



Wines for autumn

Jean Smullen looks at the latest Wine Market Report from Drinks Ireland, reveals some interesting wine market news, and highlights some wines to stock for the autumn season.

THE 2019 Wine Market Report from Drinks Ireland - Wine makes for interesting reading. 2019 saw a +1.42% increase in wine sales, which means the total market for wine in 2019 once again reached nine million cases (still slightly below the market peak in 2017 of 9.1m cases).

In addition, wine has made some ground in its overall share of the alcohol beverage market increasing by +0.2% to 27.2%, making it the nation's second favourite alcohol beverage, after beer. 83% of all wine sold in 2019 was in the off-trade sector. The popularity of rosé boomed and it now has a 6% market share. White wine is still the most popular, with a 48% market share, and red wine consumption stands at 46%.

The other constant is that Ireland is still the most taxed European nation when it comes to buying wine. Our excise rates on alcohol are the highest in Europe; Irish consumers pay €3.19 in excise per standard bottle of wine (13% ABV). Put bluntly, spend €12 on a bottle of wine and the Government is taking 49% of this in tax. It's even worse at cheaper price points, which is what most people can afford. If you decide to treat yourself to a bottle of wine at the weekend to share with friends or family and pay €9 (which is the average price point), 54% of this cost goes straight into the Irish exchequer. In 2019, the wine sector paid €378m, a marginal increase of €2m on the previous year, into Government coffers. Over the past decade, wine excise has amounted to tax payments of over €3 billion in terms of revenue. The Irish wine drinker continues to generously support the Irish economy, that's for sure!

In terms of what the Irish consumer is drinking, the biggest news was that Spain moved into second place for volume sales, overtaking Australia, who had enjoyed number one on this market for over 25 years before Chile took the top slot in 2014.

Graham Norton hits 10m bottles

GRAHAM Norton's collaboration with Kiwi producers, Invivo & Co., goes from strength to strength as the business partners are set to produce their ten millionth bottle of wine this year, a landmark moment since their first run of 14,000 bottles of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc in 2014.

The news comes as Norton is set to release his sixth vintage of Graham Norton's Own Sauvignon Blanc with Invivo & Co this September in the UK and Ireland, after making it at home this year, thanks to the pandemic. Invivo Co-founders Tim Lightbourne and Rob Cameron had couriered six Sauvignon Blanc samples to Graham, harvested in Marlborough, New Zealand, in March this year, along with a winemaking kit filled with beakers, which Graham set-up at home. Over a two-hour Zoom call, the trio collaborated to create and sign off Graham Norton's Own Sauvignon Blanc 2020, distributed in Ireland by Barry & Fitzwilliam.



Graham Norton held a virtual meeting with Invivo co-founders Tim Lightbourne and Rob Cameron to create the sixth vintage of Graham Norton's Own Sauvignon Blanc.

On the Vine

From the mid-1990s, Wine Australia was one of the most active generic bodies here and contributed enormously to creating greater visibility for Australian wine through their marketing efforts. However, the reality of the market was that most Australian wines sales were entry level, varietal brands. In the last five years, that changed; pre-Covid, the Irish consumer was choosing to 'drink less, but better'; Wine Australia started to chase the €15-20+ category to help Australian producers grow their price points. Australia's move away from volume sales towards the more premium end of the market reflects their fall in volume sales, with Australia now increasingly focused on the value market.

Spain was perfectly poised to step into second place; unlike Australia, their market share is based on both a mix of brands and wines in the mid-price and premium category. Spain has a significant amount of entry level private label value wines on sale here in the supermarkets from regions such as La Mancha and Valdepenas. However, they are also quite strong in the mid-price sector. An example of this is the enormous popularity of wines from the DOCa Rioja region; Ireland is the 11th most important market globally for Rioja wines.

However, sales of Spanish wine are not just about one region, the growth in popularity of Albariño from DOC Rias Baixas and Verdejo from DO Rueda, have also been a factor in the increase in sales of Spanish wine here. Other key regions include DO Ribera del Duero, DO Navarra and the DO Penedes region, all known for their mid-priced and premium wines.

Chile continues to be market leader with 27.5% of the volume market. This is due to the enormous popularity of two Chilean producers: Santa Rita, which is the number one wine brand on the Irish market, and Concha y Toro, who are in second place. After Chile, the order of volume sales by country of origin, breaks down as follows: Spain is second with 14%, Australia is third with 12.8%, just ahead of France on 12.6%, with Italy completing the top five on 9.8%.

