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OCTOBER 3, 2006

MADEIRA

# Ghost Wine

## *D'Oliveira's New Bottling of the Famous 1927 Bastardo*

*The vanishing* of Terrantez after Phylloxera has long been one of the great heartbreaks for Madeira lovers. Today, pre-Phylloxera examples are painfully rare, and although a few growers have replanted it in recent decades, Terrantez of any age remains scarce.

Yet, another famous Madeira grape has proven even more elusive: Bastardo. Many long-time Madeira drinkers have never seen—much less drunk—a bottle, and its history is shrouded in mystery. Owing to its miniscule yields and vulnerability to insects, little was ever planted, and even less was ever bottled on its own.

While no one knows exactly when Bastardo arrived in Madeira, some viticultural scholars believe that it came from Greece with Malvasia as early as the 1400s. For further evidence of ancient residence, others point to Shakespeare's "score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon" in *King Henry IV*. Like Terrantez, Bastardo essentially vanished after Phylloxera.

We know of only four vintage Bastardos having been made before World War II: 1870, 1875, 1876 and 1927. And rarely does even a bottle of one of these appear



*At left, Pereira D'Oliveira's cellars, dated 1619, and at right, Adegas do Torreão's cellars from 1949.*

on the market. So, it is with a great deal of excitement that we announce the new release of one of the legends: the famous 1927 Bastardo from Adegas do Torreão, bottled this year from an original cask by one of the last remaining giants of the Madeira trade, Pereira D'Oliveira.

### Always Rare

In the decades leading up to Phylloxera, each year saw a Bastardo crop, but yields were usually too small to bottle it on its own. Shippers, instead, would use it to beef up their most prestigious blends, or—as Cossart-Gordon did with its 1844 harvest—to create a small solera. After Phylloxera, few growers replanted the grape, making it even rarer. During the entire first half of the 20th century, only one vintage Bastardo was made—in 1927—and it has become every bit as famous, and mysterious, as its 19th-century predecessors.

Until now, there have been two 1927 Bastardos bottled, under the Adegas do Torreão and Leacock labels. It is very possible that both wines originated at Torreão. This little-known house, which closed a few years ago, was a *partidista*, maintaining large stocks of Madeira they'd buy from growers and then supply the big houses. ►



*The bastardo grape in Viala et Vermorel's 1903 amepelography*

# The Fabled 1927 Bastardo

► How they happened to be the owner of such an important wine as the 1927 Bastardo is unknown. The only other '27 Bastardo on the island rests in a couple of barrels belonging to Henriques & Henriques, whose Bastardo plantings in Câmara do Lobos are legendary. In fact, a Henriques wine was the source of the famous 1870 Bastardos of Blandy's and Avery's.



*A barrel of  
1927 Bastardo.*

Today only the 1927 remains in Henriques' cellars—a wine it has never sold in bottle. Is this where the Torreão wine began its life, or did it come from other vineyards on the island? We will probably never know.

## Torreão & D'Oliveira

The man behind Adegas Torreão was Vasco Loja, who—during the difficult years of the 1960s and 1970s—built Torreão into one of the island's most powerful wine companies. But after his death, his children chose not to continue his work. All of the company's assets were put on the market, including the company cellars near the historic Hinton *Torreão* sugar works which inspired the company's name. A number of barrels of wine, including small amounts of 1927 Bastardo and 1969 Sercial, were also put on the block.

Several of the island's shippers were interested, but it

was the D'Oliveira family who, in 2002, succeeded in buying the cellars and its wine. Today, they are hard at work restoring the 57-year-old building. As for the Torreão wine, while most of it continues to slumber in barrel, the D'Oliveiras have done a small bottling of the 1927 Bastardo and 1969 Sercial.

## Tastes of History

This could be the first time the 1969 Sercial has been offered for sale; in fact, we had never tasted the wine before our most recent visit to the island in June. It is a gem: a fantastic, old-style Sercial, pungently scented, deeply concentrated, with powerful acidity.

As for the 1927 Bastardo, it is of course, marvelous: somewhat drier than the Leacock '27 and with the pleasingly bitter finish that typifies classic Bastardo. And because it spent a few extra decades in barrel, we think that the D'Oliveira bottling is even better than the earlier bottlings under the Adegas do Torreão label.

