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## The Wine Gang Newsletter

### September 2010 edition

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#### Private Cellar

We are hugely impressed with the offerings of good value wines around £7-8 which seems to be a real sweet spot for Private Cellar. Intelligently priced overall, with good variety and some superb Italian wines, good, solid French classic and country wines and iconic wines from the USA. Until the end of September, Private Cellar is offering a discount of £25 off all first orders of 2 cases (24 bottles) or more from its 2010/2011 selection. Delivery is free on 24 bottles or more. [www.privatecellar.co.uk](http://www.privatecellar.co.uk)

#### Dry Whites

##### André Dezat Sancerre 2009

*Sancerre (Loire), France*

*Dry White (Cork), 13.5% abv*

A touch closed on the nose but open ups with a bit of vigorous swirling. Bright and vibrant on the palate with a balance of refreshment and fruit – it doesn't rely on pointed and aggressive acidity to power through the length, but rather the quality of the fruit which is very good.

*90/100 – £14.95 at Private Cellar*

##### Domaine Matrot Bourgogne Chardonnay 2008

*Burgundy, France*

*Dry White (Screwcap), 12.5% abv*

Charming complex layers of peachy fruit, a touch of fragrance and some oaky flourishes. Well balanced, with lactic, savoury and nutty layers along with some classic brightness to the finish. It's a traditional style with good length and will appeal to classicists. Also one to consider laying down for a couple of years - if you can resist opening it.

*90/100 – £13.95 at Private Cellar*

##### Springfontein Terroir Selection Chenin Blanc 2001

*Walker Bay, South Africa*

*Dry White (Cork), 13.5% abv*

A full-flavoured and rich dry wine with a tangy bright edge and good layers of toasty, oaky complexity along with a mineral tightness. Impressive and will appeal to Burgundy lovers in search of a more powerful wine – brilliant to match with roast chicken or mild creamy curries.

*90/100 – £12.20 at Private Cellar*

##### Bishop's Head Riesling 2008

*Waipara, New Zealand*

*Dry White (Screwcap), 12.0% abv*

Floral-edged, lime-tinged aromas to the nose with a touch of tangerine and beeswax. It's a wine that feels fruity to start with but which finishes on a drier, more minerally note and would work well with mild spiced Thai dishes.

*89/100 – £10.95 at Private Cellar*

##### Château de Sours Bordeaux Blanc 2008

*Bordeaux, France*

*Dry White (Cork), 12.5% abv*

Complex on the nose with a savoury edge to this Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon 50/50 blend. Think honeysuckle and lemony with a touch of depth and complexity to show its class.

*88/100 – £10.95 at Private Cellar*

##### Mauricio Lorca Lirico Torrontés 2009

*Mendoza, Argentina*

*Dry White (Screwcap), 14.0% abv*

Heady floral aromas, fragrant and aromatic. Round on the palate with generous fruit, quite a textured oily body and some invigorating spice on the length. Rather good to match with spicy dishes.

*88/100 – £8.75 at Private Cellar*

##### Les Rafelieres Sauvignon Blanc 2008

*Vin de Pays du Val de Loire (Loire), France*

*Dry White (Synthetic Cork), 12.0% abv*

Attractive and zesty citrus fruit on the nose. Good quality on the palate with a very dry, almost citrus peel edge to the finish. A bargain alternative to Sancerre.

87/100 – £7.95 at Private Cellar

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### Dry Reds

#### **Freestone Winery Fog Dog Pinot Noir 2006**

Sonoma Coast (California), United States

Dry Red (Cork), 13.5% abv

Cherry and oak on the nose, a touch closed but we persisted with swirling and it does show its treasures after a time. Pure, generously fruited with fine tannin and even some very subtle spice layered on the length, this is classy, balanced Pinot and well worth considering shelling out for.

92/100 – £26.95 at Private Cellar

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#### **Domaine Anne-Sophie Debavelaere Beaune 1er Cru Les Sceaux 2006**

Burgundy, France

Dry Red (Cork), 13.0% abv

Pale in the glass. Deft on the nose, superbly balanced on the palate with very fine drying tannin that will age gracefully for another 6 or more years. Savoury, elegant and classic.

92/100 – £17.95 at Private Cellar

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#### **Il Molino di Grace Chianti Classico 2005**

Chianti Classico (Tuscany), Italy

Dry Red (Cork), 14.0% abv

Tea and earthy notes – in a good way – with a very subtle floral touch. Tight and with tea-like savoury notes, umami flavour and fine drying tannin, we loved this Chianti for the quality of its fruit, the balance in its wine-making and its long-lasting layered complexity. Very good and fantastic with hard cheese or meaty fare. Developing but will age a further 5+ years in bottle.

