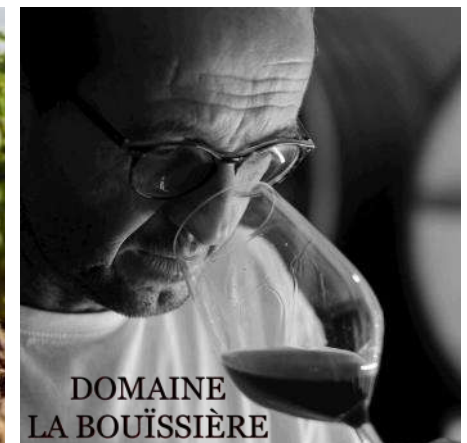
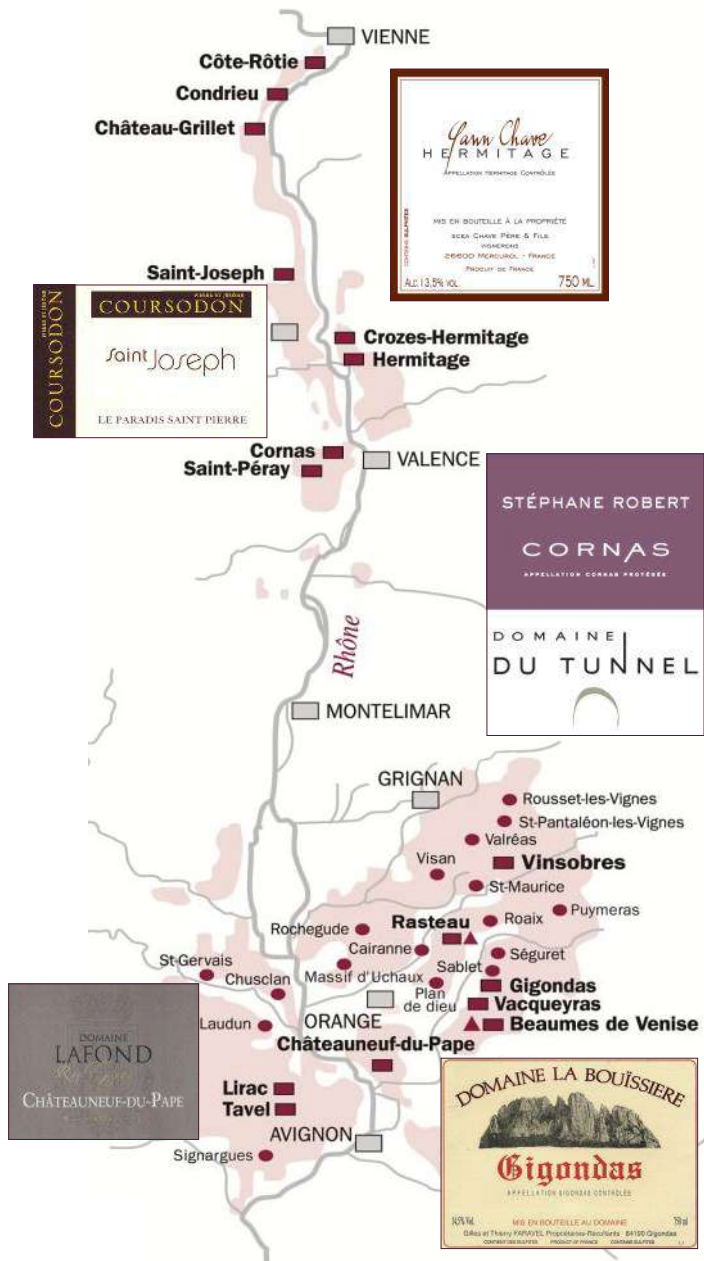


Montrachet
Fine Wine Merchants

2023 Rhône



2023 Rhône

At eight o'clock in the morning, the centre of Lyon is a driver's worst nightmare. My early optimism, built on an effortless run through the Chalonnais, Mâconnais and Beaujolais, is all too often shattered by the time I reach the Pont Sur La Saône, entirely at the mercy of the infamous Lyonnais rush hour traffic.

