

# The Beautiful South

## Languedoc - Roussillon



STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

# The Beautiful South - Languedoc-Roussillon

This year we lead with three pages of Vin de Pays - and please don't pass over these, as under this catch-all name you can find some splendid wines offered at very fair prices. As the best, forward-looking estates improve both viticultural techniques and winemaking, there's more quality and diversity available in this category than ever before. We set out to source more Vin de Pays across the whole region on our recent buying trip, and look at what we have uncovered – not just the expected grape varieties (such as the three Carignans and two Viogniers), but lush Cinsault, classic Cabernet Franc, a refined Syrah and even a charmingly delicate Pinot Noir.

There's also two new estates this year: Yves Falmet at Terres Falmet, a first generation vigneron crafting smoothly rich Vin de Pays and Saint Chinian; and James Kinglake, English expatriate, whose Domaine Begude in Limoux is, after just a few vintages, already regarded by the locals as one of the "motors" of the appellation.

Finally, do remember that spring is upon us – and you will soon be sitting in sunshine outdoors again. To celebrate that occasion you should be looking at the four rosés in the list: we introduce the intriguingly flavoured Faugères rosé from Domaine du Météore.

Simon Taylor  
March 2010

*Please note: we will be holding tastings of a selection of wines in this list, with the support of the Maison de la Région Languedoc-Roussillon, as follows:*

**Hampshire: Saturday 17th April, 9.30am-4.00pm**  
Our shop in Twyford

**London: Thursday 22nd April, 6.00-8.30 pm**  
Maison de la Région Languedoc-Roussillon,  
6 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0PD



Notification will be sent to those living in Hampshire and in London, but do apply to us if you would like to attend either tasting.

## Mixed Cases

### BS110 The Beautiful South

4 whites, 1 rosé and 7 reds) £86.50

Here is your chance to taste one bottle of each of the twelve wines listed below, making up a sampler case discounted by over 10%. This will introduce you to some of our favourites, and encourage you to come back and buy more of them.

- 2009 Croix Belle, Caringole Blanc, Côtes de Thongue, IGP (p.4)
- 2009 Preignes Le Vieux, Tradition, Viognier, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.4)
- 2008 Creyssels, Picpoul de Pinet (p. 6)
- 2009 Grand Arc, Corbières Blanc, Veillée d'Equinoxe (p.12)
- 2009 Grand Arc, Corbières Rosé, La Tour Fabienne (p.12)
- 2008 Terres Falmet, Cinsault, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)
- 2009 La Croix Belle, Syrah, Côtes de Thongue, IGP (p.5)
- 2008 Mas des Brousses, Chasseur des Brousses, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)
- 2008 Le Clos du Serres, Languedoc, Le Clos (p.8)
- 2007 Météore, Faugères Rouge, Les Léonides (p.9)
- 2009 La Grave, Minervois Rouge, Tristan et Julien (p.11)
- 2007 Fontanel, Côtes de Roussillon Rouge (p.14)

**The following mixed cases include two bottles of each of the six wines listed, with a discount of at least 7%.**

### BS210 Country Case

(3 whites and 3 reds) £71.50

- 2008 Croix des Vents, Chardonnay, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.4)
- 2009 Preignes Le Vieux, Reserve Blanc, VdP Coteaux du Libron (p.4)
- 2009 Croix Belle, Caringole Blanc, Côtes de Thongue, IGP (p.4)
- 2008 Vic, Mas de Canal Rouge, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.4)
- 2008 Les Vignerons Réunis, Carignan, Vin de Pays d'Hérault (p.4)
- 2008 Terres Falmet, Cinsault, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)

### BS310 Med Reds

(6 reds) £88.00

- 2009 La Croix Belle, Syrah, Côtes de Thongue, IGP (p.5)
- 2009 Preignes, Grains de Cabernet Franc, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)
- 2008 Terres Falmet, Carignan, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)
- 2008 Mas des Brousses, Chasseur des Brousses, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.5)
- 2007 Météore, Faugères, Les Léonides (p.9)
- 2009 La Grave, Minervois, Tristan et Julien (p.11)

### BS410 Mountain Terroirs

(Three Whites, Three Reds) £115.00

- 2008 Terres Falmet, Viognier, Vin de Pays d'Oc (p.4)
- 2007 Belles Pierres, Coteaux du Languedoc, Les Clauzes de Jo Blanc (p.6)
- 2007 Grand Arc, Corbières Blanc, Veillée d'Equinoxe (p.12)
- 2007 Saint Daumary, Pic Saint-Loup, Troisième Mi-Temps (p.7)
- 2006 Terres Falmet, Saint-Chinian, L'lvresse des Cîmes (p.10)
- 2009 Begude, Pinot Noir, Haute Vallée de l'Aude, IGP (p.13)

### BS510 Great Red 07s from the South

(Six reds) £152.00

- 2007 Belles Pierres, St. George d'Orques, Les Clauzes de Jo (p.6)
- 2007 Saint-Daumary, Pic Saint-Loup, Asphodèle (p.7)
- 2007 Clos du Serres, Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, La Blaca (p.8)
- 2007 Mas des Brousses, Coteaux du Languedoc (p.8)
- 2007 Thierry Navarre, Saint-Chinian, L'Olivier (p.10)
- 2007 Fontanel, Côtes de Roussillon Villages, Tautavel, Le Prieuré (p.14)

# Vins de Pays

Amidst all the difficulties experienced by winemakers in France over the last decade – competition from the New World, continuing over-production, falling domestic consumption (due to a combination of the young moving to beer, shorter lunches and tough drink-driving laws), weird weather, etc. - the success of Vin de Pays from the south of France has stood out as a shining light. These modern style wines, bursting with fruit and offered at modest prices, seemed France's answer to the New World.

Key to success was the freedom permitted by the Vin de Pays system, introduced in 1973. *Vignerons* were allowed to choose the grape varieties they wished to grow, and more importantly they could name their wines by grape, gaining the ability to go head to head against wines from the New World. There are now over 50 Vins de Pays in the Languedoc alone, ranging from the generic Vin de Pays d'Oc from the Languedoc-Roussillon to the very specific – some of which are very obscure.

