

THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH PROVENCE LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON THE NEXT GENERATION

TASTINGS

We will be holding tastings of a selection of wines from this list, as follows:

HAMPSHIRE

Good Friday 19th April and Easter Saturday 20th April, 9.30am to 3.45pm

At the shop in Twyford

A free informal tasting of about 20 wines

LONDON

Tuesday 30th April, 6.00pm to 8.30pm

Prince's Room, Middle Temple, Middle Temple Lane, London, EC4Y 9AT

A walk-round tasting of about 35 wines with winemakers Amélie d'Hurlaborde from Mas d'Amile and Matthieu Collet from Domaine Fontanel presenting their wines.

Cost £15.00 per head. Please let us know at 01962 712351 or sales@stonevine.co.uk if you would like to attend. Tickets on www.stonevine.co.uk

STONE, VINE & SUN

WINE MERCHANTS

THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH PROVENCE LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON THE NEXT GENERATION

winemaking rather than daily drinking wine and/or volume; and secondly, they are usually the first in their families to approach vines and wine with not just the accrued knowledge of a family behind them but with scientific experience gained via viticultural or oenological study; and the first to travel overseas to open their eyes to the wider world of wine and gain different, often challenging, experience. As a result they are the ones who are likely to be more questioning, to push the boundaries, to want to do things differently, to respond to the threat of climate change (and accompanying higher alcohol levels), to seek to make fresher whites and more polished and less structured reds. These are exciting times!

There's exciting change afoot: young winemakers are coming to the fore in our portfolio. Sometimes this is simply a matter of succession, as Nicolas Desblaches takes up responsibilities from mother Laurence at Ribotte in Bandol, or Nicolas Schenk takes over the reins from father Bruno at Grand Arc in the Corbières. Just over the ridge from Grand Arc young Elodie and Matthieu Collet have bought Domaine Fontanel from Pierre and Marie-Claude Fontaneil. We also welcome back to the list Amélie d'Hurlaborde at Mas d'Amile; and we introduce the wines of Vincent Visseque at Mas d'Agamas, a young man who has followed the well-worn but bold path of taking the family's grapes back from the co-operatives to vinify and bottle himself. With the Peyrauds at Mas des Brousses and the Maurys at La Combe Saint-Paul on board as well, the average age of our growers must be statistically unusually low - Jean-François Orosquette at La Grave, in his late forties, may actually be the oldest in this list!

Why does this matter? Because in this region these young growers and winemakers are the first to grow up at a time when the domaines of the south began to focus on quality

Simon Taylor & François Dupont - March 2019

MIXED CASES

All of the cases below are discounted by 10% against the bottle prices in the list

BS119 The Beautiful South

(five whites, one rosé and six reds) £115.85

One bottle of each of the twelve wines listed below.

La Combe Saint-Paul, Viognier, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018 (p.3)

Creysseles, Languedoc, Picpoul de Pinet, 2018 (p.3)

Domaine du Météore, Les Aquarides, Faugères Blanc, 2017 (p.6)

La Combe Saint-Paul, Calcaires d'Ensérune, Languedoc, 2017 (p.9)

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières Blanc, Veillée Equinoxe, 2018 (p.10)

Château La Grave, Minervois Rosé, Expression, 2018 (p.3)

Les Pradelles, IGP d'Hérault, 2017 (p.4)

Comtesse de Marion, Merlot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.4)

Château La Grave, Minervois, Tristan et Julien, 2016 (p.4)

La Combe Saint-Paul, La Clape, Grés Rouges, 2016 (p.9)

Grand Arc, Corbières Rouge, Reserve Grand Arc, 2016 (p.10)

Domaine Fontanel, IGP Côtes Catalanes, 2017 (p.11)

The following mixed cases include two bottles of each of the six wines listed, with a discount of at least 10%

BS219 Languedoc Values

(Three whites and three reds) £94.75

Petit Pont, Blanc, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.3)

La Combe Saint-Paul, Vermentino, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018 (p.3)

Château La Grave, Le Blanc, IGP Hauts de Badens, 2017 (p.3)

Les Pradelles, IGP d'Hérault, 2017 (p.4)

Comtesse de Marion, Merlot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.4)

La Croisade, Pinot Noir, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.4)

BS319 L-R Reds

(six reds) £120.20

Comtesse de Marion, Merlot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.4)

Les Hauts de Median, Petit Verdot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017 (p.4)

Mas des Brousses, Chasseur des Brousses, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2016 (p.7)

La Combe Saint-Paul, La Clape, Grés Rouges, 2016 (p.9)

Grand Arc, Corbières Rouge, Reserve Grand Arc, 2016 (p.10)

Domaine Fontanel, IGP Côtes Catalanes, 2017 (p.11)

BS416 Terroirs of the South

(Three whites and three reds) £139.55

Domaine du Météore, Les Aquarides, Faugères Blanc, 2017 (p.6)

La Combe Saint-Paul, Calcaires d'Ensérune, Languedoc, 2017 (p.9)

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières Blanc, Veillée Equinoxe, 2018 (p.10)

Mas d'Agamas, Terrasses du Larzac, Nostre Mescladis, 2016 (p.8)

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières, Cuvée de Quarante, 2016 (p.10)

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes du Roussillon Rouge, 2016 (p.11)

BS519 Arc of Appellations

(Six reds) £208.95

Domaine du Météore, Faugères Rouge, Les Perséides, 2015 (p.6)

Domaine de la Ribotte, Bandol, 2014 (p.6)

Mas des Brousses, Coteaux du Languedoc, Terrasses du Larzac, 2015 (p.7)

Mas d'Amile, Languedoc-Montpeyroux, 2016 (p.8)

La Combe Saint-Paul, Languedoc-La Clape, L'Insouppçonné, 2014 (p.9)

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes de Roussillon Villages, Tautavel, Cistes, 2016 (p.11)

FRESH AND FRUITY WINES

Here we list what has made the region famous for decades; fresh and fruit driven wines, full of sunshine and delivering immediate pleasure. Most of them are under Indication Géographique Protégée (IGP), formerly known as Vin de Pays, and none has seen the inside of an oak barrel.