But one must have faith, for the reward is one of the most breathtaking roads in all of France. The sheer slopes of Côte-Rôtie, the imposing hill of Hermitage, the rural tranquillity of Saint Péray and the regal plateau of Châteauneuf du Pape provide more than enough reason to limp through Lyon.

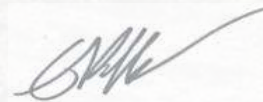
More importantly, of course, these villages are home to some of the country's greatest wines and, as prices in Bordeaux and Burgundy have risen, the best value. It's a trip I look forward to immensely.

Key Factors

- ♦ **Temperatures:** cooler than 2022 but with a spike in August - reaching a maximum of 42° C
- ♦ **Rainfall:** generally dry, but with spells in May, June and September, much needed in light of the ensuing heat
- ♦ **Long Harvest:** beginning with the whites in late August and lasting well into October, following a warm September, punctuated by occasional rainfall

Setting off from Puligny at 6am on a cool autumn morning, I was intrigued to discover what the Rhône had to offer in 2023. Reports had generally been positive and I was impressed with the handful of 2023 whites I'd tried earlier in the year. Climactically, the season began positively, with warm temperatures and sunny conditions in the spring leading to a trouble-free budburst and even flowering. The ensuing summer presented a few slight complications, with the generally fair weather punctuated by marginally higher levels of rainfall than usual in May and June, a hailstorm on the 27th July and scorching temperatures in August, frequently exceeding 40° C. Most domaines, however, were able to overcome these with aplomb and perfect conditions in late summer allowed for a straightforward harvest with ripe, healthy crops.

With a slightly higher crop and concentration levels not quite at the astronomical peaks they reached in the previous vintage, most vigneronns chose to employ a marginally stricter selection policy than in 2022. The resulting wines are wonderful – the reds have a touch more freshness than the 2022s, they are less tannic, around half a degree lower in alcohol and oozing with charm. The whites are delicious, with more tension and bite than the opulent 2022s. The best whites – Domaine du Tunnel's Saint Pérays and Coursodon's Saint Joseph blancs give plenty of Burgundies a run for their money. The 2024s are even crisper with fine acidity and minerality.



Edward Hume-Kendall

Jann Chave
CROZES HERMITAGE





Daphné Chave

Our first meeting was in the town of Mercurol with Yann Chave and his children, Daphné and Gauthier. Yann's father, Bernard, handed over the reins in 1996 and the younger Chave, just 26 at the time, immediately stamped his mark on the domaine, expanding the holdings from six to 20 hectares and converting the entire estate to organic viticulture by 2003.

It appears Daphné and Gauthier are chips off the old block, who, having between them made wine in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, Priorat and Burgundy, have returned to the Rhône with fervour and are quickly assuming control in the cellar.

The 2023s were harvested relatively early, from the 5th to the 20th September, thus avoiding most of the mid-September rain. Yields were a very healthy 40 hl/ha and a strict selection ensured a high quality crop across the board. Vinification, Daphné says, was relatively straightforward and the resulting wines are superb.

The domaine's pure, aromatic Crozes-Hermitage is wonderfully charming and will drink well almost immediately. The denser, more concentrated Le Rouvre holds its own admirably against many Hermitages I tried this year and is super value. Requiring a little more patience, the Hermitage is as precise as any northern Rhône in 2023, with an almost Côte-Rôtie-esque purity.

Red

2023 Crozes-Hermitage

From three different villages within the appellation: La Roche de Glun, Mercurol and Pont de L'Isère. Vinified in stainless steel vats to preserve the maximum of fruit, 100% destemmed and fermented with indigenous yeasts. Wonderful, pure syrah fruit on the nose and a rich, juicy texture on the palate. Accessible young but with the structure and length to age gracefully. Drink 2026-2031.

2023 Crozes-Hermitage Le Rouvre

Produced from a single 2 hectare plot of 50-70 year-old vines in the south of Crozes, the soils here are unique in the appellation, containing a high proportion of galets (also found in Chateauneuf-du-Pape). Spends 12 months in 1-3 year old oak demi-muids previously used to age the Hermitage. A dense, concentrated wine with powerful, brambly fruit on the nose and a rich, generous texture. Comfortably Hermitage quality. Drink 2027-2034.

