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Retrospective  
1941-2003***

APRIL 11, 2006

## PIEDMONT

# An Icon Redefined

## *Giacosa's Mastery of Barbaresco Finds Two Profound New Expressions*

For those who prize the purity and power of great Nebbiolo, Bruno Giacosa's Barbarescos have no peers—their towering reputation forged by the immense Santo Stefano Riservas he made prior to the 1990s. These historic wines possess the profound depth and perfume of Barolo, but with the magical richness that is great Barbaresco's birthright.

These amazing wines—made from purchased fruit eight times prior to 1991—left us to wonder what Giacosa could do if let loose in Barbaresco's two *greatest* crus, Asili and Rabajà ... particularly if he owned and could farm the vines himself. Our imagination was further fueled by the great Asili Riservas Giacosa gave us from purchased fruit in 1967 and 1990—both among the greatest Giacosa wines ever.

### **The Curtain Rises**

Finally, our curiosity has been satisfied. A decade ago in 1996, Giacosa purchased sections of Asili and Rabajà—making headspinning wines in each vintage since. And Giacosa has capped his virtuoso performance with four wines in 2000 and 2001 that redefine what great Barbaresco is all about.

These Barbarescos have been the most consistently great of his career, although the reasons for this are complex. Certainly, the fact that Giacosa owns the vines is important; while no one is better in working with purchased fruit, ownership allows him still greater control. But even more important is the prodigiousness of Asili and Rabajà, which are



*Asili (left) & Rabajà (right)*

naturally superior to the other *crus* from which Giacosa has drawn over the decades.

Both sites enjoy perfect southern exposures at up to 1,000 feet, with limestone-rich calcareous soil. With these gifts, Asili produces wines of ethereal perfume and intensity, while Rabajà yields wines of miraculous richness and texture.

### **Color Blind**

Over the past forty years, there have been few better guarantees of greatness than a red label, denoting "Riserva," on a Giacosa wine. Yet, Giacosa's record is full of white labels that could easily have been reds. And never has this been more true than in the recent run of superlative vintages. During this period, we can count a minimum of ten Giacosa white labels that could wear a red label proudly. Of these, half are from Asili or Rabajà.

Cases in point are the four wines Giacosa made from Asili and Rabajà in 2000 and 2001: each a wine of transcendent quality and among Giacosa's supreme accomplishments. Yet in each year, despite tiny differences in quality, Giacosa chose to release only one as a red label, leaving the other to find its own path to glory.

As Giacosa's legend continues to build, glory awaits *all* of these great wines. Yet, today there is an extraordinary buying opportunity that begs to be seized by anyone who loves great Nebbiolo. ►

PIEDMONT

*Giacosa Asili & Rabajà, 1996-2001*

2001

**2001 Barbaresco Rabajà Riserva\***  
**98 *Piedmont Report***  
**\$195.00**

Antonio Galloni in *Piedmont Report*: "A wine of greatness ... explodes out of the glass with outrageous balsamic aromas of sweet fruit, minerals, menthol and spices. On the palate the wine reveals tremendous depth and delineation of flavors with plenty of ripe, dark fruit ... a virtuosic, riveting wine of almost indescribable elegance ... A true masterpiece."

**2001 Barbaresco Asili**  
**94+ *Piedmont Report***  
**\$98.50**

Antonio Galloni in *Piedmont Report*: "Dark translucent ruby ... a complex nose of sweet red fruit, minerals, underbrush, spices and herbs. It is richer and rounder than the Santo Stefano, and displays much finesse and elegance in its expressive ripe fruit flavors ... this is clearly a special wine that approaches greatness."

2000

**2000 Barbaresco Asili Riserva**  
**98 *Parker* 98 *Wine Spectator***  
**\$199.95 bt. \$415.00 mag. \$895.00 3L**

Parker: "... a spectacular wine ... a gorgeously penetratingly fragrant nose ... expansive texture and an extraordinary finish ...."

*Wine Spectator*: "Decadent ... One of the greatest wines ever from Bruno Giacosa."

**2000 Barbaresco Rabajà\***  
**95 *Piedmont Report* 94 *Parker***  
**\$99.95**

Antonio Galloni in *Piedmont Report*: "Has an intense nose of spices, minerals and licorice ... with dense backward ripe fruit ... offering just a glimpse of what it will become with time. A truly profound and moving wine."

