



RHÔNE 2016 EN PRIMEUR



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An exceptional vintage: opulent fruit, melting tannins, and energetic freshness

2016 is a roaring success in the Rhône. It follows the excellent 2015 whose release saw an upsurge in interest in this classic French region of diverse expression. Where 2015 produced Northern Rhône Syrahs of remarkable depth and complexity, 2016 has produced what many growers in the South are describing as the vintage of a generation. There is little doubt that the Southern Rhône will steal the limelight in the press, but the Northern wines, both reds and whites, should not be overlooked. Indeed, the whites are nigh on perfect in balance, with the weight and texture one expects from the Rhône matched by an energetic freshness, distinguishing them as amongst the best whites the region has ever made.

Increasingly, extreme growing seasons are making themselves felt across Europe, with hail, frost, and drought all causing significant reductions in yields across the continent. Indeed, the Rhône has not escaped unscathed in 2017 in that respect, however 2016, with some minor isolated exceptions, has produced excellent yields as well as quality across the whole Rhône valley.

In general terms, the reds of the North have an elegant charm with open, ripe fruit and approachable structure, whilst the reds of the South possess a spellbinding intensity, and are expected to outrank their 2015 siblings in the long run. The whites in both regions are exquisite.

Rhône expert John Livingstone Learmonth has described 2016 as ranking amongst the top three vintages he has encountered since he began reviewing the region in the early 1970s. Even at this early stage, growers have been comparing it with such legendary vintages as 2010 and 1990. We anticipate demand will be the strongest we have seen in many years, and the wines are expected to sell out very quickly, so do not delay.

THE GROWING SEASON

Unlike the two vintages that flank it, 2016 was a late and long growing season. After a mild winter the sap was slow to rise in the vines during the cool spring months. Both bud break and flowering took place between two and three weeks later than normal, making the whole growing season late by modern standards. Rain in May and early June across the North brought on the threat of mildew, and growers

had to act diligently and defensively in the steep vineyards of Côte Rôtie and Hermitage, however the growing season proceeded unhampered in the South.

This was followed by a steady, dry summer that saw ripening develop well across the region, and a late swell of balmy weather at the end of August and early September provided ideal conditions for *veraison* (when the fruit changes colour). The fruit matured in the prolonged Indian summer that saw a warm, bright sun shine down into the early autumn, accompanied by the refreshing coolness of September nights. This meant phenolic (tannin and flavour compounds) and physiological (sugar and acidity) ripeness developed in harmony. A relatively late harvest continuing into early October was undertaken in superb conditions.

THE WINES

As a result of the long, steady growing season, the 2016s are slightly lighter in body and alcohol than the 2015s (and than the 2017s will be), by the measure of half or one degree of alcohol depending on the region. Their slightly lower pH gives them a distinct freshness too. But these are not light bodied, under-ripe wines. In the South the length of the season allowed late-ripening varieties like Mourvèdre to effortlessly reach phenolic maturity. It was also a success story for the South's most important variety, Grenache, whose weight and concentration comes from fruit intensity and not from high alcohol (the cool nights of the later season helped retain acidity and kept sugar levels in check). In the North the Syrah has tannins that are fluid and melodic, with strikingly deep colours seen in some Côte Rôties. The whites across the region, from the Viogniers of Condrieu through the Marsannes and Roussannes of St Joseph and St Péray, on into the blends of Châteauneuf du Pape, are outstanding. They are lighter in weight than the rich 2015s, with graceful fruit and lithe acidity. These are whites that will stand the test of time, so don't be afraid to cellar them.

What marks the 2016s apart is three key elements: the first, and most significant, is the density and opulence of fruit richness, less heady alcohol and heavy body here, rather intensely rich, luxurious flavours. This richness is matched by the second

defining element: supple, melting tannins. In many cases the 2016s have equally high tannic content compared with the 2015s, but their profile is distinctly different. These are sweet, silky tannins, whereas the 2015s had an edge of firmness and structure (the Syrahs from that vintage, in particular, may require some time). The third component is their energy and freshness. The long, late growing season with warm autumn days and cool nights aided the development of phenolic ripeness (silky tannins and rich colours) alongside retention of vibrant acidity and low pH. These three elements combined have a dual result: the wines have all the requisites for a long development, but they are also strikingly accessible and approachable in their youth, this particularly true of the Northern Rhône Syrahs.

Let me expand this point: 'Approachable' and 'accessible' can be deployed in tasting notes to allude to a wine's lack of concentration or shorter drinking window, but here there is no such euphemism. The wines' fruit opulence and supple tannins make them both excellent candidates for a long, fruitful, and exciting life of development, but they also make them pure joy in their youth. If you relish both the charms of sweet berry fruit flavours, the spice of minerality, and the freshness of bright youthful acidity as well as more nuanced autumnal notes, the distinction of mature bottle aged red, the nutty complexity of an aged white, then 2016 is the vintage to buy. Where the excellent 2015s will reward the patient, many of the 2016s will do for now, tomorrow, the next time, and the next. Tuck them in the cellar or pull the cork early; either way they will reward you across the years of drinking.