2023 Hermitage

The domaine owns 1.2 hectares of vines on the cooler side of the hill in the lieux-dits of Beaume and Péléat. Aged in 100% new oak 650 litre demi-muids from the tonnelleries of Taransaud and Seguin Moreau, this remarkable wine combines the power of Hermitage with the freshness and aromaticity of Côte Rôtie. Deep and brooding at present with firm but ripe tannins, fresh acidity and exquisite purity and precision of fruit. Finishes fresh and long with an impressive, close-knit texture. Drink 2029-2037.

Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
6x75cl	13	£ 102	£ 24

6x75cl	13	£ 140	£ 31
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6x75cl	13	£ 459	£ 95
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Jérôme Coursodon



Just over the river in Mauves, Jérôme Coursodon is a winemaker at the peak of his talents. Since joining his father at the domaine in 1998, he has gradually lowered the yields and used a higher proportion of 600 litre oak *demi-muids* to bring added concentration and purity to the fruit. Gentler, more precise methods of extraction have brought with them a significant refinement of tannins and the 2023s are the most beautifully textured, elegant examples of Saint Joseph that I tried this year. We are also delighted to offer a pair of his wonderfully crisp 2024 whites

White	Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
<u>2024</u> L'Étincelle blanc	6x75cl	12.5	£ 99	£ 23

70% Viognier, 30% Roussanne. A vibrant, vividly fruity wine with true charm and harmony. Made by Jérôme from vines high on the slope above Saint Joseph where it is cooler and fresher. Vinified in stainless steel vats to capture all the fruit and aromas of these two distinctive varieties. Masses of white flowers, stone fruits and a crisp but generous texture. Drink 2025-2028.

<u>2024</u> Saint Joseph Silice blanc	6x75cl	13	£ 134	£ 30
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100% Marsanne. From a mix of clay and granite soils, this is also vinified in stainless steel vats but is a fuller, more powerful wine with a rich, succulent texture and a crisp, saline finish. A great food wine that works well with rich and spicy dishes. Drink 2025-2029.

<u>2023</u> Saint Joseph Le Paradis Saint Pierre blanc	6x75cl	13.5	£ 224	£ 48
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90% Marsanne, 10% Roussanne. Produced from two plots of old, low-yielding (30 hl/ha) Marsanne and Roussanne vines planted on granitic soils in the south of the appellation. Matured for 12 months in 228 litre French oak barrels from tonnelleries Chassin, Damy and Atelier Centre France, 20% of which are new each year. Full-bodied and generous with rich, concentrated, peach fruit, a succulent texture and a long, mineral finish. Drink 2025-2029.



A 600 litre *demi-muid*

Jérôme described the growing season in 2023 as somewhat of a rollercoaster. After a successful flowering, he performed a green harvest to reduce the crop, only to be hit by a freak hailstorm on the 29th July. After a hot, dry August, welcome rain at the end of the month refreshed the grapes and enabled the fruit to reach full maturity and by the time the malolactic fermentation was complete in November, he was a happy, albeit tired, man.

The white grapes, picked promptly from the 6th September, gave wines of great weight and concentration balanced by fine levels of acidity, the Paradis Saint Pierre in particular has a distinctly Burgundian feel about it.

The reds, harvested from the 11th to the 19th September, are ripe, silky and smooth. Made in a variety of styles, Jérôme's reds contrast each other wonderfully, the unique 100% new oak La Sensonne and the magnificently concentrated Paradis Saint Pierre rouge being real stand outs.

Red	Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
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2023 Saint Joseph Silice rouge

6x75cl	13.5	£ 134	£ 30
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Produced from vines planted on steep, granitic soils in the villages of Mauve, Tournon and Saint Jean de Muzols. 15% of the stems were retained during fermentation to enhance the freshness of the fruit. The wine was aged for 12 months in a mixture of 228 litre pieces and 600 litre demi-muids from tonnelleries Damy, Chassin, Taransaud and Atelier Centre France. The result is a vivid, aromatic wine with red cherry and blackberry fruit, carefully extracted tannins and a touch of spice on the finish. Drink 2027-2033.

