



ALL-ROUND excellence

From good-value quaffers to wines of substance, the diversity offered by Grenache was on full show at this year's blind tasting, as *Patricia Stefanowicz MW* discovers

ALTHOUGH THERE are nearly 200,000 hectares globally, making it the seventh most widely planted grape variety in the world, Grenache goes unrecognised by many consumers, even though they drink quite a lot of it. There are a few reasons for this contradiction. Firstly, the varietal name is rarely seen on a wine label. In Europe, where the vast majority of Grenache is planted, Grenache is buried in the AOP regulations. Garnacha Tinta, as it's known in Spain, is a staple in the three sub-regions of Rioja and, in southern France, Grenache Noir is the mainstay of most red wines. Even in Australia, where Grenache has long been planted and vineyard area is increasing,

the name is often buried as 'GSM' (Grenache-Shiraz-Mataro) on wine labels.

Grenache, from its presumed birthplace of Spain, has expanded to so many regions because it thrives in hot and dry climates. Our Global Grenache Masters investigated wines hailing from Australia, South Africa and California, to name just a few, taking in samples made from Grenache Noir (Garnacha Tinta), Grenache Blanc (Garnacha Blanca) and even some blends with Grenache Gris (Garnacha Roja).

When well-made, Grenache Blanc has lemon custard and orange blossom, zippy acidity and creamy texture. It works nicely in Australia, and in Rioja is a foil

for Tempranillo Blanco. Whether unoaked or made with judicious use of older oak, it can make intriguing wines.

Grenache Noir, with its juicy, sweet fruit, provides the alcohol, red berry character and lively acidity to balance the tannic, herbal-scented, black-fruited Syrah. Together, these two varieties form most southern French blends, with occasional additions of dense Mourvèdre, floral Cinsault, and/or structured Carignan.

In this year's judging, we found that unoaked Grenache from France or Australia gives exceptional value at under £20. Those from France are a little more structured; those from Australia packed with sweet fruit.

Still White – Unoaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
£30-£50 Bodegas Bilbaínas	Viña Pomal Garnacha Blanca	Spain	Rioja	2020	Bronze

Still White – Oaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
Under £10 De Bortoli Wines	Grenache Wizardry Grenache Blanc	Australia	Heathcote	2021	Silver
£10-£15 Perdeberg Wines	The Vineyard Collection Grenache Blanc	South Africa	Coastal	2023	Silver
£15-£20 El Garbi	Blanco	Spain	Terra Alta	2021	Silver

Still Rosé – Unoaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
£15-£20 Domaine du Moulin Blanc	Tavel	France	Rhône	2020	Silver
£50-£70 Chateau Léoube	Collector Rosé	France	Provence	2022	Silver

Still Rosé – Oaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
Under £10 De Bortoli Wines	Grenache Wizardry Grenache Rosé	Australia	Heathcote	2022	Silver
£30-£50 Bodegas Ysios	Rosé	Spain	Rioja	2022	Gold

Still Red – Unoaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
£15-£20 Tsharke Wines	A Thing of Beauty	Australia	Barossa Valley	2021	Silver
Domaine of the Bee	The Bee-Side Grenache	France	Roussillon	2022	Silver
Res Fortes	GMS	France	Roussillon	2021	Silver
£20-£30 Gemtree Wines	Small Batch Grenache SBE	Australia	McLaren Vale	2022	Silver

About the competition

With high-quality judges and a unique sampling process, The Global Grenache Masters provides a chance for your wines to star. The 2023 competition was judged on 12 October at 28-50 Chelsea in London, employing experienced judges. The top wines were awarded Gold, Silver or Bronze medals according to their result, and those expressions that stood out as being outstanding received the ultimate accolade – the title of Grenache Master. This report features the medal winners only. Please visit the Global Masters website for more information or, to enter future competitions – giving you the chance to feature online and in print – please call: +44 (0) 20 7803 2420 or email Sophie Raichura at: sophie@thedrinksbusiness.com

Many of the big Rhône producers make great-value Côtes-du-Rhône AOC wines based on this variety. Guigal, Vidal-Fleury and Chapoutier are reliable labels to look out for. We also judged some very attractive wines from Domaine de Coyeux, in the Beaufort-en-Vallée AOC. Other crus, such as Cairanne, Vinsobres or Rasteau, are also worth searching out. At £10-£18, these wines are exceptional.

In South Australia, McLaren Vale delivers red berry and plum fruit with tobacco and black pepper spice from Shiraz blended in. GSM wines from South Australia, especially the Barossa, are superb; they have clarity and balance of fruit, gentle oak, good acidity and supple, though abundant, tannins.

