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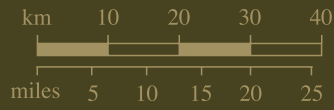
FINE WINE MERCHANTS

2009

RHÔNE

EN PRIMEUR

MAP OF REGIONS



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INTRODUCTION

Mother Nature truly blessed France in 2009. Throughout the country, her magic touched upon areas like Bordeaux, Burgundy, and yes, the Rhône, producing incredibly successful wines. Despite advances in viticultural practices and winemaking, it is still a rare occurrence for such homogeneous quality and style across regions. Vintages such as 2005 and 1990 embody this spirit, and 2009 has followed in their illustrious footsteps, producing wines that are rich, ripe and layered, with sweet, succulent fruit. Though ample, velvety and mouthfilling, its wines are also fresh, mineral and beautifully balanced with clear-cut precision. They are quite simply remarkable.

A combination of favourable weather conditions and exceptional vineyard management enabled the Rhône to hit this pinnacle of quality. The preceding winter and spring were cold and wet, a positive force for securing the water table for the coming growing season. This, however, did disturb some of the earlier flowering vines. In other areas, the flowering carried itself out perfectly, but there were just much fewer grapes. The upside to both of these occurrences, of course, was lower yields and hence greater fruit intensity. Much of the valley apart from Côte Rôtie, experienced some dry conditions. This, in turn, produced incredibly healthy fruit and positively impacted on the concentration, decreasing the quantity of juice. Nevertheless, growers welcomed two rain showers in September before harvest in areas like Châteauneuf du Pape, which re-invigorated the vines and gently fleshed out the berries.

With such exceptional ripeness and concentration, many have queried whether there might be a comparison between 2009 and 2007, a vintage that was considered one of the best in the last 50 years, particularly in the south. In the north, 2009 has a similar brightness of fruit, but the underlying structure is more reminiscent of 2005, yet with more opulence. Côte Rôtie produced the best fruit in all of the valley and as a result their wines are exceptional – gorgeous layers of sweet fruit, ripe tannins and lots of freshness. However, wines from all the northern appellations excelled. Though Robert Parker has not yet scored them, in his latest Wine Advocate he firmly declares, “I can say that without a doubt it is the finest overall vintage in the north since 1999, and probably since 1990.” (Oct 2010)

In the south, due to the wonderful concentration of juice and thicker skins, 2009 has a similar intensity of fruit as 2007 but for many wines, the structure is more pronounced. This, in turn, has given countless 2009s a slightly more masculine and broader feel than the generally more feminine 2007s. Due to the vintage’s moderate heat and cool nights, they also tend to have slightly lower alcohol levels than the 2007s giving them good balance and underlying freshness.

Not only are the 2009s a true pleasure to taste with their copious amounts of lush fruit, but they are also mineral, focused and ageworthy. Similar to 2009 Bordeaux, they are truly exceptional and are worth seeking out across all appellations and quality levels. As René Rostaing, enthusiastically declared “Que c’est magnifique!”

- Robin Kick

NORTHERN RHÔNE

A narrow valley of approximately 70 km in length whose vineyards are perched on 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 fresh and focused 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 lightly sparkling wine from the St. Péray appellation and Vin de Paille, a sweet dessert wine produced from dried white Hermitage grapes.

DOMAINE PATRICK & CHRISTOPHE BONNEFOND, Ampuis

In 1990, Patrick and Christophe took over 3 hectares of family vines following their father's retirement. They originally sold off their grapes to négociants, but then decided to build up their domaine in order to bottle their wines under their own label. Now with 7 hectares and a solid reputation for excellent, complex Côte Rôties, they haven't looked back. They produce three reds - the classic cuvée as well as two specific "lieux dits", Côte Rozier and Les Rochains. Despite both "lieux dits" being located in the Côte Brune, they are very different wines due to soil and exposition; Côte Rozier tends to be more silky and feminine while Les Rochains is typically more weighty with darker fruit and more structure.

Christophe was our first stop on the 2009 trail, and what a way to start. He described his wines as rich, full and complete. Their ripe tannins and underlying freshness gave them a moreish quality that made them wonderfully easy to taste yet capable of ageing for years.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Côte Rôtie	£265.00	2013 – 2022+

Blended from both Côte Blonde and Côte Brune parcels, the Bonnefond's straight Côte Rôtie is an impressive entry-level wine that offers notes of sweet, spiced plums, succulent cherries and lingering smoke. Focused yet ample.

Côte Rôtie Côte Rozier	£190.00 per 6	2014 – 2026+
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A beautiful Côte Rôtie that is fresh and crunchy with intricate layers of cassis, raspberries and minerals. Its excellent concentration of fruit will require several years to unveil itself. It finishes on gentle toasty notes and fine, firm tannins.

Côte Rôtie Les Rochains	£190.00 per 6	2015 – 2028+
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True to form, the 2009 Les Rochains is round, rich and smoky with notable intensity and chewy tannins. Reminiscent of a fine Hermitage, this is an impressive and powerful wine which expands with greatness and class.

