

THE RARE WINE CO.  
21481 EIGHTH STREET EAST  
SONOMA, CA 95476  
email: sales@rarewineco.com



1-800-999-4342  
1-707-996-4484  
Fax: 1-707-996-4491  
Fax: 1-800-893-1501

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**Rare Henriques &**  
**Henriques Madeira**

MARCH 20, 2007

# Rewriting History

## *Thierry Allemand's Brilliant New Take on Traditional Cornas*

For those of us who prize Cornas as one of the world's unique wines, there are three icons. Two are in their 80s and nearing retirement: the great traditionalists Auguste Clape and Noel Verset. The third is a man little more than half their age, Thierry Allemand.



Thierry Allemand

For the past 15 years, Allemand has created a new Cornas paradigm, largely following traditional methods, but turbocharged with his own unique gifts and philosophies.

Having worked with Verset and Joseph Michel—another classicist—Allemand's methods are rooted in tradition; yet he is fiercely independent. He classically does not de-stem and eschews new oak. But he differs from his elders by minimizing sulphur and not racking. He believes that excessive sulphur is the reason for the tarry aromas and hard tannins found in other producers' Cornas.

Allemand's approach results in otherworldly complexity and balance. By aging his wines on their lees without racking, they develop classic Cornas dark berries, smoke, dried herb and olive flavors, but with unheard-of definition. No one else's Cornas achieves such a combination of concentration, structure and elegance.

### **Sans Soufre**

Since 1998, Allemand has made a *Sans Soufre* (without sulphur) cuvée from his best vines. This bottling, labeled simply "Cornas," is his most coveted wine. With spectacular aromatics and stunning length, Sans Soufre is one of the world's greatest Syrahs.

Allemand's ten acres of vines are in the heart of Cornas. Here, where the soil is most granitic, ►

## *Sans Soufre: The Ultimate Cornas*

Allemand's *Sans Soufre* is Cornas' Holy Grail. Yet its virtue of being bottled without sulfur is also its curse, as the wine is highly vulnerable to exposure to warm temperatures. Consequently, many importers and merchants don't buy it, making it *extremely* scarce.

Happily, we're not among them. If we're lucky enough to have access to bottles in their pristine infancy, we grab them and give them all the TLC they demand.

We are pleased to offer the rare 1999 and 2001, which have been pampered throughout their lives. If you want to experience Syrah's essence, here it is.

**1999 Cornas 'Sans Soufre' .....175.00**

A Cornas of crystalline complexity derived from very old vines and flawless winemaking. The fruit is beautifully chiseled, bursting with flavors of blackberry, minerals, taupenade and black pepper. This is purity defined and the essence of the Cornas soil.

**2001 Cornas 'Sans Soufre' .....135.00**

The 2001 offers breathtaking clarity and is a profound expression of its grape and *terroir*. The brilliance and depth of the fruit is astonishing, as is the seamless texture. Though an infant in its development, this will be a monument to Thierry Allemand's genius.

## A Rare Thierry Allemand Retrospective

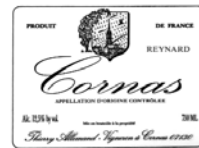
► he farms 30-year-old vines in Chaillots and 70- to 100-year-old vines in Reynard. Both sites have steep, south-facing slopes, but Chaillots' clay produces more structured wines than the mineral Reynard. Extreme vine densities assure low yields and great concentration.

The soaring quality of Allemands' wines has made him an icon in France and America. In both countries he is revered by young sommeliers and wine-makers, for whom his Cornas is the purest expression of Syrah. Yet, his tiny production of 500 cases each of Chaillots and Reynard, and less than 200 of Sans Soufre, makes his wines all but unobtainable on the open market. It is an honor, therefore, to make this unprecedented offering. Quantities of the older vintages are *extremely* limited.