Industry News

The agency for the Coravin Wine Preservation System has moved to Cassidy Wines, who took over distribution for this unique wine preservation system on August 1, 2020. Coravin allows restaurants and wine bars to pour wine by the glass without pulling the cork. Thanks to Coravin's

proprietary technology, customers can now taste, share, compare and enjoy a range of wines without opening the bottle, which preserves the wine for future use. The standard model is priced at €120 and the aerator is €10.90 for a two-pack. Coravin has a range of accessories at varying price points. For more information, contact Amanda Cardiff at Cassidy Wines.

Liberty Wines, who already represent Château de Beaucastel and Miraval, have taken over the distribution in Ireland and the UK of the Famille Perrin portfolio of wines, covering all the best appellations from Côtes du Rhône to Châteauneuf du Pape. David Gleave MW, Managing Director of Liberty Wines, said that he has long admired the Perrin family, whose signature stamp of quality is derived from their work in the vineyards of the Southern Rhône, and looks forward to introducing the wine range to their customer base in Ireland.

On August 24, leading Irish wine distributor Gilbeys of Ireland officially changed their name to Bibendum Ireland. The company is owned by C&C Group. The change to Bibendum Ireland follows the partnership between Gilbeys and Bibendum, after C&C's acquisition of the Matthew Clark and Bibendum businesses in 2018. The new company portfolio combines the established brands distributed by Gilbeys of Ireland with Bibendum's range of premium artisanal wines.

Spanish Wine Week is back, Wines of Spain will be running a series of wine events, tastings and promotions from October 12-18, 2020. A new feature of this year's event will include two tastings and seminars for the trade. More information from Sara Crespo: screspo@comercio.mineco.es.

Autumn wines

Now that autumn is here, consumer wine preferences change. As the evenings draw close and the kids go back to

school, people look for comfort foods and comfort wines. The landscape has changed utterly in 2020 and so too have wine choices. The popularity of rosé means that it is no longer seasonal and now sells all year round. The preference for white wine means sales of the popular white varietals continue during autumn and winter. Wine brands remain strong post-Covid and many of the supermarkets have adopted a simplify and rationalise approach, with tried and trusted brands dominating our shelves.

A recent report by Wine Intelligence indicates that once the global restrictions are over, the switch to at-home drinking will remain a medium to



Brand new from Comans Beverages is Oops!, a Chilean wine brand that is sure to appeal to Irish consumers.

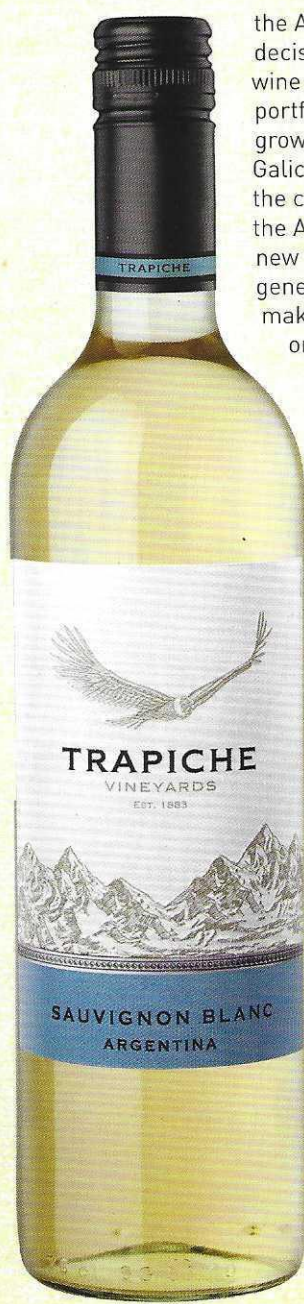
On the Vine



The premium Argentine brand, Trapiche, from Comans Beverages, will benefit from promotional activity this autumn.

long-term trend. They also suggest that the pre-Covid boom for alternative and sustainable methods of wine production (e.g. natural and organic wines) may not survive the crisis, as the increasingly price-conscious consumer returns to fundamental choices; plainly speaking, a return to brand loyalty and price monitoring.

Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard have just launched a brand-new addition to the Campo Viejo range, Campo Viejo Albariño. The white comes from the DO Rias Baixas and is made from 100% Albariño. Reflecting the enormous interest in this Spanish wine region and



the Albariño grape, the decision to add a white wine to the Campo Viejo portfolio reflects the growing importance of the Galician wine region. Given the current popularity of the Albariño grape, this new wine is bound to generate significant sales; make sure you have it on your shelves this autumn.

Campo Viejo sells very well on the Irish market, where it is the 11th most popular brand. The range includes the Campo Viejo Crianza, Reserva and Gran Reserva and all the wines are produced on their estate on the outskirts of the town of Logrono in the heart of Rioja Alta.

Given the popularity of Chile here, it is no surprise that a brand-new Chilean wine brand has just landed on the Irish market. Comans Beverages is highlighting its new Chilean brand, Oops! The brand was created when the wine maker "accidentally" mixed up the blend. The name will certainly appeal

to a younger audience and Oops! has a red and a white wine in the portfolio. The white is made from grapes sourced in Leyda, one of Chile's premium white wine regions, and is made from a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. The red is made from a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Malbec. Both will retail in the €8-10 price point.

Argentina still continues to grow apace and the demand for Argentine wine shows no sign of abating. Comans Beverages' premium Argentine brand, Trapiche, won New World Winery of the Year in 2019 at the Wine Enthusiast Wine Star award. This autumn, promotional

activity will focus on both the Trapiche Reserve range and the core varietals, using some new POS. Trapiche Sauvignon Blanc and Malbec are available in SuperValu and Spar (RRP €12 but regularly €9 on promo). The Reserve range is available in Dunnes, Fine Wines, Molloy's and Nolan's Clontarf (RRP €13-14).



La Côte Sauvage Cairanne, is a new wine from Comans Beverages, which is produced in the Rhône Valley.

On the Vine

Comans Beverages has also added three new wines produced in the Rhône Valley by Boutinot aimed at independent off licences. They are Les Coteaux Côtes du Rhône Villages (RRP €17-19), La Côte Sauvage Cairanne (RRP €22.99) and Le Cerisiers Côtes Du Rhône Rosé

(RRP €15).

Bibendum Ireland is running a promotion for Doña Paula, its range of Argentine wines, with NOFFLA in September. Look out for a case offer price of €95 (RRP €14 per bottle) for the 2016 Doña Paula Estate

Black Edition, 2016 Doña Paula Estate Cabernet Sauvignon and 2016 Doña Paula Estate Malbec. They also have a case offer price of €136 (RRP €40 per bottle) on the 2012 Doña Paula Selección de Bodega Malbec and finally a case offer price of €65 (RRP €19 per bottle) for the 2014 Doña Paula 1100 Malbec.

Classic Drinks is now distributing wines from one of Bordeaux's most recent Wine Geese wineries: Château Puynard. Andrew Eakin and his wife, Naomi Murtagh, both from Kingscourt, Co. Cavan, started their wine careers in London when they set up the Bottle Apostle group of off licences in the UK. In 2016, they

bought Château Puynard, which has had a seven-generation history of winemaking. The Eakins intend to carry this legacy into the future with their commitment to the environment; they will receive their official organic certification this year. Classic Drinks has three wines from the estate in its portfolio: Château Puynard Traditional (RRP €21-22), Château Puynard The Steps (RRP €25-26), and Château Puynard Prestige (RRP €40-41).



Bibendum Ireland is running a promotion for Doña Paula with NOFFLA in September, with special offers available for the 2016 Doña Paula Estate Black Edition, 2016 Doña Paula Estate Cabernet Sauvignon and 2016 Doña Paula Estate Malbec.

Kylie Minogue Wines launch new variants

THE latest two wines in the Kylie Minogue Wines portfolio, the Signature Sauvignon Blanc and the Signature Merlot, have been launched, completing the long-awaited Kylie Minogue Wines' Signature Range, which also includes the wildly popular and best-selling Signature Rosé, debuted in May by pop icon Kylie Minogue. The Signature Sauvignon Blanc originates from Gascony, in the south-west of France, while the Signature Merlot features grapes grown in the sun-drenched Pays d'Oc region in the south of France. Kylie Minogue Wines are distributed in Ireland by Barry & Fitzwilliam. For more information, visit www.kylieminoguwines.com.

