



Written by
Jancis Robinson
5 Aug 2015

Lea & Sandeman's 2015 finds



I'm delighted to say that Britain now has a host of independent wine retailers offering infinitely more exciting ranges of wines than the multiple retailers that Andy Howard MW is profiling every Friday. Lea & Sandeman, now a small group of highly individual shops in west London begun by Charles Lea and the late Patrick Sandeman in 1988, was in many ways the prototype. I'm delighted to say that the current team, while much missing Patrick and his widow Katie Sandeman, seem somehow to be keeping up the pace.

They offer the finest of investment-grade wines when they feel they are worth the money (and in his mailouts Charles Lea does not hesitate to say when they are not), but of more interest to most of us are their mid-priced wines which are usually reliable and sometimes stunning. L&S have inspired not a few wines of the week on this site, and you can easily see which wines most tickled my fancy at a showing of their latest finds in late May because the 52 wines below are grouped by colour (with an extra little group for the two champagnes) and then in descending

score order.

I was particularly impressed by the Acústic wines of Montsant, those of Luigi Maffini (which classicist could resist an IGP Paestum?), and by those of Monteti in Capalbio (pictured here) in the far south of Tuscany, long one of Patrick Sandeman's most successful hunting grounds. You can read about some of his finds in [A Tuscan search for finesse](#).

Many of these wines should be available to wine lovers outside the UK. Just click on the Wine-searcher information on stockists and prices below the wine details once you have clicked on a specific wine. Talking of which, all of the L&S prices given are for single bottles. There are substantial discounts for those prepared to buy a mixed case. Charles Lea contacts me several times a year to protest when I cite his single-bottle prices alongside mixed-case prices from other, less scrupulous merchants. (L&S now sell online and provide no shortage of information.)

FIZZ

- [Larmandier-Bernier, Longitude Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut Premier Cru NV Champagne](#) Wonderful balance and refreshment factor. Not mean at all but with great refinement. Tiny bead. Sophisticated and subtle. 12.5% Drink 2015-2018
£35.95 Lea & Sandeman 17
- [R & L Legras, Chouilly Blanc de Blancs Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne](#) Tiny little bead. Interesting depth of flavour with a lots of age - maybe less fresh and flirtatious than perfection? Lots of chew and rather serious overall. 12.5% Drink 2013-2016
£28.50 Lea & Sandeman 16

WHITE

- [Acústic 2012 Montsant](#) 60% Garnacha Blanc, 25% Macabeu, 10% Garnacha Gris, 5% Pansal. 30- to 70-year-old vines . A quarter of the wine was barrel fermented, all aged on lees. High and lower altitude vines.
Amazing lift and perfume endowed by the Grenache Gris. Lightly and excitingly bitter with real vivacity. Apparently the 2008 is wonderful now. Fermented lemon cough sweets. **VG**14%
Drink 2015-2020
£14.95 Lea & Sandeman 17
- [Marcel Deiss, Engelgarten 2011 Alsace](#) Mixed planting on gravel of Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris.
Very rich, almost oily. Off dry. Dense and very lively - like a bouquet of wild flowers. Long - cornucopia. Very long. 12.5% Drink 2014-2020
£29.75 Lea & Sandeman 17
- [Feliciano, Felugan 2014 Lugana](#) Very firm with a lovely green spine and masses of ripe fruit. Great food wine because there is so much to get your teeth into. Most impressive. 13% Drink 2015-2017
£13.50 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- [Luigi Maffini, Kratos 2013 IGP Paestum](#) Mouthfilling fruit with a leafy streak. Really juicy and lively. Great balance. Much livelier and fresher than many Fianos. **GV**13% Drink 2015-2017
£15.75 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- [L'Aujardière, La Noë 2013 Muscadet-Côtes de Grandlieu](#) Great tension and masses of acidity and substance. Much more character than the average Muscadet! Salty. **GV**12% Drink 2015-

