



DOWN
THE RABBIT HOLE
WITH ALICE

FEIRING'S GUIDE TO NATURAL WINE



The Wine Education Council is a nonprofit educational organization that supports the development and effectiveness of wine professionals by providing high-quality training programs and enrichment opportunities.

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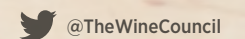
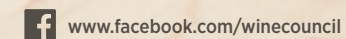
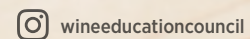
Feiring's Guide to Natural Wine



August 20, 2018
Bluxome Street Winery
San Francisco



August 21, 2018
Spago Beverly Hills
Los Angeles



*“The more there’s fake,
the more the world needs real,”*

at least according to winemaker Baldo Cappelano.

Alice Feiring has been reflecting on this aphorism ever since. In today’s seminar, Alice will support this and provide an overview in the context of the natural wine craze—the “overnight” sensation that took 40 years to develop.

Alice will introduce the principal influences in and main influences on the natural wine movement, and will discuss various issues and controversies, including why traditional protocols for rating wines don’t apply to natural wines. Seminar participants will experience the full spectrum of wines that fall under the rubric “natural”: from weird, funky, and raw, to elegant, well-mannered, and evolved.

Flight One

REVITALIZING TRADITION

1. Emilia Romagna, Italy
2016 Orsi Vigneto San Vito, Sui Lieviti

2. Muscadet, France
2015 Domaine de Belle Vue, Gaïa

Flight Two

THE QUESTION OF SKIN CONTACT

3. Mount Hunger, Vermont
2016 La Garagista, Harlots & Ruffians

4. Moravia, Czech Republic
2016 Milan Nestarec, Forks & Knives White

Flight Three

CARBO OR GLOUGLOU

5. Beaujolais, France
2016 Domaine Bernard Vallette,
Quatre Saisons

6. Ribera del Duero, Spain
2016 Alfredo Maestro, el Rey del Glam

Flight Four

WHOLE CLUSTER AND TERROIR

7. Tecate, Mexico
2016 Bichi, No Sapiens

8. Sierra Foothills, California
2016 La Clarine Farms, Piedi Grandi

9. Burgundy, France
2015 Maison en Belles Lies,
(Pierre Fenals) Maranges

RECEPTION WINE

BEAUJOLAIS FRANCE

Domaine Bernard Vallette Née Bulleuse



Domaine Bernard Vallette is comprised of 6.5 ha of vineyards situated in the village of Lachassagne in the southern Beaujolais wine region between Lyon and Macon. The vineyards were acquired by Bernard Vallette’s grandparents 150 years ago from the Marquis de La Guiche, at the time owner of the Château de Lachassagne. Vallette is an adherent of the natural wine movement and his wines have, since 2000, been Demeter-certified as biodynamic.

The Wine: Bernard Vallette has christened the Domaine’s remarkable sparkling rosé wine *Née Bulleuse*, which translates as “born bubbling.”

Following manual harvest and careful triage, the fruit is cold macerated (imparting the seductive pink hue), gently pressed and then fermented in stainless steel tanks. M. Vallette then follows the traditional regimen (methode traditionnelle) malolactic fermentation, second alcoholic fermentation. The sparkling wine then ages on its lees sur latte for a full three years. After disgorging, the finished wine rests in bottle for an additional 3-6 months before release.

1 EMILIA ROMAGNA, ITALY 2016 Orsi Vigneto San Vito, Sui Lieviti



Federico Orsi was born in Bologna and grew up in Brazil. He returned to Italy in his late teens to earn his MBA. Though poised for the corporate life, he bought a local Bolognese winery on limestone, a half-hour from Bologna in 2005. With no knowledge of viticulture or winemaking he eventually came across the philosophy of biodynamic farming. By 2009 he had started to work naturally.

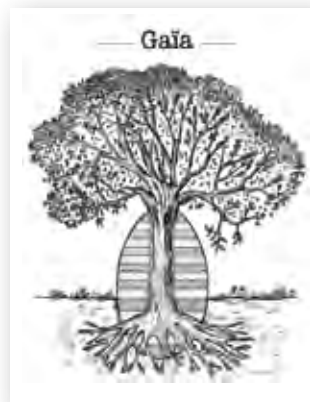
His bio-diverse working biodynamic farm consists of 9.5 hectares of land with an additional rental of 5.5 hectares. His largest production is the white grape Pignoletto, with the rest in Alionza, Albana, Malvasia, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Negretto, Cabernet Sauvignon,

and Barbera. He works with stainless, cement, oak and clay.

