



OPTIMIAN NEWS

Where in the world does this wine come from? | A look back at last year's
Cellar Offerings | The Art of Winetasting

A photograph of a wooden-handled cork puller resting on a wooden surface. Below the puller is a row of wine corks. A white circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text '2019 ORDERING AND DELIVERY SEASON'.

**2019
ORDERING
AND DELIVERY
SEASON**

2019

CONTRIBUTORS



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CARL BIRD

Carl has been a fixture at Opimian for over 15 years. He started out as a member, then took over the Northwest Territories (well, Opimian's chapter there) as Area Representative. In 2015, he moved to Montreal - his hometown - and joined the team at the head office as Area Representative Liaison and Opimian Wine Concierge. He answers members' questions in Answers UnCorked.



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JANE MASTERS MW

Jane joined Opimian in 2010. She tastes, selects and writes about all the wines featured in Opimian's Cellar Offerings. Based between France and London, UK, Jane personally knows the winemakers and visits every region offered. She passed the Master of Wine exams in 1997 and is now Chairman of the Institute of Masters of Wine.

THE LAUNCH OF OUR 2019 ORDERING SEASON



Our 2019 Ordering Season starts officially on November 9, 2018 with Cellar Offering 262. Browse the pages for your favourite wines and some new gems from New Zealand and Australia. This is the first in our nine wonderful wine selections, curated by Jane Masters MW special for our members. If you're not sure what to order or are looking for something new to tantalize your palate, keep your eye on your inbox - we'll send you suggestions from our experts every week! (For more details on the 2019 Ordering season, flip to page 4).



If you're curious about what we have in store for this new and exciting year, flip to page four. You'll find an explanation of how Opimian orders are processed, the delivery schedule and more! Plus, on page five, we have a handy ordering schedule you can cut out and hang on your fridge - this way, you'll never miss your favourite wines!



AWARD WINNING WINES FROM **VIÑA LA ROSA**

Viña La Rosa is a member favourite supplier for many reasons, one of which is their award winning wines. It seems like every year, another Viña La Rosa wine wins a new award – and this year is no different. Here are the most recent award winners. Uncork a bottle to find out what all the fuss is about!

Gold Medal for Lot 7904 Viña La Rosa Carménère 2014

Lot 7904 received a gold medal at the Catador Wine Awards 2018. Wines at this competition are tasted blind and evaluated according to the highest international standards by a jury of renowned wine makers, sommeliers and journalists from around the world.

When this wine was last reviewed, it was M10 D10 2017. For those of you who still have some bottles in your cellar, you are in luck! It has staying power much longer than we predicted and is still going strong.

CORINNE KEDDIE ACCEPTED INTO THE MASTERS OF WINE PROGRAM

Corinne Keddie, Area Representative for Calgary and Southern Alberta, starts her next wine journey – training to be a Master of Wine. Corinne was accepted into the program this past September and will study to prove her understanding of wine by passing the Master of Wine examination, recognised worldwide for its rigour and high standards. The Master of Wine examination consists of three stages, including theory and practical exams, and culminates in the submission of a final research paper, an in-depth study on a wine-related topic from any area of the sciences, arts, humanities, or social sciences.

Congratulations Corinne! We wish you the best of luck with your studies and exams and look forward to welcoming you into the ranks of Master of Wine!

2019 ORDERING AND DELIVERY SEASON

Opimian members order over 200,000 cases of wine each year. So, it's no surprise that the status of deliveries is often foremost in members' minds. Waiting for your wine to be released can be tedious, especially for new members. But once that first case arrives, others followed on a regular basis, especially if you continue to order on each Cellar Offering.

Ensuring that those orders are distributed to members as quickly as possible requires coordination with over 50 suppliers and 12 provincial and territorial jurisdictions. This is a complex operation, but we do try to provide an accurate estimate of when your wine will be available. There are some important dates and timeframes to consider when making these estimates:

- Cellar Offerings always open on a Friday and are open for a five-week period. Cellar Offering 262 will launch the 2019 ordering season on November 9, 2018.
- Cellar Offerings close on a Friday, five-weeks after they are open. Cellar Offering 262 will close on December 14, 2018.
- Once all orders are processed, Purchase Orders (POs) are prepared for each of the 12 jurisdictions, one for each supplier. Depending upon the Cellar Offering this could involve upwards of 60 or more POs per Cellar Offering. These POs are processed the Wednesday or Thursday after the Cellar Offering closes
- Suppliers then begin the process of preparing our members' wines for shipment to Canada. Shipments from various suppliers in the same coun-

try and/or region are consolidated for shipment to each of the 12 jurisdictions. This process can take several weeks.

