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RHÔNE

EN PRIMEUR 2006

GOEDHUIS & COMPANY

FINE WINE MERCHANTS

R H Ô N E

E N P R I M E U R 2 0 0 6

INTRODUCTION

Though we love all of our wine trips, the Rhône Valley is one of our favourites. Not only are its wines soulful, but they also offer such a diversity in style. This grand valley, 165 kilometres in length, is comprised of two sub-regions. Each is distinct, yet they are both intrinsically linked by grape varieties, passion and the famous northern wind known as La Bise ('the kiss') in the north and Le Mistral in the south.

Descending from Lyon, one comes upon the Northern valley's lush, sculpted and steep hills. They gently twist and turn, slinking their svelte curves all the way down the Rhône River. Though they produce their reds from Syrah (rather than Pinot Noir), in many respects northern Rhône wines are more similar to Burgundy than to their southern siblings. Offering excellent minerality, noticeable purity and superb finesse, these wines range from the appealingly rustic in St Joseph to the wonderfully ethereal in Côte Rôtie to the powerfully brooding in Hermitage.

South of Montélimar, the southern Rhône begins stretching out its stony soils. Instinctively Mediterranean, its wines are a different beast. Warm, spicy and fleshy, they typically exhibit notes of ripe bramble fruit, black pepper and wild Provençal herbs. Though Syrah is still grown in the south, it is here where Grenache is king. Other meridional varieties, such as Mourvèdre, Carignan and Cinsault, wrestle for representation on the low lying, stony vineyards. In the end, their harmonious blends create some of the most hedonistic wines produced in the world. From velvety and welcoming Côtes du Rhône to rich and textured Gigondas to robust yet gallant Châteauneuf du Papes, these wines offer pleasure to wine aficionados of every level.

We are delighted to offer some of the most exceptional producers from these two regions - producers who are conscientious in the vineyard and in the chai, leading to superb clarity of fruit, well balanced structure and discernable terroir.

We continue to work with sought after pure traditionalists such as René Rostaing, Bernard Faurie, Domaine Cayron, and Jean-Paul Versino as well as the dynamic contemporaries who add a modern touch to their wines such as Stéphane Ogier, Pierre Gaillard, Stéphane Montez of Domaine Monteillet, and the Gonnet family from Font de Michelle. Then there are those producers who combine both styles magnificently well, such as Christophe and Patrick Bonnefond and Clos des Cazaux in Vacqueyras.

It is our second year working with the Roussets in Crozes Hermitage of which we are exclusive in the UK, as well as Alain Voge, a highly coveted Cornas producer who creates consistently polished yet powerful wines. We are delighted to begin working with Bernard Burgaud, a winemaker that produces soulful and pure Côte Rôties - a style that has enabled him to enjoy fame locally in the Rhône and across the Atlantic.

We have also included a couple of domaines from the southerly region of Languedoc including the renowned Mas de Daumas Gassac and the exceptionally pure Domaine Saint Antonin whose Faugères are some of the prettiest Languedoc wines we have ever tasted.

THE VINTAGE

As in 2005, the weather in 2006 was similar in both the Northern and Southern Rhône. The valley experienced one of the coldest and wettest winters which replenished the long needed water table after three years of drought which had caused occasional vine shut down.

Spring was mild and continued into the beginning of June when temperatures spiked and produced one of the hottest Julys ever on record. Growers feared a repeat of 2003, but then August came, temperatures dropped and several gentle rain storms revived the vines. Apart from a few light showers at the beginning of the month, September was glorious with lots of sun, heat and the cooling Mistral wind which quickly dried up any residual water from the previous rain and created optimum conditions for picking.

THE WINES

The wines produced in 2006 are what the French call *gourmand*, wines that go down easily and inspire you to drink more. Many producers feel that they lie in between the 2004 and 2005 vintages in style displaying lots of finesse, *terroir* and purity but with admirable structure, concentration and complexity. Most producers view them as better and richer than 2004, but not as powerful, tannic or concentrated as 2005. Bernard Burgaud of Côte Rôtie even compared the vintage to 1989 due to their upfront, appealing style.

Though they apparently have less acidity than the 2004s and 2005s, the reds are so wonderfully fresh that this is not really discernible to the taste. The whites, however, are richer and more hedonistic than their 2005 counterparts mostly due to the impressively hot September weather which encouraged quick ripening and excellent sugar content in the grapes.

Due to their flattering nature, these will be wines that will be approachable at a younger age, unlike many of the 2005s which will require extended cellaring. Yet their notable structure, purity and balance will allow them to mature and develop for years to come. In his latest review, Robert Parker of *The Wine Advocate* commented on the 2006 Châteauneuf du Papes saying that the wines “have something that should be prized by true wine lovers – terrific balance, immediate accessibility, purity, and superb aromatic profiles” and “are incredibly charming”. We could not agree more.



NORTHERN RHÔNE

A narrow valley of approximately 70 km in length whose vineyards are perched off the steep hillsides facing the Rhône River. It encompasses 8 communal appellations: Côte Rôtie, Condrieu, Château Grillet (a unique appellation consisting of only one wine and one eponymous producer), Hermitage, Crozes Hermitage, St. Joseph, Cornas and St. Péray; and one regional appellation: Côtes du Rhône. Only a handful of varieties can be found - Syrah being by far the most planted, followed by the white wine grapes of Viognier, Marsanne and Roussanne. Stylistically, it produces dry red wines that tend to be focused and have notable freshness due to its more northerly terroir and continental climate. It also offers dry white wines, which are mineral driven yet aromatic and rich, a smattering of traditional and lightly sparkling wine from the St. Péray appellation and *Vin de Paille*, a sweet dessert wine produced from dried white Hermitage grapes.

CÔTE RÔTIE

Côte Rôtie is the most northern of all Rhône appellations. It only produces red wine from Syrah, although Viognier may be added to the blend. Its *terroir* is composed of multiple *lieux-dits* (vineyards) which are divided into two general categories – Côte Brune and Côte Blonde. Côte Brune's soil is mostly comprised of iron-entrenched granite giving the soil a rich red-brown colour. As a result, it creates wine of notable power and concentration that usually needs time in the cellar to soften and develop. The second is Côte Blonde, which is located further south down the slope towards Condrieu. It is an area mainly composed of decomposed schist and mica that is lighter in colour and tends to produce elegantly styled wine for earlier consumption (most of the area's Viognier is grown here). Many traditional producers feel that their best wines are a blend of the two.

CONDRIEU

A white wine appellation, Condrieu is produced uniquely from Viognier to make both dry and sweet examples. Its best vineyards are grown on shards of decomposed mica often lending a pronounced minerality to its wines. Though Condrieu had a famous past, its more recent history has been modest and its bottlings were virtually unknown outside its region until the 1980s and 1990s. It was during this time when aficionados began to discover its unusual balance of intense aromatics of peach, apricot and honeysuckle with a bone-dry palate. In particularly warm vintages, their wines are notably rich and hedonistic.

