



## RHÔNE 2018 EN PRIMEUR



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# RHÔNE 2018 EN PRIMEUR

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2018 continues the Rhône's extraordinary run of fortune with this fourth consecutive high-class vintage.

This high quality spans all appellations, somewhat surprising for a region that covers almost 150 miles. No one appellation outperforms the other and, despite a challenging growing season, there are some excellent wines from both the North and South. However, vigneron might lament the 2018 vintage due to the tiny crop it yielded. This small quantity of wine is nevertheless of exceptional quality, and as always, offers great value.

Vintages such as 2018 separate the wheat from the chaff. Location, terroir and careful vineyard management come to the fore. Once again, the most dedicated and talented producers have proven their worth, crafting truly excellent wines.

The essence of all great northern Rhône wines is Syrah, a varietal that thrives in heat and sunshine. 2018 delivered both in abundance and devotees will get great pleasure from this vintage. White wine lovers will find that alcohol levels are trimmed down compared to 2017 so the wines are arguably a truer expression of their origins and grape varieties.

In the South, growers made the most of the other varieties permitted in their appellations to tone down the natural exuberance and ripeness of Grenache in the final blend. The wines are stylish and approachable but maintain a core that will allow them to age as well as the finest vintages.

## THE GROWING SEASON

The year can be divided into three parts. Firstly, there was a period of consistent rainfall in spring and early summer followed in most parts by a severe lack of rainfall in mid-summer. Finally, late summer provided plenty of warmth and sunshine.

Following the 2017 harvest, the Rhône Valley experienced a mild, dry autumn and winter that lasted until March 2018. This can concern growers as it can cause early bud break, putting the vines at risk of harsh spring frosts. Thankfully this didn't happen. There followed an awkward three months of persistent rainfall across most appellations. Tain l'Hermitage experienced slightly less rain than the more northerly vineyards of St Joseph and Ampuis. In the South the story was much the same, Gigondas escaped the worst of the rain and, while the famed Mistral wind did much to ventilate the vines and improve budding conditions, it could not entirely prevent the onset of mildew. This was arguably the most crucial period for growers in the 2018 cycle and vigilance in the vineyards, staying ahead of the game, was vital to minimise the loss of crop. In the South, it was almost impossible to escape this completely which contributed to the tiny crop. In the North, Côte Rôtie, which was affected so badly in 2016, was totally free of disease and reported wonderfully healthy vineyards, as did Condrieu and Crozes Hermitage.

Thankfully, the end of June saw the last of the rain and brought with it hot, dry weather. This made for perfect conditions from the 1st July through to harvest time in the North. Likewise, in the South, apart from on August 15th when there was one heavy rainstorm refreshing the vines around Châteauneuf du Pape, weather conditions were ideal all the way through to the early harvest at the end of August for the white wines and beginning of September for the reds.

In the end, whilst a number of our growers may have a few more grey hairs, 2018 will be remembered with positivity and warmth. René and Pierre Rostaing feel that in Côte Rôtie there is a similarity with the warmth of 2009 and the structure of 2015. André Perret, most definitely a glass-three-quarters-full person, genuinely believes that 2018 is the best combined vintage for both red and white since he started back in 1983!

## THE WINES

There are two styles of red wines in 2018. The more senior appellations in the region such as Côte Rôtie, Hermitage and Châteauneuf du Pape have made very high quality, focused wines, which are open and expressive with a gorgeously appealing fruit profile. The combination of small yields, ripe fruit and tannins also means that these wines have the ageing potential of the best years. In contrast, the Côtes du Rhône Villages and Crozes Hermitage wines focus on ripe, sweet fruits, perfect for early drinking. Enjoy them in their youth and they will give huge pleasure.

The 2018 whites are thought provoking. They are certainly food wines par excellence. From the North, the wines of Condrieu and St Joseph express a dense richness of fruit. They are bold, but considerably less alcoholic than the 2017s, and therefore more composed and finer-tuned. They possess lovely aromatics and are glorious examples of Marsanne and Viognier. In the South, the Châteauneuf du Pape whites will as always inspire much discussion. They should be enjoyed either in their youth during their first 5 years in bottle, prior to entering what can be a somewhat awkward period of development or, if you hold your nerve, once they have come out the other side.

