

It is one of the world's most important wine salons and the figures confirm it: 2,350 exhibitors from 42 countries, visitors from 150 nations, over 120 events. And now the Hong Kong edition in May 2016



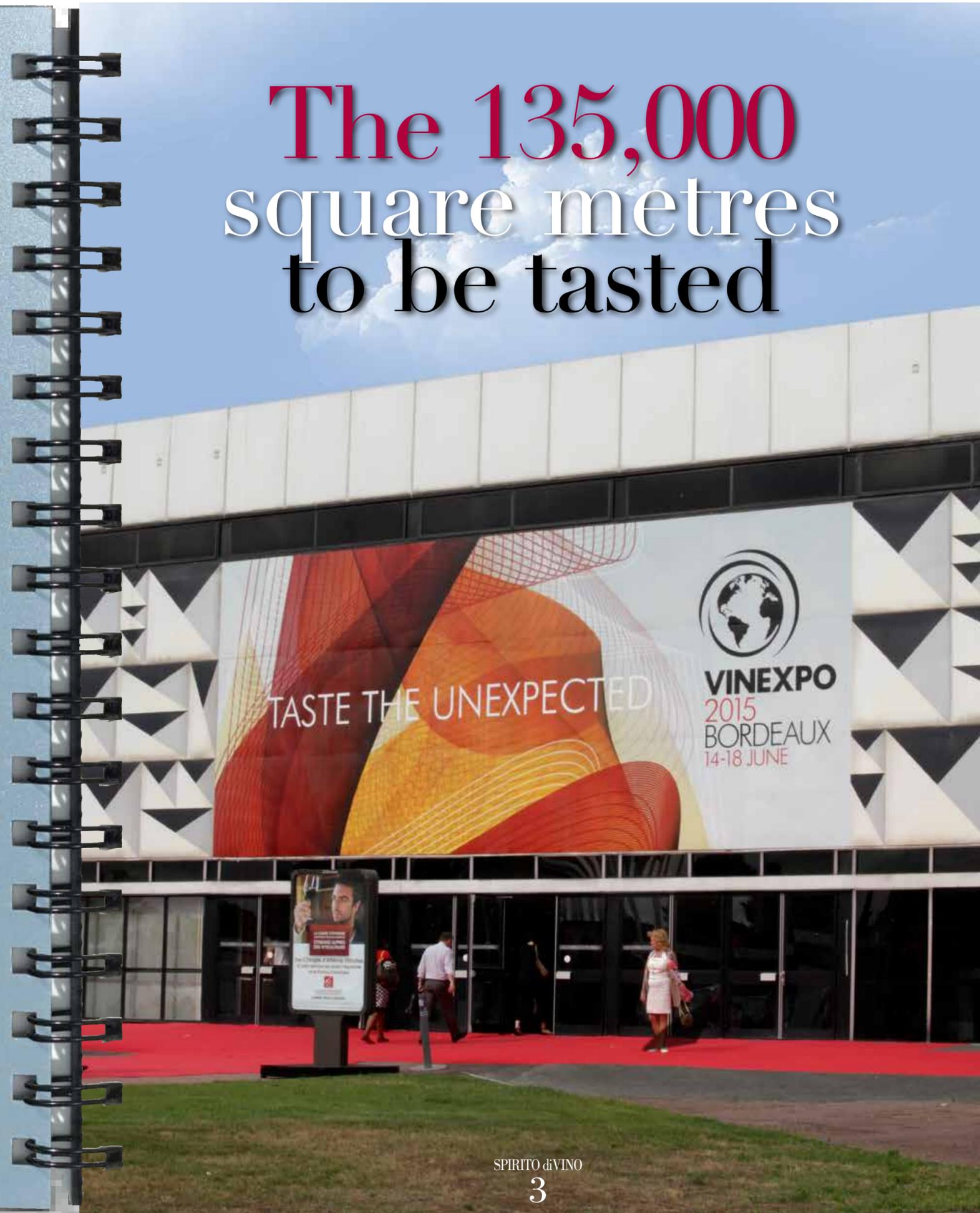
by *Alessandra Piubello* photos by *Alessio Comalli*