2017

£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5

- Dom Laurent Tribut, Beauroy Premier Cru 2012 Chablis Some development on the nose. Absolutely classic. Middle-aged already though...? Hint of hair oil. 13% Drink 2015-2022
£26.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- Dom Rémi Jobard, Les Narvaux 2010 Meursault Tense and racy. Really nervy and still with lots in reserve. Still chewy. 13% Drink 2016-2022
£43.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- Bamberger, Monzinger Frühlingsplätzchen Riesling trocken 2013 Nahe Pretty impressive density and lovely freshness. No hurry to drink this. Just a little less dense than the top renditions from this vineyard. Quite painful acidity at this point. 12.5% Drink 2015-2019
£13.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- Vincent Delaporte, Chavignol 2014 Sancerre Racy and stony with a serious dry finish. Correct. For a hot day? 13% Drink 2015-2018
£15.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- Braunewell, Riesling trocken 2013 Rheinhessen Lively with a firm spine and some ageing potential. No shortage of acidity, mind you! Rather dry finish. 12% Drink 2015-2018
£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- Dom de Pierre, Lionel Gosseaume, Les Sauterelles 2014 Touraine Masses of fruit and just a hint of asparagus. Decent enough price and certainly not industrial. 13% Drink 2015-2017
£9.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- Visintini Friulano 2013 Colli Orientali del Friuli Edge of green and lots of refreshing, juicy transparency. Some smokiness. 13.5% Drink 2015-2016
£12.75 Lea & Sandeman 16
- K & K Dautermann, Weissburgunder trocken 2014 Rheinhessen A bit too much fermentation aroma for perfection but it's delightfully racy and tense on the palate. Could well simply be a bit too young. 12.5% Drink 2016-2018
£12.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5+
- Dom Hubert Lamy, La Princée 2011 St-Aubin Hint of sulphides on the nose and with lots of substance. Ready now. Mealy. Needs just a little more lift. The more recent vintage, 2013, was Wine of the week in January 2015. 13% Drink 2014-2018
£24.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- Andrea Felici, Classico Superiore 2013 Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Green, fruity scent. Polished and easy. Ready already in terms of fruit evolution although it's still a little astringent. 13% Drink 2014-2015
£13.75 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- Dom de la Denante 2013 Mâcon-Villages Lightly rubbery nose and then sweet fruit. A bit chunky and stolid. 13% Drink 2015-2016
£10.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- Petri, Grauburgunder trocken 2014 Pfalz Fruit is good and energetic but the whole is a little too oily. Nearly there - and a great price! 13.5% Drink 2016-2017
£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- Talbott, Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Chardonnay 2012 Santa Lucia Highlands Leesy nose and then sweet and green. Not that sophisticated. Lots of ingredients but not that knit together. 14% Drink 2014-2016
£31.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- Titus, Andronicus Sauvignon Blanc 2013 Napa Valley Quite rich and a little heavy. Lots to get your teeth into but the Sauvignon aroma is a little buried. Hot end. 14.5% Drink 2015-2016
£14.95 Lea & Sandeman 15
- Terrapura Sauvignon Blanc 2014 Curicó Pretty sweet copy of Marlborough. Not especially

distinctive. Chewy end. 13.5% Drink 2015-2016

£7.75 Lea & Sandeman 15

- Berroja, Aquirrebeko 2014 Bizkaiko Txakolina More potent than many Txakolis. Seems rather long in the tooth and has rather too obvious fermentation aromas. 12.5% Drink 2015
£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 15