The French authorities have made it very difficult to get to grips with this system, by permitting growers to name their wines in any one of three ways: Vin de Pays d'Oc, for a wine from anywhere in a huge region; or Vin de Pays of your local department; or a very narrowly defined local Vin de Pays. So the Chasseur des Brousses, listed on page 5, from near Puechabon, could be labelled either Vin de Pays d'Oc or Vin de Pays de l'Hérault, or Vin de Pays de Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert. Confused? That's nothing. This is all in the process of changing. Vin de Pays as a name is to be replaced by Indication Géographique Protégée, so Vin de Pays d'Oc is now to be known and labelled as Pays d'Oc, Indication Géographique Protégée! Forgive us if you find the name on a label is subtly different to the naming in this list – all our growers are in the process of updating their labels, so they may change during the year.

We offer Vin de Pays (or IGP!) in a number of guises and from a variety of sources. Whilst appellation wines tend to be blends of approved local grape varieties, Vin de Pays are often pure single varietals, from Viognier and Chardonnay to Merlot, Syrah, Cinsaut, Carignan and even Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Secondly, they can be blends which include non-local varieties – such as the Merlot in the Chasseur des Brousses, or the Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay in the Caringole Blanc from La Croix Belle.

As for quality, Vin de Pays can range from simple and unpretentious, such as the Mas de Canal wines from the Vic family below, via really well-made wines from good land crafted by estates specialising in their production, devoting as much care and attention to their wines as any appellation wine - those from Croix Belle come into this category; thirdly, there are splendid Vin de Pays made by top growers alongside their appellation wines. Later in the spring we will ship such a wine from Domaine Fontanel.

## Our producers:

### Domaines Vic, Preignes Le Vieux

We benchmarked the wines from the Vic family - Jérôme, Robert, Bruno, brothers, cousins etc – at the big southern French wine fair at Vinisud last month - and they came out really well. The extended Vic family is a very large landowner in the Languedoc, giving total control over the vineyards (unlike a large co-operative). Their main cellar at Preignes near Beziers is a fortified hamlet, ranged round an enormous courtyard. Yet it is still very much a family-owned estate, and every wine comes with some variant of the Vic or Preignes name on the label, although the vineyards are quite far-flung around Beziers.

### Alain Grignon Wines

Alain Grignon is a colourful character who, despairing of the unwillingness of the Languedoc co-operatives to build successful brands for export, decided to go it alone. Now he sources juice from two major co-operatives and a dozen private domaines, and employs his own team of winemakers to craft terrific value wines for export. The Chardonnay and old vine Carignan below are his wines.

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### Domaine la Croix Belle, Puissalicon

La Croix Belle is acknowledged in numerous guides and journals as a benchmark estate for Vin de Pays wines. Whilst we do not ship their top wines (we are not sure the British market is ready for £15 Côtes de Thongue!), we admire the efforts made by the Boyer family and their team to craft excellent blends at any price level. Interestingly, when the vigneron in the Côtes de Thongue were offered the chance to have their own appellation some years ago they spurned it, preferring the freedom to make wine from whichever grapes they liked.

We continue to offer the Caringole wines: a white Chardonnay-based blend, lifted by about 20% sprightly Sauvignon Blanc and a little Muscat and Viognier, brilliant in the latest vintage; and a red, largely from Syrah, Carignan and Merlot with some of the wine made using carbonic maceration, giving a Beaujolais-like freshness. Of the superior wines, using grapes which would qualify them for appellation status in most of the Languedoc, we offer a white, Le Champ des Lys, largely from 2/3 Grenache Blanc and Viognier, and introduce an elegant pure Syrah.

### Domaine des Terres Falmet – see page 10

### Domaine Fontanel – see page 14

### Mas des Brousses – see page 8

## White

### 2008 Vic, Mas de Canal Blanc, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £5.50 Case £62.70 Code VIC708**

Citrus and peach aroma. Fresh, easy drinking mouthful showing stone fruit, nice weight and limey acidity. We will move to the 2009 vintage at the same price. Drink this year

### 2008 Croix des Vents, Chardonnay, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13°

**Bottle £6.25 Case £71.25 Code AGW108**

Pale lemon. Mild scent - a melon note. Fresh attack, with apple and melon fruit, pure and balanced. This is a wine which will remind you of the simple pleasures of unoaked Chardonnay. Drink this year

### 2009 Preignes Le Vieux, Reserve Blanc, Vin de Pays des Coteaux du Libron, 12.5°

**Bottle £6.50 Case £74.10 Code VIC809**

The Reserve white from Vic is really worth trading up to, an aromatic and fruity wine based on the excellent Vermentino (=Rolle), with some Chardonnay, Grenache Blanc and a little Muscat.

Such an open and attractive perfume: one can pick up that appealingly grapey hint of Muscat. Lively, enticing gush of lime, pear and melon, with a hint of spearmint. Medium bodied, and finishes well too. Could only be a Mediterranean wine, so full is it of local character and sunshine. Now-2011

### 2009 La Croix Belle, Caringole Blanc, Chardonnay-Sauvignon Blanc, Côtes de Thongue, IGP, 12°

**Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code CRO809**

No doubt that this is the best vintage we have ever tasted of this popular wine, based on Chardonnay lifted by zippy Sauvignon Blanc, a blend which makes perfect sense in the warm south. The scent just leaps out of the glass, all ripe melons and jasmine – and that same energy gives the wine surprising depth of flavour and length. Now-2011

### 2009 Le Champ des Lys, Grenache Blanc-Viognier, Côtes de Thongue, IGP, 13°

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code CRO709**

A mildly toasty note on the nose (a tiny proportion goes into barrel) is followed by intense grapefruit, with considerable heft, and subtle notes of grape seeds and almonds. A white which could accompany all white meat, from pork to turkey. Now-2011

### 2009 Preignes Le Vieux, Tradition, Viognier, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13°

**Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code PRF609**

New to the list this year, a really well-made Viognier, fresh but nicely rounded, with pretty white peach fruit. A lovely aperitif, or enjoy with prawns or scallops. Now-2011

### 2008 Terres Falmet, Viognier, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13.5°

**Bottle £11.75 Case £133.95 Code FAL608**

From vines grown on a patch of gravel and coarse sand in the hills south of St.-Chinian, and benefiting from *bâtonnage*, stirring of the lees, this is a beautifully styled Viognier. Scents of lilies and lychees are followed by a splendid palate of fully ripe apricots and pears. So fine and light and yet with intense fruit flavour. A terrific example, recommended as an aperitif. Drink this year

## Rosé

### 2008 Vic, Mas de Canal Rosé, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £5.50 Case £62.70 Code VIC508**

Grenache and Cinsaut. Pale clear pink with a hint of onion skin. Light scent of berries. Fresh mouthful of strawberry and cranberry. Nothing complicated, just a really well-made, balanced, dry rosé for drinking by the vat. The 2009 vintage follows very shortly. Drink this year

