



SUSIE & PETER

New English wine guide hits the shelves for English Wine Week

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

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A brand new guide to English wine has been released to coincide with English Wine Week (which runs from 26 May-3 June 2018).

Published by the International Wine & Food Society (IWFS), *The Essential Guide to English Wine* is written by Masters of Wine and award-winning authors Susie Barrie and Peter Richards, and edited by Susanna Forbes.

The pocket-sized monograph aims to make a virtue of concision. Its 72 pages nonetheless cover key aspects of English wine – from the history to modern developments via climate change, geology, grape varieties, viticulture, winemaking, recent vintages – while the core of the book profiles the country's leading producers. Wine tourism has its own section ('There's never been a better time to visit English wine country,' declare the authors), as does a listing of key overseas distributors to reflect the growing importance of exports. A map of the main wine regions, designed by Dr Alistair Nesbitt of Climate Wine Consulting, sits at the heart of the publication.

Barrie and Richards don't shy away from knotty issues, like the risks associated with over-production, commercial viability, high production costs, unpredictable weather, 'wildly fluctuating yields' and even Brexit. The guide features input from the likes of champagne producer (and erstwhile Nyetimber consultant from the early days) Jean-Manuel Jacquinet, geologist Dr Alex Maltman, climate change and viticulture expert Dr Alistair Nesbitt and leading viticulturist Duncan McNeill. It also includes the new English wine projects by champagne houses Taittinger (Domaine Evremond) and Pommery (Louis Pommery England).

As well as being distributed to the 6,000-strong international membership of the IWFS, which has branches from Memphis to Massachusetts and Shanghai to Harare, the guide is also available to both public and trade in the UK.

The guide can be purchased from the IWFS website via the following link:

<https://www.iwfs.org/about/publications/monographs>

The cover price is £6.99 but trade and bulk discounts are available. An e-book will also be available via various platforms in due course.

Highlights from *The Essential Guide to English Wine*

- England's wine vineyard covers around 2,275 hectares (5,622 acres). This is just 0.07% of the world's wine vineyard – but it is growing fast: plantings have tripled since 2004 and it's thought that more than a million vines per year will have gone in from 2017-2018.
- It may have been **the Normans, not the Romans**, who really got the English wine show on the road, during what's known as the 'Medieval Warm Period' when England's climate warmed up between the 10th and 13th centuries. A similar confluence of an enthusiastic producer base and a warming climate is being repeated now.
- **Climate change** is not just an opportunity but also a threat. Average growing season temperatures have gone up one degree in half a century. Yet there are also more extreme and unpredictable weather events. Milder early season weather, for example, can exacerbate the risk of potentially devastating spring frosts, as happened in 2017.
- If you've ever been perplexed by **the UK's ever-changing weather**, you're in good company. The British Isles lie beneath six competing air masses and, as a result, experience some of the most changeable and hard-to-predict weather patterns in the world. It's one of the trickiest places on the planet to be a weather forecaster. Just ask Michael Fish...
- Susie & Peter cite **Pinot Meunier** as a key grape to watch for English sparkling wine – as more and more producers enthuse about how this variety performs better in the UK than elsewhere, giving a unique combination of freshness, structure and perfume.
- The UK's vineyard and wine production has changed beyond recognition over the last three decades. From a production dominated by off-dry white wines, England is now all about the fizz, with **2/3 of production now sparkling wine**. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay – sparkling wine grapes par excellence, but which can also make excellent still wines – once covered barely 6% of the country's vineyard but now account for over half of all plantings.
- In the words of Boutinot's (French) winemaker Eric Monnin, who oversees production at Hennes in Sussex, England's wine scene is '**The new New World.**'

Excerpt from Susie & Peter's introduction

'What you have in your hands is a snapshot of a fast-moving young industry. We have tried to retain a sense of the broader perspective as well as the fine detail. Our aim is to pique your curiosity, bring key information to your attention and invite you to explore. Above all we encourage you, as the late Geoff Bowen of Pebblebed Vineyards put it, "To drink the view". It is a most magnificent vista.'

For purchases, enquiries & images, please contact Andrea Warren at the IWFS:

4 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4JU, UK Tel:+ 44 (0)20 7827 5732
Email: sec@iwfs.org Website: www.iwfs.org Twitter: @IWFSGLOBAL