ST. JOSEPH

St. Joseph is the longest appellation which extends up the western banks of the Rhône river from St. Péray to Condrieu. It produces both red wine from Syrah and white wine from Marsanne and/or Roussanne which tend to be early drinking. The wine style can be traditional or modern depending on the producer. Created in 1956, it's a young appellation which has seen extensive expansion of its vineyard area over the last 25 years. As a result, many producers feel that there is great potential in the quality of its *terroir* which has yet to be discovered. Due to its lesser known status, these wines often provide excellent value for money.

DOMAINE PATRICK & CHRISTOPHE BONNEFOND, Ampuis

Hidden in the hills above Ampuis lies the domaine of Patrick and Christophe Bonnefond. The climbing and twisting road isn't an easy one, and we invariably get lost. But what a glorious voyage.

The two brothers took over the 3 hectares of family vines when their father retired in 1990. At that time, they sold off their grapes to *négociants*. They began slowly building up their domaine to 7 hectares and bottling their wines under their own label. Their philosophy lies somewhere between modern and traditional in that they believe in cultivating the healthiest fruit possible which is rich and dense yet which also expresses its unique *terroir*.

They make three Côte Rôties - the classic cuvée as well as two specific lieux dits, Côte Rozier and Les Rochains. They use oak barrels to age their wines - 40% are new for the classic bottling and 100% for the single vineyard wines. The wood flavours, though, are barely discernible due to their amazing fruit concentration and velvety structure.

Tasting through their 2006 barrels was a sheer delight. They were succulent and fresh with lots of poise and elegance...very Côte Rôtie. Christophe said that he actually preferred his 2006s to his 2005s for these reasons. He feels that they have all the deliciousness of 2000 combined with the

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Côte Rôtie **£189.00** **2010 - 2019+**

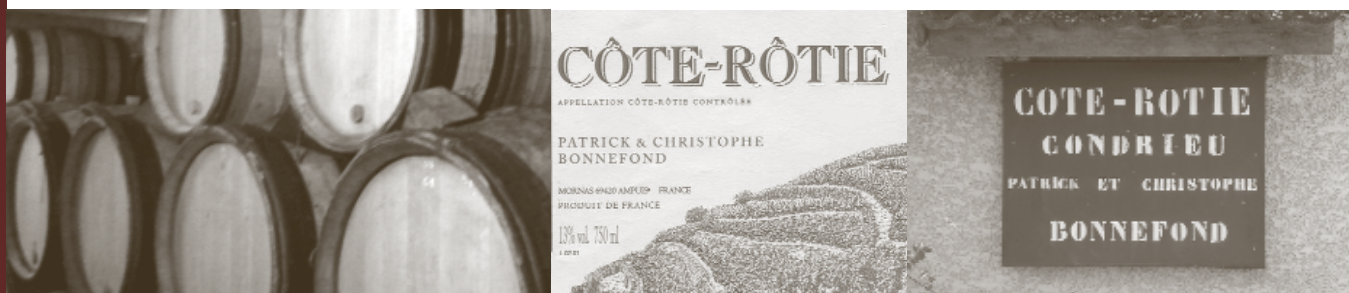
Deep purple in colour with crunchy dark berry fruit, fine yet chewy tannins and zingy acidity. Though it has some curves, it remains elegant and poised. Created from a blend of parcels from both Côte Brune (80%) and Côte Blonde (20%) and a few drops of Viognier for fragrance.

Côte Rôtie Côte Rozier **£145.00 per 6** **2011 - 2022+**

This soil of this parcel is a blend of both clay and schist which creates a notable core of richness and texture while wrapped in a more feminine form. This 2006 offers aromatic violets, blackberry and a touch of liquorice to add extra depth. It finishes long and pure with lightly toasted spice.

Côte Rôtie Les Rochains **£145.00 per 6** **2012 - 2024+**

Deep and brooding on the nose, this bold wine is rich with dark, zingy fruit, crunchy minerals and bittersweet chocolate on the palate. It has impressive concentration and power yet charming finesse due to its balance and focus. The finish just goes on and on.



DOMAINE BERNARD BURGAUD, Ampuis

Located in the quiet and bucolic hills above Ampuis, Bernard Burgaud creates some of the most characterful wines in Côte Rôtie. A sturdy, salt-of-the-earth type of soul, he has been producing wines since 1980, following in his father's footsteps and returning to the soil.

His 4 hectares of "Syrah only" vineyards are planted across six different sites and range in age from 20 to 70 years in age. Defying tradition, he was one of the first in the valley to destem his grapes before vinifying as he feels the stems absorb colour and flavour from the grapes. Despite this step away from local convention, his wines, in taste, are actually some of the most traditional in the valley. He prefers them to have presence and *rigueur* than softness and femininity. As a result, his wines often require a bit more ageing than some of his neighbours. Unlike other producers, he prefers to make one wine and one wine only. No vineyard designates or micro-cuvées. Just pure Côte Rôtie.

The 2006 vintage definitely worked in his favour. The various barrels showed superb depth of fruit and displayed a broad, expressive palate – not particularly different from his excellent 2005.

£/case in Bond Drinking Dates

Côte Rôtie **£225.00** **2011 - 2022+**

Full of character, this wonderfully traditional Côte Rôtie offers pretty aromatics of violets, blueberry and minerals. Its medium to full-bodied palate offers wonderful freshness intertwined with plump, succulent fruit and chewy tannins. This is serious stuff that nonetheless finishes poised and pretty. Produced from 100% Syrah.





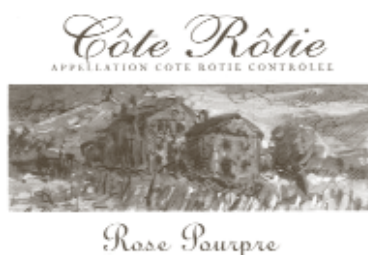
DOMAINE PIERRE GAILLARD, Malleval

Nestled in the hills above the picturesque medieval village of Malleval stands Pierre Gaillard's contemporary cellar. After years of working for other producers such as Vidal Fleury and then Guigal, Pierre decided to create his own domaine wines in the mid-1980s to almost instant acclaim.

A modernist of sorts, he relishes pure, vibrant fruit that he long backed with new oak structure and spice. Several years ago, he decided to step slightly away from his renowned style and move towards a more classical approach, still endorsing excellent fruit concentration but with better oak integration. The results are nothing less than sumptuous with wines of wonderful complexity that are often approachable young. This balance has created some of the most 'user friendly' wines of the region pleasing both the keen novice as well as the most particular connoisseur.