## Red

### 2008 Vic, Mas de Canal Rouge, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £5.50 Case £62.70 Code VIC408**

From a cocktail of southern varieties plus Merlot. A scent of ripe blackberries is followed by a light, black-fruited palate. Simple, easy-drinking style. The 2009 follows. Now-2011

### 2008 Les Vignerons Réunis, Carignan, Vin de Pays d'Hérault, 12° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £5.75 Case £65.55 Code AGW608**

Who would have thought that we would have sold pallets of wine made from Carignan, a much maligned grape? Yet this juicy wine has been a winner for us. Flagrant purple. Delicious gush of ripe black cherries. Vibrantly fruity. So winning, supple enough to be enjoyed on its own yet with plenty of stuffing. Perfect for parties. "...sprightly, fresh and perfumed", Simon Hoggart in *The Spectator*, May 2009. Drink this year

### 2008 Robert Vic, Merlot, Comtesse de Marion, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £6.25 Case £71.25 Code VIC308**

Aromas of sweet plum with a leafy touch. Supple and lightly creamy, with barely discernible tannins. This is unfailingly good. Now-2011

### 2009 La Croix Belle, Caringole Rouge, Syrah- Carignan-Merlot, Côtes de Thongue, IGP, 13°

**Bottle £6.75 Case £76.95 Code CRO109**

Light, perfume of violets. So fresh, pure and vital, with red fruits, ripe but juicily crisp, backed by the merest smidge of tannin. A wine which is easy to drink on its own, and which can be served lightly chilled when the weather warms up. Now-2011

### 2008 Preignes Le Vieux, Les Hauts de Median, Petit Verdot, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13°

**Bottle £7.25 Case £82.65 Code VIC208**

Crafted by Aurélie Trébuchon, who has married into the Vic clan. Deep and opaque. Rich and rounded, with juicy blackcurrants and hints of earth and spice, you could easily decant this and pass it off as a young but vigorous wine from the Médoc! Excellent finish too. Now-2011 Limited stock



### 2008 Terres Falmet, Cinsault, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13.5°

**Bottle £7.50 Case £85.50 Code FAL108**

From our new discovery (see p. 10) in St-Chinian, a splendidly textured wine from a southern grape usually known for making red-fruited rosé. Here it delivers a deep hue, floral scents, and a velvety, perfumed palate, all ripe red berries. Soft enough to enjoy on its own, yet with enough stuffing to accompany food as well, we think this will be a very popular addition. Now-2011

### 2009 La Croix Belle, Syrah, Côtes de Thongue, IGP, 13.5°

**Bottle £7.75 Case £88.35 Code CRO409**

A fascinating wine: though unoaked, it exhibits such depth of fruit and toasty hints it appears to have enjoyed a period in expensive barrels! Youthful vibrant purple. Classic Syrah palate, so perfumed, with a subtle undertone of black olives. Silkily textured. So classy, and much more pleasing to drink than a lot of more expensive Crozes-Hermitage! Now-2012

### 2009 Fontanel, Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes, Rouge, 14°

**Bottle £7.75 Case £88.35 Code FON409**

Pierre Fontaneil could label this wine, from Syrah and Grenache, with the prestigious Côtes de Roussillon Villages appellation on the label; but as this wine comes from his young vines he chooses instead to label it simply as a Vin de Pays! Delightfully supple, so ripe and charming, all black cherry and a pinch of spice. Plenty of concentration too. We can see this going down perfectly with a steak on the barbecue when the weather warms up. Now-2012

**Note: Arriving late April**

### 2009 Preignes, Grains de Cabernet Franc, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5°

**Bottle £7.75 Case £88.35 Code PRF309**

Such pretty aromas - strawberry leaf and roses - and that floral charm follows on to the palate of this elegant and supple example. Who would have thought that this Loire transplant could deliver such a balanced and elegant wine in the Languedoc? Delicately red-fruited, supple and with a textbook lead pencil note, this will make perfect summer drinking. Now-2011

### 2008 Terres Falmet, Carignan, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13.5°

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code FAL208**

From vines with an average 70 years of age. Deep purple tone. Autumnal scents, brambly fruit with a hint of rose-hips. Rich and smooth, with suave tannins, but also exemplifying Carignan's characteristic untamed gush of berried fruit and almost spiritry breadth. Like coming across a perfect spray of wild raspberries on a foreign hillside...Now-2012

### 2008 Mas des Brousses, Chasseur des Brousses, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 13°

**Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code MAB108**

Named after the African bee-eater (= *chasseur*) which can be seen over the vines in summer. The blend is about 60% Merlot with Grenache and a little Cinsaut, a wine with Bordelais style from the garrigue, the herby scrub which surrounds the vineyards here. Soft deep ruby. Leafy and herby scents. Black plum and berries, spiced by nutmeg and herbs. Hint of smoke. Pleasantly long. This always offers smooth and classy drinking, so food-friendly. Now-2011

## Wine boxes

5 litre boxes, each with its own simple tap: perfect for parties, barbecues, cooking wine, or just keeping in the kitchen for the odd glass (many people find them indispensable to the good working of a refrigerator).

Both come from the Vic family, the same wines as in the Mas de Canal bottles.

Note: a box can be included in a mixed case in place of 4 bottles

### 2008 Vic, Le Petit Pont Blanc, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5°

**5 litre bag in box £29.95 Code BIB608**

Drink this year.

### 2009 Vic, Le Petit Pont, Rouge, Vin de Pays d'Oc, 12.5°

**5 litre bag in box £29.95 Code BIB209**

A fresh vintage - and just terrific: supple, juicy and easy-drinking. Drink this year

# Coteaux du Languedoc Appellations around Montpellier



## Belles Pierres, St. Murviel les Montpellier, St. Georges d'Orques

Damien Coste and his father created Belles Pierres in the hill-top village of St-Murviel, near St. Georges d'Orques, in 1992, having taken their land out of the local co-op. St. Georges d'Orques is a superb argilo-calcaire micro-terroir lying across rolling hills (up to 235m) within sight of the sea just to the west of Montpellier, with vineyards in little patches cut out of the *garrigue*. Here the grape skins take on the evanescent oils of the surrounding flowers and herbs - lavender, oregano, thyme and bay - giving fascinating Mediterranean nuances to the wines.