WHITE

Petit Pont, Blanc, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017, 12.5% SC

Bottle £7.95 Case with 10% off 85.86 Code PEP118

Note: also available in 5 litre bag in box £43.25 (equivalent to £6.49 a bottle) Code BIB618

The Petit Pont wines - this white, the pretty rosé to the right and the red overleaf - are made by the Vic family near Beziers. As the clan are one of the largest vineyard owners in the south there are economies of scale here. The white is a *tutti frutti* blend of Vermentino with Chardonnay and spiced by other varieties. Fresh, easy-drinking mouthful showing stone fruit and melon with zesty acidity. Drink this year

La Combe Saint-Paul, Chardonnay, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018, 13%

Bottle £9.25 Case with 10% off £99.90 Code CSP118

For details of the Maury family at Combe St. Paul see p.9. Unoaked, this Chardonnay shows peach, apricot and citrus fruit flavours. Ripe and textured but also fresh and crisp on the finish, it would not be out of place in a flight of Mâcons. Now-2020

La Combe Saint-Paul, Vermentino, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018, 13%

Bottle £9.25 Case with 10% off £99.90 Code CSP218

The Maury's Vermentino has been very popular since we introduced it a couple of years ago. Open, stone fruited attack gives way to a more gentle, pine-scented, well-textured mid-palate. Fruity but finishes dry - a fine aperitif wine. Now-2020

Château La Grave, Le Blanc, IGP Hauts de Badens, 2017, 12.5%

Bottle £9.50 Case with 10% off £102.60 Code GRV817

Halves of Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay: the former brings volume which is perfectly balanced by fresh citrus notes from the latter. Now it comes with the simple name, Le Blanc! Drink this year

La Combe Saint-Paul, Viognier, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018, 13%

Bottle £9.50 Case with 10% off £102.60 Code CSP318

Such a pretty aroma of blossom - this is more on the light, fresh, floral side of Viognier than more obviously weighty examples. Hints of white peach and orange blossom. True Viognier body, and a good dry finish. Now-2020

Château La Grave, Minervois Blanc, Expression, 2018, 13%

Bottle £10.95 Case with 10% off £118.26 Code GRV618

80% old vine Maccabeu with Vermentino and Marsanne. Scent of herbs - almost Vermouth-like. As ever, textured and quite concentrated, with apple and melon flavours and a hint of white pepper, but also displaying a nutty / mealy weight. Deserves to be better known. Now-2020

Domaine des Creyssels, Languedoc, Picpoul de Pinet, 2018, 13.5%

Bottle £11.25 Case with 10% off £121.50 Code CRE118

The local Piquepoul grape has the advantage of being slow-ripening: picked after the heat of summer has passed it retains freshness and flavour. In the old Occitan tongue Picpoul means "lip-stinger", due to the grape's natural acidity, but this wine is a lot friendlier than that: look on it as the Muscadet of the Mediterranean, albeit with more heft and flavour. The appellation of Picpoul de Pinet, south-west of Montpellier, has now become deservedly fashionable; irritatingly so, as we now struggle to get enough stock of this excellent example made by Mme. Benau at Creyssels. Her 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 is the 15th vintage in a row we have shipped!

Very open, citrus and pine scents. A touch more texture than usual, fresh and limey, with the merest saline note on the long finish. Picpoul is the traditional accompaniment to the oysters from the local beds near Sète, but it's as appealing as an aperitif as with all types of seafood. Now-2020

ROSÉS

Le Petit Pont, Rosé, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £8.25 Case with 10% off £89.10 Code PEP518

We sell far more of the Petit Pont Rosé that we do of the equivalent white and red added together - that's how good this honest rosé is. From Grenache and Cinsault, in the Provençale style, pale, light and refreshing, it offers a scent of red berries and a pretty mouthful of strawberry and cranberry fruit, with a crisp finish. Nothing complicated, just a well-made, dry rosé perfect for regular consumption. Now-2020

Château La Grave, Minervois Rosé, Expression, 2018, 13%

Bottle £10.50 Case with 10% off £113.40 Code GRV418

From approximate halves of Syrah and Grenache, this unfailingly delivers splendid ripeness and intensity, but the Orosquettes who own La Grave felt 2018 was a top vintage for rosé. Pale pink. Lifted red fruit aromas. An appealing and hugely generous gush of strawberries and raspberries. This is a perfect all rounder, fruity enough to enjoy on its own but also dry enough for food. Now-2020

Note: this wine will arrive in late April

Domaine Begude, Pinot Rosé, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2018, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.50 Case with 10% off £113.40 Code BEG518

We introduced this organically farmed rosé last summer and it was hugely popular: the Pinot Noir is a real point of difference in the south. Clear pale salmon hue. Bright perfume of red berries. Light on its feet, refreshing, with a delicate sense of peach skin and apricot. Now-2020

Mas d'Agamas, Mourvèdre Rosé, IGP Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, 2018, 13%

