



Le DrUnK roOster

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Recently, a gent in the industry asked me what the appropriate time to drink Rhone wines was. My response was anytime! Thanks to the great value coming from the Southern Rhone, these are full bodied wines that are quite affordable to drink every night of the week without breaking the bank. Try Chateaumar, (\$11-15), which is like chocolate covered cherries in a glass, with a big juicy steak. Fabulous food and wine pairing for a Saturday night!

-Madame Bourgeois



Special Southern Rhone Values Issue

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Domaine de la Berthet

The domain was created in 1950 and has been owned since 1993 by Pascal Maillet and his family. Soon after graduation, Pascal, who majored in computer science, decided to settle in at the domain and produce his own wine. He has since then planted new vines, Syrah, amongst others, and invested in brand new equipment for the cellar in order to improve the vinification process.

The domain yields about 200,000 bottles that cover three AOC areas: Côtes du Rhône Villages (Red and White), Côtes du Rhône (Red and Rosé) and Vin de Pays de la Principauté d'Orange (Red et Rosé). It contains traditional varieties averaging 32 years of age, such as Grenache, Syrah, Carignan, and Cinsault for the reds, and Grenache Blanc and Bourboulenc for the whites. Harvesting is done by hand. The vinification process is traditional and the wine is kept in vats for periods of one to two weeks at controlled temperatures. Bottling is done at the domain.

Since the domain mostly contains older vines growing on a calcareous clay soil, it yields wines that, although highly fruity and aromatic, have a strong and tannic backbone.

This estate practices Sustainable Farming. Winemaker: Pascal Maillet

Sensation is a custom cuvee!



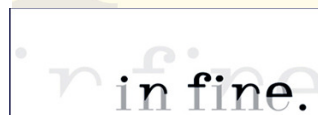
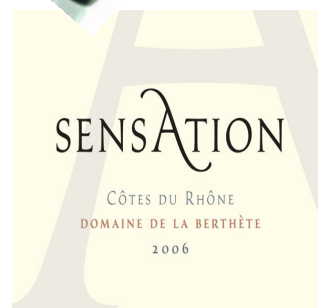
In Fine

In the Land of Winds, producers passionate about their soil have « grown, harvested and made wine from beautiful grapes for you ». In Fine (to conclude, in Latin) brings an evening to a close as nicely as it starts them! A dense, fresh and spicy wine.

This estate practices Sustainable Farming. Winemaker: Raphael Trouillet.



Stephanie, Raphael, and Philippe in the In Fine Vineyard.



“Aupaysduventoux, ausuddelafrance, des vigneronspassionnés parleurterroiront cueilli, vinifié, élevé, assemblépourvous de beauxgrains de raisins. Partagezleur passionendégustant cevindeplaisir.”



Domaine de Chateaumar

For many generations the vines at Domaine de Chateaumar have been cultivated by father and son. Today it is Jean-Felix and Frederic Souret who manage the vineyard, always maintaining the greatest respect for nature : vineyards run for generations without any chemical weed-killers.

The family estate is located some 9 km from Orange, on the D72 departmental road, in the heart of the production area for AOC Cotes du Rhone.

The vineyards of the estate include:

- 25 acres of AOC Cotes du Rhone, on stony clay-limestone soil.
- 12 acres AOC Chateauneuf du Pape. The soil of this prestigious appellation being red clay and large round cobbles.

Wine varieties

The vineyard is naturally established from several noble varieties, principally Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre.

Farming

Absolutely no herbicide is used here. The soil is turned several times during the year – providing aeration and suppleness – this allows the vine stocks to draw a wonderful energy from deep down to create beautifully formed grapes.

Harvest – grape picking

Once fully matured the grapes are hand-picked; selected and sorted with great care.

Traditional vinification

The vinification is carried out in our “wine-house” over more than 15 days. The grapes give us powerful wine with pepper and spice highlights, and the aroma of ripe red fruits.

Aging

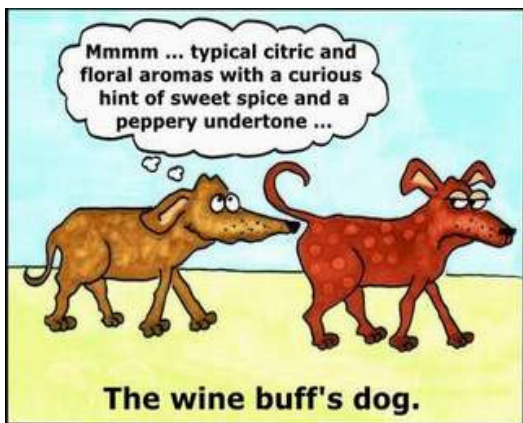
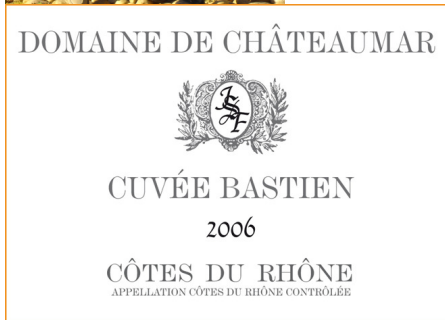
The wines are stored with great care. They are aged over 12 to 18 months before bottling at the Domaine.