The curtain falls on Vinexpo, the Bordeaux wine fair, after five intense days. More than one hundred and twenty appointments including tasting sessions and conferences, besides the possibility to meet two thousand three hundred and fifty exhibitors from forty-two countries. The professionals who flocked to this important biennial event in Bordeaux came from more than one hundred and fifty countries in the world. The majority of foreign visitors (which account for thirty-six percent of the total) came from China, followed by the United States, Spain, Italy, England and Germany. This year, for the first time ever in the history of the French wine exhibition founded in 1981, a president of the Republic opened the event. "Vinexpo - stated Francois Hollande - is one of the world's most important wine fairs and I am here because this is the consecration of a sector which gives work to more than five hundred thousand people in France and is worth more than ten billion euro of trade surplus". Hollande was accompanied by the lord major of Bordeaux Alain Juppe who announced the imminent opening in 2016 of the cultural wine museum, the "Cite des Civilisations du Vin". At Vinexpo the atmosphere is relaxed, an apparent calm, there are no crowds and frenzy typical of other fairs. All those who matter are here, "the planet of wine - states Christophe Chateau, director

for external relations of the Conseil Interprofessionnel du Vin de Bordeaux (CIVB), in unison with its president Bernard Farges - meets here, this is the place to be. We have taken part in all eighteen editions and have seen steady growth". "I have gathered many opinions from the exhibitors - confides Herve Grandeau, president of the Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur appellation - and they are all very content: there are less people present but there is more business. The majority has assured me that it is the best Vinexpo it has ever taken part in". The fact that for the first year the tramway reaches the exhibition site, connecting the city centre in less than twenty minutes, has improved the traffic flow, avoiding long traffic jams both inbound and outbound. For Guillaume Deglise, CEO of Vinexpo, "ours is more than a wine fair, it is a unique event. France, the world's biggest wine producer in 2014, occupied 63% of the net exhibition space to promote the products of its seventeen production regions. Historic exhibitors, Italy (second in the number of exhibitors after France) and Spain, with France, account for 50% of world production. The near future will be the organisation of Vinexpo in Hong Kong, in May 2016, which will be followed, in November, by Vinexpo Tokyo, where we will make our return after two years. In 2017, the Bordeaux edition will last four days and not five".

Beside the entrance to Vinexpo. This year, for the first time, the event was opened by a President of the Republic: "It is one of the most important wine salons in the world", said Francois Hollande. In 2016, apart from the Hong Kong edition in May, there will also be one in Tokyo in November, and the 2017 edition in Bordeaux will last four days instead of five.

The 135,000 square metres to be tasted



Legenda by, by, day

IT WAS NO EASY TASK TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT TASTING OPPORTUNITIES OF THIS EDITION WHICH REACHED THE AGE OF MAJORITY WITH ITS EIGHTEEN EDITIONS. WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN MANY DIFFERENT PLACES AT THE SAME TIME. VINEXPO IS HUGE (135,500 SQUARE METERS) AND IT TAKES TIME TO GO FROM PAVILION TO THE OTHER. READY, GO?

Sunday 14 June, cloudy and unstable

The morning gets off to a start with the **Pomerol** tasting session for the 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009 vintages (the last two considerably superior, overall). Few appellations enjoy the high level of prestige of Pomerol, on the right bank of the Garonne. The area around Pomerol was first used for vine growing in the first century B.C., but its wines, now exclusively reds, did not achieve international success until the 1960s. The iron-rich clay soils of Pomerol welcome their king, the Merlot grape (which is cultivated with yields which are among the lowest of Bordeaux). At the tasting sessions, from among some of the fifty producers present, we appreciated Château Certan 2010, intense, full-body with a long life, a stunner; Château Rouget 2011, caressing and majestic; Château Beau Soleil 2011, stylish and well-balanced; Vieux Maillet 2010, full-flavoured and weighty; Château Beauregard 2011, well-rounded and mouth-filling; Château Gazin 2013, still too young but promising in its classic aristocratic style.