Pierre's daughter, Jeanne, received us at the domaine and gave us a guided tasting tour of the various barrels. Luckily, Pierre caught up with us towards the end to share his thoughts on the 2006 vintage. To him, it is a harmonious vintage whose wines will be enjoyed earlier. Though the wines are not archetypal *vins de garde*, they are still notably powerful and have the structure to be cellared for years to come.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
St Joseph Clos de Cuminaille Rouge	£125.00	2009 - 2015+
<i>Pierre's Clos de Cuminaille is our favourite of his St Joseph cuvées. It is produced from two of the oldest parcels that were planted in the 1980s. Opulent with lots of violet, spice and blackberries, this medium-bodied wine offers a rich yet fresh palate. It is a pleasurable drink that does not take itself too seriously.</i>		
Côte Rôtie	£225.00	2010 - 2018+
<i>Produced mostly from sites in the Côte Brune, this wine displays wonderful balance between its plump and fruity palate and its uplifting minerality. It finishes on spicy, cedary flavours and velvety tannins. Ample yet poised.</i>		
Côte Rôtie Rose Pourpre	£330.00	2011 - 2022+
<i>Most of the grapes for this cuvée are grown in the Rozier 'lieu-dit' which is located in the Côte Blonde. It also includes 15% Viognier which adds additional softness and perfume. Rich and mouthfilling, this wine displays fleshy dark berry fruit, spicy cedar and fine, polished tannins. Very stylish.</i>		



DOMAINE DE MONTEILLET, Chavanay

The dynamic and young Stéphane Montez marks the 10th generation of vignerons in the Montez family. Rising out of stony and rugged, brush covered hills, his family domaine is a pocket of Mediterranean bliss tucked away above the village of Chavanay.

From these sheer slopes, Stéphane produces his renowned St. Josephs, perfumed Condrieu and exceptional Côte Rôties from vineyards comprised of decomposed granite soils. He believes, like many people in the new order of Rhône winemaking, in the reductive style of vinification in order to naturally extract and preserve all the fresh aromatics from his grapes. He is not fearful of using new oak to age his wines – depending on the concentration of the must – but prefers demi-muids to ensure that it never dominates but adds warmth and texture to his handcrafted wines.

Visiting him can be like a treasure hunt because he is almost always working in his vines. If not, one might find him showing his wines to Robert Parker. But his new Great Dane, Bacchus, is always keen to keep one company until he arrives.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Condrieu Les Grandes Chaillées	£195.00	2008 - 2011
<i>This Condrieu is produced from three different villages – Chavanay for aromatics, St. Michel for minerality and Vérin for richness. The 2006 is explosive with perfumed notes of flowers, racy peach and apricot. On the palate, it is silky and plush yet its striking acidity and minerality give it lightness and length. Absolutely fabulous.</i>		
St Joseph Cuvée Papy	£130.00	2010 - 2018+
<i>Deep, rich and dark, this upfront and likeable wine has lots of fleshy, ripe bramble fruit, cinnamon spice and crushed black pepper. Its textured tannins and excellent freshness make it mouthfilling yet focused. Produced from a selection of old vines within the domaine.</i>		
Côte Rôtie Fortis	£285.00	2011 - 2020+
<i>This Côte Rôtie comes from the last hillside in Ampuis. Due to its Côte Blonde terroir, Stéphane adds 15% Viognier which gives this wine a particular elegance and femininity. Spicy and animal, this wine is expressive revealing a solid core of ripe raspberry and crunchy cherry. Its curvy physique adds a bit of voluptuousness making it extra seductive.</i>		
<i>New Release:</i>		
2005 Côte Rôtie Grandes Places (very limited)	£275.00 per 6	2012 - 2025+
<i>We were unable to offer this cuvée last year as Stéphane releases it later than his others. Les Grandes Places is his top wine which spends 33 months in oak barrels before being bottled. Plump with lots of upfront fruit, its concentrated, structured palate displays notes of blackberry and granite marking its Côte Brune terroir. A subtle addition of 2-3% of Viognier adds an ethereal lift. Finishes on almond and vanilla notes. Due to its longer ageing, it will be available the same time as his 2006 vintage wines.</i>		



DOMAINE MICHEL OGIER, Ampuis

Like many people of the region, the Ogier family were polycultural farmers for generations. Included in their repertoire were exceptional grapes planted on the steep slopes of Côte Rôtie. For years, they sold off their production to local winemakers until the day that Michel Ogier decided to eliminate the other crops in order to make and bottle his own wine. Now 20 years later, he has established a reputation that rivals even the grandest, most established producers in the region.

His son, Stéphane, began taking over winemaking responsibilities from his father in the late 1990s after finishing oenology school in Burgundy. Following his father's philosophy, he has relentlessly taken great care to produce the best wines possible. This is no more apparent than by a visit to the domaine. He believes in glacial temperatures throughout the winery, whether in the barrel ageing room faintly scented of crisp, clean apples (a storage facility of yesteryear) or in his new state-of-the-art barrel room. The ambiance is cool, calm and collected, and his wines turn out in the same way.

Despite being up to his elbows in grapes and juice from the 2007 harvest, Stéphane was eager to have us taste through the 2006 vintage – a year which he characterises as “charming, fresh with very silky tannins and lots of fruit...You just want to drink them straight away.” Unfortunately, they need to be bottled first!

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
La Rosine, Syrah, Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes	£95.00	2008 - 2014
<i>Plump and alluring, the 2006 La Rosine offers a fresh yet velvety mouthfeel of punchy black currant and raspberry delicately laced with licorice and smoky spice. So complete and balanced for a lesser expensive wine, Stéphane's touch is definitely apparent. We cannot remember a better La Rosine.</i>		

Côte Rôtie	£255.00	2010 - 2019+
<i>In our opinion, Stéphane produces one of the best straight Côte Rôtie cuvées. His 2006 is not short of personality. Rich and chewy, it displays notes of red cherry, blackberry, crushed pepper, citrus peel and "bacon fat", the ubiquitous Parker description for Syrah. This wine is full of flesh and finesse.</i>		

New Releases:

2005 Côte Rôtie Lancements (limited)	POA	2011 - 2025+
<i>A single-vineyard within the area of Côte Brune, Lancements is not made every year, but only when Stéphane feels that the vineyard can express its true 'terroir'. Brimming with lots of fresh, crunchy fruit – cassis, black cherry and raspberry - and subtle black pepper, this full-bodied wine is wrapped in velvety, mouthfilling tannins and lots of minerals which add plushness and finesse. Very impressive.</i>		

2005 Côte Rôtie Belle Hélène (limited)	POA	2013 - 2030
<i>Produced from the oldest vines of the domaine from the Côte Rozier 'lieu-dit', this exceptional cuvée was named after Michel Ogier's wife, Hélène. Only a few barrels of this wine are produced making it a rarity. His 2005 is otherworldly. Racy and punchy, its sweet core is explosive with black cherry, blackberry and blood oranges. Plump and round yet vibrant, it finishes long and lingering.</i>		

DOMAINE RENÉ ROSTAING, Ampuis



Réné Rostaing is a man of many words. Insightful and measured, he is the Socrates of winemakers. In his reasoned search for truth, he was able to learn from some of the Rhône Valley greats including his father-in-law, Albert Dervieux and uncle, Marius Gentaz. Upon their retirements, René eventually took over the majority of their vineyards giving him superb parcels of exceptionally old vines such as those in La Vallière and La Landonne in Côte Brune.

A pure traditionalist, he uses 50-60% stems during fermentation depending on the vintage and employs Burgundian barrels (228 litres) and demi-muids (600 litres) - of which very few are new - so that his wines express the soul of their unique *terroirs*. In his words, "They are the way Côte Rôties should be."

