

Club Wine Recommendations

Master of Wine, Peter McCombie, shares his wine recommendations for the upcoming seasons.

Chateau Les Ormes de Pez St Estèphe 2001 Cru Bourgeois

With memories of summer fading and no sign of an Indian summer, thoughts inevitably turn to autumnal dishes like game, wintery comfort eating and of course wines to match. There's an almost Pavlovian desire for red wines. Recent years have seen en primeur Bordeaux wines offered for extraordinary prices, to the extent that the casual observer might think that the 'Englishman's favourite drink' was now the preserve of billionaires. The good news is that these elevated headline grabbing prices are really only relevant to a narrow tier of top wines and recent vintages. The club is delighted to offer on the Great Gallery & Boston Room wine lists some forward, drinking clarets, from vintages like 2007, 2004 and 2001, which represent extremely good value. Just one example, from the Lynch Bages stable is the generous and fruity Chateau Les Ormes de Pez St Estèphe 2001 Cru Bourgeois

Ten Minutes by Tractor 'Wallis' vineyard 2007 Pinot Noir

There's always plenty of red Burgundy to choose from including the so-called 'forest floor' styles such as Nuits St Georges and Gevrey-Chambertin. For a New World the alternative, while New Zealand sets the pace, cooler parts of Australia are turning out some exciting versions of the notoriously fickle grape. Do try such gems as Ten Minutes by Tractor 'Wallis' vineyard 2007 Pinot Noir from Mornington Peninsula in Victoria.

Gigondas 'Les Racines' F et D Brunier 2007

The Rhône is another classic French region offering value and good drinking. Southern Rhones with a healthy dose of Grenache offer more weight and richness than their more northerly counterparts and villages like Gigondas and Vacqueyras offer a credible alternative to the increasingly expensive Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Consider Gigondas 'Les Racines' F et D Brunier 2007.

Great Gallery Wine List

New additions on the Great Gallery list include Ventisquero 'Grey' Merlot Apalta Valley 2007 Chile; Meerlust 'Rubicon' Bordeaux Blend Stellenbosch, 2006 south Africa and Amarone Classico Corte Giara, Veneto 2008 Italy. Ventisquero is a dynamic young company sourcing grapes for this wine from what may be Chile's greatest vineyard, while Rubicon has gone from being a fading icon, coasting on its reputation to become an excellent example of modern South African red. The only problem our Amarone has it that the reputation of Amarone can be daunting and apparently hard to pair with food. It makes a great partner for all kinds of game and is versatile with cheese or do as the Italians do and treat it as a 'meditation wine'.

Fine Wine Wednesdays

Of course there is still room for white wines even as the temperatures drop. Fine Wine Wednesdays are still going strong at The Boston in Woodcote Park. Snap up a bottle of Grand Cru Chablis Vaudesir 2007 from Louis Michel) for the price of mere village wine.

'Woodcote Pink'

There are great guest ales in the Long Bar and 19th Hole to keep you warm and give you a chance to try new flavours from throughout Britain. Keep an eye out for the Blackboard specials in Brooklands and The Fountain to go with your favourite dishes and for a lighter start to the evenings, how about a 'Woodcote Pink': pink port, lemonade and a squeeze of orange slice garnished with a strawberry (very seasonal!)