Change of scenery for the next appointment, with the Georgian wines. Comfortably seated in one of the rooms fitted out for the event, the Master of Wine Lisa Granik introduces the five-wine tasting session. **Georgia** is one of the places where the vine is domesticated, perhaps the oldest, the history dates to eight thousand years ago. This is witnessed by the presence in this relatively small area of 525 varieties, eighty-six are in production. The areas of greatest vine cultivation in Georgia are the regions of Kakheti (with 52% of the vineyards), Imereti, Kartli, Racha-Lechkumi, Guria, Samegrelo and Adjara. Wine in Georgia is produced using two traditional methods: Kakhetian and Imeretian (both are Georgian regions), which differ from the methods used in Europe not only for the use of clay pots buried underground (kvevri in the local language). In the Kakhetian method the vinasse is fermented with the must in clay pots. A second method, used in western Georgia, is the Imeretian which consists of putting together stems, seeds and grape skins. Maceration can last up to six months. Since the beginning of this century modern imported technology has become more and more widespread in wine production which has led to people speaking about a renaissance in Georgian winemaking. Among the wines presented we preferred the Otsakhanuri Sapere (one of the oldest red berry varieties from Georgia) 2011 produced by Khareba, which uses the Imeretian method, for its freshness, quaffability and distinctive personality. We return to a walk-around tasting session, in the presence of fifty-five producers, all members of the Grands Crus Classés

association of **Saint-Émilion**, 2011 and 2014 vintages. On tasting, the 2014 vintage seemed far better than that of 2011. Though younger, it has a classic profile. The characterizing elements were its fruit, soft suite of tannins and refreshing acidity. Great tasting session for Château La Serre, with a 2014 vintage of refined elegance and for a 2011 which displays a great depth of flavour; then Château Franc Mayne, great texture for the sublime 2014 and for the flavourful 2011; Château La Tour Figeac 2014, complex and powerful, the 2011 is also good, with a long and assertive finish; Château Balestard La Tonnelles 2014, crispy and fresh; the elegant and subtle Château Petit Faurie de Soutard 2014 with a long-life. We are at the end of the first day, but the gala dinner awaits organized by the Council of the Grands Crus Classés of 1855, dedicated to the International press, in Château Margaux. A memorable event, welcomed in grand style by the hostess Corinne Mentzelopoulos and by the president of the Board of Grands Crus Classés, Philippe Casteja (thanks also to the diligent Sylvain Boivert, press relations officer of C.G.C.C.).

Monday 15 June, rain and cold

We start our day with the **Burgundy** region and imposing tasting session arranged by the winery Albert Bichot, with twelve wines, two are Grand Cru and six are Premier Cru. It owns four independent wineries, each with its own cellar, in strategic points of Burgundy: Château Long-De-



Here above, the five wines featured in the tasting of Georgian wines led by Master of Wine Lisa Granik. Georgia is one of the first places – perhaps the first – where vines were domesticated: their cultivation here dates back 8,000 years. A radiation that is witnessed and confirmed by the presence in this relatively small area of around 525 varieties, of which 86 are still in production.



1. Producers at 'Fine wines from the U.S. and Abroad'. 2. Bernard Farges, president of the Conseil Interprofessionnel du Vin de Bordeaux. 3. Oenologist Denis Dubourdieu. 4. The pavilions. 5. Hervé Grandeau, president of Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur. 6. Critic Michel Bettane and Alessandra Piubello. 7. The international exhibitors' stand. 8. Alberto Santini di Ristorante Dal Pescatore (Italy) and Alain Beydon Schlumberger from the Domaine of the same name. 9. Alain Serveau, oenologist at Albert Bichot. 10. French president François Hollande opens Vinexpo. 11. Sommeliers at the Château Margaux evening. 12. Philippe Casteja, president of Grand Crus Classés en 1855, at the Château Margaux supper. 13. Olivier Zind Humbrecht from the Domaine of the same name. 14. Hubert de Billy of Pol Roger. 15. Manuel Lima Ferreira, tasting manager at Instituto dos Vinhos do Douro e do Porto. 16. Erwan Faiveley from the Domaine of the same name. 17. Thierry Deseauve at 'Les Super Bordeaux réveillent Bordeaux'. 18. Oenologist Michel Rolland. 19. Fabrice Rosset, president of Delas Frères. 20. Almaviva group photo: from left, Andrés Ballesteros, Export Director Asia; Francisco Zilleruelo, Sales Manager; Felipe Larrain Vial, General Manager; Alessandra Piubello, and Michel Frou.



