

PRESSE RELEASE

**AUTREMENT VIN launches the first “Tasting Exhibition”:
Review of a new concept - successfully established thanks to its
originality**

www.autrementvin.com

Toulouse, 1 December 2009 –

82 wines from 70 wine makers were on show last November 19th in Paris; a first-time event that took place at the CENTQUATRE, the new location for cultural activities in northern Paris. From 2pm through to midnight, around 400 people, professionals and simple wine amateurs, allowed themselves to be guided and surprised by this new “Tasting-Exhibition” concept.

With Autrement Vin, wine is not simply a consumer product; it is also the object of a culture, of epicurean tasting as well as scientific and technical knowledge. These oenological and viticultural accounts were rich and varied, united around a common theme suited to this concept: “Atypical wines”, often unprecedented and audacious. Wine makers from a wide range of backgrounds were brought together around this theme: from the smallest vineyard with less than one hectare (Mas Cascal) to the large trader (George Duboeuf) from the most minimalist technical approach (Natural or Organic wines) to cutting edge innovative technology (partial dealcoholisation)... What they all have in common is not opposition to traditional wines but the quest for authentic and unique qualitative expression. Is the quality of French wine not achieved through its diversity?

The concept

The concept is new: professionals accustomed to traditional fairs were surprised and occasionally even unsettled. No stands, but a circuit open around 4 central units displaying the wines with wall texts, as found in museums, explaining their atypical character. Tasting was open to all with the taster being invited to use the spittoon, explaining and demystifying this professional gesture. The set design was educational and aesthetic, playing on the geometrical forms of wooden crates used for shipping. The evening's cuisine was intended to concur with the 'authentic produce' approach: the Basque country was selected, with Paul Duberland's outstanding cooked meats, cheeses and cakes, and remarkable seafood from the Conserverie in St Jean de Luz.

The categories

Unclassifiable

Appellation wines, « Vins de pays » or table wines: all those that cannot be classified.

“Unclassifiables” can be wines derived from manufacturing techniques that do not correspond to traditional techniques used in their appellation (a cremant matured on lees for 36 months instead of the required 9 months, a Bordeaux estate that centres its entire viticultural strategy on rosé, a dry Layon, a Beaujolais matured on lees...). While not looking to break away, essentially the idea is to take the search for a qualitative expression of ‘terroir’ or grape variety to a higher level. The second group of unclassifiable wines presented was made up of unexpected grape varieties. Whether grape varieties that are not permitted in their appellation

decree and that are consequently marketed as table wines (Californian Zinfandel cultivated in Languedoc, Chardonnay cultivated in Cognac), or new blends/grape varieties cultivated in the appellations (a pure Malbec in Bordeaux, a pure Grenache in Minervois,...), the search for a qualitative vinification is their common ground. At the end of this circuit, a few other European curiosities could be found, originating from the work of French oenologists.

Innovative

Wines derived from new vitivinicultural techniques.

This category demonstrates that new products for new consumption patterns are emerging in our viticultural landscape: a black Muscat vinified in sweet rosé, a partially dealcoholised Chardonnay, a sparkling Gamay, an exception rosé for drinking in winter,... this category also proves that oenology extends beyond the frontiers of wine derived from grapes and ventures into new horizons: mead (from fermented honey), fruit wines... However, innovation in the wine industry is not incompatible with traditional know-how: it can just simply complement it, endeavouring to improve the expression of all the grape's components. This can be achieved by using maceration and extraction techniques, harvest selection techniques, reducing sulphite addition in wines...

Forgotten

Ancient grape varieties, ancient vinification methods or small, little-known appellations.

The Sauvignon gris, the Bourboulenc, the Lledoner Pelut, the Grenache gris, the Clinton, the Jacquet... rediscovered witnesses of our viticultural history. A journey taking in the rediscovery of ancient wine manufacturing techniques, local ancestral methods (e.g. vinification of Mauzac as a sparkling wine in the Gaillacois), or Roman vinification principles. Visitors were able to discover the taste of wines drunk by the Romans thanks to archaeological wines.

Sustainable

Wines derived from research for reduced environmental impact

As an agricultural production, viticulture inevitably has an impact on the environment. From chemical vine treatment to CO2 emissions, the entire industry is implicated. All the trends were present, from Organic wines to integrated vinification charters, to Natural wines and Biodynamics... While certain viticultural regions have already taken measures to control their carbon footprint, an initial attempt to address the issue of the carbon footprint caused by wine packaging and transportation has been made: Saint-Gobain Packaging presented the "Le Temps de Vivre" (the time to live) vintage with its Ecova bottle, lighter and with a carbon footprint 15% lower than a traditional bottle.

The highlights of November 19th

The debate

Laurent Bazin, economic and political journalist and presenter of the morning i-Télé programme, accepted to discuss wine with Michel Bettane and Marcel Richaud, Organic wine-maker at Cairanne in the Côtes du Rhône appellation - debating the sometimes contradictory viticultural views. Read the highlights of this debate at www.autrementvin.com.

Commentated tasting

The “Cercle des Dégustateurs”* is made up of professional tasters, journalists, oenologists, sommeliers and French and European buyers. During the Tasting Exhibition, each taster presented 2 or 3 wines. On the 11th November, the Cercle des Dégustateurs got together behind closed doors to attentively taste all the wines. Far from defining a scoring system or imposing a judgement, the Cercle des Dégustateurs was guided by two principles: appreciating the wine-makers bias in the way they manufacture their wine (tasting was not blind) and the emotion experienced with each wine, intimately linked to each individual's subjectivity. Tasting commentaries for all the wines and CENTQUATRE's tasting commentaries will soon be available at www.autrementvin.com.

The future

Autrement Vin would like to be seen as the unavoidable and unique rendezvous for any amateur or professional who seeks to discover new wines with a highly selective and precise approach. While its origins took place in Paris and CENTQUATRE, Autrement Vin could also travel to other European capitals, as early as 2010.

Partners

L'école du vin de Paris

Chef & Sommelier and the Arom'Up Fruity glass

The magazine Terre de vins

Saint-Gobain Emballage and Ecova - the ecological bottle

Notes:

* Cercle des Dégustateurs : **Michel Bettane** (Guide Bettane et Desseauve), **Bernard Burtschy** (Le Figaro), **Pierre Guigui** (founder of the national contest for organic wines and author of the GaultMillau wine guides), **Myriam Huet** (journalist and advice oenologist for Maison Richard), **Patrick Léon** (œnologist wine-maker), **Frédéric Brochet** (new director for Fauchon's Wines and Spirits and atypical wine-maker in the Poitu), **Bernd Kreis** (sommelier and cellar master, elected “Best wine boutique in Germany” in 2009) , **Sébastien Garnier** (national wine and spirits buyer for Galeries Lafayette), **Olivier Bourneuf** (director of the company Brittle, specialised in “champagnes de vigneron” sales) and **Laurent Grandadam** (Gastronomic photographer and wine amateur).

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