

STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

2011 Rhône and Burgundy en primeur

Contact: Simon Taylor or Gordon Coates
Stone, Vine & Sun
13 Humphrey Farms, Hazeley Road, Twyford
Winchester, Hampshire SO21 1QA

Telephone: 01962 712351 Fax: 01962 717545
Email: sales@stonevine.co.uk Website: www.stonevine.co.uk

How sales 'en primeur' work. You choose the wines you want to buy now and we will invoice you at the prices quoted. Effectively you are buying the wine overseas, often before it has been bottled. We will then invoice you for duty at the prevailing rate (currently £22.81 per case, but very likely to increase in the spring budget) plus VAT (currently 20%), on the cost of the wine and the duty, when it is shipped from the late spring of 2013 onwards. As an example, if you buy a case of wine now for £100, then assuming import duty and VAT remain constant, we will later invoice you for £47.36 prior to sending you your wine. Prices are valid until the end of April 2013.

Terms and conditions. Wine is only offered in unsplit cases of 12 bottles or 6 magnums unless stated otherwise. **Please note that wine will NOT be available in bond.** To enable us to be as competitive as possible we ship all wine to our own warehouse, duty paid. We will then deliver it on to you or to your preferred place of storage at our standard delivery charge of £5.95 per case for orders under £150, or free above £150 (including the duty and VAT). For Highlands, Islands and Northern Ireland please ask us for a quote. Finally, whilst we make every effort to supply the wines offered above, if the wines fail to be made available by the producer we will either offer to supply similar wines or alternatively refund any payments made.

For advice do ask for:
Rhône - Simon Taylor Burgundy - Gordon Coates

2011 Rhône en primeur (plus the 2010s from Le Couroulu in Vacqueyras)

The “gourmand” vintage

As in 1998-2000, again the Rhône seems to have produced another trio of excellent to great vintages, with 2011 following after the hugely powerful 2009s and the more restrained but classic 2010s. 2011 is, of course, different: to generalize, the wines from both north and south appear more immediately charming than either of the previous years, showing a great purity of fruit, both red and black, and are probably not wines to pack away for years. Indeed, many wines are already deliciously ready to drink, and as a broad rule, the top wines, especially in the south, might actually benefit from being drunk ahead of both previous vintages.

The French have a word for this accessibility and charm: they say “*gourmand*”, and no less than three of the growers we buy from used this word to describe their reds from 2011. Ignore the associations of greed in the English application of this word: the French mean appealing, pleasing and seductive. So often tasting the wines I found the tannins so ripe and well-integrated that I was barely aware of their presence. There’s plenty of authentic spice too.

The Weather

The *vignerons* are now all moaning about how difficult 2012 was: with hindsight, 2011 looks like a picnic, but it was an unusual year. A very warm spring prompted an early budbreak, and the vines set off at breakneck speed, prompting comparisons with other hot years like 2003 and 2005. Midsummer was, to say the least, mixed, with cool and rainy weather in June and July. However, as Guy Ricard at Couroulu noted, there were never any problems with the health of the bunches as it was always dry and windy after the rain. The weather then improved in September, and the harvest took place in perfect sunshine, with the Mistral blowing a lot of the time, drying and concentrating the grapes. In the south the unusual heat meant that the grapes again raced to maturity, so choosing the right moment to harvest wasn’t always easy, but the smaller *vignerons* we buy from coped easily with that, and it wasn’t an issue in the north.

The Whites

Whilst our customers will unquestionably focus on the reds, we have included a handful of whites this year, as we felt they were particularly fresh and aromatic. They aren’t cheap, but we do want to encourage you to try some of these fascinating wines at a friendlier price: so here’s white Vacqueyras, Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Condrieu.

Pricing

These folk don’t let one down: they had a good crop in 2011, there’s no greed, the Chinese don’t chase these wines, and in the Rhône, as opposed to some areas of France, they have less concern about the size of their crop in 2012. Prices are very stable indeed. Most wines in this offer are at the same or almost the same price as last year, despite the current parlous state of sterling. Only Guy Ricard at Couroulu has increased his prices, but that is because we are offering **2010s** from a tiny harvest.

2011 Rhône Tasting

Friday 1st March February, 6.00 - 8.30pm

**Venue: The Wykeham Arms, 75 Kingsgate Street, Winchester, SO23 9PE
AND**

Saturday 2nd March, 9.30am - 4.00pm

Venue: Our shop in Twyford

In the upstairs private room at this excellent pub and restaurant, and again the next day at our shop, we will be offering samples of all the early bottled 2011s in the list (i.e. almost all of the less expensive wines), plus the 2010s from Guy Ricard at Couroulu, plus a few older vintages of the reds from our stock and a couple of Rhône whites: about 18 wines in total. This is a great opportunity to gain an understanding of the vintage, re-connect with the Rhône, and decide what you might want to buy.

The South

Domaine des Amadieu, Cairanne

Yves-Jean Houser now has four harvests under his belt, and has, he admits, changed his vinification methods a little, aiming for a little less power and more *"souplesse"*, suppleness and elegance. Prices have remained so fair here: two years ago we offered the Cairanne at the same price. From vines between 45 and 55 years old, grown in what is unquestionably one of the top terroirs left in the Côtes du Rhône Villages category, this looks like a bargain.