DOMAINE CLUSEL ROCH, Ampuis

One of the most traditional (and smallest) domaines in Côte Rôtie, Clusel Roch was created in 1989 by Brigitte Roch and Gilbert Clusel. Their philosophy is that Côte Rôtie should be smooth and elegant yet with enough structure to age well, gaining complexity over time. It should also clearly express its unique terroir. In order for this transparency of place to surface, they carry out “massale selection” – a technique where the best and most adapted vines are chosen from within a producer’s own vineyards. They have also been officially organic since 2002. The soil is tilled by hand and medicinal herbs are used to treat the vines.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Côte Rôtie	£315.00	2012 – 2020+

A blend of multiple parcels, the 2009 Côte Rôtie offers an aromatic nose of brown sugar, raspberries and cherries. Its lovely fruit sweetness leads to a firm structure that is also mineral and focused. An old-fashioned wine that exudes lots of charm.

Côte Rôtie Grandes Places (very limited)	£295.00 per 6	2014 – 2025+
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Brigitte and Gilbert’s Grandes Places is produced from a mere 0.7 hectares and from the domaine’s oldest vines. An impressive wine, this fuller-bodied Grandes Places is spicier, toastier and deeper than the straight Côte Rôtie. Ripe yet well delineated, this will age beautifully.

DOMAINE PIERRE GAILLARD, Malleval

After years of working for other producers such as Vidal Fleury and then Guigal, Pierre Gaillard 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 produces sumptuous wines with wonderful layers. His are some of the most “user friendly” wines of the region pleasing both the keen novice as well as the most particular connoisseur. They are truly delicious.

The 2009 vintage delivered beautiful ripeness which enabled them to carry out extra long macerations. This shows in the wines impressive concentration, roundness and complexity.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
St Joseph Clos de Cuminaille Rouge	£170.00	2012 – 2019
St Joseph Clos de Cuminaille Rouge Magnums	£185.00 per 6	2013 – 2022

One of his two top St Josephs, Clos de Cuminaille has been a favourite of ours for years. The 2009 has a sweet yet savoury palate filled with juicy plums, black cherries and blackberries framed with notes of soy sauce and spice.

Côte Rôtie	£295.00	2014 – 2022+
Côte Rôtie Magnums	£310.00 per 6	2015 – 2024+
Côte Rôtie Jeroboam	£105.00 each	2015 – 2026+

A wonderfully balanced wine, Pierre’s 2009 straight Côte Rôtie is lifted, pure and precise yet with such an intensely juicy core of fruit; it is impossible to not like this. Brown sugar and sweet plums juxtapose against its mineral saltiness adding even more depth and layers.

Côte Rôtie Rose Pourpre	£595.00	2014 – 2024+
Côte Rôtie Rose Pourpre Magnums	£610.00 per 6	2015 – 2026+
Côte Rôtie Rose Pourpre Jeroboam	£205.00 each	2016 – 2028+

After taking a sabbatical in 2008, Pierre’s Rose Pourpre is back on cracking form in 2009. Produced from Côte Rozier on a Côte Brune parcel that is pure schist. Dried fruit and plum compote flavours fill out the core while spicy roasted coffee and toasted oak surface secondarily. A delicious wine that is truly representative of the 2009 vintage.

DOMAINE DE MONTEILLET, Chavanay

The dynamic and entertaining Stéphane Montez is the 10th generation of vignerons in the Montez family. From his sheer Mediterranean-like slopes, Stéphane produces renowned Condrieu, perfumed St. Josephs and excellent Côte Rôties from vineyards comprised of decomposed granite soils. Like many people in the valley, he believes in producing wines reductively (with little exposure to air) in order to 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, yet adds warmth and texture to his handcrafted wines.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Condrieu Les Grandes Chaillées	£275.00	2011 - 2015

Though Stéphane's reds are exceptional, his Condrieu is famous throughout the Rhône Valley. He always seems to create the perfect balance of sheer hedonistic fruit yet with a fresh, mineral touch and lightness. Plush peach and spice lift from the glass while its feminine and silky texture soothes the palate. Caramel finish. Just delightful.

St Joseph Cuvée Papy	£175.00	2014 – 2022+
St Joseph Cuvée Papy Magnums	£185.00	2015 – 2024

This cuvée is named after the moment when his father first became a grandfather. The 2009 Papy is big and ripe with notes of violet, blueberry and cocoa. Its succulent fruit and balance give it a cheeky, sort of charm, which makes it wonderfully drinkable. Finishes on notes of vanilla and roasted coffee.

Côte Rôtie Fortis	£375.00	2015 – 2026+
Côte Rôtie Fortis Magnum	£390.00 per 6	2016 – 2028+

Due to its Côte Blonde location, Stéphane incorporates some Viognier in his Fortis cuvée. This aromatic white variety adds more fragrance and an ethereal touch. Slightly more spicy than the Papy, the 2009 Fortis delivers an opulent sweet core of fruit with aromatic smoke and earthy notes. Velvety tannins caress the palate while its freshness adds lift. Just delicious.

