



# LIFE MAGAZINES

## MONTHLY A5 LOCAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES

### WINE & SPIRITS - **Yellow Wine?**

**A**rbois is in the Jura (from which we get the word Jurassic). This limestone mountain region lies on the border between Switzerland and France. Arbois is on the French side. The wine area is from the north of Arbois to Lons le Saunier and it produces a range of wines, mostly white but with some reds (which are mostly quite pink!). The white grape varieties include Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay and Poulsard and Savignin (also known as Naturé). It is from Savignin grapes that the famous yellow wine, vin Jaune is made.

Very ripe grapes are fermented normally and then there is a malolactic fermentation. After this the wine is put into old Burgundy barrels with air space left at the top. These barrels remain in cellars for over 6 years while an oxidation process takes place. A surface crust or voile or flor forms and this prevents the wine turning to vinegar. After its long sojourn in the barrels the Vin Jaune is bottled in traditional 0.62 litre bottles. It is said the Vin Jaune has been made since the 14th century. It can be kept for decades before drinking. It has a sherry-like flavour with some walnut, almond and spicy overtones. The very best Vin Jaunes come from the village of Château Chalon. Vin Jaune is an ideal wine to accompany Foie Gras and puddings.

The Arbois region also produces a sparkling wine, Cremant du Jura made from Chardonnay grapes as well as a great deal of conventional Chardonnay. The Poulsard grape produces a very pale red wine which looks like a rosé. Trousseau and Pinot Noir are also used to produce pale red wines.

Poulsard, Chardonnay and Savignin grapes are sometimes dried on straw or hung up to dry to reduce their moisture content and hence increase the sugar

concentration. The wines from these grapes are aged in oak for at least 3 years to produce a dessert wine, Vin de Paille or straw wine.

Arbois, apart from producing some interesting wine is an excellent place for a holiday. It has rivers, lakes and mountains to explore. The caves of Les Planches (Grottes des Planches) are close to the town. In the town itself there is the Gloriette Tower and the Chateau Pécault built by the Dukes of Burgundy and housing a wine museum. The great scientist Louis Pasteur was born nearby in Dôle in 1822 and lived in Arbois from 1830. His house was converted into a museum by the Academy of Sciences in 1995 and has exhibits of some of his wonderful achievements.

**George Leslie**