

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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AUGUST 16, 2005

# La Forest

## *Vincent Dauvissat's Hidden Treasure*

*René & Vincent Dauvissat* are world-famous for their coveted *grand cru* Chablis, Les Clos and Les Preuses. But insiders know of a third prize in their portfolio: the *premier cru* La Forest (*a.k.a.* La Forêt).

At a price that's half the *grand crus*, many knowledgeable observers regard La Forest as a near-equal, regularly achieving *grand cru* levels of expressiveness, depth and complexity.

Dauvissat produces three other *premier crus*—Sechet, Vaillons and Montmains—and they are among Chablis' best. But as fine as they are, La Forest combines a rounder, more honeyed texture with deeper aromas and flavors. This enables the wine to reach a degree of weight and complexity typically found only in the best *grand crus*. There is also a pronounced forest floor characteristic with an anise seed nuance that comes with age; this, too, is an expression of the great La Forest *terroir*.



*"The top two wines are consistently Les Preuses and Les Clos, but for value consumers should seek out the Chablis La Forêt, which is almost as good in top years." Robert Parker*

*"I have always thought the La Forest is the bargain play among the Dauvissat wines."  
Burghound*

### **An Extraordinary Site**

These qualities come from a high percentage of old vines (a 40-year average); a perfect southern exposure; and a classic Kimmeridgian soil that is—like the great *grand cru* Les Clos—mostly clay. Such soils are cool—cooler, for example, than Forest's rival, Montée de Tonnerre—and they retain less heat. They are more sensitive to frost in spring, and the fruit ripens more slowly.

The bottom line is that La Forest is vulnerable to reduced yields, due to Chablis' frequent spring frosts, and difficult ripening in cool or rainy years. But in warm, sunny years, it excels, achieving a degree of complexity and richness that is of true *grand cru* quality.

### **Brilliance in the Cellar**

Dauvissat is philosophically driven to restrict the use of chemicals in the vineyard, while strictly hand harvesting, fermenting with whole clusters and using natural yeasts whenever possible. ►



*La Forest*

# CHABLIS

## Dauvissat's Great La Forest

► One of the earliest Chablis domaines to sell wine under their own label (1931), Dauvissat has always aged their wines in barrel. The family's belief is that this allows the wine to breathe during the *élevage*. As René Dauvissat, Vincent's father, told writer Michael Steinberger in 2002, "Oak is very important to Chablis. The synergy of air and wood adds character and also helps soften the wine. Without oak, Chablis is too hard, too austere."



Vincent Dauvissat

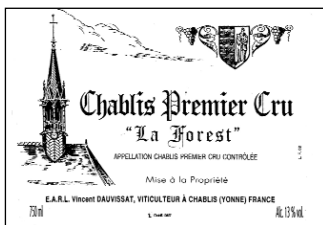
wood, the *premier cru* Sechet 3%, the *premier cru* Vaillons 5% and La Forest 15%. This latter figure is testament to Dauvissat's belief in the near-*grand cru* quality of this wine.

### This Offer

Over the past two years, we have been searching in Europe's best cellars for perfectly cared-for examples of La Forest's finest vintages. Our greatest score was a prime parcel of the superb, and now scarce, 1995 at a bargain price. But we have also acquired additional quantities of the coveted 2000 and 2002, rare bottles of the legendary 1989 and 1990, and some very desirable vintages in half bottle. This is a dream come true for Chablis lovers.

But Dauvissat is against overtly oaky wines. They carefully calibrate the amount of new oak for each *cuvée*, depending on the raw material and concentration of the wine. In 2002, for example, the *grand crus* were aged in 20% new

acquired additional quantities of the coveted 2000 and 2002, rare bottles of the legendary 1989 and



### 2000 R. & V. Dauvissat Chablis La Forest

93+ Tanzer

**\$47.50** *bt.* **\$24.95** *half bt.*

Tanzer: "... highly nuanced nose combines peach, nectarine, lime, lemon skin, nuts ... already rich and mouthfilling, with the ripe fruit notes perfectly supported by a flavor of liquid stone. A wine of great energy, finishing with explosive length and powerful minerality. Grand cru size and cut."