Côtes du Rhône Villages

Case £54.00 Code AMB111

About 60% Grenache from vineyards near Cairanne, 30% Syrah from Ste Cecile and 10% Carignan. Attractive, open scents: crushed berries, slightly cooked. Rather richer on the palate, with a decent gush of red and black fruits, mildly spiced, with light tannins. Very ripe - Yves-Jean applauds its *"sucrosité"* - but not in the least sweet, this is honest and gutsy. A success. 2013-2016

Côtes du Rhône Villages, Cairanne, Vieilles Vignes

Case £78.00 Code AMB311

50% Grenache, 20% each of Syrah and Mourvèdre and 10% Carignan; about a quarter goes into old barrels. Surprisingly pretty red fruit nose, with that floral and strawberryish scent of young Grenache. Pure, melting red fruits, slightly jellied. Appealing texture. Pepper on the finish. This appears to be charming, but with no lack of mass. 2014-2018

Domaine des Espiers, Vacqueyras

Tasting the 2011 vintage with Philippe Cartoux was a pleasure: whereas in hot vintages like 2005, 2007 and 2009 his wines can be hugely powerful, this year they were more elegant, with better-integrated tannins - without sacrificing any of their usual character. Even the Côtes du Rhône is, as usual, a well-constructed wine which is always better for being kept a year or two.

The Côtes du Rhône Villages Sablet, from Philippe's vineyards on the better land on the slopes above the village towards Seguret, is largely Grenache but with about 30% Syrah. The Gigondas is about 2/3 Grenache and 1/3 Syrah, about a third raised for 6 months in old oak *demi-muids*, not to lend oak flavour but just to round it out. The Les Blaches cuvée (he makes only about 2000-2500 bottles of this) includes a little more Syrah from his best plots of old vines (and Philippe says these are of the small-berried northern Rhône *Serine*), and takes the oak further (though only 15% new barrels) to create a sumptuous and showy bottle.

Côtes du Rhône

Case £57.00 Code ESP111

Magnums Case (6 x 150cl.) £63.00 Code ESP811

Soft hue. Open, ripe scent of strawberries and a hint of cinnamon. Soft, juicy and fresh, but there are good tannins lurking there too. Plenty of heart. Late 2013-2016

Côtes du Rhône Villages, Sablet

Case £81.00 Code ESP411

Lifted, floral perfume. Gush of cherries. Really ripe and fleshy, all strawberries and cherries, fresh and balanced, over a similar underpinning of tannins to the Côtes du Rhône. This wine always delivers. 2014-2018

Gigondas

Case £123.00 Code ESP311

Some elements from the barrels - a little vanilla - apparent on the nose. Much more black-fruited than the Sablet, cherries and blackberries, with a darker, dried fruit hint of figs. Tannins really rounded and integrated - so pure and smooth. Powerful but well-mannered. 2014-2019

Gigondas, Les Blaches

Case £195.00 Code ESP211

Both the aromas and the palate indicate this appears less richly oaked than usual. Instead it's all lush black fruit, very concentrated and ripe, with a cassis-like opulence and texture. Well-covered tannins. Forward and exciting. 2014-2019

Domaine Le Couroulu, Vacqueyras

Note: reds from the 2010 vintage offered here

Our customers will know that Guy Ricard at Couroulu is a late bottler so we always offer his wines *en primeur* a year late. This charming, modest man has worked his magic again - and even he was prepared to state that he thinks his 2010s are superb. Guy speaks with a long perspective, and though he appears like a jolly peasant, he knows exactly what he is doing: he noted that though his 2010s appear approachable, analysis indicates that they actually include more tannin than his 2009s. Prices have increased here, but only because (as with Philippe Cartoux at Espiers) Guy had his lowest ever yields in 2010, about 25 hectolitres per hectare for the Classique and a miserable 16 hl./ha. for the Vieilles Vignes. Note too: a) the usual very high scores from Robert Parker, a long-time admirer; and b) the Vieilles Vignes is available in bottles, magnums and rather magnificent double magnums.

White

2011 Vacqueyras, Cuvée Laura, Blanc

Case £108.00 Code COW611

It's the first time we have offered this rarity *en primeur* (as so little white Vacqueyras is made, and Guy Ricard at Couroulu only produces about 1,200 bottles). From Viognier and Roussanne in old oak and old vine Grenache Blanc and Clairette kept closed in tank, this is akin to a white Châteauneuf. Fascinating, non-fruity scents: fennel, pine resin, straw and honey. Ripe pears, citrus and stone fruit palate, weighty but also fresh, dry and somehow savoury. 2013-2015

Red

2010 Vacqueyras, Classique

Case £108.00 Code COW110

About 65% Grenache, 20% Syrah and 15% Mourvèdre. When tasted against the 2009 this actually seems softer and more approachable: Guy remarked that it appeared more feminine and "*velouté*". Generous, ripe, cooked fruit scents. Lively and bright, spicy and energetic, showing sharp black fruits - berries and cherries. Some attractive underlying meatiness indicates its food-friendly potential.

"Two spectacular Vacqueyras were also produced in 2010. Both are black as a moonless night with lots of blueberry and blackberry fruit. The 2010 Vacqueyras Cuvée Classique, a blend of 60% Grenache, 25% Syrah and 15% Mourvedre aged in cement tanks, is more evolved with good acidity, terrific focus and unbelievable concentration for a wine that sells for under 10 euros at the domaine. (92-94)", Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate, October 2011. Late 2013-2019

2010 Vacqueyras, Vieilles Vignes

Case £141.00 Code COW310

Magnums case (6 x 150cl.) £153.00 Code COW910

Jeroboam (1 x 300cl., equivalent to 4 bottles) £52.00 Code COW510

The Vieilles Vignes bottling is a very special Vacqueyras. Average production of this wine is around 8,000 bottles, about two-thirds 60 year old Grenache and one third Syrah, based on one plot planted mainly by Guy's grandparents on the plateau amidst the garrigue. Dense hue. Intense aromas of cassis, cooked fruit and meaty, savoury elements. Very powerful on the palate, the great mass and texture indicating huge promise, but it's actually quite closed right now. A keeper.

*"The 2010 Vacqueyras Vieilles Vignes (70% Grenache and 30% Syrah aged in cement) reveals off the charts blackberry and blueberry fruit notes intermixed with Provencal herbs, lavender and licorice. This sensational 2010 should drink well for 10-15+ years. (92-94+)", Robert Parker, **The Wine Advocate**, October 2011. 2015-2020*

Couroulu Mixed Case £117.00

Code COWDOZ

Including 3 bottles of the 2011 Cuvée Laura white, 6 bottles of the 2010 Classique and 3 bottles of the 2010 Vieilles Vignes.

