

WINE News

*There's a region for the season:
Rhône and French Regional.*



OCTOBER 28, 2019 FEATURES

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Vintage Triple Treat, Plus 2018, from Rhône and Beyond

By Keith Mabry

This year saw some real highs and lows in the production of France's wines — highs in quality but lows in yields. Looking at the past few vintages, 2015 still remains one of the resounding successes across almost every category in France. And, along with good yields, we saw consistently great wines. In 2016, the challenges faced in the Loire were some of the most extreme because of frost. But on the flip side, we saw one of the greatest vintages in the southern Rhône in two decades. In 2017, the Loire was hit again with frost, and in the south, there was a severe drought leading to lower yields across the board. Challenged but not defeated, our producers made very good but more limited

wines. And finally, 2018 saw a spectacular recovery in the Loire with a near-perfect vintage. But, this time in the south, the winds didn't blow and we saw disease pressure leading to limitations in crop yield. All of these vintages have one thing in common: our faith in all of our producers as they overcome the bad and excel in the good. Vintages are important, but we think our producers are always making wines that show their place and the winemaker's passion. In these pages you will only find the highs, showing our best and brightest finds from our team of enthusiasts who cover these categories. Please join us as we journey through the hinterlands of some of France's most exceptional regions.

2016 Domaine du Vieil Orme "Infini" Touraine Chenonceaux Blanc (\$15.99)

I dare any Sauvignon Blanc drinker not to immediately fall in love with this wine. From one of our favorite producers in Touraine, little sister of Sancerre, this has the richness and intensity of fruit of a top-tier Sancerre producer at twice the price. Notes of passion fruit, roasted grapefruit peel, fresh hay and a crystalline focus make this the most pleasurable SB I have had this year!



2016 Petroni Corse Rouge (\$13.99) I recently revisited this gem from Corsica and was extremely pleased! The wines of Corsica are gathering steam and the Petroni is one of the best values from the region. Niellucciu and Grenache dominate the blend, giving it an Italian feel with French focus. Red fruit, savory spices, and sweet tannins make it pure drinking pleasure. Where most of the region's wines come in north of \$30, this offers an incredible intro for half that price. **94 JD**



2017 Moulin de Gardette Tradition Gigondas (\$34.99) Halfway through the summer, I started fielding emails and phone calls asking, "When does the new Gardette get here?" Well, finally here it is! Another great vintage from our dear friend Jean-Baptiste Meunier yields one of his most sumptuous wines yet. With expansive floral and garrigue aromas surrounding the fleshy black and red fruit, this wine announces the terroir of Gigondas with authority.



Chenin, Limited: Loic Mahé of Savennières

By Keith Mabry

One of my favorite visits in the Loire was to the little village of Savennières, one of the smaller and more elite sub-appellations within Anjou. The soil is distinct and makes for some of the best Chenin Blancs produced anywhere. Vigneron Loic Mahé is a



Loic Mahé.

certified organic, practicing Biodynamic producer with vines planted on the two primary soils of Savennières: the classic schist (also called shale) of the region, and loess (a windblown sand), known locally as “sables.” The wines from the region often start a bit austere, but with just a few years of bottle age, they pick up weight and add intensity. Loic holds back the wines a couple of years before release, giving them the chance to build and develop.

The **2016 Loic Mahé “Sables & Schistes” Savennières (\$24.99)** is brought up in fiberglass tanks. Like a classic wine of Savennières, this has an almost nervous energy, and shows bright acidity, with flavors of Granny Smith apples, Korean pears, and candied ginger. As the wine opens, those ginger spices unfold, adding more minerality. This is a gorgeous and vibrant Chenin that is accessible now but should offer years of pleasure as it develops even more with some bottle age. **93 WS, 91 WE**

The **2015 Loic Mahé “Les Fougeraies” Savennières (\$34.99)** offers up more richness and body. From mostly the loess soils over schist, this has so much depth that it is reminiscent of Savennières master winemaker Nicolas Joly’s wines. No surprise, as Loic also follows those Biodynamic principles, and the Fougeraies parcel is just a few hundred meters from some of Joly’s plots. This is aged in large oak barrels, adding more spice dimensions of coriander, allspice, and turmeric to complement the intense apple fruit. **93 WE, 90 WS**

Loic is a producer on the rise, and these limited-production wines are potentially collectible.