### 1995 R. & V. Dauvissat Chablis La Forest

**\$59.95**

Tanzer: "Pristine aromas of lemon custard and minerals. Superb density gives the wine a tactile, almost chewy texture and uncanny generosity of flavor. Really impeccable sugar/acid balance. This will be stunning both early and late."

### 2002 R. & V. Dauvissat Chablis La Forest

93+ Tanzer

**\$49.95** *bt.* **\$105.00** *mag.*

Tanzer: "A pure mineral expression in the mouth: precise and very intense, with great energy and grip. And yet it's utterly silky too. Pristine flavors ... Superbly tactile, dusty finish builds and lingers. Leaves behind a scent of peach in the empty glass. This will be a knockout."

### An Indispensable Book on Chablis



We recently discovered a fantastic book on Chablis written by two Englishmen, Austen Biss and Owen Smith. It is 308 pages in length and the most thorough guide to Chablis' wines, producers and vineyards we've ever seen in English. Published in 2000, the authors have told us that the first printing is nearly gone and the book is unlikely to be reprinted. A must-buy. Hardcover with dust jacket.

**Biss & Smith, The Wines of Chablis (2000) .... 29.95**

### More Great Examples of La Forest

**2003 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest ..... 39.95**

**2003 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest half bt. ... 19.95**

Tanzer: "90-93 rating ... powerful, penetrating flavors."

**2001 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest ..... 35.00**

Tanzer: "90+ rating ... superb length ...."

**1997 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest half bt. ... 24.95**

*Wine Spectator*: "... wonderfully balanced ...."

**1990 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest ..... 145.00**

**1989 Dauvissat Chablis La Forest ..... 145.00**

# 2001 Barolo Elite

*The Great Ginestra Cru Yields Three of the Vintage's Superstars*

With this year's release of the 2001 Barolos, it is now clear that Piedmont has enjoyed six outstanding vintages in a row—a feat unprecedented in the region's history.

Not only is 2001 another fine vintage, it promises greatness. But just how great depends on who you are. For lovers of classically styled Barolo, 2001 will go down as a monumental year, with a degree of power and complexity rivalled recently only by 1989 and 1996.

Modernists may be slightly more reserved. *Wine Spectator* still holds 2000 in highest esteem, followed by 1997. Yet, the publication acknowledges that a few top growers—including some modernists—made their best wines ever in 2001, earning eye-popping scores.

### This Offer

Three weeks ago, *Wine Spectator* published scores for its



*Ginestra was the source of three superstar 2001s—from Conterno-Fantino & Clerico*

top twenty 2001 Barolos on its website. The highest rating (99 points) went to Conterno-Fantino's Sorì Ginestra, from the part of Ginestra with the densest, most limestone-rich soil. Although the *Spectator* has only recently climbed on this wine's bandwagon, Steve Tanzer has beaten the drum for several years, calling it "one of Piedmont's great wines."

For several years, we have shared Tanzer's enthusiasm, making our first major offering of Sorì Ginestra in 2003. Today, we are working on a retrospective of Sorì Ginestra going back to 1989, which will be offered in a coming issue.

For now, we are pleased to offer the superb 2001 Sorì Ginestra, along with three other transcendent 2001 Barolos. These include Clerico's two marquee Barolos, both also made from Ginestra fruit. Each of these wines is a must-buy for lovers of Barolo.

### Conterno-Fantino

**2001 Conterno-Fantino Barolo "Sorì Ginestra"\***  
**99 Wine Spectator**  
**95+ Tanzer**  
**\$84.95 extremely limited**



*Wine Spectator*: "... loads of rich fruit and big velvety tannins. Gorgeous wine. Huge concentration, yet balanced. Greatest wine ever from here and the wine of the vintage. \$99"

### Manzone

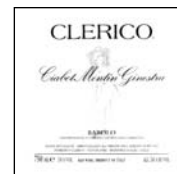


**2001 Manzone Barolo "Gramolere"\***  
**95 Wine Spectator**  
**\$39.95**

*Wine Spectator*: "Gorgeous aromas of ripe fruit, spices and light cedar. Full-bodied, with silky tannins and a long finish. This is balanced and wonderfully made, with great concentration. Fabulous."