paquet with 65 hectares of vineyards in Chablis; Domaine du Clos-Frantin with 13 hectares in Nuits-Saint-Georges (Côte de Nuits); Domaine du Pavillon, with 17 hectares in Pommard (Côte de Beaune); Domaine Adélie, with 4.5 hectares in Mercurey (Côte Chalonnaise). At the end of the tasting session, we took a quick walk along the red walkway that crosses the lake to reach the modern pavilion outside the fair centre and taste the wines of **Expression Bio**. One hundred and thirty exhibitors, all rigorously organic, from a little all over France (we are aware of the inclination of French wine growers to organic wine, they are second in the world for quantity of dedicated surface). A few names from all those we tasted? Château Pech Sirech 2012 Cahors, La Dame de Château Jean Faux 2012 Bordeaux Supérieur, Château Guadet 2012 Saint-Émilion Grand Cru Classé, Château Haut Mallet 2013 Bordeaux Supérieur. The time has come for the great tasting session: Fine Wines from the **United States and Abroad**. One hundred and twenty eight producers were selected by the heads of the famous American magazine with one common denominator: one of the two entirely owned companies (or a subsidiary) must be located in America. Some of the companies were set up outside the USA, where they later invested; others were set up in America but expanded to France, Italy, Argentina and South Africa. Consequently, at each desk, on one side you taste the wine of the American company and, on the other, that of the company outside the USA and they are compared to each other. The walk-around tasting session, which was actually very crowded, even though the participation was exclusively by invitation only, was useful to confirm that to our palate the wines from the United States in general are more structured and muscular, ostentatiously pervasive in the mouth. They are enjoyed at all costs but lack the crux of drinkability, which is often overpowered



by the use of wood. And yet, even on American soil, we found some interesting exceptions: the Riesling Columbia Valley Eroica 2013 by Château Ste. Michelle, sapid and balanced; the amazing Quartet Brut Rosé Anderson Valley of the Roederer Estate, with a caressing and stimulating mouth feel; Pinot Nero Anderson Valley 2013 of Domaine Anderson stylish and expressive; and to close, a truly intriguing discovery, the Butler Single Vineyard Cuvée Mendocino 2011 of Bonterra Organic Vineyards: intense, spicy, crispy and dynamic. They are many titled wines to mention, but they are already extremely well-known and, forcibly, we limit ourselves to these names.

In the evening, in the centre of Bordeaux, in Palais de la Bourse, one of the most famous winemakers from Bordeaux and others await:

Here above, from left, winemaker Stéphane Derenoncourt during a moment of the 'La Grappe en bouteilles' evening he organized at the Palais de la Bourse in the centre of Bordeaux. Top of page, Mersault poured in the glasses during the impressive tasting laid on by the Albert Bichot winery, founded in 1831, featuring 12 wines, including two Grands Crus and six Premiers Crus.



Stéphane Derenoncourt. So authentic to be an outsider, Stéphane presented 70seventy wineries he collaborates with. Big names and great bottles at La Grappe en bouteilles (this is the title of the event), some of the best Bordeaux wines. We descend the stairs immersed in the aristocratic beauty of the building and the notes of an effervescent band, with a fresh and mouth-watering name on our lips, which is almost unknown to the majority, Château Gree Laroque 2010.

Tuesday 16 June, a few rays of sun emerge

We start with the interview with **Christophe Chateau**, director for external relations of the Interprofessional Committee of Bordeaux Wines and with the president of CIVB Bernard Farges. They confirm the healthy status of the ancient Burdigala, with 720 million bottles, on 113,000 hectares, for a value of 3.74 billion euro. 58% of the volumes is sold in France, export, which accounts for 42%, is divided between Europe (45%), Asia (33%) and USA (11%). Following figures and discussions, a glass of Champagne would go down a treat, so we move on to meet Hubert de Billy, director of **Pol Roger** for a chat and a good (well, actually more than one) flûte of Champagne. But the time has come to take off for the next appointment: a master class on **Port, Douro and cheese**.