1998

**1998 Giacosa Barbaresco Asili ..... 75.00**

Parker: "93 rating ... a big, sweet nose of dried herbs, cedar, tobacco, tar, and red fruits. Opulent on the attack, ..."

Tanzer: "92+ rating ... Wonderfully sweet and sappy in the mouth ... compelling vinosity. Lifted by a strong floral perfume ... near-perfect balance ...."

**1998 Giacosa Barbaresco Rabajà .....110.00**

Parker: "95 rating. A terrific Barbaresco ... Complex notes of soy, earth, candied cherry fruit, and cigar box emerge from this concentrated yet intellectually challenging effort. Full-bodied, with a soft attack as well as a tannic finish, it will be drinkable between 2007-2020."

*1996 & 1997*

**1997 Barbaresco Rabajà**  
**96 *Parker***  
**\$125.00**

Parker: "... a fabulous nose ... Dense and full-bodied, with a spectacular, silky texture, gobs of glycerin, and a layered, multidimensional palate, it is immensely satisfying from both hedonistic and intellectual perspectives."

**1996 Asili Riserva**  
**98+ *Parker***  
**\$295.00 bt. \$595.00 mag.**

Parker: "... utterly perfect ... a heroic offering brilliantly displaying both power and elegance ... extraordinarily rich, dense mid-palate, and a finish that lasts nearly a minute ... massive concentration, extract, and overall harmony."

**1996 Barbaresco Rabajà**  
**96 *Parker***  
**\$135.00**

Parker: "Giacosa's debut vintage from this noted vineyard ... an intriguing nose ... with an enormous impact on the palate, it is extremely concentrated, yet the fruit, alcohol, tannin and acidity are all marvelously well integrated."

# The Purists

## *Clos des Papes & Vieux Donjon in Great Vintages & Rare Sizes*

As recently as the late 1980s, most Châteauneuf-du-Pape domaines produced just one red wine, vinified traditionally and aged in tank and/or large old barrels called *foudre*. Then, in 1989 a few producers separated themselves from the herd, setting aside the juice from their oldest vines to age in smaller wood, including barriques—a healthy percentage of it new. A new Châteauneuf paradigm was created: darker than before, packed with fruit, often nuanced by flavors of cocoa and vanilla from the new wood.

Of the area's stars, only a few resisted the trend toward adding a prestige *cuvée* to their list of offerings. These holdouts included principally the Avrils of

Clos des Papes, the Michels of Vieux Donjon, and, of course, the Reynaud family of Ch. Rayas.

To this day each of these well-known producers makes just one “flagship” red wine from the domaine's own fruit. No prestige *cuvée* is offered and, almost as if by coincidence, the vinification and *élevage* at all three remains traditional.

For this offer, we have elected to focus on Clos des Papes and Vieux Donjon. Unlike Rayas, which has vacillated in quality over the past decade, Clos des Papes and Vieux Donjon have delivered superlative Châteauneuf-du-Papes year after year. We are pleased to offer this selection of the best of their recent wines.

### 2003 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape

97 Parker

\$89.95 *bt.* \$47.95 *half bt.*

\$195.00 *mag.* \$450.00 *3L*



Parker: “... one of the most profound wines of the vintage ... manages to offer the vintage's character in power, high glycerin, and huge volume, but retains remarkable elegance and finesse that is so much in keeping with the style of Clos des Papes.”

**2001 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape .....59.95**

**2001 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 1.5L 135.00**

**2001 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 3-liter 295.00**

Parker: “95 rating. Full-bodied with beautiful purity as well as a strikingly rich mouthfeel ... intensely concentrated ... great aromatic and palate presence.”

**2000 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape .....59.95**

**2000 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 3-liter 295.00**

Parker: “96 rating (Hedonist's Gazette) ... stylistically similar to the great 1990 ... voluptuous, full-throttle, intense.”

**1998 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 3-liter 235.00**

Tanzer: “90+ rating ... expressive, very complex ... concentrated, smooth and penetrating ... Plenty of volume.”

**1995 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 1.5L \* 185.00**

Parker: “94 rating ... as profound as the 1990 ... Wow!”

*Wine Spectator*: “96 rating ... Terrific focus and purity.”

Tanzer: “95 rating ... Superb wine.”

### 2003 Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape

94 Parker

\$43.95 *bt.* \$24.95 *half bt.*

\$95.00 *mag.*



Parker: “Comes closest in character to the 1990 ... sweet aromas of resinous pine forest interwoven with creme de cassis, black cherries, melted licorice, and smoky herbs. In the mouth, gamy, meaty flavors emerge along with black currants, cherries, and a hint of the sushi wrapper called nori. Full, rich ...”