### Clerico

**2001 Clerico Barolo "Ciabot Mentin Ginestra"\***  
**96 Wine Spectator**  
**\$69.95**



*Wine Spectator*: "Aromas of blackberries and licorice with hints of oak. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and lots of ripe fruit as well as smoky oak. A rich and very long wine. Beautiful and massive. This is always one of the best. \$83"



**2001 Clerico Barolo "Pajana"\***  
**95 Wine Spectator**  
**\$69.95**

*Wine Spectator*: "Blackberry, spice and chocolate aromas and flavors follow through to a full-bodied palate, with chewy tannins and a long, long finish. A big wine. I like this better than 2000 for this vineyard. Solid as a rock. \$83"

## BURGUNDY

# Elusive 2002 Red Burgundy Stars

*"The 2002 vintage in Burgundy is ... the most consistent vintage I have ever seen in 25 years of visiting the region. It's an excellent vintage from top to bottom, something that rarely occurs."*

*Allen Meadows, Burghound*

### *Gevrey Chambertin: The Grand Crus*

**Dupont-Tisserandot  
Charmes-Chambertin**  
**98 Wine Spectator**  
**\$125.00**

*Wine Spectator:* "Lush and appealing, with blackberry and cassis aromas and flavors, plus mineral and leather notes. Concentrated and backed by a firm structure, so this is built for the long haul. Lovely cassis note on the lingering finish."

**Frédéric Esmonin  
Ruchottes-Chambertin**  
**92 Burghound**  
**\$89.95 bt. \$179.95 magnum**  
**Rare 3-liter bottle: \$389.95**

*Burghound:* "... from a .52 ha parcel of 50+ year old vines ... rich, truffle-infused flavors that are beautifully intense and extremely long ... the complexity of the finish is first rate."

**Geantet-Pansiot  
Charmes-Chambertin**  
**93 Tanzer**  
**\$95.00**

*Tanzer:* "... a blend of 1952, 1963 and 1972 plantings ... Brooding ... The fattest and sweetest wine in the cave ... an utterly captivating rose petal perfume and sappy fruit flavors that I associate with the best examples of this grand cru ...."

### *Pommard: The Premier Crus*

**Hubert de Montille  
Pommard-Rugiens**  
**94+ Tanzer**  
**\$99.95**

*Tanzer:* "Sweet, dense and extremely deep, with great energy in the mouth. This has explosive flavors of red fruits, spices, iron and earth. Finishes with terrific verve and palate-staining length. A great bottle ..."

**Comtes Armand Pommard  
"Clos des Epeneaux"\***  
**92 Burghound**  
**\$79.95**

*Burghound:* "The extract of black cherry aromas are classy, elegant, ripe and forceful with sappy, gorgeously intense ... concentrated flavors of immense depth and reserve ... a great young Clos des Epeneaux."

**Joseph Voillot  
Pommard-Rugiens**  
**92-94 Rovani**  
**\$57.50**

*Rovani:* "... displays perfumed black cherry aromas. A masculine wine of considerable weight and concentration, its intense personality unleashes pit fruits, plums, blackberries, and dark cherries."

### *Volnay: The Premier Crus*

**Marquis d'Angerville  
Volnay "Clos des Ducs"\***  
**94 Burghound**  
**\$89.95**

*Burghound:* "Absolutely perfect harmony and a subtle, understated, almost Zen-like reserve ... will rival such memorable vintages as 1978, 1985 ... If you love Clos des Ducs, don't miss the '02."

**Comtes Lafon  
Volnay-Santenots**  
**93-95 Rovani**  
**\$125.00**

*Rovani:* "... explodes from the glass with awesome scents of flowers and dark cherries ... sappy, expansive waves of dense black cherries. Exquisitely ripe, yet fresh, it reveals a prolonged finish ...."

**Jean Boillot  
Volnay-Chevrets**  
**91-94 Tanzer**  
**\$59.95**

*Tanzer:* "Hugely sweet but sappy in the mouth; wonderfully vibrant ... Densely packed ... This has a superb fruit/acid balance. Finishes bright, sharply focused and very long, with suave tannins."

## SAUTERNES

# 1988 Climens

*"If one measures the greatness of a wine by its extraordinary balance and finesse, Climens has no peers." Robert Parker*

For Sauternes lovers, Climens has always embodied elegance. Ch. d'Yquem can be counted on to deliver otherworldly opulence in great years. But outstanding years of Climens are likely to produce a wine of ethereal refinement.