Domaine du Joncier, Lirac

Marine Roussel is still exulting in her espousal of organic and bio-dynamic methods: giving her a generous and wholly healthy crop in 2011, the first vintage when all her wines will be certified as bio-dynamic by Demeter. Just as important to our customers, she has achieved this without any price increases!

It's worth pointing out that the land in Lirac is by no means homogenous. Marine's vineyards are on the best terroir, marked by the same "*galets roulés*" as those of Châteauneuf just across the Rhône.

Lirac, Le Gourmand

Case £69.00 Code JON511

About 65% Grenache with Syrah, Cinsaut and Carignan. Enticing scents: a hint of cassis with floral and liquorice hints. Plummy, juicy, joyous, yet with plenty of seductive flesh this is "*gourmand*" indeed, really pleasing, and you don't have to wait for it either. 2013-2016.

Lirac, Le Classique

Case £87.00 Code JON111

Magnums Case (6 x 150cl.) £93.00 Code JON911

As Marine now has a separate bottling of Grenache, she has increased the Syrah element in the Classique, so this is about 40% Syrah, 35% Grenache with Mourvèdre, Carignan and Cinsault, all from her older vines and best parcels. Very deep color and brilliant rim. Gorgeous black cherries dominate. Very ripe. Generous tannins. Somehow this combines northern Rhône finesse and southern Rhône grunt. As ever, terrific. Late 2013-2018

Domaine Roger Perrin, Châteauneuf-du-Pape

We are expanding our business with this excellent estate which lies in the northern sector of Châteauneuf just off the road to Orange. They have such a fine range of wines, and under the skilled supervision of Véronique Perrin-Rolin, an oenologist working in Tain, every one offers virtues. As Véronique puts it, they are not seeking excessive extraction here, but rather a traditional but very drinkable style.

Like many top estates here, the average age of the vines is very high across all their land, with a large part of the wine in their splendid old vine Côtes du Rhône from ancient trunks planted in 1906; and the average age of the vines in their 15.6 hectares of Châteauneuf being about 60 years.

White

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc

Case £150.00 Code PES711

From about half Grenache Blanc with some barrel fermented Roussanne, plus Clairette, Bourboulenc and the little-grown Picardan, all raised in tank. This is very much a modern style of white Châteauneuf, with delightful freshness, but plenty of weight too. Nose and palate show fresh apricots, ripe pears and herbal notes - fennel. An appealing alternative to white Burgundy, excellent to accompany chicken dishes. 2013-2017

Red

Côtes du Rhône Vieilles Vignes

Case £75.00 Code PES211

From vines averaging 60 years of age grown on parcels just outside the boundary of the Châteauneuf-du-Pape appellation; and about 73% Grenache, 22% Syrah and 5% Cinsaut. This always shows such attractive fat - that level of glycerol is something almost unique to the southern Rhône. Really open black fruit, cherries and berries, rich, backed by smooth tannins and with an incipient savouriness. Terrific. 2013-2017

Châteauneuf-du-Pape

Case £153.00 Code PES411

Magnums Case (6 x 150cl.) £159.00 Code PES911

About 65% Grenache, with Syrah and Mourvèdre and tiny amounts of Cinsault, Counoise, Vaccarese and Cinsault; and about 15% in a mix of oak barrels. Harmonious fresh fruit aromas. Excellent, immediately appealing attack of blackberries and blackcurrants, lush, with just the merest notes of leather and game to indicate its likely evolution. Smooth, honest, textbook Châteauneuf. Even in the 2009 and 2010 vintages this wine was approachable early, and this will be similar. 2014-2019

Domaine La Barroche, Châteauneuf-du-Pape

For four years we have been enthusing about the outstanding quality of the Barroche reds. That confidence is now really justified by the splendid current drinking condition of the estate's Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Signature 2007. We put this wine in our Christmas list and several people who bought it have come back to us singing its praises.

We used to say that Julian Barrot, who began bottling wine from the family's vineyards only in 2003, was a rising star. However, this estate has definitely arrived, sadly with prices rising to match demand for these terrific wines. The key is the Barrot family's precious inheritance of old vines, including about a third of the estate's 12 hectares planted to 100 year old Grenache vines. Most of the vines lie in the north and north east of the appellation, on the plateau near to Rayas and Beaucastel, on very meagre, sandy and pebbly soils.

Julian has made two cuvées in this vintage: Signature, Barroche's principal wine; and the estate's top wine, Pure, from very old vine Grenache produced in tiny quantities, especially in 2011. For the latter we can only accept orders of 6 bottles per customer. Secondly, as there's huge demand for this, **if people would like to buy Pure we would expect them to buy a cases of Signature from Barroche as well, or alternatively other wines in this offer to the value of £250.00 or more.** We are reluctant to do this, but we also don't much like selling this rarity to cherry-pickers or people who only buy to resell!

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Signature

Case £270.00 Code BAS211

The mainstay of production, a Grenache dominated blend: in 2011 65% Grenache, 16% Mourvèdre, 13% Syrah, and 6% Cinsaut (the Cinsaut, from very old vines in Les Cerises, is wonderful in this cellar) and 1% others. Scent of raspberries - both fresh and with cooked accents. As usual at this early stage this is not fully together: a core of cooked black cherries is enlivened by notes of toast, cinnamon and Kirsch. There's plenty of acid and tannin for longevity, and there's a roasted, earthy quality akin to that seen on young Hermitage. Potentially great stuff!

