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THE WORLD'S BEST WINE MAGAZINE

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CLASSES FROM 2004

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what's it all mean,
and do we care?

REVEALED:
How a wine
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SPURRIER'S WORLD

Our in-house walking palate recommends yet more diverse wines to try this month – from an Austrian Grüner Veltliner to Taittinger's California sparkler



BEST OLD WORLD WHITE JURTSCHITSCH, SCHENKENBICHL GRÜNER VELTLINER, AUSTRIA 2006

Family-owned since 1858, the Jurtschitsch estate owns the finest terraced vineyards in Langenlois. Organic since the 1970s, the wines marry purity and intensity. White peaches on the nose, dry spices on the palate, wonderfully long. **£18.25; ABS**



BEST NEW WORLD WHITE MAVERICK, TRIAL HILL RIESLING, AUSTRALIA 2006

Only 5,000 bottles were made from a single 2ha (hectare) block on a Northeast- (our southwest) facing slope high in the Eden Valley. Intense lime and citrus on the nose with mineral acidity, this cracking wine joins the ranks of top Australian Rieslings. Stelvin closure. **£12.50; L&S**



BEST SWEET WINE DOBOGO, MYLITTA, HUNGARY 2005

Named after Izabella Zwack's great aunt, a renowned beauty nicknamed Mylitta, this is a late-harvest, botrytised blend from 30-year-old 60% Furmint, 30% Harslevelu and 10% Muscat de Lunel. White peach and fresh almond nose, honeyed fruit with lemony acidity. A lovely wine. **£13.50; Lib**



BEST OLD WORLD RED SAN FELICE, POGGIO ROSSO CHIANTI CLASSICO, ITALY 2001

This magnificent riserva, with 10% Colorino to temper the densely vibrant Sangiovese, combines an almost lush richness of fruit with spice and impressive depth. A serious single-vineyard wine, perfect expression of the 2001 vintage, for drinking over the next 10 years. **£18.99; Amp, DBy, V20**



BEST NEW WORLD RED CLOS DU VAL, RESERVE PINOT NOIR, USA 2003

Although based in the Stags Leap district, Clos du Val's Pinot Noir comes from the cooler Carneros. Full velvety colour, fine ripe Pinot fruit with more weight than expected, great purity and depth, this is a very good wine from an estate better known for its Cabernets. **£29.99; Vyd**



BEST SPARKLER DOMAINE CARNEROS, BRUT, USA 2003

Taittinger's California venture covers 121ha of Carneros vineyards, with nine different Pinot Noir and six Chardonnay clones. A 68/31% blend with 1% Pinot Blanc, this has a floral lift and fresh pear fruit and bready, brioche characteristics. A 'Champagne' sparkler from California. **£17.36; Evy**

FROM
THE
CELLAR

MATURE PESQUERA

Founded in 1972 by the legendary Alejandro Fernandez, the Pesquera estate at Pesquera del Duero is said to have 'ignited the Ribera del Duero renaissance'. Vega Sicilia would not agree, but it is true that the Pesquera range is remarkable as much for its consistency as for its quality. A few years ago, Majestic bought a large parcel and I was able to acquire wines from 1999, 1997 and 1995. Coming back to them recently, the **TINTO 1999** is wonderfully ripe and smooth for uncomplicated

pleasure; the **RESERVA 1997** still has a good, deep colour and warm, earthy fruit, but a certain hollowness due to the rainy vintage; the **GRAN RESERVA 1995**, much darker in colour, more intense and robust, showed a firm tannin structure that needed aeration and presumed a few years ahead of it. All were 100% Tempranillo, 18 months in French/Spanish/American oak for the Tinto, 24 months for the others, all satisfyingly mature with life ahead of them, justifying their exalted reputation. **Arm**

FOR
THE
CELLAR

PAGOS FROM ABADIA RETUERTA

The splendid 700ha Abadia Retuerta estate, owned by the Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis, is at Sardon del Duero, just outside DO Ribera del Duero. The 204ha under vine range from 850m down to the southern banks of the Duero. The winery, designed in 1996 by St-Emilion's Pascal Delbeck, is entirely gravity fed. All the wines, sold under the *Vino de la Tierra de Castilla y Leon* label, come from the estate's 54 'Pagos', similar to Burgundian climats, which are classified according to

soil composition, orientation, temperature and variety. The finest are **PAGO NEGROLADA**, a 100% Tempranillo, and **PAGO VALDEBELLON**, a 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. My own cellar only holds the 2000s, whose youthful colour reveals a concentration of small berry fruit and velvety elegance, ready now but with more to offer, my preference being for the **NEGROLADA**. The robustly warm 2003 and the densely firm 2004 still have over a decade in front of them. **Lib**