



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HIS MAJESTY THE PRINCE OF WALES
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON

CORNEY &
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



THE WINES OF PETER SISSECK

2013 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK AND HONG KONG



“Despite the initial delay of the cycle, we managed, due to extensive experience in the vineyards, to achieve a well-balanced ratio between clusters and foliage. This, we believe, contributed to a perfect maturity of the grapes.”

PETER SISSECK, JUNE 2014

THE WINES OF PETER SISSECK

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We are extremely proud to be the exclusive UK and Hong Kong agent for Dominio de Pingus and Flor de Pingus, two iconic, highly sought-after Spanish wines along with Psi, the newest recruit to the Peter Sisseck, "Pingus" portfolio.

Twenty years ago, the young Dane, Peter Sisseck, had a dream. In hindsight, his imagination, vision and ambition were extraordinary. What must the Spanish locals have thought of a Dane in their midst, unable to speak their language and versed only in the traditional winemaking of Bordeaux?

However, those prophesying Peter's inevitable demise would have been somewhat chastened when the first vintage, 1995, absolutely astounded the critics. It took the wine world by storm with its balance of classicism and a totally authentic sense of place.

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Ribera del Duero



Ψ Psi 2013

&

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TODAY

In June 2014, the Corney & Barrow team made their way to Ribera del Duero from London, Marseille and Edinburgh respectively. Miraculously we all met up in Madrid and the intrepid foursome, Bryce Fraser, Managing Director Corney & Barrow Scotland, Luke Lupton, one of our top fine wine salespeople based at Thomas More Street, senior buying assistant Christelle Chédeville and I headed north to the Ribera del Duero.

June? Spain?...nice work if you can get it I can hear people cry!

Think more Costa del Clyde Coast as we drove into rainstorm after rainstorm.

We were later to hear from Peter that, desperate for rain, he had therefore been rather loathe to ask the heavens to postpone all precipitation until after our visit, or at least to confine it to night time.

Our first stopping point was the cellar, with the promise of a vineyard visit the following morning.

Peter's cellar today is in a wonderful spot, on the bank of the river, at Quintanilla de Onésimo in the Ribera del Duero. From the outside, the building is simple and traditional, yet those outer walls frame a winery of inspired vision and complexity.

The pristine, whitewashed walls of the upper cellar make for an almost monastic feel. The fresh morning air flows freely through wide open windows, which look onto an inner courtyard, cooling the cellar naturally, before the sun is too high. The place is immaculate, housing large, open-topped vats and glistening stainless steel. Below, a surprise is to be had in a very rare, underground, vaulted barrel cellar originally built in 1832, hidden for years and now beautifully restored by Peter.

Returning to ground level, across the courtyard, are a

state of the art laboratory and a wonderfully modern set of offices, one area of which is dedicated to the preparation of biodynamic treatments.

This juxtaposition of traditional and modern is of course extremely apt, as it reflects the style of Peter Sisseck's wines, all of which have a very modern look and feel, whilst retaining classical balance at their core.

Tasting complete we eagerly anticipated the visit to the vineyards the following day – after a very interrupted sleep. What sounded like golf balls being passed through a centrifuge was in fact a heavy storm, leaving lots of sticky mud in its wake. To the vineyards!

We always remind customers, in our offers, about the fresh night temperatures at these high altitudes – so what of during the day?

Even as the sun was rising in the sky, there was a bitter wind. With the exception of my Scottish colleague and compatriot, Bryce Fraser, who clearly lives in a fridge, we can fully attest to that 'freshness'.

In fact, our blue pallor notwithstanding, the visit was spectacularly illuminating, showing quite how high up the vineyards are and how varied their soils and aspects, with their gnarled vines, immaculately pruned. This is a very special place and after a few hours with Peter we were banging his "save the old vines" drum.

We are delighted to present here Peter Sisseck's portfolio from the 2013 vintage – three exceptional, inimitable wines which are so true to their origins.

ALISON BUCHANAN
July, 2014

THE VINEYARDS

DOMINIO DE PINGUS

8 Planted at altitudes of more than 800m above sea level in La Horra, Pingus vines enjoy warm, sunny days and refreshingly cool nights during the growing period. These swings in temperature ensure increased complexity and vibrant freshness. There are two complementary *terroirs* covering 4.5 hectares. The first, “Barroso” lies on gravel and sand over alluvial limestone. The second, “San Cristobal” is on south-west facing clay slopes. From the outset, in terms of vines, Peter favoured indigenous Tinto del País and determined to push it to dizzying heights. Unusually for this grape, in this region, he decided to use French, rather than American oak.