We continue with two oaked wines, both named in homage to Damien's father, Joseph. The strikingly unusual white is from 60% Roussanne with equal proportions of Viognier and Grenache; a big, wildly perfumed wine which can accompany strongly flavoured food. The red, basically Syrah and Grenache with some Mourvèdre, is a wine which shows that elusive scent and flavour of the *garrigue*, and develops earthy complexity with a year or two in bottle.

## Domaine de Creyssels, Mèze

Picpoul de Pinet is a little known appellation near the Bassin de Thau, south-west of Montpellier, for just a single grape, the white Piquepoul. The grape has the advantage of being slow-ripening: picked after the heat of summer has passed it retains freshness and flavour. The wine is much appreciated within France, a staple in Parisian bistros to accompany seafood. Fresh, slightly sharp, with a bit of weight and a tang of the sea about it, it really does wash down oysters, mussels or fish perfectly (the vineyards are within sight of the oyster beds in the Bassin). Look on it as the Muscadet of the Mediterranean, albeit with more heft and flavour.

Julie Benau's vineyards are on clay and gravel soils, which lend greater weight than the sandier fields nearer the sea, set amidst woods of pines and cypresses. She crops at low yields, around 40hl/ha., picks very late - well into September - and leaves the wine on its lees. This care produces a wine with considerable concentration and character, which has become a real favourite here.

## 2008 Coteaux du Languedoc, Picpoul de Pinet, 12.5°

**Bottle £7.50 Case £85.50 Code CRE108**

Pale lemon. Light scent of white flowers, citrus and dairy notes. Grassy, herbal, and kiwi-fruited, with a touch of floral honey and a tang on the finish. Very complete wine. Now-2011

## 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc, Les Clauzes de Jo Blanc, 14°

**Bottle £10.95 Case £124.83 Code BEL607**

Bright, tinged with pale green. Scent of ripe fruit, - mangos and white peach - but also bay leaf and honey. Totally consistent on the palate, with the exoticism of the fruit counterbalanced by the caramel and almond notes of the oak. A big wine, well matched to strongly flavoured, herby, Mediterranean cuisine. Now-2011

## 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc, St. George d'Orques, Les Clauzes de Jo Rouge, 14°

**Bottle £10.25 Case £116.85 Code BEL307**

Cassis and herb aromas. Lovely raspberry and red cherry attack, with accompanying hints of thyme and sage. Supple tannins in this lovely vintage. Long and perfumed finish. Velvety. Now-2012



## Saint Daumary, Valflaunès, Pic St Loup

Julien Chapel's vineyards lie mainly on the flanks of the plateau of Hortus, just to the north of the 685 metre peak of Pic St Loup. These are at the heart of this mountainous *appellation* north of Montpellier, cooled by wind and some altitude, and long known as a top Syrah *terroir*. Many are little plots scraped out of the *garrigue*, the surrounding scrub, on mainly limestone rich soils which suit Syrah, although there is also Grenache on the sandier sites and he has planted Mourvèdre in his hottest corners. We have really found a star in this modest and amiable young man, who took over part of his father's land at the age of 19 in 1999 (and was then the youngest winemaker in the whole of the Languedoc) and converted to organic cultivation - he believes organics delivers better "*transmission de terroir*".

First up is a classy white, La Boca Loca, 80% Roussanne with Grenache Blanc, about a third of which is lightly oaked. His red Pic St. Loups are all based on Syrah (see the proportions below) with Grenache, Mourvèdre and Carignan. Voilà Le Printemps ("here comes the spring") is unoaked, deliciously perfumed, and to be enjoyed young for its smooth black fruit. The Syrah in the Troisième Mi-Temps (which vaguely translates as "third half") is aged in barrel, whilst the Grenache and Carignan are in tank. Asphodèle, named after the plant which dots the slopes, gets 18 months in barrel, 50% new: it's oaky, concentrated and has more than a touch of Côte Rôtie about it. New this year, arriving in April, is a pure Carignan, from one parcel of low-yielding 45-50 year old vines, given 12 months in old oak barrels, and as deliciously silky and refined as his other reds. Julien bottled just 1200 bottles of this for the first time, and we have taken as much as we have been allowed.

### 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc, La Boca Loca, 14°

**Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code DAU607**

Aromas of grapefruit and blossom. Initial sense of citrus and attractive ripeness is followed by limeflower aromatics. Beautifully weighted, and very long. Such a complete and harmonious white. Now-2011

### 2007 Pic Saint-Loup, Voilà Le Printemps, 14°

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code DAU107**

60% Syrah, 15% Grenache, 15% Carignan and 10% Mourvèdre. Scent of black cherries, and that cherry note continues on to the palate, with hints of smoke and caramelly sweetness. Smooth, silky and hugely enjoyable already, but will keep too. Now-2012 Limited stock

### 2007 Pic Saint-Loup, Troisième Mi-Temps, 14°

**Bottle £11.25 Case £128.25 Code DAU307**

50% Syrah, 25% Grenache, 25% Carignan. This has a red-fruited tone to the aromas, the Grenache lending a lovely scent of roses. Textured, gently chocolatey and malty (so characteristic of Pic Saint-Loup). Charming velouté of red cherries. Pure and classy. Now-2013



### 2007, Pic Saint-Loup, Belladonna, 14°

**Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code DAU207**

Such a pure scent, deliciously red-fruited, without any of that animal edge so often present in Carignan. Thrilling on the palate, a sort of vinous Fry's Turkish delight, all perfumed, jellied fruit wrapped in chocolate, freshened by the variety's lively acidity. Unusual and splendid. Now-2012

**Note: Arriving late April**

### 2007 Pic Saint-Loup, Asphodèle, 14°

**Bottle £15.95 Case £181.83 Code DAU407**

70% Syrah, plus 10% each of Grenache, Mourvèdre and Carignan. Wines that smell of cassis, as this does, are always going to be lovely. Spicy notes of vanilla and cinnamon too. Bittersweet attack, crisp redcurrants vying with sweet brambly fruit. Very concentrated – nice mass. Huge potential. Can already be enjoyed, but best mid 2010-2014 Limited stock



# Appellations against the plateau: Terrasses du Larzac

This zone covers a wide range of terroirs in the north of the Coteaux du Languedoc, abutting the Larzac plateau. This is largely a hilly band running from St Jean de la Blaquière in the west, across via St. Saturnin and Montpeyroux to Puéchabon in the east. Andrew Jefford, a deeply serious and intelligent wine critic, called the Terrasses du Larzac “some of the greatest vineyard land in the south of France” (**Financial Times**, 8th August 2009).

