

THE ART OF WINE & FOOD

Established 1990

dealing in wine & food related antiques & curiosities

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March 2011 - The Paris Issue

e-Update

Introduction

You know you are well settled in Paris when you've cooked your first *Bœuf Bourguignon* with two cuts of meat [one for *gélatine*] and a high quality speck recommended by your butcher.

This e-Update is primarily devoted to recent Paris activities including eating out, a trip to Reims as well as some wine a food-related finds. Enhanced by a review of a recently opened good-value London restaurant.

The Patron Saint of Vignerons



Coloured woodblock of Saint Vincent by Jean André Chizez [1898-1975]. Size 40 x 30cm [\$265]

Traditionally in Burgundy pruning will not begin until after the feast of Saint Vincent on January 22 to thank God and nature for past and future harvests. Vincent was said to have been imprisoned and tortured and died on the 22 January 304.

Throughout France wine regions celebrate this day in hundreds of ways with several organisations devoted to the celebration.

These include Confrerie des Vignerons de St. Vincent de Macon, Archiconfrérie Saint Vincent des Vignerons de la Champagne, Confrérie des Grumeurs de Santenay and Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin.

Entrée Restaurant & Bar

Eating out in London can often be expensive, disappointing, or both. Not so for me recently at Entrée on Battersea Rise in Clapham.

One year after acquisition, extensive renovations to convert the old kebab shop, and rebuilding a kitchen [and brigade to go with it] two Australian owners are offering excellent value food in a most comfortable French-inspired two-level setting.

As partner Jayke Mangion explained 'we wanted a point of difference from what's around us...' This is very evident in the value-for-money food pricing, produce quality and personal touch of the owners in the decor. For example, water is served in old brightly-coloured French bistro carafes from Pernod, Berger & Martini.

The produce-driven menu offers seven entree and main course options. For two courses à la carte expect to pay around £25. There is a 2-course £20, or 3-course £24 option.

The signature dishes are 'Scallop and crab lasagne with chive beurre blanc' [with a generous portion of crab] and '28-day Dexter-Galloway beef rump, rocket & parmesan, thrice-cooked chips & Bérnaise'.

It's good to see produce so well described – Channel Island sea bass and Cumbrian chicken are two more.

The wine list is well-chosen, succinct [a page each of whites & reds] with offerings from France, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, South Africa, USA, Spain, Hungary and Chile. There's plenty of choice from £16.75 upwards and a selection of wine by-the-glass.

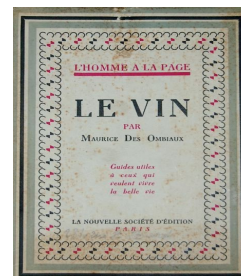
There are some good Burgundies offered at the higher end and BYO every Monday night is a good Aussie touch [£5 corkage].

For anyone in London this is an excellent value-for-money place to eat. Highly recommended.

Entrée Restaurant & Bar 2 Battersea Rise London SW11 T 0207 223 5147

Wine-related books

1. **La Vigne et le Vin**, Jacques Loustaunau-Deguillhem, First Edition, 1945 [\$55]
2. **Le Vin**, E Chancrin, First Edition, 1908 [\$65]
3. **Le Vin**, Maurice des Ombiaux, First Edition, 1928. Signed by the author [\$95]



Haute Cuisine

Marie-Antoine Careme [1784-1833] was an early practitioner of the complex style of cooking known as *haute cuisine*. Later, Auguste Escoffier [1846-1935] modified and simplified this elaborate and ornate style.

Le Cuisinier Moderne ou Les Secrets de l'Art Culinaire by Gustave Garlin, documented these elaborate dishes. This framed coloured engraving from 1887 shows three of them [\$330].

Faisans truffés rotis

Dindes roties [au Cresson]

Poulardes truffées à la Périgieuse





Aux Lyonnais

This restaurant dating back to 1890 was acquired by Alain Ducasse in 2002. It remains dedicated to *La Cuisine Lyonnaise*.

The March 2011 specialities included

Planche de charcuterie lyonnaise

Quenelles à la lyonnaise sauce Nantua

Pot de la cuisinière de lyonnaise

Saint-Marcellin de la mère Richard.

The well-chosen wine list focuses on close-to-Lyon vineyards especially Burgundy and the Rhone. With a good selection of gamay from the fabulous 2009 vintage to choose from.

