

the bullionaire

BULLION 15A

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The perfect mix ...

Matthew Dunne the Head Sommelier for Aria Sydney / Aria Brisbane / Chiswick / Chiswick Art Galley / North Bondi Fish / Aria Catering has chosen the wines for this delivery. As you can imagine he is a pretty busy guy with lots of wine lists on his mind.

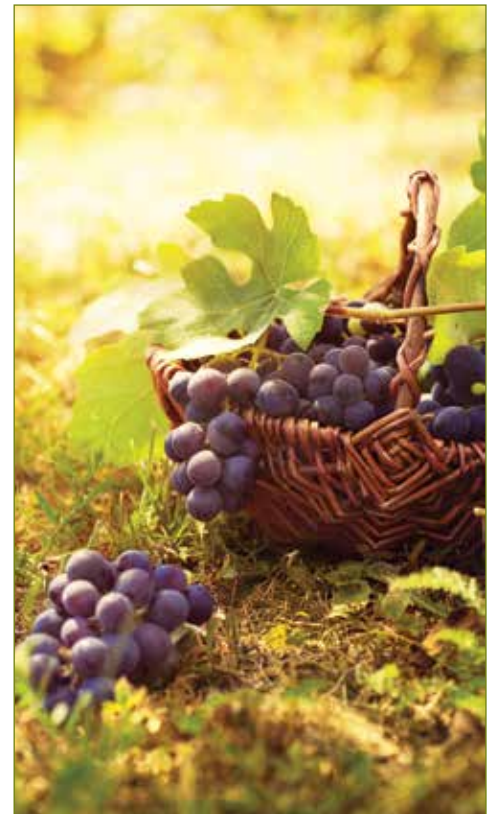
It is only natural that you have favourite wines and regions, and at the moment mine is Spain, and particularly the wines of Priorat. The Tempranillo based wines of Rioja and Ribera del Duero have been part of Spain's winemaking culture for generations. (We have supplied some great wines from these regions in prior selections). Priorat however is the new kid on the block, with fantastic Grenache and Carignan based red wines which have really only gained recognition in the past 30 years. They are renowned for beautiful wines that manage to combine power, density and structure with a distinctive sense of place. These are the superstars of Spain at the moment, with the top wines selling for \$1500 per bottle.

The wine Matt has found is a fantastic example of this style from a slightly larger neighbouring region called Monstant. Monstant is a more recent discovery. It received its DOC classification in 2001. It actually surrounds the smaller Priorat and shares a similar climate; the major difference being the soil. The best vineyards in Priorat are on steep slopes, in slate like soils known as "llicorella", allowing extremely low yields. In Monstant the soil is more varied though predominately granite like sand. The wine Matt has chosen, the **2012 Faunus**, is a better example than most I have tried from Priorat. This is exactly the type of wine we want our sommeliers to find. Anyone can buy the most expensive wines. You don't need any knowledge, all you need is money.

This wine is a sub brand of one of the more famous producers in Priorat – Portal del Priorat and the winemaker is also a pretty famous architect in Barcelona – Alfredo Arribas. This is a fleshy, complex, engaging wine that makes you want to head off to Spain and get stuck into some tapas. It is a blend of the traditional Spanish grape varieties Carignan and Tempranillo, with a splash of Syrah and Merlot for good measure.

The white wine Matt has chosen was a no brainer. Over the past 4 years, Matt has been developing his own wine label with Mac Forbes, a great winemaker from the Yarra Valley, and Nicholas Crampton, an importer based in Sydney. The Result is Drake Sampson. We have included one of their wines before. A Pinot Noir from Martinborough in NZ.

This time the Yarra Valley gets its turn, with a wine sourced from one of the most famous vineyards in the area. The Lusatia Vineyard in the upper Yarra Valley. Planted in 1985 and purchased by the Sheldmerdine family in 1989, it is regarded as one of the top vineyards in the area and the county. Mac Forbes and Matt Dunne have been able to convince the family for a small allocation of fruit from the 2013 vintage, making only 70 cases of wine. Or in the terms of the local Lingo – "Givus a tonna Chardy will ya Mate!" You see a tonne of fruit will give you approximately 70 dozen. Mac Forbes is one of the gun, younger winemakers in the area, (Well not that young anymore) starting his winery business in 2004. He focuses very much on single vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in the Yarra. This Chardonnay is from the warmer 2013 vintage and is made in the modern style of Australian Chardonnay – Lean, crisp and bloody drinkable. For years I have been telling



anyone who would listen that Chardonnay is the "New Black" and it is great to include a cool climate example in one of our selections.