## Le Clos du Serres, St Jean de la Blaquière

Sébastien Fillon only became a vigneron in 2006 at the age of thirty, but already his wines have won rave reviews in the French wine press. Most of the vines here are on the slopes around St. Jean, up to 350 metres in altitude, where cool currents come down from the Larzac plateau, and there is a marked diurnal change of temperature. This lends a lively freshness to the wines. Furthermore the landscape is remarkably diverse: there are amazing red volcanic soils, the *terres rouges* known locally as “*ruffe*”, but also schist on the slope and *galets* in places. 15 different parcels, all vinified separately, give Sébastien plenty of scope for interesting blends.

Le Clos is based on 40% each of a local clone of Cinsaut (the “*Oeillade*”) and Syrah, plus 20% Grenache, with more substance than usual in the latest 2008 vintage. La Blaca is 90% Syrah and 10% Grenache, unoaked, beautifully black-fruited. We return to Les Maros, also unoaked, 80% from low-yielding Grenache, with Syrah and Carignan. Sébastien’s top wine is Florilège, 60% Grenache, and 40% Syrah in barrel, which is just scrumptious.

### 2007 Languedoc, Le Clos, 13°

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code SER107**

Just a few cases left of the 2007 vintage. This offers a black cherry heart. Quite rich and complete, with nice supporting tannin. “...the silky, spicy Languedoc wine from Le Clos du Serres...a wine of great power, and, dare I say it, dignity. Velvet, fruit, herbs – you’ll love it”, Simon Hoggart in **The Spectator**, 23rd May 2009. Now-2011 Limited stock

### 2008 Languedoc, Le Clos, 13.5°

**Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code SER108**

Strong purple. Scent of red cherries. Intense red and black cherries, spiced with liquorice and even a hint of menthol. Fine grained tannins. Now-2012

### 2007 Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, La Blaca, 14°

**Bottle £11.50 Case £131.10 Code SER407**

Unusual aromas of black fruits, caramel and dark chocolate. That cassis note continues on to the palate, with touches of toffee and mint. Intriguingly different: classy Syrah with a southern accent. Now-2013

### 2007 Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, Les Maros, 14°

**Bottle £12.25 Case £139.65 Code SER307**

This Grenache-based blend always shows raspberry and blackberry fruit, with an interesting gamey nuance and a hint of liquorice. Warming and characterful. Now-2012

### 2004 Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, Le Florilège, 14.5°

**Bottle £14.75 Case £168.15 Code SER504**

Primary fruit still apparent on the nose. This is immediately delicious, all black fruit, figgy, ripe and spicy, with fine fruit tannins. Such finesse. Now-2012

### Mas des Brousses, Puéchabon, Terrasses du Larzac

Brousses translates as bush, or brush; this is, literally, the farm in the brush. Amidst the rolling scrub-covered hills around Puéchabon and the pebble-strewn terrasses near the Hérault river lie the domaine’s plots of vines. Géraldine Combes, whose family has inhabited Puéchabon, near Gignac, since 1525, juggles looking after three small boys with tending the vines. Husband Xavier Peyraud, grandson of the legendary Lucien Peyraud of Domaine Tempier, is the winemaker. Their first vintage was only 1997, and some of their grapes still go off to the local co-operative.

Their appellation wine is a blend of about 2/3 Syrah and 1/3 Mourvèdre aged largely in old oak: this always seems to show some of the fragrance of the land, fresh and pine-scented.

### 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, 13°

**Bottle £13.50 Case £153.90 Code MAB207**

Vibrant purple. Intensely black-fruited and refined, with tar and liquorice notes around a coulis of blackcurrants. Very suave. Still on the way up. Now-2013



# Appellations against the plateau: Faugères

Faugères is a small and homogenous appellation - only 2,000 hectares in production, and 35 growers - unique in Languedoc-Roussillon in that all of the vineyards lie on schist. Schist is formed of foliated sedimentary layers changed by heat and pressure. Its common distinguishing feature, like slate, is that it splits easily into thin flakes or slabs, so the vineyards look as though they are covered in shards of rock; which can range in colour from soft pinky-beige in Faugères to coal-black near Maury. It is hard to see how vines can survive on such a sterile matrix: they do so through their roots penetrating deep into the fissures in the rock to find moisture and nutrients during the long dry summers.

In the north of the appellation, where the vineyards go up to 350m, breezes offer fresher temperatures and here Syrah thrives.

## Domaine du Météore, Cabrerolles, Faugères

Guy and Genevieve make a perfectly contrasting couple: he is tall, thin, balding, and wholly relaxed and laid-back; she, on the other hand, is short, well-covered, and distinctly feisty.

We have added their Faugères rosé this year, a really expressive example, with generous fruit and exciting minerality.

As for the reds, Les Léonides is an unoaked blend of more or less equal parts of Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Carignan: this is a wine with entrancing perfume and character, superb in the 2007 vintage. Well-oaked, Les Orionides is based on 55% Syrah with Mourvèdre, Grenache and Carignan.

## 2009 Faugères Blanc, Les Léonides, 13.5°

**Bottle £9.25 Case £105.45 Code MET709**

A blend of half Roussanne, half Marsanne. As ever, a really textured wine, and offering intriguing notes of orange peel, lime-blossom and fat nuts beside the weighty stone fruit. Now-2011

## 2009 Faugères Rosé, Les Léonides, 13.5°

**Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code MET509**

From Grenache with Cinsaut and a little Syrah. Vibrant deep pink. Great depth of red cherry fruit, allied to a finesse and perfume which derives from the schistous soils. Really vital and impressive. Now-2011

## 2007 Faugères Rouge, Les Léonides, 13.5°

**Bottle £8.75 Case £99.75 Code MET107**

The best vintage we have tasted of this unoaked wine. You only have to smell it to wonder at its source, as it delivers a fascinating, lifted melange of cassis, herbs and hot stones. Vibrant black and redcurrants, so alive, with fine tannins. The fruit lingers on the finish delightfully, leaving echoes of blackberry jelly. Now-2012

## 2006 Faugères Rouge, Les Orionides, 13.5°

**Bottle £10.50 Case £119.70 Code MET306**

Quite a roasted scent, with notes of coffee and cooked fruit. Bittersweet character, with concentrated black fruit, dark and spicy, with solid tannins and lively acidity. Now-2012



# Appellations against the plateau: Saint-Chinian

Saint-Chinian, in the hills 30km north-west of Béziers, is one of the most exciting districts in the whole of the South. This was recognised as early as 1982 when Saint-Chinian earned AOC status as a Cru within the Coteaux du Languedoc. Now the authorities are trying to sub-divide it further, identifying two zones, one to the north-west around Berloup for wines based on Syrah, and the other to the north-east around Roquebrun for wines based on Carignan.