- 2000 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **69.95**  
Livingstone-Learmonth, *Wines of the Northern Rhone*:  
"★★★★" Tanzer: "superripe ... densely packed ..."
- 2000 Cornas 'Chaillots'** ..... **59.95**  
Tanzer: "Pure aromas of dark berries, black olive, violet and gunflint. Concentrated, minerally and tight..."
- 1999 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **89.95**  
Livingstone-Learmonth: "★★★★" Tanzer: "... as dark a Cornas as I saw in November ... blackberry, blueberry, violet, game and bitter chocolate ... penetrating flavors."
- 1998 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **69.95**  
Tanzer: "Superripe aromas of blackberry liqueur, crushed blueberry, bitter chocolate ... Huge ... spectacular aromas."

### A Cornas Pinnacle: '04 Reynard

**2004 Cornas Reynard\***  
**95 Josh Raynolds**  
**\$79.95**



Josh Raynolds in Steve Tanzer's *International Wine Cellar*: "Explosively aromatic nose shows intense floral, blackberry, cassis and dark cherry, with a ripeness bordering on liqueur-like. Impossibly sweet and concentrated ... The fruit almost overwhelms the palate and builds impressively through the extremely long finish. A remarkable wine ... \$96"

- 1997 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **65.00**  
Tanzer: "Brooding aromas of blackberry, game, gunflint... Extremely intensely flavored ... This should be long-lived."
- 1996 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **49.95**  
Tanzer: "... brooding aromas of blackberry, licorice, black olive ... thicker, denser ... complex inner-mouth flavors ... sneaky length." *Wine Spectator*: "92 rating."
- 1995 Cornas 'Chaillots'** ..... **75.00**  
*Wine Spectator*: "95 rating. Beauty and power in a single package ... bacon, smoke, mineral and licorice."
- 1994 Cornas 'Reynard'** ..... **95.00**  
Livingstone-Learmonth: "★★★★★" Parker: "an inner core of intense, rich fruit ... wonderful purity ..."

## Incredible Prices on Top Girardin Meursaults

Vincent Girardin has emerged as one of the great producers of Côte d'Or whites, drawing his fruit from the Côte's most revered sites. We were delighted recently to acquire a parcel of perfectly cellared 1999 Meursaults from three of the village's most revered crus—at stunningly low prices.

**1999 Meursault Narvaux**  
**\$35.95**

*Burghound*: "91 rating. From 5 different parcels of vines that average 40 years of age. The wood is completely buried in the lush yet elegant fruit and marvelously intense flavors that display nut butter, hazelnut and fine minerality ... knockout length."

**1999 Meursault Genevrières**  
**\$39.95**

Tanzer: "89-92 rating. Lime, apple, spearmint and toasty oak on the nose. Sweet and penetrating, with firm flavors of mint and apple. Less fat and full than the Charmes ... but more elegant and equally long. Minerally, stylish and structured to age."

**1999 Meursault Charmes**  
**\$39.95**

Tanzer: "90-93 rating. Tangy, sappy aromas of lemon and honeysuckle. Dense but bright, with juicy acids framing and intensifying the citrus and stone flavors. Lovely sugar/acid balance. Very strong, slow-building finish. Impressive potential."

# Togni's Treasures

*Pristine Rarities from the Cellar of a California Master*

Last December, for the first time since 1993, we featured Philip Togni on the cover of this newsletter. That offering of rare magnums of Philip's monumental 2003 Cabernet—about the closest thing you'll find to a Bordeaux First Growth made on this continent—sold out with extraordinary speed. But it was a small wonder, as this parcel consisted of a few coveted cases that Philip had set aside for library release not before 2012!



Philip Togni

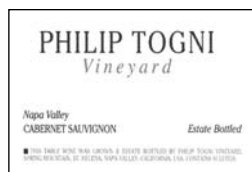
Inspired by the strong interest the offer generated, we asked Philip if there were any other treasures he could share with Rare Wine Co. customers. The answer was more than we could have hoped for. He came up with three famous wines from the early and mid 90s—1993, 1994 and 1995—along with a few cases of his towering 2001.