"Admirably demonstrating the winemaking and viticultural skills of Julien Barrot, the 2011 Chateauneuf du Pape is a seriously endowed wine that transcends the overall quality of this vintage. Its dense ruby/purple color is accompanied by copious aromas of black raspberries, kirsch, lavender and licorice. A sleeper of the vintage, this medium to full-bodied 2011 should drink well for 6-8 years. (89-91)", Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate, October 2012. 2015-2021

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Pure

Case of **Six** bottles £198.00 Code BAS511 (6 bottles only per customer - linked to the purchase of 12 bottles of Signature from Barroche as well, or alternatively other wines in this offer to the value of £250.00 or more)

97% Grenache, from one complanted parcel of vines planted in 1901, in the Grand Pierre area near to Rayas, on sandy but red-irony soils. These old vines are managed to yield just a few bunches each. Bunches are partly destemmed, and after a four week maceration the wine has about 18 months in old oak tuns.

"The 2011 Chateauneuf du Pape Pure may be the wine of the vintage. It boasts terrific intensity as well as a majestic perfume of black and red fruits intertwined with floral, sandy soil and lavender notes. This astonishingly rich, essentially naked wine (it was aged totally in old foudres) should age effortlessly for 10-15 years. (93-95)", Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate, October 2012. 2015-2022

Clos des Papes, Châteauneuf-du-Pape

Vincent Avril's famed red is from about 65% Grenache, 20% Mourvèdre, 10% Syrah and 5% of Counoise, Vaccarèse and Muscardin. It's always highly refined - Vincent, trained in Beaune, seeks a Burgundian "*finesse*" - and approachable quite young, although the relatively high percentage of Mourvèdre adds longevity. Clos des Papes have also long made a speciality of their white wine, wholly unoaked but capable of long ageing. It is varied in its blend, including: Roussanne and Grenache Blanc ("for fat and fruit" as Vincent Avril said); Bourbolenc and Picpoul (for "acidity"); and Clairette and Picardou (for "*finesse*"). They pick late and seek a fruity but mineral style, which can be drunk young or alternatively left for many years - as it can close down in between and be rather mute and disappointing.

Although this estate has been organic and working with bio-dynamics for years, this is the first vintage which is certified as bio-dynamic.

As ever, we have limited stocks of these two wines so please call us immediately if you would like to buy either.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc

Case of 6 bottles £168.00 Code CDP311

"The 2011 Chateauneuf du Pape Blanc is composed of all the white varieties permitted in Chateauneuf du Pape. Although it is not put through malolactic fermentation and sees no oak whatsoever, this cuvee has proven to age remarkably well. The 2011 exhibits lots of poached pear, honeysuckle, quince and white currants as well as a full-bodied, powerful (15.6% natural alcohol) style. It reveals lots of glycerin along with wonderful freshness, acidity and purity. The 2011 should last for 10-12 years. 92 points", Robert Parker, **The Wine Advocate**, October 2012. Drink 2013-early 2015, or alternatively 2017-2019

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Rouge

Case £465.00 Code CDP111

"I tasted through a number of different foudres of the 2011 Chateauneuf du Pape red, which came from tiny yields of 18 hectoliters per hectare in what was a relatively prolific harvest for many producers in Chateauneuf du Pape. Proprietor Vincent Avril implemented a severe triage in both the vineyard and cellars. The result is a beautifully made, sexy, hedonistic, up-front red with plenty of mulberry, kirsch and cassis fruit, a medium to full-bodied mouthfeel, and plenty of glycerin and authority. It tips the scales at 15% alcohol. (91-94)", Robert Parker, **The Wine Advocate**, October 2012. 2014-2022

The North

Yann Chave, Mercuriol

Yann Chave's 2010 Crozes-Hermitage, Le Rouvre, featured on the front cover of the January 2013 issue of **Decanter** magazine (see our accompanying list for details): typical of the critical acclaim his wines rightly enjoy both here and within France. He was very happy with 2011, enjoying a generous crop (he actually did three green harvests to reduce his yields) of ripe grapes, which came in very healthy due to the Mistral, but also with the moderate alcohol Yann prefers. For example his Crozes-Hermitage will be 13°.

We think of Yann as a young man: we bought his 1998 vintage, the first he made alone after taking over from his father, but he is now on his 14th vintage, and a wine maker of calm assurance. He treats his two cuvées of Crozes-Hermitage differently. The first Crozes receives micro-oxygenation in stainless steel tank, making for a forward, deliciously fruity wine which can be drunk quite early. On the other hand his Crozes Le Rouvre, named after a type of sessile oak, is aged for 12 months in new, one and two year old *demi-muids*, 600 litre barrels. This comes from parcels of old vines on the very stony fields at Les Chassis, and is a very serious, mineral wine for ageing. Yann's Hermitage, also in *demi-muids*, but 100% new, comes from plots in Beaumes (granitic) and Péléat (stony, *galets*) on the great hill. Yann says he likes to use new oak as its greater porosity prevents reduction (Syrah being very prone to reduction), so he doesn't have to manipulate the wine by pumping over.

Crozes-Hermitage

Case £120.00 Code CHA111

Bright purple. As usual, it's difficult to believe this wine is unoaked: there's even a hint of chocolate on the aromas. On the palate appealingly young and vital, all pure black fruits. This is a perfumed, balanced northern Rhône Syrah which one could enjoy immediately. 2013-2016

Crozes-Hermitage, Le Rouvre

Case £156.00 Code CHA211

Magnums Case (6 x 150cl.) £165.00 Code CHA911

Deep and inky. Very ripe scents: cassis and black chocolate; and the same almost jellied, sharp blackcurrant and Morello cherry fruit marks the palate. Again, so pure. Soft tannins. Mocha touches. Superbly natural and unforced, yet suavely elegant. 2015-2019

Hermitage

Wooden Case of 6 bottles £234.00 Code CHA311

This year we have prevailed on Yann to bottle our allocation in wooden boxes of six, so much better for long keeping than cardboard. Very deep purple. As ever, similar Syrah aromas to the Rouvre but with the extra dimension of that roasted note characteristic of Hermitage. So full, rich and round, with an initial impression of voluptuous black fruit. Around that core there's some spice, lively acidity and velvety tannins. Expands energetically on the palate. 2016-2023

Domaine Monier-Perréol, St. Desirat

Restless experimentation and investment continues *chez* Monier. The latest toys in the pursuit of perfection are very expensive concrete eggs for the whites; and he has been experimenting with the preservative properties of pyramids. Jean-Pierre has been farming organically since the 1980s and biodynamically since 1993, long before this extreme and fascinating branch of organic viticulture became fashionable: his wines are certified by Ecocert. Whatever his means, he unfailingly produces wonderfully flavoursome, well-oaked wines which are hugely admired within France and seem to go down very well with sommeliers at smart London restaurants too!