Over the years, his natural winemaking methods have earned him an excellent reputation and have created such a loyal following that disciples from all over the world seek out his unique bottlings.

As always, tasting with him this year was a pleasure. René adores his 2006s. Like a proud father, he could not stop talking about their balance, structure and elegance; and like many producers, he feels that they are similar to his 2004s, but even better.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Condrieu La Bonnette

£275.00

2008 - 2011

This Condrieu is produced from the granite-rich soil of La Bonnette "lieu-dit". The 2006 is rich and ripe with aromatic peach, apricot and acacia opening up onto its tender, voluptuous palate. Its minerality adds further refinement and poise. René prefers to block malolactic fermentation so that the wine's fruit purity shines through.

Côte Rôtie (limited)

£275.00

2010 - 2018+

Youthful and vibrant, this wine offers a fresh zingy palate of black fruits and dark chocolate. Its plump, superfine tannins add a velvety structure and polished mouthfeel. Finishes on lightly toasted coffee and autumnal spice.

Côte Rôtie La Landonne (very limited)

£250.00 per 6

2011 - 2024+

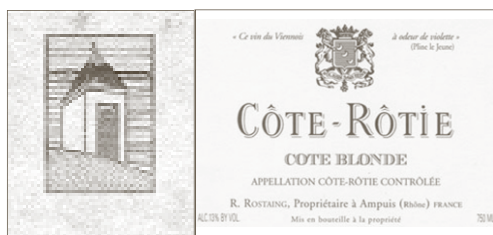
Despite being the domaine's most powerful cuvée, René always prefers to taste it before his Côte Blonde – perhaps muscle before finesse. Its brooding nose is representative of its tight, powerful palate. Notes of fleshy damson plum and soft crushed pepper add to its broad, expansive mouthfeel. Its superfine tannins add roundness and a velvety touch while its fresh acidity adds wonderful lift and depth.

Côte Rôtie Côte Blonde (very limited)

£275.00 per 6

2011 - 2024+

Réné's favourite cuvée for its consistently silky yet profound palate. He inherited this vineyard from his maternal grandfather who also used to work its ancient, rocky soil. This 2006 is ample with fresh, racy red and black bramble fruit and chiselled minerality. Its sweet core is soft and velvety but impressive power comes through on its long finish. Small amounts of Viognier are vinified with the Syrah adding additional complexity and aromatics.



HERMITAGE

A region that produces both red and white wines. Its famous red is made from 100% Syrah while the white is produced from Marsanne and/or Roussanne. A sweet and very rare white dessert wine, *Vin de Paille*, is also produced from grapes that have been dried on straw before being pressed. A slighter warmer micro-climate enables its red wines to have more ripeness and structure than Côte Rôtie which adds additional power and longevity. As a result, they are usually the most 'masculine' styled reds in all of the northern Rhône.

CROZES HERMITAGE

The northern Rhône's largest appellation, Crozes Hermitage produces approximately 8 times more than its more distinguished neighbour, Hermitage. In addition, it has both red and white wines similar to Hermitage and in many ways is very similar in style, though less concentrated and complex. Plump, silky and smooth, they are usually made for early consumption; however certain producers have been known to make some examples which need to be cellared for several years and can be kept for up to a decade.

DOMAINE BERNARD FAURIE

Modest and warmly welcoming, Bernard Faurie is always a pleasure to visit. His *chai*, possibly the smallest in all of the Rhône Valley, is tucked away underneath his house. It resembles a hobbit's lair more than an actual cellar replete with an earthen floor, small lamps that beam soft warmth on the bottles, foudres and barrels and a small library of books.

He makes some of the best old world-styled wines. No de-stemming is carried out and the grapes have 2-3 weeks of skin contact during and after fermentation before they are pressed. The wine is then aged in old wood some of which are large oak foudres. As a result of his non-interventionalist style, his wines are so elementally pure, complex and incredibly elegant that some have described as *sauvage* or 'wild'. Like most great wines, they are not designed for immediate drinking but are intended to reward those who are patient.

Though we have been in Bernard's cellar many times, we never noticed how meticulous and fastidious he was until this last trip. Despite having an old fashioned cellar, he is the king of cleanliness, rinsing his pipette between each barrel tasting. Spitting on the floor is an absolute no-no and one can never put unused samples back into the barrel. As he says, "Everything must be *nickel*" (or 'spot on'). It is this kind of dedication that enables him to produce some of the most enticing and soulful wines of the Rhône Valley, if one can find them, that is. His production is one of the most minute.

€/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Hermitage

£290.00

2012 - 2025+

This full-bodied wine opens onto the palate with a lovely sweet core of brown sugar, red and dark berry fruit and pronounced minerality. Mouthfilling and broad, yet fine and focused. Its excellent density and notable complexity lead it to a long sweet finish. Wonderful.

DOMAINE ROUSSET, Erôme

Robert Rousset is a quiet, modest man who has a penchant for making wonderfully silky Syrah in Crozes Hermitage. Wine runs in his blood. His uncle was Raymond Roure, a famous winemaker and vineyard owner in the 1960s and 1970s who had the highest quality parcels within the appellation of Crozes Hermitage. He sold many of them to Jaboulet who to this day makes a special cuvée out of his vines. However, the best parcel, Les Picaudières, was purchased by Robert. This steep plot of profound, decomposed granite is planted mostly with old vines (dating from the 1930s) and produces some of the most expressive Syrah of the appellation.

Virtually unknown to the English market until we offered his wines last year, Robert Rousset is a gem of a winemaker that we stumbled upon. His style is traditional and almost Burgundian - stylish and well balanced velvety fruit blending with earthy notes. Pure delights for lovers of old world, *terroir-driven* wines. He still continues with minor polyculture (apricots are part of his fruit portfolio) while an 18 year-old mare tills the soil on the flatter terraces up to 5 times a year. A Goedhuis exclusive.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Crozes Hermitage

£79.00

2008 - 2013

Plump, fruity, and particularly quaffable, this soft textured wine is full of appeal offering up ripe red and black berry fruit, lightly toasted spice and pepper. Robert uses 10% new French oak barrels for aging to add a bit of depth and complexity.

Crozes Hermitage Les Picaudières

£110.00

2009 - 2018

Earthy with pronounced aromatics of granite, maple syrup, blackberry and cassis. This medium-bodied wine has velvety tannins that deliver a round, plump palate with only polished edges in sight. Finishes on clean cut mineral overtones and dark chocolate. Sumptuous.



DOMAINE BARRET, Chanos Curson

Soft spoken, serious and gentle, Etienne Pochon is at the helm of this family domaine. For many years, he and his father sold off their grapes to the Cave de Tain, the local cooperative, but in the late 1980s, they broke away in order to produce their own wines.

They work 11 hectares of Syrah plus 4 hectares of Marsanne and Roussanne dispersed throughout various parcels. In order to ensure the best quality of their fruit they gently handpick their grapes and ferment them in temperature-controlled stainless steel vats. All of this fanfare takes place at their home, Château Curson, a beautiful old stone farmhouse.