Catherine Petrie MW



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TOM MONTAGU POLLOCK ESQ

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Then there is very little for you to do other than review your cellar online and, once your wines are ready to drink, decide when to take delivery of and enjoy your wines.

NORTHERN RHÔNE

DOMAINE PATRICK & CHRISTOPHE BONNEFOND, AMPUIS

For over 25 years brothers Patrick and Christophe Bonnefond have been running their family estate in the commune of Mornas, perched up on the hills just behind the Côte Rôtie escarpment. They make a good team, with Patrick tending the vines and Christophe in the winery. The domaine's style is a modern and polished approach to Northern Rhône Syrah. The wines have a compact richness, which is matched by up to 50% new oak in the top cuvées, giving the wines toasty smoky notes. The Colline de Couzou Côte Rôtie is a blend of fruit from the Côte Blonde and the Côte Brune, however the Rochains and Rozier both come from the heart of the Côte Brune whose schist and mica-schist soils typically give more structure to the wines than the finer, more delicate

character of the granite soils found in the Côte Blonde. Their vineyard sites are of exceptional quality; the Les Rochains parcel lies just next to Guigal's La Landonne, and their style is slick and seductive. The wines are never fined, and only undergo a light filtration before bottling. Christophe likes to include some press wine in the final blends, giving them a creamy richness. He describes the 2016s as a 'gourmand' vintage that can be enjoyed in its youth as well as with time. A slightly longer *cuvaison* and warmer fermentation (up to 31° compared to their normal maximum of 28°) has resulted in the extraction of soft tannins and a deep ruby colour.

CÔTE RÔTIE COLLINE DE COUZOU



£315.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

From a blend of plots scattered across the Côte Blonde (25%) and Côte Brune (75%). The granite parcels of the Côte Blonde contribute dark colour, deep myrtle berry flavours, direct sweetness and fine light tannins. The Côte Brune components on the other hand contribute more substance, salty savoury tones and luscious density. The inclusion of press juice adds creamy depth and a spiced plum character. This is a gorgeously pure style of Syrah, unmasked by the light touch of new oak (10-15% in new 400 litre oak fûts). Drink 2019 – 2028

CÔTE RÔTIE LES ROCHAINS



£215.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond
£220.00 per 3 Magnums In Bond

Planted in 1947 on the mica-schist soils of the Côte Brune, these old vines lie next to Guigal's famous La Landonne vineyard. Compared with the Rozier, it is a wider, denser wine, where power and weight outrank elegance and aromatics. It is Christophe's favourite cuvée, with its brooding intensity. Its high altitude position ensures the wine retains excellent freshness. The nose has both the peppery spice of Syrah and the sweet scent of wild berries, contributed perhaps by inclusion of a small amount of whole bunch fruit (10-15%). Drink 2020 – 2032

CÔTE RÔTIE CÔTE ROZIER



£215.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond
£220.00 per 3 Magnums In Bond

This cuvée is sourced from the 40-50 year old vines in the Côte Rozier parcel (the younger vines are blended into the Colline de Couzou cuvée). The vineyard faces the river with an eastern exposure, and enjoys the constant flow of cool breeze moderating the searing heat of the summer sun. This gives the wine a tension and purity, and fragrant intensity to the black fruit. The tannins are fine, agile, and perfectly coated by the ripe fruit core at the centre of the palate. It finishes long, poised, and elegant. Drink 2020 – 2030



DOMAINE RENÉ ROSTAING, AMPUIS

René Rostaing retired after the 2014 vintage, leaving the estate in the capable hands of his son Pierre. René had spent 40 years building a reputation as the patriarch of the Northern Rhône, and Pierre's handling of the 2015s and 2016s shows a seamless handover has taken place. The house recipe here remains unchanged: old vines from some of the region's greatest sites, a high proportion of whole bunch vinification, long macerations, wild yeast, and restrained use of new French oak. Pierre describes the character of the Syrah in 2016 as silky

and easy. After studying in Montpellier Pierre did a *stage* at Domaine Comtes Lafon in Meursault, and the Burgundian touch is clear in his wines. He has continued his father's inimitable style in Condrieu, fermenting the wine in stainless steel, and his La Bonnette is absolutely outstanding in 2016. The gifts of the season were such that this stripped down, unadorned version of Condrieu draws the curtain back on this often misunderstood appellation, and shows the quality of the fruit in all its dazzling glory.



