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SOUTHERN RHONE

Emerging Greatness

Châteauneuf-du-Pape's Fabulous 2000's and 2001's

Châteauneuf-du-Pape doesn't want for history. Nearly two millennia ago, the Romans realized that its stony soil was a perfect place to plant vines. For most of the 14th century, the Popes of Avignon summered here, building the great castle (the "new house of the Pope") whose ruins remain. And in the 1920's, Châteauneuf gave birth to France's *appellation contrôlée* movement.

And so it is ironic that until perhaps forty years ago, Châteauneuf-du-Pape was little more than a source of blending wine for negociants. Yields were high, as growers were paid not for the quality of their wine but the volume. Many of today's top estates existed only to supply large producers in Burgundy and the Northern Rhône. As recently as the late 1950's, Ch. de Beaucastel bottled only a tiny fraction of its wine under its own label.

But in recent decades, Châteauneuf-du-Pape has begun to realize its vast potential. With expanding markets and a growing recognition of Châteauneuf's distinctive quality, the first postwar generation of growers realized that they could get far more from their vineyards—and offer their children a more secure

future—if they estate-bottled their wine. When their children took over in the 'eighties and 'nineties, there was an infusion of knowledge and sophistication that transformed Châteauneuf-du-Pape into one of the world's most dynamic winegrowing regions.

One can't help but draw comparisons with Tuscany's Montalcino, another historic region whose present fame hides the fact that only 40 years ago there were but four estates selling estate-bottled Brunello.



View from the Top: Overlooking Châteauneuf-du-Pape from its historic center

The New Era

Today, Châteauneuf-du-Pape is on top of the world. With the publication of *The Wine Advocate* two weeks ago, Robert Parker confirmed his view that the 2000's are among the greatest Châteauneufs ever, while predicting that when bottled this spring, many 2001's will rival them. This is on the heels of outstanding wines in 1998 and 1999—an unprecedented run of four superior vintages.

Once *The Wine Advocate* was out, we went to work sourcing the top-rated wines we didn't already have—before their prices began their inevitable ascent. The success of our efforts can be seen on the pages that follow.

The Stuff of Legend

Pierre Usseglio's Great 2001 Châteauneufs

The new *Wine Advocate* reviews have caused a run on a number of 2001 Châteauneufs. But for the wines of Thierry and Jean-Pierre Usseglio, it has been a stampede. Parker gave not one, but *two*, Usseglio 2001 cuvées potentially perfect scores. After just four years of running their family domaine, the Usseglio brothers have already reached the pinnacle of their profession.

With roots in Italy's Piedmont region, the Usseglio's are a perfect example of Châteauneuf-du-Pape's recent history. Jean-Pierre and Thierry's father and grandfather were content to sell most of their wine to negociants. When the brothers took over in 1998, they not only dramatically increased domaine-bottling, they created the property's first-ever "old vine" *cuvée*, in homage to their grandfather—*Mon Aïeul*.

The very next year, they created a second old-vine

cuvée—first named *Cinquantenaire* and later evolving into *Réserve des Deux Frères*. Like *Mon Aïeul*, this is a wine that relies exclusively on low-yield fruit for its power and richness (there is little taste of new wood to be found). Both wines are the supercharged essence of Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

But even Usseglio's regular Châteauneuf puts others to shame. Made primarily from Grenache, it is a wine of sensational spicy richness. A joy to drink now, it should age with ease for a decade or more.

This Offer

The Usseglio 2001's are, needless to say, some of the hottest tickets in town right now. But we've managed to secure an allocation at the opening price. Based on what we've seen over the past few days, these prices should already be well below-market. Snooze, you lose.



**2001 "Réserve
des Deux Frères"***
98-100 Parker
\$149.95

Parker: "A candidate for perfection, this offering produced from 65-70 year old Grenache vines, manages to hide its 16.2% natural alcohol. Inky black-colored, with a glorious perfume of minerals, blackberries, asphalt, white flowers, licorice, and blueberries, it is extremely unctuous with the intensity of a dry vintage Port. It cascades over the palate with unbelievable concentration and intensity. The finish lasts for over 60 seconds. Deep, full-bodied, and prodigious, it is also a modern day legend in the making. Anticipated maturity: 2008-2030."