RED

- Acústic, Auditori Vinyes Velles Màgiques de Garnatxa 2009 Montsant All old Garnacha. Much richer than the blends with Cariñena in them. Splendid, broad and glorious in shape. Refined and very alive. Easy to see a relationship with Châteauneuf but this has more energy than most of them! 14% Drink 2014-2023
£40.95 Lea & Sandeman 17.5
- Monteti 2008 IGT Toscana *Petit Verdot and both Cabernets grown in Capalbio near Orbetello on the Tuscan coast, given 18 months in barrel.*
Dark crimson. I would hate to be given this blind and am pretty sure I would put it in Bordeaux. Wild and fresh on the finish – perhaps a little freer, less corseted and less heavily oaked than the average bordeaux at this price. For a wine of this age, it's **GV**. 14.5% Drink 2013-2019
£23.95 Lea & Sandeman 17
- Fattoria di Magliano, Poggio Bestiale 2011 IGT Maremma Toscana *Bordeaux blend with Merlot (just) dominant from a site planted by a refugee from the shoe business in 2000 at 250 m elevation just north of Orbetello on the Tuscan coast.*
Very dark and intense with real life. Lovely richness and suppleness with an exciting, dry finish. Some warmth and dust. But a massive core of well-balanced ripe fruit too.
Exciting! 14% Drink 2015-2022
£24.50 Lea & Sandeman 17
- Dom Laurent Martray, Les Feuillées 2013 Côte de Brouilly Lots of acidity and sleek fruit. Polish, sophistication and extreme juiciness. Some fine tannins and a mineral streak too. 12.5% Drink 2015-2018
£15.50 Lea & Sandeman 17
- Chacra, Barda Pinot Noir 2013 Patagonia *Planted earlier this century on the site of the original 1932 vineyard with ungrafted cuttings from vineyards planted in 1955 and 1967.*
Very pale ruby. Light but convincingly earthy nose. Sweet start and then delightfully light and transparent but by no means thin. Masses of personality! **GV** 13% Drink 2014-2018
£18.95 Lea & Sandeman 17
- Dom Thierry Mortet 2009 Gevrey-Chambertin Very appealing, well-balanced perfumed fruity essence with some earthiness. Juicy and ready and open. Just the job for current drinking. 13% Drink 2014-2020
£35.50 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- Luigi Einaudi, Cannubi 2011 Barolo Pale rust red. Scented and super fruity. Lightweight with refined tannins and lots of life ahead of it. Polished with an earthy, truffley undertow. 14% Drink 2017-2028
£54.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- Cigliuti Nebbiolo 2013 Langhe Light cherry red. Civilised nose with a firm spine and lots of acidity and tannin on the end. Great structure. Definitely needs food but very well done. 13.5% Drink 2015-2019
£17.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5
- Montcalmès 2010 Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac Round and sweet. Lots of grip and character. Pretty pungent and tastes of warm slate. Just a little expensive perhaps. 14% Drink

2015-2019

£23.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5

- Chacra, Cincuenta y Cinco Pinot Noir 2011 PatagoniaMid garnet. Scented with strong 'mineral' top notes. Juicy fruit and a bit sweeter and denser than the Barda. Quite a lot of tannins on the end. This will probably last longer than the Barda but it's rather less charming. 13% Drink 2014-2020

£36.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5

- Luigi Maffini, Kleos Aglianico 2011 IGP PaestumDeep crimson. Lots of depth and layers with warm tarmacadam and very ripe, burly fruit. Just the right side of overripe but excellent for the money. **VGV**14% Drink 2015-2020

£14.95 Lea & Sandeman 16.5

- Dom François Lupp, A Vigne Rouge Premier Cru 2009 GivryVery deep crimson for a Pinot Noir. Inexpressive nose. Masses of fruit impact. And pretty firm tannins - perhaps partly informed by water stress? A Givry that wants to be a Gevrey? 13% Drink 2017-2023

£27.75 Lea & Sandeman 16+

- Castello del Terriccio, Tassinaia 2009 IGT ToscanaDark, glossy crimson. Round and sweet and sinewy without quite the density of the Possio Bestiale. The fruit is not *quite* fresh and frank enough for my taste. 14% Drink 2014-2019

£24.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Penedo Borges Malbec 2014 MendozaMid crimson. Fresh fruit, relatively simple. A suggestion of meatiness and drive. **GV** 13.5% Drink 2015-2017

£9.75 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Alain Coudert, Clos de la Roilette 2013 FleuriePale garnet. Sweet and round. 'Pleasant' rather than outstanding.13% Drink 2015-2016

£14.75 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Braunewell, Essenheimer Kalkmergel Spätburgunder 2011 RheinhessenCrunchy sweet raspberry fruit on the nose. Very sweet start. Lots of fun and good balance. Impressive length and not heavy. 13.8% Drink 2014-2017

£18.75 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Acústic, Braó Vinyes Velles 2012 Montsant60-year-old vines, 80% Cariñena and 20% Garnacha. Older barrels.

