

1993 Chateau Pajzos Tokaji Aszu 5 Puttonyos

Sweet Dessert wine from Tokaj Hungary

Predominately Furmit, with Harslevelu

12 % Alc.

\$55 deVines

Decanter describes it as having an expressive nose, intense ripe fruit, nutty character; on the palate, wonderful combination of high acidity balanced by rich orange marmalade. Wine Spectator says this late harvest white offers a lush, pillowy texture and rich flavours of dried apricots, toffee and vanilla. It's sweet, yet quite fresh and still lively. Both publications gave this wine a high rating.

This wine is cited in the Hungarian National Anthem. It is made from Aszu grapes, which means dried. In the west we have referred to these types of grapes as "botrytised" (from which ice wines are made). Puttonyos refers to the sugar content of the wine and ranges from 3 to 6. This one has a puttonyos of 5.



2006 Calatrasi Terrale Catarratto (Sicily, Italy)
Wine - White \$15.99 (750mL) at Devine wines

The wine maker: Calatrasi has very large holdings throughout Italy and in particular Sicily. The owners are Maurizio and Giuseppe Micciché. And the winery is located about 30 miles south of Palermo.

The Grape varietal: Catarratto is a very prolific and easy to grow grape that in the last 15-20 years has been one of the largest contributors to the wine lake of Europe. It is often blended into other wines to add flavor and body however over production is an issue. This grape varietal is only second to Sangiovese. There are hints of nectarine and white stone fruit flavors with tastes of lemon flavors on the finish. It is refreshing, full bodied with generous fruit and a long finish.

The wine making style is typical with pneumatic pressing, short but temperature controlled fermentation and stored in stainless steel vats. It seldom sees oak because of the cost and the market this wine targets. The wine is usually bottled within 14 months and regularly served at 10-12 degrees C. It is the most popular white wine in Sicily.

Chateau Langlois Carmin dry (NV)

Red Sparkling wine from the Loire Valley

100% Cabernet Franc

13.5% Alc.

\$28 deVines

Nose of roses and wild flower. Full of fruit, strawberry, blackberry and blackcurrent. Foamy, rich, ruby red sparkling wine, exciting to pour. You want to savour the appearance of a freshly poured glass for as long as possible. The taste is of cherry, phenol and mineral.

The wine has had a short maceration (process where tannins and other flavour compounds are leached from the grape skin, stems and seeds into the must) to give colour and a little structure and then 18 months on its lees (a settlement period) before disgorgement (removal of sediment from the bottle).

Fun because it is different and unusual.

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Maison Potel Beaune 1er Cru 2006

The producer: Nicolas Potel with assistant wine maker Fabrice Lesne. The label says Maison Potel and should not be confused with Domaine Potel. Nicolas is the son of the late Gerard Potel of Domaine La Pousse d'Or. In 1995 he started buying grapes and juice from a number of sources and started his own label. In 2002 he over expanded and needed money to finance the growth. The Cottin brothers of Laboure Roi were only too eager to help. In 2007 Nicolas started his own label due to the restrictive management of the Cottin family. In January of 2009 the top management of Maison Potel were fired by the Cottin brothers and today Fabrice is the wine maker and Nicolas has his own new label Domaine Potel.

The wine maker: Fabrice is a self taught winemaker using the old world style with some biodynamic considerations. He ferments his wines using full bunches to reduce harsh tannins from crushed pits. The wines are typically aged in oak for 16 months with limited new oak. His style is not to rack the wines until just before bottling and he uses the old style gravity filling method to avoid using pumps. This style he learned directly from Nicolas Potel who in turn learned his wine making style from his father Gerard.

The vineyard: The region is flat and the soil rich with vines aging up to 90 years old. Chalky, clay and relatively rich loamy soil is evident in the rich concentrated fruit flavors of this wine. These vineyards are not owned by Nicolas but the viticulture and biodynamic methods are nevertheless controlled by him personally.

The wine: Full of cherry fruit on the nose with a hint of tar. On the palate there is further confirmation of this concentrated cherry fruit that fills the mouth and lingers long after the wine is gone. There is good acidity in this wine with soft, fine tannins. Nicolas has always been a believer of keeping his use of SO₂ low and manipulating his malolactic fermentation so that it starts later than most. His wines are generally very well regarded and his larger than life style will surely arise again with his newest label. Priced at about \$52.00 per bottle from Devine wines it is a bit pricey but very good value.