*Ch. Climens in the 19th century*

Not only does Climens have the commune's finest *terroir*—at the very top of the Barsac plateau—its unusual *cépage* of 98% old-vine Semillon produces a wine of haunting grace. Also, its regime of 100% barrel fermentation, and a further two years in cask, marries perfectly the fresh flavors of lemon and pineapple with the opulence of honey, vanilla and *crème brûlée*.

In 200 years of winemaking, Climens arguably enjoyed its greatest success between 1986 and 1990, with four great vintages out of five. Of these, the wine that has

emerged as the most sought-after is the 1988.

Even as its availability has dwindled, just two weeks ago we were offered a parcel of 1988 Climens that has never left the same cellar in Bordeaux. The condition is absolutely pristine ... making our offering price simply incredible. Snooze, you lose.

**1988 Ch. Climens\***

**96 Parker**

**\$119.95 bt. \$1,395.00 cs.**



Robert Parker: "The 1988 reveals layer upon layer of honeyed pineapple- and orange-scented and -flavored fruit, vibrant acidity, high levels of botrytis, and a fabulously long, yet well-focused finish. It is a great wine."

# 2001 Olivares "Dulce"

*The New Vintage of a Stunning Dessert Wine Bargain*

Five years ago, we introduced Bodegas Olivares' fabulously rich, exotically scented 1996 *Dulce Monastrell*, made from ungrafted Mourvèdre vines, some dating to the 1870's. Deep red in color, it was one of the most amazing dessert wines we had ever encountered.

Olivares has recently released the 2001 *Dulce*, and it too is a knockout. It's an honor to offer it.

### **Spared by Phylloxera**

Olivares' home in Jumilla is one of the few places on earth with significant acreage of vineyards planted on their own roots. Like Noval's "Nacional" vineyard and Bollinger's "Vignes Françaises," Jumilla was spared during the Phylloxera epidemic of the late 1800's. To this day, Jumilla boasts ungrafted vines dating back more than a century.

Each year, Olivares leaves a few acres of vines to hang late into the fall. Yet, only when blessed with perfect

conditions can they make their incredibly rich, exotic dessert wine, *Dulce Monastrell*.

An ideal partner to chocolate and blue-veined cheeses, *Dulce Monastrell* has for years been featured in such top Spanish restaurants as El Bulli, Arzak and Berasategui. Lovers of Port and other dessert wines should jump on the amazing 2001. September arrival.

**2001 Olivares  
Dulce Monastrell\***

**93 Parker**

**\$24.95 500 ml**



Parker: "... an intriguing after dinner drink. It boasts ripe notes of scorched earth, chocolate, and espresso, medium to full body, wonderful intensity, and vibrant acidity as well as freshness ... this tasty 2001 should drink well for 3-5 years, possibly longer."

## CALIFORNIA

# Sean Thackrey

*"I remember once last year, the whole crew was gathered around, waiting ... I was up on top of the fermenter. The crusher-stemmer was in place, and Ned said: 'Don't want to rush you, Sean, but, are we the hell going to be de-stemming or not?' I said: 'I'm thinking, I'm thinking.'" Sean Thackrey*

*There are* two ways to make wine. One is by the book. The other is by gut instinct. Growing grapes and making wine is a ride—you see where it takes you. If you fail, at least you tried. And if you succeed, you can make something profound.

Of all the winemakers we know, two best exemplify the latter school. In France there's Henri Bonneau; and in

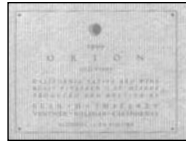
California, Sean Thackrey. Both, over the past twenty years, have made some of our favorite wines.

It's been two years since Sean's wines have appeared in these pages, but it was worth the wait. Not only are we able to offer some of the last remaining bottles of 2001 Orion *anywhere*, but we have the full range of his stunning 2002's. These are not to be missed.

### 2001 & 2002 Orion

#### 2001 Orion 94 Parker

**\$89.95** bottle



Parker: "A massive, primordial offering boasting a saturated black/blue color as well as a big perfume of graphite, animal fur, blackberry liqueur, cassis, and hints of tar, earth, and truffles ... huge, full-bodied ... This is wine gone wild ... and is all the better for it."

