



NEWSLETTER

Second Event:

Well, our second event couldn't have been more exciting. Our venue was double booked and we found ourselves in the car park, loaded with wine and cheese and other goodies, looking at each other in utter disbelief!

Fortunately a solution was found, everyone rallied to make it work - thank you, lovely people - and our very enjoyable French Wine Tasting, where we explored the wines of the Loire Valley and Beaujolais areas went ahead, in a tiny room, where we all got to know each other that little bit better. It was so very cosy!

The tasting was most informative and Rod's tasting notes are attached to this Newsletter. They will also be included on our Website.

Rod also brought along some scent vials so we could practice detecting different aromas, expected to be in the wines that we would be drinking. It proved to be a very popular addition, which we intend to expand upon.

Our Website:

We have bitten the bullet and bought a domain name and a paid hosting. While you will be re-directed from the old website, better to use the new address:

<https://phoenixccwac.org> Keep it handy.

Hopefully this will eliminate the annoying "rubbish" that has been coming up on the old site on occasion.

BIG NEWS: New Venue:

Seems the availability of the Kariong Progress Hall is a permanent issue. We have been fortunate to secure another hall in a similar area and, most importantly, at a not too dissimilar cost.

The new hall is **Phillip House, home to the Rotary Club of Kariong Somersby , 21 Old Mount Penang Rd., Kariong.**

It can be a bit tricky to find, so allow a little extra time for your first visit.

Check out this link.

https://maps.app.goo.gl/6FUq9GQoJ9H4Ne bF9?g_st=am

MORE BIG NEWS: New Meeting Night:

Switching to the ***Ssecond Thursday of the month*** was floated at the meeting on Tuesday night and met with unanimous approval. So we have. Perhaps update your diary?

Membership:

Memberships are still available for \$25.00 for the year ending June 2026. You are very welcome as a Non-Member - it will just cost you more, which is fine by us.

Our Raffle:

Once again, Members have been very supportive of our raffle. Thank you. We do depend upon it to keep us going. This month David Fernie took out the Raffle Prize and the Lucky Door Prize was won by David Stephens.



NEWSLETTER

A selection of rather nice wines was displayed from which the winners could choose their prize. Rod had described each of them earlier in the night so both winners were able to make an informed choice.

Preview Degustation Dinner:

We have secured 25 places at a Degustation Dinner to be held on September 23, commencing at 6.00 pm sharp, at the Preview Restaurant, TAFE NSW, Ourimbah Campus. Cost is \$75.00 pp, including wines. Bookings were heavy at the Wine Club Meeting, and at the moment, only 7 places remain, so if you are interested, best book in quickly. The food is prepared and served by the students and is on an "alternative drop" arrangement. Some of our Members reported having enjoyed these degustation dinners in past years.

Please RSVP to: rsvppccwac@gmail.com
RSVP date is **September 2**, but perhaps don't leave it that long. Best check availability first, then pay directly to our account: Phoenix C.C. Wine Appreciation Club BSB 032527 Acc. No. 349176
First in - best dressed.

September Meeting:

Classic Australian Wines. The September meeting will be devoted to wines, each of which are representative of an Australian wine-producing region with a "signature grape" (or blend) as described in the monumental work, "How to Drink

Australian". **Please RSVP by Wednesday, September 3.**

Pre-Payment:

We remind you that RSVP and pre-payment are vital for each event. Our Banking details (as above) are also on our website, along with the RSVP email address: rsvppccwac@gmail.com

Rod's Survey:

Is still coming and should be available on our website soon. Please complete it when it appears. The information will assist us to provide the type of events that are of the most interest to you - our Members and Friends of Phoenix

Future Events:

Our Degustation Dinner:

Tuesday, September 23.

Wine Club Meeting:

Classic Australian Wines

Thursday, September 11.

NEW NIGHT NEW VENUE

Coming up sometime in the future:
Adelaide Hills Gruner Veltliner tasting.
Aussie Newcomers

Great to see our attendance numbers increasing. If it continues at this rate we will be very happy, indeed. Our Club has a nice vibe.





