

NYWS Old Vines

– March 2025. David Saville

All wines are from The Wine Society and prices as of December 2024

Muscadet Sèvre-et-Maine sur Lie, Comte Leloup du Château de Chasseloir, Cuvée des Ceps Centenaires, Chéreau-Carré 2018. £11.50. 12.5%

An aged Muscadet (now 7 years old) from a 100 year old, 12 acre, vineyard. It is only made in the best years, is aged on the lees (the sediment produced by the dead yeast cells which gives greater depth and flavour to the wine) for 9-10 months then aged in bottle at the vineyard for 2-3 years. Harvesting is done by hand and vines that eventually die are not replaced with new vines so that the cuvée is not diluted.

Viños López La Bodegaza Blanco, Valdejalón 2021. 13.5%, £16.00

An outstanding white from an off-the-radar Spanish area just West of Zaragoza. Mario López is transforming the area's image with his high-quality Bodegaza wines. His garnacha blanca from 50-year-old vines, fermented in barrel, result in a white of incredible complexity and depth with notes of spice and Mediterranean herbs.

Triangle Wines Sanha, Bairrada 2021. 12%, £18.95

An old-vine Portuguese blend of grapes local to the Bairrada region; these are: Maria Gomes, Bical and Cercial. Made by Dirk Niepoort, this shows both precision and minerality, with a persistent fresh finish. The vines vary between 50 and 80 years old.

Château Ksara Old Vine Carignan, Lebanon 2021. 13%, £16.00

From a single vineyard with 60+ year old vines, this wine is such good value for money. Showing great intensity and layers of flavour, the wine sees no oak and allows the red berry perfume of the Carignan to come through perfectly in the glass. Hints of garrigue, black olive and liquorice persist on the finish.

(The term “garrigue” refers to the low-lying vegetation on the hills that often surround vineyards on the Mediterranean coast. This wild brush is made up of herbs such as rosemary, thyme, sage, mint and lavender, as well as juniper. Therefore; when describing a wine as having an influence of “garrigue”, it simply refers to herbal, minty, earthy and floral aromas)

Mendel Mendoza Luján de Cuyo Finca Mendel Malbec 2021. 14.5%, £25.00

Sophisticated Argentine malbec from a vineyard planted in 1928 and from a cool vintage. Matured for about a year in 225-litre French oak barrels, it has black and red-fruit aromas, and a firm, balanced palate with old-vine density of flavour. A balanced European-style wine designed to be enjoyed with food. Decant half an hour before serving. Grape 100% Malbec (aka Cot). Slight Oak.

Sobon Estate Rocky Top Amador Zinfandel 2021. 15%, £18.59

Amador County produces some of California's most powerful zinfandels from old bush vines. This is full-bodied, with sweet cherry, sarsaparilla, and vanilla flavours, soft well-integrated tannins and a long blackberry-scented finish. Grape 100% Zinfandel, Oak.