## Perfect Timing

As Philip has always counseled clients to wait a decade before drinking his Cabernets, no one should pass up this opportunity to acquire the legendary 1993, 1994 and 1995. All were extraordinary vintages for Philip, and while they have reached their plateau of sublime maturity, they have *at least* 15 to 20 more years of profound development ahead of them.

In the 49 years since he arrived in Napa Valley, Philip has made a legion of unforgettable Cabernets, including the famous 1969 Chapellet and 1975 Cuvaision. But the wines he has made under his own name over the past 15 years have few peers in Napa Valley history. It is indeed an honor to offer these great wines—all direct from Philip Togni's own cellar.

**2001 Philip Togni  
Cabernet Sauvignon**  
**96 Parker**  
**\$98.00 bottle**



**1994 Philip Togni Cabernet**  
**"Library Release"**  
**97 Parker**  
**\$195.00 bottle**

Parker: "The finest Cabernet Togni has produced since the mid-nineties ... the nose offers up spectacular aromas of melted licorice intermixed with creme de cassis, acacia flowers, roasted meats, tapenade, and subtle pain grillé. Opulent and voluptuous, with huge body ... this Cabernet possesses impeccable equilibrium, admirable purity, and a 50-second finish. It is one of Togni's great Cabernet Sauvignons ...."

Parker: "A glorious perfume ... of plums, figs, creme de cassis, smoke, hickory spice, and high quality cigar tobacco ... this California Cabernet could easily be mistaken for a great Pauillac given its structure, density, richness, and perfume. This 1994 is just beginning to move into its adolescence ... it has 20-25 years of life remaining ... It is a monumental Cabernet Sauvignon from one of the valley's legacy producers."

**1995 Philip Togni Cabernet**  
**"Library Release"**  
**96 Parker**  
**\$195.00 bottle**

Parker: "A classic Cabernet Sauvignon that apparently turns to Bordeaux for elegance, structure, and complexity, yet retains Napa's extraordinarily sweet, rich, concentrated fruit. This profound 1995 still tastes like an adolescent ... It is unquestionably one of California's as well as the world's greatest Cabernet Sauvignons."

**1993 Philip Togni Cabernet**  
**"Library Release"**  
**94 Parker**  
**\$395.00 magnum**

Parker: "A complex Cabernet that is just approaching mid-adolescence. Its tastes are similar to a hybrid blend of a Pauillac and St.-Julien. Cedar wood, spice box, black currants, and tobacco leaf aromas soar from the glass of this aromatically exciting 1993 ... impressive purity as well as intensity. Already beautiful to drink, it should evolve for another 10-15 years."

## RIBERA DEL DUERO

# 2004 Atauta

### *A Stunning Ribera del Duero from Ancient Vines*

Of all the new viticultural projects of Spain, none is proving more profound than Dominio de Atauta. Consisting of dozens of parcels of very old Tempranillo vines—many pre-phylloxera and ungrafted—Atauta reflects the rich pedigree of Ribera del Duero, while possessing *terroirs* not found elsewhere in the region.

Atauta's 2004s have now been released and, as you'd expect, they are spectacular—magically transparent wines that express the minerality and perfume of the site and the very old vines, with the richness imparted by a great vintage.

Winemaker Bertrand Sourdis produced four stellar *cuvées* in 2004. Three are the mythic single-cru wines of **La Mala**, **Valdegatiles** and **Llanos del Almendro**. With U.S. allocations ranging from 7 to 14 cases, these legends-in-the-making will be painfully scarce when offered a few months from now.

#### **A First Taste of Greatness**

But you won't have to wait to experience the domaine's magical 2004 vintage: the flagship wine, **Atauta**, is available *now*. This mosaic from ungrafted 60 to 150 year-old vineyards is aged in 250-liter and 500-liter

*"French winemaker Bertrand Sourdis is fashioning fabulous wines at this extraordinary estate." Robert Parker*



*Atauta's ancient ungrafted vines.*

barrels, of which only 20% are new. Offering the balance of a near-perfect year while reflecting the growing mastery of winemaker Bertrand Sourdis, Atauta continues to remind us of a profound northern Rhône, boasting an Hermitage-like palate and Côte Rôtie-like complexity. It is among the singular wines of Ribera del Duero's 2004 vintage—don't miss it.