FRENCH WINE CONCEPTS

WINE APPELLATION (DENOMINATION)

HISTORY in EUROPE:

- ancients Greeks stamped amphorae with a seal of the region of origin if the wine they contained was thought to be of special quality
- in C16-18th, Hungary certified and set the borders of specific wine regions, classified specific vineyards, and regulated particular grape-growing and wine production methods
- in France:
 - specific Bordeaux wines were classified in 1855
 - early C20th laws protected the names of regional and communal wines
 - the *appellation d'origine contrôlée*, AOC / AC (controlled designation of origin) system introduced in 1935 (**to protect producers, not consumers**)
 - a lesser category, *vin délimité de qualité supérieure*, VDQS (delimited wine of superior quality) was launched in 1949
 - 1960's and 1970's regulations created a *vin de pays*, VdP (country wine) classification that could be applied at the regional, departmental or local levels
 - still, unfortified wines that do not fall into any of these categories were classified as *vin de table*, VdT (table wine)
- in 2009, the European Union attempted to introduce a standardised EU-wide classification system; for the French, this meant that:
 - AOC wines were to be migrated to the *appellation d'origine protégée*, AOP (protected designation of origin) designation (but AC / AOC is still in use!!)
 - VdP wines migrated to the *indication géographique protégée*, IGP (protected geographical indication) designation
 - VdT wines migrated to the *vin de France* (French wine) designation

- the VDQS classification was discontinued and VDQS wines had to seek promotion to the AOP level or fall back to the IGP level.

APPELLATION CONCEPT: the expression of the long-held belief that a wine's quality, reputation and other distinctive qualities are inextricably linked to its precise geographical origin.

The significant attributes of the geographical origin of a wine include:

- its climate: from the regional "macroclimate" to the local "microclimate" (affected by its geography, including its elevation, topography, direction of inclination and the presence of nearby forests and large bodies of water)
- its soil (including its fertility, water and heat retention properties, mineral composition and even its microbial population).

This led to the concept of *terroir*, the belief that no two sites are identical and that the wines produced from different sites reflect those differences. In Burgundy, some basic vineyards practically abut highly esteemed vineyards.

This idea was then extended to incorporate the influence of the grape-grower and winemaker (historically, these roles were often performed or overseen by the one person). It was widely accepted that over decades and centuries, the local wine producers had evolved their practices to suit the local *terroir*, resulting in:

- the selection of the most appropriate grape variety(s) and even clones
- the most appropriate vine tending practices (including the planted vine density, the pruning and training methods, the use of fertilizers, and pest and disease control preparations, etc)
- the optimal timing of harvest
- the employment of appropriate winemaking techniques

The conclusion was that local wine producers had learnt how to produce wines that were best suited to their little corner of the world, and the appellation system and its rules codified many of their practices to ensure that stylistic and qualitative integrity was maintained.

So, the most important feature of a French wine has been its appellation. For example, an AOP Chablis is not seen primarily as a Chardonnay from the Chablis commune, rather as a distinctive wine from the Chablis commune that will have been produced from Chardonnay grapes, by virtue of the Chablis appellation laws. These appellation laws are typically many and varied. Obviously, the foremost rule is that the grapes must have been sourced from within the strict geographical boundaries of the appellation, but can also include:

- which grape variety(s) may be grown and the proportions in which they can be blended to produce the wine of the appellation
- the maximum grape yields
- the minimum alcohol level
- the earliest harvest date (published for each appellation and each individual vintage based on the season's local weather conditions)
- other vineyard practises (vine density, pruning and training methods, permissibility of irrigation, etc)
- winemaking practices (must enrichment or adjustment, ageing in cask and/or bottle before release, etc)
- detailed labelling regulations

French appellation hierarchy: regional classifications (e.g. Bordeaux) may contain one or more sub-regional classifications (e.g. Haut Medoc) which may contain one or more *village* classifications (e.g. Pauillac) which may contain one or more *cru* classifications (e.g. Chateau Latour). The higher an appellation sits in the hierarchical structure, the more stringent its regulations will be. Wines sourced from within the geographical boundaries of an appellation that fail to comply with other appellation rules may be entitled to use a "lesser" appellation with which it does comply.

