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FEBRUARY 23, 2005

# Clos des Goisses

## *An Historic Offering of Rare Older Vintages*

For more than a half century, Philipponnat's Clos des Goisses has occupied a niche in Champagne akin to that of Claude Dugat's Griotte-Chambertin in Burgundy or Trimbach's Clos Ste. Hune in Alsace. In other words it's a wine that few wine drinkers have ever seen, yet it is worshipped by insiders as a wine of nearly magical complexity and power.

In a sense, Philipponnat's wine is even more remarkable than those of Dugat and Trimbach. More than 60 years ago—and 40 years before Krug's Clos du Mesnil—it proved that, to be consistently great, a Champagne need not be made from a blend of sites.

From its inception in 1935, Clos des Goisses was unprecedented: never before had a major Champagne been made from a single vineyard. And from the start, Clos des Goisses proved its greatness. In the 17 vintages made between 1952 and 1990, critic Richard Juhlin gives Clos des Goisses an average rating of 95.8 points. Only Salon and Krug have comparable ratings from Juhlin for the same period.

### **A Providential Site**

Clos des Goisses' is made from 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay. But the real key to the wine's magic

is the site's southern exposure on the Marne River, its chalky soil and the fact that the Clos consists of a steep slope and a plateau. In hot, sunny years, the plateau assures balance; in cool, cloudy years, the steep southern slope guarantees ripeness. This accounts for the wine's incredible consistency.



*The famous view of Clos des Goisses, whose reflection against the Marne River resembles a Champagne bottle.*

*"The late Colin Fenton, MW, who was perhaps the world's greatest admirer of Champagne Salon, stated that anyone who could not understand or like Salon would not appreciate Clos des Goisses, and vice versa ... both have a singular intensity which sets them apart from all other Champagnes." Tom Stevenson*

property. He assembled a vertical of six great vintages from 1980 to 1990, with the bottles all late-disgorged. Charles also supplied us with a little extra 1980, 1982 and 1989 to offer on their own.

This could be the most remarkable offering of Philipponnat's Clos des Goisses ever in the United States. It is also an opportunity not to be missed by anyone who loves great Champagne. ►

### **Great Rarity**

With its tiny production (often just a few hundred cases), any great Clos des Goisses vintage starts out rare and becomes rarer over time. Finding well-cellared older vintages is now next to impossible, and Philipponnat itself has few of these older treasures left, rarely making them available for sale.

However, this January we visited the estate and met Charles Philipponnat who today runs the

# CHAMPAGNE

## Rare Clos des Goisses Vertical

### The wines' credentials:

1980: Juhlin 95  
 1982: Juhlin 95 Spectator 98  
 1985: Juhlin 96 Spectator 96  
 1986: Juhlin 94  
 1989: Juhlin 96  
 1990: Juhlin 96 Spectator 95

One bottle each of  
 1990, 1989, 1986, 1985,  
 1982, 1980 Clos des Goisses  
 ... all late disgorged.

**\$1095**

for the 6-bottle set



Limited quantities of these wines available individually ...

### 1989 Clos des Goisses

**\$165.00** bottle

Richard Juhlin: "96 rating. Very rich and quite concentrated. Wait at least ten years before you drink it. If you do fall for this temptation too early, at least see that you decant this '89 to bring out a whisper of the glorious vanilla aromas that come with time."

### 1982 Clos des Goisses

**\$225.00** bottle

Wine Spectator: "98 rating. Absolutely brilliant. Still pale yellow in color, displaying a kaleidoscope of aromas and flavors ranging from biscuit and coffee to vanilla, hazelnut and lead pencil, all on a dense, firm structure. Completely fresh and really showing its stuff now, yet will develop with time."

### 1980 Clos des Goisses

**\$195.00** bottle

Richard Juhlin: "95 rating. A wine with the grace of a dancer ... the nose blends coffee and hazelnut with snow and sea stones. The taste is crisp and pure with intense minerality. Not the typical Clos des Goisses, but it will still play to a packed house. Certain bottles taste like a lacy 1980 Dom Perignon."

