



BUYING GUIDE

Déc. 31, 2007 – Jan. 15, 2008

FRANCE

Rhône / Côtes du Rhône & Côtes du Rhône-Villages

91 Tardieu-Laurent Côtes du Rhône Guy Louis 2005 \$24 This is amped up with layers of suave mocha- and mesquite-tinged toast, showing richly layered blackberry and black currant fruit and a long finish tinged with graphite and iron. Shows serious grip. Drink now through 2009. 750 cases made.—J.M.

91 Domaine Vacheron-Pouizin Côtes du Rhône Clos du Caillou Les Quartz 2005 \$34 A big, modern-style wine, packed with fig, currant preserve and raspberry ganache flavors, along with a dark toast and mocha-filled finish. But then the finish is cream—pure and filled with minerality. Impressive. Drink now through 2009. 1,000 cases made.—J.M.

91 Domaine Vacheron-Pouizin Côtes du Rhône Les Clos du Caillou Réserve 2005 \$45 Supersilky and alluring, with lush boysenberry and blueberry fruit riding along creamy-textured tannins through a long spice- and fruitcake-filled finish. Ultramodern and totally delicious. Drink now through 2009. 550 cases made.—J.M.

90 Domaine Delubac Côtes du Rhône-Villages Cairanne Les Bruneau 2005 \$23 Brawny, with dark currant and tobacco flavors pushed by fig paste, cocoa powder and game notes on the back end. Chewy but ripe through the finish. Drink now through 2009. 56 cases imported.—J.M.

90 Château du Trignon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Sablet 2005 \$20 Really solid, with a muscular core of boysenberry and linzer flavors surrounded by notes of bittersweet cocoa, mesquite and licorice. Nice minerality works on the almost loamy finish. Drink now through 2009. 4,000 cases made.—J.M.

90 Domaine Vacheron-Pouizin Côtes du Rhône Le Clos du Caillou Cuvée Unique Vieilles Vignes 2005 \$20 Dark and winy, with aromas and flavors of warm raspberry and fig sauce, fruitcake, licorice and sweet spice. Juicy finish stretches out nicely. Drink now. 2,165 cases made.—J.M.

89 Domaine Delubac Côtes du Rhône 2005 \$17 Firm and stony, with a minerally grip to the black currant, tobacco and *garrigue* notes. Lengthy, sinewy finish. Drink now through 2008. 112 cases imported.—J.M.

89 Domaine de la Renjarde Côtes du Rhône-Villages 2004 \$15 Solid, with a focused beam of red and black currant fruit woven with subtle toast, cocoa and mineral notes. Nice bit of grip on the finish. Drink now through 2009. 10,000 cases made.—J.M.

89 Tardieu-Laurent Côtes du Rhône Les Becs Fins 2006 \$18 Pure and polished, with delicious boysenberry and raspberry fruit mixed with hints of mocha, graphite and dark licorice. The finish is long and pure. Very solid for the appellation. Drink now through 2009. 5,000 cases made.—J.M.

88 Domaine de Cabasse Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Cuvée Garnacho 2005 \$17 A nice briary edge runs through this red, with juicy red currant and licorice notes followed by a minerally finish. Drink now. 1,048 cases made.—J.M.

88 Etienne Gonnet Côtes du Rhône La Font du Vent Les Promesses 2005 \$15 A tender, traditional style, with moderately structured red currant and plum fruit, along with hints of hot stones and lavender. A taut edge keeps the finish going. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault and Carignane. Drink now. 3,330 cases made.—J.M.

88 Etienne Gonnet Côtes du Rhône-Villages La Font du Vent Confidentia 2005 \$18 Open-knit, with perfumy red fruit and floral notes, followed by notes of cocoa powder and sandalwood on the finish. Syrah and Grenache. Drink now. 330 cases made.—J.M.

88 Alain Paret Côtes du Rhône Valvigneyre 2005 \$12 Quite ripe, with plum cake and raspberry ganache notes that verge on jammy, but there's good spice, graphite and grip chiming in on the finish to keep it honest enough. Drink now. 5,000 cases made.—J.M.

88 Domaine Vacheron-Pouizin Côtes du Rhône Le Clos du Caillou Bouquet des Garrigues 2004 \$20 Fresh and round, with lots of easygoing raspberry, blackberry and spice flavors. Good creamy edge to the finish. Drink now. 5,000 cases made.—J.M.

87 Bosquet des Papes Côtes du Rhône 2006 \$14 Plump and juicy, showing a mix of red berry and blackberry fruit, with hints of sweet toast and tobacco. Drink now.—J.M.