2001 "Cuvée de Mon Aïeul"*
96-100 Parker
\$75.00 bt. \$159.95 mag.



Parker: "... virtually perfect ... possesses a prodigious 15.8% alcohol. The crop size was tiny, and the ripeness was fabulous in this vintage. Aged in equal parts foudres and used barrels, and cropped at 15 hectoliters per hectare, it is a wine of extraordinary intensity. Its deep purple color is accompanied by magnificent aromas of blackberry and cherry liqueur intertwined with spice box, licorice, and loamy soil notes ... this is a modern day legend in the making. This compelling wine should be at its best between 2009-2030."



**2001 Pierre Usseglio
Châteauneuf-du-Pape***
90-93 Parker
\$35.00 bt. \$399.00 case

Parker: "Sweet, long, and concentrated, the 2001 Châteauneuf-du-Pape possesses more power, volume, and tannin than its 2000 counterpart. It is one of the finest regular *cuvées* the Usseglios have yet fashioned. Drink this deep, full-bodied, classic Châteauneuf over the next 12-15 years."

CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

More Must-Buy 2000's & 2001's

"A candidate for wine of the vintage" Parker

**2000 Dom. Beurenard
"Cuvée Boisrenard"
95 Parker
\$69.95**



Parker: "A candidate for wine of the vintage ... Subtle aromas of vanillin intermixed with blackberry, black cherry, chocolate, and espresso characteristics explode from the glass. In the mouth, there is firm tannin as well as enormous fruit, undeniable Southern Rhône typicity, powerful, concentrated, thick flavors, and a finish that lasts for 45+ seconds ... a stunning effort"

**2001 Tardieu-Laurent
"Vieilles Vignes Cuvée Spéciale"*
95-98 Parker
\$89.95**

Parker: "... meant to represent the essence of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. From 75-80 year old Grenache vines planted in the sector known as La Crau, the 2001 flirts with perfection. There are just under 1,000 cases of this offering, which should be gobbled up by Châteauneuf-du-Pape enthusiasts. A deep black/purple color is accompanied by a fabulous perfume of ripe figs, *crème de cassis*, cherry liqueur, chocolate, and licorice. It possesses admirable freshness and vibrancy for a wine of such formidable power, glycerin, and alcohol (close to 16%). Massive in the mouth and fabulously well-balanced, it unfolds magically on the palate to reveal a prodigious wine. An Amarone from Châteauneuf?"



**2000 Cuvée du Vatican
"Réserve Sixtine"
93+ Parker
\$39.95**

Parker: "The firm, broodingly backward, structured, powerful 2000 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve Sixtine is atypical for this vintage. Its saturated purple color, firm tannin, full body, and long, concentrated finish suggest it will age well for 15-20 years."

*"A tour de force in traditional
Châteauneuf-du-Pape" Parker*

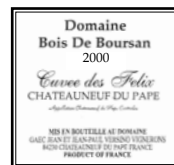
**2000 Domaine du Pégau
"Cuvée Réservee"*
95 Parker
\$49.95**



Parker: "... sweet aromas of *crème de cassis*, kirsch liqueur, cedar, licorice, and pepper ... Sweet, fat, opulent, and voluptuous, with fabulous fruit concentration, sweet tannin, and a long 45+ second finish, this powerful, deep, seamless 2000 is impeccably well-balanced. A *tour de force* in traditional Châteauneuf-du-Pape, it is accessible now, but should age easily for 15-20 years."

**2000 Domaine du Caillou
"Les Quartz"*
94 Parker
\$54.95**

Parker: "... brilliant ... Full bodied, with high glycerin, and a heady concoction of minerals, black raspberries, cherries, blackberries, and licorice, this layered, fruity, pure, well-balanced 2000 has a huge finish of nearly 50 seconds. It is a *tour de force* in winemaking."