# A Valpolicella Triumph

## Bussola's 2001 "TB" Delivers Unprecedented Excitement

Alongside Romano Dal Forno, Tommaso Bussola makes the Veneto's best Valpolicella, a wine that could easily be mistaken for a top Amarone in a blind tasting.

It is made by *ripasso*, fermented on the skins from Amarone grapes. This gives the wine its rich, smoky chocolate and cherry aromatics, and the ravishing Amarone-like texture.

In fact, for us, Bussola's is the finest Valpolicella made. Its richness is comparable to that of Dal Forno's, but it has less new wood and even more complexity.

### The 2001

The Veneto's 2001 vintage is the greatest in years. It

*"The sensation aroused by the wines of Bussola ... has crossed the Atlantic and created a cult that chases after—often futilely—the few bottles that make it to the USA." Daniel Thomas*

offers the ripeness of 1997 and 2000, with the structure of 1995 and 1998. It rivals, or surpasses, 1990 in quality.

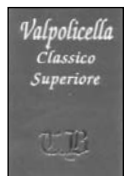
So it comes as no surprise that Bussola's 2001 Valpolicella TB is prodigious, a wine of hedonistic richness allied to great complexity. Wonderful now, it will become even more captivating with age.

With Dal Forno's Valpolicella selling for

\$100, Bussola's Valpolicella TB is a screaming value. Buy it by the case.

### 2001 Bussola Valpolicella TB

**\$35.95** bt. **\$420.00** case



## SOUTHERN RHONE

# The Essence of Châteauneuf

## *The Monumental 2003 Clos des Papes*

Since our first visit to Clos des Papes more than fifteen years ago, this famous estate has been among our favorite producers. In fact, we probably have more bottles of Clos des Papes in our cellar than any other Châteauneuf-du-Pape.



Clos des Papes is one of the few Châteauneuf estates to resist the trend towards super *cuvées* and new *barrrique*. The Avril family makes just one red and one white, each capturing the essence of Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

There is no secret to the quality. Not only do the Avrils have some spectacular vineyards with a large percentage of old vines, the domaine is one of the last to harvest each year. They are among the Southern Rhône's most intelligent and skilled winemakers.

### The 2003

Clos des Papes has made many spectacular wines over the past two decades, including the great 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2001. But the most majestic of all could be the 2003. It will not only be the richest Clos des Papes made in recent decades, it should be one of the monumental Châteauneufs of this important year.

Given its modest price and high score, demand for this wine has, of course, been intense from the start. But as longtime supporters of the estate, we received our usual allocation in bottles, magnums and half bottles. This is one 2003 Châteauneuf you won't want to miss at its opening price.

### 2003 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf du Pape\* 96-99 Parker

**\$69.95** bottle **\$145.00** magnum  
**\$39.95** half bottle

Parker: "Its dense ruby/purple color is matched by an extraordinary perfume of black raspberries, kirsch, blackberries, licorice, incense, and Chinese black tea. There is tremendous intensity on the attack, full body, loads of glycerin, and abundant but sweet tannin. With magnificent purity, richness, and generosity, yet fine delineation, this brilliant effort will be ready to drink in 3-4 years, and should last for two decades. Kudos to Vincent Avril for the finest wine he has made in his young, but promising career."

# Scavino's 1998 Rocche Annunziata

## *Steve Tanzer: "A Great 1998"*



Since its first vintage in 1990, Enrico Scavino's Rocche dell'Annunziata has been one of the iconic Barolos of Piedmont's modernist movement. Produced from an extraordinary one-acre site, it is aged for 16 months in *barrrique*, 16 months in large oak and 24 months in bottle. When it is finally released five years after the vintage, it proudly wears the "Riserva" designation (a rarity for a modernist Barolo).

With its tiny production, the stunning 1998 sells for \$150 and \$200 a bottle. However, we have acquired a few cases that we can offer for a song. Don't miss out.

