

## Staff sniffers have a nose for quality

The Winery comes up trumps as employees source a range that typifies each individual style yet displays plenty of diversity for the discerning customer, says **Jane Parkinson**

The Winery is the epitome of what every wine store should be – or at least attempt to be – achieving high quality without compromising on quantity.

Wines for its comprehensive range of more than 650 lines come from all corners of the globe courtesy of staff who “poke around for undiscovered treasures and sniff out hidden gems”, according to its website.

There are clearly no problems with the staff’s poke-or sniff-ometers. The tasting was one of, if not the, highest quality reviews we have featured on these pages to date – a reflection of the great reputation this company has built up since its formation 10 years ago.

The success of The Winery’s original store near Little Venice in west London brought about the birth of its second outlet in November 2004. The location of choice was within one of London’s most famous retailers, department store Liberty. However, the store also operates on a mail order basis (tel: 020 7286 6475).

Not short of a bob or two, customers by-and-

large are 25-50 years old, well-travelled, London-based and often not British.

They are a group of people happy to spend to guarantee quality, it seems. The store’s average bottle price of £9.99 is far higher than the pitiful national average, which is stuck below the £4 mark.

The Winery has a refreshing focus on the origin of wines, too. It doesn’t succumb to the might of the New World mob, preferring to concentrate on two European stalwarts – Burgundy, which accounts for 27 per cent of its stock, and Germany (24 per cent). David Motion, The Winery’s director, says the company lists “overwhelmingly the Old World, albeit new wines from the Old World!”

Motion adds: “The discovery aspect is one of the most enjoyable parts. We try to get a balance between our proven, popular growers – our Winery Classics – and always finding something new so we and our customers don’t get bored.”

On this tasting’s performance, boredom doesn’t even feature in The Winery’s vocabulary. A number of wines were worthy of consideration for W&S’s



Star Buy category and all showed true class.

The Rieslings were fantastic, diverse in character yet displaying hallmarks of their type, while the Italians also performed well – sumptuous, fruity, smoky, melt-in-the-mouth wines. Even the Barolo, just shy of £40, appeared worth the money: a heady, sexy, velvety wine.

Hurrah! For once, a clean sweep for the W&S taste-ometer.

### STAR BUYS

**1998, Jean Velut, Champagne, France**

**£22.99**

Pears, red apples and rich buttered toast aromas and flavours with an extraordinarily long length. Real value for money, grower Champagne.



**Nerio, Schola Sarmenti, Puglia, Italy 2000**

**£10.99**

Naughty but nice! Soft, baked plums on the nose. A fresh and juicy palate that makes it approachable, but it also has a darker side ...



**Riesling trocken, Fred Prinz, Rheingau, Germany 2005**

**£8.99**

Lemon, chalky with a touch of honey. A brilliant sweet and sour flavour. Great lemony acidity. Perfumed and packed with lovely flavours.



**Barbera d'Alba, Mauro Veglio, Piemonte, Italy 2005**

**£10.99**

Yum! Liquorice, blackcurrants, nutmeg and cinnamon. Baked gingerbread on the palate with lovely chewy sweet and sour flavours and textures.



**Saint-Véran, Michel Cheveau, Burgundy, France 2004**

**£11.99**

A cracking Burgundy. Creamy and buttery but not at all cloying on the palate, just rich and ripe fruit.



**Chardonnay, Hafner, Alexander Valley, Sonoma, USA 2002**

**£19.99**

Full-on the nose with butter and biscuits. Well-made but not overblown or cloying at all. Golden syrup flavours.



**Le Convivial NV, Michel Bedouet, Vin De Pays du Jardin de la France, Loire, France**

**£4.99**  
A lemony, exact finish, creamy too. Fresh and bitter citrus flavours on the palate. Lovely summer drinking wine with fish and salad.



**Gäns Riesling trocken, Lubentiushof/Andreas Barth, Mosel, Germany 2005**

**£16.99**  
Petrol, rich and complex nose. Some mineral underpinning the complexity resulting in an earthy, almond finish.



**Madonna Riesling Spätlese trocken, Rudolf Trossen, Mosel, Germany 2004**

**£13.99**  
Banana pastry nose with layers and layers of custard, apples, lychees and quince. The palate is clean and fresh but also full-bodied with a honeyed richness.



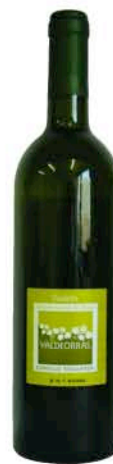
**Quincy, Valery Renaudat, Loire, France 2005**

**£10.99**  
A creamy, fruit salad (sweet) and lively nose. Lovely mineral underlying flavour. Citrus dominant but doesn't open up a great deal.



**Godello, Alan de Val, Valdeorras, Galicia, Spain 2005**

**£9.99**  
An olive oil with green peppers and refreshing citrus and mineral nose. Would come alive with some food.



**Marsannay Blanc, Cyril Audoin, Burgundy, France 2005**

**£17.50**  
A lovely caramelised banana nose that's elegant too. Full of flavour on the palate, good acidity, clean and bitter, but very dry.



**Spätburgunder Classic, Thomas Nelles, Ahr, Germany 2005**

**£15.50**  
Full-on berry attack. Very concentrated for a German Pinot, this one. Extremely bright but also bitter on the palate. No silkiness (which the nose was promising).



**Les Beaumonts, Chorey-lès-Beaune, Daniel Largeot, Burgundy, France 2004**

**£14.99**  
Sexy nose. A complex, herby wine with an element of raw parsnips (that's a good thing by the way!). Fresh thyme, rosemary and lovely texture. Good for the price.



**Pinot Noir, Woodenhead, Russian River Valley, Sonoma, USA 2003**

**£25.99**  
Mellow, pure fruit nose, sweetness of oak. Juicy palate with ripe fruit. A moreish wine.



**Les Hauts Lastour, Les Vignerons du Quercy, Coteaux du Quercy, France**

**£5.99**  
A rustic flavour with plenty of earthy, meaty, gravy characters. The palate is dry with all the same flavours.



**Château les Jonqueyres, Blaye, Bordeaux, France 2002**

**£13.99**  
A ripe and juicy Bordeaux wine. Sweet-fruited and rich with quite dry tannins.



**Barolo Cannubi, Damilano, Piemonte, Italy 2001**

**£38.99**  
Delicate but brooding. Distant violet aromas develop into creamy, roast meat characters that whet your appetite. This is one hunk of a wine.