Minimal Sulphur at bottling and only 15% new oak allows the minerality of the Lusatia vineyard to shine through. Stone fruits and elegance are the hallmarks of this wine. I bet they wish 2 tonnes were available!

Despite what a lot of people may say about Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, there are some awesome red wines being made in NZ, primarily from three major regions.

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bullion CELLARS
SOMMELIER SELECTED AND DELIVERED



THE WINES

Selected by Matthew Dunne



2013 DRAKE SAMSON CHARDONNAY *Yarra Valley, Australia*

This winery is a fantastic collaboration between Winemaker – Mac Forbes, Sommelier, Matthew Dunne and Importer Nicholas Crompton. They really have everything covered. The wines are sensational as well. Mac Forbes concentrates on single vineyard wines from the Yarra and this Chardonnay has been sourced from the very famous Lusatia Park Vineyard. There are a number of wine labels bearing this famous vineyards name and Drake Samson can be added to that list. Only 70 cases of this wine were made, or roughly one tonne.

The vineyard was planted in 1985 to the P58 Chardonnay clone and it has consistently delivered refined and elegant fruit with great intensity of flavour. A combination of intensive hand cultivation, low yields, cool climatic conditions and volcanic rocky soil adds to the special mystique of this vineyard. The fruit was handpicked and de-stemmed before maturation for six months in French oak, (15% new) before bottling and minimal sulphur addition. The idea was to let the quality fruit shine through with minimal winemaking tricks. 2013 was a warmer vintage, 2 weeks earlier than normal.

Cool Climate Chardonnay from Australia is the new black and this wine is a great example. A fine, tight nose with aromas of white peach and a hint of melon. The palate is elegant and driven by fine acidity, with a depth of stone fruit flavours beginning to express themselves. You forget how enjoyable good Chardonnay can be, there is so much flavour and complexity, yet it has this linear acidity that holds everything together.

FOOD MATCHINGS

Perfect with light and delicate seafood's such as shellfish, crab, prawns and oysters. Also great with sushi and sashimi. It can also handle slightly richer dishes like salmon and chicken, pork or pasta in a creamy sauce. A very versatile wine.

CELLARING POTENTIAL

Drinking very well now, however will benefit from 2-4 years in the cellar, but it will be hard to keep your hands off the screw cap.



2012 FAUNUS CARGINAN / TEMPRANILLO / SYRAH / MERLOT *Ediciones I Limitadas - Montsant, Spain*

What happens when an architect turns vintner? In the case of Spanish architect Alfredo Arribas (pictured below), the move spawned not just one, but two wineries—both infused with artistry from the wine down to the amazing illustrated labels and of course the beautifully modern winery buildings. What would you expect from an architect and industrial designer of some note, with buildings in Spain, Germany, Italy, China, Belgium, France and particularly in Japan. In 2001 he established Portel del Priorat in the emerging wine-making regions of Priorat and the neighbouring Montsant and is now one of the shining lights of Spain. This 2012 Faunus is from the second winery project, Ediciones I Limitadas, focusing on vineyards in the surrounding Montsant region. It would be easy for this winery to be a sideshow and indulgence of a wealthy and influential owner. However Alfredo is very committed and passionate in all things wine. Focusing on local grape varieties and clones, his vineyards are all organic and the winemaking is fastidious.

The wine only spent 9 months in oak and it shows, or more to the point does not show. A lot of new wineries believe they need to overpower wines with oak to make them more impressive. This is just not the case if you have great fruit to start off with. This wine is all about the balance.

FOOD MATCHINGS

Tapas anyone? Mediterranean based dishes that involve a lot of oil and rich flavours. As a bit of indulgence I reckon this wine would be sensational with pizza as well. Maybe try out your new pizza oven .

CELLARING POTENTIAL

This wine could be cellared for the next 5- 8 years. As always decant for 10-15 minutes before serving, but I will be enjoying this wine over the next 6-12 months. I just love its freshness and vitality.

The 2012 Faunus is a blend Carginan (30%) Tempranillo (30%) Merlot (25%) & Syrah (15%).

Intense vivid purple with almost bluish edges. There is a burst of red and black fruits and just a touch of smoky notes that heighten the overall sensation of the wine. Fleshy, juicy and pretty amazing with or without food. The wine is very balanced, sure it is quite high in alcohol at 14%, but you do not notice it. There is also this prominent minerality that is so common to the region. It gives the wine a sense of drama and intensity.





