



Having returned from snowy Galicia in early January where we had been tasting wines throughout the region (you can look forward to trying these in March/April), we arrived back in an equally wintery Britain thinking of food. Galicia is one of the best places to eat a whole variety of seafood and in particular octopus. If you have had the good fortune to try this eight legged delicacy you will know that its firm meat and slightly gelatinous skin is a delight.

Unfortunately Octopus is far less of a staple here than it is 1000 miles further south so instead we have been making food that has provided much comfort through cold January. Whether it has been chicken and tarragon terrine, roast loin of pork with turnips, garlic and anchovies or a fine (and rather grand) fore-rib of beef, the wines in the first case below are what we've chosen to consume over the past month.

The second case is a reflection of those wines that proved particularly popular amongst our customers over Christmas...you're all clearly blessed with exceptional taste! Happy New Year.

O & B's What We're Drinking Case £138.68

The Touraine sauvignon is our aperitif of choice as well as being the perfect partner to oily fish and goats' cheese.

I love drinking good chardonnay and Colbois' Chablis with roast chicken makes the ideal Saturday lunch.

The Savennieres was the wine chosen to have with the Terrine mentioned above and as always proved irresistible with its mix of elegance, persistence and rich fruit. Chenin Blanc like this is a truly fine experience.

Aglianico, as regular customers will know, is a particular favourite here and Di Meo's 'Isso' is a soft and fruity example which is perfect with pork and with a wide variety of pasta dishes.

The cabernet franc dominated 'La Cerisaie' from the Loire was wonderful with roast beef and better than any sub £20 bottle of Bordeaux that we've tried over the last 12 months.

Finally Berta Maillol's grenache and syrah dominated Barral is showing real finesse and for deep flavoured stews and game really can't be beaten.

2x Touraine Sauvignon Blanc 2008

Domaine Michaud, A.O.C Touraine, France

2x Chablis 2006

Michel Colbois, A.O.C Chablis, France

2x Savennières 'Clos Le Grand Beaupréau' 2005

Domaine de la Bergerie, A.O.C Savennieres, France

2x Aglianico 'Isso' 2005

Di Meo, Campania, Italy

2x Anjou Rouge 'La Cerisaie'

Domaine de la Bergerie, A.O.C Anjou, France

2x Collioure 'Barral' 2007

Berta-Mailliol, A.O.C Collioure, France

O & B's Particularly Popular Case £91.10

2x Friulano 2008

Banear, D.O.C Friuli Grave, Italy

2x Picpoul de Pinet 2008

Mas Saint Laurent, Languedoc

2x Chardonnay 2008

Domaine la Colombette, Languedoc

2x Mas des Lauriers Rouge 2008

Domaine Lalaurie, Languedoc, France

2x Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2008

Casal Thaulero, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo

2x Rioja Crianza 2006

Bodegas Beronia, Rioja Alta, Spain

The interest shown in the friulano really surprised us at first but with its inherent quality and inexpensive price-tag maybe we shouldn't have been.

Mas Saint Laurent's picpoul has become an institution here and is a real crowd pleaser with its ripe fruit and alluring scent. It is also very versatile being great with roast chicken as well as with shellfish.

Unfortunately, many now view chardonnay with suspicion and claim not to like the variety, this is perhaps due to the plethora of clumsily oaked versions of the 1980's & 90's. If you want to reintroduce your palette to quality chardonnay, we suggest that you start here.

Both the merlot and syrah dominated Mas Rouge and the Montepulciano are juicy delights that punch well above their weight and are suitable for almost any occasion.

Lastly Beronia's silky, sweetly oaked and strawberry scented Rioja is a great example from this famous region.