



TOUR DE FRANCE!

Stop Press...
PORTUGUESE TASTING DAY!
Saturday 14 May 11am – 4pm
 In conjunction with Huntleys and Out of the Deep, Barrica will be holding a Portuguese Tasting Day! Come along and try a selection of wines with regional dishes, suckling pig, piri piri, bacalhao and much more. Entry is free and we'll have some special offers available on the day – hope to see you there!

As always things tend to snowball and what began as an overnight visit to Burgundy – just Ali, Kate and me, grew into a select group of customers on a grand tour of France! Wine expert *Jane Cuthbertson* tells us more



A 3am start sort of tests the mettle, but everyone rallied in good spirits and left John Lennon airport to arrive in Lyon in time for breakfast. Our first stop was less than one hour later in Macon at Domaine Lucien Thomas. People like to think I live a glamorous lifestyle, sitting in vineyards, tasting the fruits of the winemakers' labours in the sunshine. In reality, we stood on the hillside in cold, fine drizzle, the type which really gets you wet. But what became very apparent, especially during the tasting afterwards, was the profound effect that the altitude and aspect of a vineyard can have on the finished wine and how those features influence the choice of varieties planted.

The evening saw us at Chateau de la Saule in Montagny to join in the celebration of their 200th vintage. This was an informal dinner in an 18th century chateau belonging to Alain Roy – an amazing experience with some great wines from the chateau and also those of Domaine du Meix-Foulot in Mercurey, presented by Agnes, daughter of sixth generation owner, Paul de Launay.

Sunday dawned as a bright, if little crisp day which we spent tasting some truly great Burgundies in a medieval Abbaye. Domaines Clerget and Georges Lignier wines were the stars for me, but the overall quality of the 2009 vintage is certainly worthy of investigation.

The journey continued on Monday through Beaujolais, stopping to visit Domaine des

Roches du Py and Dufour Pere et Fils, and down into the Rhone to St Gervais where we received a very warm welcome from Francois and Claire at Domaine Clavel and their friends, well into the night.

Turn right and cross to the Languedoc, and eventually you arrive at Domaine La Croix Belle in the heart of Puissalicon, a tiny feudal village. Most of you who have visited Barrica will already know at least some of these fantastic wines, but to actually visit the estate and taste them in situ, is an experience not to be missed.

Our last visit was to a domaine which is new to Barrica, Domaine de la Bouysse in Corbieres. A visit to the cellar and tasting was followed by a barbecue lunch in

the middle of the vineyards. A fabulous enterprise whose wines will shortly be on the shelves – watch this space!

Lunch in Limoux finished off a week of many hours in the car, hundreds of miles covered and wines sampled, some great and some not so great, but above all – fabulous hospitality, lots of laughter and knowledge gained. Now THAT'S what it's all about! ■

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