Cabernet Franc in the Spotlight: La Source du Ruault

By Chris DePaoli

Cabernet Franc, the unheralded parent of Cabernet Sauvignon, is ready for its turn in the spotlight. And, arguably, no region in the world does Franc better than the Loire Valley. Earlier-ripening compared to its prolific offspring, Cabernet Franc’s softer tannins and herbal touch lend themselves wonderfully to younger drinking. Chinon and Bourgueil have staked claim to some of the best editions of the Loire’s standout red grape in the world, but the third biggest area, Saumur Champigny, is the most exciting place to be right now. Marrying the Loire’s Cabernet Franc heritage with the newfound fervor for Biodynamic practices and organic production that the region is becoming known for, the red wines of Saumur Champigny are fun and energetic, while keeping their classic structure and serious complexity.

La Source du Ruault, a small producer in the heart of the region, is a showcase of possibility. Their **2016 La Source du Ruault Saumur Champigny Rouge (\$16.99)** is bright, full of fresh red fruit and sage notes, and has classic crowd-pleasing potential with its clean, even finish and quiet, round tannins.



The brawnier **2014 La Source du Ruault “Clos de la Côte” Saumur Champigny Rouge (\$39.99)** offering is more serious. Begging to accompany a rich holiday meal, the wine’s opulent, Black Forest cake and herbal quality is softened by its years in the bottle. Even with plenty of good years ahead of it, this is a wine that is drinking extraordinarily well right now. Evoking the purity of the limestone and clay soils they were grown in, both wines benefit from careful organic and Biodynamic farming practices, and are easy to enjoy as the days get shorter and the air gets colder.



Jean-Noël Millon of La Source Ruault.

Sancerre Direct Imports: A Wine for Any Season

By Cameron Hoppas

Sancerre is surely *the* quintessential white wine of the Paris bistro. Effusive aromatics and zesty freshness make it an ideal aperitif, while its famous structure and complexity pair beautifully with classic bistro fare like moules-frites, or green salad with warm goat cheese.

Just two hours outside of Paris, Sancerre is the gateway to the Loire Valley. Sancerre is known for its limestone-rich terroir and its crisp and distinctly aromatic wines. We at K&L are privileged to direct import several small, boutique producers that escape the cosmopolitan bistro setting to tell the story of a bucolic French village. As Gary Westby shared in a recent blog post, Sancerre is a village of winegrowers who share a little piece of their beautiful home in each bottle. At the end of any given day, one can find them sharing an aperitif at the local watering hole over a regional sports match.

Aurore Dezat made the decision to transform her family's modest farm that's located on the limestone, flint, and pebble soils of the commune of Sury-en-Vaux, into a high-quality domaine focused on producing terroir-driven wines. Since 2011, she has made positive changes to the property, such as converting to organic practices. Dezat feels that farming organically and doing much of the work by hand, rather than with machines or chemicals, allows them to farm with more attention to quality and helps to foster a unique expression of place in their wines. The **2018 Aurore Dezat Sancerre (\$19.99)** is a wonderful example of both region and winemaking style. Crisp and refreshing, it's a classic Sancerre vinified and finished in tank. **90 DC**

The **2016 Aurore Dezat "Les Chasseignes" Sancerre (\$26.99)** refers to the small area in which the domaine is located. In addition to the minerality and aromatics of classic Sancerre, Les Chasseignes has a bit more spice, broader shoulders, and a little more depth and complexity. The **2018 Aurore Dezat Sancerre Rouge (\$19.99)** reflects a bright future for Loire Pinot Noir. It's an incredibly approachable wine with a soft and generous profile of bright red fruit.