The Wine: The Pignoletto is slowly pressed over twelve hours. After the wine stops fermenting, some frozen must (reserved from the previous vintage) is introduced, Then the wine is bottled and spontaneously referments in the warm weather of spring. The resulting sparkling wine is sold undisgorged.

TASTING NOTES

2 MUSCADET, FRANCE 2015 Domaine de Belle Vue, Gaïa



Jérôme Bretaudeau is one of a small handful of serious, young winemakers devoted to the remaking the reputation of Muscadet in the Pays Nantais, the most western of the Loire Valley regions. Domaine de Belle Vue has 12 hectares of organically-certified vineyards in active transition to full biodynamic viticulture. In addition to Melon, Bretaudeau also makes eccentric cuvées of Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc.

The Wine: Cuvée Gaïa is made from old vines (1940's) Melon grown on a small, 1.5 ha. parcel of gabbro, an igneous soil. The grapes are fermented in tank over indigenous yeasts at low temperatures. Gaïa is aged on its lees for 14 months in egg-shaped cement tank, and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

3 MOUNT HUNGER, VERMONT 2016 La Garagista, Harlots & Ruffians



Deirdre Heekin and Caleb Barber began their La Garagista Farm + Winery in 2010 as a way to provide as much produce and fermented beverage for their Woodstock restaurant. By the time they shuttered the restaurant and devoted themselves to the winery and farming six years later, they had already proved to Vermont (and the world) that hybrid grapes make sense and yes, you can work biodynamically in that harsh climate. They produce ciders and wines from two

diverse pieces of land. Their high-elevation, home vineyards (1600ft) are on schist and granite parcels. They rent another two, on limestone, that hug Lake Champlain at about 190 feet.

The Wine: With 50% La Crescent (descendent from Muscat d'Ambourg) + 50% Frontenac Gris (descendent from Aramon and Muscat d'Alexandria), the co-planted grapes from the Vergennes vineyard near Lake Champlain were hauled back up to the mountain (1.40 hour drive). The grapes were destemmed. Frontenac was pressed immediately while the La Crescent stayed on its skins for 8 weeks. They are vinified in open fiberglass vats. Zero/Zero



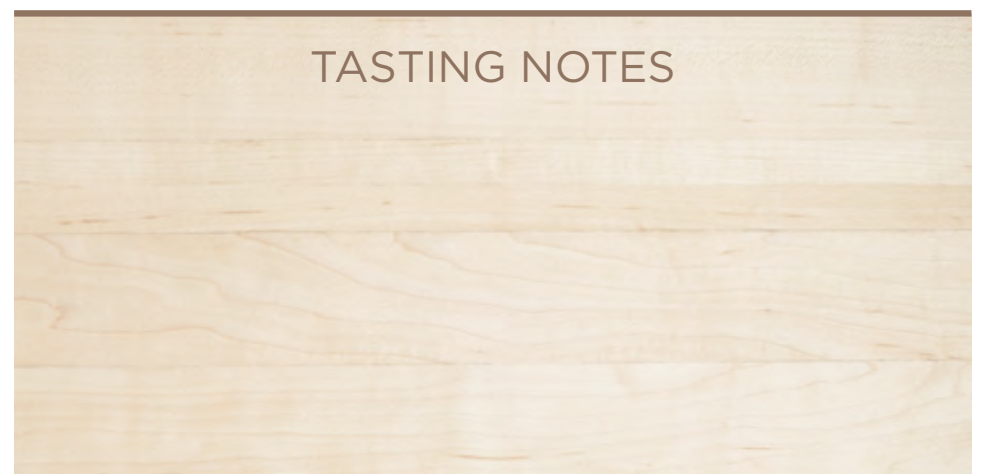
4 MORAVIA, CZECH REPUBLIC 2016 Milan Nestarec, Forks & Knives White



In 2001, Milan's father planted 8 hectares of vines across two Moravian wine growing municipalities: Moravský Žižkov and Velké Bílovice. Milan, who had been working with his dad since he was a kid, took over the winery in 2011. He was on the path of conventional when a stage with Aleš Kristančíč of Movia changed everything. There

he fell in love with skin fermented white wines and working naturally. He believes that organic and gentle methods of growing grapevines and grape processing gives the best result. He works with a variety of fiberglass, steel, oak and acacia barrels.

