

## Wine down in history

Grape through the ages.

Wine, no matter the locale, is divine. Daisuke Kawai, owner of Japanese wine bar La Terre, leads us on a wine journey based on history—at least, in terms of place of origin. Though the earliest known winery, dating back to 4100 BC, was found in Armenia, we begin with Lebanon, the modern site of the seat of the ancient Phoenician empire. You can thank those seafaring guys for bringing this gift of the gods to all of the Mediterranean, especially Greece, where it was cultivated to perfection. The Portuguese brought wine to the Americas, so we'll need one from the New World too—with a twist. It's grown in Napa Valley but by a Japanese winemaker. Lest you don't want to leave the comfortable bosoms of France, Italy and Spain, La Terre maintains a carefully curated list of mainly Old World wines, with a few exquisite selections from other *terroirs*, along with some really rare whiskies.

*La Terre is located at 11 Upper Circular Road.*



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
**Château Ksara, Blanc de Blancs, Bekaa Valley, 2012 (Lebanon)**

"On the nose, we can find elegant white florals. The taste is medium-bodied with a slightly nutty, toasted almond flavour. I'd recommend vegetarian food, for instance, a chickpea, eggplant or zucchini gratin, or just simple grilled vegetables, so there's balance that harmonises well in the mouth."

SGD68++ a bottle.

**Kenzo Estate, Rindo 紫鈴, 2009 (USA)**

"When the Japanese make something, they take things very seriously. They follow even the smallest detail, so the wine becomes basically big-bodied, but also sensitive, elegant and very clean. On the nose, we can find blackcurrant, raspberry, black pepper and star anise; it's altogether very complex. I'd try simple but unique food with this, like raw beef or raw horsemeat." But if that's too intense, *teppanyaki* works just as well.

SGD304++ a bottle.

**Gaia, Assyrtiko Wild Ferment, Santorini PDO, 2012 (Greece)**

"Slightly spicy white pepper, cloves and honey notes on the nose. Taste is dry with a nice citrusy kind of acidity. It's very fresh, and I recommend pairing it with a boiled or grilled seafood platter with a dash of salt and pepper."

SGD86++ a bottle.

**Pereira d'Oliveiras, Terrantez, 1977 (Portugal)**

"This grape variety is called Terrantez. It is very rare nowadays, because it's difficult to grow in the [Madeira] soil. If we were to compare it to normal white wine, it's sweet, but also dry in terms of other Madeira wines. On the nose, it's very herbaceous, with honey and sugarcane, a bit like sherry but not with the same oxidation nose. The taste is very complex. Pair it with dessert."

SGD441++ a bottle.