2011 KINDRED SPIRITS SYRAH *Gimblett Gravels, Hawkes Bay New Zealand*

Kindred Spirits is collaboration between Australian winemaker Corey Ryan and the friends he made over many years making wine in New Zealand, specifically during the seven years as chief winemaker for Villa Maria. The Kindred Spirits Range consists of a Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, Central Otago Riesling and Hawkes Bay Syrah, but for us the Syrah is the standout wine.

Sourced from two vineyards grown on the Gimblett gravels, they are both low yielding (less than two tonnes per acre) and all handpicked. The fruit was destemmed, (not crushed) into small open fermenters. After a cold soak for five days, the fruit was allowed to begin fermentation naturally with a total of thirty days on skins before pressing to oak. Maturation was in tight grained French oak Barriques, sixty percent new for twenty months without racking. Bottled with minimal filtration and sulphur addition.

2011 was a cooler vintage, giving the winemakers a modest crop of well balanced and peppery fruit. The wine has now been in bottle for 2 years and it is so smooth and elegant you feel like you have been wrapped in a velvet blanket. A very perfumed aroma shines through with dark berries, a touch of forest undergrowth and quite prominent oak.

The palate is medium bodied and just so smooth and elegant. Pepper, spice and that oak again fills out the palate, giving the wine a very juicy, fleshy, fresh feel that is very moorish. I really love this wine and this style of Shiraz/ Syrah.

FOOD MATCHINGS

This elegant silky wine is perfect for long slow cooked roasts of pork or lamb that may even be a little bit fatty (shoulder of lamb and lamb shanks, for example). It suits stews with dark, winey sauces too. Also great with hard cheeses, or quite frankly just by itself.

CELLARING POTENTIAL

Decant this wine for 10 minutes before drinking. This wine is in the zone right now, with almost 4 years under its belt. You could safely cellar this wine for another 3-4 years.



2013 CHATEAU DE PIZAY Morgon, *Beaujolais, France*

Beaujolais has been on a bit of a roller coaster over the last 30 years. During the 1980's and early 90's, Beaujolais Nouveau was all the rage, but as the quantity increased, the quality decreased, as wineries raced to supply the demand. It all came to a halt around 2001 when people stopped buying this style of wine, ending with the inevitable wine lake which was eventually distilled. Thankfully the region is focusing on better quality wines, however it will take a long time for the region to shake its low quality image. This is great news for us, as the wines from the 10 Cru's or villages offer amazing value and quality. In fact the vineyards in the Cru villages are not permitted to make "Nouveau".

Chateau de Pizay has been making great quality Beaujolais for centuries, centred on the Cru village Morgon, the second largest of the Crus. Morgon's unifying feature is the decomposed schist soil called 'roches pourries' or 'rotted rocks' and locals believe this contributes to cherry and dark fruit characters and the fleshy, juicy texture that is found in all the wines. These wines tend to be denser than those made in the rest of Beaujolais and age so distinctively and consistently that the region's name is often used as a verb to describe this process: 'il morgonne'. These are wines can be cellared for 3-5 years.

This wine is a definite "Pinot style" with plenty of flavour and structure. It has this mineral freshness that is captivating. Scented, savoury and silky smooth it could easily serve as the poster child for cru Beaujolais. The wine's deep crimson colour sets the tone, but it's the beautiful bouquet of cherry and raspberry fruit with just the right hints of mineral and spice that make the wine pretty special. Classic Morgon, showing the fruit of Beaujolais and the charm of Burgundy.

FOOD MATCHINGS

It is important this wine is served at the right temperature. Too warm and the wine will not show at its best. Ideally 15-16 degrees. It is a good idea to think like Pinot Noir with food matchings, so stick with simple roast chicken, grilled pork, lamb or veal. Also a great lunch time wine, matching with hearty salads that include a protein (beef/chicken/salmon) If you want to be adventurous, try with steak tartar.

CELLARING POTENTIAL

This classic, top notch Morgon is ready to drink now, but Morgon is one of the longest-lived crus. The young, fleshy palate of cherry and plum will develop into a more earthy wine reminiscent of Burgundian Pinot Noir. It can be cellared for the next 2-3 years.





ABOUT THE SOMMELIER

Matthew Dunne - Aria, Sydney, Brisbane / Chiswick / Chiswick Art Galley / North Bondi Fish

Matthew Dunne has worked in a number of key restaurants, not only in Australia, but also the US (Charlie Trotters) and UK (The River Café). Since 2008 he has been the head sommelier for Matt Moran's restaurant ARIA in both Sydney and Brisbane. He was also heavily involved in the opening of Sydney's hot new restaurants - CHISWICK Woollahra, CHISWICK Art Gallery and NORTH BONDI FISH which offer different styles in both food and wine selection.