The Wine: Grapes are hand harvested and destemmed. The wine is fermented in 2000-liter stainless steel tanks for 10 days, five days of that with the skins. It then rests in tank for about 10 months with no interference with the wine until it is bottled. Zero/Zero



5 BEAUJOLAIS, FRANCE
2016 Domaine Bernard Vallette, Quatre Saisons



Bernard Vallette works on 6.5 ha of vineyards situated in the village of Lachassagne in southern Beaujolais. Vallette's wines have been Demeter-certified as biodynamic since 2000. The vineyards are planted on clay-limestone topsoil that lies over a base of pink granite.

The Wine: The gamay vines, older than 55 years of age, give a low yield of 40hl/ha. Whole clusters are fermented in stainless tanks under carbonic maceration for 17 days without any punch downs, pumping over, or *délestage*. The wine is then racked into stainless steel and neutral oak barrels. Bernard emphasizes that he entirely avoids intervention to this entire process, and that "the wine finds

its own journey." There is no fining, filtration, degassing. Zero/Zero

6 RIBERA DEL DUERO, SPAIN
2016 Alfredo Maestro, el Rey del Glam



Alfredo Maestro started making wine and planting vines in 1998. From the beginning, he was organic and also started to seek out neglected vineyards around Castilla y León and Castilla-La Mancha. In the cellar he initially worked conventionally but by 2000 he rejected additions and quickly eliminated all winemaking additives - including sulfur. Over time, Alfredo has accumulated 9 hectares

across his territory, establishing a second small bodega near Madrid.

The Wine: This is a marriage of two terroirs, the mountain fruit grown in granite from Gredos and the Ribera del Duero fruit grown on limestone. It's 100% Garnacha made in carbonic maceration, aiming for a *vin de soif* style. Uncrushed whole grape clusters undergo a natural, unassisted carbonic maceration in steel vat. Then it's quick to the bottle after a short élevage. Zero/Zero

TASTING NOTES

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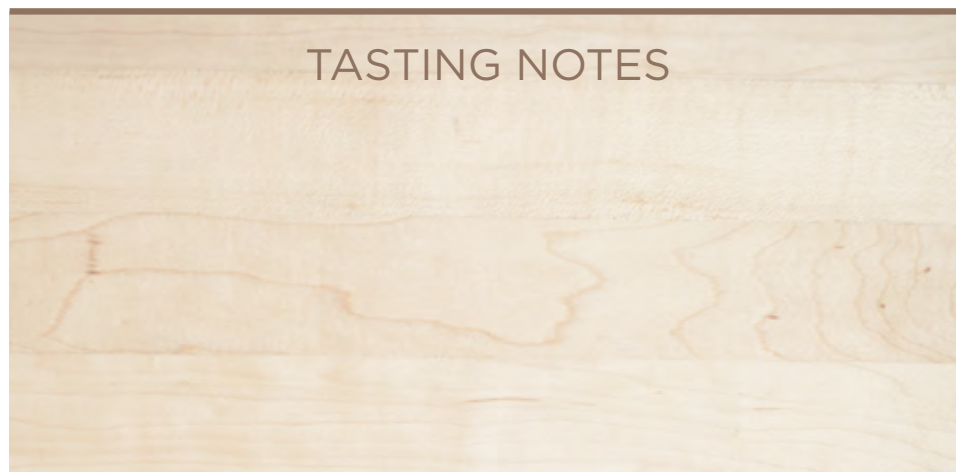
7 **TECATE, MEXICO**
2016 Bichi, No Sapiens



With the help of Chilean (by way of Burgundy) winemaker Louis-Antoine Luyt, brothers Noel & Jair Tellez are reinventing the notion of wine in Mexico. They have their own biodynamic vineyard and have contracts with local farmers and their organic, non-irrigated, head trained vineyards. In the heart of brutal Baja, Valle de Guadalupe, they make wine naturally. All vinification is carried out in cement tinajas of their own design.

The Wine: No Sapiens comes from a single, dry-farmed vineyard comprised of a mysterious grape variety that remains unidentified at 1,066 feet, not

far from the Pacific. The farmer says it could be Dolcetto, Luyt thinks maybe Cariñena due to its sharp acidity. The grapes harvested at the end of August, de-stemmed and fermented in 450L concrete tinajas. The wine was raised for three months in equal parts steel vat and older oak, and bottled without fining or filtration and only 10 ppm of added SO₂.



8 **SIERRA FOOTHILLS, CALIFORNIA**
2016 La Clarine Farms, Piedi Grandi



Looking to start a winery and vineyard, Hank Beckmeyer and Caroline Hoel settled in the Sierra Foothills and in 2001. 2600 feet up in the foothills, they planted 2 acres of vines, mostly Tempranillo but also including Syrah, Tannat, Grenache, Negroamaro, Cabernet

Sauvignon, and some unknown vines that emerged from seeds in the compost heap. The “home vineyard,” is farmed following the farmer-philosopher Masanobu Fukuoka’s ‘do nothing’ methods. From this vineyard he produces a single wine in extremely low quantities.