Pre-Release :

Côte Rôtie Grandes Places 2007	£300.00 per 6	2014 – 2024+
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Grandes Places is Stéphane's 'Tour de Force' which is always released later than his other cuvees. The 2007 offers poised, crunchy red and black fruits, zesty spice and grounding smoke. Meaty and fleshy on the palate, this is a fantastic 2007 that offers the more upfront fruit of the vintage but retains the nobility of the vineyard.



DOMAINE RENÉ ROSTAING, Ampuis

Insightful and contemplative, René Rostaing is the Socrates of winemakers. In his reasoned search for truth, he was able to learn from such Rhône Valley greats including his father-in-law, Albert Dervieux and uncle, Marius Gentaz. Upon their retirements, René 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 staunch traditionalist, he uses 30-60% of 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." He produces three Côte Rôties - a "village" level as well as La Landonne and Côte Blonde, the wine we affectionately refer to as "The Queen".

When asked to describe the 2009 vintage, René said three words: "Que c'est magnifique!" (How magnificent it is!). He described his wines as incredibly elegant and supple, unlike the burly, structured 2005s. But he feels that they have the same potential in terms of quality. We found them fantastic - utterly mouthfilling and complex.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Condrieu La Bonnette (limited)	£400.00	2011 - 2016

Viognier through-and-through, René's 2009 Condrieu is a rich and mouthfilling wine whose opulent palate exudes peach, apricot and perfume which is gently laced with aniseed and lemongrass. Despite its unctuousness, it remains fresh. Finishes round and long.

Côte Rôtie (limited)	£425.00	2013 - 2022
Côte Rôtie Magnums (limited)	£440.00	2014 - 2025

Produced from 80% of Côte Blonde terroir and 20% of Côte Brune, the 2009 has an old-fashioned, soulful feel with a lovely core of sweetness and attractive aromas of violets and brown sugar. Tannins are ripe and round yet dense and solid. A fine entry-level Côte Rôtie.

Côte Rôtie La Landonne (limited)	£ POA	2014 - 2030+
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A powerful La Landonne that lives up to its impressive reputation. The 2009 delivers a complex and weighty palate of succulent black fruits, freshly roasted coffee and lots of sweetness. Despite its masculine presence, it is nonetheless charming and seductive. Wonderful freshness and length.

Côte Rôtie Côte Blonde (limited)	£ POA	2015 - 2030+
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Perfumed and expressive with ripe raspberries, blueberries and flowers. Intense yet ethereal and layered. Incredibly stylish, it carries itself beautifully from start-to-finish and finishes long, focused and intricate. This has the makings of a truly exceptional wine.



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. All of this fanfare takes place at their original family 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 makes them particularly user-friendly and excellent value for money.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Crozes Hermitage	£90.00	2013 – 2018

One of the bigger wines Etienne has produced in recent vintages, the 2009 delivers a solid core of fruit, hinting at blackberry preserves and damson plums. Deeper layers open up to reveal notes of treacle and spice. The tannins are velvety but present, requiring slightly longer ageing than usual. Good value.

DOMAINE DU COLOMBIER, Mercurol

Since Florent Viale's 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 barrels that are more concentrated and age worthy. In addition, he makes a small amount of red Hermitage, and a minute quantity of white. On our recent trip to taste his 2009s, we were lucky enough to find Florent's 2000 Hermitage on a wine list in one of the restaurants. It reminded us of what we love so much about his wine. Velvety and unbelievably fresh. Succulent yet savoury and just delicious.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Hermitage Blanc (limited)	£225.00 per 6	2013 – 2020+

In 2009, Florent produced a refined and graceful wine that displays incredible freshness and layers. Opening up with notes of sweet pear, roasted hazelnuts and white flowers, it finishes on citrus zest and minerals. Ethereal and light. Those drinkers that think Hermitage Blanc is a bit 4-square and heavy would change their minds upon tasting this wine. Sheer poise and elegance. Only 1000 bottles have been produced.

Crozes Hermitage Cuvée Gaby	£160.00	2014 – 2022+
Crozes Hermitage Cuvée Gaby Magnums	£170.00 per 6	2015 – 2024+

We've always loved this wine and the 2009 exceeds our expectations. Deep in colour, the 2009 Gaby is lavish on the palate with sweet notes of wild bramble fruit, roasted coffee and gentle spice. Incredibly mouthfilling while remaining fresh and complex. A fine wine that will age beautifully.

Hermitage	£435.00	2015 – 2030+
Hermitage Magnums	£445.00 per 6	2016 – 2032+

A naturally rich wine that is well-endowed with layers of red cherries, blackberries and chocolate. Its round, velvety tannins flesh out the palate while its pronounced minerality adds freshness and elegance. It finishes long on notes of cassis and spice. A hedonistic and profound wine.