Port is produced exclusively with grapes from the Douro region in Portugal, one of the wine regions with the most breathtaking landscape, crossed by the Douro River, famous for the production of Port wine. The care taken with the vineyards over the centuries has allowed the survival of hundreds of autochthonous varieties, some of which go back thousands of years. Traditionally, Port is the result of an assembly of grapes

from different vineyards, vinified using different techniques, and from different years; but recently the "Quinta unica" method is also used or, rather, with grapes originating from one single wine estate. In recent decades the wineries have begun to vinify and market many non-fortified wines, Douro, whites, pinks or reds. Among the wines and cheeses available for tasting, we preferred the Quinta do Infantado Vintage 2003, powerful and concentrated, with sweet and harmonious tannins, paired with a stilton, a heavenly match. The pungent flavour of the blue cheese is softened by the liqueur-like wine, filing away at the edges of a mature seasoning. At the same time the sapidity of the semi-hard cheese harmonizes with the sweetness of the wine without any contrast, in a reciprocal exchange of alternating sensations.

The next appointment is with the tasting session in the room set up with five vintages (1997, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2013) by **Almaviva** (Cabernet Sauvignon in a higher percentage, depending on the vintages between 61 and 74%, Carmenère and Cabernet Franc), a Chilean company of Puente Alto created in 1997 and is a joint venture between Concha y Toro and Baron Philippe de Rothschild. Almaviva (name inspired by Count Almaviva, a hero in Mozart's Marriage of Figaro), owns its vineyard, eighty-five hectares, a little less than half is uncertified organic, in the highest area of the Maipo Valley, in Puente Alto (the best terrain for Cabernet Sauvignon in Chile). The vineyards are an average of twen-



Here above, Clos des Baies, a French red from the Saint-Émilion district made by Philippe Baillaguardet, cellar master at Château Ausone. Above, moments during the tasting of Albert Bichot, which possesses four independent wineries with their own cellars in strategic parts of Burgundy: Château Long-Depaquit, Domaine du Clos-Frantin, Domaine du Pavillon and Domaine Adélie.



ty-five years old with roots that go deep into the stony and clayey-sandy soils. The winery is present in eighty countries around the world, but Hong Kong is its first market. Where to next? We reach Olivier Humbrecht at his stand **Domaine Zind Humbrecht** to taste the wines and conduct an interview. Humbrecht, who is also Master of Wine, besides being a wine expert and bio-dynamic wine producer since 1997, has very clear ideas on how to work the vineyard, even going against the general trend (for example, he is against green pruning). Forty hectares in Alsace with five Grand Cru to produce unique wines, of rare expressive complexity and incredible purity.

Reluctantly, we have to bid Olivier farewell; time is short and we have to take part in the not to be missed tasting session of the **Gran Cru d'Alsace**,

with ten different producers, with vintages from 2013 to 2008 (excluding 2012). Organised by the wine expert Thierry Fritsch of Conseil Inter-professionnel de Vin d'Alsace (CIVA), the meeting offers the opportunity to dwell on this territory of 38,000 hectares and 4,400 producers with a very special climate. The region is protected to the west by the Vosges Mountains, which ensure a less cold climate, safe from icy winds and rain. Compared to the other zones at the same latitude, the climate of the Alsace is less cold, with a considerable temperature range that allows the grapes to ripen slowly. Since 2011 the Alsace Grand Cru AOC wines can be produced exclusively in one of the 51 towns legally recognized by the disciplinary, which represent eight percent of the total surface and four percent of the total wine produced in Alsace.

In the Grand Cru at least ten different geological formations exist (in Alsace there are about 30) which create a mosaic of different soils. The Grand Cru Kitterlé is prevalently volcanic, the Spiegel marly, the Kessler sandy-clay, the Saering marly-limestone. Fritsch says that the Grands Crus should be divided into fruit (granite and shale soils) wines, which are aromatic, elegant, of more immediate drinkability, but less age-worthy and stone wines (from marly, clay, limestone soils), where the terroir can prevaricate on the vine, which are more powerful and buttery, and need more time to express themselves fully. At the end of the incredible tasting session it is already time to move on to the tasting session in Bordeaux on the wines of Pays d'Oc, organized by Terre de Vins. The setting is plain and colourful, but we make a move and try desperately to do some wine scouting, a feat which proves to be anything but easy. At the end, a couple of names: Elixir 2013 from Domaine Condamine Bertrand, fruit-rich and stylish, a "glou glou" wine and Cuvée Lombarde 2013 from Domaine Aigues Belles, fresh and dynamic, fruit-rich, lingers on the palate.