- For European suppliers, wines will start arriving in Canada about eight to 12 weeks after the POs are received. Shipments from the Southern Hemisphere can take longer.
- The estimated time that these wines are expected to arrive in Canada is indicated in the Cellar Offering. This is not the time that members should expect their wines to be available for pick up. This simply indicates that the wine has arrived on Canadian soil – it must still travel to your Pick Up Location.

At this stage, Opimian's control over the process is limited to a role of consulting and communicating with the provincial and territorial liquor authorities. Opimian communicates with those authorities on a regular basis for updates regarding the delivery status of the wines. Whenever we receive new information, we update the delivery status for each wine in our Members' Wine Files.

Each provincial and territorial liquor authority has their own process for clearing the wines through customs, bringing them to their central warehouse and dividing the wine up to be shipped to the various Pick Up Locations. Depending upon the jurisdiction, this can take a few weeks or a few months. Possible release dates for wines are estimated to be no earlier than six weeks after arrival in Canada. For the larger jurisdictions (Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and BC) a more realistic anticipated release date would be

10 to 12 weeks after arrival in Canada.

Opimian and our provincial/territorial partners work hard to minimize this delay. However, there many reasons why release dates differ. Among those reasons are:

- Different testing requirements;
- Desire to wait for a minimum number of cases to be received before issuing a release;
- A one release per month policy;
- Holidays; and
- Other demands on the liquor authorities' schedule.

Once a liquor authority advises Opimian when they plan on delivering wines to the various distribution point, we are able to confirm when the wines will be released and when members can pick those wines up. Due to the breadth of our wonderful vast country, wine may be available earlier at some locations and later at others.

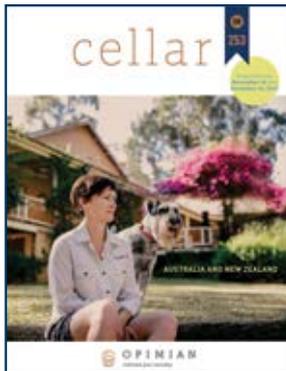
Finally, and this is the best part, when you receive notification of a release you simply login to the Opimian website, click on "My Pickup Notice", print the applicable Pickup Notice and go get your wine. You can then open a bottle and enjoy it, or you can store it in your cellar to enjoy when it reaches its best.

To see a summary of the delivery information for the 2019 Cellar Offering Season, login to www.opim.ca/cellarofferings and click on "2019 ORDERING AND DELIVERY SEASON".

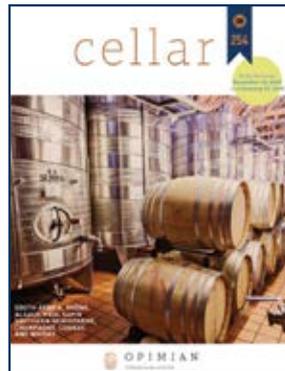
2019

| CELLAR OFFERING | ORDER FROM-UNTIL | POSSIBLE RELEASE DATES | COUNTRIES/ REGIONS |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| 262 | November 9 – December 14 | Earliest – End of April Most Likely – End of May to Mid June | New Zealand & Australia |
| 263 | December 14 – January 18, 2019 | Earliest – End of May Most Likely – Mid June to Mid July | South Africa, Paul Sapin Grape Varieties, Alsace, Rhone, Champagne, Cognac, Whisky |
| 264 | January 18 – February 22 | Earliest – Early July Most Likely – End of July to Mid August | Argentina & Chile |
| 265 | February 22 – March 29 | Earliest – End of July Most Likely – Mid to End of August | Italy & Chablis |
| 266 | March 29 – May 3 | Earliest – End of August Most Likely – Mid September | Portugal, Spain, Macon |
| 267 | May 3 – June 7 | Earliest – End of September Most Likely – Mid to End of October | Italy, Austria & Germany |
| 268 | June 7 – July 12 | Earliest – Mid October Most Likely – Mid November | Bordeaux, Bergerac, Beaujolais & Australia |
| 269 | July 12 – August 16 | Earliest – End of November Most Likely – Mid December to Early January | Burgundy, Languedoc-Roussillon, Loire & Provence |
| 270 | August 16 – September 20 | Earliest – Early January 2020 Most Likely – Mid to End of January 2020 | United States & Spain |