DOMAINE BERNARD FAURIE, Tournon

Modest, shy and warmly welcoming, Bernard Faurie makes some of the most incredible wines (and tiniest in quantity) of the Rhône Valley. Rather like a hobbit's lair, his cellar is replete with an earthen floor, small lamps that beam soft warmth on the bottles, foudres, barrels and a small library of books, perhaps for the occasional literary dip in between rackings. He makes some of the best traditionally styled wines that are elementally pure, complex and incredibly elegant. Some have even been 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. His 2009s are delicious. They showed lots of fruit intensity as well as 2009's ubiquitous velvety tannins.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
St. Joseph	£210.00	2015 – 2026

Though we always enjoy Bernard's St Joseph, it becomes extra special in exceptional years. 2009 is one of them. Though tight on the nose, the palate offers a solid core of plump, sweet fruit and round, velvety tannins. It also retains a sense of old world charm. Bernard's is one of the most complex St Josephs made, and thus it will require a bit of cellaring to completely bloom. Unfortunately, Bernard recently sold most of his St Joseph vineyard to an inspiring young winemaker, so this will undoubtedly also be a very rare bottle.

Hermitage	£215.00 per 6	2018 – 2032+
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A blend of 3 lieux-dits and terroirs, Bernard's 2009 Hermitage is incredible. Firm yet velvety and round with lots of layers and complexity, it is ripe yet incredibly fresh. Its finish is immeasurably long. This is what great Hermitage used to be. Complex and with great ageability. Very fine indeed.

DOMAINE ALAIN VOGÉ, Cornas

Alain Vogé has been making wine for over 40 years. His style of combining Old World charm with Cornas' ability for ripeness and complexity earned him a renowned reputation for producing wines that tend to be approachable moderately young yet which are layered and age worthy. In 2004, Albéric Mazoyer, former general manager for Michel Chapoutier, joined forces with Alain to become his business partner and the domaine's manager. A charismatic perfectionist, he has fostered the innate quality of their wines a step further. They produce several reds including Cornas Vieilles Vignes, a blend of parcels from vines that are mostly between 50 – 60 years old. They also make several St Pérays, whites from 100% Marsanne. Robert Parker describes theirs as "one of that appellation's finest" and a "Chablis look-alike".

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
St Péray Fleur de Crussol	£235.00	2011 – 2018

The Fleur de Crussol is the domaine's top St Péray cuvée. Despite having very tiny yields, the 2009 is incredibly light and fresh, giving way to wonderful mineral notes. The palate is further fleshed out with sweet ripe peaches, honeysuckle and brioche. A delightful Marsanne that shows a more lacy touch.

Cornas Vieilles Vignes	£335.00	2010 – 2017
Cornas Vieilles Vignes Magnums	£350.00 per 6	2015 – 2025+

A big Vieilles Vignes that delivers an ample mouthful of dried fruits, blackberry liqueur and roasted coffee. It delivers lots of density and power with bold, chewy tannins and an incredibly long finish. Opulent and ripe with more southern than northern Rhône characters. One to watch.

SOUTHERN RHÔNE

Unlike the svelte and steep contours of the northern valley, the southern Rhône is broad, hilly and occasionally flat, particularly in Châteauneuf du Pape where large galet stones are widely dispersed in the vineyards. The climate is warm and enriched by the Mediterranean sun. Though the famous Mistral wind 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 wine styles and colours. They include Châteauneuf du Pape, Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Tavel, Lirac, Beaufort de Venise, Rasteau, the newly created Vinsobres, 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.

DOMAINE CLOS DES CAZAUX, Vacqueyras

Clos des Cazaux has one of the most bucolic vineyard sites in all of the Rhône Valley. It is run by Jean-Michel and his brother Frédéric Vache. Their philosophy blends “lutte raisonnée” (addressing issues as they arise to avoid unnecessary chemical treatments) with organic and biodynamic methods in grape growing. Low yields and late harvesting are also critical as they want their wines to be as expressive and harmonious as nature will allow. Winemaking is carried out as organically as possible with indigenous yeasts and at its own pace. The results are wines that are charming, pure and balanced. Since Vacqueyras is one of the region’s least known appellations, their wines also provide particularly good value.

Jean-Michel describes his 2009s as having lots of depth with good concentration, ripe, mature tannins and “a high potential of pleasure”. Similar to 2007, but with a bit more backbone.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Vacqueyras Cuvée St Roch	£95.00	2011 – 2017
Vacqueyras Cuvée St Roch Magnums	£110.00 per 6	2012 – 2019

Cuvée St Roch is the more “feminine” of their two Vacqueyras cuvées. Produced from 65% Grenache and 35% Syrah, the 2009 offers a sweet succulent core of fruit that displays wild raspberries, red cherries, chocolate and cedary notes. Its fine, ripe tannins make it particularly mouthfilling.

Vacqueyras Cuvée des Templiers	£105.00	2014 – 2022
Vacqueyras Cuvée des Templiers Magnums	£120.00 per 6	2015 – 2024

The more muscley of the Vacqueyras couplet, the 2009 Cuvée des Templiers delivers an enticing nose of spicy, garrigue aromatics and a plump, velvety palate that furthers expresses notes of Christmas cake, dried figs and soy sauce. Intriguing and delicious.

