



THE GRAPE ESCAPE

FÊTE DU BEAUJOLAIS

2022

**Thursday 17th to
Sunday 20th November**

**“No sun – no moon!
No morn – no noon –
No dawn – no dusk –
No proper time of day –
November!”**

For poet Thomas Hood the penultimate month of the year was the most depressing. With its dark days and damp weather, we can all sometimes feel like November has little to recommend it. Luckily, we have Beaujolais Nouveau day to cheer us up.

Every third Thursday in November, we join thousands of winemakers and wine lovers to celebrate the end of harvest by toasting the vintage with the very first of it's wines. The vin de primeur, bottled just 6 to 8 weeks after harvest, is bright and fresh with fruity flavours. It is meant to be drunk immediately on release and we are OK with that!

However, there is so much more to Beaujolais than Nouveau. Although the region is just 34 miles long and 9 miles wide, it is home to 10 Crus, each with their own distinct personality. And whilst of course the Gamay grape reigns supreme, the rarer white wines are also worth getting to know.

GAMAY GUIDE @ £40

TRY ALL 15 OF OUR WINES FROM BEAUJOLAIS

INDIVIDUAL WINE FLIGHTS @ £15

THREE FLIGHTS OF FIVES WINES TO CHOOSE FROM (SEE OVER)

INDIVIDUAL GLASSES, BOTTLES, CARAFES AS PRICED

BEAUJOLAIS WINE FLIGHTS

FLIGHT A:

Château Thivin 'Clos de Rochebonne' Beaujolais-Villages Blanc 2020
Château de Vaux Beaujolais-Villages Nouveau 2022
Domain Laurent Perrachon Juliéna 2019
Domain Paul Janin et Fils Moulin-a-Vent 'les Vignes du Tremblay' 2018
Jean-Paul et Charly Thévenet Morgon 2020

FLIGHT B:

Jean-Michel Dupré 'Glou-Glou' Beaujolais-Villages Nouveau 2022
Château de Pavé Brouilly 2020
Domain Laurent Perrachon St. Amour 'la Gagere' 2020
Château de la Chaize Fleurie 'Clos de la Chapelle des Bois' 2020
Domaine Thillardon Chénas 2015

FLIGHT C:

Château de Grandmont 'Blanc de Moines' Beaujolais-Villages Blanc 2020
Julien Sunier 'Wild Soul' 2020 Beaujolais-Villages
Domain Rémy Passot Chiroubles 2020
Julien Sunier Régnié 2020
Château Thivin Côte de Brouilly 'Les Griottes de Brulhié 2019

WINE FLIGHTS @ £15
(5 x 50ml each)

BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU

BN is the first wine of the latest vintage to be released in France to celebrate the end of the harvest and (hopefully!) a job well done. Nouveau is a fun and fruity drink, usually made from young vines. The grapes are picked towards the end of August/beginning of September and fermented using carbonic maceration; whole grapes are fermented under a cover of carbon dioxide before crushing. Conventional alcoholic fermentation involves crushing the grapes to free the juice and pulp from the skin with yeast serving to convert sugar into alcohol. Carbonic maceration ferments most of the juice while it is still inside the grape, although grapes at the bottom of the vessel are crushed by gravity and undergo conventional fermentation. The resulting wine is fruity and very low in tannins; it is ready to drink quickly but lacks the structure for long-term ageing.

Glass Carafe Bottle

Château de Vaux Beaujolais-Villages Nouveau 2022 £5 £18 £26

The twelve-hectare domaine is operated using eco-friendly and sustainable viticultural methods. Our good pal Chris Piper joined winemaker Yannick de Vermont at Château de Vaux for the 2021 after Château de Grandmont was sold (where Chris had made the wines since 2001).

Jean-Michel Dupré 'Glou-Glou' Beaujolais-Villages Nouveau 2022 £5 £18 £26

Jean-Michel Dupré and daughter Cindy are the fifth and sixth generations of winemakers to work the family estate from their cellars on the outskirts of Beaujeu. The Dupré ethic is to work naturally with minimum intervention to emphasise the vibrant pure fruit character of their Beaujolais.