CONDRIEU LA BONNETTE (W)

£255.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

From the southwest facing granite soil *lieu dit* La Côte Bonnette, which is the first parcel in the appellation after the border with Côte Rôtie. This Viognier is always fermented and raised in 100% stainless steel. With a higher than average yield in 2016, Pierre explains how this vintage has been a gift for Viognier. A naturally higher yield suits the variety, which can become cumbersome with lower yields. This example has gorgeous blossom aromas and a fresh, dynamic palate of white peach flesh with a saline undertow. Extremely fine and elegant, and ideal for enjoyment in its flush of youth. Drink 2017 - 2020

CÔTE RÔTIE AMPODIUM (R)

£495.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

£505.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond

'Ampodium' is the Roman name for Ampuis, and this iconic Rostaing cuvée is a blend of 13 *lieux dits* from around Côte Rôtie. The young vine parcels give a fruity, juicy character, whilst older vines add depth and drive. The tannins across all are supple, and the fruit character is archetypally Syrah, with black fruit, pepper and liquorice. Drink 2019 – 2028

CÔTE RÔTIE LA LANDONNE (LIMITED) (R)

£515.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

Arguably the most famous *lieu dit* of the Côte Rôtie, Rostaing's cuvée delivers the density, precision, and depth one expects from legendary terroir. Whole bunch fermentation has added to the wine's glowing ruby colour, and given a sweetly scented mid-palate of rich dark fruits. Sweet dark cherries and kirsch character drive through to the long finish, supported by ripe tannins and mineral freshness. Drink 2020 – 2032

CÔTE RÔTIE CÔTE BLONDE (LIMITED) (R)

£550.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This cuvée is a blend of two neighbouring parcels grown on the granite soils of the Côte Blonde, and has a deeper denser colour than the Landonne. Its tannins are of such fine and supple quality the wine has a velvet texture as it glides over the palate. Just a small touch of new oak (10-15%) gives a little extra boost to the luxurious dark fruits. All in all perfectly executed. Drink 2020 – 2032

DOMAINE CLUSEL ROCH, AMPUIS

Brigitte Roch and Gilbert Clusel's son Guillaume is beginning to make his mark on his parents' estate nestled below the steep slopes of the Côte Brune. The style here is understated yet complex, with a distinctly Burgundian finesse combined with Syrah's natural muscle. The domaine includes some very old parcels of Syrah vines, and has been certified organic since 2002. The delicate handling in the vineyard and cellar results in wines with lower alcohol than many of their neighbours, and produces hugely pure, distinctive wines that avoid any over-extraction. Guillaume never employs a cold soak prior to fermentation (as a result the wines are paler in

colour than some neighbours), and in 2016 he carried out slightly shorter macerations than usual. All the wines are vinified without the use of sulphur dioxide, which is only added after the malolactic fermentation has been completed. He likes to incorporate the press wine in the final cuvées to add depth and structure. From 2016 onwards the estate will no longer produce their young vine cuvée, La Petite Feuille, as the 15 year old vines have reached sufficient maturity to be included in the Côte Rôtie Classique. This estate holds its traditional methods close to heart, and their dexterous array of Côte Rôties is a fascinating portrait of Syrah.

CÔTE RÔTIE CLASSIQUE (LIMITED) (R)

£370.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

Blended from four principal parcels in the Côte Brune, combining both young and old vines grown on the mica-schist soils. The result is a really complete picture of the appellation, with the fruity vigour of young vines, the svelte body of older vines, and the smoky, savoury grip and fresh acidity from these steep slopes. The final blend has a red cherry scent, is delicate but firm in structure, with freshness and energy. 30% whole bunch fruit in the fermentation adds aromatic depth to the wine, with sweet red cherries, crushed raspberries, and the light spice of nutmeg and cinnamon on the palate. It should drink well from youth and continue for at least a decade. Drink 2018 – 2028

COTE ROTIE LA VIALLIÈRE (VERY LIMITED) (R)

£278.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This schist parcel within the Côte Brune is particularly respected amongst Côte Rôtie locals. Its mid-slope position and high proportion of gravelly stones aid drainage and produce wines of great finesse as well as notable substance. The 2016's 30% whole bunch gives the wine tender fruit aromatics, whilst the palate is driven by a salty tension, propelling the small, fine tannins along to a beautiful finish. The well-judged proportion of new oak complements its finesse. Drink 2019 – 2029

CÔTE RÔTIE LES GRANDES PLACES (VERY LIMITED) (R)

£353.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This cuvée is usually the more powerful of the Clusel Roch parcels, and 2016 is no exception. It has deeper, darker fruit in the nose, and this follows through onto the palate, which incorporates structure, density, and complexity in its blend of Syrah sinew and Côte Rôtie savoury drive. A compelling wine of high drama. Drink 2020-2035



DOMAINE ANDRÉ PERRET, CHAVANAY

André Perret needs little introduction: he is the master of light-footed, complex Viogniers from the granite soils of Condrieu. The appellation is known for its rich, mouth-coating whites best drunk in their youth. André's sophisticated, expressive examples also have the potential to age intelligently in bottle. These wines will give enormous pleasure drunk in the first two years, or even up to five. The whites are raised in a combination of oak barrel and stainless steel so that the wines have depth but are never marked by an overlay of new oak. The 13 hectare domaine includes 5 hectares in Condrieu and 5 hectares in St Joseph, and the close-knit, peppery, herb-tinged St Joseph rouge is excellent value and not to be missed. 2016 has been a triumph for the Northern Rhône whites, and there has never been a better time to venture into this region than now.