Bottle £11.50 Case with 10% off £124.20 Code AGA518

For details of our latest find, Mas d'Agamas, see p.8. This pale rosé from Mourvèdre, the grape associated with Bandol (see below), is beautifully made, using *pressurage direct*, (i.e. gentle pressing of red grapes, rather than rosé being juice drawn off a vat almost as a byproduct of red winemaking), arguably the best way of making rosé. Pale, lightly coppery hue. Lightly red-fruited but with fascinating exotic fruit hints. Delicate and fine. Now-2020

Les Quatre Tours, Coteaux d'Aix en Provence Rosé, Signature, 2017, 13%

Bottle £11.95 Case with 10% off £129.06 Code QUA517
Magnum £25.95 Case (6 x 150cl.) with 10% off £140.13
Code QUA917

The characteristic Provençale blend of Grenache, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon from a small co-operative just north of Aix; and a long-term favourite here. Very pale - a transparent onion skin tint - generous fruit and restrained elegance: flavours of white peach, melon and berries, with satisfying weight and a fine dry finish. Drink this year

Domaine de la Ribotte, Bandol Rosé, Cuvée Anaïs, 2017, 13.5%

Bottle £17.50 Case with 10% off £189.00 Code RIB517

Bandol, an appellation on the coast just east of Marseille produces the finest rosés in the world, based on the Mourvèdre grape which thrives on the sunshine and clay soils. This is the fourth vintage we have shipped of this example made by Laurence Desblache and her son Nicolas. Amazing aromas of peach juice and pink grapefruit leap out of the glass; followed by delectable intensity of peach melba and cream. Really well-textured, with a characteristic long and mineral, even saline, finish. We have lost count of the number of customers who have told us that this wine is the best rosé they have ever tasted. (Note: not for people who want a rosé that doesn't taste of anything!) Now-2020

"Really pretty salmon pink colour. Lovely fresh earthiness on the nose, as if someone had just dug into the turf. Sweet, juicy start. More open and a little bit simpler than the blessed Tempier but agreeably savoury and very appetising on the end. This would be serious as an aperitif - though is certainly possible. It really builds on the finish and surely has a little saltiness(!) on the end. Good stuff. 16.5/20", Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com, 20th June 2018

RED

Les Pradelles, IGP d'Hérault, 2017, 12% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.50 Case with 10% off £81.00 Code PRD117

Bottled at a spanking new co-op at Cébazan in St.-Chinian, this is a soft and easy-drinking blend of Carignan and Grenache from the plains of the Languedoc. Red fruited with a surprisingly good texture, no rough edges, light and juicily berried. Very winning. The 2018 follows at £7.75. Now-2020

Petit Pont, Rouge, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.95 Case with 10% off 85.86 Code PEP617

Note: also available in 5 litre bag in box £43.25 (equivalent to £6.49 a bottle) Code BIB217

Largely from Grenache, Cinsault and a little Cabernet Sauvignon. Bramble fruited but with a lighter, raspberry accent and minimal tannin: a fruity, easy-drinking style. Now-2020

Comtesse de Marion, Merlot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £8.95 Case with 10% off £96.66 Code VIC317

A taller bottle and a smarter label have increased sales of this well balanced example. It always shows attractive typicity: aromas of sweet plum with a leafy touch, followed by a supple and lightly creamy, berried palate with barely discernible tannins. Now-2020

La Croisade, Pinot Noir, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £9.50 Case with 10% off £102.60 Code AGW717

With fruit in part sourced from cool Limoux, crisp and classy, blended with some grapes from the plains with riper, sunnier fruit, this is a step up on the last vintage. Juicy palate, true to the grape, showing fresh cherries with a touch of vanilla. Now-2020

Les Hauts de Median, Petit Verdot, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2017, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £9.95 Case with 10% off £107.46 Code VIC217

Petit Verdot - a Bordeaux grape - ripens late even in the Languedoc: the grapes for this wine are always the last to be harvested from the vineyards near Beziers. It's a deeply hued, impressive example crafted by Aurélie Trébuchon: classy layers of red and black fruits, subtle tannins, and vivacious acid. The 2018 follows at the same price. Now-2021

Château La Grave, Minervois, Tristan et Julien, 2016, 13%

Bottle £9.95 Case with 10% off £107.46 Code GRV116

From the Orosquette family, named after two once tiny and now strapping cousins in their 20s, this is a bright and uncomplicated, easy drinking red from halves of Syrah and Grenache. Youthful purple. Lovely squashed berry aromas, and a pure, surprisingly poised palate of ripe strawberry and brambly fruit. Perfectly ripe yet of moderate alcohol, this is the smoothest vintage we have ever shipped of this wine. Now-2020

LIMOUX

Limoux, with vineyards lying across rolling hills - effectively the foothills of the Pyrenees - is an unusual appellation in the south as there is no AOP for red wines. It's best known for sparkling wines made in the Champagne method, i.e. with a secondary fermentation in the bottle, and locals claim that they were making fizz here long before Champagne. White Limoux has to be from hand-picked grapes, both vinified and aged in wood.

Domaine J. Laurens, La Digne d'Aval, Limoux

We have been recommending the sparkling wines of Domaine Laurens for years to customers who want attractive fizz with smart presentation without a Champagne price. Many of you come back for more. Both are well-made, interesting and food friendly; and while the Blanquette has its own and unique spectrum of flavours coming from the local grape Mauzac, the Cremant is more akin to a good house Champagne.

