



PORTALIS
wine shop + wine bar

All About Beaujolais Nouveau

by Jens Strecker, Owner of Portalis Wine Shop + Wine Bar
published at www.winesquire.com in November 2002

On the third Thursday of November (which will be November 21 this year), the most recent vintage of Beaujolais – called Nouveau or Primeur when it is released – goes on sale in wine stores around the world. Beaujolais Nouveau is marketed as the “first wine of the new vintage.”

By decree, French wine authorities do not permit the sale of Beaujolais Nouveau until 12:01 AM, November 21 and importers in other countries are required to agree in writing not to ship their wine until the day before the official release date.

Beaujolais lies in the southern part of the Burgundy region in France. The climate is much drier than it is in the rest of Burgundy. Driving south from Paris, Beaujolais is the first region where you begin to see and feel Mediterranean influences (both in the warmer, drier climate and the architecture).

Like most Beaujolais (and some wines outside of the Beaujolais region), Beaujolais Nouveau is made using carbonic maceration or whole-berry fermentation. Rather than first crushing grapes and then fermenting them (as it is standard winemaking practice), grapes are thrown into the fermentation tank whole with only the grapes at the bottom being crushed by the weight of those on top. Fermentation of the grapes on the bottom proceeds in the normal fashion, but the whole grapes on top actually ferment individually within their skins. This avoids extracting a lot of tannin from the grape skins and the resulting wine is much fruitier and less tannic.

Why Beaujolais Nouveau? Because it's fresh! Because it is juicy! Because it is fun! Because it is just plain delicious to drink and easy to enjoy!

For the second year in a row, Best Cellars is featuring **Mommessin Beaujolais Nouveau**, a small, high quality grower and producer.

You could call Mommessin's Beaujolais a “nouveau on steroids”. It's one helluva juicy yet deeply flavored red wine, chock-a-block with super-ripe berries and cherries that linger on the palate, sip after sip. Come and check it out!