ST JOSEPH BLANC (VERY LIMITED) (W)

£190.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

A blend of equal parts Marsanne and Roussanne from the north of France's longest, thinnest appellation that runs from St Péray in the south up to the border with Condrieu in the north. It is fermented and raised half in oak, a fraction new, and half in stainless steel. The nose has a charming sweetness of white blossom and tropical guava and mango. The palate is creamy and fresh with a brilliant drive and long dry finish, leaving the lingering flavours of pear and quince. Drink 2017 – 2021

CONDRIEU CLOS CHANSON (VERY LIMITED) (W)

£205.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This southeast facing enclosed vineyard is home to old Viognier vines (55 years+) grown on granitic soils. Pale lemon gold in colour it has aromas of waxy ripe citrus and fresh pineapple. The palate has great subtlety and nuanced layers from its 12 months ageing on lees. André does not stir the lees, wishing to retain the wine's natural freshness that is in abundant evidence in 2016. The texture is precisely balanced between the gentle weight of apricot fruit and mineral bite. Drink 2017 – 2021

CONDRIEU CÔTEAUX DE CHÉRY (LIMITED) (W)

£205.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

From another *lieu dit* whose vines are approaching 70 years. This wine is vinified in exactly the same way as the Clos Chanson, but spends slightly longer in oak barrel, giving the wine a marginally deeper colour and sweet honeysuckle aromas. The palate has a lightly viscous density and perfectly pitched weight – just what one looks for in the silky wines of Condrieu. This is utterly harmonious and will give enormous enjoyment from youth. Drink 2017 – 2022

ST JOSEPH ROUGE (VERY LIMITED) (R)

£165.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

These Syrah vines grow in the very north of the appellation, not far from Condrieu and André's cellar, and produce a deep ruby wine with a brambly aromas reminiscent of autumn hedgerows. An excellent value Northern Rhône with the elegant freshness of little berries bursting on the palate and lightly spiced structure underneath. Drink 2018 – 2025

DOMAINE BERNARD FAURIE, TOURNON

Bernard is slowly moving into retirement having handed over the majority of his St Joseph-based estate to his daughter and son-in-law. It is with bated breathe we wait each year to learn whether Bernard has not quite given up the day job, and in 2016 we were delighted to learn that he has once again vinified his ethereal Hermitage from three small parcels on the famous hill. Fruit from the three parcels of Méal (schist), Greffieux (poor soil at the lower part of the hill), and Bessards (granite) are blended together to create this diamond of a wine. Made in just the way the three generations before him have, the fruit from old vines, some over 100 years, is whole bunch fermented and undergoes a fairly short maceration period (just 15 days in total), which is followed by ageing in barrel.

HERMITAGE (VERY LIMITED)



POA

A glowing ruby colour, this Hermitage has supreme aromatics of cranberries, light spice, floral violet tones and fresh herb scents. The tannins are so fine in structure they have become completely entwined with the intense fruit flavours of damson plums. What a charming example of the finest attributes of the Syrah grape. It should drink ahead of its 2015 sibling, but stands to enjoy a long life as well. Drink 2020 – 2032



DOMAINE DU COLOMBIER, MERCUROL

This 16 hectare estate is run by brothers Florent and David Viale and produces a dark, bold interpretation of Crozes Hermitage and Hermitage. These wines are brawny and powerful, and have a distinctive palette of dark fruits, black olive tapenade, and graphite smokiness.

Although grape growers for almost a century, the family only began to bottle their own wines in the early 1990s. Their wines may take a little time to come around, but will reward in the long run.

HERMITAGE BLANC (VERY LIMITED) (W)

£255.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This tiny parcel (just one fifth of a hectare) of old Marsanne vines (100%) has produced a classical example in 2016. With the richness of ripe peach and nectarine fruit and the tension of nutty minerality, the vintage's natural freshness and acidity bring the wine into perfect balance. Having spent 12 months on fine lees the wine has been recently racked off to guard the freshness and open character of the fruit. Drink 2019 – 2029



CROZES HERMITAGE ROUGE CUVÉE GABY (R)

£195.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

£212.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond

From the clay-limestone soils of Crozes Hermitage, just across the river from the Hermitage hill, this cuvée is a special barrel selection from the domaine's traditional Crozes. The wine has been aged in 20% new oak barrels and has the deep colour and black olive tapenade character so typical of the Colombier Crozes, with a saline, meaty backbone. Slightly closed at this early stage, its ripe tannins show promise. Drink 2019 – 2025

HERMITAGE ROUGE (R)

£245.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

£255.00 per 3 Magnums In Bond

Hailing from the famous slopes of Hermitage. This appellation had to handle some of the trickier weather of the vintage, even encountering a smattering of hail in the summer, but no major damage was inflicted and this wine shows all the classic hallmarks of a Colombier Hermitage, built for the long run. A deeply coloured Hermitage with rich fruit content on the nose. On the palate the dense fruit has a chewy intensity and structure, showing the muscle of full-bodied Syrah. Drink 2022 – 2030

DOMAINE ALAIN VOGÉ, CORNAS

Alain Vogé is owed a lot of credit for putting Cornas and St Péray on the fine wine map, thanks to his tireless work from the 1980s up to the 2000s. In his later years he has stepped down from the day to day management, entrusting this to the accomplished Albéric Mazoyer. Since joining the domaine as managing director, he has driven the estate to ever greater heights, in 2016 overseeing the final stage of conversion to certified organic farming. Having trained at Chapoutier, Albéric has a very good understanding of how to coax the signature style out of different appellations.