2023 Saint Joseph L'Oliveaie

6x75cl	13.5	£ 204	£ 44
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From a single south-facing plot of densely planted (8,500 vines per hectare), 60 to 80 year-old vines in the hills surrounding Saint Jean de Muzols where the cool air from the Doux valley helps the vines retain freshness throughout the growing season and gives wines that combine depth with freshness. 85% destemmed, maturation is split equally between 228 litre barrels and larger demi-muids. 20% new oak adds spice and vanilla to the brambly fruit and creates a generous, fleshy texture on the palate. Has high quality tannins, excellent freshness and long, powerful finish. Drink 2028-2034.

2023 Saint Joseph La Sensonne

6x75cl	13.5	£ 234	£ 50
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A magnificent cuvée made from a selection of the oldest vines from the domaine's finest sites in the vineyards of L'Oliveaie and Le Paradis. Aged for 12 months in 228 litre new oak barrels (70% Chassin, 30% Taransaud). A rich, opulent wine with dark fruits and toasty oak on the nose, an impressive, close-knit texture and great length on the finish. Drink 2028-2035.

2023 Saint Joseph Le Paradis Saint Pierre rouge

6x75cl	13.5	£ 284	£ 60
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Produced from 80 year-old vines in the steep, terraced lieux-dits of 'Le Paradis' and 'Saint Joseph' in the village of Mauves, just a few hundred metres from the Coursodon cellar. Fermented with 50% whole bunches and matured for 12 months in oak barrels (10% new) followed by 6 months in a cement egg-shaped vessel, this has amazing depth and concentration, vivid fruit and a long, mineral finish. Drink 2029-2036.



Emma and Stéphane Robert

Tucked away in the hills above Saint Péray, Stéphane Robert's winery lies in a disused railway tunnel, formerly linking Valence to Vernoux-en-Vivarais and now providing perfect conditions in which to vinify and mature Cornas and Saint Péray.

Stéphane founded the domaine 31 years ago at the age of just 24 and makes wines with an elegance and finesse rarely found in Cornas. His two children, Emma and Lucas have followed suit and already play important roles in the winemaking process.



White

Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
6x75cl	13	£ 184	£ 40

2023 Saint Péray 'Roussanne'

100% Roussanne. Stéphane is one of the few Saint Péray producers to plant a high proportion of the more capricious Roussanne grape variety. The majority of these vines are planted at high altitude (280m) giving a rich but fresh, aromatic wine. Fermented using only natural yeasts, half in 1000 litre oak vats and half in four and five year old barrels, this is a magnificent wine that combines depth and concentration with fine vitality. Drink 2025-2029.

2023 Saint Péray 'Prestige'

6x75cl	13	£ 194	£ 42
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80% Marsanne & 20% Roussanne. This superb cuvée comes from three plots of granite and clay soils on the lower slopes of the appellation just outside the town of Saint Péray. The Marsanne vines are over 100 years old and the Roussanne at least 60 years. This was fermented and aged for nine months in four year old 228 litre barrels. Has impressive depth and vitality with intense fruit and a long aftertaste. Drink 2025-2029.

2023 Condrieu

6x75cl	14	£ 254	£ 55
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100% Viognier from a tiny 0.17 hectare plot in the lieu-dit of Chanson where Stéphane rents vines from Stéphane Montez of Domaine du Monteillet. Vinified in three year old barrels, this is beautifully aromatic with fresh, apricot fruit, a crisp, lean texture and a long, mineral finish. Drink 2025-2029.

2023 Saint Péray 'Pur Blanc'

6x75cl	13.5	£ 304	£ 64
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From a single plot of 100 year old Marsanne vines in the lieu-dit of l'Arzalier, nestled in the middle of the town of Saint Péray. The most concentrated and age-worthy white wine in the cellar with wonderful purity of fruit and tremendous power and concentration. Drink 2025-2030.

The white grapes were picked promptly from 4th September with excellent levels of both sugar and acidity. Fermentation and ageing was for nine months in a mixture of 1000 litre oak *foudres* and 228 litre *pièces* that Stéphane buys mainly second hand from top Burgundy domaines. The 2023 whites are perfectly ripe, opulent wines that have impressive depth and concentration together with fine balancing acidity.

The reds, harvested a few days after the whites, were mainly destemmed, fermented in stainless steel and aged for 12 months in second hand 228 litre *pièces*. They are rich, suave, elegant wines with masses of red and black fruits, ripe tannins, excellent structure and impressive, long finishes. They will drink well when young and age magnificently.