Domaine J. Laurens, Blanquette de Limoux, Le Moulin, Brut, NV, 12%

Bottle £13.50 Case with 10% off £145.80 Code LAU1NV

Elegantly made from 90% Mauzac, the traditional variety of Limoux, with 10% Chardonnay. Pale lemon with a fine mousse. Aromas of ripe pear and white flowers with the notes of crisp apples with warm nuts and cinnamon characteristic of Mauzac. Citrus and orchard fruit flavours meld seamlessly and lead to a finely focused finish. A perfectly refreshing aperitif. Now-2020

Domaine J. Laurens, Cremant de Limoux, Les Graimenous, Brut, 2016, 12%

Bottle £15.50 Case with 10% off £167.40 Code LAU316

A blend of 60% Chardonnay with 30% Chenin, 5% Pinot Noir and 5% Mauzac. Such a refined nose with citrus and green apple scents, breadth and complexity. This is delightfully racy and vital, with ripe orchard fruits and a refined hint of breadiness. Such a versatile wine, an ideal accompaniment to seafood, even sushi and tempura and a dead ringer for Champagne. Now-2021



Domaine Begude, Limoux

We have been shipping wines from James Kinglake since he left his life in the City in 2003 to buy the Château Haute Begude, about 350 metres up in the foothills of the Pyrenees near Limoux. "I could not quite afford to buy in Burgundy so I chose the next best thing". He acknowledges how tough it is to be a farmer: his yields have been hit hard in recent vintages by frost, drought and mildew.

Note that the Pinot Noir and the Begude Pinot Rosé listed on p.4 will arrive in late April.

Domaine Begude, Chardonnay, L'Etoile, Limoux, 2016, 13.5%

Bottle £15.95 Case with 10% off £172.260 Code BEG216

This is a star barrel-fermented Chardonnay, from very low yields (less than half those in Burgundy). It develops beautifully, with ripe citrus and buttery notes coming to the fore. Lots of volume and grip.

"Yield reduced to 18hl/ha. Immediate pressing. 85% barrel fermentation with strict barrel selection process. 20% new French oak; all 600l demi-muids. 15% stainless steel cool fermentation. Pretty rich nose and then very fresh, clean, floral nose. Nice chalky finish. Lightly bitter finish again. Very accomplished texture. Slightly sweeter than a fine white burgundy - which should please some palates. Impressively long. 16.5/20", Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com, 22nd March 2018. Now-2021

Note: this wine will arrive in late April

Pinot Noir, IGP Haute Vallée de l'Aude, 2018, 13.5%

Bottle £12.95 Case with 10% off £139.86 Code BEG618

A long term favourite here, a fresh and pure Pinot - just 10% goes into old barrels. Such an inviting nose of wild strawberries and cherries with a touch of spice. A lovely clean and fresh palate with strawberry, raspberry and cherry flavours. Juicy and ripe with a crisp, long finish.

Perfect Pinot for warmer weather, served cool with a plate of charcuterie or mild cheese. Now-2021

BANDOL AND FAUGÈRES

Domaine du Météore, Cabrerolles, Faugères

2017 was the last vintage made by Geneviève and Guy Coste-Libes from their organically farmed vines in the village of Cabrerolles in the north of the Faugères appellation. Their estate has been sold and we wait to taste the most recent vintages. It's named after the huge crater of a meteor which punctures the vineyards; and all of the wines are named after meteor showers. Two local factors mark all the wines: first all the family's 23 hectares of vines are on schistous soils - and that gives the wines a particular high-toned scent and exciting minerality; and second, the vineyards go up to 350 metres in altitude, and that, combined with cool downdrafts from the plateau to the north, brings freshness to their wines. Syrah in particular benefits from this terroir.

Domaine du Météore, Les Aquarides, Faugères Blanc, 2017, 14%

Bottle £13.95 Case with 10% off £150.66 Code MET717

50% Roussanne with 40% Rolle (Vermentino) and 10% Clairette: a scent of exotic fruit anticipates a wonderful cocktail of flavours; stone fruit and pineapple. Concentrated, fresh and complete. Now-2020

Domaine du Météore, Viognier, Les Bootides, IGP Pays de l'Hérault, 2017, 13.5%

Bottle £13.95 Case with 10% off £150.66 Code MET617

The Bootids are a lesser known meteor shower, visible in late June. We always advise that if one can't afford northern Rhône Viognier (also often grown on schist soils) then try this, from the estate's highest and coolest vineyards up against the plateau of the Cevennes. Peach and pineapple with notes of apricot, a rich and exuberant style of Viognier, delivering concentration and exotic aromatics at a fair price. Now-early 2020
Limited stock

Domaine du Météore, Faugères Rouge, Les Léonides, France, 2015, 14%

Bottle £12.50 Case with 10% off £135.00 Code MET115

From about 30% each of Syrah and Grenache, and 20% of Mourvèdre and Carignan, unoaked; and always shows those distinctive, lifted and perfumed notes derived from the meagre schist-based soils in Faugères. Bright and juicy, with ripe blackberry and blackcurrant flavours, plenty of schist character and a long finish. Round and attractive, this is more polished than usual in this superb vintage and should be perfect with grilled beef. Now-2020

"Very lively and fresh together with sweet strawberry fruit. Round. 16/20", Jancis Robinson, MW, jancisrobinson.com, 5th November 2018.