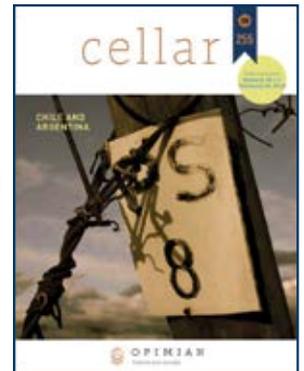
A LOOK BACK AT LAST YEAR'S CELLAR OFFERINGS



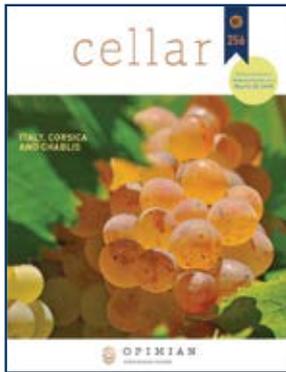
Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9396 Berton Vineyard's
Winemakers Reserve Shiraz, 2016



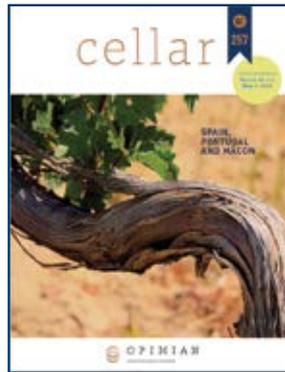
Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9434 Warwick First Lady
Cabernet Sauvignon, 2016



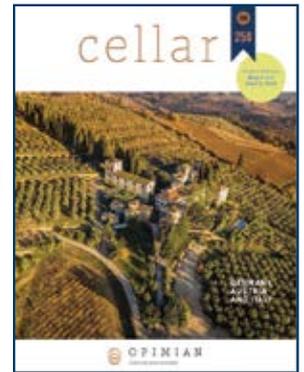
Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9547 Lirico Malbec, Vista Flores,
Valle Uco, 2017



Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9613 Folies Parisiennes,
Le Rouge des Héritiers Lamblin



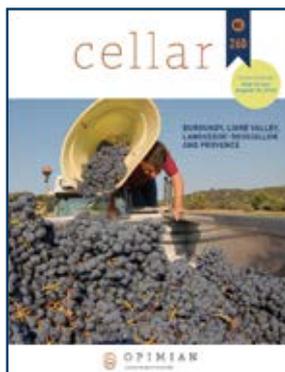
Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9647 Montblanc 362 Tempranillo/
Cabernet, DO Catalunya, 2017



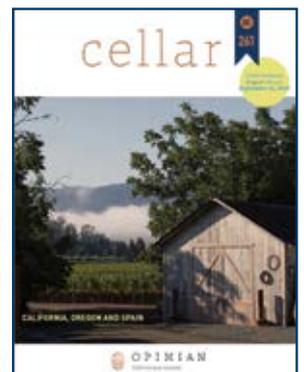
Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9722 Graffeta Nero D'Avola,
DOC Sicilia, 2015



Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9768 Prince Pirate Rouge Cuvée
L-A.B. Vin Rouge de France



Most Ordered Wine ~ Lot 9840
Vignobles Canet Merlot Cabernet
Sauvignon, Oak Reserve, IGP, Pays
D'OC, 2017



Most Ordered Wine ~
Lot 9873 Opimian California Red



WHERE IN THE WORLD DOES THIS WINE COME FROM?

I've been contemplating what to order from the current Cellar Offering 260 and noticed something different in the designation of wines from Languedoc-Roussillon. Instead of the familiar AOC, I see "IGP Pays d'Herault", "IGP Pays d'Oc", "AOP Corbieres", and "AOP Minervois". Could you explain these designations?

Murray Groom

Pretty much across the world, wines are labelled with a "Geographic Indication" (GI), which refers to the region or place of origin. They can be as broad as the country of origin or as narrow as a single vineyard. The EU has ruled that GI can be divided into two categories – Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographic Indication (PGI). These designations, while legal for use on labels, rarely appear in favour of long-established traditional labelling terms. In France, the PDO equivalent is Appellation d'origine contrôlée (AC or AOC). This is the more common labelling term used in most of France rather than the French term for PDO, Appellation d'origine protégée (or AOP). France's traditional term for PGI has been "Vin de Pays". While that is still used in some locations, more wines are labelled with the French term for PGI which is Indication géographique protégée (or IGP).