We offer wines from estates lying in different terroirs. First, we introduce a new estate near Creissan, on the rolling hills to the south-east of the town of Saint Chinian itself, Domaine des Terres Falmet. Further north, close to the river Orb near Cessenon, lie the well-drained and gravelly vineyards of Marc Valette. From the schistous hills in the north, we offer wines from the idiosyncratic Thierry Navarre at Roquebrun.

## Domaine des Terres Falmet, Creissan

Yves Falmet is a first generation *vigneron*. He has created his own wine estate the hard way: having studied bio-chemistry, he has worked in wineries all over the world - from Champagne to New Zealand - and then taken out a large loan, and bought 20 hectares of steeply sloping vines in the Languedoc, some of which had been abandoned by the previous owner, and shunned by neighbours. This is tough work. But Yves saw the potential of the old vines - his Carignan vines (see p. 5) average around 70 years old - and is making splendid, fairly priced wines.

His Saint-Chinian is a blend of 40% Mourvèdre, 30% Grenache and 30% Syrah, unoaked, from vines averaging sixty years of age. He calls it L'Ivresse des Cîmes, which is a nice pun: you could translate it literally as drunkenness of the peaks, but in French it really means mountain sickness, suitable as the grapes come from a very steep vineyard near a crest, on calcareous soils.

### 2006 Saint-Chinian, L'Ivresse des Cîmes, 13.5°

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code FAL306**

Open, youthful scent of ripe red fruit. Ripe, raspberry, cherry and bilberry core, very pure, with a twist of liquorice and spice. A ripe tannic backbone gives substance. A very honest wine, perfect for robust food. Now-2012



## Domaine Canet-Valette, Cessenon-sur-Orb

Marc Valette's land near the Orb river at Cessenon, consists mainly of gently south-facing, well-drained and gravelly terraces, which he cleared from the scrub himself. He tends his vines bio-dynamically, and the wines are certified as such since the 2004 vintage.

Antonyme is from mainly Cinsaut and Mourvèdre, picked earlier for freshness, and all in stainless steel tank.

### 2008 Saint-Chinian, Antonyme, 12°

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code CAN408**

A wine full of bright red cherries and raspberries. High-toned aromatic feel, bright and alive, with a hint of bacon-fat and earthiness. Light and supple. Now-2011 Limited stock

## Domaine Navarre, Roquebrun, Saint-Chinian

Thierry Navarre is one of only a handful of independent winemakers in Roquebrun, a pretty town with a delightful Nice-like micro-climate, lying up against the massif. Thierry, impish grin on his face as usual, was rightly proud of his 2007s: we thought they were the best wines we have yet tasted from him.

Le Laouzil (= schist, translated from the Occitan) comes from a rocky vineyard on a windswept plateau above the town and is blended from about 40% Grenache with 30% of each of Carignan and Syrah. This lies in huge old oak vats before bottling but is effectively unwooded, allowing the purity of the fruit to shine. This always keeps very well, developing savoury secondary flavours. L'Olivier, from tiny - 20 hl./ha. - yields is from equal thirds of the same grapes, and is aged in 600 litre *demi-muids*, but is also immediately ready to drink.

### 2007 Saint-Chinian, Le Laouzil, 13.5°

**Bottle £9.95 Case £113.43 Code NAV207**

Deep but youthful ruby. Scent of cooked cherries. Intense red cherry character, spicy and vibrant. Silky and slightly wild, this is delightfully aromatic, with bittersweet and tobacco nuances on the finish. Now-2012

### 2007 Saint-Chinian, L'Olivier, 14°

**Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code NAV307**

Open, spicy Syrah dominated nose. With an even more velvety feel than Le Laouzil, this deep-hued, smooth, cassis and damson flavoured wine is delectable, with a lushness of fruit which conceals a decent backbone for ageing. Now-2012

# Minervois

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Minervois, granted appellation status in 1985, is a very large appellation - 4800 hectares of vineyards covering a dry landscape; La Livinière is one of the driest spots in the whole of France.

Repeated visits, even to estates in the leading sub-region of Minervois La Livinière, have convinced us that is one of the least interesting areas in the south, for two reasons. First the land is, largely, boring - plains and gentle hills, lacking the excitement of the rock terroirs which surround it. Secondly Syrah has become the predominant red grape variety, supported by Grenache and Mourvèdre. This has not necessarily been for the best. Syrah-dominated wines have lost some of the local character which makes the Languedoc so interesting, particularly if dressed up in fancily oaked cuvées.

As a result we tend to offer wines from the family-owned Château La Grave, who produce honest, easy-drinking, approachable wines at reasonable prices, rather than trying to over-achieve from their land.

## Château La Grave, Badens, Minervois

Owned by the Orosquette family, and named after the gravelly soil on the Etang de Marseillette, Château La Grave lies in the south-western part of the Minervois, now known as Les Balcons de l'Aude. The Expression wines here are consistently good. The unusual white is based on a parcel of old vine Maccabeu, with Vermentino and Marsanne, which makes for a surprisingly weighty wine at the price. Their rosé, made largely from Syrah with Grenache, is always a real charmer. This year we return to the Tristan et Julien red, about half Syrah and Grenache, ripely soft and uncomplicatedly enjoyable.

### 2008 Minervois Blanc, Expression, 13°

**Bottle £7.25 Case £82.65 Code GRV608**

Scent of ripe apples. As ever, not an obvious fruit wine, but textured and quite concentrated, with that volume given citrus and almond nuances. Drink this year

### 2008 Minervois Rosé, Expression, 13°

**Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code GRV408**

Year on year this wine, from Syrah and Grenache grown in the Minervois, is our best-selling rosé, always delivering splendid ripeness, and so fruity although correctly dry. Soft pink. Oodles of strawberry and red cherries, bright and ripe. Plenty of texture. Perfect all rounder, fruity enough to enjoy on its own but also dry enough for food. The 2009 vintage will follow shortly. Drink this year

### 2009 Minervois Rouge, Tristan et Julien, 13°

**Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code GRV109**

Just so open, simple and enjoyable, the sort of youthful French country wine of old: very ripe berried fruit, with the merest hint of supporting tannins, juicy and easy-drinking. Now-2011



# Mountain appellations of the South: Corbières

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The appellation of Corbières, established in 1985, is by far the largest in the Languedoc, and indeed the fourth largest in all of France, with over 15,000 hectares under cultivation. Since 1991 there have been efforts to sub-divide this largely mountainous region into 11 different terroirs, several of which have limited validity. Grand Arc is in the southernmost region, Quéribus.