Both reds are 100% Syrah, destemmed after 12 hours cold soak, then given a temperature controlled fermentation before spending 12 months in barrel. The straight Saint Joseph comes from 30 year old vines near the cellar and goes into about 20% new oak. The low-yielding production of Terre Blanche (about 30% new oak, all aged naturally for seven years) derives from limestone/clay parcels on more steeply pitched vineyards.

Saint Joseph

Case £129.00 Code MOP511

Almost floral perfume. Jellied fruit - very ripe raspberries and blackberries. So pure, juicy and ripe. So often in this wine Jean-Pierre combines perfect ripeness with a very food-friendly classic bite. Delicious. 2014-2018

Saint Joseph, Terre Blanche

Case £162.00 Code MOP111

Cassis aromas, akin to the best Northern Rhône Syrah. Both powerful and smooth, all rich and velvety black fruit. Very well-integrated tannins. Splendid long finish. 2014-2019

Domaine Balthazar, Cornas

Franck Balthazar was very happy with his 2011 Cornas. This year he had none of the problems with flowering which plagued him in 2010, and he brought in an average-sized, perfect crop. Whilst he thinks Chaillot may have a little less power than 2010 or 2009, he guarantees more elegance!

Franck makes a traditional style of Cornas. His wines really show the classic marriage of very old vines (those in Les Chaillots are in their mid forties and mid nineties) grown on the dramatic, steep granitic slopes of this tiny terroir (the entire planted surface of Cornas is about the same as one big Bordeaux chateau). The grapes are not destemmed, and after a traditional fermentation the wine goes into old 600 litre *demi-muids* before being bottled without fining or filtration. Franck has effectively been organic in production since 2006.

Cornas, Chaillot

Case £210.00 Code BAL111

Seductively open scent - cassis and violets. Intensely blackcurranty, refined, with supple tannins. This already appears so complete, with a terrific finish, that ripe black fruit returning with a flourish. 2015-2020

Domaine Pichat, Vérenay

When I visited him in September 2011 Stéphane Pichat was quite sanguine about the year, but he is now very happy as to how his wines have come out: he actually prefers his 2011 reds to his fine 2009s. The vintage perhaps suits his chosen style: he doesn't seek to make oaky blockbusters, seeking instead finesse, equilibrium and moderate alcohol.

He is beginning to build a name for himself, both in France and here, where Rhône authority John Livingstone-Learmonth rates his wines highly. His Côte-Rôtie remains very moderately priced, but I doubt it will stay at this level for long!

White

Condrieu, La Caille

Case £258.00 Code PID611

From one south-facing parcel which gives him just three barrels (one new each vintage). Beautifully poised: fresh stone fruit - peaches and apricots; fine clean oak; and an elegant minerality. Opens out impressively; and offers a long, floral honey and stone fruit finish. 2013-2015

Red

Syrah, Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes

Case £84.00 Code PID111

The lightly oaked Vin de Pays Syrah, from young vines within the Côte Rôtie appellation and on similar land to Champons, is a wine of authenticity and value. Just rounded from the barrel-ageing, it's ripe, juicy and with appealing cut. Raspberry tone. Rather pure, lifted and fine. Late 2013-2017

Côte Rôtie, Champon's

Case £258.00 PID311

Stéphane's principal Côte Rôtie, Champon's (sic), is 85% from the vineyard of that name in the northern, schistous sector of the appellation, with the rest from Plomb and Cognet. There's about 2% Viognier in this wine. Perfume of fresh red fruit - raspberries and crushed strawberries - plus nutmeg and cinnamon. Fruit more cooked on the palate, with generous fat and volume. Really ripe and pleasingly silky. 2015-2021

2011 Burgundy En Primeur

The Weather

Unseasonably warm and very dry spring weather ensured a good early flowering, but also prompted concerns of an extremely early harvest in mid August. A cold and wet summer ensured that the rate of development in the vineyard slowed considerably. As one winemaker put it "Water stress was succeeded by water excess." Jean-Marie Fourrier noted that the younger, and therefore more productive, vines were much more susceptible to rot than the older, lower yielding plants. From mid August the temperature rose and dry weather meant excellent conditions to bring the fruit to full maturity. As in 2010 these various challenges through the growing season significantly reduced the size of the crop. Most producers started to pick at the end of August and the weather held through into September.

The Wines

It was always going to be difficult for any vintage to follow on from 2009 and 2010, and I arrived in Burgundy in the early days of November with some trepidation. Interestingly, a glance at my last year's notes shows that I approached my early tastings of 2010s cautiously, assuming they could not match the joy of the preceding year: yet how wrong I was then. So whilst the weather during the growing season was reminiscent of 2007, both the whites and reds are significantly better than the wines of that vintage. 2011 is not in the same league as 2010, though, interestingly, several growers did make a comparison; and perhaps what the wines lack compared with 2010 will actually make them rather more enjoyable to consume during their early years.

The white wines are poised, fruity and charming, with racy rather than aggressive acid structure, and are not overly alcoholic. Whilst my notes perhaps do not contain the same number of superlatives as last year they do indicate that these wines reflect their origins and the quality hierarchy with a clarity and precision that can often be lost in warmer riper years.