The two wines offered by the glass that evening were Mercreury 1er cru – Les Champs Martin – Domaine Brintet 2007 and Châteauneuf-du-Pape – Château Mont-Redon 2000.

Aux Lyonnais is quite casual, but as one of the Alain Ducasse offshoots, it is well known internationally and you will need to book. The second sitting is at 9.30pm.

Well known by local business people for lunch and thus always busy.

In Paris, Ducasse also owns Benoit [the only brasserie in Paris to have a Michelin star], Le Relais du Parc, Spoon Paris, and Rech. All with their own personalities albeit with the 'L'Esprit Bistro' Ducasse promises.

In March 2011 we paid €35 for two courses at Aux Lyonnais.

This contrasts to a €360 menu offered at the Michelin 3-star Alain Ducasse au Plaza Athénée.

Aux Lyonnais 32 rue Saint-Marc 75002 T 01 42 96 65 04

Comptoir de la Gastronomie

Just near Eglise Saint-Eustache, Comptoir de la Gastronomie is a purveyor of fine foods well known by locals who understand that in minutes, you can find everything you will need for DIY entertaining, be it casual drinks, or a serious dinner party.

The proprietor Dominique Loi has the best of *foie gras* in all forms, *quenelles de brochet*, *boudin blanc aux truffes*, *esgargots de Bourgogne*, *magret de canard*, *cassoulet* & *oeufs de saumon* all complimenting his offering of wines and champagnes.



Blinis, large & small, a house speciality, sell at a lively rate. No doubt destined to be served with smoked salmon, crème fraîche, chives and salmon roe.

Its 40-seat bistro adjoins the retail premises providing good-value dining of some of his produce.

Comptoir de la Gastronomie 34 rue Montmartre 75001 T 01 42 33 31 32

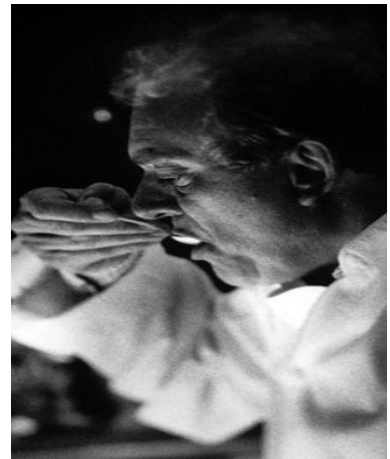
Recent Wine Auction Prices

In March a pristine bottle of Château Mouton Rothschild 1er GCC Pauillac 1945 sold at Artus Enchères in Paris for €7,670 [\$A11k] including the 18% buyer's premium ['outgoings' as the French describe it].

At the same sale twelve bottles all in original wooden cases of each of Château Haut Brion 1er GCC Pessac Léognan, Château Margaux 1er GCC Margaux and Château Latour 1er GCC Pauillac all from 1990 sold for €6,608, €9,204 & €7,670 respectively including buyer's premium.

For anyone after a curiosity, a high-shoulder ullaged toffee-coloured Château d'Yquem 1er Cru Supérieur 1942 Sauternes made just €543. No doubt destined for a seventieth birthday next year.

Interestingly, an imperial [6L] of Cote Rotie 2000 Les Bécasses [M.Chapoutier] in its original wooden box struggled to get anywhere near the pre-sale estimate of €350 to sell at €236 including buyer's premium.



Michel Rostang

Michel Rostang provides a remarkable dining experience at the price one expects at a Michelin 2-star - *Le Menu du Saison* €169 or *Le Menu* €285 '*Tout Truffes Noires*'.

In February 2011 at the height of the season we were greeted by a huge bowl of pungent black truffles, with a menu to do justice to the produce.

Le 'sandwich' tiede à la truffe fraîche

La soupe d'artichauts violets aux truffes noires

La salade des pommes de terre 'rattes' servie tiede

to mention just three.

The cellar is remarkable for its content and museum-like setting, with large format bottles a feature. It is rated as one of the best in Paris. Strong on Bordeaux including 1961, 1982 & 1990. The ever-attentive sommelier Alain Ronzatti has been with Rostang for 20 years so the expert advice is respected.

Rostang and his daughter Sophie have also acquired some authentic old bistros around Paris. Le Flaubert adjoins Michel Rostang.