These can be some of the most rewarding old white wines from anywhere in the northern hemisphere. Demand for these whites is often confined to the serious Rhône lover, but ignore them at your peril!

To conclude, it is three years since I have written this offer and visited our growers so comprehensively. My week in September tasting these wines served as a timely reminder of what a sensational part of the wine world this is, how very special the wines themselves are and how warm-hearted and genuine our growers in this great region are.

I hope you enjoy this high calibre vintage.

DAVID ROBERTS MW





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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE PATRICK & CHRISTOPHE BONNEFOND, AMPUIS

Brothers Patrick and Christophe Bonnefond make a good team. Their estate in the commune of Mornas is perched up on the hills behind Côte Rôtie and while Patrick is busy in the vineyard, Christophe takes care of matters in the cuverie. They have four well situated *lieux dits* located mostly on the Côte Brune where the mica-schist soils give the wines their signature density and muscle. The wines have a compact richness, which is matched by up to 30% new oak in their top cuvées. The Colline de Couzou cuvée is a blend of fruit from the Côte Blonde and the Côte Brune while Rozier and Les Rochains are exclusively Côte Brune. The two parcels convey the contrasting personalities of this slope: the sunny south facing Les Rochains lies just next door to Guigal's famous La Landonne vines while Rozier has a cooler east facing exposition and is ventilated by the river breeze.

The wines are never fined and are only lightly filtered before bottling. The generous fruit and rich spice of the 2018 vintage is in keeping with the Bonnefond style.

Christophe's priority for the 2018 vintage was the careful management of alcohol levels. The warm, dry summer months meant that the harvest date was crucial to get the balance between sugar and acidity and so he decided to pick a little earlier than normal on 10th September. The result is that, in his words, the wines have a sunnier nature than his 2017s with a little more depth, structure and greater ageing potential. This fine domaine deserves greater recognition and this vintage highlights its high calibre.

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE COLLINE DE COUZOU



£315 per 12 Bottles In Bond

A very complete example of Côte Rôtie from plots of vines scattered across the schistose, granite soils of the Côte Blonde and the darker clay and iron oxide-rich Côte Brune. This has an appealing balance between enticing summer fruits, hints of Moroccan spice and mocha. There is a certain power and some noticeable richness on the palate. A wonderfully full and concentrated wine with subtle freshness on the finish and excellent length. Drink 2022-2033

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE CÔTE ROZIER



£215 per 6 Bottles In Bond

£220 per 3 Magnums In Bond

This cuvée is sourced from 40-50 year old vines in the Côte Brune's Côte Rozier parcel. Its position facing the Rhône river has a cooling influence on the vines which makes for a very pure and harmonious style of wine. Aromas of Black Forest fruits, an appealing intensity and a tightly woven tannic core give this cuvée great energy. Naturally sweet ripe fruit notes flow beautifully into the fine, long finish. Drink 2023-2034



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#### CÔTE RÔTIE LES ROCHAINS



£215 per 6 Bottles In Bond

£220 per 3 Magnums In Bond

Compared with the Côte Rozier, Les Rochains always gives a warmer, richer style of wine thanks to its beautiful south facing aspect. These old vines lie next to the famed La Landonne *lieu dit* on the Côte Brune. The 2018 has a vivacious nose with black cherry and deeply spiced aromas matched by hints of Valrhona chocolate. Full and concentrated with wonderfully expressive voluptuous fruit and a fine floral finish. A lovely style of Côte Rôtie. Drink 2023-2034

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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE RENÉ ROSTAING, AMPUIS

Since establishing the domaine in 1971, René Rostaing has worked tirelessly to give the Côte-Rôtie the exposure it deserves and, in doing so, has built a reputation as the patriarch of the northern Rhône. In 2014, René's son Pierre took on the mantle in what has proved to be a seamless transition. The house recipe remains unchanged: a high proportion of whole bunch fermentation, long macerations and a judicious use of new French oak (René has always been adamant you must never be able to taste new oak). The domaine boasts some serious parcels on the Côte Rôtie including holdings on the granite soils of the Côte Blonde and in the famous La Landonne *lieu dit*.

