

Latest snippets

21 Feb 2011 by Jancis Robinson

I spent two days in Bordeaux at the end of last week and will report in more detail later but meanwhile I see that the Gardinier family, owners of Château Phélan Ségur of St-Estèphe are, understandably, bringing their new ownership of the world-famous restaurant **Taillevent** in Paris into play in luring us tasters of 2010 primeurs to their property. I received an email last night from managing director Véronique Dausse inviting me to say when would suit me to taste at the château 'followed by a dinner inspired by Taillevent'. Sounds good to me. What a shame that I always feel so exhausted by a day tasting the bordeaux primeurs that I almost invariably hightail back to my dreary hotel room for R&R (recovery and room service). But I don't blame them one bit for trying to conjoin two such great investments. I still think Taillevent (whose team is shown here) is a truly great restaurant, not least for wine lovers, even if Michelin did deprive it of its third star.

Good news from **South Africa**. Wine writer Tim James of www.grape.co.za tells me that the South African authorities have decided against legalising the addition of water to South African wine. Hallelujah! The proposal was made by those suggesting it could be added 'to correct moisture losses in grapes' but the law-makers have, thank goodness, seen sense. Imagine what officially condoning the practice would have done to the reputation of South African wine abroad. The authorities have also outlawed with immediate effect the use of natamycin in 'certified wine' (Wine of Origin). The use of this anti-fungal agent continues to be allowed until the end of next year while bottling (not fermenting) the most basic South African uncertified wine.

The two biggest markets by far for bottled **Chilean wine** (let us set aside the substantial trade in cheap bulk wine shipped to wherever needs cheap bulk wine most) are the US and the UK. The ambitious UK head of Wines of Chile Michael Cox is thrilled to announce that the very latest figures show that although American imports of Chilean wine were so great in belt-tightening 2009 that the US overtook the UK in terms of the total value of wine imported from Chile, the UK is now back in top place for both value and volume for 2010. See the precise figures [here](#) and, as background, [Chile v Argentina - a transatlantic divide](#).