So, a wine's quality is inferred from the status of its appellation followed by the skill of the winemaker (embodied in their reputation and the price of their wines), then the quality of the specific vintage. This means that purchasers are expected to have accumulated extensive knowledge of the wines that interest them or be guided by the advice of retailers and wine critics. This status quo began to erode when New World wine producers adopted varietal labelling of their wines and these wines began to compete with, and even eclipse, the comparable Old World wines (e.g. Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated wines from Napa Valley and Coonawarra; Chardonnay from Napa Valley and Margaret River; sparkling wines from Sussex and Tasmania; Shiraz from Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale; etc.). Other New World practices (e.g. top quality multi-regional blends like Penfolds Grange) and more recently, the effects of climate change, are also challenging the concept of *terroir* and its foundation for the appellation system.

Loire Valley:

- the Loire River is France's longest river (just over 1,000 kms)
- 4 main sub-regions (Pays Nantais, Anjou, Touraine and Upper Loire)
- main wine styles ...

	SUB-REGION			
STYLE	Pays Nantais	Anjou	Touraine	Upper Loire
Dry white	Melon de Bourgogne (98%)	Chenin Blanc (95%)	Chenin Blanc (75%) Sauvignon Blanc (22%)	Sauvignon Blanc (99%)

Sweet white	-	Chenin Blanc (100%)	Chenin Blanc (100%)	-
Sparkling	-	Chenin Blanc (65%) Chardonnay (15%) Cabernet Franc (10%)	Chenin Blanc (97%)	-
Rosé	-	Cabernet Franc (70%) Grolleau Noir (20%) Cabernet Sauvignon (8%)	Cabernet Franc (65%) Gamay (20%) Malbec (8%)	Pinot Noir (75%) Gamay (20%)
Red	-	Cabernet Franc (95%)	Cabernet Franc (90%) Gamay (5%)	Pinot Noir (75%) Gamay (20%)

Sauvignon Blanc:

- green-skinned grape that probably originated in the Loire Valley (but it is also found in southwest France, including Bordeaux)
- it is now grown widely around the world (including parts of Spain and Italy, and in Chile, United States, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia), especially in regions that are cooler
- it is used to produce dry, crisp wines that can range in flavour from citrus and tropical fruit to a herbaceous style
- it is sometimes fermented and/or aged in oak barrels (e.g. in Bordeaux) and can then taste of stone fruits
- in some regions, it is blended with Semillon (e.g. in Margaret River) and can then be used to produce sweet wines (e.g. in Sauternes)
- it pairs well with many foods, but especially with tomato-based dishes and goat's cheeses

TASTING

Consider structural profile:

- sweetness (dry to medium to sweet)
- acidity (flat to rounded to fresh to sour)
- tannin (absent to mild to firm; powdery to bitter)
- umami (low to savoury or "meaty")
- alcohol (low < 11% to high > 14%)
- body (light to medium to full)

... then consider flavour profile:

- (fruity, vegetal, nutty, spicy, herbal, buttery, woody, etc)
- intensity (weak to medium to concentrated)
- persistence (short to medium to long).

Premium Réserve de la Famille Drouet Sauvignon Blanc 2023 (I.G.P. Val de Loire)

Source: Aldi (\$9.99)

11.5% abv (alcohol by volume); dry; very direct, vibrant acidity; quite light-bodied; lemon is the dominant flavour with hints of chalk dust and musk;

slightly more intensity than the average wine, but the finish is about average in length

Pierre Chainier, Chateau de la Roche Sauvignon Blanc 2023 (A.O.P. Touraine)

Source: Aldi (\$9.99)

12% abv; dry; fresh, but more rounded, acidity; light to medium-bodied; lemon fruit dominates the palate, but there is also an elderflower undertone; moderate intensity, and medium to persistent finish