Any time we can offer two Madeiras of such rarity and quality, it's a privilege. But the even greater honor is to afford American wine lovers their *only* opportunity to experience one of Madeira's mythic wines: the great 1927 Bastardo.

## 1927 D'Oliveira Bastardo\*

*(ex-Adegas do Torreão)*

**\$275.00**

Beautiful deep walnut color with a greenish-yellow rim. Very perfumed, powerful and high-toned nose of dried Adriatic green fig, vanilla, malt and dried apricot. There is a persistent core of sweetness on the nose. The palate opens with perfumed dried apricot and toffee flavors of moderate sweetness. Very well-balanced with excellent acidity across the rich mid-palate; the acidity pulls the richness through to the long, powerful dry almond-infused finish. A wonderfully exotic combination of elegance and power.

## 1969 D'Oliveira Sercial\*

*(ex-Adegas do Torreão)*

**\$89.95**

A walnut color of medium darkness and a yellow rim with green glints. The nose is impressively deep and very aromatic, revealing notes of dried Mirabelle plum, dried cherry and cherry blossom, and almond. There's a silky entry on the palate, with a great acid structure in the fleshy mid-palate; dried Mirabelle plum and green almond flavors with a slightly bitter note of quinine really fan out on the very long, very dry finish. Great balance and freshness thanks to the impressive natural acidity.


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# “Madonna del Piano”

*Valdicava’s Mythic “Cru” Brunello ... Including the Coveted 1997*

Since the 1980s, Vincenzo Abruzzese has made the Valdicava estate legendary. His obsessive viticulture and the brilliant winemaking of Attilio Pagli have made Valdicava Brunellos famous for their dizzying richness allied to great minerality.

Abruzzese is often compared to Roberto Voerzio in the expressiveness of his wines. He’s not afraid to use new small barrels; the fruit’s great density assures that any taste of new wood is absorbed.

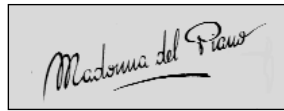
 “Montalcino’s number one over-achiever ... The secret: a willingness to spend whatever it takes for quality.”  
Daniel Thomases

Abruzzese’s Brunello *normale* is coveted by collectors, but in outstanding years, he sets aside wine from his best site, **Madonna del Piano**, to become one of Brunello’s elite Riservas. Thanks to its huge following, Madonna del Piano lists for \$140. But we we’ve just acquired an amazingly priced parcel from 1997-1999 that’s been in the same cellar since release.

A mindboggling opportunity for lovers of profound Brunello.

**1999 Brunello Riserva  
“Madonna del Piano”  
96 Wine Spectator  
95 Daniel Thomases  
\$85.00**

*Wine Spectator:* “Fantastic aromas of ripe fruit and coffee, with hints of plum and cedar. Full-bodied, with lovely, velvety tannins ... Big and glorious. The greatest wine ever from here. **\$128**”



**1997 Brunello Riserva  
“Madonna del Piano”  
95 Wine Spectator  
\$79.95 bottle \$165 magnum  
\$340 double magnum**

*Wine Spectator:* “Very opulent and decadent, with blackberry, meat and dried fruit aromas ... silky, ripe tannins and a long, long finish. A beauty. **\$140**”

**1998 Brunello Riserva  
“Madonna del Piano”  
92 Daniel Thomases  
\$59.95 bottle**

Daniel Thomases: “Size and concentration to spare ... the weight and grip on the finish are impressive. **\$140.**”

*Wine Spectator:* “Decadent aromas ... big, velvety tannins and a long, very rich aftertaste.”

# 2004 Mongovone

*A 72-year-old Vineyard Yields a Barbera of Astonishing Depth*

In 2000, Stefano Perrone made a remarkable discovery: a 1.3 hectare Barbera vineyard in Isole d’Asti planted in 1932. But it wasn’t just the old vines that caught Stefano’s eye; it was also the precipitous southwest-facing slope.

Stefano purchased the vineyard (called “Mongovone”) and immediately began to turn out Barberas of monumental richness and depth. His first three releases from the site were all stunning: 2000, 2001 and 2003. But the 2004 could be his best yet. It reflects his increasing mastery over the site, as well as the greatness of the vintage, which matches or exceeds 2001 for combining ripeness with structure.



With just 400 cases produced, quantities are very limited. Hurry!

