

# Top Drops to Celebrate

Exciting wines, all with a back story, to see you through December into 2020

**W**ine experts Benjawan Wissotsat and Lily Nuttiya Wisootsat, the mother and daughter team behind boutique wine importers 'Fin - Fabulous Is Needed' company are known for their eclectic curation of wine labels. *Expression*, stopped the duo long enough to put together a must-drink list for the holiday season from their seriously exhaustive wine list. Their selections will have you reaching for your glass.

## BRING ON THE BUBBLES, UNCORK THE FUN

**Champagne Diebolt-Vallois, 2008 Champagne Blanc de Blancs "Fleur de Passion":** From 100 per cent Chardonnay, this Champagne celebrated for its quality, has earned itself a permanent spot on the wine lists of several leading restaurants around the world. Diebolt-Vallois is one of the absolute top domaines on the Côte des Blancs. One reason for the exceptional quality is its ownership of some of the most valuable sites in Cramant, Chouilly, Cuis and Epernay. Many of the vines for the house's top cuvées date back to 1950. Slender, precise, and elegant, Diebolt's champagnes have stunning complexity, and extreme cellaring potential - Fleur de Passion is a jewel in the range. Vinified from 60-year-old Grand Cru vines, it is barrel-fermented, without malolactic fermentation, and unfiltered. The result is explosively aromatic with a rich, mineral laced mid-palate and a long, long finish. Plus, it is sustainable.

**Drink it with-** A treat to be enjoyed with ones you love dearly.

**Gerhard & Brigitte Pittnauer, Burgenland; 2018 Pitt Nat Blanc, Pittnauer:** Given the reins of his vineyard in the mid-1980s after the death of his father, Gerhard decided to 'grow' wine rather than 'make' it in the cellar, and he did so based on the 'consistent, common thread he found in the wines he loved to drink from France and elsewhere'. His Pitt Nat Blanc (Varietals: Grüner Veltliner, Riesling, Müller



Lily Nuttiya Wisootsat and Benjawan Wissotsat

Thurgau, Welschriesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris & Muskat Ottonel) pops, prickles, froths and sparkles. Perfectly balanced between craft beer and champagne with lots of fruity and yeasty flavours. The acidity fizzles, invigorates.

**Drink it with** -Your natural wine-loving friends. It's a bottle to pop, enjoy, and keep it flowing.

## ON THE WHITE WINE TRAIL

**Weingut Tement, Südsteiermark; 2014 Zieregg Sauvignon Blanc "Grosse STK Lage":** A family winery in Austria with vineyards in Südsteiermark (southern Styria), Weingut Tement handcrafts some of the most highly awarded, certified organic Austrian wines. His white wines are amongst the best in the world. The 2014 Zieregg Sauvignon Blanc comes from the single vineyard Zieregg characterised by a steep slope. The old vines (35 years +) grow on shell limestone soil with a bio-organic cultivation. The terroir reflects in the aroma of the wine in a very distinctive way: deep smokey flavour underlaid with elegance and limestone spices - incredibly structured, on the nose it is an attractive yellow tropical fruit, edged by orange zest with nuances of flower honey and lime. On the palate it has incredible minerality and subtlety.

**Drink it with** - Serious wine lovers. This Sauvignon Blanc is deeply versatile. Pair it with fish, white meat, and even heavier dishes and meats.

## IN THE MOOD FOR RED, RED WINE

**Salomon Estate, Australia; Alttus (2003 ALTUS Shiraz; 750 ml & Magnum 1.5l):** Bert Salomon's search for suitable sites for quality fruit-driven reds ended on the gentle hillside in the Finnis River Valley in the Fleurieu Peninsula south of Adelaide where the warm days and cool evenings help increase the aroma and richness in the grapes. This red, a jewel in the crown of Salomon Estate, is aged in assorted new French oak for 18 month. A sustainable red, it is not obviously Australian on the nose. A cross between Australia and Northern Rhone, it has a lovely texture - it's complex, well knit and subtle. Wine critic Jancis Robinson is enthusiastic: "Dark smudgy ruby with lots of development. Sweet, rose-petal nose - very flattering, very developed. Pretty dry finish - I'd say definitely French! Well balanced and fluid. Not heavy." **Drink it with:** Important business clients to celebrate a fruitful year in business or senior family members. This is a hidden gem that you should be proud to find and share.