Lacheteau Ohh! Poitou Loire Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2023 (A.O.P. Haut-Poitou)

Source: Dan Murphy's (\$19.00; RRP: \$21.99)

11% abv; dry; bright, quite direct acidity; light to medium-bodied; lemon is the primary flavour of this wine, but there is also a vegetal character in the background; moderate to high intensity with a medium to persistent aftertaste

Patient Cottat, Anciennes Vignes Pouilly-Fumé 2020 (A.O.C. Pouilly-Fumé)

Source: Dan Murphy's (\$37.10; RRP: \$38.99)

13% abv; dry; the acidity is fresh, but less aggressive on the palate; medium-bodied; a vegetal character is this wine's dominant flavour, but there are also smoky and lemony hints; moderate intensity, but quite persistent on the finish

Beaujolais:

- once regarded as the most southerly of Burgundy's sub-regions, now treated as a separate region
- the soils are mainly derived from granite and schist
- mainly red wines produced from the Gamay grape variety, but also a little rosé (also produced from Gamay) and white produced from Chardonnay
- the southern 40% of the region is all basic A.O.P. Beaujolais; of the northern 60%, the most easterly and southerly parts are generally A.O.P. Beaujolais-Villages; the remainder of the northern 60% is mostly assigned to the ten named Beaujolais "Cru" villages / communes
- the ten Beaujolais Cru's from north to south are: Saint-Amour, Juliéna, Chénas, Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Régnié, Côtes de Brouilly and Brouilly
- A.O.P. Beaujolais is the lightest style (especially Beaujolais Nouveau: it is produced and ready for distribution and the third Thursday in November following vintage and should be drunk within 6 months), then A.O.P. Beaujolais-Villages, and then the Beaujolais Cru's (A.O.P.

Morgon, A.O.P. Moulin-à-Vent and A.O.P. Côtes de Brouilly are typically the most structured of the Cru wines); the lighter the Beaujolais, the more chilling it can take

- the wines of Beaujolais are usually quite light-bodied and fruit-driven because of the nature of the Gamay grape and because a winemaking technique (semi-carbonic maceration) is widely adopted (except for some Cru wines) which minimises the extraction of tannins from the grape skins
- the wines of Beaujolais can be paired with cured meats, roast chicken and pork, Brie, Camembert, burgers and grilled meats, tuna, salmon, pasta dishes with goat's cheese, basil and/or sun-dried tomato, etc.

Gamay (Gamay Noir à Jus Blanc):

- dark-skinned grape that probably originated in Burgundy (it is documented in the C15th)
- it is cultivated in southern Burgundy (where it is sometimes blended with Pinot Noir to produce A.O.P. Bourgogne Passe-Tout-Grains) and in Touraine, and in Switzerland and Canada; there are also limited plantings in Australia and in Oregon (United States)
- it produces wines that are light-bodied, low in tannin and fruit-driven (especially when semi-carbonic maceration is employed)
- Gamay wines can be quite acidic, but semi-carbonic maceration can soften them
- most Gamay wines should be consumed within a few years of vintage (some Beaujolais Cru wines can be aged for up to ten years).

TASTING

Georges Dubœuf Beaujolais-Villages 2022 (A.O.P. Beaujolais-Villages)

Source: Dan Murphy's (\$24.70; RRP: \$25.99)

13% abv; dry; quite fresh acidity; quite light-bodied; quite mild tannins; berry flavours are to the fore, redcurrant and perhaps strawberry or raspberry; barely moderate in terms of concentration and about average in terms of its length