#### 2002 Orion 96-100 Parker

**\$99.95** bt. **\$225.00** mag.

Parker: "... riveting ... mint and blackberry notes intermixed with exotic floral characteristics. With great intensity, full body, multiple dimensions, and superb purity as well as length, this blockbuster is incredibly well-balanced/harmonious."

### 2002 Sirius & Pleiades XIII

#### 2002 Sirius (Petite Sirah) \$59.95 bt. \$125.00 mag.

Parker hasn't reviewed the 2002 Sirius yet, but he gave the 2001 96 points, calling it a "wine of legendary proportions." Like its predecessor, the 2002 is massively rich, packed with dense, concentrated fruit and loaded with complexity. Grab it while you can.

#### Pleiades "Old Vines" XIII \$19.95 bottle

There is no under-\$20 wine made in California with as much character as Pleiades. The components of Syrah, Barbera, Petite Sirah, Carignane, Sangiovese and Zinfandel—mostly old vines—give the wine its Châteauneuf-like robustness. An incredible value.

### 2002 Andromeda & Aquila

Sean makes two even rarer *cuvées*: **Andromeda**, from Devil's Gulch Pinot Noir, and **Aquila**, from Eagle Point Ranch Sangiovese. Just 200 to 300 cases of each wine were made in 2002.

#### 2002 Andromeda (Pinot Noir) \$65.00 bt. \$135.00 mag.

A huge, powerful Pinot Noir from the Devil's Gulch vineyard near Point Reyes Station. The cool climate, and vertiginous slope, produces tiny berries and yields of less than one ton per acre. An incredibly rich, opulent Pinot Noir about which there's already a buzz. Hurry.

#### 2002 Aquila (Sangiovese) \$49.95 bottle

From the same Mendocino ranch as Sirius, the 2002 Aquila was selected from a superb plot of Sangiovese planted in the 1980's. The grapes thrived in '02's very warm growing season, producing a hugely rich, lush red with seductive flavors of licorice, violets and raspberry.

## RHONE VALLEY

# A Condrieu for Côte-Rôtie Lovers

## *Rostaing's Ambrosial 2003 Condrieu "La Bonnette"*

The *Viognier* grape's Garden of Eden is in Condrieu—a small stretch of earth just below Côte Rôtie. In this providential setting, Viognier produces some of the richest, most opulent and aromatic white wines on earth.



Condrieu

But not all Condrieus are created equal. For us, René Rostaing's examples come as close to perfection as any we've found. The key is not only Rostaing's brilliant winemaking, with little use of new oak. It's also his ownership of vines on the Côte Bonnette.

Here, very near to Côte Rôtie itself, the soil represents a transition between Condrieu's granite and Côte Rôtie's limestone. From such soil, Rostaing makes a

Condrieu that is not only dazzlingly rich—Andrew Jeffords calls it “shimmering with honeysuckle scent”—but has superb balance and delineation. Its aging potential is also extraordinary for Condrieu.

The 2003 could be Rostaing's richest Condrieu yet. We had the privilege of tasting the wine last month in his cellar and were stunned by its opulence and aromatic complexity. Sadly, just 15 cases were allocated to the U.S. Don't miss out. Fall arrival.

### **2003 Rostaing Condrieu "La Bonnette"**

**\$59.95 extremely limited**



# From Father to Son

## *Jean-Louis Chave's Remarkable Mon Coeur & St. Joseph Offerus*

Now in his seventies, Gérard Chave is one of the world's revered winemakers, and the skill with which he crafted dozens of great Hermitages is the stuff of legend.

Needless to say, Gérard Chave is a hard act to follow. His son Jean-Louis—the heir not only to his father but also to more than 15 generations of Chave winemakers—could easily have spent the first two decades of his career struggling to emerge from their shadow.

Yet, in less than a decade, Jean-Louis Chave has

established himself as a gifted winemaker in his own right. He is admired for his recent vintages of Chave Hermitage, as well as for his exciting new Mon Coeur and St. Joseph “Offerus.” With these, he shows that the Chave gift for blending can be used to produce wines of typicity and character, yet at bargain prices.

Two superb new versions of Mon Coeur and Offerus have just been released. We are pleased to offer them at *very* attractive prices.