**2001 Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape ..... 45.00**

**2001 Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape 3-liter ..245.00**

Tanzer: “94 rating ... flamboyant, wild Châteauneuf-du-Pape aromas ... explosive, layered and deep ... If someone sticks a glass of this in your face and you don't say Châteauneuf-du-Pape, you should give up wine drinking.”

Parker: “93+ rating. One of the appellation's classic, old style offerings ... admirable density and chewiness.”

**1998 Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape .....89.95**

**1998 Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape 1.5L ....195.00**

Parker: “96 rating ... This immense, concentrated, majestic, old style offering boasts a dense ruby/purple color in addition to a gorgeous nose of licorice, tobacco, dried herbs, smoke, blackberries, cassis, and aged beef. Sensationally rich, ripe, full-bodied, and unctuous, with high levels of tannin, this is a classic *vin de garde* requiring another 2-4 years of cellaring. It should keep for 20-25 years.”

## Late-Disgorged Rarities from Jacquesson



Jacquesson is famous for its older vintages—left undisgorged in its cellars until release fifteen or more years after the vintage.

These wines are further distinguished by their fabulous baroque labels, of the type that Jacquesson used in the 1840s.

Last year, the house announced the release of a small amount of superlative 1988 and 1989 disgorged in 2004 and 2003, respectively. So profoundly complex are these wines that Jacquesson chose to illuminate

their character by releasing them with no dosage.

Fewer than 20 cases of each wine were shipped to the U.S. We are honored to get a small amount of each. Quantities are extremely limited.

### 1988 Jacquesson Late-Disgorged Non-Dosé ..129.95

Compelling melted brown sugar and cream nose, with great texture, powerful structure and outstanding length on the palate. Long life ahead.

### 1989 Jacquesson Late-Disgorged Non-Dosé ..129.95

Powerful nose of toast and hazelnuts, a classically opulent 1989. Richer and more forward than the 1988, yet it will continue to improve for a decade or more.

## Marcial Dorado's Sublime 2003 Alvarinho

Arguably Spain's greatest white grape, Albariño is grown just above the Portuguese border in Rias Baixas. But ironically the finest Albariño of all is being made not in Spain, but just across the line in Portugal, by a Spaniard named Marcial Dorado.

A decade ago, near the Portuguese town of Melgaço, Marcial discovered a 70-year-old Albariño vineyard whose soil structure and climate were identical to the great Rias Baixas vineyards, but with far older vines.

The 2003 Dorado is astonishing—very possibly the Iberian Peninsula's white wine of the vintage. This is one to buy by the case.

2003 Dorado

Alvarinho Superior

\$19.95 *bt.* \$225.00 *cs.*



The 2003 Dorado has all the compelling qualities of the best Rias Baixas Albariños: intense floral aromatics, vivid flavors of pear and quince, and exuberant acidity. But thanks to extensive lees stirring, the old vines and an extra year of aging before release, it offers far more concentration and depth. Enjoy it well-chilled or at cellar temperature for even more complexity and richness.

## Raveneau's Immortal Montée de Tonnerre



Montée de Tonnerre

Raveneau Chablis are universally revered for demonstrating the profound complexity that white wine can offer, but rarely does.

The domaine's *grand crus* are, of course transcendent, but there exists another treasure: Montée de Tonnerre. Produced from the same southfacing slope as the *grand crus*, Raveneau's Montée de Tonnerre is *grand cru* quality and one of the top dozen wines made in Chablis. It sells at a premium to all the other Raveneau *premier crus* and can approach the *grand crus* in price.

In 2003, Raveneau harvested at the end of August—to optimize physiological maturity, acidity and minerality

—avoiding the excesses of producers who picked later. Montée de Tonnerre is simply amazing in this vintage. So, we were ecstatic recently to secure a parcel at a give-away price. Grab it while you can.

### 2003 Raveneau Chablis Montée de Tonnerre .....59.95

Tanzer: "Dense, sweet and vibrant, with enticing flavors of white peach, minerals and spring flowers. Finishes bright and very long, with an almost tannic impression of power."

*The Holy Grail: 2003 Raveneau Les Clos*

### 2003 Raveneau Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos\* .....129.95

A phenomenal price for "Clos." Tanzer: "Superripe aromas of white peach, spearmint and powdered stone ...Thick and silky but lively, with a dominant flavor of wet stone."