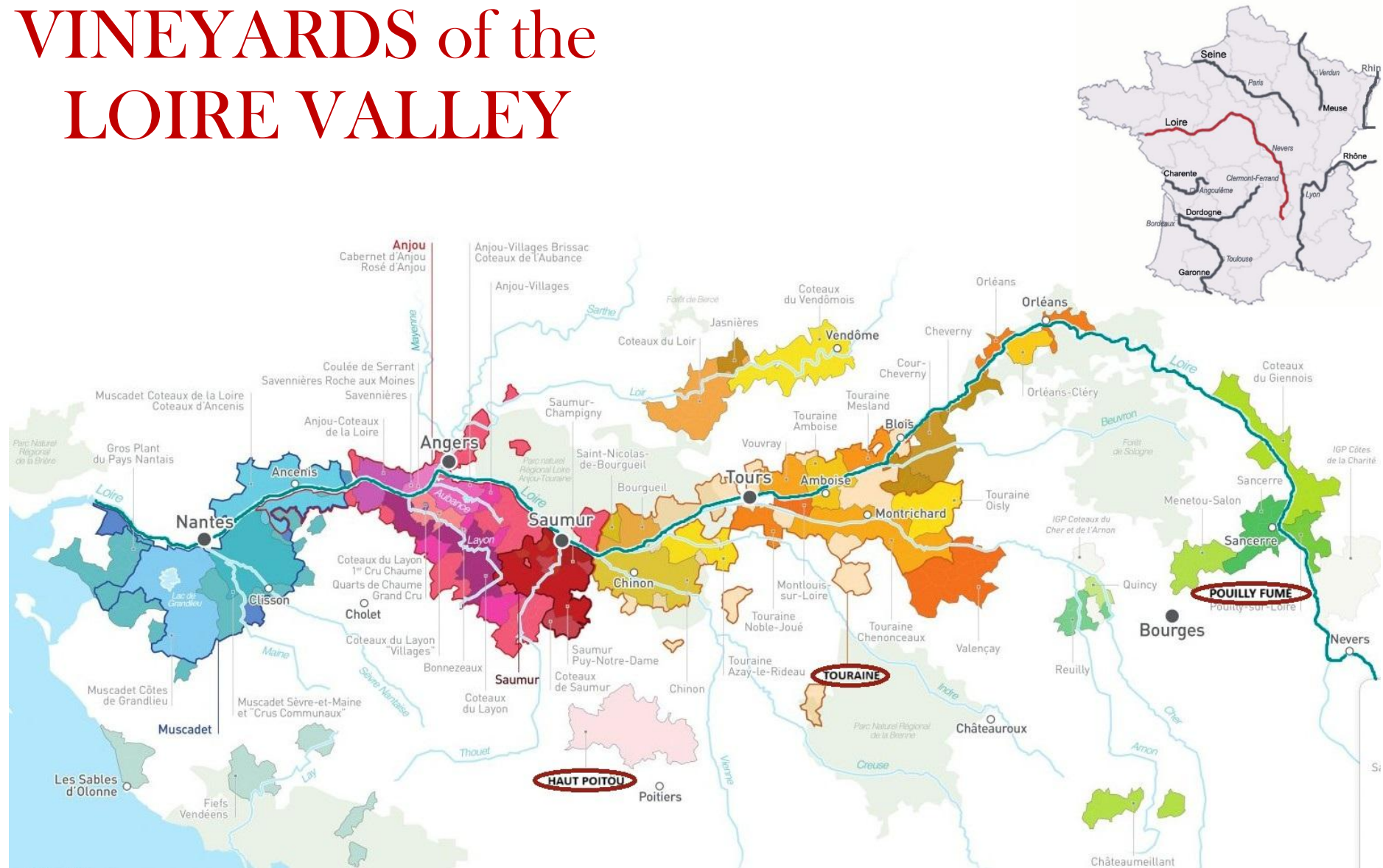
Château de Pierreux, Réserve de Château Brouilly 2021 (A.O.C. Brouilly)

Source: Dan Murphy's (\$25.70; RRP: \$26.99)