Gigondas La Tour Sarrazine	£125.00	2014 – 2025
Gigondas La Tour Sarrazine Magnums	£140.00 per 6	2015 – 2027

This Gigondas seems to have it all – a wonderful core of sweetness, round tannins, rich fruit flavours and fresh acidity. Opulent notes of dark chocolate with ripe red cherries and savoury undertones add depth and layers of fruit while it finishes lively and lifted. A characterful wine that remains balanced and focused.

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 wild and captivating landscapes in the valley. The domaine is run by Eric Michel, a passionate and determined winemaker who took over his family's vineyard holdings in 1990. Many of Eric's vines are situated high up on the Massif d'Uchaux, an area that creates profound yet silky wine. 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 maintain their purity, he ferments and ages his Côtes du Rhône and Gigondas in concrete vats using no oak. The results are often explosive cornucopias of fruit which are rich and long-lived on the palate.

Eric believes his 2009s embody both the 2003 vintage in terms of opulent ripeness and the 2005 in structure. The 2009 vintage also marks the first year he used a small wooden fermentation vat for his Châteauneuf due Pape. Due to its endowed power and concentration, he feels that it has added complexity and depth.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Côtes du Rhône	£90.00	2012 –2018+

Eric makes one of the best Côtes du Rhône's that always delivers far more than its price point would suggest. The 2009 lives up to its reputation with its deep, lush colour, spicy sweet fruit and ripe velvety tannins. This will make delicious drinking in 2 years time.

Gigondas	£220.00	2013 – 2025+
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This is one of the finest Gigondas' we know. Its lovely deep colour opens up to sweet berry fruit and spice on the nose and hints of black cherry on the palate. Generous and rich with quite firm tannins leading to a long generous finish. Beautiful complexity.

Châteauneuf du Pape Le Bois Pointu (limited)	£460.00	2014 – 2028+
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This wine is produced from two parcels of very old vines in exceptional locations. One parcel produces robust, masculine wine while the other is lacy and refined.. The final result embraced its terroir as well as the vintage, delivering a beautifully poised nose of roses, garrigue herbal spice and sweet raspberries. On the palate, it is focused and mineral with fine taut tannins and a long finish.



DOMAINE CAYRON, Gigondas

Unusual in this multi-wine region, this well-established domaine makes but one wine... Gigondas. No single vineyard bottlings, no special barrel selections, just, one clean cut cuvée. Its small cellar is fantastically traditional – somewhere in the 1950s for its vinification room and perhaps the late 19th century for its ageing chamber. Today the domaine is under the watchful eyes of three sisters, Delphine, Cendrine and Rosaline. Like their cellar, their wine is one of the most old-styled in the region. To help their trademark style along, the Farauds include the stems, which add an Old World charm to the wines. They also prevent fermentation temperatures and the final degree of alcohol from rising too high. The Farauds feel that their 2009 is most like their 2007 than any other vintage in recent years.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Gigondas	£165.00	2014 – 2023
Gigondas Magnums	£190.00 per 6	2015 – 2025
Gigondas Jeroboam	£70.00 each	2015 – 2028

We tasted two large foudres of their 2009. Though at different stages of their evolution (due to the foudre sizes), they showed the same luxurious fruit with additional notes of chocolate, garrigue wildness, minerality and crunchy freshness. This is a blockbuster that is not overly done but just perfectly balanced. Drinkers who follow this domaine will be very impressed.

DOMAINE CLOS DES PAPES, Châteauneuf du Pape

One of the oldest winemaking families in Châteauneuf du Pape, the Avrils began their vinous adventures in the early 17th century. Today, the domaine is run by Vincent Avril who took over from his late father Paul in the early 1990s. Traditional producers with a modern twist, Vincent uses no stems in vinification and ferments in large ceramic-lined vats, but he does age his red varieties in large, old foudres in a humidity-controlled cellar. In addition, his is one of the few domaines in Châteauneuf du Pape to use all 13 recommended regional varieties in their red and all 6 varieties in their white. His meticulous vineyard and winemaking practices have catapulted their reputation over the past 15 years and today they are considered one of the grandest growers in the appellation.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc	£180.00 per 6	2012 – 2018

An aromatic, floral nose with undertones of apple and pear; there is a lovely streak of acidity imparted by the 15% Picpoul and blocked malo, and a round weightiness from time spent on lees.

Châteauneuf du Pape	£275.00 per 6	2014 – 2028+
Châteauneuf du Pape Magnums	£580.00 per 6	2016 – 2032+
Châteauneuf du Pape Jeroboam	£210.00 each	2017 – 2035+

We tasted a series of assemblages, all of which made up of Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. The overall impression was of a wine which will be complex and hugely concentrated, but with a great deal of finesse; rich and spicy with notes of kirsch, red liquorice and a smattering of red and black fruits. This is certainly a big wine, with alcohol levels exceeding 15%, but fresh acidity and a vein of minerality keep it balanced.