**2004 Perrone Barbera d’Asti  
“Mongovone”\*  
\$29.95 bottle \$350.00 case**

Surpassing the 2000 that Robert Parker called “spectacular,” the 2004 Mongovone is the complete package: a deep reddish black color; a volcanic nose of smoky black cherry and blackberry, licorice, tar and saddle leather; and a hugely rich, but ruggedly structured, palate of outstanding length. A fantastic wine, and a superb value.

# Leighton's Magic

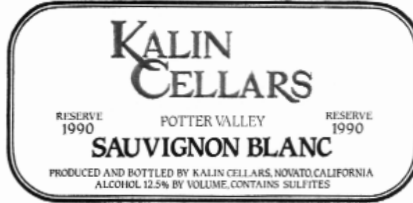
*"The Wines of a Genius" Robert Parker*

We have been remiss. It will be ten years in February since we last featured the brilliantly idiosyncratic wines of Kalin's Terry and Frances Leighton. This gap in time is all the more inexcusable since their wines have long conformed to our wine ideal: remarkable expressions of time, place and winemaker, with no tricks and no illusions, wines that demand and reward long aging.

A biochemist, Terry retired from UC Berkeley in 2002, but he and Frances have been making wine for nearly 30 years. They call most modern winemaking "industrial," arguing that it minimizes the chances of something going wrong but also strips wine of its soul. All of their wines are handmade, using methods that could have been found in Burgundy cellars a century ago.

## Nothing by the Book

Terry and Frances own no vines but find vineyards that produce wines of unique character. Just from Sonoma's Long Vineyard they make three distinct Chardonnays: LV ("Long Vineyard"), LR (riverside cuvée) and LD (designated original section). And the little-known Livermore and Potter Valleys have produced many great Kalin wines over the years.



Terry and Frances hold wines back for what would be an eternity to other winemakers. Terry's view: "We're not hung up on maintaining any kind of vintage sequence; we release what tastes good." Parker says that Kalin

"stands nearly alone in the Golden State when it comes to producing Chardonnays that require considerable cellaring. Most California Chardonnays drop their fruit by the time they are three years of age. Kalin's Chardonnays do not begin to open until they are four or five."

Thus, Kalin's current white wine releases are the 1996 Livermore Valley Semillon and 1994 Cuvée LD Chardonnay. And because we asked nicely, we were even able to wrest away some of the glorious 1990 Potter Valley Sauvignon Blanc Reserve.

## This Offer

This long-overdue offer is quintessential Kalin. Everything is at least a decade old, and included are Terry and Frances' magical Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc (the best in America) and an extraordinary Chardonnay. All three are highly recommended, not only as examples of their craftsmanship, but as totally unique examples of California winemaking.

**1996 Semillon**  
**"Livermore Valley"**  
**92+ Tanzer**  
**\$29.95**

Steve Tanzer: "Fresh, slightly high-toned aromas of orange, apricot, oatmeal, hazelnut; notes of resinous eucalyptus and bay leaf emerged with aeration. At once penetrating and dense ... ultimately creamy in the middle ... Finishes with sneaky length. I found myself raising my score each time I went back to the glass."

**1994 Chardonnay**  
**"Cuvée LD"**  
**92 Tanzer**  
**\$32.95**

Steve Tanzer: "Fresh, ineffable aromas of ginger, candied orange peel, lavender and pine nut. Fat, sweet and deep, with a real 3-D texture. Like liquid velvet yet possesses excellent cut. A wine of great sucrosity, but kept fresh by its shell of acidity. Finishes very long and brisk."

**1990 Sauvignon Blanc**  
**"Potter Valley Reserve"**  
**92+ Parker**  
**\$45.00**

Parker: "... should be inserted as a ringer in a blind tasting of top white Graves such as Laville-Haut-Brion and Haut-Brion-Blanc—it is that exceptional. There are abundant aromas of honeyed fruit, some subtle, smoky, herbaceous scents, and layers of concentrated, crisp, marvelously well-focused fruit ... **a brilliant achievement that is unrivaled in the New World ....**"

# Reinventing the Art of Tea

*Dammann's Cristal Sachets Reveal Tea's Soul ... with Ease*

When the 19th-century New York tea merchant Thomas Sullivan sent his clients samples of his teas in small silk bags, he did it to cut the cost of shipping the loose leaf tea in heavy metal canisters. But his customers steeped the bags in their tea pots and loved the results. The silk bags made a great pot of tea without the hassle of loose leaves.



