

# Where serious wine buyers shop

Jane MacQuitty



Where do billionaires go shopping for wine? You could be forgiven for thinking they stick only to the most recherché auction rooms — the punters who splashed out £192,000 for a bottle of 1947 Cheval Blanc and £297,000 for a bottle of the cult California 1992 Screaming Eagle can't have been short of a bob or two. Yet judging by the handful of super rich that I spoke to at a recent charity auction, you'll find them in less obvious places too. One does his wine buying at Laithwaite's Wine, better known to readers of this newspaper as *The Sunday Times Wine Club*, while another liked Majestic Wine Warehouse.

The majority, though, entrust their needs to merchants such as Berry Bros & Rudd at 3 St James's Street, London SW1 (0800 280 2440), which has been stocking the cellars of the aristocracy since 1698, and newer players such as Hedonism Wines in Mayfair, owned by the Russian mobile phone millionaire Yevgeny Chichvarkin. Well-heeled oenophiles guild their bespoke cellars with limited-edition single vineyard champagnes such as Krug's Clos d'Ambonnay, whose inaugural 1995 vintage was priced at £892 a pop, or the



Berry Bros and Rudd, St James's, London

Anyone exploring Hedonism's Aladdin's cave of bottles at 3-7 Davies Street, London W1 (020 7290 7877) will swiftly understand what the wealthy want in their cellars. Swanky, never-again bottles here include a 1774 Jura at £72,553.80; an 1811 d'Yquem, £98,700; a rare 5-litre bottling of 1989 Pétrus for £47,787.90; and a double magnum of 2000 Le Pin for £22,101.70.

Chichvarkin may not fit the traditional wine merchant mould in his Rasputin T-shirt but he is knowledgeable. Hedonism's aim is "to be here for anyone who loves wine", he says, and even we more quotidian folk can find much to enjoy in Cavalchina's top Bianco di Custoza, the delicious smoky 2011 Amedeo, £14.60, or the tangy, stone fruit and fresh pineapple elegance of a rare Napa 2012 Peter Franus Albariño, £23.30.

More discreet millionaires are more likely to drop into Berry Bros where they can dive into a 25,000 bottle burgundy sale. For me, its star white burgundy was the creamy 2009 Meursault, Clos du Cromin from Patrick Javillier, while the star red burgundy was the beetrooty Domaine des Croix 2010 Beaune, 1er Cru Bressandes, down to £30 and £28 respectively if you buy 12.

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## This week's best buys



2013 Calvet Sauvignon Blanc, Bordeaux, France  
Co-op £7.49

Finding good bottles on the Co-op's shelves is a struggle, but this sparky, just 11.5 per cent sauvignon with lots of lip-smacking, yet punchy, green bean and fennel-laced fruit is a gem.



2011 Château Vieux Manoir, Bordeaux, France  
Co-op £7.49

Delicious, dusky, curranty claret, from a good, not great vintage, with an elegant, tangy finish; just the ticket with a lunchtime plate of pork pie or beef carpaccio.



2013 Grosset Springvale Clare Valley Riesling, Australia

Liberty (020 7720 5350) and Noel Young Wines (01223 566744) £24.99; Wine Society 01438 741 177 £25

Jeffrey Grosset's rieslings are some of the Clare Valley's best, with so much dazzling, racy, floral, lime-licked fruit they almost outshine the German originals — a huge achievement for this valley, 100km north of Adelaide. The high, cool Springvale vineyard's zingy offerings are my favourite. 2013's long-growing season was one of Grosset's best so dive into this zesty, minerally, crisp and

## The keeper



2013 Château du Cléray Muscadet Sèvre-et-Maine Sur Lie, Loire, France



2012 Valpolicella Ripasso, Minini, Italy  
Majestic Wine £12.99 or two for £9.74 each