*One of this month's Five Wines to lay down*

92/100 – £14.75 at Private Cellar

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#### **Villa Serra Minervois 2005**

Minervois (Languedoc), France

Dry Red (Cork), 13.5% abv

Deep and dark aromas laced with warming notes. We enjoyed this wine's dark character and savoury notes, think tapenade with a tang of spice. Good wine to match with bangers, a roast or some hearty hard cheese. Marvellous Minervois – worth the price – and perfect for the last barbecue of the summer.

*One of this month's Five Last of the Summer Wines*

90/100 – £10.90 at Private Cellar

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#### **Ets J-P Moueix Bordeaux Supérieur 2005**

Bordeaux, France

Dry Red (DIAM cork), 13.0% abv

An elegant and lighter style of Bordeaux, still with plenty of tannin and structure but a classy sense of allowing the fruit, freshness and tannin to show rather than lash it with too much oak. Worth a few bottles to keep you in bargain Bordeaux over the winter.

90/100 – £10.25 at Private Cellar

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#### **Bishop's Head Pinot Noir 2008**

Waipara, New Zealand

Dry Red (Screwcap), 14.0% abv

A touch of sweet oak, forest floor and savoury evolution on the nose. The palate has intensity, depth and oak aplenty and has good length with freshness - though we found the oak tannin prevailed over the fruit a smidgen right at the close. Still, good wine.

89/100 – £14.65 at Private Cellar

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#### **Frédéric Magnien Bourgogne Rouge 2006**

Burgundy, France

Dry Red (Cork), 13.0% abv

Very firm tannin with an austerity to the finish that demands good food. Well crafted wine, designed for some ageing, we'd say, with its bright fruit and powerful drying tannin.

89/100 – £14.40 at Private Cellar

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#### **Château Cèdre d'Arthus Bordeaux Supérieur 2005**

Bordeaux, France

Dry Red (Cork), 13.5% abv

Pronounced fruit aromas with edges of darker intrigue. Drying to the finish and quite oaky, we reckon this wine belongs with food to show off its best side. The second wine of St Emilion Grand Cru Fleur d'Arthus, this wine comes from a cracking vintage and could do with a few more years in bottle to soften into its best shape.

89/100 – £12.50 at Private Cellar

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#### **Château Beauchêne Côtes du Rhône Le Pavillon du Château Beauchêne 2008**

Côtes du Rhône (Rhône), France

Dry Red (DIAM cork), 13.0% abv

Fleshy, blueberry fruit, with pepper and tannin. It drinks like a wholesome country wine with power and structure and offers rather splendid value for money. We approve – especially with dark game dishes such as boar and venison.

89/100 – £8.50 at Private Cellar

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### **Château Beauchêne Côtes du Rhône Premier Terroir 2007**

*Côtes du Rhône (Rhône), France*

*Dry Red (Cork), 13.5% abv*

Summery red fruit with intensity and structure along with some darker layers. Good wine, perhaps a touch pricey for us, but one for Rhône fans to savour.

88/100 – £11.75 at Private Cellar

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### **Springfontein Sopiensklip Red 2008**

*Walker Bay, South Africa*

*Dry Red (DIAM cork), 15.0% abv*

Subtle earthy and vegetal notes on this Merlot-based blend. A hint of coffee bean spice. Smoky, rich, very powerful and spicy with highly intense flavour and yet not overly chunky on tannin. If you're a fan of bold New World spicy reds, give this one a whirl – with hearty, meaty food.

88/100 – £8.95 at Private Cellar

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### **Bodega Foster Ique Malbec 2008**

*Mendoza, Argentina*

*Dry Red (Cork), 14.0% abv*

Attractive strawberry and blackberry fruit on the nose. The palate has a subtle aromatic touch and then plenty of bitter dark chocolate, espresso and kirsch notes to the finish. Fruity, intense and pure – no oak.

88/100 – £8.75 at Private Cellar

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### **Domaine Combe Blanche Calamiac Terroir Tempranillo 2008**

*Minervois (Languedoc), France*

*Dry Red (Cork), 13.5% abv*

Very savoury on the nose, almost like a tang of liquorice. The palate is very easy drinking with some fine tannin and, though we reckon it could do with a jot more fruit, it's a drinkable wine and worthy of attention as it's a Tempranillo from Minervois! We salute the intention and look forward to further vintages.

86/100 – £8.95 at Private Cellar

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