*Dammann's cristal sachet.*

Of course, big tea companies exploited Sullivan's idea, devolving it into cheap paper bags filled with inferior tea dust. The heart of brewing fine tea was lost to all but a few connoisseurs. But in 1986, an elite French tea company, Dammann, revived Sullivan's idea, introducing to Europe the finest available teas in transparent nylon bags called *cristal sachets*.

Over the past two decades, the Dammann tea bags have quietly acquired a cult following—combining the aesthetic pleasure of the world's greatest teas with the ease and practicality of the tea bag.

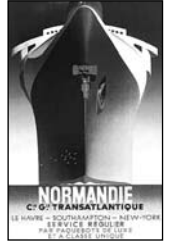
## Dammann's Notion

Tea, like wine, is all about nuance and *terroir*—the expression of unique soils and climates with minimal intervention from man. And before its innovation, a classically oriented tea merchant like Dammann would never have put its teas in a bag.

Having sold tea in Paris since the 17th century, the Dammann family became famous for its brilliant blends, and Dammann teas have long been the domain

of the French elite. If, for example, you sailed on the *Normandie*, you drank Dammann. But with its invention of the *cristal sachet*, Dammann emerged as an *avant gardist*, too.

The genius of Dammann's elegant little bags was not only that they eliminated the taste of paper; they also increased water flow and capacity—allowing for the full aromatic infusion of the choice whole tea leaves, not just the extraction of caffeine and tannin. It was the perfect marriage of convenience and connoisseurship.



*On the Normandie, one only drank Dammann.*

## Now's the Time

We discovered Dammann's bags on a trip to Burgundy two years ago and have been believers ever since. So, when Dammann agreed to our introducing their teas in our newsletter, the only question was which tea?

The answer was easy: the most versatile and widely appreciated tea in their range, **Breakfast Blend**. This full-flavored tea is a marriage of small leaf Assam—which imparts a hearty, malty taste—and Ceylon and Darjeeling, which give the tea its high tone. It's an exceptional example of a classic tea, and a great introduction to an idea whose time has come.



**Dammann Breakfast Blend**  
**\$14.50** box of 50 cristal sachets

## *Dammann's Exquisite Presentation Case*

Like wine, tea should delight all the senses. And so Dammann has created this beautiful velvet-lined wood presentation case, holding eight of its best teas. Each case contains six *cristal sachets* each of: **Breakfast, Darjeeling, Earl Grey, Ceylon O.P., Lapsang Souchong, China Green Gunpowder, China Green Mint Tea and Soleil Vert**. Each sachet is packed in its own foil pouch. These presentation cases will make fantastic gifts this holiday season. November arrival.

<b>Presentation Case with 8 teas (6 sachets each)</b> .....	<b>59.50</b>
<b>And to replenish the case :</b>	
<b>24 sachets of a favorite tea</b> .....	<b>9.50</b>
<b>24 sachets each of all eight teas in the case</b> .....	<b>68.00</b>



## SOUTHERN RHONE

# A Châteauneuf Legend

## *The 1978 Paul Jaboulet "Les Cèdres" plus other Treasures*

In March 2005, we provided a glimpse of a past epoch in the Rhône Valley, when few domaines did their own bottling, and negociants produced most of the region's best wines.

During this period, which lasted until about 1990, Paul Jaboulet Aîné was a powerful force in Châteauneuf du Pape, producing vintage after vintage of great wines under the "La Grappe des Papes" and "Les Cèdres" labels. (The wines were the same, but different markets received different labels.)

### 1978 Les Cèdres

Our 2005 story on La Grappe des Papes featured several classic vintages from the cellar of a Michelin-starred Parisian restaurant. While we sold every bottle and magnum from that offer, we recently came up with an entirely new treasure: bottles and magnums of the famous 1978 Les Cèdres from a top Belgian Restaurant.



*Two decades of Les Cèdres  
and La Grappe des Papes*

Of course, 1978 was one of the greatest Châteauneuf vintages ever, producing fabulously rich wines that have aged effortlessly. These beautifully cellared bottles and magnums of 1978 Les Cèdres offer all the evidence you'll ever need of the year's depth and staying power.

### There's More ...

After our Belgian acquisition, we went back to Paris to see if we could acquire any more old Grappe de Papes. As is often the case, the restaurant had held onto a few cases, including some 1983 and 1990 in bottles, magnums and jeroboams. There was also a gem missing from our previous offer: the sensational 1989 Grappe de Papes in bottles and magnums.