## TUSCANY

# Magnum Opus

*A New Vintage of the Mythic Il Caberlot Arrives*

Until last year, not an ounce had ever been offered for sale to America. Bottled exclusively in magnum, only two *enotecas* (out of a thousand or more) in Tuscany get any, and restaurant allocations are limited to the likes of Paris' 3-star L'Ambroisie and Florence's Il Cibreo. Members of Florence's elite Teatro del Sale can buy *one magnum* per year, a privilege handed down from generation to generation.


The wine is Il Caberlot. It and its second label Carnasciale are the only wines in the world made from a mysterious clone discovered four decades ago near Verona. Named "Caberlot," the grape has characteristics of both Cabernet and Merlot, hence its name.

### Providence on the Arno

Caberlot's discoverer—agronomist Remigio Bordini—has allowed the vine to be planted just one place outside his nursery: a rocky, southfacing bluff towering above Tuscany's Arno River. Famed enologist Vittorio Fiore discovered this providential site—Wolf and Bettina Rogosky's "Carnasciale"—in 1986.

To limit yields, Fiore planted the site at a then-revolutionary 10,000 vines per hectare and then pruned to five clusters. As if to presage Il Caberlot's future, the Rogoskys buried a bottle of Sassicaia under the first vine.

From the first vintage, 1988, Il Caberlot has been a huge cult wine in Europe, its scarcity driven by nature and the vineyard's size of less than an acre. With time, more vines have been planted, but pro-

 "One of those rare wines capable of stimulating genuine excitement ... the only defect is scarcity."  
Gambero Rosso

duction remains miniscule. Bettina Rogosky still numbers each label by hand.

### This Offering

Last September, American wine lovers had their first opportunity *ever* to buy Il Caberlot. Now, their second chance is here—with the arrival of 2002 Il Caberlot and its second wine 2002 Carnasciale.

Il Caberlot boasts an extraordinary perfume, sleek texture and great elegance, while Carnasciale mirrors its sibling on a slightly smaller scale. Boasting nuances of Graves, Pomerol and Carnasciale's unique *terroir*, these are among the planet's most singular wines.

**2002 Il Caberlot**  
**\$198.00 magnum**



A stunning success, Il Caberlot is the Tuscan Wine of the Vintage in the influential *L'Espresso Guide* for 2006. (Ornellaia Masseto came in second.) The nose explodes with white pepper and oriental spices, accenting a core of ripe black fruits. The palate is beautifully textured, with fine concentration, soft tannins and a long, full finish. Just 25 cases allocated to the United States.

**2002 Carnasciale 750 ml ..... 39.95**

Like Il Caberlot, the 2002 Carnasciale is intensely aromatic, with a dominant note of white pepper. The palate is soft and plush, with terrific balance. It's rare to find a wine with such class at a price like this. Just 10 cases for the entire U.S., so hurry!

## Girardin Red Burgundies to Covet

### 1998 Girardin Chambolle-Musigny

**Les Amoureuses ..... 59.95**

Steve Tanzer: "92-94 rating ... Superripe, nuanced aromas of raspberry liqueur, bacon fat, minerals and roasted nuts. Very firm and penetrating in the mouth ... terrific cut and delineation. **Real grand cru intensity of flavor** with a noteworthy lightness of touch ... Lovely Pinot Noir. Yes, Girardin showed me this sample after the Grand Cru Bonnes-Mares." *Very limited.*

**2003 Girardin Charmes-Chambertin ..... 99.95**

Pierre Rovani: "95 rating ... Bursting with black cherry aromas ... ample, rich, sweet, and lush ... regales the palate with candied red cherries as well as spices. Sappy and chewy ... flawlessly ripened ... a long, supple finish."

**2002 Girardin Chambertin Clos de Bèze ..... 129.95**

*Wine Spectator*: "98 rating. Wild and feral yet refined ... cherry, mineral, licorice, animal and underbrush notes ... Shows an underlying energy, with a long, long finish."

# Jamet for Hedonists

*The Great Côte Rôtie Classicists Produce an Extraordinary 2003*

The quintessential classicists, Jean-Luc and Jean-Paul Jamet are revered by those who love Côte Rôtie of incredible nuance and ethereal balance. If you're looking for blockbuster Côte Rôties brimming with new oak and extract, you should look elsewhere. But if perfume and texture's your thing, Jamet Côte Rôties are among the planet's greatest wine experiences.