Here above, not only reds; there is also Champagne such as Pol Roger to be tasted at Vinexpo. Top of page, moments from the tasting of five vintages of Almaviva, a Chilean winery founded in 1997 in a joint-venture between Concha y Toro and Baron Philippe de Rothschild. Adjoining page, a frequently noted scene at Vinexpo: checking the label of the wine you are sampling.





Wednesday 17 June, brilliant sunshine

We hope that this threatening number doesn't bring us bad luck, but we are not superstitious. We start by meeting Erwan Faiveley, president of the **Domaine Faiveley**. Erwan is the seventh generation; the maison was founded in 1825 in Nuits-Saint-Georges. Over time, the family purchased lands in the most important areas of Burgundy: Gevrey-Chambertin, Pomard, Volnay, Puligny-Montrachet, Mercurey and others. The vineyards are divided into small parcels, the average surface for appellation is just one hectare. Faiveley works on ten hectares dedicated to Grand Cru and twenty-five dedicated to Premier Cru. Time passes quickly and we need to reach the world's most famous couple of French critics, Bettane & Desseauve. The tasting session entitled "The **super Bordeaux** reawaken Bordeaux". Thierry Desseauve explains: "People are always talking and writing about the Grands Crus Classés, which give the image of Bordeaux in the world and they are icons (in truth they are just 3% in volume, 20% in value, see editor's note) but objectively they are difficult wines to purchase. We have decided to focus on the super Bordeaux, a category which Michel and I have coined, to make it clear that good Bordeaux wines do exist at an affordable price. They are the Bordeaux wines of the future, those of the new millennium, able to challenge the hierarchies".

We do not agree on the name that has been given to this new generation of wines, but we do agree on the choice of the majority of the six producers present at the table to introduce us to two vintages of their wines. Here are the names: Château Les Carmes Haut-Brion, Château Haut-Carles, Château Haut Condissas, Clos des Baies, Goulée by Cos d'Estoumel, Château La Fleur de Boüard. Then, we greet Denis Dubourdieu,



one of the most acclaimed and best known French wine experts, professor at the University of Bordeaux and producer in the family winery founded in 1794, Denis Dubordieu Domaines. We proceed with the interviews with Alain Beydon-Schlumberger, president of Domains Schlumberger, the winery with the largest number of hectares dedicated to Grands Crus in Alsace and with Fabrice Rosset, president of Delas, 30 hectares in the Rhone Valley. We are also present at the press conference of one of the most famous actresses from Hong Kong, **Carina Lau**, who has launched her own selection of wines, two Champagnes in association with Maison Moutard and ten reds in association with Maison Ginestet from Bordeaux which will be distributed throughout Asia with her name. That is all from Bordeaux, till next time! 🍷

Above, left, Château Doisy-Daëne, a Barsac wine from Denis Dubordieu Domaines. Right, Carina Lau, one of the most famous actors from Hong Kong, who launched her selection of wines: two Champagnes made with Maison Moutard and ten reds with Maison Ginestet of Bordeaux. Top of page, the Domains Schlumberger stand, the winery with the largest acreage of Grands Crus in Alsace.

The ten best wines of Vinexpo

96 POL ROGER CUVÉE WINSTON CHURCHILL 2004



The prestigious Cuvée of the Maison was created to pay homage to Sir Winston Churchill ("a bottle of Champagne is too much for one and too little for two"), following his preferences for Champagne: robustness, ripeness, structure. Produced only in the best vintages, the first in 1975 and the fifteenth in 2004, the Cuvée remains at least ten years in the cellar at a depth of more than thirty meters. Mostly Pinot Nero (eighty percent) which ensures body and fullness, with the addition of twenty percent Chardonnay, which confers elegance and finesse. It displays dynamic effervescence in the glass, with notes of citrus fruits, of butter, of toasted bread, of raisin, of candied fruit. Complexity resolved, semi-sparkling and inexhaustible dream. Opulence and sophistication to produce excellent depth on the palate which exceeds reality to become mythical (www.polroger.com).