93 Les Vins de Vienne Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes Sotanium 2005 \$55 Very juicy, with well-focused layers of cassis and plum fruit riding on top of chocolate, graphite and toast notes. The long, dark finish shows flashes of fruit, mocha and mineral, and the tannins are ripe and well-embedded for cellaring. Drink now through 2015. 1,300 cases made.—J.M.

92 A. Clape Cornas 2004 \$95 Dark and muscular, this is loaded with dark bramble, bittersweet cocoa, currant and game notes that rumble through a tar- and tapenade-filled finish. Built uncompromisingly for the cellar. Best from 2009 through 2017. 1,500 cases made.—J.M.

92 Pierre et Jérôme Coursodon St.-Joseph L'Olivaie 2005 \$43 Dark and modern in style, with mocha and espresso notes up front, yet this still shows plenty of the bright purple fruit and racy minerality of St.-Joseph on the back end. The long, supple finish really holds your interest. Drink now through 2012. 705 cases made.—J.M.

92 Alain Paret St.-Joseph 420 Nuits 2005 \$35 Really packed, with lots of dark fig and currant fruit, all layered with turkish coffee, incense, loam and graphite. Long, smoldering finish shows serious grip. Drink now through 2012. 200 cases imported.—J.M.

92 Les Vins de Vienne Côte-Rôtie Les Essartailles 2005 \$64 Well-built and sleek, with lavender, linzer torte, raspberry ganache, hoisin sauce and incense notes that race along prominent but seriously ripe, racy tannins. Best from 2009 through 2015. 1,000 cases made.—J.M.

92 Les Vins de Vienne Hermitage Les Chirats de St.-Christophe 2005 \$70 Racy and well-structured, with solid tannins guiding enticing raspberry and boysenberry fruit. The long finish shows flashes of licorice, graphite and incense. Has the grip of the vintage, and will need some time to flesh out fully. Best from 2009 through 2015. 165 cases made.—J.M.

90 A. Clape Cornas Renaissance 2004 \$63 Shows the typical Cornas profile of green olive, tobacco and pepper, along with a chalky intensity, all pushed by a nice core of red and black cherry fruit. Still a touch tight, this should age nicely in the near term. Best from 2008 through 2012. 500 cases made.—J.M.

90 Pierre et Jérôme Coursodon St.-Joseph Silice 2005 \$33 Spicy and exotic, with lots of cinnamon and mocha, but also very fresh, with stylish blueberry and blackberry fruit offset by a strong, mineral spine. Has nice length. Drink now through 2010. 2,665 cases made.—J.M.

90 Domaine de Seyssuel Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes Serinae 2005 \$60 Crisply textured, but well layered with boysenberry and blackberry fruit, as well as hints of incense, vanilla and tobacco. Fresh acidity drives the peppery finish. Intriguing wine. Drink now through 2009. 430 cases made.—J.M.

90 Les Vins de Vienne Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes Heluicum 2005 \$34 Delightful violet and cassis aromas give way to a racy palate filled with licorice, graphite, plum and game, with a tangy lavender- and pepper-tinged finish. Drink now through 2008. 1,200 cases made.—J.M.

89 Fayolle Fils et Fille Hermitage Les Dionnières 2005 \$75 A touch crisp for Hermitage, but with good black currant, fig and licorice notes. Solid, grippy finish. Best from 2009 through 2011. 25 cases imported.—J.M.

89 Marceline & David Reynaud Syrah Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes Domaine Les Bruyères 2006 \$15 Pure and stylish, with licorice, plum and sanguine notes that glide along fine-grained tannins, leaving an enticing feel on the finish. Drink now. 56 cases imported.—J.M.

87 Château de Montfaucon Côtes du Rhône Baron Louis 2004 \$16 Maturing, with hints of cinnamon and woodspice on the nose, giving way to a supple palate of fig cake, sweet toast and licorice. Drink now. 2,500 cases made.—J.M.

87 Château du Trignon Côtes du Rhône 2006 \$15 Fresh and primal, with grape and cherry fruit pushed by a layer of sweet toast. Good, fleshy finish. Drink now. 5,000 cases made.—J.M.

85 Domaine Lafond Côtes du Rhône Roc-Epine 2006 \$12 Forward and round, with ebullient grape and plum notes followed by a hint of mocha. Drink now.—J.M.

FRANCE

Southern Rhône / Other Red

92 Domaine de la Charbonnière Vacqueyras 2005 \$25 Plush and layered with exotic fig, raspberry and boysenberry fruit allied to creamy tannins and well-embedded acidity. Long and showy finish lets spice, fruitcake and floral notes ripple on. Impressive. Drink now through 2013. 550 cases imported.—J.M.