**2004 Atauta**  
**92 Wine Advocate**  
**\$38.95** *bt.* **\$450.00** *case*  
**\$89.95** *mag.* **\$525.00** *case*



Jay Miller in the *Wine Advocate*: "... comes from 60- to 150-year-old, biodynamically farmed, mostly ungrafted Tempranillo bush vines. The wine is aged in 100% French oak of which 20% is new. Dark ruby/purple in color, it has an expressive nose of spice box, coffee, black cherry and blackberry. Made in a racy style, with good acidity, this wine admirably combines ripe, sweet fruit with elegance."

## *A Vega Sicilia Unico Trilogy*

Vega Sicilia started it all, creating a worldwide reputation for Ribera del Duero by World War I. This 140-year-old estate continues to produce wines of transcendent class and style. Vega's top *cuvée* is, of course,

the coveted Unico. Made only in great years—and released at least a decade after the vintage—it is one of the planet's greatest red wines. We are pleased to offer three great "recent" Unicos at *very* attractive prices.

#### **1995 Vega Sicilia Unico .....255.00**

Jay Miller in the *Wine Advocate*: "97 rating ... has aromatic complexity which nearly defies words. There are notes of earth, licorice, hard wood charcoal, and black currants. Full-bodied, and powerful, the wine has beautiful balance with a multi-dimensional character and the structure to last for 25-40 years."

#### **1991 Vega Sicilia Unico .....229.95**

Robert Parker: "95 rating ... sweet vanilla notes intertwined with black currants, cherry liqueur, flowers, spice box, and tobacco leaves. Full-bodied and intense ... outstanding density as well as purity, and a layered mouth-feel... it's a wine of great elegance as opposed to power."

#### **1987 Vega Sicilia Unico .....225.00**

Steve Tanzer: "94 rating. Sappy raspberry, game and spices on the nose. A wine of great verve and sweetness; lush and chewy but also urgent and sharply delineated. Bracing acids give this dense wine buns of steel. Wonderful expanding finish features strong but thoroughly ripe tannins. An outstanding vintage for this legendary wine."

# Inauguration Wine

*An Epic Fifty-year-old Madeira from Henriques & Henriques*

In 1994, the venerable house of Henriques & Henriques needed a great Madeira with which to inaugurate its new winemaking facilities. The firm's winemaker Luis Pereira searched its stocks of old wine to find something truly extraordinary, eventually choosing a wine made in the 1950s by his mentor Peter Cossart.

Six hundred liters were bottled for dignitaries attending the event, leaving a small amount in cask, which was finally bottled in October, 2006. While only 144 bottles were produced the second time around, the wine was even richer and more complex than the original bottling, thanks to a further 12 years in cask.

## Two Giants

This wine is a tribute to two legends: Peter Cossart and Luis Pereira. The former was the younger brother of Noel Cossart, whom he would have followed into Cossart-Gordon had it not been for the threat of war in 1937. His mother worried that Cossart-Gordon's great size would have made it a target for the German *luftwaffe* and didn't want both of her sons there. So, he went to work for family friend João Henriques at



*In the 1950s, at about the time this wine was made, Peter Cossart (left) says goodbye to his Canadian importer about to board a Solent flying boat (far left) in Funchal harbor.*

Henriques & Henriques, remaining until his death in 1991.

Cossart became known as a master blender of the old school; his 1954s and 1957s, for example, stand as masterful examples of a style of winemaking that has all but vanished today.

But his greatest legacy may have been

training Luis Pereira, whose wines, like those of his mentor, are rich and powerful, built for long-aging.

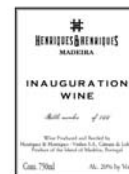
## The Wine

Even in 1994, when Luis Pereira selected it to launch the new buildings, the so-called "Inauguration Wine" was cloaked in mystery. Apart from Peter Cossart having made it during the 1950s, no one knew where it came from or even the grape variety.

