



LE GRAND *NEWS*

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND LE GRAND NOIR NEWSLETTER

IT'S OUR WAY OF SHARING NEWS OF THE BRAND WITH OUR PARTNERS ACROSS THE GLOBE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU, WHAT YOU THINK OF IT, AND ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE FOR FUTURE EDITIONS.

WE'D ALSO BE VERY GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD JOIN OUR LES BERGERS DU GRAND NOIR LINKEDIN GROUP [HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/GROUPS/12872758/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12872758/) AND TELL US ANY STORIES YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT LE GRAND NOIR IN YOUR MARKET: INTERESTING CUSTOMERS, EVENTS, MEDIA COVERAGE, ANECDOTES... IF YOU HAVE PICTURES, PLEASE LET US HAVE THEM TOO. IF YOU ARE NOT IN THE GROUP YET, PLEASE SEND US YOUR LINKEDIN PAGE AND YOU'LL RECEIVE AN INVITE TO JOIN.

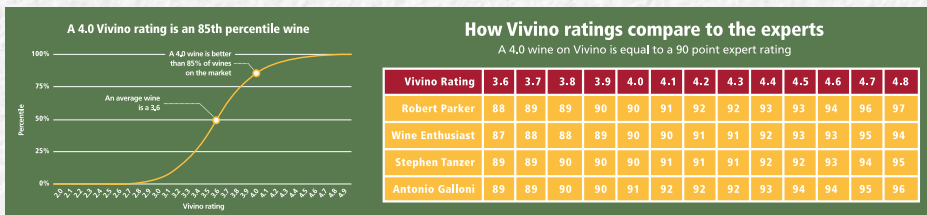


92 POINT RATING FOR THE 2022 LE PIANO ET LA CLARINETTE CHARDONNAY

So our first news is that we were delighted to receive a **92 point rating** for the **2022 le Piano et la Clarinette Chardonnay** from the **Wine Enthusiast** and a **Best Buy** award. This wine, which we think is the best Chardonnay we have produced so far, also won a **Silver medal** from **Mundus Vini** in Germany and a **Gold** from the **Concours Mondial de Bruxelles**. All the bottles now carry a Wine Enthusiast sticker celebrating the score.

WINE DRINKERS CLEARLY AGREE WITH THE EXPERT TASTERS.

16,700 Vivino users have given this wine **four stars** which, as Vivino states, is the equivalent of a 90 point score and an indication that the wine is *'better than 85% of the wines on the market'*.



vivino

Le Grand Noir Chardonnay

4.0 ★★★★★
16764 ratings



2023 WAS NOT AN EASY VINTAGE IN MANY PARTS OF EUROPE BECAUSE OF VERY HIGH TEMPERATURES AND A LACK OF WATER.

Instead of the usual 170mm of rain, we just had 65mm. The months of June and July were cool but there were very high temperatures from the 21st to 27th of August, where the temperature reached 44°C (111°F) in our region which, on the 23rd of August, was the hottest place in France. These conditions and their effect on the soils and vines illustrated the advantage of our 'Vin Des Terroir' philosophy that takes advantage of the wide range of terroirs in the Jean d'Alibert estate.

The harvest started on the 20th of August and ended with the Cabernet Sauvignon at the beginning of October. This lengthy period allowed us to harvest each plot at its ideal maturity.

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES, AS WE WORK ON THE BLENDS, WE ARE REALLY HAPPY WITH ALL OF THE WINES WE PRODUCED IN 2023 AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THEM IN THE MARKET.

Vineyards with clay soil, for example, suffered more, producing smaller berries and less wine, while in our gravel soils, on the other hand, the water went straight to the roots where it was needed. We quickly reacted to the heat and adapted our vintage techniques accordingly to maintain the freshness in grapes whose juice might otherwise have developed a 'cooked' character. Thanks to our know how and the attention we devoted to the harvest and vinification, we were able to produce aromatic whites and rosé with more minerality than last year and even better balance. The reds have deep colour with ripe fruit flavours and harmonious tannins. Happily, too, despite the heat, our higher-altitude vineyards have enabled us to maintain our moderate alcohol levels.