Domaine du Météore, Faugères Rouge, Les Perséides, 2015, 14%

Bottle £18.50 Case with 10% off £199.80 Code MET415

From equal halves of old vine Syrah and Mourvèdre, aged 18 months in barriques, this is grand. With cassis and cedar aromas, it has the blackcurrant and mocha flavours of a fine, well-oaked wine, but with excellent vitality and freshness: it's both darkly concentrated and juicy. We have only recently begun to recommend this wine - it needs a few years in bottle to show its best. Now-2023

Domaine de la Ribotte, Bandol

With our enthusiasm for the Desblache family's exquisite rosé (see.p.4), we sometimes forget their classic and robust red Bandol. Based on Mourvèdre, this is a terrific wine for hearty food, and even at five years old it can be kept for many years.

Domaine de la Ribotte, Bandol, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £22.50 Case with 10% off £243.00 Code RIB814

Red Bandol is usually backward, but this is already expressive, showing a nose of Asian spice on black fruit; with impressive, inky concentration, well-covered tannin and attractive savoury elements. A traditionally framed example. Now-2024





Xavier Peyraud in front of the Mas (des Brousses)

Mas des Brousses, Terrasses du Larzac, France, 2015, 14.5%

Bottle £18.95 Case with 10% off £204.66 Code MAB215

This is largely Mourvèdre (grown from cuttings from the famed Domaine Tempier in Bandol), with Syrah and Grenache, barrel-aged. Concentrated but also high-toned and tense - mountain wine. Generous blackberry and raspberry, savoury and fresh. With just the correct grip on the finish, a classy bottle which is built to age. Now-2024

Mas des Brousses, Terrasses du Larzac, France, 2016, 14%

Bottle £19.95 Case with 10% off £215.46 Code MAB216

The December 2018 issue of **Decanter** magazine featured the results of a blind tasting of "two leading lights of the Languedoc going head to head, Minervois La Livinière and Terrasses du Larzac". The 2016 Terrasses du Larzac from Mas des Brousses, came top amongst 58 wines tasted. Here is the composite tasting note from no less than three Masters of Wine, Simon Field, Justin Howard-Sneyd and James Lawther:

"Complex and finely-etched, with a minty dark fruit aroma ceding to a firm and layered yet rounded and refined palate. A wine that's full of resonance, and with ageing potential. 94/100. Drink 2019 - 2023". Simon Field went further: *"A magnificently exciting Terrasses take on a Bandol theme, with its brooding Mourvèdre, a dense organic backdrop and very finely honed tannins to complete the picture".*

We know this wine ages superbly, so.... Now-2026

TERRASSES DU LARZAC AND MONTPEYROUX

There are authorities on Languedoc-Roussillon - and not just those who live there! - who would claim that the finest wines in the whole arc from Montpellier to the Spanish border come from the hilly vineyards around Aniane, Montpeyroux and Saint Saturnin. For example Paul Strang calls this zone "home to some of the finest of all Languedoc wine" (Languedoc Roussillon, The Wines and Winemakers). Demand and prices have risen here, so we were really pleased to be able to add Mas d'Agamas, this year: we think that Vincent Visseque's wines represent terrific value.

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 terraces near the Hérault river lie the domaine's plots of vines. Tall Géraldine Combes (from a family who have inhabited Puéchabon, near Gignac, since 1525) juggles looking after three boys with tending the vines. Husband Xavier Peyraud, grandson of the legendary Lucien Peyraud of Domaine Tempier, is the winemaker. What stands them apart from other estates in the Terrasses du Larzac is the high proportion of Mourvèdre, the vines coming from Xavier's carefully transplanted cuttings from Tempier in Bandol. Their wines are not certified, but they have been organic in practice for years.

We don't normally list two vintages of the same wine, but the remarkable accolade in Decanter for the 2016 vintage of the Terrasses du Larzac needs to be recognised!

Mas des Brousses, Chasseur des Brousses, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2016, 13.5%

Bottle £12.95 Case with 10% off £139.86 Code MAB116

From about 50% Merlot, 30% Grenache with some Syrah, and a surprisingly successful marriage of Bordeaux and the Rhône. Generous mouthful of brambly fruit, supple and refined, with hints of menthol and liquorice, and subtle tannins. Very aromatic and long. Now-2021



Amelie d'Hurlaborde, Mas d'Amile

Mas d'Agamas, Lagamas

Looking for talent in a room with 150 Languedoc winemakers from the region, we needed help - so we asked Xavier Peyraud from Mas des Brousses who we should not miss: "you really should taste with Mas d'Agamas". Young Vincent Visseq studied winemaking in Montpellier and went on to work at Chateau Capion, a grand estate near Mas du Daumas Gassac. As with many young French winemakers, he also chose to broaden his experience in Australia, where he was able to vinify one vintage in the Goulburn Valley, working with Marsanne and Syrah in particular.

In 2009 he decided to regain control of the family vines: since the 1970s they had been supplying grapes to three local cooperatives. He now farms 11 hectares, entirely within the Terrasses du Larzac. As his grape varieties were sold to separate co-ops, and he was only able to end the contracts in stages, he initially made single varietal wines on new world lines. He continues to do so, preferring to label some of his wines as IGP (see also his Mourvèdre rosé on p.4); the local AOP for Terrasse du Larzac demands at least three grape varieties in a blend.

Vincent is considered *vigneron conventional*, i.e. not organic, but he follows the biodynamic lunar calendar both working in the vines and the cellar. All his tanks are stainless steel, undoubtedly an influence from the New World, and he would not use any other material. His motto is to work hard in the vineyard but also to be as gentle as possible, harvesting solely by hand, cosseting the bunches and being precise all the way to the bottle. Vincent makes wines with the refinement you would expect from the region, but they all share the same profile, friendly and thirst quenching. "Le vin, c'est une boisson!" - he makes wine to drink!