Composed of two-thirds Grenache, and the balance largely Syrah, these wines are powerful, richly textured and intensely aromatic Châteauneuf du Papes that have stood the test of time. Even at age 30, they offer a phenomenal drinking experience at a laughable price. If you love great red wine, don't miss them.

### 1978 Les Cèdres

**\$95.00** bottle **\$199.95** magnum

The low yields of the 1978 vintage shine through in the firm, concentrated sweetness of Les Cèdres. The color has depth, brilliance and youth, while the nose offers classic mature nuances of saddle leather, truffle and dark fruits. Nearly three decades old, the wine is still beautifully taut, the sweetness of maturity still offset by the wine's sturdy structure. A classic Châteauneuf that testifies to Jaboulet's greatness in the '70s.

### 1983 La Grappe des Papes

**\$69.95** bottle **\$145.00** magnum

The finest Grappe des Papes between 1981 and 1989. This deeply colored, large-scaled wine exudes classic aromas, with an exotic Asian spice nuance; the palate is firm, powerful and concentrated, with excellent structure, and brimming with mature, sweet fruit. It may last another decade, but it can't get any better than it is now.

### 1989 La Grappe des Papes

**\$79.95** bottle **\$169.95** magnum

It's no surprise that in the monumental 1989 vintage, Jaboulet made an outstanding Grappe des Papes. An intoxicating nose of cedar, chocolate and saddle leather is followed by a palate that is long and beautifully textured. Slightly more delicate than the 1990, but bursting with complexity and nuance.

### 1990 La Grappe des Papes

**\$89.95** bottle **\$395.00** jeroboam (3-liter)

The 1990 vintage produced many outstanding Châteauneuf du Papes, but this beauty easily holds its own. In fact, in *Rhône Renaissance*, Remington Norman calls the '90 Grappe des Papes "a top example from that fine vintage." It boasts fantastic color; a deep truffly nose and, on the palate, sumptuously sweet black cherry liqueur-like texture and flavor.

# More 1996 Fireworks

*Newly Renamed, Jacquesson's Prestige Cuvées Embody this Great Year*

Long revered by insiders, the 208-year-old Jacquesson & Fils has suddenly emerged as a superstar among Champagne houses. Just look at *Revue du Vin de France's* current Top 4 rankings for quality and stature: **Bollinger, Krug, Jacquesson** and **Salon**.



*Jacquesson's rare 1920s poster*

Change has been at the heart of Jacquesson's meteoric rise. First it was the revolutionary retooling of its viticulture to reduce yields. Then it was the groundbreaking creation of its new *vintage-based* non-vintage *cuvée*. And next came its terroir-based *cuvées*, an unprecedented move for a traditional house.

But there's more change to come. Owners Jean-Hervé and Laurent Chiquet have decided to rename Signature Brut and Rosé—the firm's prestige *cuvées*—in the most minimalist way possible. The new names are

Jacquesson Brut and Rosé, acknowledging that they reflect Jacquesson's very soul.

## A Great Vintage

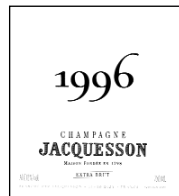
Jacquesson picked a perfect year to make the name change. As we all know, 1996 was a historic vintage, offering levels of ripeness and structure not seen since 1928. And it's a year with which collectors are scrambling to fill their cellars.

Despite the new name, these two 1996s continue the great Signature tradition. Each was entirely barrel-fermented—a meticulous selection of *grand cru* Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. But, sadly, this is the last time this transcendent prestige rosé will be made.

Built for the long haul, these will surely prove among the best of a very great year. Don't miss either one.

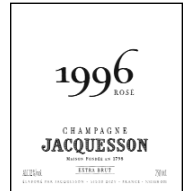
**1996 Jacquesson Brut\***  
**Tête de Cuvée**  
**95 Richard Juhlin**

**\$74.95** *bt.* **\$159.95** *mag.*



**1996 Jacquesson Rosé\***  
**Tête de Cuvée**  
**94 Richard Juhlin**

**\$74.95** *bt.* **\$159.95** *mag.*



Richard Juhlin: "The label is beautiful ... and the wine itself is of course wonderful ... Very typical wine for this house with wide aromas of chocolate, straw, liquorice, mustard greens, green apples, 'pain d'epice' plus an acid backbone that assures the future."