We visited the domaine on the day that Pierre and his team were picking the Côte Blonde vineyard parcels so we were looked after by the charismatic and supposedly retired René. We certainly got the impression that the word retirement is used loosely here! René's house adjoins the winery and I suspect visits imparting words of wisdom are an almost daily occurrence. In 2018, the domaine's practice of whole bunch fermentation delivered wines which balanced a natural warmth and richness with a hint of delicacy and subtle concentration. Very fine, powerful wines once again.

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#### CONDRIEU LA BONNETTE

£255 per 6 Bottles In Bond



From the southwest facing granite *lieu dit* La Côte Bonnette, which is the first parcel in the Condrieu appellation after the border with Côte Rôtie. This cuvée is vinified in 100% stainless steel to ensure maximum expression of the Viognier fruit. The 2018 shows subtle tropical fruit aromas with hints of guava and lychees. There is an unctuous volume beautifully balanced by the bright, fresh structure. An extremely attractive wine that is ideal for early drinking. Drink 2020-2024

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE LA LANDONNE

£515 per 6 Bottles In Bond



A hugely impressive wine and a beautiful expression of Côte Rôtie's famous La Landonne vineyard. The 2018 combines intensity with subtle power and the layers of spice, dark cherry and cassis lead through into the palate revealing notes of dark chocolate and vanilla pod. This is all supported by a grippy tannic core that ensures a full, powerful and long finish. Fabulous. Drink 2023-2040

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE AMPODIUM

£495 per 12 Bottles In Bond



A blend of 13 individual *lieux dits* on the Ampodium (Ampuis) slopes of the Côte Rôtie. For Pierre and René this cuvée embodies the appellation. Shining deep purple in colour, it has a striking scent of sweet ripe black fruits. This is a very polished style, full of rich fruits and lightly spiced with a hint of liquorice. The subtle use of new oak supports the wine's natural intensity and sweetness of fruit on the finish. High class. Drink 2022-2034

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE CÔTE BLONDE

£550 per 6 Bottles In Bond



This wine is a blend of two neighbouring parcels on the Côte Blonde and as we tasted we could see Pierre's pickers harvesting the 2019 vintage on the steep granite slopes. Watching the backbreaking work that goes into this wine made us even more appreciative of its quality. The rich dark black fruits are complemented by hints of caramel and treacle. Soft tannins give a more refined contrast to the bigger La Landonne cuvée. Wonderful ripeness makes this an absolute showstopper. Drink 2023-2040

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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE CLUSEL ROCH, AMPUIS

'An iron fist in a velvet glove' is a fitting description of the Côte Rôtie wines of Domaine Clusel Roch, where Burgundy like finesse is combined with Syrah's natural muscle. Guillaume Clusel has taken over from his parents and the understated yet complex style synonymous with this estate is still in charming evidence. Nestled below the steep slopes of the Côte Brune, this small domaine has been organically certified since 2002 and has some very old parcels of Syrah vines. Meticulous vineyard husbandry and delicate handling in the cellar gives wines with much lower alcohol than many of their neighbours. With some serious terroirs to play with such as La Viallière and the *pièce de résistance*, Les Grandes Places, it's no wonder that this domaine crafts hugely pure and distinctive wines deserving of their place in the canon of Northern Rhône Syrah.

Guillaume is consistently one of the earliest to harvest in the appellation and this paid dividends in 2018. The domaine's strict pruning regime meant that the remaining bunches were more than adequately satisfied with water and nutrients during the dry summer months and the fruit reached optimum maturity ahead of many of his neighbours. Purity and elegance define this estate in 2018, a hugely successful year.

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE LES SCHISTES

£370 per 12 Bottles In Bond



Selected from four different south easterly facing parcels in the northern section of the appellation, Les Schistes contains 5% Viognier. The Clusel Roch vineyards are co-planted with small amounts of Viognier which might explain the floral, aromatic nature of their Côte Rôtie wines. With a brilliant purple colour and pungent aromas of red fruits, this has striking purity and direction while its tannic tension and depth give great poise. A delightful expression of this appellation. Drink 2023-2036



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#### CÔTE RÔTIE LA VIALLIÈRE

£285 per 6 Bottles In Bond (limited)