Red	Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
	6x75cl	13	£ 192	£ 42

2023 Saint Joseph

The domaine owns 2.5 hectares of vines in the villages of Mauves, Tournon and Glun in the south of the appellation. Over 80% of the bunches were destemmed to privilege the fruit. This is rich and elegant with a complex mixture of red cherries and blackcurrants. Sweet and succulent on the palate with a tremendous, vividly fruity finish. Drink 2027-2034.

2023 Cornas	6x75cl	13.5	£ 242	£ 52
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From 15 different parcels of vines from various sectors of the appellation. 25% whole bunches give a terrific, spicy, aromatic quality to the wine. Beautiful, sumptuous fruit on the palate and firm but ripe tannins add structure. A fine, complete wine that will age gracefully. Drink 2028-2036.

2023 Cornas Vin Noir	6x75cl	13.5	£ 338	£ 71
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Produced from the oldest (100+ years) vines in three of the appellation's finest lieux-dits: Les Egyats, Les Combes and Champelrose. A vivid, dense wine of amazing vitality and precision. Splendid blackcurrant and cherry fruit on the nose together with a hint of spice. Full-bodied with a generous texture and a long, fresh finish. Drink 2029-2037.

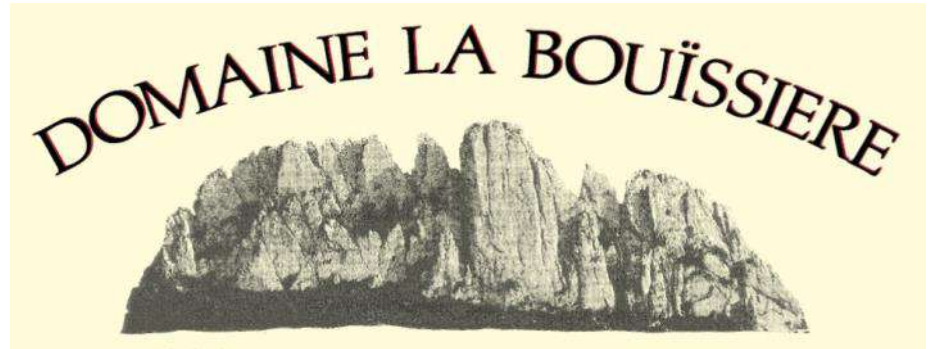
2023 Cornas Pur Noir	6x75cl	13.5	£ 646	£ 133
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Only produced in the finest vintages, Stéphane chooses one or two barrels from the cuvées he has already selected for the Vin Noir. Rich and concentrated with flair and personality. Tight and backward at present but with great intensity and a magnificent finish. Drink 2030-2038.



Lucas Robert

Maëva Gauci



Nestled in the shadow of the jagged peaks of the Dentelles de Montmirail, Domaine La Bouïssière embodies an elegance and refinement rarely found in the southern Rhône.

The charming and ever busy Thierry Faravel, whom we eventually found cleaning the inside of a stainless steel vat when we arrived at the domaine, runs this family estate with his brother Gilles, sister Josiane and niece Maëva.

After a hot August which included nearly three weeks over 40 °C, the harvest took place over a five week period from the beginning of September to well into October. The estate is one of the highest in the Gigondas appellation with many vineyards just below the Dentelles de Montmirail, a big advantage in hot summers such as 2023.

The domaine's Gigondas will be bottled and released in the autumn and were the finest range of wines that I tasted in the southern Rhone this year. In the meantime, we're delighted to offer their Amis de La Bouïssière, along with my two favourite available older vintages.

Red

2023 Les Amis de La Bouïssière

This delightful blend of merlot, syrah and grenache comes from vines grown near the river Ouvèze, just outside the Gigondas appellation. 90% destemmed, the varieties are fermented together and then aged for 11 months in stainless steel vats. Designed for relatively early drinking, the 2023 has vivid, red cherry and blackcurrant fruit, a succulent texture and a long, fresh finish. Drink 2025-2029.