Richard Juhlin: "Unfortunately the last time that they will do this fantastic prestige rosé ... The wine is round and full, with a rich pinot tone, but not yet in full harmony .... Give this wine plenty of time after the degorgement."

## Rising Meursault Star: Latour-Giraud

Burgundy's recent renaissance has depended heavily on the revitalization of underachieving domaines with great vineyards. A good example of this has been Latour-Giraud, where Jean-Pierre Latour is now making the most of his family's fabulous Meursault vineyards.



Since taking over in the 1990s, Jean-Pierre has lowered yields and practiced indigenous yeast fermentation in barrel with no filtration. He is also exploiting the domaine's extensive holdings in the loftiest Meursault *premier crus*, to make some of Burgundy's richest white wines.

**2002 Latour-Giraud Meursault Charmes .. 59.95**

Tanzer: "92 rating. Complex nose ... Sweet, silky and suave, with lovely harmonious acidity framing the orange and lemon flavors. Pure, refined wine that really spreads out to coat the palate. Finishes with sneaky power ...."

**2000 Latour-Giraud Meursault Genevrières ..... 59.95**

**2000 Latour-Giraud Meurs. Genevrières Mag. ..125.00**

Tanzer: "92+ rating ... charry aromas of iodine, hazelnut and powdered stone ... rich and vibrant ... bright acids ... superb definition. Finishes with a tactile impression of strong extract."

# RIBERA DEL DUERO

## Atalayas

### *A Bargain from the Makers of Dominio de Atauta*

Among Spain's newest viticultural projects, none has proven more profound than Dominio de Atauta, a collection of very old Tempranillo vines—many pre-phyloxera and ungrafted—from around the once-forgotten Ribera del Duero village of Atauta.

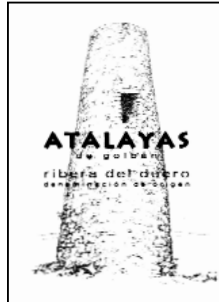
Based on its astonishing first four vintages (2000-2003), Atauta is on fire, winning "Spain's Best Winery" honors last year from Jose Peñin, the country's most influential wine critic. This year we can look forward to the amazing 2004s—arguably the finest set of Atauta wines yet. But owner Miguel Sanchez and winemaker Bertrand Sourdais also have a surprise up their sleeves: the release of a new wine that will rock Spain with its price-quality rapport.

#### From the Ashes

When Miguel began buying vineyards around Atauta in 1999, it was a ghost town and many of its vineyards abandoned. But when the 2000 Atauta was released, it set off a land rush; within weeks, vineyard speculators began appearing in the town.

Fortunately, Miguel had already acquired virtually all of the town's oldest and best vineyards and had begun buying similar sites in neighboring villages. But rather than adding the nearby vineyards to Dominio de Atauta, he created a second project—**Atalayas de Golban**—named for a medieval watchtower in the valley.

Thanks to Miguel's foresight, Atalayas is endowed with an incredible 170 acres of priceless old Tempranillo



vineyards. They share many of the same characteristics as those of Dominio de Atauta: great age and elevations 400 to 500 meters *higher* than in the heart of Ribera del Duero. They also enjoy cool nighttime temperatures that produce wines with a freshness, structure, and delineation unlike anything else in Ribera.

#### Haut Brion Barrels

And winemaker Bertrand Sourdais has worked the same magic with Atalayas as he has with Atauta and its great *Valdegatiles*, *La Mala* and *Llanos del Almendro* crus. Despite the fact that the wine is priced under \$20 a bottle, it has the taste, and winemaking, of something twice as expensive. All grapes are hand-harvested and meticulously sorted, and the *elévage* is in French barriques, 80% of which are second and third passage barrels from Château Haut Brion.

The debut 2004 Atalayas has just been released and it is a stunner. Don't miss this astonishing value.

### 2004 Atalayas de Golban

#### *Ribera del Duero*

**\$18.95** bottle **\$225.00** case

Josh Reynolds in the *International Wine Cellar*: "Deep ruby. Fresh, bright scents of blackberry, cassis, cherry and violet. Very pure and graceful, with mineral-driven dark berry and bitter cherry flavors and an elegant, almost light texture. Finishes fresh and long, with an echoing note of cherry."

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