



Wiston Estate Cuvée 2013 Magnum, Traditional Method, West Sussex, England

Introduction

Nestled in the heart of England's rolling South Downs in West Sussex, the beautiful Wiston Estate has been in the hands of the Goring family since 1743 and is presided over today by Harry and Pip Goring. The estate is managed by their son Richard and both he and his wife, Kirsty, are now involved in the day to day running of the vineyard and winery.

It was Pip's long-held belief that the estate held the potential to grow high quality grapes and in 2006 her dream came to fruition when Wiston's 6.5ha vineyard was planted on a south/south-east-facing escarpment of pure chalk, like the renowned *Côte des Blancs* in Champagne. Under the guidance of winemaker Dermot Sugrue with a strict philosophy of sustainability, the tight-knit team produces award-winning sparkling wines of exceptional purity and finesse from Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier.

2013 Vintage

The 2013 growing season began positively with a warm, frost-free period encouraging bud burst. Temperatures cooled for the remainder of the Spring but re-warmed in time for flowering in July. As a result, the yield for the year looked set to be good. Warm, dry, even temperatures throughout August, September and October resulted in a long growing season allowing the grapes to develop optimal ripeness. Harvest began on 18th October and finished 10 days later on 28th October. The warm, dry weather conditions resulted in a medium size crop of exceptionally ripe and healthy grapes. The year is one of concentration of flavour, producing broad wines with impressive ability to age.

Vineyard Information

Location: South Downs, West Sussex. A natural sun-trap, and protected from prevailing winds, the south-facing vineyard slope benefits from maximum sun exposure, promoting ripening.

Climate: Moderate rainfall, cool winters and temperate summers couple with cool breezes from the south coast, allowing the grapes to ripen slowly but fully and retain the crucial acidity and freshness vital to produce high-quality sparkling wine.

Soils: Wiston's vineyard sits on an ancient chalk seam covered by a shallow layer (10-30 cm) of topsoil, an ideal growing medium for vines. As in so many areas producing wines of outstanding quality, it is this chalky soil that helps to impart the complex flavours and structural elegance to the grapes and the wine itself.

Philosophy: As part of a larger agricultural estate with the utmost respect for nature, Wiston's vineyard is run according to a strict philosophy of sustainability. The team's efforts include the installation of solar panels at the winery as a source of renewable energy. Natural methods are used in the vineyard to optimise health and balance; the vines require careful tending by hand, one by one, to ensure that the leaf canopy is optimised. A Boisselet cultivator allows us to manage root and weed growth by returning them gently to the soil, rather than resorting to 'quick fix' chemical herbicides and synthetic fertilisers.

Harvest: The tiny yields (15 hl per hectare) are critical to Wiston Estate's purity, focus and elegance. The 2013 harvest was carried out by hand by a team of skilled pickers from 18th-28th October 2013.

Winemaking Details

Grape varieties: 47% Pinot Noir, 33% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Meunier

Pressing: The grape varieties were pressed separately using a traditional, gentle Coquard basket press – as used in the Champagne region - to preserve the delicate fruit flavours and aromas in the juice. They are pressed as whole bunches.

Fermentation & Maturation Process: The juice from each of the grape varieties was fermented separately in a mixture of mature Burgundy barrels (average 10-years old) with selected yeasts. Barrels are used to promote a gentle micro-oxygenation process, refining the mouthfeel and structure of the wine; there is no oak flavour imparted to the wine, due to the age of the barrels. The wine is rested on its lees for several months until springtime, bringing additional complexity of structure. The Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier were then blended together and put through malolactic fermentation to soften their natural acidities. Yeast and nutrients were then added (*liqueur de tirage*) for the secondary fermentation in bottle. Bottling took place in July 2014.

Ageing & Disgorging: The wine underwent a slow secondary fermentation and was kept on its side, under crown cap (*sur lie/latte*) at cool 11 degree temperatures for 5 years, while it matured and took on flavour and structure through the process of autolysis. Autolysis is one of the crucial processes in the production of high quality sparkling wines, imparting a unique combination of complex flavours and textural finesse.

Time spent on lees is arguably the most important factor in determining quality. The bottles were riddled, then the first disgorgement took place in September 2019. To preserve the wine's natural poise and balance, dosage was restrained, with only 8g/l required to complete the wine. A further year's ageing on cork took place prior to release in November 2020, to allow the flavours to marry.

Tasting Notes

Refreshing and fine, with the fragrance and fruit of an English orchard, the 2013 displays a more opulent expression of Wiston's Vintage Cuvée style. With impressive depth, its filigree texture retains Wiston's signature precision and elegance, that gives more than a nod to French bone structure. A beautifully focused wine with fantastic ageing potential.

"Ripe red apples and warm brioche showing on the nose, with stone fruit richness to the palate that is balanced by energy and acidity. There is a tremendous umami savouriness and an almost chocolatey yeast character; this needs time and will be very good." **94 Points Decanter Magazine's Most Exciting Wines of the Year 2017 Panel Tasting, [October 2017](#)**

"Pale gold with a hint of baked apples on the nose, even a light note of apricots. Very fine mousse, impressive fruit intensity but still with perfect balance between freshness and depth of fruit. Red apple flavours on the finish, crunchy like a crisp apple. Lots of pleasure and more fruit than I expected, certainly more than a typical champagne. I went back to this on the second and third days and it was holding up amazingly well. Clearly it was a bit less fizzy but it was still so fresh and bright, showing more richness and almost a honeyed character. I increased my score I was so impressed by the way it held up and changed after opening." **17.5 Points Julia Harding MW, Purple Pages of [JancisRobinson.com April 2017](#)**

"The 2013 Cuvée Brut is a blend of 47% Pinot Noir, 33% Chardonnay and 20% Pinot Meunier that is 100% fermented in oak barrels. It has a clean and precise bouquet with scents of walnut, smoke and a touch of sea spray, the latter becoming more accentuated with time in the glass. The palate is fresh on the entry with a tang of ginger. This has impressive weight and sense of intent. It fans out nicely on the finish with a slight nettle-like note on the aftertaste. This is excellent!" **92 Points Neal Martin**, [The Wine Advocate June 2017](#)

"From the chalky soils of the South Downs, this is a lovely wine with ripe citrus and pear fruit with some apple notes. The brisk acidity is countered by a hint of sweetness on the finish. Lemony and linear, this is really serious." **Jamie Goode**, Sunday Express June 2017

"Made by talented Dermot Sugrue, whose wines get better and better, using grapes grown on the South Downs, this white sparkling wine is a pinot noir-based blend (47%) with chardonnay (33%) and pinot meunier (20%). Like all Sugrue's wines it has taut definition and a lively tang but there are also some lovely, warmer, honeyed notes, too." **Victoria Moore**, [The Telegraph February 2018](#)

"This is huge news - a future ICON for English fizz. Rich, poised, electrifying." **Olly Smith**

"Mmm, Dermot the wild Irish wine wizard has weaved magic spells with this deep, thoughtful, spice and brioche crust beauty." **Oz Clarke**

Awards:

Platinum Medal for Best UK Sparkling Wine in the Decanter World Wine Awards 2017 (Came 1st out of 136 English & Welsh wines entered.)

English Sparkling Wine Trophy in the International Wine & Spirit Competition 2017

Top 25 Most Exciting Wines in the World 2017 in Decanter Magazine December 2017