



# March Newsletter



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March 2007

## Ben's monthly wine rant.....Broccoli.



I wanted to get into seasonal recipes and wine matching for this month's column; it seemed however that the only really exciting food in season at the mo is purple sprouting broccoli! It's fair to say that 'PSB' is about as sexy as it gets in the brassica family, but like the best of any fruit and veg it deserves to be eaten as fresh as possible with the least amount of fuss, just wilted and lightly seasoned with some good butter and pepper. Should wine get in on the act? Wine and vegetable matching hmm...parsnip and pinot grigio anyone?!

After a good bit of head scratching I got all excited about the idea of an off-dry Loire valley white, I have a lovely one here in the shop. It's called Cendrillon or Cinderella (en anglais) and is a 'revelationary' blend of Sauvignon blanc with a smidgen of barrique aged Chenin. The wine reminds me of the freshness and natural sweetness of the broccoli with an overriding presence of floral and earthy mineral qualities. Delicious!

You can't beat seasonal produce, as hard as the supermarkets might try to give us year round strawb's and a perpetual summer season, the

quality and freshness inherent to local and seasonal food is unbeatable. I feel quite unwell thinking of the bland mush that is the out of season tomato let alone how and where it was grown! But what's happening with our seasons? Won't broccoli soon be a February to April vegetable?



As a wine buyer and in fact as someone whose lifestyle is wholly dependent on the production of grapes, climate shift is a big concern. The greatness of any wine lies in its grapes. The grapes must ripen steadily with perfect balance of acidity and sugar and picked at exactly the right moment. If the climate changes then as you'd expect, the effect on the vineyard and wines will be drastic. Recent climate change prediction models have forecast changes of up to 4°C over the next 40 years, what does this mean in terms of vine growing?

In the 1300's England was a considerably warmer place than it is now. Grape production was in full swing across northern Europe and harvest was recorded at least a month earlier than it is now. It is estimated the climate was just one degree warmer. Since then we had a

mini ice age (a shift again of about 1°C!) which saw a southward retreat of wine production and in Champagne Pinot Noir ceasing to be a red wine and instead being used in the sparkling wines.

We can thank ourselves (temporarily!) for a resurgence in temperatures. In Sussex alongside top quality sparkling wines we are beginning to find quality white wine grapes and not just hardy hybrid varieties actually proper vitis vinifera. As grape growing races polewards the UK is becoming an ever more exciting prospect and while there are olive trees being planted in Cornwall, should someone be thinking of Syrah in Sussex!

We'll certainly have more than just purple sprouting broccoli on our plates.



### Wine Profile

Cendrillon 2004 - £9.59

Origin: Domaine de la Gareliere, Touraine, La Loire

Vintage: 2004

Cultivars: 95% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Chenin Blanc

Alcohol: 13%

Certification: Ecocert & Demeter



## Events !

We are hosting our very first event here at the shop on March 22nd. 'Game Night' will be a true tasting night, 6 courses of game prepared by upcoming star chef Mark Gilchrist of Game for Everything. I'll be doing the wine matching and it all should be rather scrummy!

In fact so many other people thought so that we've sold out. Sorry! If you're interested in future events here please email us. In April we're planning to have Neal's yard cheeses in the cellar.

13 Ship Street Gardens BN1

## March Specials

**More wine recommendations for drinking in March:**

• **Everyday Cracking red:**

Maris Syrah £6.49

• **Top red, food wine:**

Petalos £12.09

• **Luxurious White**

Begude AC Limoux

£9.49