

Jane Clare: As the leaves turn red, so does my choice of tippie

As autumn well and truly arrives, our intrepid wine lover turns to hearty reds to reflect the season's harvest fruits and chilly winds



Autumn is here; weekends of scrunchy woodland walks, skin-tingling whip-it-up winds and soggy downpours.

Crisp whites and rosés still have their place but there's nothing better than a red wine reflecting the season's leafy clusters and harvest fruits.

Last week I was a little rosy-cheeked after sitting in unexpected warm autumnal sun. With me, a Beaujolais, its soft tannins easy drinking before Sunday dinner. ("It was the sun what giv me rosy cheeks, honest guvnor.")

But the Beaujolais straightened its back, donned some table manners and became a perfect accompaniment to a roast chicken with caramelised onions.

Beaujolais has a tinged reputation because of the over-hyped Beaujolais Nouveau which is released on the third Thursday of each November. You should look beyond that. Beaujolais can be unpretentious and easy drinking but you should definitely keep an eye out for the "crus".

There are 12 appellations in Beaujolais – the basic Beaujolais AC; then Beaujolais Villages. There are 39 villages which can use Villages on the label – but the best appellation is the Beaujolais crus, which consists of 10 villages which produce wines of distinction from the region's gamay grape.

Seek out Saint Amour, Juliéna, Chénas, Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Regnie, Brouilly, and Côte de Brouilly.

My wine was **Henry Fessy Moulin-à-Vent 2011**. It had aromas of leafy hedgerow bushes, fingertip-squeezed blackcurrants and warm red berries. Mouthwatering black fruits and gentle spice leave a squeak of acidity as soft tannins ease away to a fruity afterglow.