**2000 Bois de Boursan
"Cuvée des Felix"*
96 Parker
\$79.95**

Parker: "... profound ... fabulous ... provides a lesson in the flavors of Provence. It's like an open air Provençal marketplace with notes of dried herbs, saddle leather, fennel, licorice, black cherries, cassis, blackberries, and tapenade. With tremendous concentration and purity, as well as powerful, balanced, full-bodied flavors, this stunning effort represents the nectar of old vines planted in the sun-drenched appellation of Châteauneuf-du-Pape."

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Another Dimension

Two Exciting Bargains from a Young Barolo Star

Over the past 15 years, a legion of young winemakers has electrified the wine scene in the Langhe—home of Barolo. In our view, one of the most innovative of the group is Enzo Boglietti (*pronounced bowl-yet'-tee*).

While most of the Langhe's winemakers have been divided into two camps—traditionalist and modernist—Enzo has straddled the two, creating a portfolio of singular wines that is as diverse as it is rich.

In less than a decade he has transformed his family's La Morra estate into one of the top properties in the Langhe—an achievement similar to what Scavino, Altare and Clerico accomplished in the late 1980's. He



has done this through hard work and talent, and also because he has amazing vineyards with which to work.

In fact, most of Enzo's vineyards are on a single steep hillside south of La Morra. This slope includes several of Barolo's most revered vineyards: Cerequio, Brunate, Case Nere and Fossati.

The Barolos Enzo produces from these crus have made him a superstar in Italy. But what intrigues us most are the *other* wines he makes from these crus—wines that receive the same lavish treatment, and enjoy the same *terroir*, yet are priced at bargain levels. They are among the most exciting wines coming out of Piedmont today.

Buio

Enzo could sell every drop of Nebbiolo from his best vineyards as Barolo, but each year he sets aside a small part of it to make a Super-Piedmont wine called *Buio* (*pronounced bwee'-o*). Buio is made up of 92% Nebbiolo from Enzo's Barolo vineyards, with 8% Barbera added for color and brightness. Enzo lavishes as much care on *Buio* as he does on his top Barolos, including the use of the best French barriques.

This will be the third vintage of Buio that we have offered, and it is clearly the best to date. With its extravagant 'tar and roses' bouquet, it would embarrass many producers' Barolos.

2000 "Buio"

\$32.95 *bt.* **\$375.00** *cs.*



Dollar for dollar, it will be tough to find a more hedonistic wine from Piedmont. This "Baby Barolo," from the great 2000 vintage, shows all of the classic rose, tar and cherry smells of Barolo, along with sexy aromas of cocoa and vanilla from the new French oak barrels. On the palate, 2000 Buio mirrors the plush mouthfeel achieved by such leaders of the Barolo New Wave as Altare and Corino. A stunning value.

Dolcetto 'Tiglineri'

Our other favorite is Enzo's barrique-aged Dolcetto Tiglineri, produced from three parcels of 70- to 100-year-old vines. The biggest percentage of the vines are in Fossati, with an important contribution from Serralunga, the town famous for its long-lived Barolo. It is the Serralunga element that gives Tiglineri its incredible structure. While most Dolcetto is best drunk in the first two years of life, we can imagine enjoying 2000 Tiglineri years from now. It's that good!

There are few \$18 bottles on the planet as good as this one. Don't miss it.

2001 Dolcetto "Tiglineri"

90 Parker

\$17.95 *bt.* **\$210.00** *cs.*



Parker: "Made from 70-100 year old vines, the stunning 2001 Dolcetto Tiglineri boasts a dense saturated purple color as well as a knock-out bouquet of cocoa, sweet black cherries, figs and plums, a soft mid-section, exceptionally sweet, ripe fruit and a round, opulent finish."

GERMANY

Germany 2001 *More Stars from a Benchmark Year*

Germany's superb 2001 vintage produced wines of remarkable richness and clarity. The country enjoyed a rare October, during which grapes achieved extraordinary ripeness thanks to the sun, without relying on *botrytis* for their richness. In *The Wine Advocate*, Pierre Rovani describes the result:



Erdener Prälät

Auslese, and Ausleses the profound concentration generally only associated with Beerenauslese yet without their blatant sweetness or botrytised flavors. Yet for all their richness, the 2001's retain the zest, tang and liveliness that is the hallmark of this great wine producing nation."