Sweet start and a little tart and tough on the end. Slightly drying finish.14% Drink 2017-2024

£22.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Le Macchiole 2012 BolgheriMerlot, Cabernet and Syrah.

Bright crimson. Well balanced, well mannered but not attention-grabbing nose. Obviously lots of heat but no excess alcohol and sufficient acidity. Already approachable. 14% Drink 2015-2019

£18.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Dom Rochette 2013 Beaujolais-VillagesVery sweet start and attractive fresh finish. 13% Drink 2015

£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Acústic, Vinyes Velles Nobles 2012 MontsantStarted 2003. Comes from Penedès. 70% Cariñena, 30% Garnacha, from 25 to 60 years old. 200-750 m elevation.

Sweet start and very tense and demanding. Real grip on the palate. 15% Drink 2016-2020

£14.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- Titus, Andronicus 2012 Napa ValleyFirst-ever second label from Titus, made by the Chapellet winemaker. 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 7% Petit Verdot, 6% Cabernet Franc, 6% Petite Sirah, 3% Malbec.

Dark crimson. Looks very smart. Warm, sweet, tea-leaf nose and very well-integrated ingredients. Early maturing and reasonably relaxed rather than aiming for 100 points. Mild but

impressively persistent. Relatively **GV** for Napa.14.9% Drink 2014-2018

£21.95 Lea & Sandeman 16

- **Monfil Garnacha 2013 Cariñena**Jazzy label; looks much more expensive than it is. Bright young blueish crimson. Confident and well balanced – pure fruit cocktail. **VGV**13.5% Drink 2015-2017
£7.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- **Dom Romain Roche 2013 Côtes du Rhône***From old Grenache, Syrah and Carignan vines on clay-limestone in Cairanne.*
Slightly greyish crimson. Rich, ripe nose. Good balance with some salty savour. Carries its alcohol very well. 15% Drink 2015-2019
£11.95 Lea & Sandeman 16
- **Dom Huguenot, Montagne 2010 Marsannay**Sinewy and bone dry on the end. Lots of chew on the finish. Still a little severe.13% Drink 2016-2021
£23.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5+
- **Sottimano, Pairolo 2011 Barbera d'Alba**Very dark crimson. Not desperately expressive on the nose. Tough tannins on the end. Dry and dusty. 14% Drink 2016-2020
£20.50 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- **Dei 2011 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano**Very warm nose with some dustiness. There's a certain gamey quality too. Just a little too much rusty nail for me. Drying finish. 13.5% Drink 2015-2021
£19.50 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- **Terrapura, Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 Colchagua**Very slightly green on the nose. Just a little aggressively chewy on the end. Sincere but a bit demanding.13.5% Drink 2016-2018
£8.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- **Talbott, Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Pinot Noir 2013 Santa Lucia Highlands**Reasonably intense nose but it does seem a tad sweet and simple when tasted immediately after a Thierrt Mortert Gevrey 2009 at £3 more. Flattering sweet, spicy, juicy palate entry but overall just slightly too sweet to refresh.14% Drink 2015-2018
£31.95 Lea & Sandeman 15.5
- **Talbott, Kali Hart Pinot Noir 2013 Monterey County**Pale ruby. Interesting savour on the nose – much less sweet than I expected on the nose but a little bit too uncomfortably sweet on the palate. Not a bad price though.14% Drink 2015-2019
£18.75 Lea & Sandeman 15.5