From these squat, gnarled vines (Tinto del País is a cousin of Tempranillo) of sixty years and more, Peter now coaxes a ridiculously small production ranging from 20 hectolitres per hectare (hl/ha) at best, to as little as 9hl/ha. Organic from day one, Pingus has been farmed according to biodynamic disciplines since 2000. Pruning and sorting are rigorous and ruthless. For a farmer, consciously and deliberately producing low yields is an anathema, but therein lies the secret and obsession for quality.

Production in 2013 is 6,900 bottles for the world market.

FLOR DE PINGUS

A jewel of an estate, Pingus was nonetheless a precarious stand-alone business, as production would always be subject to the whims of Mother Nature. Other opportunities beckoned and Peter chose a pragmatic option which would allow him to protect the integrity of Pingus, spread risk and increase production. He sought out different plots of land, well-sited, with younger vines. The fruit from these plots would produce Flor de Pingus.

Flor exhibits a very individual style, albeit bearing the peerless Sisseck hallmark of purity and freshness. Flor de Pingus is a great wine in its own right, with its own, richly-deserved, faithful followers. It is the product of 16 different vineyard sites, some older and some younger vines, with a very respectable average age of 35 years. The more recent plantings are set at between 6,000 and 10,000 vines per hectare to encourage competition. In this way, the individual vine's roots need to dig more deeply for nutrients, aiming for added complexity. The parcels are vinified separately in stainless steel with the malolactic and subsequent ageing in French oak, 50% new, 50% one-year-old.

Both Pingus and Flor de Pingus are in great demand. Having set enormously high standards from the outset, Flor de Pingus has become even more focussed as Peter, mirroring Pingus, has fully embraced organic principles, with biodynamic viticulture being the goal. Flor de Pingus has been fully biodynamic since 2005.

Production in 2013 was 63,000 bottles.



PSI

Before long, Peter would witness Flor de Pingus following a similar path to that of Pingus. Despite the greater volume, in a very short time demand began to exceed supply, which left Peter with a dilemma. He had access to additional vineyards where he could acquire more grapes, but he was keen not to change the path of Flor.

He has now established a network of complementary growers and *terroirs* under the name of Bodegas y Viñedos Alnardo and, from that, Psi was born, the first vintage being 2007.

The Psi project (his initials make up the Greek letter PSI Ψ) is very different from either Flor or Pingus. With Psi, Peter seeks to capture and protect the very essence of the Ribera del Duero, revisiting and reinventing tradition, whilst adding a philanthropic touch for good measure.

For all his relaxed, convivial *bonhomie* and his passion for wine, Peter has a serious side. Over recent years, wine production in the Ribera del Duero has soared, although not always at the quality end of the spectrum. The region's heritage of old vines is under threat, as they are seen simply to be an impediment to efficiency and

growth. Peter has forged relationships with growers who might otherwise have been tempted by the promise of an easier life, offering them an alternative way of working. The threat to these old vineyards is very real. Peter has watched desperately as farmers run their vineyards into ruin. Incentivised by payment based on weight, they are effectively encouraged to overproduce, using labour-saving chemicals and pesticides which add to the problem.

Peter is conscious that these are proud people and that as a fair, blue-eyed Dane, he would be ill-advised to try and instruct them. He therefore began by working alongside the farmers in an advisory capacity, encouraging moves to organic viticulture, which he rewards by paying a premium. He pays three or four times the going average rate for his grapes – a powerful incentive. Over the years these farmers have developed a deep trust and respect for Peter, who has a great deal of passion for Ribera del Duero, as well as a profound sense of gratitude. Psi has become so much more than a wine: it is a philanthropic endeavour to preserve the traditions and way of life built up over decades and is a means to give something back to the region. The fact that the wine happens to be hugely characterful bears witness to Peter's almost obsessive focus on quality and sustainability.

VINTAGE REPORT

“Rain non grata”

*“Climate is what you expect,
weather is what you get.”*

PETER SISSECK

June, 2014

2013 was dominated by an unusually cold period, lasting from the 15th May until the 15th June, delaying the growth cycle. Peter's team pre-empted any irregularity by cluster thinning, to allow for consistent, even ripening. This attention to detail, allied to canopy management, were key factors in producing an even, ripe crop.