ROBERT JOSEPH SHARES THE AWARD-WINNING LE GRAND NOIR LE PIANO ET LA CLARINETTE CHARDONNAY AND LE DIAMANT LEGENDAIRE ROSÉ



Le Grand Noir Rosé

Jean D'Alibert

Pays d'Oc

Languedoc-Roussillon

France

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHARDONNAY AND THE LE GRAND NOIR LE PIANO ET LA CLARINETTE CHARDONNAY AND THE LE DIAMANT LEGENDAIRE ROSÉ THAT WON A GOLD MEDAL AT THE 2023 INTERNATIONAL ROSÉ CHAMPIONSHIP, WATCH THIS YOUTUBE CLIP FEATURING ONE OF LE GRAND NOIR FOUNDERS, ROBERT JOSEPH.

[HTTPS://YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=VB-B8LDAMY4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=vB-B8LDAMY4)

EVENTS

LE GRAND NOIR AND GREAT CHINESE CUISINE

Fuchsia Dunlop, the multi-award-winning food writer who, according to the New York Times has "*done more to explain real Chinese cooking to non-Chinese cooks than anyone*" selected the **2022 le Piano et la Clarinette Chardonnay** and the **2022 Soliste Tête Pinot Noir** for the London launch of her new book, *Invitation to a Banquet*. Dunlop said she



thought both wines were perfect partners for a wide range of Chinese dishes.

Our Chinese importers agree, while our partners in India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia and Philippines share their view that all of the **Le Grand Noir** wines are uniquely versatile when it comes to food-matching, or simply for enjoying by themselves.

TIM IN POLAND : WARSAW WINE EXPERIENCE

Poland has a booming economy, with uninterrupted growth since 1992, even after the financial crisis of 2007–2008. Its increase in GDP per capita has been twice as fast as the 15 most dynamic nations of the EU.

That economic success has been reflected in the wine market and we have been fortunate to have as our partner for **Le Grand Noir**, **TIM S.A.**, Poland's leading distributor.

In October, **TIM** took part in the *Warsaw Wine Experience*, where Robert Joseph gave a **Le Grand Noir** masterclass and attended a dinner with leading media, retailers and members of the *Association of Polish Sommeliers*.



MANDIRI GRAHA PERSADA IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA - TASTING FOR THE GRAPE SOCIETY AT SILK BISTRO

We were excited to see **Le Grand Noir** being launched in Indonesia by our importer *Mandiri Graha Persada* who hosted a grand event for *The Grape Society* at *Silk Bistro* in *Jakarta*. The invitation mostly included loyal customers for both on and off premises and led to 90% of the attendees listing the wines, especially *Le Soliste Tête Pinot Noir*.

EVENTS CONTINUED

COMANS IRELAND – A NEW START

Le Grand Noir is now in over 65 countries, but there are still a few gaps on the map. One of these, until now, was Ireland. But, after a meeting and a tasting earlier in the year, **Redmond Gavin**, head of **Comans**, one of that country's top importers decided to add our wines to his portfolio. The first shipment has only recently arrived and we are making plans to help our sheep become a familiar sight in Dublin's impressive collection of restaurants.



SCHENK BELGIUM - GENT JAZZ

Once again, Le Grand Noir was the wine partner at *Jazz Gent* where top performers included *Herbie Hancock, Winford Marsalis, Mavis Staples and Gregory Porter.*

Eric Lanin, CEO of Schenk Benelux has not only been one of **Le Grand Noir's** longest-standing and most effective partners, he has also become a personal friend of both *Hugh Ryman* and *Robert Joseph* who travelled to Belgium for the event.

VINETUM IN FINLAND – FINE WINE AND SPIRITS EVENT

Our partners in another dynamic market, **Finland**, are **Vinetum Group** which celebrates its 25th birthday this year. To mark the anniversary, the company organised a tasting event in April at **Hotel Kämp**, where **Le Grand Noir** was among nearly 50 producers and brands that were poured for clients including **Alko Oy, HoreCa** and consumers.



When Eric first took on **Le Grand Noir** in 2010, he sold round 50,000 bottles in the first year. Just over a dozen years later, despite the pandemic and the energy crisis, that figure is now 230,000 – and growing. Most bottles are sold in the on trade, where the brand has been extraordinarily successful. This year marks Eric's retirement, and we will certainly miss him and the enthusiasm he has shown for the brand. We wish him well and look forward to catching up with him over a glass of **Le Grand Noir** when we make our next visit to see his successor.



