



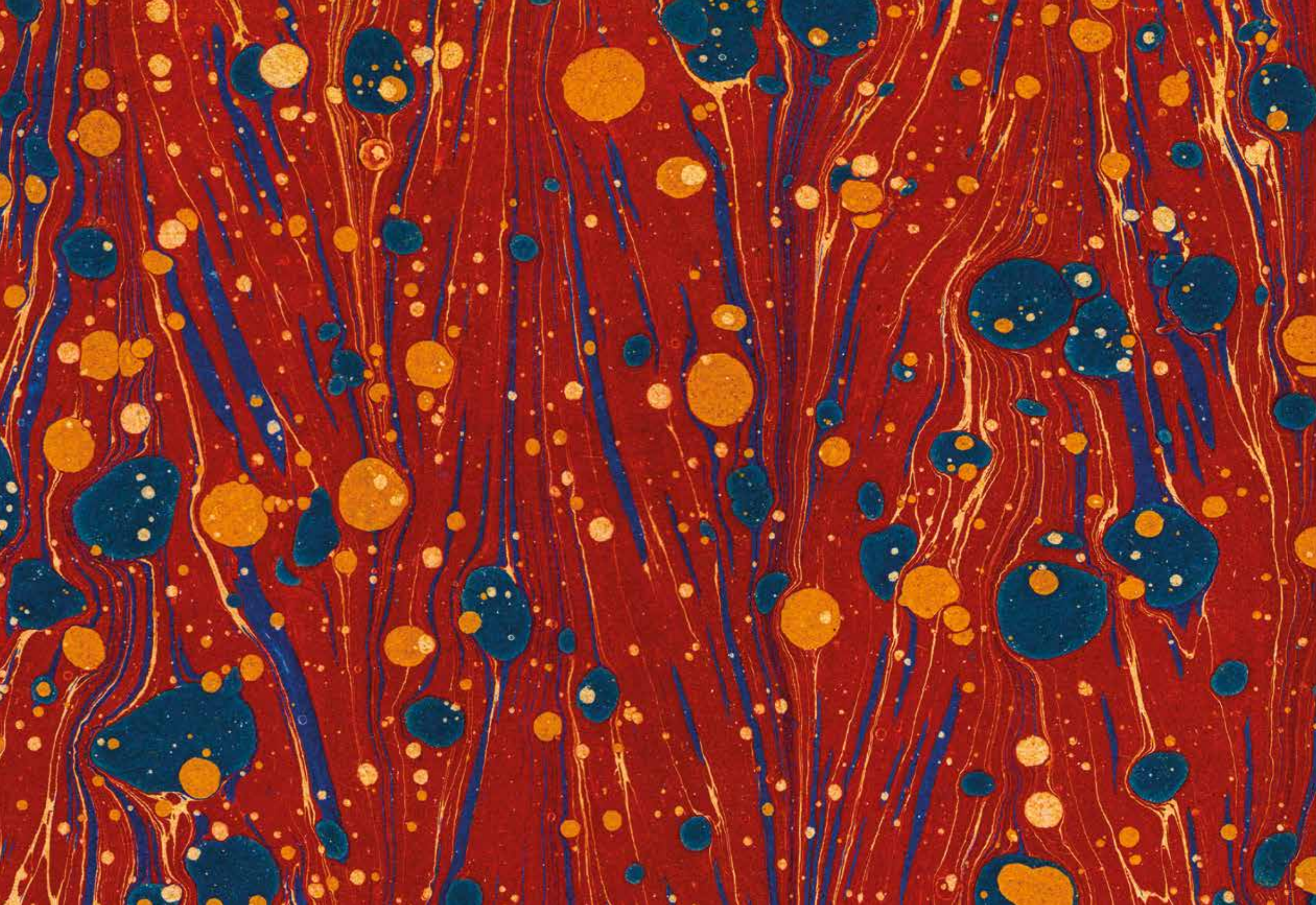
BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
AND SUPPLIERS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS  
OF WALES  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON

**CORNEY &  
BARROW**  
INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780

*Integrity  
and provenance  
on a delicious  
journey*





*Corney & Barrow believes  
that life rewards the curious.  
Join us on this delicious journey.*

**A**t an auction in New York in 2006, a double magnum of Château Petrus 1921 sold for \$47,800. From the same source, a case of Romanée-Conti 1990 sold for \$161,325.

The seller, who wished to remain anonymous, was referred to by the *Wine Spectator* magazine as “renowned for his discriminating taste and being a stickler for provenance”.

For most of modern history, wine—even the very best—was something to be drunk as quickly as possible after vintage before it turned to vinegar. Some wine merchants were not noted for their honesty.

In the snappily titled 1703 book, *Art and Mystery of Vintners and Wine Coopers or Brief Discourse concerning the Various Sicknesses and Corruptions of Wines*, various tricks to perk up

less than fresh goods were mentioned: “Take half a bushel of full-ripe Elder-berries, pick them from their stalks, bruise them, and put the strain’d juice into a hoggs-head [sic] of discoloured Claret; and so make it drink brisk, and appear bright”.