2022 Gigondas

72% Grenache, 26% Syrah, 2% Mourvèdre. The Faravels own nine hectares of old vines, the majority of which are high up in the Dentelles de Montmirail. Vinified with 65% whole bunches and aged in a mixture of oak foudres and cement eggs. Wonderful elegance and depth on the nose. Opulent black fruits on the palate allied to a close-knit texture, lovely freshness and a long, concentrated finish. Drink 2027-2032.

2020 Gigondas Font de Tonin

100% Grenache. A magnificent wine produced from old vine grenache planted in 1956 & 1963 on two terraces high up in the Dentelles de Montmirail. 100% whole bunches with ageing in 225 litre barriques. Rich and spicy with tremendous intensity and an impressive, close-knit texture. Finishes very long. Drink 2026-2032

Case Size	% abv	£ per case IN BOND	£ per bottle inc VAT
6x75cl	14.5	£ 59	£ 16

6x75cl	15	£ 116	£ 27
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12x75cl	15	£ 330	£ 37
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Thierry Faravel



Dentelles de Montmirail

Jean-Baptiste, Pascal and François Lafond



This substantial, organically farmed, 90 hectare estate comprises many of the finest vineyards of the Lirac, Tavel and Châteauneuf du Pape appellations. Jean-Baptiste and François Lafond have taken over the day to day running of the estate from their father Pascal and the wines continue to go from strength to strength.

After a hugely successful 2022 vintage, Jean-Baptiste considers the 2023s to be even better, the best in the southern Rhone since 2016, combining freshness and vitality with rich fruit flavours and close-knit succulent textures. Their Cotes du Rhone certainly shows the qualities of the vintage; the domaine's Lirac and Châteauneuf du Pape will be released after bottling later this year.

The estate also produces one of the finest dry white wines of the southern Rhone, an intriguing wine that shot to prominence after Pascal Lafond planted Roussanne and Viognier to complement the traditional Grenache blanc. The 2024 is one of the best vintages ever for white wine combining rich fruit flavours with excellent freshness and acidity.

White

2024 Lirac blanc

50% Grenache blanc, 30% Roussanne, 20% Viognier. A delicious, harmonious, aromatic white from the lighter soils of the estate which are well suited to white grape varieties. The grenache gives a rich, succulent texture whilst the Roussanne and Viognier provide aroma, class and fine minerality. Most of the juice is vinified in stainless steel vats to retain the maximum of fruit and vitality with the balance fermented and aged in new French oak demi-muids from Seguin-Moreau and Atelier Centre France to give structure and complexity. Drink 2025-2026.

Red

2023 Côtes-du-Rhône

Half of this superb Côtes du Rhône is declassified Lirac, a successful policy which has the advantage of enhancing the quality of both wines. The remaining fruit comes from vines in the nearby Laudun and Saint Marcel d'Ardèche. Vinified entirely in stainless steel vats to maximise the fruit, this has ripe red and black cherries on both the nose and palate together with a hint of spice. A fine, generous wine with vivid fruit and carefully extracted tannins to give enough structure to allow for graceful ageing. Drink 2025-2028.

2022 Châteauneuf du Pape

80% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre. From three separate plots in this famous appellation: Pradel, L'Etang and Les Grandes Serres. The Grenache is aged in a mixture of oak demi-muids and cement vats whilst the Syrah and Mourvèdre are matured in barriques and demi-muids. The result is a rich, gutsy wine with a complex mix of spicy red and black fruits, a round, sumptuous texture and magnificent power on the finish. Drink 2027-2035.





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In Bond prices are per case (6x75cl) and exclude duty (which will be different for each 0.5% abv) and VAT. Please note that the % abv may be subject to change for the cuvées which are not yet bottled. In Bond prices are only available when the wine is to be delivered to a bonded warehouse. All wines will be invoiced at the duty paid price unless we are provided with a bonded warehouse account or freight forwarder's details.

All wine is sold lying at London City Bond, Creek Road, IG11 0JH.

Availability and delivery - Some wines are available for immediate delivery, the remainder will be shipped to the UK between now and December 2025. Deliveries are free for orders of 36 bottles or more within mainland England and Wales. For smaller orders there is a carriage charge of £ 20 inc VAT within mainland England and Wales. Deliveries to Scotland and Overseas are charged at cost.

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E&OE March 2025