But then once every century or so, a vintage like 2003 comes along, forcing the Jamets to test their aesthetic boundaries, as well as their skill. In this year of meteorological extremes, lesser winemakers made overripe and out-of-balance wines. But the Jamets made a minor masterpiece.

Though atypical for this domaine, the 2003 Jamet Côte Rôtie—masterfully blended, as always, from more than two dozen different parcels—is stunningly opulent, featuring New World richness allied to an

Old World elegance. An extraordinary wine for all lovers of rich, expressive Syrah.

**2003 Jamet Côte Rôtie**  
**92 Josh Reynolds**  
*(Steve Tanzer's International Wine Cellar)*  
**\$59.95 bt. \$129.95 mag.**



*Josh Reynolds:* “Juicy dark berry aromas with hints of sultana raisins and sweet tobacco. Extremely ripe and sweet, with dense blackberry and plum flavors accented by tobacco and smoky herbs. I commented that it reminded me of Cornas, to which Jean-Paul laughed and replied ‘maybe even further south than that!’ Finishes with intense notes of dark cherry, bitter chocolate and espresso. A seriously oversized heavy-weight of a Côte-Rôtie.”

# A Singular Vendange Tardive

*Zind Humbrecht's Remarkable 2000 Clos Windsbuhl Riesling*

Today, the Clos Windsbuhl is one of the jewels in Zind-Humbrecht's crown—best known for producing the first-ever 100-point Parker rating for an Alsace wine. But as recently as two decades ago, Windsbuhl was a forgotten vineyard with a distinguished past—used mainly to supply the local co-op.



First planted to vines in the late 1600s, and long one of Alsace's revered vineyards, Clos Windsbuhl has a unique microclimate. Its limestone terraces are protected from Alsace's northerly winds, so that the grapes grown here achieve maximum ripeness while retaining excellent acidity.

The wine that reclaimed Windsbuhl's exalted reputation was Zind-Humbrecht's 100-point 1989 Gewurztraminer “Clos Windsbuhl,” made under a lease from the vineyard's owner. Zind-Humbrecht bought the vineyard in 1990 and—through drastically lowered

yields—went on to make a astonishing series of wines over the next decade. One of the greatest of these was the late-harvest Riesling Vendange Tardive produced in 2000.

We are pleased to offer this stunning Riesling at a very attractive price. But quantities are limited.

**2000 Zind-Humbrecht**  
**Riesling Clos Windsbuhl**  
**Vendange Tardive\***  
**97+ Rovani**  
**\$75.00**

Pierre Rovani: “Minerals, clove-spiked pears, and peaches ... This spectacular wine combines exceptional power and richness with magnificent detail and balance ... exuberant, and intense, its feminine flavor profile is dominated with spiced red berries. Drink it between 2007 and 2020+.”

## SAUTERNES

# Ch. La Tour Blanche

## *A Great Sauternes Terroir Reclaims its Former Glory*

At the time of Bordeaux's 1855 Classification, Château La Tour Blanche was ranked second only to Yquem—occupying a loftier position than even Climens and Rieussec.



*An early engraving of Ch. La Tour Blanche*

But as has often happened, La Tour Blanche entered a period of neglect under a series of owners who underexploited its noble *terroir*. The decline began in the late 1800s, when La Tour Blanche began to be used as an enological training center, and vineyard and winemaking practices suffered.

La Tour Blanche's renaissance began in 1983, when the new director Jean-Pierre Jausserand began lower-

ing yields and improving the winemaking. His 1983 and 1986 were excellent, while his 1988, 1989 and 1990 all achieved the full-throttle splendor of that trio of vintages. Clearly, La Tour Blanche had regained its place near the top of Sauternes' elite.

### This Offering

With the generous help of the château, we have assembled a remarkable retrospective of La Tour Blanche spanning six decades—with bottles coming straight from La Tour Blanche's library. This is a unique opportunity for lovers not only of great dessert wine, but wine's fascinating history.

### The 1940s & 1950s

It's a privilege to offer two beautiful, painfully rare, early La Tour Blancs. Wines from '41 are scarce due to the war and 1956's because of the devastating freeze that killed millions of vines in Bordeaux that year. These bottles are in fabulous condition.

**1941 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château* \* ..... 245.00**

**1956 Ch. La Tour Blanche ..... 195.00**

### The 1980s

With the renaissance in full swing, Jean-Pierre Jausserand made outstanding La Tour Blancs in 1983 and 1988.