He also understands the chemistry of each variety, and he seeks out the pithy phenolic character of Marsanne grown on St Péray's limestone and granite soils, resulting in accomplished whites with length and savoury bite. The reds are equally well handled, and are benchmark Cornas – bright Syrah with depth, freshness and just a hint of rusticity in their wild berry and dried herb flavours. In 2015 the estate redesigned its labels for the full range, which are simple, elegant, and smart.

ST PÉRAY FLEUR DE CRUSSOL (VERY LIMITED)



£290.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

The estate makes three St Péray cuvées, with the Fleur de Crussol sitting at the top of the range made from the oldest Marsanne vines of the appellation (80 years+) grown on the granitic and limestone soils of the La Côte *lieu dit* in the heart of St Péray. Here there is a complex interplay between phenolic and fruit character with mineral freshness. Albéric explains that the “light bitterness at the end of the palate is the Marsanne, and the freshness is the terroir”. It has the rich concentration of apricots and the smooth, creamy texture of barrel ageing, with the evident freshness and balance of the 2016 vintage. Drink 2018 – 2022

CORNAS LES CHAILLES (LIMITED)



£305.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

Sourced from parcels found towards the bottom of the granitic Cornas slope, these vines have an average age of 40 years. With a long maceration period and ageing exclusively in neutral oak barrels, the earthy sweet fruit sings out. The tannins are small and supple, and the wine ends with a long fresh finish. Drink 2019 – 2029

CORNAS VIEILLES VIGNES (LIMITED)



£450.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

The old vines have an average age of 60 years, and come from slightly higher up the Cornas slope, with deep roots in the granitic soils. With around a fifth of the fruit vinified with whole bunches, this wine has a deep purple colour and an aromatic density to the fruit character. It is deep, soulful Syrah with savoury structure and juicy hedgerow fruit, with suede-like tannins. Drink 2020 – 2030



SOUTHERN RHÔNE

DOMAINE LE CLOS DES CAZAUX, VACQUEYRAS

The enthusiasm of Jean-Michel Vache is infectious. He runs this historic southern Rhône estate alongside his brother Frédéric. With an aversion to oak ageing, the brothers are more interested in expressing the fruit character of their terroirs. Alongside this philosophy, late picking, long maceration periods, and extended élevages give the wines their primal density. The Southern

appellations have performed brilliantly well in 2016s, and the high proportion of old vine Grenache in Gigondas has performed particularly well. These dense wines may demand a little time in bottle, so this is an estate that offers an excellent source of good value wines you can happily tuck away for a few years.



VACQUEYRAS CUVÉE ST ROCH



£115.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond
£125.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond

This Grenache based blend (65%) with 30% Syrah and 5% Mourvèdre is vinified with no hint of new oak, and draws on the old Grenache vines for its concentration and intensity. A three week maceration gives the wine its deep colour and brooding liquorice notes. There is a plumpness to the ripe fruit surrounding the structural tannins. Jean-Michel says without doubt it is the best vintage they have made since 2001, and should begin drinking from a little earlier than some previous vintages. Drink 2021 – 2028

GIGONDAS CUVÉE TOUR SARRASINE



£145.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond
£155.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond

Another Grenache based blend (70%) but with slightly more Mourvèdre (15%) and less Syrah (15%) than the Vacqueyras Cuvée St Roch. These vines are situated at 600 metres altitude on the terraced slopes that reach up to the Dentelles de Montmirail. This full-bodied wine is packed with fruit, accompanied by supple tannins, which are also highly abundant giving the wine a creamy density. The synergy of the Gigondas terroir and the 2016 growing season are well displayed here. Drink 2022 – 2030

DOMAINE FONT DE MICHELLE, BÉDARRIDES

Guillaume Gonnet is one of an impressive group of young vigneron stepping up to take the reins from their parents, guiding his domaine with modern innovation and respect for tradition. Innovation includes the installation of pyramidal concrete tanks in the cellar, which enable a teabag-like infusion of the must. Tradition lies in the gentle handling of the fruit, which receives minimal extraction. The estate is not one to push alcoholic maturity, and the gentle pumping over of destemmed fruit results in unforced wines with appealing juicy fruit. The domaine is split across two main plots, the first in the *lieu dit* Font de Michelle and the second perched up on the plateau in the *lieu dit* La Crau, which is populated by exceptionally old vines. The domaine makes a number of

cuvées in Châteauneuf, and their classic cuvée, which blends a selection of parcels and grape varieties, is an evocative expression of the Font de Michelle vineyard. The Cuvée Etienne Gonnet is both homage to Guillaume's grandfather as well as the 100+ year old Grenache vines that grow on the La Crau plateau. The estate is organically certified, and has been following a number of biodynamic practices since 2013. With no commercial yeasts or enzymes used in the winery, these are wines of great honesty and purity. Guillaume's philosophy is to flow with the character of each individual vintage. The decision to use no new oak allows the fruit to fully express its charm.