### 1998 Scavino Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata Riserva 93-95 Tanzer 92-95 Parker **\$95.00**



Tanzer: "Superripe, liqueur-like nose ... Huge, velvety and quite powerful, but still youthfully unevolved. Hints of brown spices and dried flowers. Best today on the explosively long finish ... A great '98."

Parker: "... an undeniable show-stopper. An exquisite combination of black fruits, coffee, smoke, new oak, licorice, and incense ... equally riveting flavors ..."

## RED BURGUNDY

# Perrot-Minot's Great 2002's

A *friend* who visited Burgundy last Spring came back raving about the 2002's of Christophe Perrot-Minot. This normally restrained collector actually compared them to those of his reference point, the legendary Henri Mayer.



Christophe Perrot-Minot

We were initially skeptical, but we soon discovered the reasons for his claim. For starters, in 2000 Christophe purchased 10 acres of prime, old vineyards—increasing his average vine age to an amazing 65 years. More importantly, he began to develop friendships, and to

learn from, a couple of Burgundy's superstars: Denis Mortet and, the legend himself, Henri Mayer. With their advice, Christophe made significant changes to his winemaking and *élevage* between 1998 and 2001. It is with 2002, however, that he is staking his claim to the Mayer throne. The wines are amazing; call it *terroir*, or wizardry, but each *cuvée* is strikingly individual, possessing great definition and depth. You can be sure that today's prices will look like bargains in the years ahead.

### 2002 Mazoyères-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes

**95-100 Wine Spectator — 92-95 Tanzer**  
**\$129.95**

Steve Tanzer: "Sauvage aromas of black raspberry, mocha, minerals, spices and game; more reduced than the Charmes. Then sweet, lush and fleshy in the middle, but very firm and powerful on the back end. Possesses a tightly coiled spring of spicy berry fruit ..."

### 2002 Perrot-Minot Nuits St. Georges

**Richemone Vieilles Vignes ..... 95.00**

A wine of head-turning power and intensity, rated 95-100 by the *Wine Spectator*. Extremely limited.

### 2002 Charmes-Chambertin

**95-100 Wine Spectator — 91-94 Tanzer**  
**\$99.95**

Steve Tanzer: "... aromas of blackberry, cassis, violet and minerals ... this very backward wine has a powerful mineral backbone to support its black fruit, game and leather flavors. Finishes very long and violet. Perrot told me this parcel is located next to Rousseau's holding of Chambertin."

### 2002 Perrot-Minot Morey St. Denis Rue de Vergy .. 46.50

A bargain from 30-year-old vines. Tanzer: "Sappy-sweet aromas of black raspberry, maraschino cherry, minerals, mocha and chocolate ... with a creaminess of texture and strong spice notes. Comes across as very ripe, with soft acidity—an impression Perrot says is due to the minerals in the soil."

## An Amazing Corton Charlemagne Buy

### *Bouchard Pere et Fils' Marvelous 2000*

With 3.25 hectares, Bouchard is the third most important landowner in Corton Charlemagne, having purchased vines in this legendary *Grand Cru* vineyard a century ago. Their version is classic: a steely minerality set against a soft, creamy background. A top vintage can age with ease for 15 to 20 years.

Bouchard enjoyed particular success in 2000, and so we are delighted to offer their excellent 2000 Corton Charlemagne in both bottles and half bottles at an amazingly low price. A gift for white Burgundy lovers.

### 2000 Bouchard Corton Charlemagne

**94 Wine Spectator — 92 Tanzer**

**\$59.95 bottle \$29.95 half bottle**

*Wine Spectator*: "Very creamy, refined Chardonnay, this is full of chalky, mineral character. Full-bodied, with wonderful harmony, offering vanilla beans, pear tart and toasted oak character. Silky finish, a caressing wine. **\$100 retail.**"

Steve Tanzer: "Steely, pure aromas of apple and lime. Sweet, dense and firm but not hard, with lovely apple and spice flavors and impeccable sugar/acid balance ... very long on the aftertaste ..."