Matthew has won numerous awards for both the restaurant and himself, but he is most proud of his "Good Food Guide Sommelier of the Year" in 2011.

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Martinborough, Central Otago and the Gimblett Gravels in Hawkes Bay. We have already looked at the first two regions before, so Matt has chosen a Syrah from the third.

The Gimblett Gravels is a relatively new region on the central East coast of the North Island of NZ. With the geography lesson over, we now come to geology.

Up until the late 1980's the area was regarded as the poorest, least productive land in Hawke's Bay, needing about three acres to feed one sheep and no hope of growing a decent crop of anything. A concrete company even purchased 150ha. to mine for gravel. You couldn't give the land away. In 1982 a few pioneer winemakers experimented with the traditional red Bordeaux grape varieties and the rest as they say is history.

Today there is some 800 hectares grown on the unique Gimblett Gravels area and 90% of this is planted to red grapes (Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Cabernet Franc) This is one of the few wine regions in the world, where the area is demarcated by soil type alone.

As you can imagine the soil is littered with gravels and stones, which are free draining with low fertility, resulting in low vigour vineyards where the vines concentrate on ripening the fruit rather than producing lush vegetation. The temperature is also a few degrees higher than other parts of Hawkes Bay, with the gravels acting as a sort of thermal blanket, warming up and then radiating heat, helping to ripen the fruit.

In a very short time, this region has established itself as the prime red wine region of NZ and its wines are bloody sensational. The best winery in

NZ, Craggy Range is based here so keep an eye out for their wines. They are expensive in the same vein as Penfold's, but well worth the money. Their wine "Le Sol" is a particular favourite of mine. Whilst it is the Bordeaux varieties that put the region on the map, Syrah is gaining some serious ground. You will note, the Kiwi's call it Syrah and not Shiraz. This is to help differentiate from the Shiraz across the ditch. The Gimblett Gravels style is medium bodied with floral, perfumed aromas and the distinctive cool climate characteristics of spice and pepper. (It's funny how this style is becoming all the rage in Australia as well). Matt has chosen the **2011 Kindred Spirits Syrah** and it is bloody fantastic. 2011 was a cooler vintage in the region resulting in a very elegant style.

Australia never really got the Beaujolais Nouveau trend. Beaujolais what? I hear you say!

Beaujolais Nouveau used to be quite a big deal. The idea was to sell the first wine of the northern hemisphere vintage on the third Thursday every November. It was originally made as a simple, chuggable wine for celebrating the harvest. There was always a lot of excitement, advertising and sales associated with this wine, with one producer leading the way to get the first wine to market (George Duboeuf). But it never really took off in Australia.

The problem today is that Georges Duboeuf turned the region into a bit of novelty, one that was known for bad wine that you only drank one month in a year. People forgot that Beaujolais in the right hands and from the right vineyards can be a gorgeous wine that is one of the most underrated on the planet. Well not our Sommeliers.

So what is Beaujolais?

Firstly Beaujolais is small region of France just south of Burgundy. It is a lighter bodied red wine made from Gamay, a thin-skinned grape variety that has some things in common with Pinot Noir, including fresh, tart acid with light-to-medium body. At the higher level (Cru Beaujolais), it offers gentle tannins with juicy red fruits that can be very expressive of its granite-heavy terroir, showing intense minerality.

However you need to stick with the village and cru level and stay away from Beaujolais Nouveau. There are 10 Cru regions, and the wine Matt Has chosen is the **2013 Chateau de Pizay, Morgon**. Cru Beaujolais is both playful and serious at the same time. Morgon is the most structured of the crus, with more intensity, concentration and savoury flavours. The soils here are rich in iron and manganese, and it shines through. Beaujolais Nouveau has nothing in common with the rustic, brooding wines from Morgon.

Chateau de Pizay is a rather grand 19th-century estate with 80 hectares of vines - massive by Beaujolais standards - between Brouilly and Morgon. The place is nowadays a hotel, conference centre and spa (you know the sort of place). With its winemaking team doing a great job, no doubt benefiting from the extra money in the business due to all those tourists. Expect a nose dominated by blackberries and cherries and a silky smooth palate.

These are 4 wines that will brighten any dinner party. Enjoy, I know I will.

Matt, The Bullionaire