Particularly consistent year-in and year-out, their wines are plush, fruity and upfront. This style combined with their fine balance and concentration make them particularly user friendly and excellent value for money.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Crozes Hermitage	£72.00	2008 - 2013
<i>With a hue of ruby purple and a youthful upfront nose, this 2006 offers notes of black currant, granite, fresh red grape and a touch of molasses. On the palate, its soft, enveloping tannins and racy freshness makes it notably easy to drink and enjoyable even at such a young age. It finishes on ripe plum and minerality.</i>		



DOMAINE DU COLOMBIER, *Mercuriol*

If Florent Viale had not become a winemaker, he may have had success in America as a player for the NBA. Fortunately for us wine lovers, his interests were not in basketball, but rather in winemaking. Since his first vintage in 1991, his wines have gone from strength-to-strength capturing the attention of international wine critics and collectors alike.

Very clean and pure, his style falls halfway between traditional and modern. Valuing fresh flavours, he destems all of his grapes before vinification and prefers larger demi-muids for the ageing of his more prestigious wines. For him, oak should never dominate but rather integrate nicely, emphasizing the natural fruit quality.

He produces two Crozes Hermitages including Cuvée Gaby, a blend of the top Crozes Hermitage barrels that are more concentrated and age worthy. In addition, he produces a small amount of red Hermitage, and a minute quantity of white Hermitage – a wine he began making in the 2004 vintage and which he creates from a recently purchased parcel of 60-year old vines.

On our last visit, we noticed that Florent seemed to have taken on a new look. Emerging from a micro-sized Citroen, our 6'5" Hermitage hero was sporting long, wavy hair and intellectual, modern glasses – molto italiano. Despite a physical change in this "Italian stallion", we are happy to report that his wines are just as delicious as they have ever been.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Hermitage Blanc (limited)

£160.00 per 6 2009 - 2018+

This medium-full bodied wine is silky smooth with candied lemon, lime zest, almond and pear flavours. Wonderfully rich yet ethereally light it has excellent depth, concentration and complexity. A real beauty. Only three barrels of this wine were produced.

Crozes Hermitage Cuvée Gaby

£115.00 2009 - 2018

Crozes Hermitage Cuvée Gaby Magnums

£121.00 per 6 2010 - 2019

Cuvée Gaby is this domaine's 'tête de cuvée' Crozes which is named after Florent's father. It is produced from the first pressing of the grapes which contains the richest and sweetest juice. The 2006 is powerful and chewy with a lush fruit core and fresh acidity. It finishes on black cherry, dark chocolate and cloves.

Hermitage

£315.00 2012 - 2024

Hermitage Magnums

£321.00 per 6 2013 - 2024

Penetrating and deeply coloured, this 2006 reveals intriguing notes of fragrant violets, liquorice, spicy orange and black currants. On the palate, it commands its presence with an ample palate, notable depth and a focused, finely tuned finish. Lingering flavours of smoky bacon and cedar draw its expressive personality to a close.



CORNAS

This most southerly appellation of the Northern Rhône has long been lost in the shadows cast by the limelight of its more glamorous neighbours. It has suffered from an archaic (and entrenched) reputation of producing tannic, dense wines that need many years to come around. Yet for a long time, this has not been the case as winemakers have polished their viticulture and vinification techniques. Many of its wines are produced from slopes of excellent historic reputation which benefit from the well drained steep soils and sheltered exposures from cold northern winds. Due to this micro-climate, it usually produces riper wine than the more northern appellations in colder vintages. It is one of the most underestimated appellations which can at times challenge Hermitage.

DOMAINE ALAIN VOGUE, Cornas

Alain Voge has been making wine for over 40 years. After his military service in Algeria, he returned to help his father at the family domaine. However, grapes were only part of his responsibilities; they also grew various fruits, wheat and raised pigs and goats for cheese. They were even the local distillers. But as time passed, grapes became more and more important until they became their only focus.

Like most growers in Cornas, they do not destem completely but use about 20-30% of the stems to gently extract structure and to control vinification and drainage while the juice is run off the skins. As a result, the wines have a definite 'old world' feel that adds character and charm, but without any harshness. Though their reds are all aged in oak barrels, only 10-20% of them are new which enables the wine to retain its purity of fruit while softening its structure.

They make several wines including three Cornas cuvées. They are then bottled according to the age of the vines. Vieilles Vignes, their largest cuvée, is produced from a blend of parcels from vines that are mostly between 50 – 60 years old while Vieilles Fontaines is a 1-hectare vineyard whose vines average 80 years in age.

Despite a broken ankle from a riding accident, Albéric Mazoyer, co-owner and winemaker, was in glorious spirits during our tasting. Following the whites, we had mini verticals of their Cornas cuvées from 2004-2006. They were all just so delicious and showed how consistent their wines are. What we love about them is their polished style which never loses sight of Cornas' personality.

€/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Cornas Vieilles Vignes **£229.00** **2010 - 2020**

A discreet nose is fleshed out by a refined, poised palate. Flavours of blackberry and plum and cinnamon unfold while its velvety, superfine tannins add breadth and structure. Its wonderful purity and notable freshness adds lightness and depth. Absolutely delicious. They've done it again.

Cornas Vieilles Fontaines **£329.00** **2010 - 2020**

Produced from one of the best parcels in Cornas. This 2006 displays a deep purple hue and rich, concentrated flavours of toasted cedar, blackberry and black cherry and spice. Its full-bodied palate has chewy, powerful tannins and an impressive presence that culminates in a long, captivating finish. The 2005 vintage got Robert Parker's highest rating for Cornas and called it "absolutely monumental" and stated that it is "one of the finest" he has ever tasted from this appellation.

SOUTHERN RHÔNE

Unlike the svelte and steep contours of the northern valley, the southern Rhône is broad, hilly and even sometimes flat, particularly in Châteauneuf du Pape where large galet stones are widely dispersed in the vineyards. The climate is warm and enriched by the great Mediterranean sun. Though the *Mistral* begins in the northern Rhône, it actually hits the southern areas the hardest, cooling down the grapes – an effect which allows these robust wines to retain their freshness. There are multiple appellations reflecting all styles and colours. It includes Châteauneuf du Pape, Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Tavel, Lirac, Beaufort de Venise, Rasteau and Côtes du Rhône. They are made mostly from a base of Grenache and Syrah and are fleshed out with other meridional varieties such as Mourvèdre, Carignan and Cinsault. Many of the reds are rich and spicy with *garrigue* notes, a term used to describe the aromatic blend of wild herbs such as rosemary, lavender and thyme that are prominent in the region.

VACQUEYRAS

One of the newest appellations to emerge from the southern Rhône, moving up from Côtes du Rhône Villages in 1990. As a result, it also is one of the least known. Stylistically, its wines are rich and plump with more complexity and concentration than Côtes du Rhône, but perhaps slightly less concentration than its neighbouring appellation, Gigondas. Like most things, though, this depends on the producer and vintage. It makes all three colours – red, white and rosé, mostly from 4 varieties – Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault and Carignan though the red is by far the most dominant. Due to its lesser known reputation, they often offer excellent value for money.