The ferrous schistose slopes of Viallière are ideally suited to Syrah and are particularly respected amongst Côte Rôtie locals. This tightly knit example has striking autumnal fruits with hints of Indian spice. Like a coiled spring, there is an underlying tension, drive and energy. Very exciting. Drink 2023-2035

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#### CÔTE RÔTIE LES GRANDES PLACES

£360 per 6 Bottles In Bond (limited)



These old Syrah vines were planted between the two World Wars and, unsurprisingly, give a bolder and more muscular wine than the Viallière. It is rich, broad and intense with dark summer pudding fruits layered on top of spice and pepper. The higher elevation of this vineyard (300m) ensures that the density of this wine is offset by a pleasing freshness. This is a sophisticated wine that will age with grace. Drink 2023-2035

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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE ANDRÉ PERRET, CHAVANAY

André Perret has an astonishing gift for producing light-footed, complex Viogniers from the granite soils of Condrieu. Crafting cellar worthy wines from this fickle variety is no easy task but André's sophisticated examples taste delicious both in youth and with bottle age. His 13 hectare estate includes a monumental 3 hectares on the enviably positioned Chéry slope where his old vines (70 years) enjoy a south facing exposition and a crumbly loess topsoil. The small parcel of Clos Chanson is another treasure and gives wines with great energy and verve. From his 5 hectares in St Joseph, André crafts a peppery herb tinged St Joseph Rouge and a pithy St Joseph Blanc, both of which offer excellent value.

André is extremely happy with the character of his white wines this year; a return to his classic, restrained style. The alcohol levels are between 13.5% - 14%, a full degree lower than the previous vintage. He feels this is the best level to show the natural richness of Viognier whilst preserving its scented aromatics and the freshness crucial to keep the wines of Condrieu alive as they age.

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**ST JOSEPH BLANC**  
£110 per 6 Bottles In Bond



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The vines used to make this wine are actually planted within Condrieu but André feels that this northern part of the appellation is more suited to Marsanne and Roussanne. The 2018 is a blend of equal parts of both varieties and offers an easy floral style with notes of jasmine, honey and stone fruits. Its flowing intensity is beautifully reflective of the characteristics of the two varieties. Drink 2020-2026

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**CONDRIEU CÔTEAUX DE CHÉRY**  
£210 per 6 Bottles In Bond



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For the Coteaux de Chéry, André follows the same winemaking policy as he does for the Clos Chanson but the more friable nature of the soil in this *lieu dit* offers glorious aromas of fresh lychees and apricots. Elegant and rich, the Côteaux de Chéry has sumptuous white fruit notes. This is a beautifully balanced and layered cuvée with a soft, gentle finish. Drink 2020-2030

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**CONDRIEU CLOS CHANSON**  
£210 per 6 Bottles In Bond (very limited)



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Careful vinification in 30% stainless steel and the remainder in larger oak barrels allows the Viognier to shine. Lemon yellow in colour, the nose has plenty of freshly picked nectarines and apricots as well as a tinge of lime and honeysuckle. The granite soils in the Clos Chanson allow these 50 year old vines to express themselves perfectly and the 2018 shows great intensity with a bright energetic freshness. This is crystalline, pure and uplifting. Drink 2020-2030

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**ST JOSEPH ROUGE**  
£90 per 6 Bottles In Bond (limited)



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From grapes grown in the north of the appellation, this Syrah blend displays an abundance of dark cherry fruits with soft layers of white pepper. This is a noticeably rich style with characteristics of liquorice and mocha and appealing ripe sweet fruit. The tannins give structure but are at no stage controlling. Drink 2021-2030



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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE BERNARD FAURIE, TOURNON

The passionate and amiable Bernard Faurie lovingly tends to his modest 3.5 hectares of old vines on the hill of Hermitage. His holdings are spread across three different parcels: Bessards (granite and a full southern exposure), Greffieux (poorer limestone soils) and Méal (schist). Bernard's approach honours the three generations of winemakers before him: in the tiny garage cellar attached to his home, the fruit from the old vines (some over 100 years old) is whole bunch fermented and undergoes a short maceration period before maturing in oak barrels (10-15% new). Powerful, graceful and age worthy, Bernard's expertly blended Hermitage is one of the most accomplished examples of Syrah in the Northern Rhône.

