



All about the Grapes

We continue our fascination with irresistible Indian Wines....

IF YOU LIKE wine and have been keeping your ear close to the ground, you may have noticed the Indian wine industry gradually making a name for itself in recent years. Not too long ago most people we met had never even heard of Indian wine let alone tried it, but at *Chaat!* we have been in touch with key developments over the years and are pleased to report that a rapidly increasing proportion of wine enthusiasts are now not only familiar with the advent of Indian wine on these shores but have begun to see it as a fixture in their wine lists of choice.

Marks & Spencer now sell wines from India's Nasik Valley under the Jewel of Nasik brand, but the brand that has had the greatest impact in popularising Indian wine amongst wine and food enthusiasts in the

“WINE ENTHUSIASTS LOVE TO SHARE AND DISCOVER NEW WINES.”

UK has undoubtedly been Soul Tree. Since its UK launch in 2011 by Oxford MBA duo Alok Mathur and Melvin D'Souza, Soul Tree has been listed in over 600 restaurants and bars all across the United Kingdom. The brand is now busy growing its international footprint into markets like France, Germany, and the USA.

The growing popularity of Indian wine does not surprise Soul Tree founders Alok and Melvin. “Wine enthusiasts love discovering new wines and wines from previously undiscovered regions but they also love telling their friends about the discoveries that excite them most”, says Alok.

Soul Tree's current portfolio includes six wines. The 2014 Soul Tree Sauvignon Blanc is vibrant and invigorating; a really well made tropical white wine. The Soul Tree Rosé is an unusual, dry rosé made from a blend of Shiraz and Zinfandel grapes; distinct from most commercial rosés we find that this wine appeals to wine drinkers who do not typically consider themselves 'pink' drinkers. Soul Tree's portfolio of red wines includes an excellent limited release oak matured Shiraz - Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, a very versatile and popular Shiraz; and a Cabernet Sauvignon that works great with Indian cuisine.

The most recent addition to the Soul Tree

portfolio is another unusual wine – a white sparkling wine produced from a cuvee of an interesting mix of grapes: Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Shiraz, and Symphony. Going by how popular the last Indian sparkling wine to hit these shores was a decade ago, we are excited about the possibilities this wine presents!

“We are creating a rounded portfolio”, says Melvin. “A big, bold oak matured Shiraz – Cabernet Sauvignon; a spicy Shiraz that is great to drink on its own or with food; a full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon that works really well with the complexities of a spicy curry; a memorable, tropical Sauvignon Blanc that breaks from the mould; a distinctive rosé for non-rosé drinkers; and a sparkling wine that is perfect for weddings or celebrations.”

“Soul Tree already has a fan-following amongst its growing consumer base, and we are keen to ensure that its fans and ambassadors extend all around the world. It is for this reason that when it came to raising growth funds recently we chose crowd-funding over more conventional methods”, says Alok. Soul Tree's recent crowd-funding campaign successfully raised over £350,000 from 235 investors around the world.

As food and wine enthusiasts we are excited by what Soul Tree have achieved in such a short space of time. Watch this space! ◀