There is also Jarrasse, Dessirier, La Boutarde and L'Absinthe. All very different, but each featuring aspects of Rostang's passion to collect culinary objects. Le Flaubert features walls of Barbotine jugs, whilst La Boutarde is the repository of his old coffee grinders.

Michel Rostang definitely falls into the 'special occasion' category but you never feel intimidated. The welcome starts as you are greeted by Sophie and continues throughout the dining experience. Recommended.

Michel Rostang 20 rue Rennequin 75017 T 01 47 63 40 77

New Arrivals

Champagne coolers from the House of Christofle continue to be the most sought after in France - antique or more recent editions. These date to the later part of the 20th century.



An outstanding pair of Christofle champagne coolers in an Art Deco style with elegant round ebony handles. The Christofle mark clearly visible on the base. In excellent condition with generous capacity. Height 23cm. [\$1,650]



Louis Pasteur [1822-1895] tinned-lead plaque. Size 11 x 8cm [\$165]

Beaujolais 2009

Not enough attention is given to the gamay grape with a reputation confused by the publicity given to Beaujolais Nouveau – a wine just two months old that can range from enjoyably quaffable to just drinkable.

At Juveniles wine bar in Paris, owner Tim Johnston, is well known for his preference for gamay to pinot noir, and always eager to show you something to illustrate the point.

In 2009 Inter Beaujolais reported that with little rain in July and August healthy vines were able to produce grapes of impeccable quality and optimum ripeness. It was warm without being too hot.

The deliciously sweet, small, thick-skinned berries produced a perfect balance of sugar and acidity with extremely low yields. In a lesser year, relatively high acidity can dominate the fruit.

It is now evident that 2009 will be one of the greatest vintages Beaujolais has ever known. But prices remain very affordable.

Jancis Robinson suggests wines from Chiroubles, Chénas, St-Amour, Fleurie, Brouilly, Côte de Brouilly, Juliéna, Morgon and Moulin-à-Vent, that are said to become more and more like pinot noir-based red burgundy with age. She has ranked them in ascending order of body and ageing potential.

Buy them whilst you can, with more Beaujolais now sold with a specific vineyard name and appellation.

At Ultimo Wine Centre in Sydney, you'll find Domaine Jean-Marc Burgaud Beaujolais Morgon Les Charmes 2009 regarded as one of the best vineyards in Morgon as well as his Beaujolais-Villages Chateau Thulon. New shipments are en route.

Ultimo Wine Centre 99 Jones Street Sydney NSW 2007 T +61 2 9211 2380

Mumm Champagne

This year Reims Cathedral [Notre-Dame de Reims] celebrates its 800th year. Famous for the 25 Kings of France crowned there from Louis VIII [1223] to Charles X [1825].

So what better reason to hop on the TGV from Paris and in 45 minutes be in Reims? And enjoy the Gothic architecture of Reims Cathedral modelled on the Chartres Cathedral established in 1194 as well as experience the Marc Chagall [1887-1985] stained glass installed in 1974.



Then visit the Musée des Beaux Arts or one of the champagne houses open to the public. Opening times vary depending on the season and only some sessions are in English.

Tours can be organised direct with the champagne houses, or via the most helpful information bureau located behind Reims Cathedral.

Mumm established in 1827 was our choice - a short local bus trip from the centre of Reims, at 34 rue du Champ-de-Mars, near Chapelle Fougita.

The €10 fee included an informative explanation of the history of Mumm and the region; grape varieties; viticulture practices; and the complete *méthode champenoise* process; during an extensive tour of the pristine tunnels and spaces within the chalk cellars deep beneath Reims.

Then a visit to the Mumm museum [one of the better efforts I've seen] and to view the *vinotheque* [wine library] with its thousands of undisgorged bottles back to 1893.



We were told these bottles continue to be used by the winemaker today to benchmark the complex blends from the three grape varieties and hundreds of plots owned by Mumm, or their independent growers.

It was also explained to us that at Mumm, 100% malolactic fermentation of base material is practised to 'better round-out flavour'

In the elegant tasting room a generous glass of Mumm [NV Brut or Demi Sec] concluded the one-hour tour.

Here you can buy a jeroboam [double magnum 3L] NV Brut in a purpose-built wooden box for a not unreasonable €147, or choose from a range of the latest designer Mumm champagne coolers, glassware, and aprons.

Overall a very good and educative wine experience and recommended.



Mumm Champagne 34 rue du Champ-de-Mars REIMS 51100 T 03 26 49 59 70