



STEVEN SPURRIER'S fine wine world

Decanter's long-standing consultant editor and 2017 Decanter Man of the Year hand-picks fine wines for drinking now and recommends others to lay down, all priced from £25 upwards

FROM THE CELLAR

Dr Lippold, Urziger Würzgarten-Weltersberg Riesling Auslese 2010

On the instigation of Mosel winemaker Dr Enno Lippold, five colleagues and I sat down in November in front of Riesling producers from six countries, each showing a 2010 to prove 'how complex and harmonious serious Rieslings can be once their components have had time to settle down and blend together'.

First was Niki Saahs with his **Nikolaihof, Steiner Hund** from Austria's Wachau, aged for 30 months in old casks: rich yet dry with the Riesling kick on the finish. Then came Morten Hallgren with his **Ravines, Argetsinger Vineyard** from New York's Finger Lakes: a fine balance of phenolics and minerality, still young. Giuseppe Vajra

presented the **Vajra, Petracine, Langhe** - Piedmont's first Riesling, planted in 1985: very varietal, showing dried honey and a stone fruit finish. Olivier Humbrecht MW from Alsace followed with his **Zind-Humbrecht, Clos Windsbuhl**:

tight and honeyed, grippy and vertical. By contrast, and no less fine, was **Pewsey Vale's The Contours**, from South Australia's Eden Valley presented by Jon Stevens: floral and lemony with hints of petrol, fine length and purity.

Finally, Dr Lippold's own **Urziger Würzgarten Weltersberg Auslese**, from 65-year-old vines: intrinsically Mosel in character, with natural richness enhanced by age, superb to 2040.



FOR THE CELLAR

Tyrrell's, Vat 1 Hunter Semillon

Tyrrell's, based in its historic homestead in New South Wales' Hunter Valley, is in its 160th year of winemaking, headed up by fourth-generation Bruce and fifth-generation Jane, John and Chris Tyrrell.

In London a few months ago to present the family's wines, Chris explained that even though he is the youngest member of the team, he was already on his 17th vintage, while head winemaker Andy Simmons was on his 40th. Such continuity was plain to see through a range of Tyrrell's renowned Vat 1 Semillon, from the not-yet released 2017 back to 1998 - the first vintage under screwcap.

Vat 1 is made only from the best blocks, the centrepiece being the Short Flat vineyard

planted in 1923. The 2017 is superb, and 1,000 magnums will be made (to be released in 2022) to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the first vintage of Vat 1. The just-released 2013 is lovely, already showing complex ripeness from just 11.5% alcohol and natural vigour to

see it into its third decade. The 2009 is perfect now with charm and depth; the 2006 has smoothed out well; while the 2005, a 'museum release', is more structured than both - my wine of the evening. 2004 and 2003 matched each other in creamy texture balanced by natural acidity; while the 1998 boasted honey-like concentration. Prices and stockists from UK importer John E Fells.



The Spurrier selection



Haskell Vineyards, Anvil Chardonnay, Stellenbosch, South Africa 2016 91

£29.50 Lea & Sandeman
Brilliant winemaker Rianie Strydom has created a lovely floral wine from Haskell's 30-year-old Chardonnay vines. Fresh pear and peach aromas lead to a very elegant palate with a hint of toasted almond and stone fruit finish. All charm and elegance. **Drink** 2019-2022 **Alc** 12.5%



Elephant Hill, Stone Syrah, Gimblett Gravels, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand 2015 94

£44 Corney & Barrow
Located on an old river bed with more stones than soil but wonderful drainage. This allows the Syrah to express ripe concentration with the tight-knit structure of a Côte-Rôtie while retaining dense, dark-berried fruit for a long future. **Drink** 2019-2030 **Alc** 13.9%



Bodegas Tradición, Palo Cortado VORS 30 Year Old, Jerez, Spain NV 96

£97.80 Handford, Hedonism, WoodWinters
This young bodega keeps to its name by releasing Sherries of classic maturity. Extraordinarily complex aromas, intense yet lifted, a richly smooth entry onto the palate and a bitter almond aftertaste. Quite superb and memorable. **Drink** 2019-2030 **Alc** 19.5%