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE



£250.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

This densely-fruited blend is based on 70% Grenache that is vinified along with a number of other varieties since all – apart from the trellised Syrah – are planted as field blends in gobelet bush vines. The Font de Michelle *lieu dit* is a large parcel on the mid slope named after the natural water fountain found there. This natural water reserve lying under the vineyard helps the vines in this parcel sit out even the drier summers in ease. In the 2016 there is a fabulous balance between fruit sweetness and silky supportive tannins. Drink 2020 – 2030

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE CUVÉE ETIENNE GONNET



£215.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

Perched on the top of the plateau in *lieu dit* La Crau, neighbouring the vines of Vieux Télégraphe (in fact, Guillaume's grandmother was a Brunier) is an abundance of old vines. Grenache aged between 100 and 120 years old make up 65% of the blend, with the rest sourced from old Syrah vines (20%) and 15% Mourvèdre. The plateau's clay base and pudding stone pebbles on the surface help the vines reach optimal ripeness, so that in the ideal growing conditions of a year like 2016, an exquisite expression of Châteauneuf is achieved. The wine is intensely perfumed, with a deep core of ripe berry fruits and tempting, minty acidity. Drink 2022 – 2035



DOMAINE BOIS DE BOURSAN, CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE

Jean-Paul Versino is the magic behind Domaine Bois de Boursan. Of Piedmontese extraction, the Versino family bought a plethora of old vine parcels in Châteauneuf du Pape in the 1980s. Jean-Paul has spent the decades honing his skills in coaxing the subtle nuances innate to each plot. He makes two red cuvées in Châteauneuf, a traditional blend, and in the best years, Cuvée des Felix, a special bottling made from the best parcels and

the oldest vines, which includes a larger percentage of Mourvèdre. Unusually for the area, he uses a high proportion of whole bunch fruit (around 80%). This gives the wines a notable elegance, setting them apart from some more brawny examples in the region. He describes his 2016s as both powerful and approachable.



CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE



£230.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

With 70% of the blend based on old vine Grenache, the balance is made up with Syrah (10%), Mourvèdre (10%), plus other local varieties (10%). The well-ripened stems in 2016 fully justify their inclusion here (80% whole bunch), and give the wines freshness and complexity. The tannins are ripe and sweet, supported by a rich body of silky fruit. The fruit character is gorgeously sweet, with just a touch of spice. Drink 2020 – 2030

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE CUVÉE DES FÉLIX



£220.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

Only made in the best years, there was no question mark over this cuvée in 2016. Vines with an average age of 90 years planted on a northwest exposure give the wine hugely complex aromas. The high proportion of Mourvèdre (25%) adds colour, tannic structure, and great ageing potential. The various plots that go into this blend were picked between 15th September and 1st October. Judging the maturity of each parcel is a skill Jean-Paul has perfected. His efforts are rewarded in 2016 with a nuanced, layered wine in this special cuvée. Drink 2021 – 2034

DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE, BÉDARRIDES

This is a top class Châteauneuf estate with a well-deserved reputation for long-lived wines. Belonging to the Brunier family, the 65 hectare single plot lies on the plateau of La Crau, one of the highest points between the small towns of Châteauneuf du Pape, Bédarrides and Courthézon. The soil here is carpeted in the famous galets roulés, or pudding stones, which insulate the vines against both heat and cold, and aid drainage. The elevation means these vines are exposed to the extremes of the Mistral wind and the fierce sunshine. Not what you might call easy to farm; but the Brunier family have clung to this unruly terrain for over a century, and produce some of the truest wines of the appellation from vines

with an average age over 60 years. This is the source of distinguished, traditional Châteauneuf du Pape. With age the wines develop leather, spice and dried fruit characters.

Their estate in Gigondas, Les Pallières, has long been producing excellent Grenache based blends from vines that are slightly younger than those at Vieux Télégraphe, but still average an impressive 40-50 years. The estate is half owned by legendary American wine merchant Kermit Lynch, a long-standing friend of the family and Southern Rhône enthusiast. The high altitude (250-400m) of this Gigondas parcel affords the wines delicious freshness.

