

[SG] O'Batignolles x Domaine du Tariquet | learning the century old French wine heritage

With more than a century's presence in Gascony, Jean-Pierre purchased the Chateau du Tariquet, a very old estate that dated back to the 17th century. As the estate passed down the generations, the property was developed further to grow corn and surrounding land area was acquired to expand the estate.

It was not till 1982 that the Cuvee Classic was born and in the following year, the white wine won its first accolade by securing first prize at the Concours des Vins de Table in Montpellier. A wine made purely from Ugni blanc, which is characterised by its good yields but inability to yield distinguished wine, it was beyond imagination for members of the wine trade. The success soon spilled across to London where Tariquet was voted 'White Wine of the Year' in 1987. Fast gaining popularity in its domestic markets, Tariquet was soon well-received worldwide.

The vineyard is located between the Landes forest which serves as a partial rain screen and temperature regulator, and the Pyrenees, that block the hot winds coming up from the South. The maritime influence to the West, together with the proximity of the Pyrenees created favourable climate conditions for the development of flavours. During the month of August for instance, the area suffers from dramatic temperature differences with fluctuations up to 20 degrees celsius. Protecting themselves from the variations, the grape skins thicken and it is the skins that contain the desirable flavour cursors. The combination of a climate that remains moderate even at the height of summer and alternating day and night temperatures determine the balance in grapes.

For Tariquet's wines, freshness is one of the hallmarks and its favourable geographical location not only allow grapes to ripen without water stress but more importantly to maintain freshness.

The complexity in Tariquet's wines is not only explained by the influence of **natural maritime influence** but also the diversity of its **soil composition** which includes fine sand coloured by iron oxide, clay-limestone soils and a mixture of silica, clay and sand.

Now that we have learnt briefly about the origins of Tariquet, time to get our taste buds to work!

Domaine du Tariquet Classic 2013



Photo credit: Domaine Du Tariquet

The Classic packed much complexity in flavours, as derived from its composition of Ugni Blanc, Colombard, Sauvignon and Gros Manseng. The different blends were introduced for layered dimensions. The dry, fruity wine has much intensity and carries floral and citrus scents. A crisp wine with great freshness, we later learnt that this leaves the strongest acidic after-taste.

For pairing, it is ideal as an aperitif, with cold meats, shellfish or seafood.



Domaine du Tariquet Sauvignon Blanc 2013



Photo credit: Domaine du Tariquet

Comprised fully of Sauvignon grapes, this white wine brings a familiar bouquet of fine, intense floral notes with mineral nuances. The after-taste was distinctly different from the Classic with its dominant sensation of ripe grapes, leading into an abundance of freshness.

For pairing, it is ideal at the start of a meal or as an aperitif to accompany oysters, fish tartare or even well-seasoned carpaccio.



Domaine du Tariquet Chardonnay Tete du Cuvee 2011



Photo credit: Domaine du Tariquet

Like the Sauvignon, this comprised fully of Chardonnay grapes that delivered a ripe, vanilla bouquet with notes of fresh pineapple and coconut milk. With its origin from old vines that boasts finesse, this is produced in very small quantities and only when conditions of the vintage allow. The fermentation of this particular wine is carried out largely in the barrels, hence bearing a tinge of oak scent. For those familiar with their red wines, this could be the closest relative and one that would most likely appeal.

For pairing, it would go beautifully with sweetbreads and wild mushrooms or even to be enjoyed on its own!



Domaine du Tariquet Premieres Grives 2013



Photo credit: Domaine du Tariquet

With Gros Manseng comprising fully in this last tried white wine, it was quite a refreshing twist altogether with its alluring sweetness. When the fruits thrushes arrive with the autumn chills, late harvests start. Very ripe, sugar-gorged grapes develops into an exotic character that is flavourful and full-bodied with dynamic freshness. Embracing a perfectly balanced sweetness, it leads into a refreshing grape finish.

For pairing, it is ideal as an aperitif or best enjoyed with foie gras or white meat. The versatility in the wine makes it a surprisingly good fit with blue-veined cheeses and perfectly served as a dessert wine.





There was no better way to enjoy the wine pairing session with a cheese and cold meat platter! O'Batignolles along Gemmill Lane (near Club Street) is one of the many restaurants in Singapore that carries a collection of beautiful white wines from the Tariquet estate.

Starting from as low as S\$26/bottle for the Classic, price ranges up to an affordable S\$50/bottle for the Tete de Cuvee. There is also a free delivery service for orders above S\$200 else a delivery fee of S\$30 would be imposed. At present, there is also an ongoing promotion to wine-taste the four different glasses of wine at a flat fee of S\$20 in total!

We were very fortunate to have the company of Florence who provided much insights about the various types of white wines and learnt much about the origins and characteristics of the estate and vineyard. What we realised was that with an abundance of good quality wines out there, the best way to figure out what suits your palate is to keep trying. While that sounds as rudimentary as it can be, it is indeed the best advice yet.

If you have any good tips or advice in choosing white or red wines, we invite you to write in to us!

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