

July 17 2010 wine

A summer evening is epitomised by the waft of flowers, night scented stock and nicotiana mingling with the diffused aromas of meat sizzling gently on a barbecue. As a slight cool of the evening sets in there is nothing light a touch of fresh red wine to bring out the flavour of the meat and summer vegetables. A slightly cool red wine is definitely the cool drink for summer, and there is nothing better than a Beaujolais to personify all the flavours of the flowers and fruits of the season.

Fleurie is so named as the wine has a most distinct floral aroma, of violets, geranium, and all those pretty herbaceous flowers of summer. It is one of the ten Cru wines of Beaujolais Villages, each of which is named after its village and has a distinct character of the terroir. Morgon has a deeper ripe fruit flavour, while Moulin a Vent is powerful and structured.

The 2009 vintage was a joy for all in the Beaujolais area. It was the best for over thirty years and superb wines were produced in all areas. There are definite specialists who are based in the area itself such as Henry Fesse who has holdings in nine of the crus. The man who really put Beaujolais on the map was Georges Duboeuf who has presence everywhere and buys from all areas for his renowned cuvees. There are the Burgundians of the famous houses such as Louis Jadot, Joseph Drouhin and Louis Latour who also have vineyards in Beaujolais to complement their great wines of the Cote D'Or.

Wines from reliable names will all be superb from the 2009 vintage and now they are just appearing on the shelves. Compare them to the 2008 vintage which was fine, but the difference between the two really demonstrates what a great vintage is. Also the distinctive character of each region or Cru wine is very well defined, and this year, if ever it is the time to try a wine from each of the ten villages, as well as the delicious straight Beaujolais Villages.

Beaujolais Villages, Combe aux Jacques, Beaujolais Villages 2009 £9.09

Fleurie, Henry Fesse, 2009 £9.99

Morgon Les Charmes Louis Latour 2009 £9.99

Chiroubles, Georges Duboeuf 2009 £9.99