July arrived with more seasonal warmth and August was normal. September was cool and had rather more rain than was strictly required, with storms on the 5th and 7th. Then, just before harvesting, two Atlantic fronts joined the party, one after the other, delivering very unusually, fine rain and elevated humidity – precisely what is not required pre-harvest. Fortunately, due to the strict regime in the vineyard, the vines bore loose clusters of grapes, well-aerated and with strong, resistant skins.

Whilst October initially was mixed and occasionally overcast, further inhibiting the vines' progress, the second half of the month, happily, was rather more benevolent, allowing the grapes to attain full, phenolic maturity.

Constant, painstaking work in the vineyard made for an attractive balance between grape clusters and foliage, contributing greatly to the perfect maturity achieved. Thereafter, severe and rigorous selection ensued.

Peter is absolutely delighted with his 2013, citing the work he has done in the last fifteen years, rather than the course of 2013 itself, as a reason for such spectacular success.



Ψ Psi 2013

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

14-16

A VERY GOOD TO
EXCELLENT WINE

16-18

AN EXCELLENT TO
OUTSTANDING WINE

18-20

AN OUTSTANDING
TO LEGENDARY WINE

Wines are judged within their peer group, eg. *Villages*, *Premier Cru*, *Grand Cru*. A definitive score of a young wine is almost impossible. We usually offer a spread (eg. 14 - 16) that relates to a potential to achieve a higher mark. A '+' adds further to that potential. A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.



2013 TASTING NOTES

PSI 2013

Watch this space... and think about large formats! The Psi project has grown both in complexity and stature. The wine is from six different vineyards. In 2013, for the first time, Peter's team made all of the constituent wines themselves, having built up the trust of the farmers. When Peter embarked on his "save the old vines" project, he initially relied on the knowledge and experience of the farmers. He then started to offer advice and give direction and today, trusted with the freedom to do things his own way, his independence has made a huge difference – borne out in the glass, despite the challenges of the year. The wine is vinified in large, traditional concrete vats, then matured for 18 months in a mix of second and third year Dominio de Pingus French oak *foudres* and barrels. The 2013 is a beautiful colour, an intense plum, bright and lustrous. The nose presents very bright, fresh, crystalline, summer berry fruit, roses and violets to the fore, complemented by a more savoury layer, warm spice, grilled fennel and minerals. Peter has included 7% of Garnacha, which makes for a rounded texture, coated ripe tannins and a very approachable wine in youth. Rather sumptuous at this embryonic phase, Peter and his team have achieved a lovely balance, drive and length.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+ to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2015 - 2022+

£199/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£105/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

FLOR DE PINGUS 2013

Opaque plum in colour, with a bright, firm cherry rim, this presents an attractively aromatic nose, slightly smoky and spiced, which is both inviting and intriguing. A plethora of berried fruit then prevails, brambles, super-ripe blueberries and raspberries, all set within an extraordinarily fresh frame. The colour and texture are apparently at odds with the sheer exuberance of this

wine, yet the balance is perfect, with lovely focus and direction, underscored by minerals – a true *vin gourmand* with a protracted, layered finish. We often speak of the influence of cool night temperatures in the region, but the tremendous purity and freshness of fruit here bears testimony to its importance.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2028+

*£455/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£235/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

* Maximum 2 cases or equivalent per customer.

PINGUS 2013

There was a time when *en primeur* tasting notes here were dominated by references to mocha and vanilla – the hallmarks of new oak. In Peter's opinion now, whilst oak adds an extra layer of complexity, it can also detract somewhat from the purity of fruit and the most honest translation of *terroir*.

"Pingus does not need the make-up any more."

Velvet-textured, jet-plum in colour, this immediately presents a stunning array of red and black fruit, earthy *sous bois* and briny minerals. In many aspects this transcends the vintage, offering a totally pure expression of the varietal – pristine and focused. A spearhead of purity, underscored by stony minerals, the palate mirrors this with a totally seamless, finessed, aromatic elegance through to a protracted finish – bravo Peter!

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5 to 18.5+
Recommended drinking from 2020 - 2030+

£2,650/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£890/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK



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