Betty and Franck Millet took over their family domaine to become third-generation winegrowers in the commune of Bué. Together, at Domaine Franck Millet, they make expressive wines of exceptional quality focused on individual plots. Small vinifications allow them to bring out the site-specific characteristics of their wines. They produce Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir from Sancerre, Pouilly-Fumé, and Menetou-Salon AOCs. Their **2018 Franck Millet Sancerre Blanc (\$17.99)** is pure and expressive with just enough juicy acidity to get your mouth watering with a luscious, chalky finish. The **2017 Franck Millet "Insolite" Sancerre (\$26.99)** comes from the chalkiest site on the property. They utilize an extended cold soak, letting the juices macerate with the skins to gently extract phenolics



Franck Millet in Sancerre.

and enhance site expression. They then drain off only the free run juice for the wine. The result is a beautiful wine with a rich, luscious texture. Complex and approachable, it's an incredible value for such an exceptional reserve level cuvée. The **2018 Franck Millet Rouge (\$18.99)** is aged 50% in tank and 50% in barrel. It has earthy aromas of forest floor, mushroom and dark spice, with a core of dark fruit.

Located north of Franck Millet and south of Aurore Dezat is Domaine Cherrier Père et Fils, in the village of Verdigny. Their limestone and calcareous-clay soils have a major impact on the distinct aromas typical of a classic Sancerre. Founded in 1930, the estate is now run by its fourth generation of winegrowers. The **2018 Domaine Cherrier Père & Fils Sancerre (\$17.99)** is vinified entirely in stainless steel tanks to preserve the delicate floral aromas that waft over the dense, chalky texture, and the citrus flavor on the palate. It's a wine that our Loire buyer himself calls, "One of the biggest crowd-pleasing Sauvignon Blancs from anywhere in the world."

While we move into the fall season, away from the heat of summer and toward indoor celebratory gatherings, don't forget about Sancerre. Whether you want to take advantage of a warm fall evening, or share a delicious bottle at a big family gathering, these boutique wines are equally well suited to fall evenings and the upcoming holidays.





The Southern Rhône Is Not Just Châteauneuf!

By Keith Mabry

Châteauneuf-du-Pape may be the most famous growing region in the Rhône Valley, but there are so many other established sub-regions within the southern Rhône. Many of these are known as *Villages* or *Crus*. What's the difference between a Village versus a Cru, you might ask? Well, a Côtes du Rhône-Villages will often carry the name of its most famous nearby village (but it doesn't have to!) if the terroir and vineyards are exceptional. And after many years of established production, sometimes those villages are elevated to Cru status. Recently, Cairanne was brought up to Cru status. Other inductees include Rasteau, Vacqueyras, and Gigondas. Here are some of our favorite Rhônes—not Châteauneufs—that, regardless of Cru or Villages status, make for some of the best drinking in the store.

2017 Clos Bellane Côtes du Rhône-Villages Valréas (\$16.99) Proprietor Stéphane Vedeau is behind the great La Ferme du Mont wines, but his home property is in Valréas, the northern part of the southern Rhône. This Village appellation has high, sloping hillsides and is usually a few degrees cooler on average, making for brighter and crunchier-fruited reds. Vedeau's practices are low intervention and his vineyards are certified organic. This red-fruited beauty is one of the purest expressions from the region. **90-92 JD**

2016 Château de Montfaucon Lirac (\$15.99) Our dear friend Rodolphe de Pins makes some of our favorite Rhônes year in and year out. A recent addition to his portfolio of hits, this Lirac is loaded with blackberry fruit, and has notes of saffras and nutmeg. Lirac always has a sub-earthly note that gives the wine a bit more structure and complexity than other villages, validating its Cru status, which was bestowed some 75 years ago. **91 RP, 90 DC**

2017 Domaine de la Ganse Vacqueyras (\$19.99) Coralie Onde is a one-woman show making sublime and elegant Vacqueyras. Vacqueyras was elevated to Cru status back in 1990. Coralie's vineyards are situated on top of a plateau made up of little pebbles over chalky limestone and surrounded by garrigue (the local forest). Her Vacqueyras always shows more classic black fruit, with notes



of thyme and fennel in the background of its brambly, saturated profile. This always shows best its great texture and weight after a year or two of bottle age (which it now has!) and continues to drink beautifully for years more. Also certified organic! **91 JD**

2017 Domaine de Fondrèche "Persia" Ventoux Rouge (\$24.99) Fondrèche is one of the top three producers in Ventoux and makes some of the sexiest, silkiest wines in the foothills under Mont Ventoux (pictured, above). Based on Syrah, this wine delivers deep fruit, sweet tannins. It represents the best this region has to offer. **94 JD, 91-94 RP**



Southern Rhône: The Hits Just Keep on Coming!