## TUSCANY

# Soldera's 1999 Brunello

*"Sangiovese of exquisite quality" Daniel Thomases*

*"I am of the opinion ... that the 1999 harvest has given Gianfranco Soldera the best grapes since 1983, the vintage that gave birth to the Brunello Riserva 1983, the greatest wine of that region that I have ever tasted."*

*Daniel Thomases, 2005 Veronelli Guide*

*It has been* nearly a decade since Gianfranco Soldera went from being a cult curiosity to the superstar of Montalcino. He was one of the first of Brunello's "new wave," having founded his Case Basse estate in 1972. By the early 1980's his intensely concentrated, yet highly aromatic, Brunellos were already turning heads; yet, production of just a few hundred bottles kept the lid on his reputation until the stakes were raised with his 1990's.

Today, of course, his wines are uniquely coveted among Brunellos. They have a majesty that other Brunellos seldom achieve—the result of methods that are a blend of traditionalism and his own quest for perfection. For example, while he continues to age his Brunello for five years in large Slavonian oak tanks and vats, he is a modernist in the vineyard: short pruning in the winter, a green pruning in the sum-

mer, and grape thinning and limited leaf-stripping in the fall to maximize ultimate ripening.

### The 1999 Brunello

Because he releases his wines later than everyone else in Montalcino, and doesn't give journalists "sneak previews," his wines are often missing from the general rundowns on each vintage. Thus, hardly a word has been inked on his 1999 Brunello in the U.S. press.

In Italy, on the other hand, the wine's reputation is already well established. Soldera himself has let it be known that he considers 1999 one of his best vintages ever. This view is echoed by Daniel Thomases, who covers Italy for both Robert Parker and the *Veronelli Guide*. Writing in *Veronelli*, Thomases says that you must go back to 1983 to find this kind of quality in Soldera's cellar.

We are pleased to offer Soldera's 1999 Brunello at a compellingly low price. Don't miss out.

**1999 Soldera Brunello**  
**"Case Basse"**  
**94 Daniel Thomases**  
**\$175.00**



# Altesino's 1999 "Montosoli"

*A Great Brunello at an Incredible Case Price*

*Altesino's "Montosoli"* has long been a Montalcino icon—a great wine whose sunny but cool microclimate extends the flowering and hangtime. The Montosoli vineyard is always among the last Montalcino sites harvested, yielding, since 1975, a wine of uncommon minerality and complexity.

Our allocation of the superb '99 sold out quickly last year. But we've found more that we can offer by the bottle at the same below-market price—and by the case at an incredible \$57.92. Hurry!

**1999 Altesino "Montosoli"**  
**Brunello di Montalcino**  
**95 Wine Spectator**  
**\$695.00 case \$69.95 bottle**



*Wine Spectator*: "Deep, dense aromas of porcini and wild strawberry turn to fresh tobacco. Full bodied, with tight and refined tannins. The finish goes on for minutes. A big, muscular, powerful Montosoli. \$90 retail."

## AUSTRALIA

# Best of the Best

## *Highly Coveted 2002 & 2003 Shirazes*

Last November, we offered a selection of Australia's most highly touted Shirazes from the great 2002 and 2003 vintages. But some of the most difficult-to-acquire wines were missing.

Over the holidays, we were hard at work trying to round up these prizes. We succeeded in finding four wines at the very top of our list, which we are pleased to offer at very attractive prices.

### **2003 Amon Ra Shiraz\***

**96-100 Parker**

**\$149.95 bottle**



Parker: "... from a 98- to 110-year-old dry-farmed vineyard ... Killer stuff, with notes of crushed rocks, acacia flowers, graphite, blackberries, cassis, and smoke, it possesses extraordinary concentration, tremendous purity, a seamless personality, and a magnificent finish that lasts over 60 seconds ..."

