

garagiste

Sample Offer

Sebastien Riffault

Dear Friends,

You can classify today's offer under "core" or "important" as it represents the reason I continue to pound the cobblestones on a daily basis.

Are the wines easy to understand?

Definitely not (and they are not for everyone) but they brim with an excitement and a unique fire that fuels the most basic aspect of ingenuity – they are real.

Sebastien Riffault has become a foundation producer for us and this is our 5th series of wines from him – released on a bizarre and ever changing schedule that makes no sense and has no rhyme or reason.

This is a true artist that paints the landscape of his wine on his own time and we are grateful for his independent mind and spirit.

Sebastien plies his trade in Sancerre with 100% Sauvignon Blanc for the whites, but they are not what you would think of as "Sancerre". They lie somewhere between Chenin Blanc and Semillon with a dose of Rias Baixas and oloroso thrown in. They are taut and mineral but also unctuous, explosive and textural in the same sip. One thing is for sure, you've probably never had an experience with Sancerre quite like this.

As one of the original pioneers of the hyper-natural wine mantra in Sancerre, Riffault has had plenty of detractors and naysayers wondering what he's up to. What he's up to is producing wine for those that dream – those will be swept away by his wine's ability to take you somewhere outside of the present tense. He produces wine he loves and not for a movement that never existed in the first place (on a side note - I will not use the term "Natural Wine Movement" any more as the term has become so twisted and turned that it bears little resemblance to the original inspiration for the words. In truth, there is no organized "movement" but a groundswell of like-minded individuals throughout Europe that were gathered together, in thought, by wine writers - not by their own volition. While the majority of the producers do not mind the term, it is more genuine to allow each of them to decide what their own associations will be. For now, let's just call it a natural wine mantra).

Production is miniscule, at times only a few dozen cases, and he has relatively little distribution to speak of (most bottles are hand delivered to a few top wine shops/restaurants in Paris and also neighboring countries when he's on vacation – that's about it). He follows no trend, preferring to set his own course – one that other young winemakers admire but find too labor intensive and difficult to emulate. He does not plow very often and prefers to hand churn the earth in a more gentle fashion (did I say this was labor intensive?). His philosophy is organic and slow moving but his desire is for the wines to stand on their own merits not because they are part of a movement or BIO label (see above thoughts on Natural Wine Movement).

All of the wines have considerable interest, even the rouge, and I've tried to price the Akmenine at a level that should encourage wide experimentation by our Email List. If nothing else, you will learn something. For additional thoughts on Riffault and the wines below, please see my previous musing:

<http://www.grapestories.com/wine.asp?iWine=644585>

In addition, I encourage you to peruse community TN's on Sebastien Riffault as you will learn about his singular style as seen through the eyes of a wider group, which is always beneficial.

All wines are directly from Riffault's cellar with impeccable provenance:

Please note: this is not Riffault or Etienne Riffault – this is strictly Sebastien Riffault

2008 Sebastien Riffault Sancerre "Akmenine" -

Editor's Note: Price will appear here in an actual offer. Price has been removed in this sample offer.

We are making next to no margin on this wine as a subtle nudge to try it – you support enough other wine throughout the year that we can give one away now and again for pennies – it's usually \$25-30. This is from a 1.3 hectare parcel on limestone with the trademark Sebastien texture, majesty and mystery – a wine you will not easily forget.

2008 Sebastien Riffault Sancerre "Auksinis" -

Editor's Note: Price will appear here in an actual offer. Price has been removed in this sample offer.

A step above the Akmenine but not necessarily better. This is his massive golden (the definition of Auksinis) version of Sancerre that is almost a dessert wine without any RS. Truly a one of kind dry experience, especially when it is noted that this hails from Sauvignon.

2008 Sebastien Riffault Sancerre "Skeveldra" -

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VERY RARE – Sebastien's oldest parcel of vines (.7 hectare) grown on pure silex/flint (Skeveldra is "stone" in Lithuanian, the birthplace of his wife) - more difficult, sinewy, rocks, earth, tension, white fruit – for the cellar but what a ride it will be in 6-8 years.

2008 Sebastien Riffault Sancerre "Raudonas" (rouge/Pinot Noir)

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100% Pinot Noir with the inspiration of his father and the setting sun seen from the vineyard as guidance. No trends, no fads – purity wrapped in a completely hand-made framework that tastes as though it were produced in your basement a few moments prior to drinking. From painfully low yields, picked grape by grape and lightly pressed, why can't all wine in the world be this honest?

To order any of the above: niki@garagistewine.com

This parcel is set to depart the cave – it will arrive in late November (please check OARS for local pick up after December 10th). It will ship during the spring shipping season.

Out of state orders will be held for free under ideal storage conditions (56 degrees/70%humidity) until shipping is possible. Locals may pick up at their leisure.

For current local pick up and arrival/ship information, please see your OARS link below (at the bottom of this offer) - don't know how to access your OARS? Simply click the link and see your account. You can also paste the link into your browser. If you are having trouble with your link or your account, please contact: support@garagistewine.com

NO SALES TO RETAILERS OR WHOLESALERS

Thank you,
Jon Rimmerman
Garagiste
Seattle, WA