DOMAINE VERSINO, Châteauneuf du Pape

Jean-Paul Versino is the magic behind this domaine (which is also known as Bois de Boursan). After years of making wines from rented vineyards, the Versino family, third generation Piedmonteses in Châteauneuf du Pape, bought 40-100+ year-old-vines from retiring owners in the mid-1980s. As a result, their vineyards resemble something of a patchwork quilt, comprising 27 different parcels with various soils and microclimates. He makes two Châteauneuf du Pape reds – Bois de Boursan and in top years, Cuvée Félix. This special bottling is made from the best parcels and the oldest vines and includes a larger percentage of Mourvèdre. His style tends to be earthy and soulful. It is perhaps for this reason that Robert Parker compares them more to Burgundy than to the wines of the Southern Rhône.

Jean-Paul feels his 2009s are between 2007 and 2005 in terms of aromas and structure. We found them just sumptuous.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan	£195.00	2014 – 2028+
Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan Magnums	£210.00 per 6	2015 – 2032+
Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan Jeroboam	£100.00 each	2016 – 2033+

Pure and poised with lots of red crunchy cherry, damson plum and blackberries. While zingy, sweet and vibrant, the tannins are velvety, ripe and tender - not overly structured or brooding. A charming wine that is a bit of a coquette and highly likeable.

Châteauneuf du Pape Bois de Boursan Cuvée Félix	£180.00 per 6	2016 – 2035+
Ch. du Pape Bois de Boursan Cuvée Félix Magnums	£195.00 per 3	2017 – 2036+
Ch. du Pape Bois de Boursan Cuvée Félix Jeroboam	£140.00 each	2017 – 2038+

Dense, chewy and deep, this is a step up in intensity of fruit and structure from Jean-Paul's straight Châteauneuf. Fleshed out with figs, blackcurrant liqueur and chocolate, its ample palate unfolds slowly into a long, velvety finish. An intense, powerful wine.



CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL, Courthézon

Château de Beaucastel is undoubtedly one of the most famous domaines in the southern Rhône and probably the most recognisable Châteauneuf du Pape. Created in the early 1900s, this domaine has passed down through several illustrious pairs of hands including those of the dynamic and philosophical Jacques Perrin and now to those of his two sons, Jean-Pierre and François. Over time, their vineyards have grown to over 110 hectares - all organically farmed - to create their various cuvées. Through the Perrin's creativity, ingenuity and pioneering spirit, their wines are also some of the most atypical for the region. This is no doubt partly due to their red Châteauneuf du Pape containing the largest percentage of Mourvèdre in the region (usually a minimum of 30%) which contributes notable aromatics of roasted game and chewy, powerful tannins.

Château de Beaucastel hit another pinnacle with their 2009 vintage. Marc Perrin feels that their 2009 red is more feminine than the 2007 and likens it to their incredible 1989, a wine that is silky, balanced and complex – a born charmer.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc	£215.00 per 6	2012 – 2018+

Aromatic with toasty notes of brioche, fresh butter and hazelnuts. On the palate, it offers a fruitier core with succulent fresh peaches and honeysuckle. Its delineation is pure and sculpted yet it remains creamy.

Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc Vieilles Vignes Roussanne	£395.00 per 6	2013 – 2024+
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Produced from 100+ year old vines, the 2009 Vieilles Vignes Roussanne is a tour de force. Rich and powerful with layers of lemon curd, mirabelle plums, pineapple and limestone. Despite its weight, it remains smooth and fresh. One of the grandest white wines produced.

Châteauneuf du Pape	£245.00 per 6	2014 – 2028+
Châteauneuf du Pape Half-Bottles	£495.00 per 24	2013 – 2024+
Châteauneuf du Pape Magnums	£495.00 per 6	2016 – 2032+
Châteauneuf du Pape Jeroboams	£205.00 each	2016 – 2035+

Gentle and poised on the nose, but on the palate, it is explosive. A cornucopia of juicy fruit leads to an underlying meaty core that finishes with a dusting of cocoa and spice. Amazingly layered and complex. Marc thinks this might evolve like the legendary 1989.

DOMAINES PERRIN, Courthézon

Over the years and with the addition of Jean-Pierre's sons, Marc, Pierre and Thomas to the family business, they have developed a separate range of wines. This range includes their well-known Côtes du Rhône Réserve as well as various "crus" which embody the individuality and character of each of their appellation areas. It also includes the most recent Rhône appellation, Vinsobres. Using the same savoir faire as Beaucastel, these wines always provide excellent value.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Vinsobres Les Cornuds	£75.00	2012 – 2019

A beautiful, poised wine that has wonderful balance and tenderness. Sweet notes of wild bramble coulis and red cherries add the fruit component while violet and granite add lift and depth. It finishes on gentle peppery notes and silky tannins. Previous vintages of this wine have been voted Best French Value Wine and Top Rhône Valley Value from Robert Parker, Decanter and Wine Spectator. A wine to discover.