92 Tardieu-Laurent Gigondas Vieilles Vignes 2005 \$39 Ultramodern, with very suave mocha- and spice-filled toast leading the way for lush raspberry, boysenberry, licorice and graphite notes. The long finish lets the minerality blaze while still pumping out the fruit in spades. Drink now through 2013. 450 cases made.—J.M.

92 Tardieu-Laurent Vacqueyras Vieilles Vignes 2005 \$36 Really exotic, with fig, raspberry, Port reduction, mocha, cinnamon and melted licorice aromas and flavors rippling over creamy tannins. The superlong finish shows notes of sweet earth and fruit mingled together. This has to resolve itself a bit more before it fully hits its stride. Best from 2009 through 2013. 475 cases made.—J.M.

91 Château du Trignon Gigondas 2005 \$29 Enticing layers of Black Forest cake, black licorice, fig sauce and linzer torte are harnessed by solid acidity. Long finish has a solid tug of earth while letting the fruit shine. Drink now through 2012. 8,000 cases made.—J.M.

88 Paul Avril Vin de Table Français Le Petit Vin d'Avril NV \$12 Delightful, with elegant plum, violet and grilled herb notes running through the focused finish. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Carignane. Drink now.—J.M.

FRANCE

Northern Rhône / Red

93 Bernard Burgaud Côte-Rôtie 2005 \$71 Dark and tight, with a tangy iron note blocking off the dark cocoa, currant, fig and bacon notes for now. There's really juicy acidity buried in this, and the finish is dark and fleshy. A rock-solid, cellar-worthy wine. Best from 2009 through 2020. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 1,400 cases made.—J.M.

93 Pierre et Jérôme Coursodon St.-Joseph La Sensonne 2005 \$53 Exotic, with fig and boysenberry fruit layered with plenty of mocha. But this is also pure and driven, with racy acidity, fine-grained tannins and a long finish that smolders with minerality. Drink now through 2013. 330 cases made.—J.M.

93 Les Vins de Vienne Cornas Les Barcillants 2005 \$49 Shows the packed fruit and grippy profile of the vintage, with layers of currant, plum sauce, graphite, licorice and charcoal. As modern as Cornas gets, but stays true to its *terroir*, with flashes of iron and olive buried deep on the finish. Best from 2009 through 2015. 550 cases made.—J.M.

89 Gilles Robin Crozes-Hermitage Papillon 2006 \$29 This offers purple fruit and floral notes up front, with a prominent sanguine streak that guides the mineral finish. Drink now through 2009. 2,600 cases made.—J.M.

FRANCE

Northern Rhône / White

94 Les Vins de Vienne Condrieu La Chambée 2005 \$58 A lush, modern style, with alluring grilled almond and hazelnut aromas giving way to ripe fig, pear and melon flavors, all kept honest by lingering hints of acacia and lemon verbena. The very long finish delivers a great encore of anise and mineral. Drink now through 2010. 650 cases made.—J.M.

93 Les Vins de Vienne Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes White Taburnum 2005 \$55 Bold, with white peach, green fig, blanched almond and persimmon notes. The long, creamy finish really glides nicely, with buried minerality stretching it all out. Brings you back for more. Drink now through 2011. 500 cases made.—J.M.

91 Les Vins de Vienne St.-Joseph White L'Élouède 2005 \$34 Buttery up front, this offers more stone fruit and melon notes as it opens, with a long, creamy finish that shows a nice flash of minerality. Modern, with a very pure display of fruit. Drink now through 2009. 650 cases made.—J.M.

91 Les Vins de Vienne St.-Péray Les Bialères 2005 \$28 Has nice purity, with stone fruit and bracing mineral notes fronting for a richly textured palate of brioche and peach. The long, juicy finish lets a fresh, chalky hint play out. There's a good combination of fruit and mineral. Drink now through 2008. 650 cases made.—J.M.

90 Fayolle Fils et Fille Hermitage White Les Dionnières 2005 \$75 Solid concentration, with lots of anise, dried peach, almond and floral notes running along a well-structured palate. Nice lingering brioche hint on the finish. Drink now through 2011. 25 cases imported.—J.M.

90 Alain Paret Condrieu Lys de Valan 2006 \$55 Ripe and tropical up front, with creamed peach, melon and star fruit notes followed by hints of fennel and bitter almond that help define the lengthy, alluring finish. Drink now through 2009. 400 cases made.—J.M.