94 DOMAINE FAIVELEY BIENVENU-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU 2013

This prestigious Grand Cru in Puligny-Montrachet is one of the smallest in Burgundy, an extension of just 3.68 hectares, half a hectare is the property of the Faiveley family. On limestone-clay soils, with vineyards which are more than fifty years old, the Faiveley family produce this Chardonnay in a very limited amount, made to last over time. Precise and stylish on the palate, rich in soft suggestive elements (honey, butter,



pan brioche), but also of ripe fruit pulp, hazelnut and a velvet-smooth mineral quality. Gentle, intense, buttery, it paces the agility of progression, leading to the harmonious fusion of structure and acidity. Grand style and balance for a memorable mouth feel which will know how to evolve with sophisticated elegance. (www.domaine-faiveley.com).

92 ZIND HUMBRECHT CLOS SAINT URBAIN

RANGEN DE THANN 2013 RIESLING GRAND CRU
From a vineyard of five hectares, the most southerly of all the Alsace, situated on a historic cru which has been mentioned since



the 13th century. Dramatically steep (on average 70%) and southerly exposed, it possesses a soil composed of volcanic rocks and sedimentary soil, in which the over forty-five year-old vines are deeply rooted. Rocky scents, of flint, peat, iodine, white pepper. Intense depth, all-embracing salinity. Impactful, dynamic volume. The acidity which is clearly exhibited moves the pulp, which grows with vitality. Tense and concentrated, it develops an impressive energy and vibration. Rare balance, in which austerity becomes a fundamental quality. If someone continues to doubt whether the adjective mineral can be significant or not in wine literature, taste this wine, it is a sublime example. Extraordinary in its youth, it will be able to amaze us even more over time (www.zindhumbrecht.fr).

92 DENIS DUBOURDIEU DOMAINES CH. DOISY DAËNE BARSAC 2013

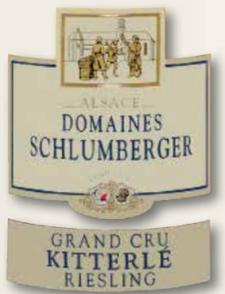
Situated on the left bank of the Garonne and separated to the north by the Ciron River from the more extended appellation Sauternes, Barsac enjoys an ideal microclimate for the development of noble rot. Château Doisy Daëne, close to Climens, which has been the property of the Dubourdieu family since

1924, sits on limestone, covered on the surface by a layer of clay sands known as "the red sands of Barsachese", able to give the white wines a natural lightness which sets them apart from the rest. The acclaimed skill of the celebrated wine expert Dubourdieu in this liqueur wine (90% Semillon, 9% Sauvignon, 1% Muscadelle) favours the intensity of the fruit concentrated by Botrytis cinerea, preserving its acidity. Power and freshness, sugar rich but wisely balanced with lightness and finesse. Crystalline and pure, it enjoys a good long finish without ever being cloying (www.denisdubourdieu.fr).



92 DOMAINE SCHLUMBERGER KITTLERÉ 2010 RIESLING GRAND CRU

The history of the Schlumberger family in the world of wine began in 1810 and is now in its 7th generation. Half of their vineyards are dedicated to Grand Cru (Saering, Kessler, Kitterlé, Spiegel) and they are the largest owners of the best wine-producing areas of the Alsace. The G. C. Kitterlé to the north of Guebwiller is extremely sloping and is worked with horses on narrow terraces. The site is unique, with three different exposures, on sandy soil with substratum of volcanic rocks and pink sandstone. The territory can be read in the glass: rocky scents, flint, graphite, infusion of flowers, peat. Deep character, close-knit texture: intense, nervous and taut in its vertical purity, it progresses lively into absolute harmony. Long finish, it closes on notes of toasted hazelnut, seductive palate (www.domaines-schlumberger.fr).



**90 ALBERT BICHOT DOMAINE
LONG-DEPAQUIT****MOUTONNE CHABLIS GRAND CRU 2012
MONOPOLE**

Moutonne is a parcel of 2.35 hectares, sheltered in a natural amphitheatre in the heart of the thousand year history of the vineyard in Chablis. The vineyard of Albert Bichot Domaine Long-Depaquit, with south-south east exposure, reaches elevated slopes in the central part. Between Vaudésir and Preuses, this Grand Cru of a single owner



(“monopole”) is rooted in clay-limestone soils with the presence of fossils (Kimmeridgian).