However, Pereira believed it to be a great southside Verdelho. It has the pungent, roasted-coffee flavors and powerful acidity that one finds in aged Verdelho from well-exposed sites on the south coast. The level of sugar in the wine is ample (over 3%), but you'd hardly notice it, given the freight-train acidity.

The lucky wine that spent a further 12 years in barrel surpasses what was bottled in 1994—having achieved a level of power and intensity that is rarely found today. It is a pleasure to be able to offer it.

**Inauguration Wine**  
**Henriques & Henriques**  
**\$195.00**



This is one of the great Madeiras of the Postwar era. Presumably a Verdelho, possibly from Cama do Lobos, it has remarkable depth of color thanks to 50 years in barrel. The nose explodes with aromas of coffee, caramel and burnt sugar, while the palate is no less intense. The acidity is electric, focusing the flavors and supporting the wine's richness from front to back. The finish seems interminable, ending with a burst of roasted coffee and bittersweet chocolate. A classic in the Henriques & Henriques mold, which means it's a powerhouse. Only 144 hand-numbered bottles made.

## Ponsot's Back

*The Heroic 2003 Clos de la Roche Mags*

With the release of its monumental 2003 Clos de la Roche, we can report that Ponsot is back. Due to the meticulous selection, Ponsot made only magnums, and a small number at that. Since their release last fall, their price has skyrocketed. We were fortunate to pick up a few of these treasures at what is now a below-market price. Very limited.

**2003 Clos de la Roche Vieilles Vignes Mag ....950.00**

Robert Parker in the *Hedonist's Gazette*: "99+ rating ... one of the greatest young Burgundies I have ever tasted. A magnificent wine .... it is a nectar of the vines and true Pinot Noir elixir .... The 2003 may be a more modern version of the 1985, being bigger, richer and even more profound."

## UMBRIA & TUSCANY

# Marciliano's New Level

*A Ricardo Cotarella Prize Earns a Stunning "97" from Thomases*

*Ricardo Cotarella's* most famous wine is undoubtedly Montevetrano, the Neopolitan red that ushered in a new era for Southern Italian red wines in the early 1990s. But in the view of Daniel Thomases, Cotarella's greatest achievement could be Marciliano—a larger-than-life marriage of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc from high altitude vineyards near his home in Umbria.

In the 2006 *Veronelli*, Thomases gave 2003 Marciliano a stunning 96 points—signaling that its maturing vineyards had carried the wine to a new level. This score topped Thomases own 95-point rating for the 2001 Marciliano and even surpassed Robert Parker's 94-point rating for the inaugural 1999. It was in reviewing this vintage that Parker wrote that "Marciliano is a wine of first-growth quality."

But the just-released 2004 could be Marciliano's

crowning glory. It is a wine of incredible richness whose price is simply mindboggling. Grab it while you have the chance.

**2004 Marciliano**  
**97 Thomases**  
**\$45.00 bt. \$95.00 mag.**



Daniel Thomases in the 2006 *Veronelli Guide*: "The superb Marciliano already strives to be a Cabernet that produces great emotions while obtaining high levels of expressiveness."

**...Plus a few magnums of the 2003**

Last fall, we offered the great 2003 Marciliano in bottles. We have since secured a few magnums. Hurry.

**2003 Marciliano Mag. (96 Thomases) ..... 95.00**

# A Tuscan Epiphany

*A Brilliant 1983 Reminds Us of A Forgotten Pioneer*

*A turning point* in our love of Tuscan wine came 20 years ago when we journeyed to the home of one of our early heroes: Fabrizio Bianchi's Castello Monsanto. Though Bianchi's achievements are today largely forgotten, he was then leading Chianti Classico out of the wilderness, fighting the rules that made that era's Chiantis so mediocre. Working virtually *in purezza* with Sangiovese from 1968, his wines—particularly the iconic *Il Poggio Riservas*—were the first great modern Chiantis.

