

LOST IN A FIELD

“Frolic” pét-nat 2023 - MAGNUM

#drinkthe 🌈



The 2023 Lost in a Field “Frolic” pét-nat is a blend of six heritage grape varieties from five vineyards in four different English counties; Herefordshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Kent

Madeleine Angevine	24%
Schönburger	21%
Müller-Thurgau	20%
Huxelrebe	16%
Reichensteiner	15%
Triomphe d’Alsace	4%

2582 bottles and 172 magnums produced

Magnum Magic - we hand apply bottle wax (sky blue, lemon yellow, bubblegum pink) and matching coloured bakers twine to the tops of the magnums; when the string is pulled the wax comes off! It’s purely for aesthetic purposes, and our version of the “theatre” of opening a Champagne cork, but for *pét-nats* sealed with a crown cap. And it looks pretty, reason enough.

2023 - the Goldilocks vintage

Not too hot, not too cool, not too much rain, it was just right.

2023 broke records across England and Wales for volume, but the quality for many was mixed. Our old vine heritage vineyards bucked this trend, with the old vines naturally regulating and never producing an overly abundant crop. A cool and wet summer conspired against full ripeness for many in the country, but again the beauty of our early ripening German heritage varieties could be seen, with full flavours and balanced acids even at relatively low ripeness levels. The 2023 Frolic comes in at a featherlight 9.5% abv, the same as the previous vintage, but the sourcing of fruit from a wider range of vineyards across the south of England, from Herefordshire in the west to Kent in the east, gave us more balance and fruit weight. After three vintages, getting to know our vineyards better, bringing on new growers, and refining the craft of low intervention *pét-nat* making in the winery, we think that the 2023 might just be, whisper it, our best Frolic yet.

The story of 2023 for us was “new” with four out of the five vineyards coming into the Frolic stable for the first time, reflecting our quest to keep increasing the aromatic varieties in the blend, and particularly exciting for us, a significant proportion (21%) of Schönburger for the first time - the unicorn of heritage grape varieties!

Working with such small volumes - no pick from any vineyard was more than one tonne - means that harvest is a white knuckle ride. We have to bring all the white grapes (96% of the wine) into the winery within a two day period to fill the press and process the fruit as quickly as possible so as to avoid oxidation and spoilage, a particular challenge as we are not using sulphur dioxide. I hired a long wheel base transit van on Thursday 5th October, drove to Herefordshire that evening to pick our Madeleine Angevine the next morning which I delivered to the winery in Kent that evening, after which I turned the van around and drove to Wiltshire. The next morning we picked the Schönburger which I delivered back to the winery, whilst the same day our two new growers in Kent very kindly picked and delivered the Müller-Thurgau, Reichensteiner and Huxelrebe. We pressed all four varieties that night, and by the time I got the van back to Brighton I'd driven exactly 1004 miles in 72 hours. We'd picked 250kg of Triomphe d'Alsace (for colour) from the organic walled vineyard in Hampshire the week before, so that had been sitting on its skins for a week gently extracting colour.

It's a real challenge both logistically and from a natural wine making point of view, to put together such a crazy jigsaw of heritage varieties from a geographically diverse range of old vineyards, but I guess you'd have to be crazy to try and copy us, so there's method in our madness, what we are crafting is truly unique.

How we made it

We started by picking the hand staining, red fleshed Triomphe d'Alsace which was macerated in a bin for a week before being basket pressed and added to the juice from the white grapes, which were hand picked from four vineyards between 30th September and 7th October 2023 and delivered to Defined Wine in Kent. All six varieties were then co-fermented in a stainless steel tank with wild yeasts. After two weeks we dropped the temperature of the tank to encourage the wine to become tartrate stable, after which we racked the wine of its gross lees and tartrate crystals, which avoids the risk of the final wine gushing when opened. Fermentation continued slowly as temperatures dropped and the wine was bottled on 11th February 2024 when the residual sugar was around 12 g/L which would hopefully ferment dry leaving a pressure of just under 3 bar. We bottled the wine into 2582 bottles and 172 magnums. As temperatures rose in the Spring the wine continued to ferment, we tasted samples every month and decided that by early June the wine had successfully fermented and the flavours had transformed from raw juice to wine. July was then spent arranging labels and waxing the magnums ready for release on August 1st 2024, ten months after the grapes were picked.

How it tastes

The colour sits somewhere between cloudy pink grapefruit and pale coral pink with a delicate, pretty hue. A cloud burst of foaming white bubbles when poured, the initial aromas are delicately floral with rose petal, elderflower and hedgerow flowers, followed by a palate of quince, strawberry, cut lime and with a grapefruit skin pithiness. There's a saline / quinine character that provides G&T-like refreshment and the featherlight body (just 9.5%) gives great drinkability. Fruity, fun, fault free, zero sulphur English *pét-nat* made from heritage grape varieties from old vines. Drink the rainbow!

Alcohol (ABV)	9.5%
pH	3.23
Total acidity (TA)	5.23 g/L
Free Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂)	0 g/L
Total Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂)	7g/L
Residual sugar (RS)	0.6 g/L

