minty, smoky, complex, structured	<i>California</i>
Carmenere	green pepper, chocolately, assertive	<i>Chile</i>
	<u>Blockbuster Insense</u>	
Shiraz / Syrah	pepper, spice, mineral, leather	<i>Australia</i>
Zinfandel	sweet berries, mouthfilling, soft tannins	<i>California</i>
Nebbiolo	tar, violets, smoky, powerful	<i>Italy</i>