GIGONDAS

Gigondas has been an appellation in its own right since 1971. Though they can occasionally be more rustic, the reds are often considered a miniature version of Châteauneuf du Pape. Part of this may have to do with the same limited yield restrictions and minimum alcoholic strength (12.5 %), but they also share some of the same varieties including Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Certain bottlings can be approached shortly after release, but many benefit from several years of cellaring. Like Châteauneuf du Pape, aged bottles take on appealing gamey and forest floor aromatics which make them particularly enjoyable with roasted meats.

CÔTES DU RHÔNE

The largest of the Rhône appellations, it also has the greatest variety in its styles. Its hierarchy ranges from the fruity and ultra light Côtes du Rhône Primeur, to the standard Côtes du Rhône, to the more concentrated versions of Côtes du Rhône Villages and finally to the crème de la crème, Côtes du Rhône Villages from one of 16 specified villages. It is generally known for its fruit forwardness and easy drinkability. Most of the vineyards are found in the southern valley whose main variety is Grenache; however, there are smaller areas in the northern valley that uniquely grow Syrah, therefore producing a very different wine.



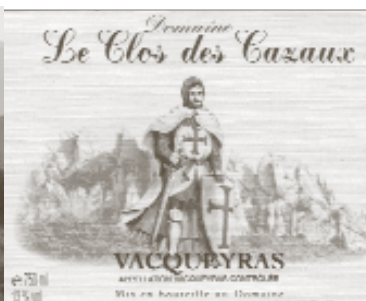
DOMAINE CLOS DES CAZAUX, Vacqueyras

Every year, we descend upon the southern Rhône valley. Regardless which season it is, we are always greeted with such a depth of Mediterranean beauty – the rambling hillsides, the warm colour of the earth, the delicate and enchanting scents of wildness. At such moments, one may think that life could not get much better. Until one tastes at Clos des Cazaux, that is. Their only flaw is their appellation. Very few people are familiar with Vacqueyras, and it is unfortunate for they make some of the most sumptuous, balanced and well priced wines in the southern valley.

Clos des Cazaux is run by Jean-Michel and his brother Frédéric Vache. They are passionate and friendly. Their winemaking and vineyard management philosophy blends *lutte raisonnée* (addressing issues as they arise to avoid unnecessary chemical treatments) with organic and biodynamic methods. Low yields and late harvesting are also critical as they want their wines to be as expressive and harmonious as nature will allow.

Jean-Michel was steeped heavily in the vines picking away when we arrived. Luckily, their mother was on hand to have us taste through their various cuvées all of which were deliciously good.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Vacqueyras Cuvée St. Roch	£75.00	2010 - 2018
<i>Wonderfully pure, the 2006 Cuvée St. Roch has notes of crisp bramble fruit, crunchy minerals and violets. Its notable silkiness adds poise and elegance. Finishes fresh and clean.</i>		
Vacqueyras Cuvée des Templiers	£79.00	2010 - 2020
<i>Deeper in colour than the Cuvée St. Roch, this medium to full-bodied wine also displays more wildness. Savoury flavours of game, smoke and plump blackberry fill the palate while its freshness and mineral touch keeps it focused and restrained.</i>		
Gigondas La Tour Sarrazine	£115.00	2011 - 2020+
<i>Ample and masculine, this 2006 has intriguing aromas of spicy 'garrigue' notes, sweet leather and black currant. Velvety and smooth, it is plush, yet uplifting and wonderfully polished. An exemplary Gigondas.</i>		



DOMAINE CROS DE LA MÛRE, Derboux

Domaine Cros de la Mûre is located in Derboux, a small hamlet in the southern Rhône valley. Surrounded by lavender fields and sweeping, untamed brush and forests, it is easily one of the most beautiful landscapes in the valley. The domaine is run by Eric Michel, a passionate and determined winemaker who took over his family's vineyards holdings in 1990 after finishing his studies at Bordeaux University.

Many of Eric's vines are situated high up on the Massif d'Uchaux, an area that creates profound yet silky wine. Its soil is made predominately from two distinct types: clay/limestone around Derboux and lighter, sandy soil around the village of Uchaux which is hotter and produces wine that are notably fruity and ripe.

A believer in late harvesting, he picks his grapes at the height of ripeness enabling his fruit to be as rich and expressive as possible. To further maintain its purity, he vinifies and ages his wines in concrete vats using no oak. The results are often explosive cornucopias of fruit and are rich and long-lived on the palate.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Côtes du Rhône	£69.00	2008 - 2012
<i>Smoky and sauvage on the nose, the palate is juicy and ripe with notes of blackberry and black cherry and a touch of molasses. Its soft tannins and good freshness make it particularly mouthfilling and appealing. Made with 60% Grenache, 30% Syrah with the remainder being Carignan and Mourvèdre.</i>		
Gigondas	£120.00	2009 - 2018
<i>Chocolately and dense, this wine offers chewy tannins, generous concentration and uplifting acidity. It finishes on clove and liquorice. Despite its ample presence, it remains elegant, fine and pure. Perhaps the most feminine Gigondas we have ever tasted from Eric.</i>		



DOMAINE CAYRON, Gigondas

Unusual in this multi-wine region, this well-established domaine makes but one wine...Gigondas. No single vineyards bottlings, no special barrel selections just one clean cut cuvée. Its small cellar is inconspicuously located behind a large door off a residential winding road that leads to the hilltops overlooking the valley below. Once opened, its porthole transports the unexpected to yesteryear – somewhere in the 1950s for its vinification room and perhaps the late 19th century for its ageing chamber. Traditional is an understatement.

Now Michel Faraud has more or less retired and the domaine is under the watchful eyes of his three daughters, Delphine, Sandrine and Rosaline. They produce one of the most old-styled Rhône wines available – a rarity these days. The grapes are pressed in an old horizontal basket press. The juice is then fermented in cement vats with indigenous yeasts before being aged in large old oak foudres. The Farauds also include the stems as they feel they help in preventing fermentation temperatures and the final degree of alcohol from rising too high. They are neither filtered nor fined. In the end, the results are extraordinarily pure and balanced.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Gigondas

£120.00

2011 - 2018+

Medium ruby in colour, this 2006 displays exotic aromas of game, garrigue and a sweet core of crunchy blackcurrant. Fresh, chiselled minerality adds excellent focus and depth. Its subtle rusticity adds character and charm. A soulful wine.



CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE

The emperor of southern Rhône appellations, Châteauneuf du Pape was the first A.O.C. in all of France, created in 1936. Their bottle is unique embossed with the papal coat of arms. Thirteen varieties (14 if Grenache Blanc is counted separately) can be incorporated in the blend. The reds include: Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, Carignan, Cinsault, Terret Noir, Picpoul, Vaccarèse, Counoise, Muscardin, while the whites are Roussanne, Bourboulenc and Clairette. Only a handful of producers use all 13, Grenache often being the highest percentage of the blend. This enables each producer to highlight the varieties that are the ripest and most interesting in any given year. Many Châteauneuf du Papes are master examples of wines that can be approachable within the first few years of release yet able to develop superb complexity during many years of cellaring.