### **2002 Colonial Estate**

**"The Exile"\***

**98 Parker**

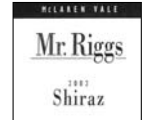
**\$149.95 bottle**

Parker: "Produced from a dry-farmed, single vineyard of old vine Shiraz (some of which are 120 years old) ... A sweet nose of black fruits, flowers, melted licorice, and espresso roast precedes a wine of amazing concentration, compelling intensity, and a tremendous finish of more than 60 seconds...."

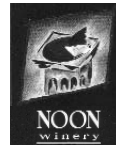
### **2002 Mr. Riggs Shiraz**

**94-96 Parker**

**\$59.95 bottle**



Parker: "... There will be 400 cases of this ... It offers a gorgeous nose of licorice, melted road tar, blackberry liqueur, and sweet black currants. There is dazzling palate persistence, tremendous texture, and full body ... The finish lasts for 45+ seconds. With thrilling density and richness yet good equilibrium, it will drink well for 10-15 years."



### **2002 Noon Shiraz Rsve.\***

**99 Parker**

**\$225.00 bottle**

Parker: "... a 300-case *cuvée* ... this full-bodied, remarkably intense Shiraz possesses great purity and richness as well as a broad palate. As concentrated as Shiraz can get, it is also impeccably well-balanced, elegant, and bursting with personality/soul. It is the kind of wine that is hard to duplicate anywhere else in the world ..."

# A Wondrous Eiswein

## *Dönnhoff's Spectacular 2003 Oberhäuser Brucke*



*In our last issue* we featured Helmut Dönnhoff's glorious 2003's—offering virtually all of his top wines. Yet, there was one very important *cuvée* missing: his Oberhäuser Brucke Eiswein.

It's not that we hadn't hoped to offer it, but we simply couldn't lay our hands on any at the right price. But then a couple of weeks ago, we hit the jackpot, acquiring a small amount at an incredibly low price. Here's your chance.

### **2003 Dönnhoff Oberhäuser Brucke Eiswein**

**95 Rovani**

**\$179.95 half bottle**

Pierre Rovani: "... unbelievably dense, concentrated and long, this superb effort coats the palate with oily waves of black cherry jam, white chocolate and molasses. Unlike most of the super-high-end sweet 2003s I tasted from Germany, this one did not abandon grace and balance in favor of syrupy sweetness."

## SPAIN

# Pioneering Priorat

## *The Exceptional 2001 Rotllan Torra Tirant*

*Of those who* pioneered Priorat's renaissance in the 1980's, perhaps the least well-known is Jordi Rotllan Torra. Having previously been a winemaker in nearby Penedes, he arrived with his family in 1984.



*The 16th-century cellars of Rotllan Torra.*

Those were early days for the area's revival, and so Torra had his choice of ancient vineyards. Most of the other pioneers concentrated on sites around the village of Gratallops, but Torra chose to buy great old hillside vineyards in Torra del Priorat. For the next decade he worked quietly from his 16th-century cellars, producing traditionally styled Priorat wines aged in American oak.

In the late 1990's, he created a more refined *cuvée*, Tirant, aged in new Tronçais barrels. He named the wine for a heroic medieval knight, Tirant Lo Blanc.

The first few Tirant vintages are very good, but the 2001 is simply spectacular—created 55% from 90- to 100- year-old Garnacha and Cariñena, with 45%

Cabernet, Syrah and Merlot from more recent plantings. In Robert Parker's view, it is one of the monumental wines of the 2001 vintage.

With its stratospheric rating, it is no surprise that this wine has become so difficult to find in recent weeks. Yet, we were fortunate in

securing an exceptionally well-priced parcel. Hurry!

**2001 Rotllan Torra Tirant**  
**96-98 Parker**

**\$64.95 bt. \$139.95 mag.**



Parker: "Inky/purple-colored to the rim, it boasts a spectacular bouquet of blueberries, blackberries, and the region's classic crushed stone minerality. This full-throttle yet remarkably elegant 2001 possesses tremendous intensity and texture as well as layers of flavor ... Give it 1-2 years of cellaring and drink it over the following 10-15. The 2001 Tirant is indeed a special wine."