BEAUJOLAIS-VILLAGES BLANC

Beaujolais Blanc white wines are produced in Beaujolais from the Chardonnay grape variety. They make up only about two percent of the region's production. A Beaujolais Blanc is typically light and fresh, and most of the wines are not designed for long ageing, unlike their white Burgundian counterparts.

Beaujolais appellation laws state that white wine grape varieties must make up no more than 15 percent of any one vineyard, effectively limiting the quantities of white wine that can be made here. Around 480 of the 3000 vineyards in Beaujolais are planted with rows of Chardonnay.

Château de Grandmont 'Blanc de Moines' Beaujolais-Villages Blanc 2020 (Flight C1) £6 £22 £30

This beautiful family domaine can be found in the hamlet of Grandmont, just to the east of the village of Blacé. The vines are planted in parcels surrounding the château and the historic twelfth century buildings of the Priory of Grandmont. From youngish vines, this is a tank-fermented Chardonnay, refreshingly energetic with an enticing minerality.

Château Thivin 'Clos de Rochebonne' Beaujolais-Villages Blanc 2020 £8 £30 £40

This 16th-century walled vineyard is made up of the famous "golden stones" of this south Beaujolais region, it was historically attached to the Château de Rochebonne standing at the summit of the village of Theizé. The soil is clay/limestone from the Jurassic era, which is the preferred terroir for Chardonnay.

BEAUJOLAIS-VILLAGES

Beaujolais Villages is an appellation made up of 38 villages in the north of Beaujolais. The hilly terrain and granite soil here is considered superior to that of the flatter lands in the south of Beaujolais. As a result, Beaujolais Villages wines are of a higher quality than those of the straight Beaujolais appellation. Most wines at this level are made using semi-carbonic maceration, known here as maceration traditionnelle.

The Beaujolais Villages appellation accounts for around a quarter of the Beaujolais region's total annual output. Most of this is red wine, with just small amounts of white and rosé wine produced. The appellation law has slightly different rules surrounding vinification and permitted yields than the more generic Beaujolais appellation. This gives rise to a slightly fuller-bodied, more concentrated style of wine. Most Beaujolais Villages wines are made for immediate consumption. However, some of the best examples can be cellared for up to five years.

Glass Carafe Bottle

Julien Sunier 'Wild Soul' 2020 Beaujolais-Villages £7 £25 £36

From Julien Sunier, one of Beaujolais' most exciting young producers, comes this epic Beaujolais-Villages. It is made with old vine Gamay grown in some of the region's best sites but labelled as Beaujolais-Villages and sold at a superb price. The wine is naturally made with no added sulphur during vinification or bottling.

THE 10 CRUS OF BEAUJOLAIS

The region's highest-quality wines are those of the ten Beaujolais 'crus' – ten vineyard areas long recognized as the finest in the area. Each of these ten (from north to south - Saint-Amour, Julienas, Chenas, Moulin-a-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Regnie, Brouilly, and Cote de Brouilly) has its own appellation title.

SAINT-AMOUR is Beaujolais' most northerly appellation, best-known for its light and easy-drinking wines dominated by bright red fruit flavours. Soils here are a bit varied, comprised of a mix of granite, clay, schist, and limestone. Wines from Saint-Amour generally show their best within a year or two after harvest. Unsurprisingly, a significant amount of Saint-Amour bottle sales take place around Valentine's Day (approximately 20-25% of annual production!)

Domain Laurent Perrachon St. Amour 'la Gagere' 2020 £7 £25 £36

Pursuing the work of their ancestors producing wines the traditional way the Perrachon family are masters at crafting greatness from the Gamay grape. This wine is from a small parcel of 70 year old vines on a very rocky soil, on the most northern part of the Saint Amour appellation, overlooking the village of Saint-Véran. This is a sensual and delicate wine with a great personality.

Below Saint-Amour sits **JULIÉNAS**, named after the ancient Roman leader, Julius Caesar. These wines have been admired since Roman times, known for their sturdier and slightly more tannic profiles. Because of this tannic structure and hearty backbone, wines from Julié纳斯 are some of the more age-worthy bottles to come out of Beaujolais. Expect wines with abundant notes of dark berries, violets, and hints of baking spice, balanced by gritty tannins and vibrant acidity.

