



BOB TYRER ON THE BOTTLE

There is something about Beaujolais that can lead me astray. It got me into terrible trouble in much younger days; but for three decades I've been safe, because it's been out of fashion. Then I heard that 2009 had produced a miracle Beaujolais vintage.

Last year vigneron whooped with joy all over France, and on the granite hillsides north of Lyon in particular. They have reinvented Beaujolais since the awful days of banana-tasting Nouveau. A painstaking new generation is coaxing serious flavours from the land. Good stuff, no chemicals; I'm older and wiser; surely, there'd be no harm in trying a few?

Well, they were certainly lovely: fresh and zippy, but with underlying intelligence and purpose. Some were even cerebral and brooding (2009 Moulin à Vent Domaine Les Fines Graves Cuvée Vieilles Vignes, £12.81, richardgrangerwines.co.uk, is a serious bargain).

I went to bed happily after tasting them with dinner — and was woken at 3am by banging. Not in my head, but outside, where two youths were vandalising Mrs Tyrer's car (just repaired after a previous assault), while one of them waved a large bottle (surely not Beaujolais).

I'm not quite sure what happened next, but I found myself racing down the street in bare feet shouting horrible things. Just as I got to "little shits!", I felt something give in my right leg, as if a champagne cork had popped deep within it, and I fell over.

I lay sprawled on the tarmac in my pyjamas like an escapee from the old people's home up the road, until Mrs T arrived (in her PJs, too) to help me hobble away. Somewhere there is a shocked Mercedes driver who saw us. Lord, what is Blackheath coming to? My younger son said sagely: "I was hoping something like that would happen. It would've been much worse if you'd caught up with them."

This is not the best moment to have a bust achilles tendon at The Sunday Times, as we are leaving Fortress Wapping, where we've been for the past 24 years, for a "vertical campus" with our sister newspaper titles in a real office block. Packing while on crutches is fun, but I can't take my many wine samples with me. So, what the hell, open the Beaujolais.

LIQUID HUNCHES

🍷 2009 Morgon Côte du Py Dominique Piron (£12.93) My absolute favourite: lively and delicious (domainedirect.co.uk).

🍷 2009 Côte de Brouilly Château Thivin Les Sept Vignes (£14.95) Supercharged plums and spices



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