



VIVE LA
DIFFERENCE

Ann Morrison, director of private client services at Grant Thornton in Leeds, broadens her horizons with two tipples from the Languedoc ...

Having just returned from a short break in Paris, I was delighted to find that the two wines BQ had selected for me to review were both from France. My husband and I wasted no time in getting on with the sampling, choosing the red to accompany our dinner on Friday night. I'm very fond of French reds and I was pleased to see that this was from the 2005 vintage - a particularly good year. The wine itself - Mas de L'Ecriture - L'Emotion Occitane - is a Cotes de Languedoc. It's not an area I'm that familiar with, but the bottle said it was 'appellation controllee' - another good sign.

According to the label it comprises mainly syrah and grenache grapes, with the addition of cinsault and carignan. The label itself is worth a mention - not the usual picture of a Chateau (maybe those are just for the British market) but decorated with bright abstract shapes - very French, we thought.

Not really knowing what to expect, we poured the wine and did the swirling around the glasses thing, sticking our noses in and observing that it didn't have a strong bouquet (though if we'd followed the instruction to open two hours before serving it might have been more noticeable). However, my husband thought he was getting late summer hedgerow smells, and we did a bit more swirling and sniffing, noted that it had 'good legs' and a pale rim, both good signs, then got onto the tasting.

We are very fortunate to live in Ilkley, which boasts one of the country's best butchers - Lishmans - and the wine went very well with our evening meal of fillet steak from Lishmans, new potatoes, sugar snaps and béarnaise sauce. Bearing out the hedgerow theory, the wine had definite blackberry flavours, quite long on the palate, and was very good both as an aperitif and with the meal. Not as fruity as a Bordeaux or Burgundy, but lively and with a certain je ne sais quoi. Anyway, by the end of

the bottle we were planning our next trip to Paris and agreed that this wine would be worth looking out for. We saved the second bottle, a white, for Sunday night, as we had bought cod loin steaks in Ramus (another plug for shopping in Ilkley) and my husband planned to serve these pan fried, with a chorizo, onion, tomato and butter bean cassoulet. There were even fewer clues on this bottle as to what to expect - a 2006 Domaine de Clovallon viognier - but again it was a very pleasant surprise. A pale straw colour, with initial fruitiness to the taste, it reminded me of peaches at first but then developed on the palate into a very refreshing, not too dry wine. After sampling a glass we agreed that it was packed with flavours and was quite zingy; a wine that would be nice on its own as a summer afternoon tippie and went equally well with our fish supper; the rich flavours of the food contrasting well with the clean smoothness of the wine. This one was also from the Languedoc region, and we agreed that we should be a bit more adventurous in our choices in future. Another trip to France is definitely on the cards.

Anne Morrison's wines were kindly supplied by Skipton-based Terroir Wines, specialist in Languedoc wines. Find out more at www.terroirlanguedoc.co.uk

Terroir Wines

**Mas de L'Ecriture
L'Emotion Occitane 2005,
£12.50**

This latest cuvée is made with the same meticulous care and attention as the other wines using grapes from the same vines. The idea is that it does not need as much time to age as the other cuvées and so is a wine which can be drunk immediately. The red fruit and blackberries on the nose complemented by a touch of the garrigue, lends to a silky generous fruit and spice on the palate.

**Domaine de
Clovallon
Les Aires 2006,
£13.50**

Similar in style to wines from Condrieu, this wine is one of the best Viognier from the Languedoc. The north facing slopes at high altitudes in the Haut Languedoc along with the hard work in the vineyard and minimum intervention make this a fine and delicate wine it is. Peach, pear and citrus notes on the nose give way to a creamy, delicate yet complex palate with a clean and long finish. A truly excellent wine.



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