For the red wines, modern vinification techniques were again vital following the difficult summer weather. The use of sorting tables to remove diseased fruit followed by gentle extraction and minimal handling ensured that the nascent clarity, freshness and balance were captured. These wines are perfumed and openly fruity; and they have convincing weight along with a refreshing structure which really lifts that fruit and allows a clear expression of the character and quality of each of the Burgundy's myriad *terroirs*.

Prices & Availability

Because the UK trade traditionally tastes in Burgundy during the November of the year following the vintage we already have news of 2012. For a multitude of reasons including frost, hail, disease, and even, in some cases, sunburn, the amount of wine available from 2012 is dramatically reduced. Something of an Indian summer means that the quality of what is available is likely to be very good to great. However, as many *vignerons* have lost the equivalent of one normal year's

production over the last three years, there are likely to be substantial price increases in the pipeline.

Considering this, any price increases *ex-cellar* for 2011 have been generally quite restrained. There are, however, domaines in this list where international demand encourages an automatic annual price increase. As merchants we have to accept this as the discussion generally centres on “how much will you let me buy?” rather than “what discount will you offer?”, and certainly the continued interest from consumers indicates that price has not yet become a barrier to purchase.

Gordon Coates - February 2013

Côte de Nuits

Domaine Fourrier, Gevrey-Chambertin

Whilst acknowledging the meteorological similarities with 2007 Jean-Marie Fourrier considers that his 2011s are much closer in style and quality to the 2010s, but perhaps just lacking a little of the “mineral tension” of that year. The advantage of this for most consumers is that, though still ageworthy, the 2011s will delight from the off. The aim *chez* Fourrier is to produce wines that give pleasure, not wines that overpower and exhaust the taster. There is an extraordinary purity of bright red fruit, and yet the subtle nuances that differentiate village from village, *climat* from *climat*, are clear to taste.

This is the middle of three years with significantly reduced yields and, rather than imposing huge price increases in an attempt to curb demand for his wines, Jean-Marie has reduced allocations. So for the second year we have fewer wines to list and we have much smaller quantities of each. They will sell out quickly.

Morey St-Denis, Clos Solon

Case £276.00 Code FUR811

From half a hectare of 40 year old vines, close to the centre of the village. Soft, expansive raspberry aromas. Medium bodied, pure red cherry fruit, with refreshing acid and fine tannins. As usual this lasts well and will give pleasure from an early stage. 2013-2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Aux Echezeaux

Case £288.00 Code FUR211

A single vineyard wine, from vines planted in 1928 at the southern limit of Gevrey bordering Morey St-Denis. Translucent ruby with blue tinges. The nose leaps from the glass - all summer fruits and cream. An elegant, velvety mouthful of ripe, slightly darker fruit, discretely structured. 2014-2020

Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieille Vigne

Case £288.00 Code FUR111

Also from vines planted in 1928 but to the north of the village, close to the hamlet of Brochon. As usual this is more deeply coloured, broader and firmer than the wines above, and will need more time to develop. A broad palate of rich hedgerow fruit with just a kiss of oak and sweet spice. Particularly well constructed, with heft and power indicative of definite potential for future pleasure. 2015-2021

Sylvain Cathiard, Vosne-Romanée

I have met Sylvain's son, Sebastien, once before, but then he quietly shadowed his father throughout my visit. 2011 was Sebastien's first year in charge and so on this year's visit he led me through the tasting. This is a case of evolution rather than revolution, and the house style for wines with intense, highly refined fruit rounded with clean, sweet, high quality oak remains. Sebastien did talk of subtle changes including reducing the percentage of new oak for some wines. These wines invariably give great pleasure from an early stage and, such is their suavity and delectable fruit, rarely pass through a closed phase. Needless to say we have tiny quantities of each of these wines.

Vosne Romanée

Case of 6 bottles £285.00 Code CAT111

A vibrant, translucent mid purple hue. Lovely red fruit scents. Almost delicate this year with a filigree style and persistent cherry and redcurrant fruit. 2014-2020

Chambolle-Musigny, Clos de l'Orme

Case of 6 bottles £300.00 Code CAT411

From 56 year old vines in a vineyard just below the 1er Crus near the village centre. This wine is always so pure and precise, with its bright raspberry fruit. Such silky texture and elegant balance, it is generous yet also focused. Well cloaked acid and tannin structure. Finishes well. 2014-2020

Nuits-Saint-Georges, 1er Cru, Aux Murgers

Case of 6 bottles £594.00 Code CAT611

Another well-sited plot between Nuits and Vosne on the mid slope contiguous with the run of Grand Crus just to the north. Open on the nose with a fruit compote character and the tell-tale sweet spice of this vintage. The palate is powerfully constructed, with an abundance of creamy fruit and such silky texture. A long finish. 2015-2022

Vosne Romanée 1er Cru En Orveaux

Case of 6 bottles £594.00 Code CAT511

Sourced from old vines just above the Grand Cru of Echezeaux (indeed most of the vineyard is actually within the boundary of the Grand Cru). A complex mix of soft red fruits and berries, again with a peck of spice. Real depth and density, allied to poise and a linear focus. 2015-2022

Domaine Faiveley, Nuits-Saint-Georges

Established in 1825 this large (120 hectares) family owned domaine is controlled by seventh generation Erwan Faiveley. Erwan has recruited the talented and well connected Bernard Hivet as general manager, and together they have overseen an expansion of the domaine to include more white Premier and Grand Crus in the Côte de Beaune. The style of the reds remains traditional, yet they are less austere and more forward than those produced during the tenure of Erwan's father François. These wines were tasted first in the extensive Faiveley cellars in Nuits-Saint-Georges in early November, then again a few weeks later in London, in the company of Export Director Vincent Avenel.