## Domaine du Grand Arc, Cucugnan

Bruno Schenk's vines are on classic *argilo-calcaire* soils, with some sandstone, in the wild hills between Cucugnan and Padern, surrounded by amazing hill-top Cathar castles. It's surprisingly cool here in these vineyards - Bruno was told when he arrived from Alsace that the land was only good for white and rosé - and this gives great finesse and freshness to all the wines. The latest developments at Grand Arc are: a) Bruno converting some of the outbuildings at the domaine into attractive living quarters - here he seeks "*décompression*" amidst his vines; and b) Bruno choosing to make wine in recent vintages with minimal sulphur.

As for the wines: his gentle, stone-fruited white is from Grenache Blanc, Maccabeu and Roussanne. The rosé, from Cinsaut, Grenache, Carignan and Syrah, is widely considered to be among the best in Corbières. The Reserve and Cuvée des Quarante are both aged in barrel, albeit very old ones in the case of the Reserve, which is about 55% Carignan, with 30% Grenache and 15% Mourvèdre. The Cuvée des Quarante is also based on Carignan and Grenache but with Syrah as the third variety.

### 2009 Corbières Blanc, Veillée d'Equinoxe, 14°

**Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code DGA609**

A floral scent - heather? - is followed by a beautifully weighted, fragrant palate of ripe lime, white peach and ripe pear. Enchanting. Now-2011

### 2009 Corbières Rosé, La Tour Fabienne, 14°

**Bottle £8.25 Case £94.05 Code DGA509**

As usual, a neon pink hue, almost bluish pink! So fresh and zingy, with delightful *fraises des bois* character, enlivened by stone fruit notes. Crisply dry, and combines the depth of bright fruit of a red wine with the freshness and bite of a white. Now-2011

### 2008 Corbières Rouge, Reserve Grand Arc, 14°

**Bottle £8.75 Case £99.75 Code DGA208**

Currently marked by toast and mocha from the barrel ageing, but lovely black fruit behind. Mouthfilling, joyous blackberry fruit, with a lick of chocolate and spice. Medium weight. Powerful but attractively smooth and refined. One of our best-sellers. Now-2012

### 2007 Corbières Rouge, Cuvée des Quarante, 14.5°

**Bottle £9.95 Case £113.43 Code DGA307**

Very deep tone. Oak-influenced scents of caramel, coffee and toast vie with briary fruit on the nose. The core is all cherries and cassis, smooth and lush. This wine always shows a perfect equilibrium of fruit, oak and tannin - so keeps beautifully. The excellent, brambly 2008 follows at £10.50. Now-2013



## Mountain appellations of the South: Limoux

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Limoux has the potential to be a real motor of growth for white wine in the south of France, with plentiful vineyards benefiting from altitude, which brings both cooling breezes and a fall of temperature at night. However, the appellation rules are restrictive (for example Limoux Chardonnay has to be hand-picked and barrel-fermented to gain Appellation status); and the supporting cast of Mauzac and Chenin Blanc isn't inspiring. This year we introduce the wines of Domaine Begude, as we feel English arriviste James Kinglake is a real mover and shaker.

### Domaine Begude, Limoux

James Kinglake, ex City trader, has now been ensconced at the Domaine Begude, about 350 metres up in the hills near Limoux, since 2003; and his wines have been getting better and better as he and his team get to grips with the terroir here. He inherited organically farmed land, and continues to promote sustainability.

He has carved out an enviable reputation for his Chardonnays: the example below is enlivened by the addition of 10% Chenin Blanc.

However, we were also awe-struck by his 2009 Pinot Noir: a wine of such levity, purity and finesse (and less than 12° of alcohol) that it would put many a more expensive wine from the Côte d'Or to shame. James only made just over 200 cases of this, so we are fortunate to be able to offer it.

### 2009 Chardonnay, Amélie, Pays d'Oc, IGP, 13° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code BEG109**

Bright and clear. Citrussy aromas, which little prepare one for the ripeness and weight of this well-textured Chardonnay. The 10% of Chenin, picked late, brings a nice honeyed note. Now-2011

### 2009 Pinot Noir, Haute Vallée de l'Aude, IGP, 12° [Screw-cap]

**Bottle £9.75 Case £111.15 Code BEG609**

Soft, pale hue. Light aromas of *fraises des bois* with citrus peel. Delicate cranberry and strawberry fruit, so gracefully light yet perfectly ripe too. Definitive summer picnic wine – lightly cool and enjoy with chicken salad or charcuterie. Now-2011



# Roussillon and Vins Doux Naturels

Here we feature two vigneron at either end of the Roussillon – but both making wine from hillside vineyards in this hot, dry and windswept environment, and both masters not just of still wine but also that Roussillon speciality, the fortified *Vin Doux Naturel*.

## Domaine Fontanel, Tautavel

M. Fontaneil, heir to 35 hectares of a family domaine since 1864, is such a gentle, unassuming, softly-spoken man: his personality is at variance with his red wines which shout with vivacious, dense black fruit. New this year - and we just have to wait a few weeks for it to be bottled and shipped - is his 2009 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes (see p.5). M. Fontaneil's modesty and reticence shows here. He could label this wine, from Syrah and Grenache, with the prestigious Côtes de Roussillon Villages appellation on the label; but as this wine comes from his young vines he chooses instead to label it simply as a Vin de Pays!

The oaked white Côtes de Roussillon, from old vines of Grenache Blanc (planted 1908!) Roussanne and Malvoisie (all planted together!) is a wine we always like to ship, with the barrel aging lending a nutty roundness to the stone fruit. His sturdy but unoaked red Côtes de Roussillon, from 60% Grenache, 25% Syrah and 15% Carignan grown on schist near Mauray, offers both value and authenticity. We again list his flagship red, Le Prieuré. From one parcel near Tautavel on a high, windswept, north facing vineyard marked by galets, rounded stones, this blend of 2/3 Syrah, with Mourvèdre and a little Grenache, is given a 42 day maceration and 18 months in new oak. This can approach Hermitage in style after a few years in bottle.



