

The 100 Club - of grape varieties

2 Aug 2005 by JR

Here's a clever idea. A New York couple, the De Longs (she designer, he architect), have come up with the Wine Century Club, www.winecentury.com, which you can join for nothing if you have tasted the 100 vine varieties cited on the De Longs' grape varietal table of 100 shown here and sold at http://www.delongwine.com/wgvt.php for \$35. It's a wall chart, along the lines of a periodic table but with the grapes cunningly laid out in order of acidity and weight, plus a little box about each.

You can pick holes in it if you're a nasty editor type person like me. It's probably unfortunate that the close-up chosen on the site is of Tinta Negra Mole on which Madeira is spelt three different ways and its claimed genealogy (Pinot Noir x Grenache??) is a bit off - but what the heck? This quibbling reflects far worse on me than it does on these enterprising people who are trying to earn a crust putting a bit of fun into wine. - and have some exciting other projects on the way.

I like their stated philosophy:

WE ARE:

- · People who enjoy wine
- Wine adventurers
- Consumers and promoters of uncommon wine grape varieties

WE ARE NOT:

- Wine Snobs
- Advocates of single varietal wines (Although we like single varietal wines, we don't favor them over wines blended from several different grape varieties there are simply too many great blends!)
- Anti-Chardonnay
- Anti-Merlot (Pass the Petrus, please!)

They say only three per cent of the thousands of entry forms for the Wine Century Club downloaded have been completed by people who have actually tasted all 100 of their chosen varieties. I took a look and wonder who can be confident they have ever tasted a Picpoul Noir. I'm not. Fewer than 100 hectares/250 acres remain in the south of France and I don't think even Ch de Beaucastel make this one, do they? Nor am I sure I have tasted a Vinho Verde made from Avesso although varietal versions do now exist.

Go and have fun with this list yourself!