For the rest of his wines he purchases fruit from like-minded farmers in the area. He makes a variety of bottlings but handles all of his wines using some essential methods: Native yeasts, neutral or no oak, and minimal sulfur. The goal here is to keep his wines fresh and pure expressions of their individual terroirs.

The Wine: The mountain grown Nebbiolo (38%), Syrah (32%) and Mourvedre (30%) from volcanic loam soils, were grown at 3000’ elevation in the Sumu Kaw vineyard. As with all of Hank’s reds, this was not destemmed, foot-crushed in Flex tank with no temperature control. After about a week of fermentation, it was plunked into old 600liter oak, not racked until bottling after 11 months. It then gets additional 7 months before release.

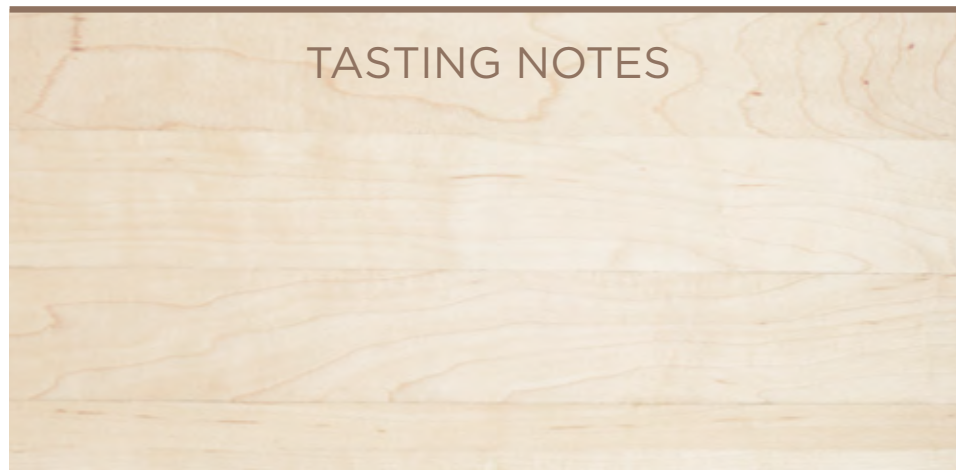


9 **BURGUNDY, FRANCE**
2015 Maison en Belles Lies, (Pierre Fenals) Maranges



Pierre Fenals bought one of Steiner's book on a whim at a Parisian flea market and began his journey from the fashion industry to the vineyard. This path included raising cows (to learn farming biodynamically) and interning with Trapet, Lapierre, and Emmanuel Giboulot in Burgundy. In 2002 when he was 52, he purchased his first 2.5 hectares of vines in Maranges and in the Hautes Côtes de Beaune. He now also rents and owns vines in Santenay, Montheilie and Corton including a plot of Le Corton itself. He started the Maison en Belles lies, in Saint Aubin in 2011. He does most of the farming by himself.

The Wine: The Maranges comes from the "Les Crevêches," vineyard where the biodynamic vines are over 60 years. Fermentation takes place in large in Tronçais wood vats, 100% whole cluster, no input and no temperature control for thirty days. Seeking elegance, especially in the tough-skin vintage of 2015, there's only one pump over and then very light food treading. There's a 14-month elevage in three-year-old oak barrels. Racking and minimal sulfuring before bottling, no fining, no filtration, bottling by gravity at the estate.



Alice Feiring



ALICE FEIRING is a New York-based, award-winning writer who has been writing about wine since 1990. Known as a long time champion of vin naturel, she is the author of four influential books all which focus on authenticity or naturalness, whether about the threat of globalization (*For the Love of Wine or How I Saved the World from Parkerzation*, 2008), the natural wine movement (*Naked Wine*, 2011), the importance of Georgia (*For the Love of Wine, My Odyssey Through the World's Most Famous Wine Culture*, 2016), or bedrock (*The Dirty Guide to Wine, Following Flavors from Ground to Glass*, 2017). Her next book, a handbook for the kind of wines she drinks, will be out in 2019. She has written for a slew of global papers and journals including *The New York Times*. A past wine correspondent for *Wall Street Journal Magazine* and *Time*, she now mostly focuses on those books as well as writing and publishing *TheFeiringLine.com*, the definitive natural wine newsletter, and occasionally penning essays on life, love, wine, and plumbing.

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