"Kabinetts in 2001 have the must weights of Spätleses, Spätleses the density and weight of

We are pleased to offer the follow 2001 Rieslings, each among the stars of the vintage.

J.J. Prüm

**2001 J.J. Prüm Wehlener
Sonnenuhr Auslese***
95 Wine Spectator
\$49.95



Wine Spectator: "One of the greatest sites in the middle Mosel, the Wehlener Sonnenuhr is a steep, south-facing wall of slate. Dr. Manfred Prüm's interpretation of Sonnenuhr Riesling results in some of the Mosel's most multifaceted wines. This auslese offers a piercing scent of slate, then the palate is awash in peach, pear and lime notes, intricately layered in the dense, yet clear texture. Beautifully defined by a firm, well-integrated structure, with an endless finish."



**2001 J.J. Prüm Graacher
Himmelreich Spätlese***
95 Wine Spectator
\$42.95

Wine Spectator: "A fantastic spätlese. Rich, succulent and harmonious, boasting peach, citrus and mineral aromas and flavors, all pure and displayed with finesse on the well-integrated structure. It picks up a creaminess and vanilla note on the endless finish."

2001 J.J. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Spätlese*49.95
Wine Spectator: "96 rating. A completely seductive and appealing '01 spätlese, seamless and airy in texture, yet layered with peach, citrus and mineral aromas and flavors enmeshed in the delicate frame. Lovely finish."

Pauly-Bergweiler

2001 Pauly-Bergweiler Erdener Prälät Auslese*49.95
Wine Spectator: "95 rating. Vivacious, bursting with aromas and flavors of honey, citrus and apricot, extremely concentrated and focused, even overwhelming ... Impressive ..."

Dr. Loosen

2001 Dr. Loosen Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese*39.95
2001 Dr. Loosen Wehlener Sonnenuhr Aus. 375 ml*..19.95
Wine Spectator: "94 rating. Lightweight and focused, with peach, lime and mineral flavors on an open, airy texture. Good underlying acidity drives the long finish ... very pure."

Dönnhoff

**2001 Dönnhoff Oberhauser
Leistenberg Auslese 375 ml*32.50**
Pierre Rovani: "95 rating ... Honey-laden liquid minerals ... has superb focus and concentration. Pure flavors of smoky minerals and botrytis can be detected in its silky-textured, rich, and complex personality as well as in its admirably long finish."
2001 Dönnhoff Oberhauser Leistenberg Kabinett* 29.95
Pierre Rovani: "92 rating ... sports a nose of slate and minerals intermingled with chamomile. Loads of sweet, smoke-imbued stones can be found in this layered, delineated, rich, and surprisingly persistent Kabinett."

Gunderloch

2001 Gunderloch Nackenheim Rothenberg Auslese* 45.00
Wine Spectator: "95 rating. Just delicious. Packed with exotic tropical fruit and spice flavors all displayed on a gossamer texture, this is Riesling expressing both terroir and its multifaceted character. The vibrant, yet well-integrated structure holds it all together."

AUSTRALIA

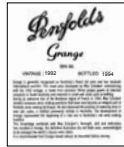
Holy Grail Bargains

*Incredible Prices on Classic
Grange and Hill of Grace*

Penfold's Grange and Henschke's Hill of Grace are two of the planet's greatest Syrah-based wines. Decades before the current generation of Aussie stars appeared, Grange and Hill of Grace were exciting palates worldwide. Long ago, they firmly established themselves as the Southern Hemisphere's most sought-after wines.

We recently purchased parcels of two superb vintages—1992 Grange and 1997 Hill of Grace—at prices a good 30% below market. Don't miss either one.

1992 Grange*
94 Wine Spectator
\$159.95



Wine Spectator: "Ripe, smoky and spicy, this is a wine of extraordinary subtlety and complexity"



1997 Hill of Grace*
95 Wine Spectator
\$159.95

Wine Spectator: "Explosively aromatic and extraordinarily long ... gorgeous flavors. Cherries, berries, earth and mineral notes mingle enticingly, wrapped in a gentle buzz of tannins."