During our visit, we tasted all of the great wines he made between 1962 and 1983, giving us an insight few Americans had at that time. Bianchi was the first to admit that his wines seldom made it to the U.S. in good condition, such was the state of American wine importing. But when tasting at Monsanto, the magic of those early wines was inescapable.



The highlights of the tasting of course were the great Il Poggios, the youngest of which was the 1983. Though already five years old, it was still a baby; but we had no idea just how great it was—nor how long it would live—until last year, when we stumbled on a few perfectly cellared cases in Germany. The wine was mindblowing, greater than we could possibly have imagined and surpassing *any* '83 Brunello we've experienced.

Though we bought what we could, there's not much to go around.

**1983 Chianti Classic Riserva "Il Poggio" ..... 95.00**

The impact of this wine is astonishing, from its deep color to huge richness on the palate. There is great ripeness and superb structure, with the weight, concentration and texture of which Cabernet-boosted Chiantis can only dream. We have no doubt it will live at least another decade: a remarkable bottle of wine by any measure.

# The Sideways Effect

## The "Real" Pinot Noir Finds its Home on Sonoma's Coast

The stunning success of the 2004 film *Sideways* triggered a dramatic reversal of fortune for two of California's most famous grapes. Miles Raymond's condemnation of Merlot consigned a once high-flying cultivar to commercial purgatory, while his love of Pinot Noir ignited a firestorm of interest in this noble *émigré* from Burgundy's Côte d'Or.

Today, in part due to *Sideways*' influence, the planting of Pinot Noir in California has gone into hyperdrive after two decades of slow but steady development. There has been a rush to plant Pinot all along the coast, from Santa Barbara's Santa Rita Hills to the Anderson Valley two hours north of San Francisco.

### A Mixed Bag

But the results have not all been great. Even in relatively cool coastal microclimates, the recent hot sum-



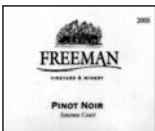
Even a century ago, vineyards girdled the town of Sebastopol.

mers have taken their toll on Pinot Noir's inherent delicacy. Too many wines have behaved as if they're on steroids, losing the captivating texture and perfume that makes red Burgundy so magical.

Thankfully, there are exceptions, particularly along Sonoma's Coast, where Williams-Selyem pioneered the idea of California cool-climate Pinot Noir. Here, a number of small specialists are springing up, continuing the area's tradition of minimalist small-batch winemaking.

In recent months, we have scoured this area (particularly in the heartland around Sebastopol) for small producers who believe that Pinot should produce wine of subtlety and perfume, expressing both *terroir* and grape. It's a privilege to be able to offer the wines of three marvelous new producers.

### Freeman



Featured last December in *Wine Spectator's* top 30 Pinot makers, Freeman

already has a cult following. (We got the heads-up a year ago from Pax Mahle.) In 2001 Ken and Akiko Freeman resurrected a defunct winery once used by Williams-Selyem and hired ex-Chalone winemaker Ed Kurtzman, whose strong Burgundian leanings produce Pinot of astonishing grace. Apart from Freeman's mailing list, almost every bottle goes to restaurants like The French Laundry and Michael Mina.

### 2005 Freeman 'Sonoma Coast' 41.95

A explosively aromatic Pinot of stunning purity, this 2005 marries the effusiveness of America's best Pinots with Burgundian sleekness. The hypnotic nose features cinnamon, clove and allspice, while the palate is sumptuously smooth and glyceric in texture, closing out in a gorgeous peacock's tail finish.

### Baker Lane



For decades, Stephen Singer has helped shape the tastes of Californians—at his

ex-wife Alice Water's Chez Panisse; at his own Singer & Foy (a beloved San Francisco wine shop), and at his short-lived but brilliant Table 29 in Napa .... his resumé goes on and on. His latest contribution to West Coast food and wine culture is Baker Lane, his small Sebastopol winery with its predictably Burgundian Pinot Noir. We were delighted to get a small allocation of his Pinot from the Hurst Vineyard.