DOMAINE FONT DE MICHELLE, Bédarrides

Font de Michelle is owned and operated by brothers Jean and Michel Gonnet, as well as Michel's son, Guillaume, third and fourth generation winemakers. Their various parcels of vineyards are mostly located around La Crau, one of the best sites in the entire appellation. Velvety textures and fruit forwardness are key to their modern-styled wines. In order for these innate characters to remain intact, they do not fine nor filter their wines. They also age them in both large foudres and oak barrels enabling them to gently soften. In exceptional vintages, they produce three Châteauneufs – the cuvee classique, Etienne Gonnet, a special wine created in 1988 and named in honour of their late father and a recent addition called Elégance de Jeanne, which is 100% Grenache from an ancient plot of 100+ year old vines.

Their 2009s were incredibly delicious - just loaded with sweet, juicy fruit, perhaps the most that we have tasted from them. Guillaume described them as “infused rather than extracted”. Unlike other wines in the region, they are more balanced and elegant than their 2007s. They will be just delightful for earlier drinking but they also have the fine structure to age.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape	£205.00	2013 – 2025+
Châteauneuf du Pape Magnums	£225.00 per 6	2014 – 2028+
Châteauneuf du Pape Jeroboam	£95.00 each	2015 – 2030+

Besides its wonderful sweet core of fruit, the most remarkable thing about Gonnet's 2009 is its incredible silkiness. Wonderfully fine and ripe tannins unfold onto the palate while gentle savoury notes of celery seed, cedar and pencil lead surface in the background. A beautiful wine.

Châteauneuf du Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnet	£355.00	2014 – 2028+
Ch. du Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnet Magnums	£370.00 per 6	2015 – 2034+
Ch. du Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnet Jeroboam	£155.00 each	2016 – 2036+

A more restrained wine than the classic cuvée, this is a notable step up in intensity and concentration. Its solid core of succulent red raspberries, blueberries and cherries leads to a finish of dark chocolate and spice. An impressive Etienne Gonnet that lives up to its reputation.

Ch. du Pape Cuvée Elégance de Jeanne	£370.00	2014 – 2026+
Ch. du Pape Cuvée Elégance de Jeanne Magnums	£385.00 per 6	2015 – 2029+
Ch. du Pape Cuvée Elégance de Jeanne Jeroboam	£165.00 each	2015 – 2029+

Grenache through-and-through, this impressive wine wins the award in 2009 for richness. Full of opulent layers of wild bramble fruits, red plums and milk chocolate Despite its lavishness, it remains focused and mineral.



VIEUX TELEGRAPHE, Bédarrides

Vieux Télégraphe is one of the most iconic domaines in the Rhône Valley. Originally named after an old telegraph station that stood on site, the domaine was created in 1989 by Hippolyte Brunier. Over the years it expanded and developed into the estate it is today, an area that covers 70 hectares. Unusual for the region, all their vineyards lie in a single block on La Crau plateau, which boasts some of the best terroir of the region. Unlike most domaines, their focus is to produce the greatest Châteauneuf possible. They have no interest in producing super-extracted, ultra-top cuvées. Rather, they introduced a second wine in order to strengthen the Grand Vin à la Bordelaise. For this reason, we feel that they produce some of the most balanced wines in the region, which deliver excellent fruit ripeness yet are lifted and poised.

Despite some comparisons between the 2009 and 2007, Daniel Brunier feels that 2009 is quite a different vintage. Though they are both excellent years, 2009 is more dense and robust in the middle and hence will need longer ageing.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Châteauneuf du Pape	£180.00 per 6	2015 – 2029+
Châteauneuf du Pape Magnums	£195.00 per 3	2016 – 2035+

An impressive wine, the 2009 Vieux Télégraphe is moderately masculine with a broad yet lifted palate delivering layers of red cherries, raspberries, black pepper and toasted spice. An iron hand in a velvet glove.



TERRASSE DU DIABLE, Gigondas

“The 2009 Gigondas Les Terraces de Diable was cropped at a frightfully low 16 hectoliters per hectare. It boasts wonderful fresh raspberry and black cherry fruit notes intermixed with scents of crushed rocks and flowers. An unmistakable minerality leads to a medium to full-bodied, extraordinarily elegant, dense, rich wine that is seemingly light across the palate despite what must be elevated alcohols. Drink this beauty over the next decade or more.” (90-93 points. Wine Advocate. October 2010)

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Gigondas, Terrasse du Diable	£165.00	2012 – 2023+
Gigondas, Terrasse du Diable Magnums	£175.00 per 6	2013 - 2026+

LANGUEDOC

France's largest producing wine region which extends along the Mediterranean Sea from just west of Costières de Nîmes to Fitou. It is often attached in name to Roussillon which extends further south to the Spanish border. It is most famous for producing varietal wines in the form of Vins de Pays d'Oc but also contains the regional appellation of Coteaux de Languedoc (with or without a village attached) as well as various "crus" such as Faugères, Minervois, St Chinian and Corbières and cult wines such as Mas de Daumas Gassac from the Hérault. The Languedoc tends to offer some of the world's best valued wines. This is due to its reputation for producing inexpensive wine combined with state-of-the-art advances in viticulture and vinification. Indeed, handcrafted wines that are well-made and beautifully balanced can cost a fraction of the price of those produced in more sought-after regions.