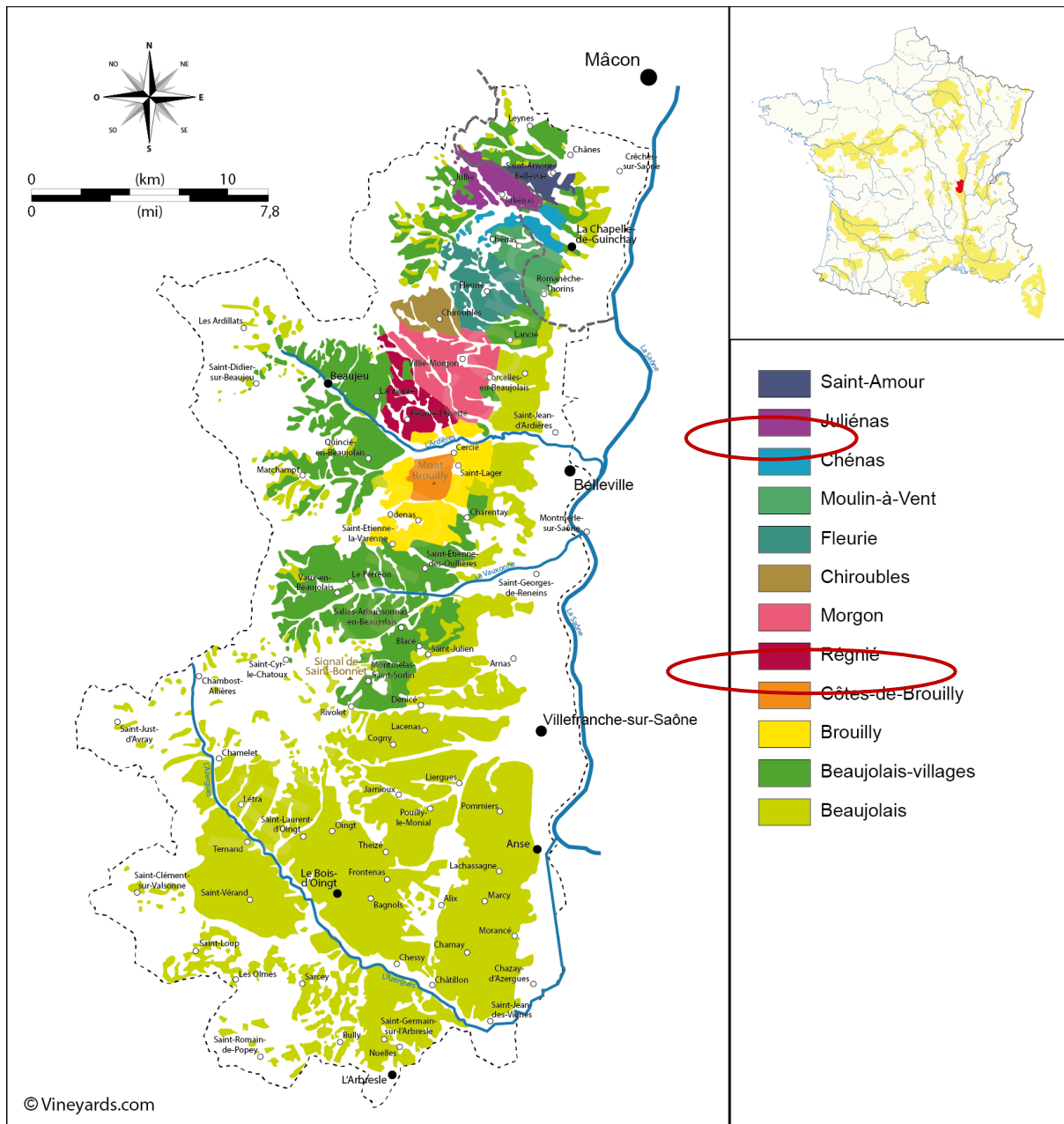
13% abv; dry; medium to bright acidity; light to medium-bodied; the tannins weren't harsh, but a little firmer than expected; the palate was dominated by black cherry, but there was also a floral suggestion, too; medium concentration and persistence.

Favourite Wine of the Night: it is pleasing to report that no one wine was preferred by significantly more of the attendees over all the other wines; in fact, every wine was the favourite of at least two attendees, demonstrating the individuality of our palates. Vive la Différence!!

VINEYARDS of the LOIRE VALLEY



VINEYARDS of BEAUJOLAI



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