

La Michelle

2016

What is it that makes a sparkling wine so special? In basic terms it is the bubbles! A slow and steady release of CO₂, trapped during secondary fermentation in the bottle gives the appearance of freshness and the sensation that the wine is alive in the mouth. Choice of wine glass is critical to the success of this strategy and the contemporary flute, with its narrow base and small surface area is ideal to enhance the life of the bubbles. The "Coupe" or saucer glass, reputedly modelled on the breast of Marie Antoinette certainly is sexy but allows the bubbles to dissipate too quickly. Fortunately it holds but a small volume so must be replenished often!

Following a full 47 months resting on lees in the bottle, the wine brings pleasure and pain as it bursts forth stinging the nose and carry the primary fruit characters of tayberry, glace cherry and soft rose petal florals before diving into a raft of more important secondary aromas. Sticky ginger bread and hot buttered popcorn aromas impart a tangible opulence while charcoal roasted macadamia nuts and almond biscotti attest to the full yeast autolysis. Finally, complex notes of split kid leather and thick mushroom risotto build the expectation of how good the wine will taste.

Alive, Alive'O, the palate opens fair, fat and wide as it dances like the sugar plum fairy on a tightly coiled double helix of clean acidity. The combination of tartness and foam swirl around the mouth like tidal wash in a south coast rock pool, cleansing the taste buds with the efficiency of a lime sorbet. Tangy lime marmalade and piquant feijoa skin leads on to creamed sweetcorn, crunchy hokey pokey and the reassuring flavours of bread and butter pudding. There is a smooth and almost oily texture, reminiscent of a lawyer in a pinstripe suit which imparts a mischievous yet convincing quality to the argument. As usual, the wine is a blend of 2/3 Pinot Noir and 1/3 Chardonnay, and somehow the sum is greater than the parts.

Technical Information

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| Harvest Date | 9 - 16 March 2016 | Total Acid | 8.40 g/l |
| Brix at Harvest | 18.5 to 20.3 | Residual Sugar | 4 g/l |
| Blend: | 66% Pinot Noir : 33% Chard | Bottling Date | 21 Oct 2016 |
| Final Alcohol | 12.5 % | Disgorging Date | 10 Sept 2020 |
| pH | 2.90 | Cellaring | 1 - 4 years from then |

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