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 geologist and oenologist Henri Enjalbert. He convinced Aimé to plant grapes and with the help of Émile Peynaud, oenologist extraordinaire, he began producing wine. Unlike other regions, they have a markedly unique microclimate. Housed in a deep valley, cool air is drawn down from the mountains, particularly in the summer evenings, creating daily temperature swings ranging from 0 - 30°C. As a result, they are able to grow a plethora of varieties successfully including Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Viognier and Petit Manseng for the small amount of white they produce and Cabernet Sauvignon, Nebbiolo, Tempranillo, Pinot Noir and Tannat for the red – all the while attaining excellent ripeness yet retaining the varieties' fresh acidity.

Like the rest of France, Mas de Daumas Gassac experienced optimal growing conditions in 2009 and as a result have produced incredible wines. They are full of fruit with velvety tannins yet fresh, precise and focused. The domaine describes the 2009 as "both majestic and seductive; one can drink it in its youthful first years. Or, equally, entrust it to the magic of long ageing."

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Mas de Daumas Gassac Blanc 2010	£110.00 per 6	2011 - 2017

Unlike other domaines, Mas de Daumas offers their white wine really En Primeur. That is, before it's even completely finished. But their quality is always excellent and the 2010 looks to be a very good vintage which will deliver lots of fruit, freshness and concentration. It is produced from 20 varieties, though the majority is composed of Viognier, Chardonnay, Petit Manseng and Chenin Blanc.

Mas de Daumas Gassac Rouge	£110.00 per 6	2012 - 2024+
Mas de Daumas Gassac Rouge Magnums	£115.00 per 3	2012 - 2024
Mas de Daumas Gassac Rouge Jeroboam	£105.00 each	2014 - 2026+

A very grand and opulent wine that delivers juicy black and red cherries, gently toasty spice and cedar notes in a delicious, ripe and smooth palate. Its freshness adds lift and succulence. This is clearly akin to 2009 Bordeaux. An excellent wine that should be discovered.

PROVENCE

Certainly one of the most beautiful wine regions in France, Provence begins at the French Riviera with its vineyards to the west of Nice and includes those encircling St. Tropez and those that extend to the beginning of the Languedoc. This is the region where one finds the everlasting sun, chanting cicadas and the intoxicating scents of wild herbs. There are various Vins de Pays and regional wines including Côtes de Provence, which is undoubtedly the most famous. It is here where rosé is king as it accounts for 4/5 of the appellation's production. In addition, there are some sought after "crus" including Bandol, its most famous, followed by Cassis and Palette. Some of the most renowned producers are Domaine de Trévallon located outside of Les Baux de Provence and Domaine Tempier in Bandol.

DOMAINE DE TREVALLON, St Etienne du Grès

A cult wine producer located in the rolling hills west of St Rémy de Provence, Domaine de Trévallon was originally created by Eloi Dürrbach in 1973. An architecture student at the time, he decided to toss aside his protractors to roll up his sleeves and start planting vines in the craggy limestone rock soil surrounding his parents' holiday home. His instincts told him that the domaine's well-draining, mineral-rich soil, arid micro-climate and glorious sun would be capable of producing exceptionally powerful and expressive wines...and he was right. Following unsuccessful experiments with other varieties, he began planting 15 hectares of Syrah and Cabernet which he then followed with a smattering of Marsanne, Roussanne (from cuttings at Beaucastel), Chardonnay and most recently Grenache Blanc. Due to changing AOC regulations, his appellation has changed 5 times over the past 37 years. But the wine remains steadfast. They are some of the most exciting wines in France.

	£/cs in Bond	Drinking Dates
Domaine de Trévallon Blanc 2010 (very limited)	£185.00 per 6	2012 – 2018

A rare wine indeed, Eloi produces this beauty from Marsanne, Roussanne, Chardonnay and now Grenache Blanc. The 2010 vintage was a cooler vintage than normal suggesting that their white will be even more fresh and lifted than usual. Some have referred to their white as the Montrachet of Provence. Based on recent tastings, we can certainly see why.

Domaine de Trévallon Rouge	£145.00 per 6	2014 – 2024+
Domaine de Trévallon Rouge Magnums	£160.00 per 3	2015 – 2028+
Domaine de Trévallon Rouge Jeroboam	£120.00 each	2016 – 2030

The deeply coloured 2009 Rouge is like a symphony of flavours and textures. Opulent and rich with notes of cassis, black cherries, toasted spice. Yet, it has 2009's incredible delineation, layers and freshness. Unlike other vintages that demand many years of long-term ageing before a single corked is popped, this wine's superfine, velvety tannins just melt on the tongue, filling out the palate. Nonetheless, it will age effortlessly in the Trévallon way. This is a gorgeous wine and in our books, a "must buy".

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All wines are offered In Bond England (i.e. all shipping and bottling charges are included). We will arrange shipment from the domaines in autumn 2011. 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 £9.50 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 £20.25 per 12-bottle case and 17.5% respectively. Delivery will be charged at cost.