WINE FOCUS: 'LE SOLISTE TÊTU' PINOT NOIR

WHEN WE BEGAN WORKING ON LE GRAND NOIR ALMOST 20 YEARS AGO, VERY FEW PEOPLE IMAGINED IT WAS POSSIBLE TO MAKE FINE PINOT NOIR IN LANGUEDOC.

WHY THE NAME? WHY 'LE SOLISTE TÊTU'?

Pinot Noir usually hates being blended, so it's famously a soloist. It's also stubborn - *têtu*-, about where it will reveal its unique cherry and raspberry flavours. Before us, no one thought of planting it in our ancient, high-altitude vineyards in Southern France.

Robert Joseph lived and worked for nearly six years in Burgundy where he developed his love for this variety and for the *Chardonnay* and learned how tricky the *Pinot Noir* in particular can be, and how rewarding to get right.



When we began working on **Le Grand Noir** almost 20 years ago, very few people imagined it was possible to make fine *Pinot Noir* in Languedoc - but that was also true for the pioneers of California, Oregon, New Zealand and Chile, all of whom are now making world class wines. The secret for us lay in finding a set of vineyards with varying soil, altitudes and microclimates.

So, instead of finding one spot in which our soloist could play at her best, we found several - like a musician might enjoy playing in a set of different venues. As with our *Chardonnay*, we're absolutely not trying to copy Burgundy, but we are using Burgundian winemaking techniques to make a world class *Pinot Noir* we are really proud of.

MARKET FOCUS: LE GRAND NOIR IN AFRICA

WHILE MANY WINE COMPANIES ARE STILL OBSESSED WITH BUILDING MARKETS IN ASIA, WE ARE ALSO EXPANDING IN ANOTHER FAST-GROWING REGION: AFRICA. OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, WE HAVE BEEN ENJOYING GROWING SUCCESS IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE, BURKINA FASO, GHANA, TOGO, BENIN, AND NIGERIA. ADDED TO THESE IS THE OPENING UP OF CONGO AND KENYA.

Between 2021 and 2022 sales in the region have more than doubled and Le Grand Noir is fast becoming one of the most visible labels – following the pattern of India, where it is now the country's *number one French wine*.

NEW MARKETS

– Our ambition for 2023 is to further consolidate brand awareness in our existing markets and to continue to build on this success by adding new countries to the list. Among our prospects are Cameroon, Senegal, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, and Ethiopia.

– As in Asia, the Le Grand Noir wine style is very well suited to the spicy cuisine of all these countries. Reds – led by *Cabernet Sauvignon*, *Merlot* and *Malbec* are the biggest sellers, but *Rosé* and *Moscato* are growing too, especially among female consumers, while our sparkling wine is a popular choice for celebrations.

Visitors to Ghana who are unfamiliar with local customs are often surprised at the amount of wine – including sparkling – that is drunk at funerals where professional 'farewell planners' are

often hired to ensure that the life of the deceased is appropriately celebrated by those who loved them.

Another factor we have discovered is that these are markets where our wooden cases are particularly popular because of their association with superior quality.

LOOKING FORWARD

Thanks to our go-ahead and imaginative agent and brand Ambassador *Bo Messan*, we have a wide range of marketing initiatives in the region, including local events organized by merchants (tastings, window displays: posters, POS, etc.), radio spot campaigns in Benin and, targeted Facebook advertising campaigns across all the markets.

Next, we are looking forward to having a dedicated stand in the Duty Free store at Lomé airport – the Togo capital is a major hub for many travellers in the region. We're also considering participating in advertising campaigns for the *African Cup 2024* and appointing an African painter or sculptor as an ambassador for the brand.

| 31 Togo | 32 Ghana | 33 Burkina Faso | 34 Benin | 45 Cameroon | 46 Ivory Coast | 47 Nigeria | 62 Niger | 63 Mali

LE GRAND NOIR AT HOME IN FRANCE

FESTIVAL DE CAUNES-MINERVOIS

Even closer to the winery, every summer since 2019, the lovely village of *Caunes Minervois* whose abbey and its courtyard has been home to its own intimate festival. The focus is on the best of classical and jazz music in the spirit in interculturalism, sharing and conviviality. This year, the star was *Giuseppe Testa*, a Sicilian composer who presented new work, specially commissioned for the event. *Le Grand Noir* is a founder-sponsor, and many glasses were enjoyed by audiences as they basked in the music.



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