Having already handed over his 11 hectares of Saint Joseph vines to his daughter and son-in-law, Bernard is gradually planning for his impending retirement. We will greatly miss his wines.

Bernard considers this vintage as combining the warmth of 2015 with the freshness of 2016. The three different locations of his vines were a great help in keeping alcohol levels balanced and by incorporating the fresher, more vibrant Méal plot (13.5% ABV) with the higher sugar Greffieux (14.4% ABV), Bernard could achieve a beautifully controlled level of just under 14% in the final blend. The perfect balance for the vintage.

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#### HERMITAGE

£350 per 6 Bottles In Bond (very limited)



Bernard Faurie's Hermitage is arguably as complete an example of this great appellation as you can find. Blended from his 3 parcels, Méal, Greffieux and Bessards, the wine has a kaleidoscope of flavours and palate sensations. A truly exceptional 2018. Deep opaque colour, aromas of wild strawberries, spice and autumnal fruits are an indication of the whole bunch pressed fruit, and there is a feeling of aged sweetness. Intense and bright, the 2018 has controlled weight and power. This is an extraordinary wine with great length and poise. True to all great Syrah wines, there is a sprinkling of white pepper that provides the final piece of the jigsaw. Fantastic! Drink 2025-2050

### DOMAINE DU COLOMBIER, MERCUROL

Proudly flying the flag for Crozes-Hermitage is Domaine du Colombier where brothers Florent and David Viale cultivate just over 14 hectares of vines as well as a small 1.6 hectare parcel at the top of the Hermitage hill. The Syrah is vinified whole and, so as not to mask the fruit flavours, maturation takes place in large oak tonneaux. Dark and bold, these wines are enjoyed for their power and their distinctive palette of dark fruits and black olive tapenade.

Florent and David are passionate about winemaking but they also have another string to their bow thanks to a serious apricot farming business. Much to their distress the brothers lost 85% of their apricot crop due to summer hailstorms and our visit to taste and talk about the 2018 vintage seemed a welcome break for them. Their success in 2018 was thanks to two factors in particular: the warm weather in which the Syrah variety so thrives, and lower levels of rainfall compared to the more northerly vineyards. The domaine always excels in this style of vintage and the wines are deep and concentrated. There are certainly no half measures here and the results are hugely rewarding.

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#### CROZES HERMITAGE ROUGE

£155 per 12 Bottles In Bond



From the clay-limestone soils, just across the river from the Hermitage hill, the 2018 Crozes-Hermitage has striking summer pudding fruit aromas. There is a noticeable richness and volume as well as the classic cassis and black olive character of Colombier's Syrah. Gentle tannins and a silky texture give dimension and weight on the finish. Drink 2022-2031

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#### HERMITAGE ROUGE

£250 per 6 Bottles In Bond



The Colombier vines lie within the Maison Blanche parcel at the top of the Hermitage hill. This is a fabulous example of Hermitage Syrah with dark brooding forest fruit flavours and a full, rich palate that shows breadth and subtle volume. Although not lacking in power, it has a degree of refinement thanks to poised tannins and a light touch of freshness on the finish. Drink 2024-2035

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## NORTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE ALAIN VOGÉ, CORNAS

Alain Vogé has worked tirelessly to put the appellation of Cornas squarely on the fine wine map. Since Alain's retirement in the early 2000s, the domaine has been managed by Albéric Mazoyer (previously of Chapoutier). 2018 marks Albéric's last vintage as head wine maker as he too eases into semi-retirement, passing the baton on to talented right-hand man Lionel Fraisse. Lionel joined in the domaine in 2012 and together he and Albéric have driven the estate to ever greater heights, in 2016 overseeing the final stage of conversion to organic farming. In Cornas, where the soils are relatively similar, the best results are blends and the domaine has 70 plots split over 7 hectares from which they produce well handled, benchmark examples of the appellation imbued with a smoky and rich black fruit character.

Partial destemming, fermentation in steel and, maturation in aged wooden barrels and foudres (10-20% new) has become the Alain Vogé hallmark. The domaine also champions the wines of next-door St Péray, where the fleshy, citrus fruit character of Marsanne thrives on the granite and limestone soils.