## 2007 Côtes de Roussillon Blanc, 14°

**Bottle £10.95 Case £124.83 Code FON707**

From old vines of Grenache Blanc (planted 1908) Roussanne and Malvoisie, planted together, well-oaked. Splendidly ripe and succulent attack, all apricots and white peach, enlivened by touches of fennel and aniseed. Such a long finish, with notes of dried apricots and fat nuts. "...a gorgeous, rich, silky wine, tasting of peaches and apricots", Simon Hoggart in *The Spectator*, May 2009. Drink this year.

## 2007 Côtes de Roussillon Rouge, 14°

**Bottle £8.95 Case £102.03 Code FON107**

Deep purple. Brooding nose, full of black fruit and southern herbs. Rich and peppery palate of melting black fruit with hints of tar and woodsmoke. Sweet blackberry liqueur finish, warming and full of local character. Now-2012

## 2007 Côtes de Roussillon Villages, Tautavel, Le Prieuré, 14°

**Bottle £16.75 Case £190.95 Code FON307**

Very open, luxuriantly inviting perfume of blackberry liqueur and mocha. Not a block-buster, but suavely refined, with finely integrated oak and velvety cassis and blackberries. Very aromatic. Now-2014

## Domaine du Traginer, Banyuls

Jean-François Deu, multi-lingual Catalan (he speaks French, Spanish, Catalan, English and Portuguese), and committed eco-winemaker, does not do anything by halves.

He began making wine at the age of sixteen. His land is ploughed by a mule (Traginer translates as "mule worker"), he tends his vines bio-dynamically (i.e. ultra-organic, working by phases of the moon), crafts miniscule yields – 17-25 hl/ha. across his range, and bottles with minimal sulphur.

The 2005 red, ¼ each of Grenache, Carignan, Syrah and Mourvèdre, is aged in foudre (large wooden vat). By contrast the 2006 Al Ribéral, is from stainless steel, and bottled early to showcase its delectable purity of fruit.

## 2005 Collioure Rouge, 14°

**Bottle £16.50 Case £188.10 Code TRG105**

The immediate pleasure is all generous red fruit, splendidly ripe, flavoursome and lightly spicy, and just gently rounded by the oak. Behind there is power and minerality, accompanied by a svelte texture. Now-2012 Limited stock

## 2006 Collioure Rouge, Al Ribéral, 14°

**Bottle £21.50 Case £245.10 Code TRG506**

Very deep and opaque. Coulis of damsons and spicy black plums. The fruit is so pure and fine. Fine acid thread. This wine is youthfully alive, yet has perfect balance to age well too. Now-2013

# Vin Doux Naturel

Vins Doux Naturels are made by stopping the fermentation of very ripe grapes, part way through its course, by the addition of alcohol (a process known as *mutage*); thereby preventing the yeasts from working, and leaving a fortified wine with plentiful natural grape sugar and anywhere between 15 and 17 degrees of alcohol.

As one can see below, Vins Doux Naturels come in different colours and styles; and from diverse regions. Rivesaltes VDNs are named after the town near Perpignan, but can be made over a relatively large area, either eponymously from Muscat or a wide range of other white grapes such as Grenache Blanc and Malvoisie. Banyuls shares the same vineyard area as Collioure: if fortified the appellation wines are called Banyuls, if not, then Collioure.

Note that Banyuls can accompany chocolate puddings, rather as berried fruit may be dipped in chocolate.

## Domaine Fontanel, Tautavel

The Fontaneil's Muscat is made entirely from the superior Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains: it has an enchantingly fresh and floral air, but is satisfyingly concentrated and it keeps well too. The Ambré is made not from Muscat but rather from late-picked, 60 year-old vines of Grenache Blanc and Gris. The Ambré - literally amber - tone develops after at least five years of mildly oxidative ageing in barrel. The 1998 was bottled after nearly ten years in barrel, and Pierre thinks it will last twenty years. This has built up a cult following among our customers.

### 2009 Muscat de Rivesaltes, L'Âge de Pierre, 15.5°

**Bottle £13.50 Case £153.90 Code FON809**

Pale lemon. Such a voluptuous scent: hothouse lilies and sun-warmed grapes. Intense, sweet tropical flavours, redolent of pineapple, concentrated and viscous. Now-2013

**Note: Arriving late April**

### 1998 Rivesaltes Ambré, 16°

**Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code FON998**

This looks like Cognac, and indeed smells quite like Cognac, with fumes of cooked plums, and a hint of sherry-like oxidation. As usual it tastes of sweet pears, but with a whole gamut of accompanying subtleties, including walnuts, figs and coffee. It's mysteriously delicious.

*"Heady, rich, sun drenched and utterly rewarding in a liquid raisiny way. Some rancio (the heady smell of extended barrel ageing)", Jancis Robinson MW, Financial Times, December 13th 2008. Now-2015*

## Domaine du Traginer, Banyuls

Jean-François Deu is a Banyuls specialist, having inherited ancient foudres of old Banyuls from his father. Rimage refers simply to a vintage wine made in closed vats (i.e. not in an oxidative style): this is as pure as freshly made raspberry coulis. The Banyuls Blanc is a rarity, from Grenache Blanc and Gris and Muscat à Petits Grains, unoaked and aromatic.

### 2006 Banyuls Rimage, 17°

**Bottle (50cl.) £16.95 Case (12 x 50cl. bottles) £193.23 Code TRG706**

This is made in tank and bottled early to preserve the aromas and freshness of the delicious, raspberry-scented Grenache. Solid ruby tone. Sweet but pure, with soft tannins and a fine silkiness in the mouth. Now-2012

### 2006 Banyuls Blanc, 16.5°

**Bottle (50cl.) £20.75 Case (12 x 50cl. bottles) £236.55 Code TRG206**

Fresh Muscat on the attack, but behind lie depths of very sweet pears, stone fruit, cream and vanilla. Irony power too. Very long. A wine to sip, with definite meditative quality! Now-2013



# Sud de France



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- We offer a 5% discount for unmixed cases (12 bottles) except where it is indicated that no further discount applies. Please ask us about discounts on large orders.
- We offer a no quibble guarantee. If you're unhappy with any aspect of your wine we'll provide a refund or a replacement without fuss, though we reserve the right to make a small charge to cover collection and delivery.
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