For something different

Corsica Wine

Corsica is an island in the Mediterranean Sea, located between the southeast coast of Provence and the west coast of Tuscany. Although it is closer to Italy, Corsica has been under French rule since 1769 and is counted among the 26 regions of France. The island's Italian origins shine through in its wines, which are made predominantly from the Italian classics Vermentino and Sangiovese (known here as Rolle and Nielluccio respectively).

Despite its remote location, Corsica's winemakers have amassed an impressive and diverse portfolio of grape varieties – there are very few places on Earth where Pinot Noir, Tempranillo and Barbarossa grow alongside one another. More than 40 – mostly of Spanish, Italian and French origin – are sanctioned for use in quality wines. Despite this wonderful diversity, most of these are used only in IGP wines; just a small handful of varieties are used for Corsican AOC wines (see French Wine Labels).

Just as Corsica's Italian history is clear in the local wines, so is the French connection. The classic southern French grapes are all present here to some extent; Grenache is a primary ingredient in many Corsican red wines and Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsaut and Carignan all play a variety of supporting roles. Less obvious is that Vermentino/Rolle – Corsica's number one white-wine grape – is arguably as much French as it is Italian.

Click here to read more

Major Wine Producing Countries

German Wine – Still in the Nun’s Shadow?

Once upon a time, in a magical kingdom far, far away, top German Riesling was more expensive than Cru Classé Bordeaux.

Germany was regarded in the early 20th Century as the leading source of fine white wine by many consumers.

As of 2016, German wine remains a pale shadow of its once great former self in the export arena,
despite many years of proselytizing from critics. The situation is compounded by the fact that its wine laws and labeling regulations are hopelessly complicated and off-putting to new consumers. Moreover, even well-intentioned schemes such as the VDP's vineyard classification create more confusion than clarity.

Germany in its heyday did business in a much more streamlined global wine market, which is now, of course, a distant memory. There simply wasn't the level of choice consumers face today, a point which Steffen Schindler, marketing director of the German Wine Institute is keen to underline. "During the '80s and '90s we saw the increase in presence of new world wines in the marketplace and everything changed. Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay took the UK by storm and to some extent Germany was a victim of this," Schindler says.

Nonetheless, a new generation of growers is taking up the reins, mindful of not repeating the mistakes of their parents. So there is much to be positive about: wines are now riper (global warming strikes again) and cleaner, and are increasingly marketed in a direct modern way, offering extraordinarily good value when set against other grands vins. And, as any enophile knows, German Riesling is a very versatile food match. Moreover, German wine is often light in alcohol, undoubtedly the country's most potent USP in a consumer climate which increasingly regards 15 percent as undesirable.

Click here to read more