Domain Laurent Perrachon Julié纳斯 2019 £6 £22 £32

Laurent Perrachon and his wife, Martine, run this impeccable 23-hectare family domaine, now with the help of their two older sons, Adrien and Maxime. These are traditionally made, serious wines with great terroir integrity, from vines that are an average of 45 to 60 years old. Long fermentations and indigenous yeasts are par for the course.

CHÉNAS gets its name from the word *chêne*, which means ‘oak tree’ in French. Despite being the smallest cru in Beaujolais, wines coming out of Chénas are full-bodied and fierce, known for their spicy, floral, and dark-fruited flavours. Here, grapes grow on just one square mile of slopes, cultivated by about 100 growers. During the 1700s, wines from Chénas were abundantly exported to Paris and held with high regard, as they were a favourite of Louis XIII.

Glass Carafe Bottle

Domaine Thillardon Chénas 2015

£9 £34 £47

Thillardon's iconic Chénas Chassignol is now regarded as one of Beaujolais most significant wines and would be classed as a Grand Cru if there ever was such a thing! It comes from a granite and quartz covered, perilously steep hillside, behind the house and cellars. This is an intense and rich wine.

Wines from MOULIN-A-VENT are deemed some of the sturdiest and most age-worthy bottles in all of Beaujolais. Despite their solid structure, these bottles are surprisingly never too tannic, maintaining an approachable flavour profile in their youth. Juice tends to show a relatively opaque hue in the glass, leading to complex flavours of ripe dark berries, crushed red flowers, undergrowth, and game. Moulin-à-Vent vineyards are also some of the highest planted in all of Beaujolais, reaching altitudes of up to 1,280 feet. Soils are comprised of pink granite, and in just two square miles, over 4 million bottles are produced annually. The region is also home to an historical windmill monument from which the appellation derives its name.

Domain Paul Janin et Fils Moulin-a-Vent ‘les Vignes du Tremblay’ 2018

£7 £25 £36

The Janins’ 8 hectare domaine was established in the early 1930s, when Eric Janin’s grandfather bought two hectares of vines in the remarkable terroir of Le Tremblay. Les Vignes du Tremblay is sourced from 4 hectares of vines grown on sand-dominated soils which the family acquired in 2013.

As an appellation, **FLEURIE** boasts one of Beaujolais’ highest concentrations of world-renowned producers, scoring it a relatively high regard amongst industry and consumers alike. Wines from Fleurie are known for their floral element (hence the appellation’s name– fleur means flower in French.) Here, pink granite soils create healthy and juicy fruit, much of which is farmed organically. Expect sophisticated and silky bottles noted with violet, rose petal, and red fruit flavours.

Château de la Chaize Fleurie ‘Clos de la Chapelle des Bois’ 2020

£8 £30 £39

Château de la Chaize acquired the Chapelle des Bois vineyard following the death of Fernand Verpoix in 2018. Christophe Gruy and his nephew, Boris (who is the head winemaker) have built a reputation as one of the outstanding estates in Fleurie, vinifying each of their parcels separately to express the terroir as best they can.

Of all 10 crus, the vineyards of **CHIROUBLES** sit the highest. Soaring vineyard altitudes lead to the region’s lowest temperatures, meaning that these clusters are some of the last to be harvested in the region. Although the wines are wildly complex, bottles from Chiroubles are meant to be consumed relatively young. Notes of iris, strawberry, and crunchy red fruit flavours are most prevalent; expect delicate, ready-to-pop wines that are perfect for evening aperitifs. Chiroubles is also known for having some of the most punishingly steep and difficult to farm slopes, which may be a reason few producers venture towards this cru.

Domain Rémy Passot Chiroubles 2020

£6 £22 £32

The total area of the Chiroubles Cru AOC is some 350 hectares and mostly comprises light degraded granite sandy soil with generally a South-Western facing aspect. Domaine Passot have 4 plots with an average vine age at 50 years old.

