

ESTD 1842



# TANNERS

WINE MERCHANTS



## Southern Rhône Gems

### *Mixed Half Dozen*

#### INTRODUCTION

In recent years the Southern Rhône Valley has seen a dynamic switch; villages that were once part of the Côtes du Rhône classifications system have now broken free and been elevated to Cru status, demonstrating they are stars in their own right and should be talked about alongside Châteauneuf-du-Pape and not left in its shadow. The most recent village to be elevated is that of Laudun, on the west bank. This is where Frédéric and Josephine Arnaud have invested enormous amounts of time and energy renovating the house, winery and vineyards of Château Courac (1). At an elevation of 200m they are surrounded by pine forests which hide underground springs providing the vines with much needed moisture in the increasingly drought-ridden climate, this in turn keeps their wine fresh, vibrant and juicy.

In Vacqueyras, brothers, Jean-Michel and Frédéric Archimbaud Vache have run their family domain Le Clos des Cazaux since taking over from their parents in 2010. Whilst Vacqueyras (2) is now a well-regarded appellation, it was their family who were some of the first to bottle and promote the wines, helping it achieve Cru status in 1990.

The others are hugely passionate about making great wines in a sustainable and respectful way to the environment. Most of their work in the vineyards is by hand with the aim of keeping their old vines healthy and yields low.

Although famed for their Châteauneuf-du-Papes, Marie and François Giraud also have vines just across the river in the less illustrious village of Lirac. With just a few hectares in this little-known appellation, where there are more trees than vines, their Les Sables d'Arène (3), is made in a similar style to their Châteauneufs, and from a similar blend of grapes – this wine packs a lot of punch for its relatively modest price tag.

Due west of Gigondas lies the small named Côtes du Rhône village of Massif d'Uchaux, a densely forested hill close to the banks of the Rhône River. With just 189 ha in production, clearing the land and creating patchwork vineyards has been back-breaking work, only made possible with the use of machines. Arbose (4) is derived from a 29 ha site and is made by Marc Thomas and his team at La Cave Coteaux du Rhône Sérignan-du-Comtat. The cooperative has been

established for 99 years but they are doing great things to make modern, exceedingly good value wines.

Of course, we must mention our Tanners Rhône Valley Red (5), made for us by Famille Gonnet. The domaine is managed following organic principles and run by cousins Guillaume and Bertrand Gonnet, who make a beautifully crafted wine for us, that just keeps on getting better and better.

The case would not be a true representation of the Southern Rhône's strengths without including a white, so we've selected

Marcel Richaud's Cairanne Blanc (6). New to Tanners range, this is a blend similar to that of white Châteauneuf, consisting of Clairette, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Marsanne, Viognier and Bourboulenc. Domaine Richaud's 75 ha of vineyards are hand-harvested (no mean feat with that quantity!) and have been certified organic since 2008 – they also follow some biodynamic principles too. This is an estate that uses minimal intervention; using natural yeasts, the wines are unfinned and unfiltered and only see a small amount of sulphur just before bottling. The results are a very pure expression of their terroir and vintage.

## THE WINES

### 1. Château Courac, Laudun Côtes du Rhône-Villages

Bin No: RR011

Succulent, ripe, supple sweet fruit with hints of cassis, damson, cherry and herby undertones. Lovely round tannins with a refreshing vein of acidity and a touch of Rhône pepperiness on the long finish.

### 2. Vacqueyras, Cuvée des Templiers, Domaine Le Clos des Cazaux

Bin No: RR034

Vibrant bramble fruit from old vines around the domaine. The white pepper packs a punch on the rich palate, offering loads of spice. A great drinking drop.

### 3. Lirac Vieilles Vignes, Les Sables d'Arène, Domaine Giraud (organic)

Bin No: RR136

Lovely, pure wine with great red and black fruit character and very fine tannins from mainly 60-year-old Grenache vines grown in sandy soils on the terraces of Lirac. Very complete and long, with really good freshness on the palate creating balance.

### 4. Arboise, Massif d'Uchaux, Côtes du Rhône-Villages

Bin No: RR122

Good rich fruit and silky texture with cherry and blackberry flavours and spicy length.

### 5. Tanners Rhône Valley Red, Côtes du Rhône

Bin No: RR001

Pretty nose of red summer fruits with some plump, creamy blue fruit notes. Medium-bodied, round and juicy with good volume and supple tannins, offering long flavours of peppery spices over crisp red fruit. Very enjoyable drinking.

### 6. Cairanne Blanc, Domaine Richaud


Bin No: RW080

A blend of classic southern Rhône white varieties offering an approachable style with some peach and apricot fruit on the nose and palate. Great texture and mouthfeel with lovely weight and an elegant, zesty finish.

## Ordering from Tanners

For up-to-date pricing and additional wine information, please visit our website and type the Bin No. of the wine you're interested in, into the search box.


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 We accept all major credit & debit cards.

 FREE express delivery on orders of £150 or more to a single address in Mainland UK (£9.95 delivery on orders under £150). In addition you are welcome to collect from any branch of Tanners.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Tanners Sales Team

Bin No: ZS2588