



TRIED &  
TESTED

# the guinea pig club

**Aoife Carrigy** tempts some of the Trail Kilkenny team up to Dublin to taste-test a half-dozen wines for harvest-time drinking

**T**he arrival of October signals that it's time to file away memories of sunshine and warmth and embrace the comforts of autumn. But we can still brighten up our darkening evenings with a glassful of sunshine, and what better white wine to do so with than a Sauvignon Blanc? This month, we chose three very different takes on the one grape. We eased into things with Masi's Serego Alighieri Possessionio Bianco, a blend of Sauvignon with Garagnega, a north Italian grape. The result is a meadow-fresh wine reminiscent of green fruit salad (think kiwi, grapes, green melon, starfruit and lime) with an attractive contrast of soft mouthfeel and a citrus-clean, steely finish. A perfect aperitif to simple seafood. Plantagenet's Omrah Great Southern Sauvignon Blanc is more delicate, with cooling ocean influences giving a crisp salty finish to layers of lime blossom aromas and salted citrus and mineral notes. Try with shellfish or a hard, salty cheese for nibbles. Finally, the Ten Rocks Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc from Lawson's Dry Hills is a classic New Zealand take on the grape, with pronounced aromas of nettles, elderflowers,

gooseberry and meadow grass. The palate is well-balanced with sweet tropical fruits reining in the natural acidity and fleshing out the generous body. Perfect for Thai salads or salads featuring roast vegetables and goat's cheese.

For the reds, we mixed things up a bit to reflect a range of autumnal moods. For those warmer evenings when you don't want to cook too much, the Soleado Merlot from Marks & Spencer is perfect for a quick pizza or pasta supper. Produced by Chile's reliable Cono Sur brand and blended with a touch of Carmenère, expect juicy, plummy fruit, some savoury herb notes, smooth tannins and fresh acidity. Louis Jadot's Couvent des Jacobins Bourgogne Pinot Noir is very light-bodied, with plenty of food-friendly acidity counterbalancing earthy, autumnal notes. Lean towards vinegar-based dishes – seafood ceviche, smoked duck salad or even mushroom risotto garnished with pickled mushrooms. Finally, Bodegas Piedra Negra Malbec from Mendoza in Argentina is ideal for fireside drinking, with warm black and blue fruits, lively juniper spice and muscular tannins. Serve with steak (make it juicy) and be thankful for autumn's cosy evenings in. 🍷

Our thanks to all at **ely winebar** in Ely Place for their help in hosting this tasting  
Photography by **Con O'Donoghue**