Whites

Mercurey Blanc, Clos Rochette

Case £117.00 Code FAJ111

From a monopole vineyard between Mercurey and neighbouring Rully. Bright mid-lemon. An open, lively citrus and rose petal nose, a touch leesy. Good weight of ripe stone fruit; elegant and finishes well. 2013-2017

Meursault

Case: £261.00 Code: FAJ211

Mid lemon colour. On the nose this shows textbook melted butter and oatmeal. Good weight and texture, with ripe pear and melon. Classy, tight and persistent. 2014-2018

Puligny-Montrachet, 1er Cru, La Garenne

Case of 6 bottles £213.00 Code FAJ311

Sparse soils on the upper slopes shape this distinctive 1er Cru. Dazzling star bright hue. Generous and classic floral perfume. On the palate white fruits vie with herbs, toast and mineral notes. So lively, tense and poised, this builds wonderfully to the finish. 2014-2020

Corton Charlemagne, Grand Cru

Case of 6 bottles £555.00 Code FAJ411

From the north eastern slopes of the hill of Corton. Quite pale gold. Lifted, classy scents of peach and almond. Really ripe, exuberant fruit, mouth-filling texture with very taut structure. So, so long. 2015-2023

Reds

Mercurey Rouge, La Framboisière

Case £147.00 Code FAJ611

Just south of Clos Rochette on argilo-calcaire soils, this is another of the domaine's wholly owned (*monopole*) vineyards. The nose is perennially redolent of raspberries. Decent weight of rounded, creamy red fruit. Already well integrated and well balanced, with good length. 2013-2017

Beaune, 1er Cru, Clos de l'Ecu

Case £252.00 Code FAJ711

From a monopole vineyard above Les Cents Vignes, with a southerly exposure. Quite a broad nose of cherry fruit. Silk textured, strawberry and redcurrant fruit, with an assertive acid and tannin structure. 2014-2020

Nuits-Saint-Georges, 1er Cru, Les Porêts-Saint-Georges

Case of 6 bottles: £192.00 Code: FAJ811

From the mid slope between Premeaux and Nuits, with the oldest vines dating from 1957. Classy, open vanilla and cherry aromas. Intense, succulent hedgerow fruit is supported by discreet tannin and well judged oak. Stylish, benchmark Nuits. 2015-2023

Mazis Chambertin, Grand Cru

Case of 6 bottles £588.00 Code FAJ011

From a 1.2 hectare parcel, this wine is again a highlight of Faiveley's mouth-watering array of Grand Crus. Such deep aromas of dark red fruit, with mocha and tobacco leaf. The palate is at once broad yet focused, powerful yet refined. Finely judged, ripe red fruit deftly cloaks the firm foundation. 2016-2025

Côte de Beaune

Domaine Jean Guiton, Bligny Les Beaune

Guillaume Guiton, who like so many of his generation has worked in several wineries both in Burgundy and as far away as Australia, is now in charge of the domaine founded 35 years ago by his father Jean. The family's 11 hectares of vines cover a wide number of appellations; and the wines display wonderful purity, and are each true to their origin. Over a few short years this has become one of our favourite sources for refined, expressive, yet affordable red Burgundy.

Reds

Bourgogne Pinot Noir

Case £93.00 Code GUI111

From vines to the east of Pommard and given 12 months in barrel, second or third fill. A concentrated nose of warm raspberry. Expressive red fruit is to the fore supported by balancing acid and creamy oak. Yet again, this is impressively stylish for a generic appellation. 2013-2016

Savigny Les Beaune, 1er Cru, Les Hauts Jarrons

Case £180.00 Code GUI311

From a vineyard close to the border with Beaune itself, and given 25% new oak. Clear and bright, uniform ruby hue. Bright, lifted nose of summer berries. Ripe fruit, correct tannin structure lifted by a scintillating acid balance. My enjoyment was heightened by Guillaume's pleasure in this wine's impressive showing. 2013-2018

Pernand Vergelesses, 1er Cru, Les Vergelesses

Case £192.00 Code GUI611

The product of a parcel of old, low yielding vines in this well sited vineyard. Aroma of raspberry coulis. This is intense, generous and well structured, with cream and savoury mineral depths. On the palate it builds to a very long finish, which bodes well. 2014-2019

Françoise & Denis Clair, Santenay

My annual visit to the Clair family has fallen into a familiar routine. Having been warmly greeted by Denis he allows his son, Jean-Baptiste, to introduce the increasingly stylish whites, but cannot resist making good humoured interjections. As we move on to taste the reds, J-B listens quietly as Denis talks through the range. Whilst the Clairs are very content with the quality of their 2011s, they assert that they should be drunk before the 2010s.

As with most of our stable, oaking is understated here: 10% new barrels on most of the wines, 20-30% on the top St. Aubins and 35% on the Puligny. The excellent *village* Saint-Aubin is rightly our best selling Côte d'Or white. The 1er Cru, Champlots, makes a perfect bridge between the village wine and the ageworthy and more pricey Murgers des Dents de Chien. The 1er Cru Puligny continues to offer very good value from a vineyard that deserves to be better known.

The Hautes Côtes de Beaune continues to offer genuine interest and value, whilst the red Saint-Aubin 1er Cru would easily pass as the product of a much more famous appellation. The wines here, both whites and reds, really do have "*rapport qualité prix*".