But change was on the horizon thanks to a man who is almost forgotten. His name was Sir Kenelm Digby. During the reign of Charles I, he invented a new type of glass. Dark and immensely strong when blown into a bottle, it would transform the wine trade. Previously, glass was very fragile. However, with these new bottles wine could be stored safely away from the damaging effects of oxygen.

The full significance of Digby’s invention would not be exploited until the eighteenth century when reliable corks were perfected. Middle class people could now keep a cellar of different wines. Before this significant



moment, only the very rich could afford to buy wine, which was sold only in a barrel.

It was found, rather by accident, that the best clarets and ports actually improved in bottle. Port in particular underwent a remarkable transformation from something fiery to something sublime.

This left only one problem—how to open the damn things. There were many attempts at creating corkscrews or bottlescrews as they were known, but the first patent was not until 1795 when Reverend Samuel Henshall perfected a reliable way of removing the cork. One imagines that between 1630 and 1795 there must have been some very frustrated wine lovers.

When Edward Bland Corney opened his shop in 1780 in Old Broad Street in the City of London, the wine business was on the cusp of momentous change.

Formerly, merchants had tried to offload their wines as quickly as possible. Now they held large stocks maturing. It required expertise. Corney sold port, sherry and claret. His wines would arrive in barrel and would be bottled in London to sell to his clients.

Until the early twentieth century, wine merchants still operated like this. There were no labels. If Corney said it was finest Margaux then you could trust him, as you can today.

Not all wine merchants are as scrupulous and conscientious as Mr Corney.

The eighteenth century essayist, Joseph Addison wrote in the *Tatler*: “There is in this city a certain fraternity of chymical operators, who...squeeze Bourdeaux [sic] out of a Sloe, and draw Champagne from an Apple”.

During the nineteenth century, British tastes were becoming more refined. The great wines of the Old World—port, sherry, Madeira,



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Bordeaux, Burgundy and Champagne—were assuming their modern forms, and the better-known châteaux, shippers and bodegas were becoming brands.

Robert Barrow joined Edward Corney in 1838, as bordeaux was on the verge of a boom that would last until the 1880s. Wine lovers found Corney & Barrow to be approachable, personable and very knowledgeable. Many mutually beneficial relationships were formed. Clients enjoyed Corney & Barrow's high standards and probity. Not surprisingly, in 1912 Corney & Barrow obtained its Royal Warrant, from George V. We currently hold two Royal Warrants, as suppliers to HM Queen Elizabeth II and HRH The Prince of Wales.

Corney & Barrow has always been scrupulous about the provenance of its wines. Authenticity is of primary importance. As a result of our integrity, in 1978 we became the

sole agents for Château Petrus, and in 1990 we secured the agency for the world's most sought-after estate, namely Domaine de la Romanée-Conti.

These might seem like obvious alliances, but at the time, many merchants turned their noses up at Petrus considering it too soft and fruity to be a real claret, and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti was going through some difficult times.

Corney & Barrow were similarly long-sighted by taking on Pingus, then an obscure Spanish country wine, now one of the world's most exclusive.

We have been innovative in other ways: today the buying team is all female and in 1989 we were the first of the old-school merchants to set up a brokerage business, putting sellers directly in touch with buyers. "Perfect



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*Three-quarters of our portfolio  
is exclusive to us.*

*The result of long standing  
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provenance” is our standard. We never buy at auction, from the Far East or America.

The success of this brokerage meant that in 1999 Corney & Barrow—a wine importer—won a Queen’s Award for Export! Our business was now as much about exporting wines as importing them.

We have offices in Scotland, Hong Kong and Singapore. However, it is fitting that our headquarters are in the old customs’ house by St Katherine’s Dock in the City of London, where goods have been arriving on the Thames from all over the world. As Brett-Smith, our managing director, put it: “Britain is a nation of traders and London is the centre of wine trade”.

“Perfect provenance” was originally about making sure your Romanée-Conti was not left on the docks in the sweltering heat of Taiwan, but Corney & Barrow’s meticulous approach



to provenance has proved prescient. Addison's "chymical operators" are back.

Domaine de la Romanée-Conti only made six hundred bottles of their legendary 1945 Romanée-Conti, yet thousands have been sold at auction.

Petrus have no record of producing the monster double magnum bottle of 1921 that was auctioned in 2006.

That "stickler for provenance" was Rudy Kurniawan, aka Zhen Wang Huang, aka Dr Conti, an Indonesian national, currently serving ten years in a Californian prison for wine fraud.

We want you to learn this vital lesson: only buy from a name you can trust.

Since 1780, Corney & Barrow have seen momentous changes in the wine business, but through it all we have kept the values



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of all that we do.*



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of our founders—impeccable provenance, authenticity, integrity. Oh, and we also bring a great deal of fun and passion to buying and enjoying wine.