CHABLIS

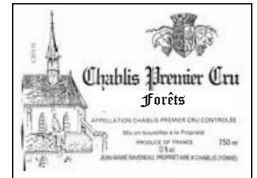
A Raveneau Rarity

1996 Forêts

Nineteen ninety-six was a Chablis vintage for the ages. In the view of Allen Meadows, publisher of *Burghound*, the '96's are the wines of the decade, surpassing even 1990. The best 1996's are classic *vins de garde*, with immense concentration and formidable structure, evolving slowly but surely into majestic maturity.

Of course, the vintage's elite are from the cellars of François Raveneau. Today, finding Raveneau 1996's on the market is difficult at best. So, we were delighted recently to purchase a pristine parcel of a Raveneau '96 that we had never seen before, let alone offered for sale: the *premier cru* Forêts. And the best part is the price—well below what a 1996 Raveneau *premier cru* should be selling for these days. Hurry, quantities are limited.

**1996 Raveneau
Chablis Premier Cru
"Forêts"**
\$69.95 limited



Mr. K ... Nectar from Krankl & Kracher

Mr. K is a joint venture between two of the world's great dessert winemakers, California's Manfred Krankl and Austria's Alois Kracher, working with Manfred's wife Elaine. Made in miniscule lots, these are dessert wines of stunning complexity and richness. When you can find them (they are nearly impossible to locate), prices per half bottle are usually in the \$175-\$200 range.

We have acquired a small amount of two of the greatest Mr. K wines to date. Quantities are *very* limited.

**1998 Mr. K Viognier
Troockenbeereauslese 375 ml *99.95**

Parker: "96 rating. The 1998 Mr. K. Viognier Troockenbeereauslese was made from botrytised Viognier from the Alban Vineyard. There are only 1,245 half bottles. Harvested at 37.8% sugar, it retained 14.5% at bottling."

1999 Mr. K Semillon Vin de Paille 375 ml * ..129.95

Parker: "98-100 rating ... a *tour de force* in sweet winemaking, with remarkable concentration and intensity as well as striking underlying acidity."

CHAMPAGNE

Le Mesnil

“The most elegant Champagnes the world has tasted.”

Richard Juhlin in 2000 Champagnes

Astonishingly, it was not until 1985 that Champagne’s historic village of Le Mesnil-sur-Oger achieved *grand cru* status. This was despite the fact that two of Champagne’s most glorious wines came exclusively from the town: Krug “Clos du Mesnil” and Salon.

Of course, for the cognoscenti, this was a mere technicality. With age, the best Le Mesnil Champagnes develop, in the words of Richard Juhlin, “walnuts and coffee combined with roguish, exotic fruit.” Yet, made entirely from Chardonnay, there is a finesse to these Champagnes that almost defies description.

This Offer

None of the great wines of Le Mesnil are made in large quantities and so they can be very difficult to find. Salon has always been a great passion of ours; we are proud that we can still offer vintages that have now largely vanished from the marketplace. To represent Krug, we have a range of rare vintages from the 1980’s. And as a real sleeper, we have acquired a few more cases of Guy Charlemagne’s incredible 1996 Mesnillésime.

Salon

“Unmatched in terms of class and purity ... so rare that only a few people have had the chance to taste the quintessence of Le Mesnil.” Richard Juhlin

- 1990 Salon*****149.95**
Richard Juhlin: “98 rating ... Perfectly pure and apple, with chablis-like aromas and a magnificent young fruit.”
- 1988 Salon*****125.00**
Richard Juhlin: “96 rating ... The nose hints at nuts and chocolate ... A great wine in six to ten years’ time.”
- 1983 Salon*****125.00**
Richard Juhlin: “94 rating ... a sweet honeyed depth ... creamy with citrus aromas and a powerful aftertaste of walnuts and melted butter ...”
- 1982 Salon****149.95**
Richard Juhlin: “96 rating. It took a few years before the '82 really found itself. Now it is wonderfully harmonious ... A classic Salon”

Guy Charlemagne

A Second Chance: 1996 Guy Charlemagne “Mesnillésime”

Last September, we offered a remarkable Champagne discovery: Guy Charlemagne’s *Mesnillésime* from the great 1996 vintage. According to Richard Juhlin, this tiny house “makes some of the purest Champagnes on the market, and the Le Mesnil character is, if possible, even more tangible than in wines from the neighboring Salon.” 100% Chardonnay from Le Mesnil.