Whites

Saint-Aubin Blanc

Case £129.00 Code CLB211

Crystal bright. Open citrus and white floral aromas. This displays real typicity with ripe white fruit allied to cream and oatmeal. Good weight and texture; excellent value. 2013-2017

Saint-Aubin Blanc, 1er Cru, Champlots

Case £162.00 Code CLB311

Champlots lies on a south west facing slope above the hamlet of Gamay with calcareous soils that imbue its wines with a definite mineral edge. The nose displays the clarity and tension of the vintage. On the palate creamy ripe pear fruit with a note of flint, well integrated, elegant and deep. 2013-2017

Saint-Aubin Blanc, 1er Cru, Les Murgers des Dents de Chien

Case £213.00 Code CLB411

Sited on the rocky slopes above the Montrachets, this is rightly considered one of the top Premier Crus in the village, and is consistently our favourite of the five in the Clair's cellar. Stylish, rounded, compelling aromas. Very finely honed lily and oatmeal palate, elegantly balanced, with such a long finish. 2014-2018

Puligny-Montrachet, 1er Cru, La Garenne

Case £345.00 Code CLB511

From old vines on this calcareous site high on the slope. Bright, pale lemon. Open, classy and focused on the nose. A compelling weight of silky fruit is given depth by subtle minerality. Finishes well, with a textbook savoury note. 2014-2019

Reds

Bourgogne Haute Côtes de Beaune Rouge

Case £96.00 Code CLB611

Even mid ruby tone. Delightful scent of wild raspberries. Juicy, ripe red cherries and raspberries given clear focus by a crisp acid spine. Such *typicité* and so moreish. 2013-2016

Saint-Aubin Rouge, 1er Cru, Sur le Sentier du Clou

Case £135.00 Code CLB811

Deeper colour and a broader nose with dark red fruit and coffee. A good weight of hedgerow fruits cloaks a well measured structure. This is lively and perhaps a touch more polished than recent vintages; very attractive. 2014-2019

René Lequin-Colin, Santenay

This 9 hectare family domaine, which dates back over 300 years, has a lovely range of vineyards, deriving from the marital conjoining of Lequins from Santenay and Colins from Chassagne-Montrachet. Relaxed and charming, François Lequin makes a well presented range of clean, precise and expressive wines. Although clearly settled on his style, François is moving towards organic methods in the vineyard which he feels helps the expression of *terroir*. This thoughtful respect for tradition allied to contemporary methods yields results which we really enjoy, and clearly so do you.

Whites

Bourgogne Chardonnay

Case £75.00 Code LEQ811

From fruit grown in vineyards close to the village of Santenay this is fermented 50% in tank and 50% in barrel, with 10% new oak. Open and clean with floral and ripe melon aromas. A creamy palate of attractive pear and melon fruit. With decent weight and complexity, this tastes grander than its lowly appellation: it's a bargain. 2013-2016

Chassagne-Montrachet, Les Charrières

Case £201.00 Code LEQ111

The fruit comes from very old, low yielding vines located below the Montrachet Grand Crus and around 25% new oak is used. Smells of flowers, with hazlenuts and subtle woodsmoke. As always focused and mineral, currently intense and quite tight. So impressive and with a good long finish. 2014-2017

Chassagne-Montrachet, 1er Cru, Les Caillerets

Case £276.00 Code LEQ311

We believe that the chalky, calcareous soils of this well-sited vineyard on the slope above the village produce the finest Premier Cru in François' cellar. Inviting on the nose with generous aromas, yet piercing focus. On the palate, rich, ripe pear fruit, mineral and well structured. Promising an attractive development. 2014-2019

Corton Charlemagne, Grand Cru

Case of 6 bottles £258.00 Code LEQ011

South facing, high on the hill overlooking Aloxe-Corton. Initially closed, the nose quickly blossoms to an array of fruit and spice backed by toasty oak. With a rich silky entry, this shows nectar-like weight, racy acid and builds really well. 2015-2020

Batard-Montrachet, Grand Cru

Case of 6 bottles £432.00 Code LEQ911

Limpid green gold. Scents of aniseed and grass with caramel in support. This is brooding, huge and opulent; even more dense than the Corton Charlemagne. 2015-2020

Reds

Bourgogne Pinot Noir

Case £75.00 Code LEQ611

The grapes are all destemmed and half the wine lies in tank whilst half goes into barrel. Bright clear purple hue. Delightfully lifted red fruit aromas. An array of bright, attractive hedgerow fruits and refreshing balance ensure this builds on the success of earlier vintages. 2013-2016

Santenay Rouge, 1er Cru, La Comme

Case £129.00 Code LEQ711

We have not bought this wine for some time, but it seems a particular success in 2011, with a degree of elegance and polish not often achieved in this village. Warm, dusty blackberry nose. Bright, silky red and black fruits are suavely balanced by correct tannins leading to a good finish. 2014-2019

Mâconnais

Domaine Saumaize-Michelin, Vergisson

Roger is committed to bio-dynamic viticulture (without certification) and he achieves superbly healthy grapes and high levels of ripeness, without the wines ever losing balance or becoming over-ripe or blowsy. Initially concerned by the early and quick flowering, and the possibility that he might be facing another 2003, Roger is more than satisfied with his finished wines after the cool and wet summer months slowed development in the vineyard and allowed the fruit to achieve the optimum hang time and reach full maturity.

Whites

Saint Véran, Fleur

Case £114.00 Code SAU811

This subtly oaked cuvée is the ideal introduction to the house style here. Attractively open jasmine and lilly aromas, and an almost imperceptible note of spice. The well balanced, creamy palate displaying both ripe fruit and floral notes. Rounded and generous; delightful. 2013-2016

Pouilly-Fuissé, Pentacrine

Case: £150.00 Code SAU711

Named after the 5-sided marine fossils found locally, this wine is selected from several parcels across the estate and raised in larger 600 litre demi muids which bring out the floral notes. Such a piercing nose of ripe stone fruit, and such an elegant silky, multifaceted mouthful - cream, citrus, mineral. A consistent favourite. 2013-2018

Pouilly-Fuissé, Clos sur la Roche

Case £174.00 Code SAU411

From vines on the lower slopes of the Roche de Vergisson directly behind the domaine. Aromas of oatmeal and honey, perhaps more typical of the Côte de Beaune. Generous and classy melon and peach fruit, with vanilla nuance. Real finesse allied to power, complete, well integrated, and finishing with a flourish. 2013-2019

STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

13 Humphrey Farms, Hazeley Road, Twyford
Winchester, Hampshire SO21 1QA

Telephone: 01962 712351 Fax: 01962 717545

Email: sales@stonevine.co.uk Website: www.stonevine.co.uk