# A White Graves Superstar

## *2001 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc*

*Domaine de Chevalier* is, with Haut Brion Blanc and Laville Haut Brion, one of the three most revered sources of white Graves. Over the course of two centuries, it has built a cult following for its rich, honeyed, mineral-infused wines.

There have been many outstanding vintages of *Domaine de Chevalier Blanc*, but few of the stature of the 2001. In fact, in this vintage, *Domaine de Chevalier Blanc* is arguably the finest white Graves of all, surpassing even Haut Brion Blanc.

We last offered 2001 *Domaine de Chevalier Blanc* in

2003, but we have recently acquired more of this legend-in-the-making at the same low price as before. Quantities are very limited, however.

**2001 Domaine de Chevalier Blanc**  
**95 Parker**

**\$69.95 bt. \$799.00 cs.**



Parker: "One of the great white *Domaine de Chevaliers* ... like liquid stones intermixed with honeyed grapefruit, orange marmalade, and smoked herbs. It boasts great intensity, a surprising amount of glycerin, and tremendous depth as well as persistence on the palate ... it looks to be a legendary *Domaine de Chevalier*."

**Wines may be sold and delivered only to persons who are at least 21 years old.** All wines are sold in California and title passes to the buyer in California. We make no representation to the legal rights of anyone to ship or import wines into any state outside of California. We are not responsible for typographical errors. All items and prices subject to availability. An \* indicates pre-arrival. Issued 16 times yearly. Copyright 2005 The Rare Wine Co.

# A Southern Legacy

## *The Rediscovery of Southern Italy's Legendary Taurasi*

For those of us exploring great Italian wine a quarter century ago, Mastroberardino's 1968 Taurasi Riserva was a touchstone wine.

It offered the power and complexity of the finest Barolos and Brunellos, and won raves from critics from Parker to Wasserman. However, like a meteor, it vanished from the market—and the world's consciousness—just as quickly as it had appeared.

Yet, it was not the first—nor will it be the last—moment of fame for Taurasi, a wine unique in Italy. Two thousand years ago, Taurasi was revered as one of the Italian peninsula's greatest wines. Today, it is once again joining Italy's elite—thanks in large part to Feudi di San Gregorio's great Taurasi Riserva Piano di Montevergine.

### **A Remarkable Microclimate**

Feudi's Taurasi Riserva is made only in great years. It represents a selection from the estate's best Taurasi vineyards at an altitude of about 400 meters. Aging is 18 months in French *barrique*.

A major reason for the wine's quality is the Taurasi area itself, situated just 40 miles from Mt. Vesuvius. The microclimate here is much like that of Barolo: the Aglianico grapes ripen late and often must be harvested in the snow in November. This produces wines of great power and richness, but with real finesse.

*"If Taurasi had been conceived within forty miles of the alps instead of forty miles from Vesuvius, it would long ago have obtained broader recognition as one of the five or six greatest Italian red wines, which in fact it is."*

*Victor Hazan*

*Gambero Rosso* editor Daniele Cernilli has called Feudi's Taurasi Riserva "perhaps the greatest Taurasi ever made." And *Decanter* has called it "a moving statement to Campania's huge potential." In short, it has become the touchstone wine that Mastroberardino's 1968 was a quarter-century ago.

We are honored to offer Feudi's glorious 1999 Taurasi Riserva, just the third vintage for this important wine. Quantities are very limited, however.

### **1999 Taurasi Riserva Piano di Montevergine 95 Daniel Thomases**

**\$47.95 bottle \$565.00 case**



Daniel Thomases in *The Wine Advocate*: "The 1999 Taurasi Riserva Piano di Montevergine cranks up the intensity level by many notches with its potent, penetrating raspberry and blackberry nose, mineral and tarry, and a packed, weighty, super-solid palate whose tannins are just beginning to unwind and bring out the underlying velvet of their texture. The wine is beginning to be approachable, but I would suggest drinking it between 2006 and 2020."

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