**Gernot & Heike Heinrich, Burgenland; 2014 Organic RED, Gernot Heinrich (Natural wine; Varietals - Blaufränkisch, Zweigelt & St. Laurent):** The Heinrich family has farmed around the area of Gols on Lake Neusiedl in Austria's Burgenland since at least 1730. Today, Gernot Heinrich has firmly established his family's wine estate as one of the most exciting in all Austria. Over the past 20 years, Gernot and his wife Heike pioneered the transition of the region of Burgenland-Neusiedlersee from simple white wine production to its predominantly red wine culture today with high-quality reds, including powerful red blends such as Salzberg, Gabarinza, and Pannobile. Their biodynamic viticulture informs their style of wines: gorgeous fruit as well as tannins, over subtle background of herbal spice. This wine has soft, silky, tightly woven tannins that provide a well-structured spine. Thanks to the cool 2014 vintage, the fruit-laden aroma is backed by vibrant acidity and a pleasant bite of a freshly picked blood orange.

**Drink it with:** Your friends or colleagues. In a very no-frills environment, just keep it flowing. This bottle is easy-going, delicious, and of great value.

**Weingut Dorli Muhr (Muhr-van der Niepoort), Carnuntum; 2010 Spitzerberg Blaufränkisch:** In Carnuntum, east Austria, is where you find one of the world's best Blaufränkisch: Spitzerberg. If you like freshness and elegance combined with mineral tension and finesse, you are in red wine heaven. Dorli Muhr's 2010 Spitzerberg Blaufränkisch is made from vines between 40 and 60 years old. A part of this wine undergoes classic open vat fermentation, while another thanks to the ancient art of foot stamping has a very short maceration time; this to extract elegant and tightly woven tannins. The wine is subtle, mineral-driven, long on the palate, fine and densely packed. Expect red cherry and berries, Szechuan pepper, and pungent herbs. With just 30 bottles on hand, this is a limited pour.

**Drink it with** - your Burgundy lover friends or family. It's not Pinot Noir, nor is it from Burgundy but it's a style with elegance and complexity.

**Tenuta degli Dei:** Owned by Tommaso and Roberto Cavalli for well over thirty years, the estate is in the village of San Leolino, near Panzano in Chianti. Panzano's soil type is mixed, allowing the vines to absorb all the minerals in the soil and transfer the characteristics of the terroir to the grapes. All grape varieties grown on the estate are of French origin. Each vintage of Cavalli Tenuta degli Dei "wears" its own distinctive print from the family's fashion house on its label. The 2007 Roberto Cavalli Collection (Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc & Alicante Bouschet) comes in a Roberto Cavalli-designed black glass bottle adorned with a bronze and rhinestone logo. The wine is layered and beautiful, with blackberry, licorice and mineral on the nose and palate. **Drink this with** - Your fashionable special someone. Plan a romantic dinner for just the two of you, and drink in style!

## OF JUST DESSERTS AND CHEESE PLATTERS

**1988 Chateau Gilette Crème de Tête Sauternes AOC, Julie Gonet-Médeville, France (Sémillon 88%, Sauvignon Blanc 8% and Muscadelle 4%):** Chateau Gilette's Sauternes, perhaps the most unique of Bordeaux wines, are released on an average between 20 and 25 years after the vintage - the wine remains in the tank for almost 20 years and is then aged for an additional 3-5 years! Prior to World War II, they made wine like every other property in the region. After the war, they found they still had wine in their tanks from the 1930s. They liked the results so much that extended ageing in cement vats became the norm. *Wine Spectator* underlined its notes of 'lemon cream, chamomile, persimmon, quinine, heather honey, glazed peach and honeysuckle all moving seamlessly together through the long, pure finish'.

**Drink it with** -Your favourite people and family. Pair with that delicious foie gras you have, complex Thai food, or glorious dessert. A bottle like this doesn't come by very often!

**2013 Maury Op Nord (Domaine les Terres de Fagayra, Roussillon, France; Grenache Noir and Carignan):** The Gallets, owners and winemakers of Domaine le Roc des Anges, have recently acquired a tiny new domaine - Les Terres de Fagayra, giving Marjorie's husband Stephane a chance to utilise the special talents for Maury that he honed as winemaker while at nearby Mas Amiel. For those not familiar, Maury are fortified wines like Port, seeing 12 months in wood before bottling. Red Maury is one of the few wines that can complement chocolate desserts; equally delicious with hard cheeses from the Pyrénées. The fortified 2013 Maury Op Nord is elegant with beautiful notes of blackberry, flower, licorice and scorched earth. Quite sweet, it's full-bodied and layered. Very limited production of only 500 -1,200 bottles annually. **Drink it with** - With friends over an elaborate cheese platter. ([www.fin-wine.com](http://www.fin-wine.com)). 