Waitrose Muscadet de S□vre et Maine 2006

1 May 2007 by JR

Weighing in at just 12% alcohol, this is quintessential summer drinking, a most successful blend created by winemaker Serge de Bucy at Lacheteau in consultation with my fellow Master of Wine Angela Muir, who travels the world terrorising winery staff from Cyprus to South America. Lacheteau, based at Sablette southeast of Nantes, is owned by the giant Les Grands Chais de France, the largest producer in the Loire Valley and also owner of the successful JP Chenet brand.

Waitrose Muscadet de Sèvre et Maine 2006 retains every ounce of maritime zest and punch under its screwcap and relies for much of its liveliness and flavour on zealous lees-stirring from fermentation through until February. While too many white burgundies and Chardonnays, for example, may over-rely on lees-stirring or bâtonnage for their flavour, it's permitted in my book for the Muscadet grape Melon de Bourgogne, a country cousin of Chardonnay which tends to have less inherent flavour and less communicable terroir. It goes without saying (so why I am saying it, you may well ask) that this wine has seen not a plank, chip or wood shaving – it's just the fruit, the whole fruit and nothing but stainless steel.

Bravo to the Waitrose team for delivering such fantastic value - also evident in the same winemaking team's **Champteloup Sauvignon de Touraine 2006** at £4.99 from Waitrose.

And those of you elsewhere may like to follow David Schildknecht's recommendation to revisit Muscadet in yesterday's Can wine be both weak and wonderful? via your favourite wine merchant. This wine is proof that you don't have to spend a bomb to be satisfied.

Remember: 2006 is looking like a much better vintage for white wines in France than reds.

Later than same day: Here's a list of approved Muscadet producers with US importers from D Schildknecht's address book.

André-Michel Brégeon

Kermit Lynch
Chateau de la Ferrardière Kermit Lynch
Château du Cléray (Sauvion) Beaune Imports
Château-Carré (Chateau de Chasselois) Monsieur Touton Selections, De Maison Selections
Château-Gunter (Château de Coing de St-Fiacre) De Maison Selections
Chon, Gilbert WineWise
Domaine de la Haut Février (Claude Branger) Vintage 59, Vineyard Research
Bruno Cormerais No known importer
Domaine de la Ragotière Rosenthal
Domaine de la Chasseraie Simon N Cellars
Domaine de la Fruitière (Jean Douillard) Hesdrick
Domaines de la Hautes Noëlles (Serge Batard) Skurnik, North Berkeley
Domaine des Herbauges (J & L Chollet) Promes Wines (Annapolis, MD)
Domaine de la Pepière (Marc Ollivier) Louis Dressner
Château de la Preuille No known importer
Domaine de la Ragotière Vineyard Brands
Domaine de la Tourmaline Chaddleton
Domaine de l'Ecu (Yves Bossard) Kysela
Domaine des Dorices Europvin
Domaine Jean Dabin & Fils Importer unknown
Domaine Gadais No known importer
Domaine Luneau-Papin Louis - Dressner
Domaine Poiron Shiverick
Domaine Trois Frères (Coullard Frères) Kysela
Domaine des Trois Tolls (Hubert Rousseau) Rosenthal
Guillaud Frères - Barré Frères Importer unknown
Joseph Landron (Dom Louvetrie) various small importers
Laurent Gregoire Importer unknown
Louis Métaireau Martine's
Michel Delhommeau Skurnik
Michel Dorbeau No known importer
Jacques Guindon various small importers