Sustainable Farming Estate
Winemaker: Frédéric Souret

Bastien is a custom cuvee.



Frederic with baby-Bastien the famous custom cuvee was named after.



WARNING: Consumption of alcohol may cause an influx in the time-space continuum, whereby small (and sometimes large) gaps of time may seem to literally disappear.

Did you know?

There are more than 700 chemical compounds in wine which have been identified and named. Probably a couple of hundred contribute significantly to flavor, making wine potentially one of our most complex foods.

Grapes and wine share flavor compounds with various herbs, spices, vegetables, other fruits and organize things. This is why tasters use words such as "peach", "vanilla" and "capsicum" to describe them.

Rooster Fun



The Rooster's favorite song?

Purple

Haze of course!

WARNING: Consumption of alcohol may make you think you are whispering when you are not.

Visit France: The Southern Rhone

Bordeaux, which may very well be France's most prestigious wine region and the largest producer of AOC wines (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée, is the government's guarantee of quality verifying the origin of a wine) doesn't have nearly the same widespread appeal as the Rhone, France's second largest AOC region. The 125-mile Rhone Valley wine region, which follows the Rhone River from the lesser known city of Vienne to just below Avignon, famous for having been the Pope's Summer residence in centuries past, is actually two distinct regions, the North and South. The South, which is the focus of this column, is much larger and produces about 90 percent of the wine in the entire Rhone.

AOCs

The Cote du Rhone AOC, which originated around 1737 when the king ordered that casks of wine shipped from the nearby river port of Roquemaure should be branded with the letters CDR to introduce a system of protecting its origin. Additional Southern Rhone AOCs include household names like Cotes du Rhone, Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Lirac, Tavel, and, last but not least, Chateauneuf du Pape.

Northern Rhone v. Southern Rhone Wines

Aside from the soil, the size of the AOCs (the latter being much larger in the south), wines from the two areas differ in the varietals used to make them. Syrah dominates the North, while the South incorporates a more varied selection of grapes such as Grenache, Cinsault, Mourvedre, and, of course, Syrah for the reds. The whites must contain a minimum blend of 80% Clairette, Grenache Blanc, Mar-

sanne, Roussanne, Bourboulenc, and Viognier.

Things to do when visiting Southern Rhone

No visit to the Southern Rhone area would be complete without a visit of the towns of Avignon, and Orange, which are both famous for their rich



Avignon's Palais des Papes

architecture.

Avignon

The city, on the left bank of the Rhône river, a few miles above its confluence with the Durance, is well known for its *Palais des Papes* (Palace of the Popes), where several official and unofficial popes lived



The Roman Theater in Orange

from the early 14th to early 15th centuries.

Orange

The town, renowned for its Roman architecture and its Roman theatre,



is described as the most impressive in Europe, and perhaps in the Roman Empire as a whole. The fine Triumphal Arch of Orange is often said to date from the time of Augustus or Tiberius, but is probably much later, perhaps Severan.

Famous Landscapes

Mont Ventoux (Occitan: *Ventor* in classical norm or *Ventour* in Mistralian norm) is a mountain in the Provence region of southern France, located some 20 km north-east of Carpentras in the Vaucluse. It is the largest mountain in the region and has been nicknamed the "Giant of Provence", or "The Bald Mountain".

As the name might suggest (*ventoux* means windy in French), it can get windy at the summit, especially with the *mistral*; windspeeds as



The famous "Dentelles de Montmirail"

high as 320 km/h (193 mph) have been recorded. The road over the mountain is often closed due to high winds. The real origins of the name are thought to trace back to the 1st or 2nd century AD, when it was

further down for more on these peaks). The top of the mountain is bare limestone without vegetation or trees. The white limestone on the mountain's barren peak means it appears from a distance to be snow-capped all year round (its snow cover actually lasts from December to April). Its isolated position overlooking the valley of the Rhône ensures that it dominates the entire region and can be seen from many miles away on a clear day. The view from the top is correspondingly superb.

Dentelles de Montmirail

The Dentelles, lace in French, are grouped in some parallel chains of limestone peaks and pinnacles. It's a paradise for rock climbing with a lot of well bolted routes and some adventure areas



A panoramic view of Mont Ventoux from the top.

too.

named 'Vintur' after a Gaulish god of the summits, or 'Ven-Top', meaning "snowy peak" in the ancient Gallic language. In the 10th century, the names *Mons Ventosus* and *Mons Ventorius* appear.

Mont Ventoux, which is actually part of the Alps is often believed to be separate from them because it stands alone to the west of the Luberon range, just to the east of the Dentelles de Montmirail (see

Bourgeois Family Selections represents other properties in more classical appellations from the Southern Rhone region. These will be covered in an upcoming issue of Le Drunk Rooster. The wines in question are:

Domaine des Florets, Gigondas,

Domaine Jerome Gradassi, Chateauneuf du Pape

Domaine de Cascavel, Cotes du Ventoux.



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