**1983 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château* \* ..... 115.00**

Clive Coates: "... rich, honeyed, fat and concentrated .... This is certainly one of the best 1983s ...."

**1988 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château* \* ..... 69.95**

Robert Parker: "92 rating ... superb richness, plenty of botrytis, creamy, honeyed, tropical fruit (pineapples galore), wonderfully integrated, toasty oak, crisp acidity, and a rich, full-bodied, long finish."

### The 1990s

**1996 Ch. La Tour Blanche *half bottles*\* ..... 19.95**

Michael Broadbent: "★★(★★★) powerful yet elegant"

### The 1960s

More great Sauternes were made in 1962 than in any other vintage of the decade. It was La Tour Blanche's moment to shine. Gloriously cellared bottles.

**1962 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château*\* ..... 179.00**

Clive Coates: "Bright, full, golden colour. Classic Sauternes. Rich, mature, plenty of *pourriture noble*. Lots of complexity and class ... lovely freshness and fragrance thanks to very good acidity. Very long and complex ... Very fine." Superb bottles from the château.

### The 2000s

Sauternes lovers have enjoyed two historically great vintages in this decade: 2001 and 2003. La Tour Blanche soared in both years.

**2001 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château*..... 69.95**

Robert Parker: "97 rating ... spectacular ... a big, exotic nose of tropical fruits, honeysuckle, orange marmalade, and creme brulee ... concentrated yet incredibly precise and well-delineated ... a tour de force in Sauternes!"

**2003 Ch. La Tour Blanche *ex-château*..... 49.95**

Robert Parker: "93-96 rating."

*Wine Spectator*: "97 rating. Full-bodied, with lovely sweetness and a long, creamy peach tart, tobacco, honey aftertaste. This is pure botrytis. Best ever from here. Has an incredible finish."

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# A California Grand Cru

## Wells Guthrie's Astonishing 2003 James Berry Syrah

In February, 2005, Robert Parker rocked the California wine community by giving a potentially perfect rating (96-100) to a new Syrah, still in barrel, from an unheralded young Sonoma winemaker.

The wine was Copain "James Berry Vineyard" Syrah, and Parker's rating came as no surprise to those watching the meteoric rise of Copain's winemaker, Wells Guthrie. Nor would it have shocked followers of James Berry, the Syrah vineyard Parker has called a "grand cru *terroir*."

In this meeting of gifted winemaker and extraordinary site, a great wine was inevitable.

### A Providential Terroir

The James Berry Vineyard lies about 15 miles from the Pacific Ocean near Paso Robles. Owner Justin Smith planted Syrah here in 1988 at John Alban's suggestion; and with time, JBV became recognized for Syrah that was as close to Northern Rhône in character as anything yet made in California. The key is not only the cool afternoon ocean breezes, but the calcareous rock—complete with fossilized whale skeletons—that is the residue of a prehistoric sea.

Such a site was perfect for Wells Guthrie, who—as much as any winemaker we've met in California—is an apostle of the Northern Rhône. Having apprenticed at Chave and Chapoutier, his role models are strictly Old World—classicists like Jamet, Rostaing and Allemand. And his methods, including the gen-



At left, the James Berry Vineyard.  
At right, James Berry's extraordinary terrain.

eral use of whole grape clusters and minimal new oak, are eerily similar to those of his idols.

Such methods are designed for "transparency"—allowing a great *terroir's* voice to be heard. JBV is such a site, and its qualities are profoundly expressed in Wells' phenomenal 2003.

There may have been greater Syrahs produced in California over the past decade. But, if so, we haven't tasted them. It is a remarkable wine by any standard.

Released a year ago with a final Parker score of 96 points, this legend-in-the-making has vanished from the market—not surprising considering that only 125 cases were made. Rare auction appearances are already realizing prices in the low \$100s. Please hurry.

**2003 Copain Syrah**  
**"James Berry Vyd."**  
**96 Parker**  
**\$89.95**



Parker: "An astonishing effort, the 2003 Syrah James Berry Vineyard possesses a dense purple color as well as an extraordinary nose of incense, Asian spices, black tea, blackberries, and cassis. The soaring aromas are followed by staggeringly majestic, full-bodied, multilayered, and enormously well-endowed flavors. It will be even better with 1-2 years of bottle age, and should last for 12-15 years."

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