Mas d'Agamas, Carignan Bleu, IGP Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, 2017, 13.5%

Bottle £14.50 Case with 10% off £156.60 Code AGA117

Carignan Bleu - a variant of Carignan - is named because of the bluish tint the grapes take on when fully ripe. Vincent's grandfather made a massal selection (i.e. taking cuttings) of their vines to replant to keep this clone alive in their vineyards. It makes for a gorgeous purple colour, and a very un-rustic, soft, well-textured, fleshy mouthful of black plums and spice.



Vincent Visseq, Mas d'Agamas

Mas d'Agamas, Terrasses du Larzac, Nostre Mescladis, 2016, 14%

Bottle £14.95 Case with 10% off £161.46 Code AGA317

Nostre Mescladis translates as "our blend", reflecting the approximate proportions of his vines across the family vineyards: about 40% Grenache, and 20% of each of Syrah, Mourvèdre and Carignan, all given a long maceration to develop great depth of flavour but vinified and bottled entirely unoaked.

Very supple and melting approach, with delicious flavours of heated strawberries. Juicy but also perfectly poised and refined. Very classy wine - one which we anticipate will become a favourite here. Now-2021

Mas d'Amile, Montpeyroux

Four years ago, after a decade of prospecting, we finally found a partner in Montpeyroux ("rocky mountain" in Occitan), the charming Amélie d'Hurlaborde. Amélie, her husband Jérôme and her brother Sébastien Carceller decided to make their own wine, starting in 2007 with just one hectare of 70 year old Carignan coming from the Carcellers' grandfather. (Sébastien's main job is supporting Alain Chabanon nearby, at one of the highest rated and most expensive estates in the Languedoc). But Jérôme was posted to Asia and Amélie went with him. Now she's back, a cellar has been built, and the recent releases are terrific. They now farm eight hectares of vines organically without certification.

The vineyards at Montpeyroux face south and are protected by the Causse du Larzac and Mont Baudile (850m) to the north and the hills of St Guilhem-le-Désert to the east. The cooling wind coming from the Causse du Larzac brings dramatic temperature variation between night and day, allowing full ripeness while retaining freshness and acidity. Montpeyroux is widely expected to become an AOP in the next few years, so highly regarded is the area.

Come and meet Amélie at our London tasting on April 30th

Mas d'Amile, Vieux Carignan, Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert, 2016, 13%

Bottle £15.95 Case with 10% off £172.26 Code MDA116

From 80 year old Carignan vines on south facing slopes yielding a miserly 19 hectolitres per hectare; about two thirds goes into old wooden vats. Blackberry and plum fruit, with a peck of spice and lovely aromatics. There's a touch of wild savouriness too and a fresh finish. Now-2021

Mas d'Amile, Languedoc-Montpeyroux, 2016, 13%

Bottle £17.95 Case with 10% off £193.86 Code MDA316

Old vines here too, between 40 and 60 years old. 60% Grenache with Carignan, Syrah and Mourvèdre, raised in a mix of old Burgundy barrels and in 600l. *demi-muids*, traditionally used in the Rhône valley. Wonderfully ripe fruit caressed by the oak. Cherry and brambly notes, super ripe fruit with a hint of liquorice. Such a silky texture with a refreshing acidity. Supple and very long; fine wine. Now-2022



LA CLAPE, CORBIÈRES AND ROUSSILLON: CATHAR COUNTRY

Across these two pages we proffer still wines from the rock of Clape on the Med., via the rugged hills of the Corbières, to the even more more arid and windswept vineyards of Roussillon, to the east of Perpignan. This is Pays Cathare, Cathar country, the heartland of the Christian sect brutally suppressed by the unholy alliance of the northern French monarchy and the Papacy in the thirteenth century.

La Combe Saint Paul, Salles d’Aude, La Clape

La Clape (a “heap of pebbles” in the old Occitan language of the south) was a mountain surrounded by the sea (east of Narbonne) when the Romans first spotted its potential and planted it with vines. Sediments from the river Aude attached it to the mainland in the 14th Century. Maximum ripeness is ensured by 300 days of sunshine per year, making it one of the sunniest spots in France, but it is also amongst the windiest with particularly violent *Tramontane* from the plateau to the north.

Paul and Line Maury might be our youngest producers but winemaking runs in the genes. Paul’s grandparents and great grandparents were winemakers specialising in single varietal wines, and you can find his fine examples of Vermentino, Chardonnay and Viognier on p.3. In 2008 Paul came across the opportunity to buy vines on La Clape and create his own domaine. His vineyard near the sea is surrounded by pine and oak trees and the soil is characterised by *grés rouge* (red sandstone) hence the name given to the first red below.