DOMAINE DU PÈRE PAPE, Châteauneuf du Pape

The Mayard family have been winemakers for 5 generations - a passion that began in 1864. In 1976, Maurice Mayard inherited the estate and decided to build up the domaine's holdings by acquiring various properties and parcels and expanding their vineyards from 7 to 40 hectares. These acquisitions included Domaine du Grand Coulet in 1989, an exceptional parcel of vines located next to Vieux Télégraphe in La Crau. The current owners are siblings Didier, Françoise, and Béatrice who work together to make the wine and to run the estate.

Though some of their winemaking methods are modern, their wine style is traditional and they believe that balance is of utmost importance. In order to harness the maximum amount of fruit possible, they steep the red grapes at cold temperatures before fermentation which gently extracts colour and flavours. Once fermentation is complete, the red wines are aged in large foudres for up to 14 months. Though they are not blockbusters of power or complexity, their balanced, attractive and pleasing personalities make their wines appealing and good value.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Châteauneuf du Pape La Crau de Ma Mère

£160.00

2010 - 2022+

A cuvée named after Maurice Mayard's mother. This wine is produced from 70% Grenache, 20% Mourvèdre and 10% Syrah. The fruit comes from old vines (some dating back to 1866) that are grown on La Crau, one of the oldest and most reputed parcels in Châteauneuf du Pape. The 2006 has superb balance between its sweet, zingy fruit core and its smoky meaty characters. Its structure is broad yet focused and offers wonderful depth and concentration. A fine 2006.



DOMAINE VERSINO, Châteauneuf du Pape

Jean-Paul Versino is the magic behind this domaine (which is also known as Bois de Boursan). Stemming from third generation Piedmontese in Châteauneuf du Pape, the Versino family bought 40-100+ year old vines from retiring owners in the mid-80s after years of making wines from rented vineyards. As a result, their vineyards resemble something of a patchwork quilt, comprising 27 different parcels with various soils and microclimates. With all the subtle nuances that are innate to each plot, Jean-Paul has become an expert on harvesting schedules ensuring that each variety is at its utmost ripeness when picked.

He makes two Châteauneuf du Pape reds – Bois de Boursan and in top years, Cuvée Félix, a special bottling made from the best parcels of the oldest vines, which includes a larger percentage of Mourvèdre.

Unusual for the area these days, he uses 100% stems in all of his vinifications, which he believes allows his wines to age for longer and to retain an authentic and traditional Châteauneuf du Pape feel. As paradoxical as it may sound, they also give his wines a notable elegance separating them from the more brawny examples of the region.

His 2006s were exemplary. When discussing the difference between 2006 and 2005, he expressed that his 2005s are more powerful, while his 2006s are finer. We believed that they had all the fruit richness of the 2005 but not the hefty tannin. He shook his head eagerly in agreement with a big smile on his face. It seems that he loves his 2006s too.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan	£145.00	2010 - 2018+
Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan Magnums	£151.00 per 6	2011 - 2020+

Jean-Paul's Châteauneuf du Papes almost have a sweet Pinot-like quality, similar in style to those of Château Rayas, which makes them particularly elegant, light and complex. Full of spice and leather on the nose, this 2006 has a wonderfully attractive sweet core of fruit on the palate. Tender and gentle, it is nonetheless penetrating and complex. A lovely Châteauneuf.

Châteauneuf du Pape Cuvée Félix (limited)	£129.00 per 6	2011 - 2022+
Châteauneuf du Pape Cuvée Félix Magnums (limited)	£138.00 per 3	2012 - 2025+

Cuvée Félix is produced from a selection of vines from his best and oldest parcels (some are 85-90 years) whose yields are a mere 20 hl/ha. Ample and mouthfilling, the 2006 offers aromatic garrigue characters, crunchy black cherry and ripe, superfine tannins enveloped in a complex, concentrated palate. Its glorious finish goes on and on.





CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL, Châteauneuf du Pape

Château de Beaucastel is undoubtedly one of the most famous domaines in the southern Rhône and possibly the most recognisable Châteauneuf du Pape. Created in the early 1900s, this domaine has passed down through several illustrious pairs of hands including the dynamic and philosophic Jacques Perrin and now to his two sons, Pierre and François. Since its début, their vineyards have grown to over 110 hectares to create their various cuvées – all of which are grown according to strict organic methods.

Through the Perrin's creativity, ingenuity and pioneering spirit, their wines are also some of the most atypical for the region. For example, they designed and mastered a winemaking technique called *vinification à chaud*. This unusual method heats incoming grapes to 80°C for just over one minute after which they are immediately cooled to 20°C. The benefits are tri-fold: extracting colour and aromatics, slowing down fermentation and preventing the natural oxidation of the grapes. It has no doubt greatly contributed to the longevity of their wines for which they are known. In addition, their red Châteauneuf du Papes contain the largest percentage of Mourvèdre in the region (usually a minimum of 30%) creating notable aromatics of roasted game and chewy, powerful tannins.

Luckily they have Fabrice, their über knowledgeable (and talkative) guide, who explains all of these details brilliantly. He is also one of the quickest tasters ever enabling the visitor to get through all 20 wines that they produce in less than 40 minutes. Luckily the wines were so delicious and memorable, notes were almost superfluous.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc £175.00 per 6 2008 - 2013

Ripe and aromatic with notes of honey, candied lemon and cinnamon, this sumptuous wine is ample with an oily rich texture. Notably concentrated, it finishes on peach and toasted almonds. They age 30% of this wine in new French oak for additional spiciness and depth. Produced from 80% Roussanne, 15% Grenache Blanc and 5% mixed varieties.

**Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc
Roussanne Vieilles Vignes (limited)** £295.00 per 6 2009 - 2019+

Explosive on the palate, its exotic aromas of white truffle, toasted brioche and ripe pear fill out its decadent core. Its low acidity makes it particularly decadent while its superb concentration adds notable complexity and length. Produced from vines that date from 1920.

"The very limited production and single greatest white wine of the southern Rhone is their 100% Roussanne cuvee from 50+-year-old vines, the 2006 Beaucastel Chateauneuf du Pape Vieilles Vignes white. This is a sensational wine, with notes of lychee, marmalade, and exotic fruits such as mango in addition to more classic notes such as poached pear and buttered brioche. The wine is full-bodied, unctuously textured, but not heavy or plodding. This is a masterpiece of white winemaking...97 points." The Wine Advocate, Issue 173

Châteauneuf du Pape £190.00 per 6 2011 - 2020+
Châteauneuf du Pape Half Bottles £195.00 per 12 2010 - 2018+
Châteauneuf du Pape Magnums £195.00 per 3 2012 - 2022+
Châteauneuf du Pape Jeroboam £140.00 each 2014 - 2024+

A blend of sweet and savoury, this 2006 offers plush notes of dark bramble fruit backed by meaty, marmite-like undertones. Like most Beaucastel Châteauneufs, it is broad and fleshy rather than restrained and poised yet its acidity adds freshness and lift particularly on the finish.

DOMAINE FONT DE MICHELLE, Bedarrides

Font de Michelle is owned and operated by Jean and Michel Gonnet, third generation winemakers who work their various parcels of vineyards mostly located around La Crau, one of the best sites in the entire appellation.