Relationships are at the heart of all we do.

We assign you a wine merchant who can get to know your tastes, offer guidance, share wisdom, tell you the story behind each wine and help you explore new tastes and build a good cellar.

We make this a truly enjoyable process.

Our contact with you can be face to face, over the telephone (which is answered promptly by a real person), by e-mail, by post, or by social media; whichever works best for you.

Around three-quarters of our portfolio is exclusive to Corney & Barrow. This is the result of our long standing relationships with the producers.

So, you can equally trust us if you are looking for a good every-day drinking wine for much less than a tenner, or you are looking for a rare vintage of Romanée-Conti, or an English white from Biddenden. Every wine is selected by the buying teams using the same rigorous selection procedure.

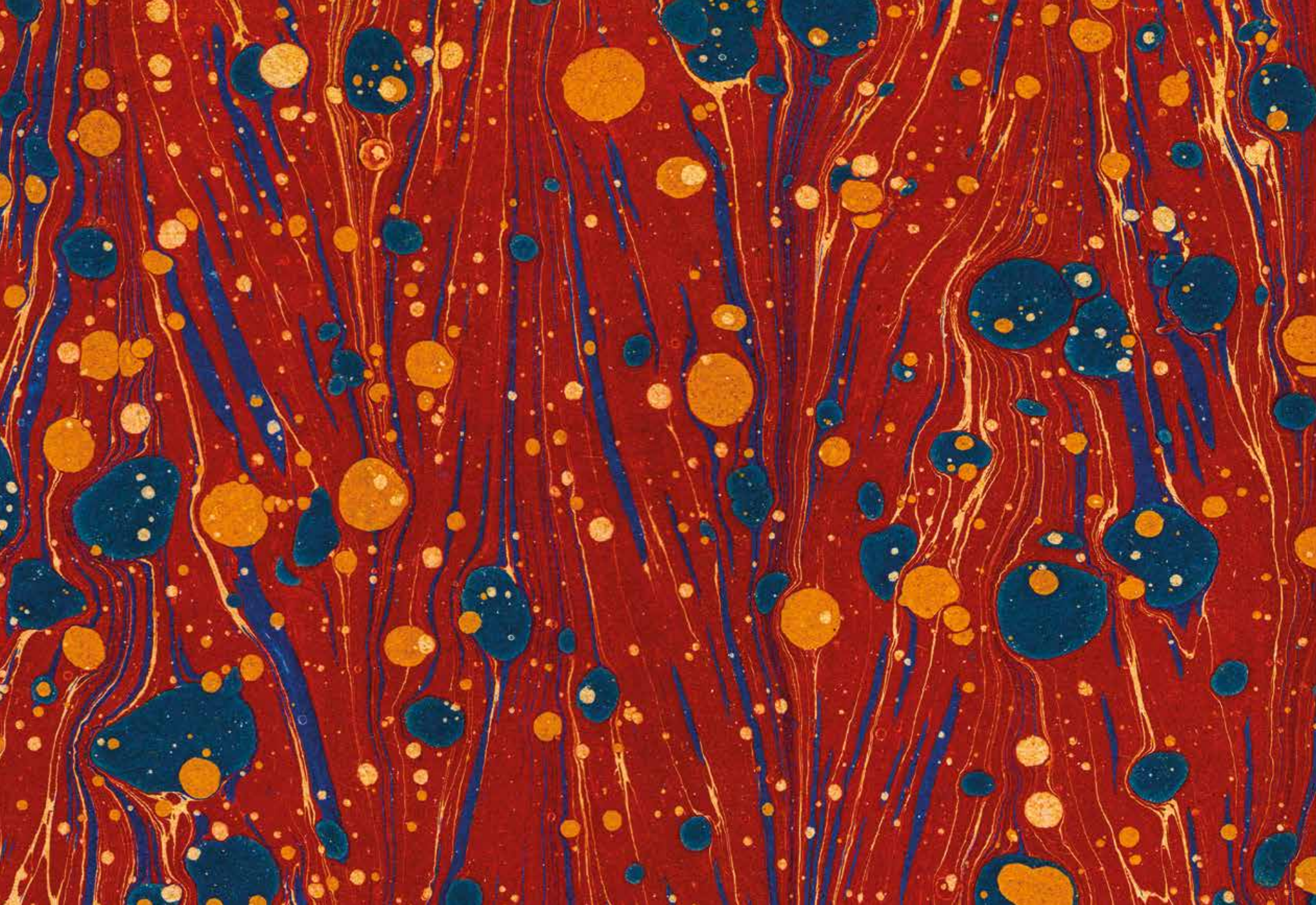
As you would expect, you can store your wines in perfect conditions in our cellars, and even monitor your wines online, checking their value against Liv-ex data. From our cellars, you can sell your wines to collectors around the globe.

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