

Decanter

PASSIONATE ABOUT WINE SINCE 1975

Fresh new look

Brighter design, better paper, new sections – but the same expertise

Wine & wisdom

Learning about wine: why you should, and how you can

Local heroes

A superb selection of English wineries to visit

+

243

wines tasted
in this issue



ITALY

THE TASTE OF LA DOLCE VITA: BRUNELLO, BAROLO, BARBERA, FRIULI, SOAVE & MORE



A drink with Mattia Mazzi

Sommelier at London's River Cafe, and currently running its retail arm, Mazzi knows what's trending when it comes to wine styles – from Italy and beyond 'I'm from Tuscany originally, but the first top-quality Italian producer I tried was Isole e Olena's Chianti Classico when I was in Australia. Although I come from the land of Chianti, there was a really limited consumption of these wines within the region.

'I trained with a Master Sommelier, so in a wine sense I've driven all the Maseratis and Ferraris. You need to have those as reference points. But there's a market for commercial wines. Particularly since lockdown, I've been looking mid-shelf, for young, approachable wines.

'Texture is really important; it's about making a commitment in the vineyard to reduce volumes. A concentrated Muscadet for instance, that's low-yielding and has time on the lees, has great texture.

'Beaujolais is one of my favourite red styles, but I'm also into crunchy Galician reds from Ribeira Sacra and Mencia in Bierzo. I also like Syrahs made from younger vines close to Côte-Rôtie that aren't quite as austere.

'At home I like to drink anything with a low pH. I love that crunch in wine, so I've been drinking a lot of Riesling. Italian wines are often marked as high-acid, but it's nowhere near German Riesling. There are two really underrated Italian wine styles: Trebbiano d'Abruzzo – which I think is at the level of Chablis and good Sancerre – and Verdicchio di Matelica.' (For more River Cafe recommendations, see 'A perfect pairing', p96.)

DECANTER LOVES...

FESTIVAL NAPA VALLEY

Running from 16-25 July, this year marks the 15th anniversary of Napa Valley's annual arts festival. The series of concerts will include performances by Oscar winner Jennifer Hudson, soprano Lisette Oropesa and American tenor Michael Fabiano. Daytime concerts are admission-free (reservations required); tickets for evening concerts cost \$15. festivalnapavalley.org



TREND WATCH: WINE IN CANS

The canned wine movement has been growing in the US for several years, but thanks to lockdown restrictions prompting an increase in al fresco drinking, it's now taking off in the UK. Cans have several benefits: they chill more quickly, there's no need to pack a corkscrew, and with a single serve you're less likely to waste wine. Cans also have a reduced carbon footprint: the effect of shipping lighter containers is significant and aluminium has far higher recycling rates than glass, with 72% of cans being recycled in the UK. But how good is wine in cans? Recent tastings by the Decanter team have proved that you shouldn't underestimate the quality – as long as you know where to look. Here are some of our favourites. For full tasting notes and more recommendations visit Decanter.com



91 AA BADENHORST, THE CURATOR WHITE, SWARTLAND, SOUTH AFRICA 2020

Adi Badenhorst makes canned versions of his good-value Curator wines and this is the pick. Packed with juicy stone fruit, plus tropical notes and a rich, creamy palate. £4.25 Vinoteca
 88 MIRABEAU, PRET-A-PORTER CANETTES ROSE TO GO!, SOUTHEAST FRANCE This blend of 60% Grenache and 40% Syrah offers a generosity of strawberry and peach fruit. It's dry, but with sweetness of fruit and good acidity to keep it fresh. A crowd-pleasing style. £3.49 Waitrose
 89 IGO, ORGANIC RED, NAVARRA, SPAIN The best of the IGO organic range. Summer pudding aromatics with a hint of earthiness. Delicious slightly chilled: soft fruit, bright, crunchy; a perfect, simple al fresco red. £4.99 Waitrose

5.2 billion

THE NUMBER OF CORKS SOLD ANNUALLY BY AMORIM, THE WORLD'S LARGEST CORK PRODUCER, WHICH SUPPLIES MORE THAN 37 COUNTRIES



UNDER THE SKY WE MAKE: BY KIMBERLEY NICHOLAS PhD
 A wine buff who grew up on her family vineyard in Sonoma, Nicholas wrote her PhD at Stanford on the effects of climate change on the California wine industry. Subtitled 'How to be human in a warming world', this book details how climate change is affecting the notion of terroir and explains why the taste of Sonoma Pinot Noir has changed forever. (\$18, GP Putnam's Sons).



THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS
 Stunning cinematography transports you to the misty forests and vineyards of northern Italy in this soulful documentary about traditional Piedmontese truffle hunters. Living in harmony with the land, their way of life alongside faithful truffle hounds has a simplicity that's at odds with the global luxury market for white Alba truffles. Compelling and moving. (On release in US cinemas, coming soon to the UK.)



WINE BLAST – S2 E12: BUILD A WINE COLLECTION AT HOME
 This hugely enjoyable podcast by Decanter contributors Susie Barrie MW and Peter Richards MW ranges widely through the world of wine. From rebooting Burgundy to finding the best rosé ever, the husband-and-wife duo give their unique takes. In this episode: what to buy if you want to drink well but haven't got lots of space to store wine. (susieandpeter.com/podcast)

DREAM DESTINATION

Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, Champagne, France

If you want to see an example of technology genuinely making the world better, the Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa is happy to oblige. The boutique luxury hotel, located 45 minutes from Paris, has introduced an in-room 'Champagne Please' button – press it and a bespoke Champagne trolley appears at your door. That's sparkling room service. The hotel also boasts a Champagne Concierge, who can arrange exclusive tastings at nearby Champagne houses. Fancy a fizz-filled weekend? www.royalchampagne.com



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