



✦ Life is different, but the basics are the same ✦

Typically, at Massaya we prefer the pruning when the liquids of the vines, sap (sève) start to move up, that is when the vines are expelling the sap instead of the fall period when the liquids are attracted to the roots. So typically, we start in January and finish early March depending on Massaya team workloads, the weather, and the moon calendar.

Indeed, the pruning is done in house exclusively by our team and not outsourced, as generally the case in Lebanon. Our precious babies are too important to put them in the hands of others, especially the bushes (gobelet) that we pride to sculpture year after year.



We always start with Ras Baalbeck (Cap Est label) on the Eastern mountain range at the north of the Beqaa with the Grenache as it is the first vineyard to break its buds then comes the foothills of Mount Lebanon, home of Terrasses de Baalbeck (TDB). We prefer to keep the Syrah that we keep typically to the very end as it is the first one that starts its cycle and we prefer to keep it to the end to avoid late frost. Globally speaking we move from the northern part of the Beqaa to the central part.

The vineyards around the winery at Tanaïl are pruned along this journey mainly during the weekends.

Faqra this year has been pruned also in January by the in-house team as snow was late to arrive this year.

Beside the vines, we have also the olive trees, the roses, the fruit trees, and the ornamental ones between Tanaïl and Faqra... we stop pruning mid-March.

Now it is time to start grafting the vines, ploughing, and planting the vegetables for the restaurants and our families.

While ploughing is tricky, grafting is a meticulous job that requires skilled and experienced labor and good conditions. Grafting is like procreating, you insert the proper vine in the solid rootstock and the harmony between them creates happy fruits for years to come!



We are not fans of ploughing, we are against disturbing life of the little warms, snails... in the welcoming humus. At Massaya we are not afraid of wild weed or flora as it attracts fauna that keeps a nice balance in the vineyards and positive vibes. Against common practice, Massaya vineyards are recognizable as it is not ploughed as frequently as other vineyards. Yet, we manually plough around the vines with handheld tools that are less aggressive than the blades that go into the soil and the plougher weight that compact the ground.

We can't deny that, between covid and the financial meltdown, life has changed, and we are adapting because we feel in Lebanon that the system is crumbling by the day and we have no solution in site neither locally nor regionally. The daily roadblocks and shortages are complicating matters, so now we have all kind of vegetables grown on the properties, name it and we have it with greenhouses, above soil, seeds, nurseries.... So, we are keeping ourselves busy and preparing for future contingencies while travelling is not an option and the restaurants at Faqra are closed. Life has changed with a twist towards the roots and life basics.

Meanwhile we raise our glasses to the new cycle of the vines and to the positive hopes and vibes that our nature offers us so gracefully.



❖ Mother's Day in Lebanon ❖



We all have one woman that has a special place in our heart. She could be a sister, a spouse or a partner but for this occasion we have wanted to honor the one who inspired us through highs and lows, our Mother.

Not only she is a great cook, but till now, she takes care of one of the most magnificent organic kitchen gardens in Lebanon. Nowadays, permaculture and biodynamic are of trend, yet back in the 70's my mother would wake us up at 6:00 am to pick fruits and vegetables at Tanaïl, as she already relied on organic produce back. She is a pioneer, not only in terms of diet, but in lifestyle, taking me with her to her yoga classes when I was 11...

She graduated at the age of 22 from AUB in pharmacy and spent most of her life following up on the progress of medicine as she is obsessed with the wellbeing of people. I remember people would always call her for advice, funny enough,

sometimes they trusted her opinion more than the doctors', I believe that is because she cared for everyone regardless if they were poor or rich, friends or foes as she believed her knowledge was for the good sake of humanity.

We inherited from her, our love and respect for nature. In a way we owe her the philosophy of Massaya.