Freshness and fruit forwardness are key to their modern-styled wines. They harvest their grapes at optimal ripeness after which they are immediately pressed. Their winemaking facility works by gravity so no pumping is needed which helps to preserve their intense fruit character. The wines are aged in oak barrels some of which are new for 6 to 12 months depending on the cuvée. Their reds receive no fining or filtration allowing them to retain all of their natural flavours and textures.

We offer their two red Châteauneuf du Pape – their ‘cuvée traditionnelle’ and their Cuvée Etienne Gonnet, a special wine created in 1988 and named in honour of their late father, which is only produced in the very best vintages.

For them, 2006 produced a smaller harvest than usual and created wines that are soft, plump, fruity, elegant and hedonistic. In other words, delicious.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape	£155.00	2010 - 2019+
<i>Wonderfully upfront, this 2006 is fleshed out by lots of ripe bramble fruit, black pepper and plump damson plum. Its sweet core is balanced by its fine tannins and uplifting acidity which surfaces at the end. Particularly morish.</i>		
Châteauneuf du Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnet	£275.00	2010 - 2022+
<i>Etienne Gonnet, the domaine's top cuvée, is produced from a typical Mediterranean blend of predominantly Grenache (from 90-year-old vines), followed by Syrah and Mourvèdre. Very little new oak is used in order for the pure and primal characteristics to show through. Rich, deep and dark, this 2006 displays intense flavours of blackcurrant, blackberry and liquorice. Its ample, fleshy palate is wrapped up in mouthfilling tannins giving a long and persistent finish.</i>		



LANGUEDOC

MAS DE DAUMAS GASSAC, Aniane

In the 1970s, a Parisian glove manufacturer named Aimé Guibert was looking for a calmer life. He purchased property at the bottom of a valley that was once an ancient Gallo-Roman settlement. Surrounded by thick, garrigue scrub and glacial, mineral-rich earth, it seemed a perfect site for viticulture...that is, to Bordeaux oenologist Henri Enjalbert. He convinced Aimé to plant grapes and with the help of oenologist extraordinaire, Émile Peynaud, he began producing wine.

Despite their southern France location, they have a markedly unique micro-climate. Housed in a deep valley, cool air is drawn down from the mountains, particularly in the summer evenings, creating extraordinary, daily temperature swings ranging from 0 - 30°C. As a result, they are able to grow a plethora of varieties successfully from both cool and warm areas including Cabernet Sauvignon, Nebbiolo, Tempranillo, Pinot Noir and Tannat, all the while attaining excellent ripeness while retaining the varieties fresh acidity.

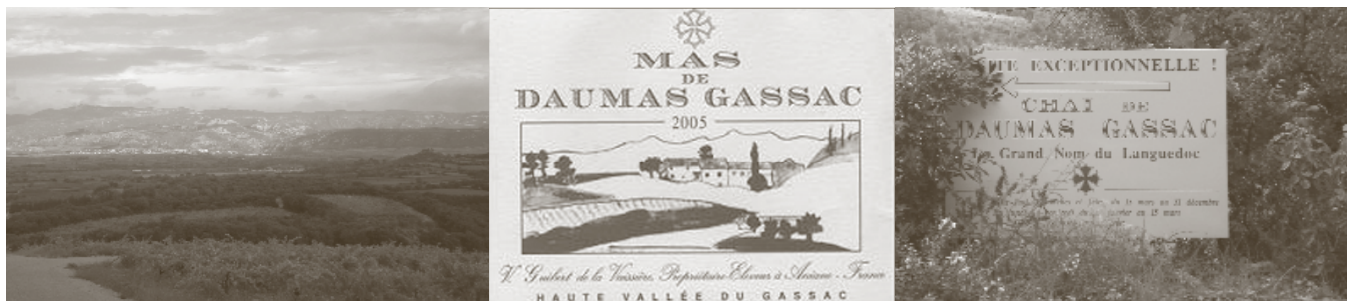
In September, we visited their extraordinary domaine for the first time. Stunningly beautiful, they overlook grand vistas over the Gassac Valley that perfectly frame their unique *terroir*. It was easy to see their passion and determination that have helped establish a reputation as the “Grand Cru of the Midi” (Hugh Johnson). Anyone who has tasted the wines would most likely concur. The 2006 is truly exciting and well worth discovering.

£/case in Bond

Drinking Dates

Mas de Daumas Gassac Rouge, Vins de Pays de l'Hérault **£168.00** **2010 - 2019+**

Though predominately Cabernet Sauvignon (75-80%), this wine also contains a smattering of others – 10 to be exact. As a result, depending on the vintage a wine can take on very different aromatics that are not necessarily characteristically Cabernet. The 2006 is wonderfully pure with a nose of fresh, plump blueberry, cassis and lightly toasted spice. It has impressive focus and minerality which adds extra finesse. A very pretty wine with backbone.



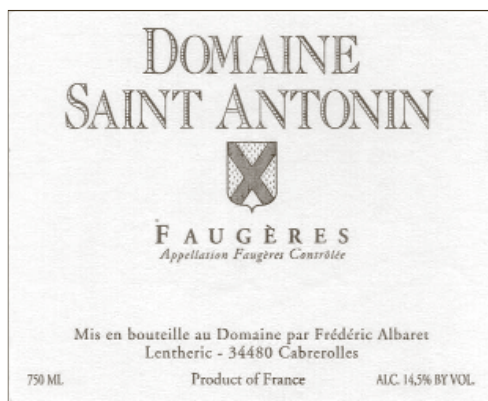
DOMAINE SAINT ANTONIN, Cabrerolles

Tucked away in a valley reminiscent of the heather dusted hills of Wuthering Heights lies Domaine Saint Antonin. This estate is owned and run by Frédéric Albaret, a winemaker who installed himself in the region several years back. He sought out vineyard land that offered exceptional terroir, was less explored and as a result, demonstrated excellent potential. He found these qualities in Faugères, one of the smallest Languedoc crus whose slate-rich soil is particularly well draining and heat reflecting in summer.

The domaine's wine style falls somewhere between modern and traditional. He values optimum ripeness yet his wines remain focused, mineral and uplifting. They are a sheer delight.

Frédéric prefers his 2006s to his 2005s saying that they are even racier, fresher and more approachable. Though his 2005s were absolutely delightful, the 2006s do seem to have a bit more *je ne sais quoi*.

	£/case in Bond	Drinking Dates
Faugères	£55.00	2008 - 2013
<i>Medium/bodied, pure, pretty and suave. Produced from 30% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 20% Mourvèdre, 20% Carignan and 10% Cinsault. Its gently sweet core is fleshed out with blackcurrant, chocolate and a touch of liquorice that adds a touch of depth and spice. Finishes on silky clean minerals. Beautiful.</i>		

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

All wines are offered In Bond England (i.e. all shipping and bottling charges are included). We will arrange shipment in autumn 2008. 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 £7.95 ex Vat per case per annum.

When you decide to take delivery, Duty and Vat become payable. These charges are at present £16.02 and 17.5% respectively. Delivery will be charged at cost.