Languedoc-Roussillon have some of the youngest GI's in France. For the most part, they have adopted the EU recognized category designation. Therefore, when you see a wine labelled with AOP in Languedoc-Roussillon, this is equivalent to AOC or AC in other parts of France and indicates wines from smaller areas with more tightly defined regulations. If it is labelled IGP "Pays - village name" or IGP "Pays d'Oc", these are broader regional GIs that have less stringent regulations. The primary difference in Languedoc-Roussillon is that in the AOP, only regionally accepted varieties can be used, whereas in the IGP designation, international varieties (Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon) can be used.

The following chart summarizes the GI usage in the top four wine-producing countries in the EU:

| Country | PDO | PGI |
|---------|--|-------------------------------------|
| FRANCE | AC or AOC and AOP | Vin du Pays or IGP |
| GERMANY | Qualitätswein and Prädikatswein | Landwein |
| ITALY | Denominazione di Origine Controllata (DOC) and Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG) | Indicazione Geografica Tipica (IGT) |
| SPAIN | Denominación de Origen (DO) and Denominación de Origen Calificada (DOCa) and Vino de Pago (VP) | Vino de la Tierra (VdlT) |



THE ART OF WINETASTING

This edition of Master's Corner first appeared in issue 307, November 2012.



The samples at the International Wine Competition



The first of many blind tastings at the International Wine Competition



From left to right: Jane Masters MW, Keith Isaacs MW and Oz Clarke



Jane uses her well-trained sense of smell to identify a wine

As a wine professional, I spend much of my time assessing wines, be it for Opimian Cellar Offerings, benchmarking wines for wine producers, judging wines in competitions or simply evaluating a wine for personal enjoyment over dinner with friends.

I am often asked how much of what I do is an inherent skill and how much is down to training. Certainly, from a very early age, I have been interested in smells and tastes, sniffing everything I came across. My brother was the same, so it must be in our genes although he has not made it a career. As part of my wine-making Oenology course in Bordeaux, our palates were trained each week to identify certain smells at lower and lower concentrations. Tasting evaluation of wines was more technical than descriptive, often detecting wine faults rather than describing the positive attributes of a wine.

Over the years, a variety of scoring systems have been developed by different people with scores out of 10, 20 or Parker's system out of 100. While I do sometimes score wines out of 20, I find looking at scores alone or out of context can be misleading; there is debate as to the usefulness of this to the wider wine-drinking public. Quality factors to consider while tasting include colour, brightness, intensity of aroma and flavour, complexity, finesse, balance and aging potential. But factors such as typicity (the degree to which a wine reflects its varietal origins) of style and value for money are also important. A score may seem simple and easy to understand, but it doesn't tell us what a wine is going to taste like. Nor does it consider what style of wines you may enjoy.

Over a two-week period, more than 10,000 wines are judged at the International Wine Competition in London each year. As a panel chair, I judge with a team of three or four other professional wine tasters, each day evaluating around 120 wines. We each taste the wines quietly, noting our scores and writing tasting descriptions to reflect our scores. Wines are set up in flights of 6 to 12 and we are given some information for context such

as origin, grape varieties and vintage. Inevitably some people are more severe in their scoring than others, but generally, even if the absolute scores awarded are different, the same wines are preferred and scored highest by each taster and after a few flights a certain calibration takes effect. For me, the most interesting part is sharing views and tasting descriptions. Every year, I learn more from my fellow judges. Sometimes it's a new vocabulary that hits the nail on the head in describing a particular character; or I discover a particular aspect of a wine that I may have previously overlooked.

Tasting is subjective –while we try to reduce outside influences we are all prejudiced. Wherever possible I taste wines blind and use standard INAO tasting glasses, but my preferences in terms of style and maturity may be very different to yours. The type of glass we use, the environment we are in and our mood all influence how we perceive and assess a wine. In biodynamics, a spiritual-ethical-ecological approach to agriculture, food production and nutrition, the phase of the moon and stars are believed to have a major impact on how a wine tastes on a given day. The biodynamic calendar breaks the year down into fruit, flower, leaf and root days. In the UK, major trade tastings are often timed to avoid tasting on the leaf or root days, when wines are thought to be more closed and the fruit masked.

On top of this, wines change. Any given day, we evaluate a wine as we see it at that time, judging how it will evolve and for Opimian awarding M & D ratings. These predictions are based on our previous experience, but only time will tell if we are correct. Even winemakers themselves, who know their own wines more intimately than anyone, can be surprised at the evolution of a wine – either positively or negatively. And of course, storage conditions will also have an impact on a wine's development.

Wine has history and traditions. It is shared as part of many social occasions, rituals and cultures. It creates atmosphere. Wine tasting may be a combination of art, science and crystal ball gazing, but is also so much more.