La Combe Saint-Paul, Calcaires d’Ensérune, Languedoc, 2017, 12.5%

Bottle £10.95 Case with 10% off £118.26 Code CSP417

From halves of Roussanne and Vermentino (Rolle), grown on limestone soils, and with about 10% aged in old barrels, this combines weight and freshness well. Such an impressive wine at the price: delivering attractive white peach character with the slightest accent of marzipan and a dry, chalky character too, this makes an excellent accompaniment to even strongly flavoured dishes. Included in Rosemary George, *My Top 30: Languedoc Whites*, **Decanter** magazine, August 2018. Now-2019

La Combe Saint-Paul, La Clape, Grés Rouges, 2016, 14%

Bottle £11.95 Case with 10% off £129.06 Code CSP616

60% Syrah with 20% each of Mourvèdre and Grenache, basically unoaked (10% raised in old barrels). Lovely vibrant purple. Smells deliciously ripe - black fruit and herbs, so Mediterranean! Lovely ripe black fruit with a nice savoury note and gentle tannins on the finish. Such a well-priced, smartly presented bottle from this prestigious appellation. Now- 2021

La Combe Saint-Paul, Languedoc-La Clape, L’Insouppçonné, 2014, 14.5%

Bottle £19.95 Case with 10% off £215.46 Code CSP714

85% Syrah with Mourvèdre, given 10 months ageing in a mix of new and 2nd fill barrels - and a very limited production wine: we take a tenth of production. Very deeply hued and glossy. The perfume is inspiring - fresh crushed berries with a cassis note. Bittersweet blackcurranty flavours are tinged with hints of black chocolate and coffee. With great suavity and length, this brilliantly combines power and finesse, and shows how the best wines of the region can stand against any competition. Now-2024

“This is a muscular wine showing a depth of inky black fruits and violet overtones, buttressed by grippy tannins and peripheral note of sweet cream, vanilla and spices. The mid-palate develops cocoa and tar richness, leading onto a long finish. Drink this with grilled red meats and game. 90/100. Drinking Window 2018 - 2024”, James Button, decanter.com.



Paul & Line Maury, La Combe Saint Paul

Domaine du Grand Arc, Cucugnan, Corbières

Nicolas Schenk is now running the family estate created by his father Bruno, originally from Alsace, in 1995. The vines lie on classic *argilo-calcaire* soils, with some sandstone, around Cucugnan, in a valley of the Massif des Corbières in the south of the appellation, overlooked by the amazing hill-top Cathar castles of Quéribus and Peyrepertuse. The isolation and elevation sets it apart from the rest of Corbières and if there were more than three estates in the valley, it might warrant its own appellation. The vineyards lie from 250 to 600 metres in height; and the semi-continental climate is unique as it benefits from Atlantic influence. The family have been following organic principles for 20 years but Nicolas was behind the final push to certification and from the 2016 vintage all wines bear the logo. He has a keen interest in biodynamics and is also continuing his father's pursuit of minimal intervention, in particular using natural yeasts and only a tiny amount of sulphur at bottling. That has always been the motto of the family, seeking to produce a wine as naturally as possible. As Nicolas says, "you know we drink it as well!". He is proud when he sees his harvest team eating his grapes and finishes with a big smile - "they tell me they are the best around". It's worth noting that the reds keep really well - even the Reserve Grand Arc will be drinking beautifully about six years after the vintage.

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières Blanc, Veillée d'Equinoxe, 2018, 14%

Bottle £11.25 Case with 10% off £121.50 Code DGA618

An unoaked blend of 40% Grenache Blanc, 25% each of Roussanne and Vermentino, plus 10% Macabeu. Stone fruited aromas follow onto the palate, rich and well-rounded with notes of white pepper and an attractive honeyed accent. The finish offers a refreshing salinity. Such an interesting wine at a fair price. Now-2020

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières Rouge, Reserve Grand Arc, 2016, 14.5%

Bottle £11.50 Case with 10% off 124.20 Code DGA216

One of our staples at SVS, about 50% Carignan, with 35% Grenache and 15% Mourvedre, a splendid barrel-aged wine which can be drunk young or kept. Dark and intense, this delivers a big mouthful of red fruit backed by masses of ripe tannins. Quite serious in this dry year; and excellent with a steak. Now-2022

Domaine du Grand Arc, Corbières, Cuvée de Quarante, 2016, 14.5%

Bottle £12.95 Case with 10% off £139.86 Code DGA316

Based on 45% Carignan with 35% Grenache and 20% Syrah, all in barrel, about 20% new. This favourite blend at the Schenk cellar was first made by Bruno when he was forty years old - hence the name - and has never changed since. Dark fruited nose with accents of chocolate, dense texture and masses of red fruit on a smooth and silky frame. Bold and fruity. Now-2023

Domaine Depeyre, Cases-de-Pène

Serge Depeyre, from a Rhône wine-making family, and Brigitte Bile, from Cases-de-Pène, met at wine-making college in Avignon in 1995. Together they returned to her birthplace, started the purchase of their own vineyards with 4 hectares in 1997, opened their small cellar in Cases-de-Pène in 2000, and produced their first wine in 2002. Serge's day job is working as *Régisseur*, effectively estate manager and overseer in charge of Clos des Fées (one of the most highly rated and hugely expensive Roussillon estates) at Vingrau, and their own little domaine has grown to 12 hectares, largely looked after by Brigitte. Hearing them, one senses how hard it is to be a grower among these arid, wind-blasted hills: they need a pick-axe in order to plant a vine; they plough using a mule; and yields are ludicrously low.

Domaine Depeyre, Côtes du Roussillon Villages, Rubia Tinctoria, 2014, 14.5%

Bottle £20.95 Case with 10% off £226.26 Code DEP414

From 90% Syrah, based on one south facing plot just above the village, plus 10% Grenache, picked relatively early, and then simply fermented in fibreglass tanks. This is a great unoaked red. It's named after the Latin name for the Common Madder, a Mediterranean plant whose root traditionally supplied a red dye, and when one sees the amazingly deep colour one can see why.