### 2005 Baker Lane 'Hurst Vyd' ...35.95

This beautiful young Pinot Noir is marked by an evocative nose of framboise and a rich, concentrated palate. There is obvious structure in this wine, but it is buried in an avalanche of fruit. The finish is packed with smoky strawberry fruit and *pain grillé*. Fantastic now, time in the cellar will make it even better.

### Lutea



A year ago, we featured Suzanne Hagins' first Pinot Noir under her own label. That 2004

was outstanding, as is her just-released 2005. Both vintages reflect Suzanne's work at Pommard's Comte Armand, particularly her minimizing the use of new wood, to preserve the delicate nuances of her Russian River fruit. The concentration of her 2005 benefits from very low yields (caused by bud damage in the spring), though it resulted in very little wine: just 210 cases. So, we were again privileged to get a nice allocation.

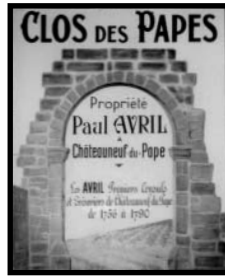
### 2005 Lutea 'Russian River' .....32.50

Suzanne has mastered the art of making subtle, expressive Pinot without sacrificing an iota of richness. The nose of her 2005 is big and opulent, with classic notes of cherry and clove, while the mouth is astonishingly sweet, rich and, above all, pure. The finish is outstanding, with beautiful persistence, power and length.

# Reversal of Fortune

## *The Majestic '05 Promises More Fireworks from Clos des Papes*

Over the past five or six years, Clos des Papes has emerged as an iconic wine for drinkers and collectors of great Châteauneuf du Pape. The Avril family's traditional approach to winemaking is back in fashion, and the consistent magic of recent Clos des Papes vintages has nudged Beaucastel aside as the go-to wine for classicists.



An old advertising poster in Clos des Papes' cellars.

For us, this is a moment of real satisfaction. We've been in love with Clos des Papes ever since our first visit in the 1980s. In fact, there are probably more bottles of Clos des Papes in our cellar than any other Châteauneuf.

### Reversal of Fortune

Yet, we can recall a decade ago having to implore customers to try Clos des Papes. Despite being one of the original domaine bottlers of Châteauneuf, and selling to the French elite for nearly a century, Clos des Papes somehow lacked Beaucastel's blue chip aura in the marketplace. And the Avril's decision to make no luxury cuvée kept them out of the headlines.

But what goes around comes around. Today, Clos des Papes is in the middle of a formidable run of vintages, of which the 2005 promises to be one of the greats. As usual, it is a blend of *all* the estate's best and oldest vines, with a healthy percentage of Mourvèdre. Not a drop was removed to feed a barrique-aged luxury cuvée.

There is no secret to Clos des Papes' quality. Not only do the Avrils have spectacular vineyards with a high

percentage of old vines, the domaine is always one of the last to harvest. They are among the Southern Rhône's most intelligent and skilled winemakers.

The 2005 promises not only to be one of the elite wines of this superb vintage, but one of the best Clos des Papes ever. Powerfully structured and effortlessly balanced, it is abundantly endowed with opulent Provençal fruit and explosive perfume. It is a fabulous Châteauneuf in the making. September arrival.

### 2005 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf du Pape\*

**94-96 Parker 94-97 Raynolds**

**\$79.95 bottle \$165.00 magnum**

**\$41.50 half bottle \$350.00 jeroboam**

Parker: "... has a deeper color than the 2004 and 2003 that I tasted side by side, and with its dense ruby/purple color to the rim, the wine has a fabulous bouquet of kirsch liqueur, raspberries, licorice, and a combination of spice and Provençal herbs. It is rich, full-bodied, with high but sweet tannin, good acidity, and a blockbuster finish of close to 45+ seconds ... a knock-out wine that will ... last for 20-25 years."

Josh Raynolds in Steve Tanzer's *International Wine Cellar*: "Should be a great Clos des Papes."

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## THE RARE WINE CO.

21481 EIGHTH STREET EAST  
SONOMA, CA 95476

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