A wet spring in 2018 meant that growers had to be particularly vigilant in protecting their vines against the risk of mildew. Lionel feels that the elevation of their vines and the breezes that flow through helped to prevent any humid conditions from developing that encourage the spread of disease. Importantly he says that 2018 is a solar vintage and this ripe expression is wonderfully evident in the range this year.

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#### ST PÉRAY FLEUR DE CRUSSOL



£310 per 12 Bottles In Bond

The Fleur de Crussol comes from 80 year old Marsanne vines (the oldest in the appellation) planted on granite and limestone soils on the higher slopes of St Péray. Aromas of hazelnuts and almonds are matched by an appealing weight and texture thanks to an extended period of 17 months in barrel. The oak and bright apricot flavours are in perfect harmony in this full, structured white wine. Drink 2020–2028

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#### CORNAS LES CHAILLES



£330 per 12 Bottles In Bond

This is sourced from six different parcels located towards the bottom of the granitic Cornas slope and has characteristics of dark olive and molasses on the nose. The warm fruit flavours on the palate are complemented by a tight tannic grip while the astute use of 10% whole bunch pressed fruit gives an added dimension. There is a satisfying savoury note on the finish as well as some mocha and vanilla thanks to careful oak management. Drink 2022-2035



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#### CORNAS VIEILLES VIGNES



£480 per 12 Bottles In Bond

The old vines have an average age of 60 years and come from slightly higher altitude vineyards on the Cornas slope which gives this wine a dense purple colour and striking aromas. The perfume is beautifully seductive with hints of elderberry and cassis while the palate shows great drive and energy. Ripe fruit flavours give roundness and the tannins, although present, are never overpowering. Layered, full and long, with a deliciously bright finish, this is an excellent reminder of why I love Cornas so much! Drink 2024-2040

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## SOUTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE LE CLOS DES CAZAUX, VACQUEYRAS

Brothers Jean-Michel and Frédéric Vache are the fifth generation of winemakers in their family and tend to their vines with passion and precision. Their holdings lie in Vacqueyras and Gigondas nestled below the foothills of the jagged spurs of the Dentelles de Montmirail. With no oak maturation, these Grenache based blends convey a sense of place with great ease. A long maceration and an extended élevage give the wines their signature density and purity of fruit.

Gigondas and Vacqueyras suffered from a damp spring and then a cold snap during flowering. The result is that yields at Le Clos des Cazaux are down approximately 15% from an ideal quantity. Fortunately, the rolling topography of this domaine protected the vineyards from the high temperatures experienced in late summer. Nonetheless, in 2018 Clos des Cazaux, who have a reputation for picking late, commenced harvest with their whites at the end of August, one of their earliest starting dates.



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#### VACQUEYRAS CUVÉE ST ROCH

£115 per 12 Bottles In Bond  
£125 per 6 Magnums In Bond



This cuvée sees no oak as Jean-Michel and Frédéric prefer to vinify and mature in concrete tanks so as not to mask the fruit and the terroir. With 65% Grenache married with Syrah and Mourvèdre, the cuvée St Roch is the perfect southern Rhône blend with aromatic summer fruit characters of loganberry and red cherry. This is a very relaxed wine with succulent fruit and a soft, easy finish. Lovely. Drink 2020 – 2030

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#### GIGONDAS CUVÉE TOUR SARRASINE

£145 per 12 Bottles In Bond  
£155 per 6 Magnums In Bond



This cuvée follows the same winemaking policy as the Vacqueyras Cuvée St Roch but has a more serious earthy side with masses of wild autumnal fruits and towering structure thanks to a grainy tannic core. Pleasing density and a warming, rich mouthfeel makes this the perfect winter cuvée. Drink 2021–2032

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## SOUTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE FONT DU VENT, FAMILLE GONNET, BÉDARRIDES

Owned by the Gonnet family, this extensive estate was previously known as Font de Michelle after the eponymous *lieu dit* in Châteauneuf du Pape. A change in legislation means that the name is no longer protected and so a decision was made a couple of years ago to rebrand. The winemaking, however, remains impeccable and the newly christened estate continues to produce consistently excellent Châteauneuf. Guillaume Gonnet has taken the reins from his parents with impressive assurance and guides this historic domaine with modern innovation. The family recently acquired an additional 15 hectares on the other side of the La Crau planted with some younger Syrah vines as well as some older Grenache and Mourvèdre to complement their 50 to 100+ year old vines that grow in the southeast of the appellation. Guillaume has also been busy overseeing the conversion to organic and biodynamic practices across the entire estate.