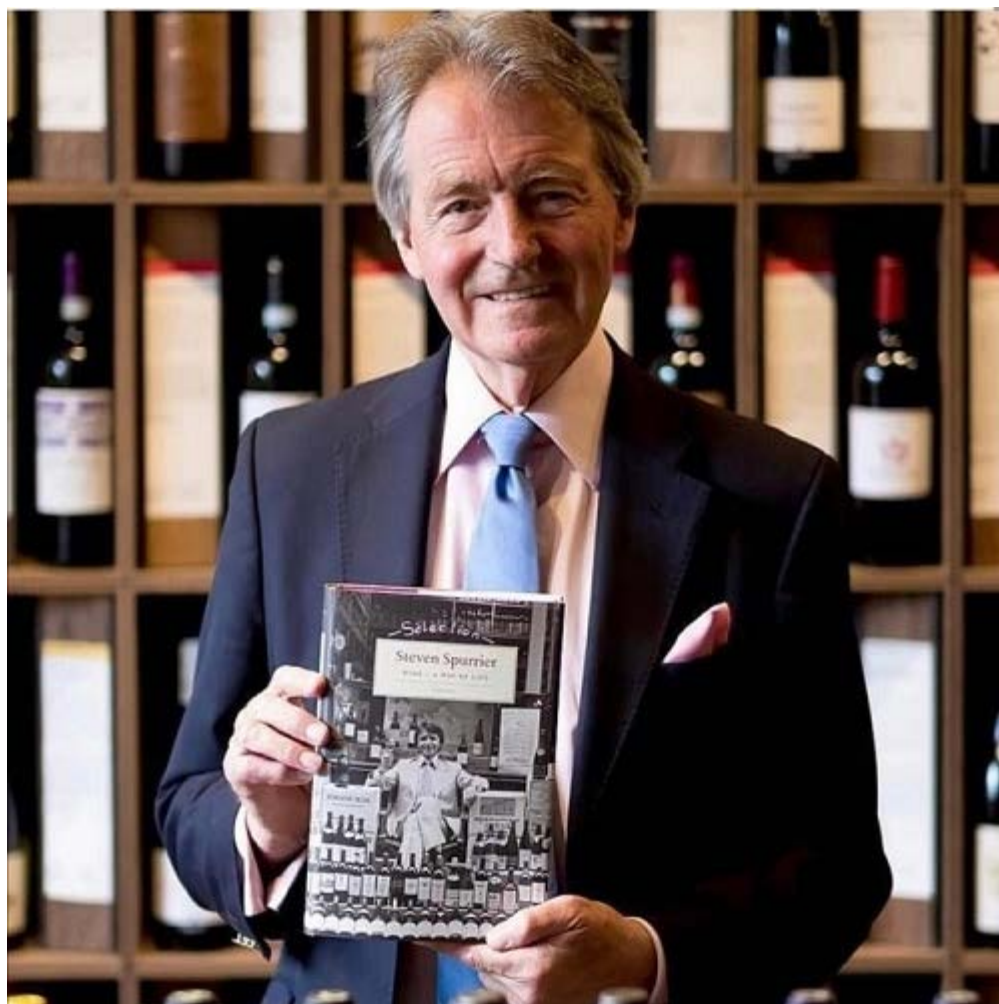
Till today she inspires us, she remains optimistic, wise, and uses the right words to recomfort us...

I never managed to understand where she gets this energy and positivity. It could be her past experiences as she went through the civil war but holds also vivid souvenirs of world war 2, or and most likely, her heart is just tolerant and generous by nature.

Here a recollection of photos, her wedding, her youth, and the family picture at Tanail in 1973 with my sibling and my late father.

Cheers Amoule and cheers to all the women who inspire humanity.

❖ Steven Spurrier, RIP sir ❖



So many beautiful tributes to Steven Spurrier “A legend, a gracious man... a pillar of opinion who everyone respected.”

The title of his latest book, “wine, a way of life” sums it up, when wine becomes a life ethic driven by the passion of discovering, enjoying every moment, and expanding the limits of the wine world...

Steven embodied the elegant wine world, talented, passionate, curious, open minded and above all honest. He graciously also shaped the modern wine world with its diversity. A huge fan and champion of Lebanon wines. He helped wake up the wine world to Lebanon’s heritage and to the vibrant renaissance at the turn of the century. He offered up such words of encouragement about our wine region, that I still remember them 20 years later...

During tastings in London, Steven was always a reinsuring figure to see and listen around winemakers. Such a considered charming and warm bon vivant. He

came from a rare and special vintage the like of which we are unlikely to see again
but his terroir was well rooted in British courtesy, RIP sir

We extend our deepest condolences to the Spurrier family and all those who
were close to him.

MARCH SCHEDULE

MASSAYA BOUTIQUES:

Safe home deliveries from Monday till Friday

FIREPLACE TERRACE:

Daily winery tours and tastings, 10:00-17:00pm

Temporarily closed until further notice

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