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Great new directory for Swiss wines

15/06/2015 BY ELLEN WALLACE — LEAVE A COMMENT

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND – One of the best tools I've seen yet, for wine-lovers in Switzerland, is now officially launched, and it's a gem.



The Swiss Wine Directory has been in the making for several months – the idea is great, and as I've watched it evolve since its pre-launch and trial phase for the wine profession at the end of 2014, I've seen it grow into something that responds well to a real need.

Note I was so impressed that when Hervé Badan, who is behind the project, asked me to be one of the occasional (every 2 weeks) contributors to the site's blog, in English, I agreed. So while I'm not involved with the site, I am a member of the team of contributors. More on that below.

It works well online and for the past couple days I've been trying it with my iPhone, since it is designed to work well with smartphones. It does. Quick to load, easy to use, readable. Eminently searchable!

Official listing of all Swiss wineries



The online directory is not a guide of selected wineries but just what it says: the official listing of all of Switzerland's wineries, with an interactive map and well-planned search features, in four languages including English. That's the functional side. More than that, it's very attractive, easy to use, has a wealth of information and it gives Swiss wine

producers the high quality online face they deserve and, frankly, lacked until now.

The project is the brainchild of Badan, whose *Swiss Wine Selection* markets and sells wines from a hand-picked group of some of the best small artisanal wineries.

The new directory has the backing, and basic wineries data supplied by, Swiss Wine Promotion, the marketing arm of the wine industry in this country. To this base, Badan has already added more, as he pushes to get wineries to buy premium listings so they can market their wines more effectively via the site, the information you'll find on their pages will grow, without burdensome advertising, a boon for the consumer. Some wineries are already doing this and you'll quickly notice the difference.



Screen shot of the results of my search (top of the page only here)

My favourite feature

One feature I love is the "wineries open today". I've just checked to see who near me is open – Monday is not a prime day for visiting wineries – and if I could ride my bike there, since it's fine weather.

It immediately offered me Domaine du Daley, a bit daunting on a bike from St

Prex, where I live, and a shade too far. It also gave me *Hammel in Rolle*. Here's a sample of the top of that search page, which also tells me about Hammel on social media, what languages they speak how I can pay, and more. If I get brave and cycle there, I'll ask them to post the wine I buy, usually one-day service in Switzerland, via La Poste.

Helping hand with digital marketing

Switzerland's wine producers are at the heart of the project, says Badan. "We very carefully analyzed their needs and one thing became quite clear – the necessary time and a lack of familiarity with or awareness of the need to use digital marketing channels has resulted in this not being part of their marketing strategies." He says the directory helps wine producers "increase their online visibility by presenting their wineries in a professional way, with multilingual content and by communicating detailed information on a large scale."

Helping hand to meet wine producers

Two things, besides the directory's personal usefulness for me, are encouraging me to support the project.

I'm keen to see more English-speakers in Switzerland discover the country's beautiful wines by visiting the wineries and talking to the artisans who make them, rather than just attending tasting sessions or going off on tours and hearing about wines from people who are not always knowledgeable. Winery open house days are showing that wine-lovers really are interested in visiting wineries. The directory makes it easier, even if your French, German and Italian are weak.

Social media, well integrated

Also, Badan is an expert in using social media well, as opposed to another knee-jerk reaction, clueless person saying "we have to be on social media", and in this respect he is just what wineries need. He's young, his pre-wine professional background is in marketing, and he's also a graduate of the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, with good experience in the food and wine industry.

The directory is using social media and direct marketing to keep its circle of visitors informed about Swiss wines, so if you visit a winery and love it, or want to let your friends know you're there ("hurry up and join me?"), you'll find it easy.

This is where the blog fits in. I will be writing short articles of a more general nature than what I usually post on Ellen's Wine World, with a link to my own blog here. The first one, about "Tourmentin", a wine from the Rouvinez family in Sierre, answers basic questions about aging Swiss wines. Most will be shorter than this one; I was carried away with enthusiasm.

Fingers crossed for a great online sales site

The next step is truly exciting and I really hope Hervé Badan succeeds with it, because online wine selling works in Switzerland it just needs to be easier and more complete for everyone, wineries and buyers. "Our first goal is to make the public aware of this platform and Switzerland's wine producers, all of them. Medium-term, we're looking to open the first online wine shop that is accessible to all of these producers."

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