By Alex Pross

There are several wine regions in the world currently vying for the title of world's greatest wine value, but at the end of the day, I truly believe that region is the southern Rhône. The wines, primarily blends of Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre, are fantastic drinkers in their youth, over-deliver on complexity and flavor, and often can be had for as little as \$12 a bottle. And wines in the \$20-\$30 range deliver an outstanding, connoisseur-level experience that few, if any, other regions can consistently deliver. Below are a handful of the best examples of the southern Rhône, giving you an amazing experience for as little money as possible.

If you want an early window into what the 2018 vintage is looking like in the Rhône Valley, the **2018 Bonpas "Dames de Bonpas" Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages Plan de Dieu (\$12.99)** is a great bellwether—and a great beauty! Gorgeous red fruits are integrated with spice and garrigue



notes. As the wine sat in my glass, further complexity was revealed, as well as a greater depth to the pretty fruit and sassy spice notes. This is a winner and a steal at only \$12.99. **95 DC**

As far as values go, the **2017 Château Pesquié “Terrasses” Ventoux (\$12.99)** is one of the best.

With great structure, a fabulous harmony of fruit, tannins, acidity, and spice, this wonderfully balanced wine is a winner and a case-worthy option. **94 JD, 91-93 RP**

Not far behind (and a tad more rich and robust) comes the **2015 Domaine de la Janasse Côtes-du-Rhône Reserve (\$15.99)** which hails from a hotter, drier vintage than either 2016 or 2017. The fruit here is of the black and blue variety, with intense berry fruit flavors and pronounced spice notes. If you're looking for a full-throttle red that still has balance and is nimble on its feet, this is your wine. **92 JD**



The last of our quartet under \$20, the **2016 Domaine Grand Veneur “Champauvins” Côtes-du-Rhône-Villages (\$19.99)** is drinking deliciously right now. Packed with lush berry fruit, spice and mocha-laced tannins, this sexy wine is made for a burger or short ribs as well as any dish screaming for a rich red table wine. **94 JD, 92 RP**

One of the hidden gems of the Rhône is Coudoulet de Beaucastel—this is basically baby Château Beaucastel for a third of the price. The **2017 Coudoulet de Beaucastel Côtes du Rhône (\$24.99)** is the natural choice for the budding Rhône enthusiast. It's a great entry wine for the wine lover who's ready to move on from Côtes-du-Rhône and into the fun and rewarding world of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Beaucastel is one of the Rhône's greatest producers, and their quality is so high, that their Côtes-du-Rhône can rival many other producers' Châteauneuf. **92 JS, 91 JD, 90-92 RP**

If you'd like to start down the Châteauneuf-du-Pape path, I suggest starting out with a few bottles of these!



Vivid, Bold, from Rhône and Beyond: Xavier Vignon

By John Majeski

Born in Picardy in northern France from fairly humble origins (his father was a guild stone mason, his mother an agriculturalist), Xavier Vignon acquired a strong work ethic and a rigorous, scientific-minded discipline that would carry through into his multifaceted career in wine. Opting for no half-measures, Vignon has dedicated his life, passionate intellect, and tireless energy to understanding the venerable history and terroirs behind the greatest wines of the Rhône and beyond.

A consultant for more than thirty harvests in over two hundred wineries, from Australia to his native land, Vignon only recently started crafting wines under his own name. We're extremely fortunate to share them as direct imports with our customers.

