



## AUTUMN BOX

Blink, and it's gone. The last of the summer wine welcomes a new season of great wines to get excited about. As the final grapes are picked for this year's harvest, we move towards more warming, richer flavours as the cool nights draw in. On this journey, we travel by bicycle in true Greta Thunberg style, covering a total of over 4,000 km. As with all great things, we begin with Champagne - on a chilly, dewy morning, standing on the flint, limestone soils in **Franck Pascal's** vineyards. Those who have tasted Franck's champagnes before will pay testament to the zero-dosage energetic signature style. Franck shares the **NV Fluence** Brut Nature to set us off in good stead - a classic blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, but with a higher proportion of Pinot Meunier (51%), which brings defined fruit notes alongside great freshness and minerality.

Our next stop is south towards the medieval town of Burgundy nestled amongst the rolling hills and pointed rooftops to meet with long-standing collaborator **Fanny Sabre**. Her philosophy is to make a Bourgogne Blanc like a Meursault - so you can be sure that her rounded and elegant **2019 Bourgogne Blanc Chardonnay** will be a step up from your "generic" Bourgogne Blanc. We stop in Bouilland to pay our respects to **Becky Wasserman** before heading for a long stretch down south to the Pays d'Oc, just northwest of Montpellier. We arrive at the tree-lined **Domaine la Marèle** to meet with Frederic and Stephanie. The **2007 IGP Pays d'Oc La Marèle** Syrah blend is our standout wine from the tasting – encapsulating a soaring freshness and juicy fruit flavours.

Next, off to Spain we go! Via the Pyrénées mountains, the views here are spectacular as we head west towards the Atlantic Ocean to the birthplace of Albariño. We meet with **Rodrigo Méndez** - a custodian of the ancient varieties from Rías Baixas. Rodrigo gives us a bottle of the **2020 Cies** - a village Albariño from three very old vineyards in Meaño. It is said that Albariño was first planted here in the 12th Century!

Now to the final leg of our tour, which takes us east, to meet with two of Tuscany's finest winemakers. First to see Silvio Messina of **Montesecondo** in the Chianti Classico region. Silvio explains the importance of the territorial essence of his wines through biodynamic farming and delicate, natural winemaking. We leave with as many bottles of the **2018 IGT Tin Amphora** that we can fit in our panniers! This wine is a beautifully textured skin-contact Trebbiano that we plan to share with mutual friends at our final stop. "Tin" means "clay" in Arabic, which is a nod to Silvio's upbringing in North Africa.

The last leg of our trip takes us up the narrow winding roads of the Colline Lucchesi to the breath-taking **Tenuta Di Valgiano** – overlooking the historic town of Lucca. Old friends Laura, Saverio and Drago the wolfdog, greet us with the warmest welcome. Together, we catch up over a long lunch and delicious bottles of the **2018 Colline Lucchesi Palistorti** - a Sangiovese predominant blend of Merlot, Syrah, Cilieggiolo, Canaiolo and Colorino. There are no better words to describe this wine, than to say that this is an elegant fine wine! What an incredible way to finish our long journey! And no, we're not cycling home, we've got too much wine to carry!

1	<b>Producer</b>	Franck Pascal	<b>Region</b>	Champagne
	<b>Wine</b>	NV “Fluence” Brut Nature	<b>Grape</b>	Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier
A classic blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, but with a higher proportion of Pinot Meunier (50%) which brings with it defined fruit notes, true to Franck’s signature style. This zero-dosage champagne holds great freshness and minerality.				<b>Pairing:</b> Sumptuous seafood platter

2	<b>Producer</b>	Fanny Sabre	<b>Region</b>	Burgundy
	<b>Wine</b>	2019 Bourgogne Blanc	<b>Grape</b>	Chardonnay
This show stopping Bourgogne Blanc has a concentrated fruit profile with refreshing acidity and a rounded and persistent finish. Sure to be loved by all who tries it! A versatile food pairing wine.				<b>Pairing:</b> Herby roast chicken

3	<b>Producer</b>	Bodegas y Viñedos Rodrigo Méndez	<b>Region</b>	Rías Baixas
	<b>Wine</b>	2020 Rías Baixas “Cies”	<b>Grape</b>	Albariño
Cies perfectly combines maturity and freshness. It is intense, mineral, vibrant and complex with a lingering sensation on the palate.				<b>Pairing:</b> Spaghetti puttanesca with boquerones

4	<b>Producer</b>	Tenuta Di Valgiano	<b>Region</b>	Tuscany
	<b>Wine</b>	2018 Colline Lucchesi “Palistorti”	<b>Grape</b>	Merlot, Sangiovese, Syrah
A very elegant and sophisticated expression of Sangiovese, Syrah and Merlot planted by Elisa Baciocchi Bonaparte when she was ruling the town of Lucca in 1804. Blended with the indigenous varieties of Cilieggiolo, Canaiolo, Colorino, Barbera, Tazzelenghe which make a beautifully balanced bright red fruit profile and a savoury, rustic finish.				<b>Pairing:</b> Roasted lamb shoulder and vegetable broth

5	<b>Producer</b>	Domaine la Marèle	<b>Region</b>	Languedoc
	<b>Wine</b>	2007 IGP Pays d’Oc “La Marèle”	<b>Grape</b>	Syrah, Mourvèdre, Carignan
A standout wine with incredible depth and a delicious evolution of spicy notes. Perfect with any and all game dishes.				<b>Pairing:</b> Go game – venison in particular

6	<b>Producer</b>	Montesecondo	<b>Region</b>	Tuscany
	<b>Wine</b>	2018 IGT “Tin”	<b>Grape</b>	Trebbiano
An extremely elegant and fresh wine which is full of energy and life. It has a fantastic ageing potential, but with only a few thousand bottles it might not even make it to the cellar as it's snapped up so fast!				<b>Pairing:</b> Top notch sushi