

Selections



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The Magical Southern Rhône's of Domaine Palon



We are thrilled to introduce you to Domaine Palon and their absolutely stunning, magical wines. If you like the wines of the southern Rhône, you are going to love these.

The winery is located just outside the charming town of Gigondas which itself is situated between Orange and Vaison-la-Romaine in the heart of Provence. The vineyards include seven hectares in the appellation of Gigondas and five more in Vacqueyras along with two of Côtes-du-Rhône and one of vin de pays. Production is very small and Domaine Palon wines are scarce. They told us that we are the last agents they will be taking on.



Annie, Sébastien et Papi Jean

Sébastien Palon (24) is the magician who creates these marvellous wines. Don't let his age fool you; he has been intimately involved in the wine business all his life and is the fourth generation to do so. His father, Papa Jean-Pierre (along with wife and partner Annie Gleize) is the vineyard owner and was President of the Cave Coopérative de Gigondas for 23 years (from 1978 to 2001). His grandfather, Papi Jean founded the same cooperative and served as administrator from 1956 to 1978 (and in his nineties is still actively involved in the winery!). Before Papi Jean there were Valérie and Léopold Palon who were wine makers in Gigondas. The Palon family established the winery in 2003 and ever since their wines have flown out of their doors. No wonder!



The Wines of Domaine Palon

We first encountered a vinous treasure from Domaine Palon at one of our favourite wine shops, Intercaves in Saint Rémy-de-Provence. The ebullient proprietor, M. Esparza poured us a glass of their 2004 Côtes-du-Rhône. It was pure ambrosia. [A cautionary note: should you ever be fortunate enough to visit M. Esparza, be prepared to spend at least three times what you intended. You will be broke, but most happily so!]

A week later, in early March, we visited the winery and thoroughly tasted all of the Domaine Palon wines (I might still be there, but the ever reasonable Hélène dragged me away amid loud, gurgling protests). The 2005 Vacqueyras was not yet in the bottle, so Sébastien had us try the individual component juices (Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah), directly from cask and tanks that would be used in the final wine. I thought the Syrah by itself was about as good as a wine could be. Then he combined the juices in the proportion he estimated he would use in the final product. It was magical. The fruit of the Grenache rounded out the silky tannins of the Syrah with the Mourvèdre adding backbone and texture. It was reminiscent of a very great, young Châteauneuf-du-Pape, in fact one of the best I have ever tasted.

All of the Domaine Palon wines come in **six-bottle cases**. If you never buy another bottle of wine, I urge you to order some of these.

2005 Domaine Palon Côtes-du-Rhône White – (13.5% Alc./Vol.)

\$15.95



Made from 82% Clairette and 18% white Grenache, this wine is as scarce as hen's teeth. It is Papi Jean's favourite! Our allotment is just fifteen cases of six bottles. It is a bright straw colour with floral, honeysuckle, spice and acacia aromas. It is crisp, full, smooth and long with very subtle tannins. This lovely wine is drinking beautifully now and will age gracefully for two to four years. Oysters come directly to mind as an accompaniment and it will go well with other shell fish and poultry. The next vintage will be sold as a Vacqueyras White and prices are bound to increase dramatically. Order now to avoid disappointment.

2004 Domaine Palon Côtes-du-Rhône Red – (13.0% Alc./Vol.)

\$15.95



This is the gem we tasted in Saint Rémy and again at the winery. It is a deep ruby colour and has the aroma of plums, red berries and a hint of white pepper. In the mouth, it is massive with solid tannins and incredible length. It is hard to believe that this isn't a Chateauneuf-du-Pape! It is a real pleasure to drink now, just decant a half hour or so before drinking. However, you will be greatly rewarded if you put it away for three or more years. This is a huge, classic Côtes-du-Rhône. We will be ordering several cases for our own cellar. Go ahead, order some!

2004 Domaine Palon Vacqueyras Red – (14.0% Alc./Vol.)

\$19.95



Oh boy, Vacqueyras doesn't get much better than this! It is not by accident. Vineyard yields have been restricted to a miserly 28.80 hectolitres per hectare and the average age of the vines is 40 years. Made from 75% Grenache, 16% Mourvèdre and 9% Syrah, it is a beautiful, clear garnet colour. The nose is marked by spices, flint, saffron and ripe red fruit. In the mouth one finds a wine that is full, round and soft with silky tannins and a lingering, persistent mocha aftertaste. This wine will

keep nicely for at least five years. Order this stunner now.

2004 Domaine Palon Gigondas Red – (14.0% Alc./Vol.)

\$23.95



And, here is la pièce de résistance from Domaine Palon, the exquisite 2004 Gigondas. At an even more miserly yield of 27.78 hectolitres per hectare and also with vines that average 40 years of age, it is comprised of 79% Grenache, 15% Syrah and 6% Mourvèdre. It is a lovely clear deep red colour. It has aromas of cherries, raspberries and strawberries that have been steeped in alcohol along with hints of liquorice and tobacco. In the mouth it is velvety,

concentrated and beautifully balanced with a lingering aftertaste of roasted coffee beans. This will cellar gracefully for up to ten years. This is the greatest young Gigondas I have ever tasted. Try some for yourself.

We will place our first order with Domaine Palon (there will be many more) in early September and we hope these great wines arrive in time for the year-end holidays. Make sure you order the white early (if they go as quickly as we anticipate, we will try to wheedle a few more cases from the winery). The Vacqueyras and Gigondas are also available in magnums (1.5 litres) – six to a case. Please let us know if you are interested.

150 Cases of Ch. St Jacques d'Albas Wines are mostly delivered!

Many members have already received and tried our first wines to arrive and the comments are very encouraging and gratifying. **We are going to place another on Wednesday August 9th.** Please act quickly if you would like some of these delightful wines.

The Value-Priced Wines of Cave Lavedieu du Temple

Our first order for this winery has been processed by the LCBO and we expect it to arrive in early fall.

The Special Champagnes of Champagne Forget-Brimont

These delightful Champagnes have been ordered and are expected by late October.

Soon To Emerge From Arthur's Cellar

Next will be the delightful Cotes du Luberon wines of Château de l'Isolette, the remarkable wines of Domaine la Croix Chaptal and the storied (literally – get all the information in advance from the delightful book, 'Virgile's Vineyard – A Year in the Languedoc Wine Country' by Patrick Moon) Coteaux du Languedoc from Domaine Virgile Joly.

'Super Selections'



We have been very fortunate to establish partnerships with several producers whose wines are actively sought after by wine connoisseurs around the globe. These producers include Domaine Roger Sabon and Vignobles Mousset-Barrot of Chateauneuf-du-Pape and Alex Gambal of Burgundy. Several of their wines have recently received ratings between 90 and 100 by Robert Parker and the Wine Spectator. Their wines are quite expensive and are in very limited supply. While the wineries have agreed to make their wines available to our Members, we will have to act very quickly or the wines will be taken by collectors in other countries. These wines will not be available through the LCBO. We will introduce these wines to you over the next couple of weeks under our new banner, 'Super Selections'.

Member Feedback

We really appreciate your feedback because it allows us to improve and better respond to your requirements. Many of your suggestions have already been put into place and we are working on several others. Thank you and please keep the comments coming! (jaswalker@arthursellers.com).

For the wine club to be successful, we need as many wine buying members as possible – please forward this newsletter to likely prospects and keep those referrals coming.

Thank you and cheers,

Hélène and Jim

PS: Our wines are also available for restaurants and other establishments that serve beverage alcohol by the glass – their prices will be a little lower because PST is not charged. If you are aware of any that might be interested, please let us know.

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