The second time around can be even more exhilarating, as in the latest version of the **Xavier Vignon “SM” Côtes du Rhône (\$24.99)**, an iconoclastic blending of the superb 2015 and 2016 vintages. A brilliant rhapsody between northern Rhône Syrah, with its peppermill, olive, and roasted black plum aromatics, and hearty Grenache from the southern Rhône, with its capricious dark cherry and spicy notes, this wine generates a rondo of rich, bold flavors that envelops the palate and rewards the senses. **94 JD, 93 RP**



Fall back a year to taste the **2015 Xavier Vignon Lirac (\$16.99)**. Showcasing another fine Rhône vintage, in a blend dominated by 80% Syrah, with the rest Grenache, this wine is a luscious cavalcade of plummy ripe fruits ballasted by garrigue, black olive, and peppery notes that reveal the finesse and seductive richness inherent in all of Vignon's wines. A textbook Lirac, this displays balance, power, and charm.

More ennobling but nameless, the **2016 Xavier Vignon “Cuvée Anonyme” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$49.99)** boldly goes where no wine... sorry, I'll start over. As mentioned, Xavier Vignon has, over several decades, advised and built formidable relations with some of the finest names in the southern Rhône. This provocative wine is a superb expression of what can be achieved with creative barrel treatments, deep knowledge of terroir, and magisterial blending. Aromas of violets, plums, and blueberries followed by a lavish crush of dark fruits, kirsch, and exotic spices flood the palate, with silky tannins entwined throughout the bravura finish. Drink up! **95 JD, 95 RP, 92 JS**



Domaine Begude: Here's Looking at Limoux!

By Lauren Seward

Perched amid the picturesque foothills of the Pyrénées mountains in Limoux, **Domaine Begude** is a leading force among Languedoc's organic wine producers. Three sides of the appellation provide the viticultural region protection from harsh ocean influences. As a result, a nearly Mediterranean climate creates ideal growing conditions for cool climate varieties like Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

The domaine is committed to practicing certified organic farming and winegrowing techniques, and these thoughtful efforts can be tasted in their distinguished, low-yield wines. Their newest offerings (a Pinot Noir, and the Terroir 11300 and Bel Ange Chardonnays) exhibit Domaine Begude's respect for the land and mission to make terroir-driven wines.

A zesty, crisp Chardonnay that speaks to the clay-limestone the grapes are grown in, the **2018 Domaine Begude "Terroir 11300" Chardonnay Haute Vallée de l'Aude (\$12.99)** is a quick go-to table white for many K&L staff members. Grapes for this pleasing wine undergo immediate pressing, and are 85% cool-fermented and 15% oak barrel aged. A citrus base prepares the palate for delicate fruit notes like apple and pear, while an elegant structure and minerality round out the wine. Enjoy this bottle now with a cheese plate or light fare, or hold off for a year.

If the Terroir 11300 is a yin sort of wine, the **2018 Domaine Begude Chardonnay "Le Bel Ange" (\$11.99)** is its yang. It's not that the wines are opposites of each other—each one offers something that the other does not. Nonetheless, both are equally high quality and terroir-driven. At 85% Chardonnay and 15% Chenin Blanc, the Bel Ange lives up to its name: "beautiful angel." Brought up all in stainless steel, the Bel Ange is the vibrant "yin" to the Terroir's fuller tones of "yang." It boasts a similar fruit profile to the Terroir 11300, but offers a fruitier tone and crisper, more expressive finish.

The **2018 Domaine Begude Pinot Noir (\$12.99)** is an extreme steal. The bottle emanates a natural wine earthy tone at first, but don't let that scare you. Just let it burn off for an hour, and an expressive bouquet of red fruit notes makes its debut. The wine is quite the fruit bomb and will do fabulously at the Thanksgiving table when partnered with fatty poultry like turkey or duck.



Jean-Louis Denois: Pétillant Frenzy in Limoux

By Keith Mabry

Jean-Louis Denois, aka the Troublemaker of Limoux, has always been a producer that has marched to the beat of his own drum.

Focusing on organics and low-intervention winemaking, and known primarily for his sparkling wines (though he does make some super cool reds and whites), he has often flouted the rules of the Limoux appellation. We have a whole slew of fun new bubbles from him.