GIGONDAS TERRASSE DU DIABLE DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES



£215.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

Dominated by 90% Grenache grown on the decomposed limestone, red clay, and scree soils of the Gigondas terraces below the jagged Dentelles de Montmirail. A small splash of Mourvèdre and Clairette make up the rest of the blend. The wine is an explosion of sweet red fruits. The terrace's northerly exposure and high altitude (250-400m) help the wine retain freshness and gives the fruit a real punch, as well as a noticeably deep colour. Drink 2019 – 2027

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE (LIMITED)



£228.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

These 65 year old vines on the stony plateau of La Crau consistently produce a smooth, *garrigue* scented Châteauneuf. With a slightly shorter élevage than some neighbours (this was bottled in June 2017) and 15% whole bunch fermentation, it has a flavour profile that swirls around red fruits, plums and blueberries. The nose has an aromatic lift and the palate has an excellent mineral undertow. This is a traditional style of Châteauneuf that should live into a dignified old age. Drink 2020 – 2032



CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL, CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE

Château de Beaucastel is the flagship estate of the Perrin family, masters of the Southern Rhône. The family are a winemaking powerhouse, and admired for both the benchmark examples they have a knack of conjuring across the Southern Rhône appellations as well as for the exquisite heights they have reached, producing some of the greatest wines the region has ever seen. Château de Beaucastel's 1989 and 1990 have gone down in vinous history as *bona fide* Châteauneuf legends. The fact that the family are unafraid of drawing direct comparison between the 1990 and their newly minted 2016 should set the tone for what customers can expect here.

An increasing tendency to elegance in the winemaking style of recent years has not gone unnoticed. The Beaucastel vines are all in one large 110 hectare block at the northern end of the Châteauneuf du Pape appellation.

The plot contains all the archetypal soil types of the region: sand, clay and limestone, with pudding stone pebbles on the surface. Their Coudoulet vines lie just beyond the northern boundary of the appellation and convey much of the typicality of a Châteauneuf in a more accessible format (and with the inclusion of varieties like Marsanne and Viognier not permitted within Châteauneuf itself). The estate famously grows all thirteen varieties permitted within the Châteauneuf appellation, with a high proportion of the late ripening Mourvèdre. Beyond the Beaucastel estate, the Perrin family have built up a comprehensive portfolio of wines across the Southern Rhône appellations including Gigondas, Cairanne, Vacqueyras and Vinsobres. The full collection is quite substantial, and we have selected a shortlist of our favourites to offer in 2016. The whites of Beaucastel are always a treat.

CÔTES DU RHÔNE BLANC COUDOULET DE BEAUCASTEL BLANC (LIMITED)

£180.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond

Produced in limited quantities, this is an excellent value white you won't want to miss out on. A blend of Viognier (30%), Marsanne (30%), Bourboulenc (30%) and Clairette (10%). A small amount is vinified in oak with the remainder in stainless steel, and the wine's fruit purity shines through. The scent of sweet juicy pear flesh and pithy lemons is followed by a palate of good phenolic ripeness, holding the savoury tones of minerality nicely in place. It has a crisp, clean finish. Delicious.
Drink 2017 – 2021

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE BLANC CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL (LIMITED)

£246.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

Roussanne forms the major basis of this blend (80%), the rest being made up of Grenache Blanc, Picardin, Bourboulenc and Clairette, with 30% vinified in oak. The estate believes a characteristic of Roussanne is that it welcomes you with open arms in its first five years – young, nutty, fruity, creamy – and then shuts down, only to re-emerge from its chrysalis after 15 years in the cellar with a complex, tertiary bouquet. This 2016 has tremendous balance in its youth and will no doubt stand the test of time. Again, the expression here is so juicy, fresh, and vibrant, with a fruit purity supported by more evident oak culminating in a luxurious style of Châteauneuf blanc. Drink 2019 – 2034

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE BLANC VIEILLES VIGNES ROUSSANNE CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL (LIMITED)

£240.00 per 3 Bottles In Bond

Unusually for a Châteauneuf this is not a blend, and comes solely from a 3 hectare parcel of very old Roussanne vines (85 years) within the Beaucastel estate. These vines produce tiny yields and take slightly longer to ripen their fruit, which means they can develop extraordinary phenolic complexity. The fruit's heightened intensity is matched by ageing in 50% new French oak, where precision in the vineyard and cellar blend in perfect harmony. Its long, echoing finish has a salty, mineral reverberation, and lingers long on the palate. This should age magnificently. Drink 2019 – 2035

CÔTES DU RHÔNE ROUGE COUDOULET DE BEAUCASTEL



£150.00 per 12 Bottles In Bond
£156.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond

From a parcel that lies just beyond the boundary of the Châteauneuf appellation, but is actually an extension of Beaucastel's single block. A blend of 30% Grenache, 30% Mourvèdre, 20% Syrah and 20% Cinsault, this has an elegant floral aroma, with lavender and violets on the nose. The palate is smooth and refined, and the tannins are velvety in nature. Finishing with a juicy succulent length, the 2016 is a really excellent example of this 'mini' Beaucastel. Drink 2019 – 2025



VINSOBRES LES HAUTS DE JULIEN FAMILLE PERRIN (LIMITED)



£105.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

Vinsobres is the most northerly of the southern appellations, so it is no surprise that this cuvée has a high proportion of Syrah (80%), supported by Grenache. The 80 year old vines in the 500m elevated 4 hectare parcel are kept cool by a stiff breeze and cool nights. At 40km north of Châteauneuf, the Syrah shows characteristics similar to the Northern appellation of Cornas, with a deep purple colour, violets and graphite aromas on the nose and a distinct freshness on the palate. The sweetly spiced dark fruit is enhanced by some new oak. Glossy and stylish, falling geographically and stylistically between north and south. Drink 2020 – 2030



CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL (LIMITED)



£240.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond
£243.00 per 12 Halves In Bond
£486.00 per 6 Magnums In Bond
£180.00 per Jeroboam In Bond

This cuvée is famous for drawing on a large proportion of the late ripening Mourvèdre variety (30%) to form the base of its blend. It takes an exceptional year for Mourvèdre and Grenache (also 30%) to both reach perfect phenolic maturity, but thanks to the long, even growing season and warm autumn in 2016, we have just such a case here. The Mourvèdre gives structure, cool cassis fruit, aromas of *herbes de Provence*, and some fine structural tannins. The blend's other main component, Grenache, adds sweet crunchy red berry fruit, supple texture, and richness. The remainder of the blend is made up of the full house of the appellation's thirteen varieties, and their diversity adds depth and drive to the wine. This wine will have a long and distinguished life ahead of it. Drink 2021 – 2035

DOMAINE CLOS DES PAPES, CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE

This estate is rightly revered as one of the greatest in the appellation. Having studied in Burgundy, and having trained in cellars all over the world (including a stage at Mouton Rothschild) Vincent Avril has just seen in his 31st vintage at the domaine in 2016. He makes supreme wines, blending varieties from the moment they are picked, so that Grenache may be co-fermented with Syrah or Mourvèdre, or all three together. His various cuveés are therefore mini blends, which show the development of the young wine as it ages before the final assemblage takes place. Low yields ensure concentration, and the same team of pickers over the past 20 years safeguard careful selection of each bunch. As well as a year of exceptional quality, 2016 produced an abundant crop. Vincent mentions his delight that they were able to pick at 25 hl/ha (a yield that would be considered catastrophically low in most other appellations!).

Ever the maverick, Vincent's take on the vintage breaks all the rules. He suspects his 2016s will be sleepers, whilst his 2015s should come around sooner. As reported in the main vintage overview, this is somewhat at odds with

other growers' experiences. But Vincent has been making the wines at Clos de Papes for over three decades and is not a man who holds back on opening older vintages to appreciate their development (much to the benefit of anyone lucky enough to visit). In other words, I'd be inclined to listen to his advice, even whilst it goes against the main flow of opinion around this vintage. The high proportion of Mourvèdre might have something to do with it. The variety performed very well in 2015, and exceptionally in 2016. Its structure, dark fruits, fine tannins, and long freshness are elemental components of a long-lived Clos des Papes. The unoaked white is a fascinating wine that, in years like 2016, can expect to enjoy an exciting journey of development.

Vincent is uninterested in creating super cuvées, so makes just one red and one white, which he considers the best expression of this appellation. At this early stage Vincent draws comparison with the 2010 and 1990 vintages. We expect to see voracious demand for these wines.

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE BLANC (VERY LIMITED)



£234.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

The white is unoaked, and Vincent explains there are three important stages for the wine: 1) primary fruit and floral freshness in the first 1 to 2 years; 2) petrol minerality not dissimilar to Riesling between 3 and 5 years; 3) and finally notes of honey and grilled nuts, with a salty savoury character from 5 years plus. This blend includes all six varieties authorised for the appellation's white: Grenache Blanc (fruity flesh), Roussanne (power), Clairette and Picardin (finesse), Bourboulenc and Picpoul (acidity). At this early stage the wine is dominated by a pretty pear skin note, with sweetly spiced nutmeg. The palate strikes a balance between ripeness and freshness, leading to a long and graceful finish. It should blossom through all stages of development. Drink 2018 – 2026

CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE (VERY LIMITED)



£348.00 per 6 Bottles In Bond

This is such a complex wine, it's hard to know where to begin. Since Vincent co-ferments varieties as they are harvested, the characters of each are intricately interwoven in the final blend. The high proportion of 30% Mourvèdre brings finesse and elegance, whilst the core of 55% Grenache brings a creamy, silky texture. Syrah and Counoise add savoury minerality. There is a suggestion of wild *garrigue* herbs, and at the centre of the palate is a profound, deep core of richness. This richness is the defining element of the vintage, Vincent says. The tannins of this wine are already superlative, and their ripeness and power should aid the wine along to a long life. Drink 2020 – 2036

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ONLINE: www.goedhuis.com

All wines are available to buy online. You can also find details of tasting notes and drink dates, and can keep up to date with our news and offers.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All wines are offered In Bond England.

We will arrange shipment from the domaines in Autumn 2018. On arrival, your wines can either be delivered directly to you or stored Under Bond at our independent storage company, Private Reserves, at a cost of £10.90 ex-VAT per case per annum.

When you decide to take delivery, Duty and VAT at the prevailing rate will become payable. These charges are at present £25.98 per 12-bottle case and 20% respectively.

All En Primeur deliveries will be charged at cost.

With thanks to all the growers for providing the beautiful photographs.
Cover image: Château de Beaucastel