MORGON is the second-largest cru in Beaujolais, just after Brouilly. Like Fleurie, Morgon is home to an array of high-quality producers, including all of the original 'Gang of Four'* vigneronns. Wines are best-known for their full-bodied and meaty flavour profiles, marked by cherry, iron, and wet stone notes. These bottles show their best when served alongside equally hearty food and are standout candidates for long-term cellar aging.

Glass Carafe Bottle

Jean-Paul et Charly Thévenet Morgon 2020

£8 £30 £42

From dynamic father-son duo Jean-Paul and Charly Thevenet, this cru Beaujolais is bursting with juicy red fruits and blackberry compote. What appears at first to be easy drinking rounds out with spices, herbs and a surprising complexity that perfectly complements a wine so light on its feet.

***GANG OF FOUR**

There are four winemakers who every wine lover has to thank for the resurrection of Beaujolais as a quality wine producing region. In the 1980s, more than 50% of Beaujolais' output was Nouveau, with many winemakers sacrificing their best grapes to get the wine out by the 4th Thursday in November to capitalise on the (then) Nouveau phenomenon. Four winemakers (Jean-Paul Thévenet, Guy Breton, Jean Foillard and Marcel Lapiere) said enough was enough and turned to tradition to produce high quality, terroir-driven wines they could be proud to call Beaujolais. Their natural winemaking methods hinged on several non-negotiables: old vines; organic or biodynamic farming principles; strict sorting of the grapes; minimal use of sulphur dioxide; no chaptalisation; and no filtration.

RÉGNIÉ's mineral-laden, pink granite soils comprise just one small square mile, but produce some of the region's most interesting wines. Vineyards are mostly cultivated on rolling hillsides, many of which sit over 1,000 feet above sea level. Régnié is the youngest of the 10 crus, officially receiving its AOC status back in 1988. Aromatic and bright, these wines tend to show flavors of raspberry and red currant. These bottles mature relatively early and generally show their best when consumed within five years of harvest.

Julien Sunier Régnié 2020

£8 £30 £42

Julien has been making his own wine for just over a decade, and his style is a captivating and boundary-less blend of new techniques and old traditions. Like many "new school" natural wine zealots, he has completely eschewed chemical fertilizers and herbicides in the vineyards. Like his classical Beaujolais compatriots, his wines celebrate the unique characteristics of Gamay, as well as the distinct terroirs of Beaujolais' different villages.

BROUILLY covers a whopping 20% of Beaujolais' entire area and is split into six communes. The region's soils are broken down into two major types: pink granite and limestone-marl. Wines from Brouilly show a gorgeous ruby hue in the glass, with varied yet all-around fruit-forward flavour profiles dominating the bottles. Light and easy-drinking, wines from Brouilly are your typical Parisian 'bistro' wines. Over 8 million bottles are produced in Brouilly every year

Château de Pavé Brouilly 2020

£6 £22 £30

Originally established in 1631 by Antoine Brac, this three hectare vineyard is perfectly situated at the foot of the Côte de Brouilly. The vines are cultivated using the 'eco-friendly' methods, yields are kept impressively low and there is minimal intervention in the winery, allowing the exceptional terroir to show through. This was Chris Piper's last vintage at Pavé after the Brac family decided it was time to sell up.

CÔTE DE BROUILLY sits within the larger Brouilly appellation. Vineyards are mostly located on the regional hillsides, where fruit tends to ripen a little better. Structured and ageworthy, these wines tend to be meatier and cellar-friendly, showing flavours of dark berries and wet stones. However, one of the Côte de Brouilly's biggest issues is soil erosion. Local vignerons have been working together for decades to create drainage facilities to release excess water from the appellation's soaked slopes. The region's soils are also marked by high levels of diorite, a hard volcanic rock, which gives the wines a distinctly noticeable flavour.

Château Thivin Côte de Brouilly 'Les Griottes de Brulhié 2019

Flight only

This 5 hectare south-facing vineyard half-way up the hillside was already famous in the 17th century, as Louvet wrote in his History of the Beaujolais Wine Region written in 1635: "On the hill of Brulhié (Brouilly), in the parish of Oudenas (Odenas) [...] which slope or hill bears the best wines of the region".

Wine Regions of Beaujolais