A prime example is one of our most beloved and best-selling sparkling wines, the **Jean-Louis Denois "Tradition" Extra Brut Reserve (\$17.99)**. For

years, this has been a blend of 50% Chardonnay and 50% Pinot Noir aged for at least three years on the lees before release. This blend was not allowed to bear the appellation of Cremant de Limoux because it had too much Pinot Noir in the cuvée, even



Unassuming troublemaker: Jean-Louis Denois.

though his Tradition is one of the most revered sparkling wines in the region!

As a "troublemaker," though, leave it to Jean-Louis to make a wine in the style of the Blanquette de Limoux appellation, making a bone-dry style as a *pétillant naturel*.

You must try his **Jean-Louis Denois "Vieille Lune de Mars" Blanquette de Limoux Pétillant Naturel Brut Nature Sans Soufre (\$14.99)**. It is made in the *méthode ancestrale* style, where fermentation is stopped during the winemaking phase (usually by lowering the temperature) and then bottled, where it finishes its fermentation. This is the classic pét-nat style made from the local Mauzac grape variety, and Jean-Louis also does it without any added sulfites! He believes the carbon dioxide acts as a natural barrier from oxidation. After having tried several of his *sans soufre* (without sulfites) cuvées, I wholeheartedly agree.



Checking in with the Wine Girls

By Keith Mabry

Four of our favorite southern French producers are part of the Vinifilles (Wine Girls), a group of women winemakers based in



Françoise Antech.

Languedoc-Roussillon.

We were introduced to them through our association with Maison Antech (one of our other beloved Limoux producers). Wine director and proprietress Françoise Antech-Gazeau leads this group of sustainable and organic producers as they work toward expanding and introducing all the sub-appellations of the south.

We just received a new batch of Françoise's new **2017 Antech "Cuvée Eugénie" Crémant de Limoux (\$13.99)**. Made from a mix of Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Mauzac, and Pinot Noir, there is no better staple in our portfolio of sparkling wines of the world. Aged for a year or more *sur lie* (on the lees), it is fresh and vibrant with light toasty notes and bright apple and pear fruit. It makes a fine aperitif for everyday drinking. Even more fun are some magnums from 2016. The **2016 Antech "Cuvée Eugénie" Crémant de Limoux (1.5L \$29.99)** has two years of bottle age *sur lie*, which adds to the overall complexity of the wine. Also, where else are you going to find a large format bottle of bubbles at this price that just screams party! It is a terrific buy.



Also recently arrived are the new releases from Domaine de la Réserve d'O. Marie Chauffray is in the Terrasses du Larzac appellation, not far from the city of Montpellier. Her high-elevation, limestone-based soils produce some of our best Syrah-Grenache blends from anywhere in the world. Demeter certified Biodynamic, Marie, with her husband, Fred, work to express the beauty of their terroir. The most classic reflection is the **2017 Domaine de la Réserve d'O "La Réserve d'O" Terrasses du Larzac (\$24.99)**. It is a blend of Syrah and Grenache with a little bit of old vine Cinsault thrown in for good measure. With minimal intervention, this wine has a gorgeous



Marie Chauffray.

bouquet of lavender, red and black fruits, and fresh tilled soil. It sits on the spectrum of where Côte-Rôtie meets Gevrey-Chambertin in its expression and elegance. This is another stunning release from one of our best and brightest direct imports. **91 RP**

In the appellation of Corbières resides Sophie Guiraudon, the winemaker for Clos de l'Anhel. Her **2017 Clos de l'Anhel "Lolo de l'Anhel" Corbières (\$13.99)** just landed, and it represents the best that Carignane can bring to the table when used as the primary grape. The Lolo is the daily drinker you didn't know you needed until you finally have it. Though Corbières is a warm growing region, Sophie's vineyards are in the coolest area. Old vine Cinsault, with splashes of Grenache and a little bit of Mourvèdre and Syrah for good measure, make this a fine, fruit-forward style with plenty of light floral complexity to bring its more complex nuances forward.



Séverine Bourrier of Château de L'Ou.

And in Roussillon lies Séverine Bourrier's property, Château de L'Ou. Most of Séverine's vineyards are near the village of Maury, which is famous for its various schist soils.