**1996 Guy Charlemagne
“Mesnillésime”
96 Richard Juhlin
\$47.50**

Richard Juhlin: “A fantastic wine with crystal clear nuances and a magnificent depth just lurking around the corner ... Its seductively floral essence can be likened to the most beautiful scent which perfumers in Grasse might dream of creating.”

Krug “Clos du Mesnil”

Krug owns the crown jewel of Mesnil, the 1.87 hectare Clos du Mesnil. In the words of Richard Juhlin, this is “the essence of Chardonnay.” Extremely limited.

- 1988 Krug “Clos du Mesnil”****325.00**
Tanzer: “97+ rating ... Extraordinary mineral bath of a nose ... A superconcentrated wine of incredible palate-staining intensity ... one of the most memorable young Champagnes I’ve ever tasted”
- 1985 Krug “Clos du Mesnil”****375.00**
Tanzer: “98 rating ... Fabulous aristocratic nose ... incredibly penetrating ... Explosive finish offers great cut. An extraordinary wine...”
- 1983 Krug “Clos du Mesnil”****325.00**
Richard Juhlin: “96 rating ... the nose is young, finely balanced and flowery, with lily of the valley, fresa and white lilies clearly definable. There is also a complex creamy side filled with toasty aromas ... massive elegance.”

THE VENETO

Ambrosial Amarone *Bussola's Incredible 1998 Amarone "TB"*


In just three vintages, Tommaso Bussola has emerged as the third great producer of Amarone, alongside Romano Dal Forno and Giuseppe Quintarelli.

Bussola is much younger than the other two; Quintarelli was an icon a quarter-century ago, while Dal Forno's fame can be traced to the mid-1980's.

But Bussola brings more than just youth to the table. He has created a completely new expression of Amarone, emphasizing purity and intensity of fruit, but with surreal balance and great aromatic complexity. Tasted side-by-side with Quintarelli and Dal Forno, one is also struck by how graceful and long Bussola's Amarones are, without giving an inch in opulence.

A Great Amarone Vineyard

Apart from his skill as a winemaker, the secret to the transcendent quality of Bussola's Amarone is a vineyard: *Vigneto Alto*. This 2-acre site not only boasts a lofty elevation and old vines, the vines themselves are of low-yielding ancient clones: Rondinella, Corvina Grossa, and Corvinone. Bussola claims that it is this last variety, now very rare, that gives his Amarone its depth. He calls it the "Super Corvina," saying that it produces stronger, denser, richer, more perfumed wines.

 "Bussola's wines are beautifully intense, with gorgeous purity, powerful ripe fruit flavors, yet a freshness and harmony that make them stand out."
Robert Parker

The 1998 Amarone TB

In 1998, for his top Amarone, Bussola drew on several vineyards, with the backbone coming from *Vigneto Alto*. The '98 growing season was the hottest on record and Bussola's ruthless pruning paid off, producing grapes with off-the-charts sugars and deep color.

The 1998 Amarone TB has proven to be Bussola's most powerful and mouthfilling Amarone to date. In 1997, his great Amarone "Vigneto Alto" possessed 45 g/l of dry extract; the 1998 Amarone TB measures an unheard-of 56 g/l.

We are pleased to offer a small quantity of this important wine.

**1998 Bussola
Amarone TB
94 Parker
\$69.95 750 ml**



Parker: ".... stunning ... concentrated and voluminous ... possesses an intense bouquet offering a smorgasbord of aromas, including plums, figs, smoke, saddle leather, chocolate and sweet cherry and berry fruit. Dense, with great concentration, sweet tannin, a multi-layered, opulent mouthfeel and a 50+ second finish, it is about as provocative and riveting as an Amarone can be."

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