The clue to Font du Vent's success in 2018 is in its name: 'font' in French means spring while 'vent' means wind, and in 2018 growers in Châteauneuf prayed for water and wind. Large amounts of rainfall in the early months of the year meant that for growers who didn't want to spray their vines, the strong wind that rips through was crucial to prevent the spread of disease and keep the vineyard healthy. The second half of the growing season was defined by a severe drought and the domaine's underground spring was a much-needed advantage. Guillaume said that at no stage did his vines suffer from water stress and the succulent character of his single estate wine confirms this point beautifully.

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#### CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE CUVÉE TRADITION

£250 per 12 Bottles In Bond  
£270 per 6 Magnums In Bond

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This is a highly accomplished example of Châteauneuf, made from a blend of 70% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre and a final 10% of what Guillaume calls "field blend" from the historic varieties co-planted in their old vineyards. Scented with damsons and sloes, this balances Grenache's juicy succulence with a tight central core. Delicious notes of black pepper and spices linger on the palate. In short it is everything a Châteauneuf should be. Drink 2021-2035



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#### 2017 CHÂTEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE CUVÉE ELEGANCE DE JEANNE

£265 per 6 Bottles In Bond

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A rather special addition to our 2018 Rhône En Primeur campaign is this 2017 cuvée! Released a year later, the 2017 Cuvée Elegance de Jeanne is named after Guillaume's grandmother Jeanne Brunier. A blend of 90% Grenache and 10% "field blend" from a 1 hectare plot in La Crau. This small vineyard was part of Jeanne's inheritance from the Vieux Télégraphe estate. Elegant and refined, it shows juicy autumnal fruits and a silky texture, with velvet tannins. The finish is graceful and long. Drink 2021-2037



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## SOUTHERN RHÔNE

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### DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE, BÉDARRIDES

This historic estate in Châteauneuf belongs to the Brunier family and is famed for its long-lived wines. Its namesake, a telegraph tower that once stood on the hill of the La Crau plateau, gives a clue to the property's advantageous elevation: the single plot of 65 hectares sits on one of the highest points between the small towns of Châteauneuf du Pape, Bédarrides and Courthézon. The soils here are carpeted in pudding stones that help retain moisture and aid drainage. Tending to the vines is a painstaking process as at this elevation the vines are subject to the full force of the Mistral wind and the fierce sunshine; but the Brunier family has clung to this unruly terrain for over a century. Winemaker Daniel Brunier continues to push the envelope of quality, producing classically styled Châteauneuf du Pape from vines with an average age of 60 years.

The Bruniers also have an estate in Gigondas, Les Pallières, which they co-own with their long time American importer and friend, Kermit Lynch. The vines here are slightly younger than those at Vieux Télégraphe and are nestled in the foothills of the Dentelles de Montmirail where the high altitude (250-400m) confers bite and freshness.

Daniel Brunier and his viticultural team are notoriously vigilant and reactive in the vineyard. This is not a Monday to Friday, nine to five domaine and if necessary, the team will do whatever it takes. Sadly, in some years round the clock care is still not enough. In 2018 yields at Les Pallières were down 40% and at Vieux Télégraphe 30%. Quality, however, remains excellent and the 2018s stand firmly alongside the two estates' finest examples.



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#### GIGONDAS TERRASSE DU DIABLE DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES

£250 per 12 Bottles In Bond  
£260 per 6 Magnums In Bond



The grapes for this cuvée come from the estate's highest altitude vineyards, some 400 metres up. While the nose is a little closed for now, the palate excites and teases with its juicy richness and intensity. The minerality and freshness of this wine work in tandem with the earthy personality of the Gigondas terroir to produce a profound wine with a satisfying grip on the finish. Drink 2023-2035

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#### VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE ROUGE