### **St. Joseph "Offerus"**

Domaine Chave has long produced small quantities of St. Joseph from its own vineyards. Since the mid-1990's, Jean-Louis has built on this tradition by obtaining the rights to fruit from other fine growers. He uses his blending skills to craft his bargain-priced St. Joseph, “Offerus.” A fabulous value.

**2002 St. Joseph "Offerus"**  
**\$19.95 bt. \$239.00 case**

The complex and distinguished nose offers scents of *garrigue*, smoked meat and flowers. The palate brings forth wonderfully bright and focused flavors of cherries, tar and meat—everything buoyed by crisp acidity. A classic Northern Rhône Syrah at a bargain price.



Jean-Louis Chave

### **Mon Coeur**

The 2003 is the fifth Mon Coeur to grace these pages, and it's the best yet. It has more Hermitage-like power than in previous vintages, while the ripe Grenache provides lift and luscious fruit. The result is a rich, youthful, and vibrant Côte du Rhône.

**2003 Mon Coeur**  
**\$17.95 bt. \$210.00 case**

The nose highlights concentrated aromas of smoked meats, violets, black pepper, and blueberries. The palate is full-bodied and richly textured, framing meaty Syrah notes alongside the ebullient plum flavors of Grenache. Delicious now but will age.

# Fifteen Years After

## *A Retrospective of the Great 1989 & 1990 Châteauneuf-du-Papes*

For fifteen years, Châteauneuf-du-Pape fans have debated which is the greater vintage: 1989 or 1990? Extremely close in quality, the 1989s generally are more structured, while the 1990s are more opulent, with both vintages boasting great richness and longevity.

Perfectly ripe fruit is a feature of both years, thanks to consecutive hot summers blessed with well-timed precipitation. There was enough rain in April to see the vines through 1989's dry summer. And in



*Châteauneuf's unique terroir produced magical wines in '89 & '90*

1990, August showers forestalled heat stress.

The best producers took advantage of the marvelous growing conditions to make some of their greatest wines ever. In fact, the '89's and '90's of Ch. de Beaucastel, Clos des Papes and Domaine du Pégau are of historic quality.

It's been years since we've had *both* vintages from each of these producers at the same time—providing a rare opportunity to compare them side by side. These wines are extremely limited; so hurry.

### **Ch. de Beaucastel**

**1989 Ch. de Beaucastel\***  
**97 Parker**  
**\$159.95**

Parker: "... extraordinarily sweet, rich ... smoke, melted licorice, black cherries, Asian spices, and cassis ... one of the most powerful as well as highly extracted Beaucastels I've ever tasted."

**1990 Ch. de Beaucastel**  
**96 Parker 95 Tanzer**  
**\$159.95 bt. \* \$350.00 mag.**

Parker: "... an incredible perfume of hickory wood, coffee, smoked meat, Asian spices, black cherries, and blackberries...will last another 15-20 years."

Tanzer: "... Fabulous, profound, smoky/gamey nose. Velvety-thick in the mouth, with great sweetness and flavor intensity ... explosive ..."

### **Clos des Papes**

**1989 Clos des Papes**  
**92 Parker 92+ Tanzer**  
**\$115.00**

Parker: "... big, muscular, virile ... hints of saddle leather, roasted herbs, licorice, and black fruit ... this vintage may behave like the 1978 ... Anticipated maturity: 2008-2025."

Tanzer: "... penetrating ... strong extract ... Very long aftertaste ..."

**1990 Clos des Papes**  
**96 Parker 94+ Tanzer**  
**\$159.95**

Parker: "... one of the greatest Clos des Papes ... opulent, sweet ... has hit its plateau of maturity, where it should rest for 10-15 years. Terrific!"

Tanzer: "... great density and concentration ... an extraordinary wine."

### **Domaine du Pégau**

**1989 Pégau**  
**"Cuvée Laurence"**  
**95 Parker**  
**\$149.95**

Parker: "The 1989 Cuvée Laurence is slightly sweeter, richer, and more opulent than its younger sibling. However, both wines are enormously constituted, thick, rich ..."

**1990 Pégau**  
**"Cuvée Laurence"**  
**95 Parker**  
**\$149.95**

Parker: "... enormously constituted, thick, rich, classic, old style Châteauneuf du Pape the likes of which are rarely seen today ... will be worth a special effort to find and purchase."

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