The wine has rich bouquet, white peach, apricot citrus fruits, white flowers, iodine. The mineral depth reaches marine notes. Dynamic and layered, this Moutonne Chablis Grand Cru 2012 offers momentum and unity of flavour: extracts and smoothness are counterbalanced by freshness and sapidity. Progression is fast, made of extremely stylish details, at times truly delicate, a sequence of infinite points that converge to leave a picture which is still futuristic. Age-worthy (www.bourgogne-bichot.com).

**90 DELAS FRÈRES
LES BESSARDS 2012**

One hundred and eighty years of history, with a significant repositioning of the qualitative image thanks to the work of Fabrice Rosset (president) and Jacques Grange (wine expert). Large investments to renew the cellar, acquisition of vineyards, a process which is still ongoing. Thirty hectares of ownership in the appellation Hermitage, Crozes Hermitage and St.-Joseph, in the northern area of the Rhone Valley. The Les Bessards vineyard, of eight hectares divided between Drôme, Tain-l'Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage and Larnage,

is on sandy, shale and pebbly ground. One hundred percent Syrah, fruit of a parcel selection of old vineyards, it is produced only in the best years. Austere and concentrated nose: hints of aromatic herbs, cinchona, damson, graphite and spices. On the palate the tannin texture is dense and rich: compact and generous, a wine of great texture but still young which needs a little time to come together completely (www.delas.com).

**90 CLOS DES BAIES
SAINT-ÉMILION 2010**

Philippe Baillaguardet is head cellar man for the Vauthier family, of Château Ausone, one of the legends of Saint-Émilion. After years spent making wine for others, he decided to start producing wine for himself. His vineyard of half a hectare on clay-limestone ground is thirty years old. He works it using organic principles, but without certification. A wine of details and shades, where the transparencies are more important than the concentration, grace more than power. The pulp-rich fruit, the finesse of the tannin texture, the vitality of the internal dynamics, the sapid vibrations, the natural juiciness of the mouth feel are all clearly exhibited. On the palate it transmits an authentic recollection of the fruit, a gustative purity of rare beauty. One of those wines to drink with joy and light-heartedness, to drink alone or with others (tel. +33.0688671668).

**90 LE BON PASTEUR
POMEROL 2012**

The property, which belonged to the Rolland family, was sold in 2013 to an investment group from Hong Kong, but the world famous wine expert Michel Rolland continues to manage the activities. It is here where he took his first steps in the wine world of which he has become an international star. The vineyard is about six and a half hectares; the



vineyards of an average age of forty years are rooted in clay and gravelly soil.

Though the vintage has not been one of the best, we have to give credit to Rolland who has succeeded in extracting the best from it. On the nose it offers full, pervasive fruitiness with notes of blueberries, blackcurrants, violets, prunes, rhubarb and a subtle balsamic quality. Seductive for its finesse and silkiness of its tannins, it exhibits itself as well-rounded and velvety, whilst maintaining a dense basic carnality. Persistent, with a classy finish, it will know how to evolve over time (www.rollandcollection.com).

**90 BARON PHILIPPE DE
ROTHSCHILD - CONCHA Y TORO
ALMAVIVA 2005**

Of the Chilean joint venture (with its soils, vineyards and climate) and France (with its traditions, its wine knowledge interpreted by Michel Frou) we have already spoken about in the introductory piece. This is the vintage we preferred from among those offered at the tasting session, more expressive and complex also because it was less marked by wood. Seventy-four percent, twenty-one percent Carmenère, five percent Cabernet Franc. Rich aroma, black fruit, chocolate, tobacco, liquorice, coffee. The first impact is powerful, mouth filling. Depth and concentration, it develops dense, mature and silky tannins. Soft and caressing sensations, with a strong personality. Surprising harmony, but with a well-balanced alcoholic volume of fourteen and a half, which succeeds in giving an exquisitely elegant mouth feel (www.almavivawinery.com).