Cassis-like perfume: instantly one thinks of Hermitage. The merest taste is so striking: this is a totally wonderful, energetic, velvety wine. Whilst there is a heart of bittersweet blackcurrants, and hints of liquorice and uame savouriness, the wine also exhibits profound mineral depths. Now-2023





Elodie et Matthieu Collet

Domaine Fontanel, Tautavel

Things have changed at Domaine Fontanel, but with a sense of continuity. Elodie and Matthieu Collet bought the domaine from Pierre and Marie-Claude Fontaneil in 2017 and have already made a name for themselves, being elected no less than *Vignerons de l'Année (Roussillon) du Guide Hachette 2019*. After both graduating as agricultural engineers in 2004, Matthieu and Elodie decided to become winemakers. Over the years they both travelled the world from the US via Champagne and the Loire to broaden their experience and expertise before passing their oenology diploma in Montpellier. Elodie specialises in taste and after working in sensory analysis for many years now makes the wine at the domaine, while Matthieu enjoys working in the vines.

Their first reason for buying the domaine was their love for the wines previously made by Pierre: he agreed to stay working alongside them for a year, another crucial advantage. Their goal is to express the terroirs at their best and they want to make traditional wines, expressive of Roussillon. The white is round and generous (Elodie refuses the trend of acidification) and the reds are rich and concentrated. The *Vin Doux Naturels* (see p.12) are fresher than they used to be, in accordance with the taste of their generation; and the reds are more polished as they achieve finer tannins and a lighter structure - but please don't tell Pierre...

Come and meet Matthieu and taste all his wines at our London tasting on April 30th

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes du Roussillon Blanc, 2016, 14%

Bottle £14.95 Case with 10% off £161.46 Code FON716

From ancient (1908) planted vines of Grenache Blanc and Gris plus Roussanne and Malvoisie, with subtly integrated oak, this is a powerful white, with a wonderful gamut of flavours. Aromas of pine, herbs and honey; and then a generous mouthful of white peach and tangerine, almond, honey, orange blossom and fennel. Creamy, fat and altogether satisfying. Now-2020

Domaine Fontanel, IGP Côtes Catalanes, 2017, 14%

Bottle £11.50 Case with 10% off £124.30 Code FON417

From young vines of Grenache, Mourvèdre and Carignan grown in hot, dry and windy mountain vineyards near Tautavel (so it could actually be labelled as Côte du Roussillon Villages). Gorgeously juicy and vital wine, lacking any bite of tannin, showing vibrant strawberry fruit, spiced with white pepper and liquorice. Australians would call it "smashable" for its enticing, drink-me perkiness - but it's an authentic Roussillon wine through and through. Now-2020

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes du Roussillon Rouge, 2016, 14%

Bottle £13.50 Case with 10% off £145.80 Code FON115

From Syrah, Grenache and Carignan grown on schist near Maury, unoaked and a classic Roussillon red, with those characteristic notes of spice, tar and black olives tinging a juicy, brambly and strawberry accented heart. Now-2021

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes du Roussillon Villages Tautavel, Cistes, 2016, 14.5%

Bottle £18.25 Case with 10% off £197.10 Code FON216

Named after the Cistus, the spring-flowering rock roses growing wild in the scrub. 60% Syrah with 40% Grenache, the former mainly raised in old barrels from Château Haut-Brion (plus a few new barrels), the latter in tank. Oaky aromas - smart, classy oak scents. Gorgeous black fruit, rich, fat and spicy. Lots of texture but velvet smooth, an iron hand in a velvet glove. Now-2022

Domaine Fontanel, Côtes du Roussillon Villages Tautavel, Prieuré, 2014, 14.5%

Bottle £19.95 Case £227.43 Code FON314

From one parcel on a high, windswept, north facing argilo-calcaire slope, this blend of 2/3 Syrah, with Grenache and Mourvèdre is given 18 months in new oak casks. It's always a dramatic wine, revealing layers of black fruit, spice and mocha flavours. Intensely blackcurranty in youth it ages like a top northern Rhône, becoming more complex, meaty and savoury. Now-2022

FONTANEL'S VIN DOUX NATURELS

Vins Doux Naturels are made by stopping the fermentation of late picked, 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, unfermented grape sugar and between 15 and 17 degrees of alcohol. It's an ancient art which probably came over the Pyrenees with the medieval spread of distillation - and examples of VDNs (not a sexually transmitted disease) are now found across the south of France, including Beauges de Venise and Rasteau. These are wonderful, distinctive fortified wines.

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Opening times: Weekdays: 9.00am-6.00pm
 Saturdays: 9.30am-4.00pm

Domaine Fontanel, Maury Grenat, 2015, 16%

Bottle £20.95 Case with 10% off £226.26 Code FON615

From one plot of 75 year old vines of Grenache Noir (the Grenat of the name); and winner of a *Coup de Coeur* in the **2019 Guide Hachette**. This style is well-known for matching chocolate, but it's equally good with cheese, especially blue cheese, in a manner akin to a very fruity and forward port. Deep ruby colour. Invitingly pure scent of puréed red berries; and then a wonderful core of raspberries, cherries and sweet spices. Round and fat, this is very polished. Now-2022

Domaine Fontanel, Rivesaltes Ambré, 2008, 16%

Bottle £21.50 Case with 10% off £232.20 Code FON908

One of the most distinctive and exciting wines in our entire stock. 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 (and here it's kept a lot longer before bottling). Deep gold, clear and bright. This offers intriguing fumes; dates, cooked autumnal fruit, a hint of sherry-like oxidation - a little like old Cognac. Dried fruit flavours dominate, with accompanying subtleties, including coffee and caramelised oranges. Juicy, stimulating, and with a lingering finish, this makes a wonderful partner to hard cheese, dried fruit and nuts. Now-2023