The wine that launched Séverine in our portfolio was her Syrah-based cuvée. The **2016 Secret de Schiste (\$29.99)** is another

defining wine. Made from 100% Syrah from a single parcel and farmed organically, this is an Hermitage in Roussillon clothing. Deeply rich and satisfying, this wine continues to evolve and develop. Her wines have often been compared to those of Manfred Krankl of Sine Qua Non, but at a fraction of the price. You have to try the wines and taste them, so you know what we instantly saw and fell in love with. **95 JD**



Northern Rhône and Châteauneuf—Pre-Arrival

By Keith Mabry and Alex Pross

The 2017 vintage makes a “hat trick” of great vintages in both the northern and southern Rhônes. Here is a list of some of our favorite pre-arrivals from this soon-to-be fabled vintage. These wines are sold as pre-arrival.

Ferraton Père et Fils

Michel Chapoutier saw the potential of this property and became a partner, and eventually owner of this Northern Rhône estate, based in Tain l'Hermitage. Each the year, the quality surpasses the previous.

2017 Ferraton Père et Fils “Lieu Dit Les Picheres” Crozes-Hermitage (\$31.99) 92-93 VN, 90 JS

2017 Ferraton Père et Fils “Lieu Dit Paradis” Saint-Joseph (\$45.99) 93-95 JD, 93-94 VN, 92-94 RP, 93 JS

2017 Ferraton Père et Fils “Lieu Dit Saint-Joseph” Saint-Joseph (\$59.99) 93-95 JD, 93-94 VN, 92-94 RP

2017 Ferraton Père et Fils “Le Meal” Ermitage (\$129.99) 97 DC, 95-97 JD, 94-95 VN, 93-95 RP

2017 Ferraton Père et Fils “Les Miaux” Hermitage Rouge (\$79.99) 93-95 JD, 93-94 VN, 91-93 RP

2017 CdP—Three in a Row!

In a vacuum, 2017 is a very good vintage in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. The only problem is that it comes on the heels of two amazing vintages in 2015 and 2016. You would be remiss to pass on this bevy of great wines, several of which are equal in quality to the previous vintages, with many at lower prices. Châteauneuf-du-Pape is the one region in the world where you can consistently acquire the top producers below \$100 or even \$50 a bottle. Compare that to Napa Valley, Bordeaux, Burgundy, and the like, and it is easy to see why you should be buying more Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Prices are listed as pre-arrival.

2017 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Pre-Arrivals

2017 Pierre Usseglio “Tradition” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$32.99) 93 JD, 92 JS, 91 RP

2017 Le Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$39.99) 95 JD, 95 RP

2017 Domaine de la Janasse “Tradition” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$44.99) 93 JD, 92 JS, 91 RP

2017 Bosquet des Papes “A la Gloire de Mon Grand Père” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$49.99) 95 JD, 94 RP

2017 Domaine Giraud “Tradition” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$49.99) 93 JD, 93 RP, 93 WS

2017 Domaine de Marcoux Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$54.99) 93 JD, 93 RP

2017 Château de Beaucastel Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$69.99) 95 JD, 95 DC, 93-95 RP

2017 Château de Vaudieu “Val de Dieu” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$69.99) 95 JD, 95 WS, 93 RP

2017 Domaine de la Janasse “Chapin” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$69.99) 97 JD, 94 DC, 94 RP, 93 WS, 93 JS

2017 Domaine Pierre Usseglio “Cuvée Mon Aïeul” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$69.99) 97 JD, 94 RP, 93 JS

2017 M. Chapoutier “Croix de Bois” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$69.99) 96 JD, 94 RP, 93 JS, 91 DC

2017 Domaine de la Vieille Julienne “Les Trois Sources” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$79.99) 97 JD, 93 DC

2017 Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe “La Crau” Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$79.99) 96 JS, 95 JD, 92-94 RP

2017 Domaine de la Janasse Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes (\$89.99) 98 JD, 97 RP, 95 DC, 94 JS, 94 WS

2017 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape (\$99.99) 98 JD, 96 DC, 96 RP

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