£219 per 6 Bottles In Bond  
£229 per 3 Magnums In Bond



The 60+ year old vines on the stony plateau of La Crau produce this historic cuvée. Grenache, Mourvèdre, Syrah and Cinsault, as well as some other Châteauneuf varieties are co-planted in the vineyard, and all contribute to the blend. Shining purple colour, this is a very expressive style full of damson and Victoria plum aromas. The harmonious fruit notes are offset by rounded tannins and a pleasing freshness. A wine of huge potential. Drink 2022-2040

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## LANGUEDOC

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### MAS DE DAUMAS GASSAC, ANIANE

We conclude our Rhône En Primeur campaign with a very special addition from the vanguard estate of the neighbouring Languedoc region: Mas de Daumas Gassac. Set up in the wild hills of the Hérault, the Guibert family seized an unlikely opportunity to plant atypical varieties in this garrigue-strewn region of southern France after the geologist-viticulturalist Professor Henri Enjalbert visited their isolated, enchanting, and beautiful estate in the early 1970s. The terroir was perfect for Bordeaux native Cabernet Sauvignon, a variety little seen in the region at the time (and still scarce today beyond the bounds of the Mas de Daumas Gassac estate). By the time eminent oenologist consultant Emile Peynaud came on board in 1978 there was no looking back. Despite its southern French location, the property sits in a deep valley that draws in cool air from the mountains. As a result, it is able to grow up to 40 different varieties successfully, all the while attaining excellent ripeness and retaining the varieties' fresh acidity. Its rich southern accent and substantial ageing potential mark their wines out as quite exceptional.

Much like the Southern Rhône, the estate enjoyed a hot, dry summer in 2018. In fact, it was the longest harvest in ten years, lasting over a month. This allowed the 63 plots to be picked on an à la carte basis, ensuring optimum phenolic ripeness and continuing the estate's tradition of producing an exceptional Grand Vin in the years ending in 8.

The 2019 vintage saw a summer of record-breaking temperatures that greatly reduced yields. The whites were particularly hard hit and production was down 50%. The precious little wine that is available however is truly sumptuous and will be shipped along with the red 2018 in May 2020.

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**2019 MAS DE DAUMAS GASSAC BLANC** (W)  
**VIN DE PAYS DE L'HÉRAULT**  
£175 per 6 Bottles In Bond (very limited)  
£185 per 3 Magnums In Bond (very limited)

The majority of the blend is Viognier, Chardonnay, Petit Manseng, and Chenin, while the final 10% is a mysterious blend of rare local varieties that thrive on the rough scrubland soils. Early picking and blocking malolactic fermentation mean the estate always guard the natural freshness of these varieties grown on the patchwork of vineyard parcels scattered over the wild hills. To be drunk young (in the first 18 months) to appreciate its magnificent minerality and very complex fruit aromas. Alternatively, to be kept at least from 4 to 12 years to discover a very rich wine with notes of honey and crystallized fruits.

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**MAS DE DAUMAS GASSAC ROUGE** (R)  
**VIN DE PAYS DE L'HÉRAULT**  
£150 per 6 Bottles In Bond  
£160 per 3 Magnums In Bond

80% of this blend comes from an old massale selection of Cabernet Sauvignon, first planted at the estate in the 1970s. The rest is made up of Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Pinot Noir, and other rare varieties (the estate grows some 40). The 2018 has a deep purple colour and a nose of wild damsons and Black Forest fruits with hints of toffee. On the palate there is an appealing intensity and a profound texture with a light touch of freshness. The tannins are ripe but provide a degree of boldness. A wine of truly exceptional class.

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### HOW TO ORDER

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Send an email to [sales@goedhuis.com](mailto:sales@goedhuis.com), [hksales@goedhuis.com](mailto:hksales@goedhuis.com) or directly to your salesman at their email address listed above.

**WEBSITE:** [www.goedhuis.com](http://www.goedhuis.com)

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

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All wines are offered In Bond England.

We will arrange shipment from the domaines in Autumn 2020. On arrival, your wines can either be delivered directly to you or stored Under Bond at our independent storage company, Private Reserves Ltd, at a cost of £11.50 ex-vat per case (12x75cl) per annum.

When you decide to take delivery, Duty and VAT at the prevailing rate will become payable. These charges are at present £26.78 per 12-bottle case and 20% respectively.

All En Primeur deliveries will be charged at cost.

