

Michel Rolland

Barking into his mobile phone and pausing only to shout 'micro-oxygenate' out of the window as his car screeches away may well be two images that will haunt Michel Rolland for the rest of his career.

More likely, however, is that it's the rest of us that remember those particular scenes from Jonathan Nossiter's *Mondovino*. Rolland, no doubt, will have long since wiped them from the memory banks and moved on.

Rolland must be not only Bordeaux's but the world's most famous wine consultant. He today consults for over 100 wineries across 13 countries worldwide, has a large team working for him and owns numerous chateaux and brands of his own, including Château Le Bon Pasteur, Château Bertineau Saint-Vincent in Lalande de Pomerol, Château Rolland-Maillet in Saint-Émilion, Château Fontenil in Fronsac, and Château La Grande Clotte in Lussac Saint-Émilion as well as joint venture partnerships with Bonne Nouvelle in South Africa, Val de Flores in Argentina, Campo Eliseo in Spain and Yacochuya and Clos de los Siete in Argentina.

He's not all smug smiles and big business though. He is known for always being ready with a smile and a quick one-liner, but there's a love story at the heart of Michel Rolland. According to Jonathan Nossiter in *Noble Rot*, it was love at first sight when Michel laid eyes on his now-wife Dany, at the University of Oenology, from where they both graduated in the class of 1972. In 1973, they bought into an oenology lab on the Right Bank in Libourne (near where Michel was born, in Pomerol, in 1947), and took over it fully in 1976. By 2006, the lab employed eight full time technicians. Today, their two daughters, Stephanie and Marie, work at the lab, with their husbands.

Excellent article by Eric Asim on Rolland:

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/11/dining/11pour.html?_r=1&oref=slogin