Spain produces brilliant Garnacha and Garnacha-based blends at all price points. Garnacha Tinta is the major variety in Rioja Oriental, not far from Barcelona. Garnacha also shows its perfection in the highlands of Rioja Alavesa around the towns of Sanmaniego, Laguardia, Leza, Badiola or Viana, adding weight and breadth to the ubiquitous Tempranillo Tinto. A little further south, the mountains of Priorat, at an altitude of

600-800m, are a true homeland for unblended Garnacha, as we discovered with artisanal gem Creu Celta from Celler en Números Vermells, a snip at under £25. Meanwhile, Scala Dei, a collection of vineyards centred around a 12th-century monastery, makes pricy but perfect examples of pure Garnacha.

Grenache also forms the basis for some beguiling rosé wines, particularly in Navarra, Spain and Provence, where it tends to be blended with Cinsault and occasionally Syrah.

From inexpensive, crowd-pleasing 'quaffers' to serious, age-worthy 'classics', Grenache makes excellent wines in a variety of styles and price points. The following pages include some of our highlights from the competition. db



BEST ROSÉ: YSIOS 2022

Producer: Bodegas Ysios

Region: Rioja

Grape varieties: 81% Garnacha, 14% Viura, 5% Tempranillo

Approx. retail price: £35

Located in the foothills of the Sierra Cantabria in Rioja Alavesa, Ysios is a modern architectural wonder, designed by world-renowned architect Sanitago Calatrava. The wine is becoming a modern legend with a 'classical' Rioja heritage. This rosé is mostly Garnacha from Rincón de Olivedo and La Pedriza in Tudelilla, Rioja Oriental, with aromatic inputs of Viura and Tempranillo from Rioja Alavesa. Very, very pale peach-pink, the wine displays strawberry, pomegranate and white cherry aromas with a very gentle, creamy oak overlay. The palate is just off-dry, with a juicy attack and vibrant acidity. White pepper accents the red fruits. Excellent concentration leads to a lingering finish. The wine's floral lift may make a good pairing for ceviche marinated in lime juice, with the essential coriander and just a touch of jalapeño adding lift.

Still Red – Oaked

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
Under £10					
De Bortoli Wines	Grenache Wizardry Grenache	Australia	Heathcote	2020	Silver
£10-£15					
Gemtree Wines	Cinnabar GSM	Australia	McLaren Vale	2022	Gold
Paragon Wine Estates	Shingleback NX Gen McLaren Vale Grenache	Australia	McLaren Vale	2021	Silver
Pinnacle Drinks	Cat Amongst the Pigeons Fat Cat Barossa Grenache	Australia	Barossa Valley	2021	Silver
Paragon Wine Estates	Krondorf Founders View Barossa Grenache	Australia	Barossa Valley	2022	Silver
Perdeberg Wines	The Vineyard Collection Grenache Noir	South Africa	Paarl	2022	Silver
Langmeil Winery	Rough Diamond Grenache	Australia	Barossa Valley	2022	Silver
£15-£20					
Paragon Wine Estates	Chapel Hill The MV Bush Vine McLaren Vale Grenache	Australia	McLaren Vale	2022	Gold
Wakefield/Taylors Wines	Reserve Parcel Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre	Australia	South Australia	2021	Gold
El Garbi	Tinto	Spain	Terra Alta	2021	Silver
Domaine le Prieuré des Papes	Le Prieuré	France	Rhône	2020	Silver
Domaine de Coyeux	Les Jumelles	France	Rhône	2020	Silver
Domaine de Coyeux	Les Cavares	France	Rhône	2018	Silver
Domaine de Coyeux	Les Cavares	France	Rhône	2016	Silver
£20-£30					
Angove Family Winemakers	Angove McLaren Vale Grenache	Australia	McLaren Vale	2022	Gold
Gemtree Wines	Small Batch Grenache SBO	Australia	McLaren Vale	2022	Gold
Celler en Números Vermells	Creu Celta	Spain	Priorat	2020	Gold
St Hugo	Grenache Shiraz Mataro	Australia	Barossa Valley	2022	Gold
De Bortoli Wines	PHI Grenache Amphora	Australia	Heathcote	2022	Silver
MontGras	Handcrafted Rare Garnacha	Chile	Colchagua Valley	2022	Silver
Ferruccio Deiana & C. SAS	Cannonau di Sardegna DOC Sileno Riserva	Italy	Sardegna	2020	Silver
£30-£50					
Yangarra Estate Vineyards	Old Vine Grenache	Australia	McLaren Vale	2021	Master
Angove Family Winemakers	Warboys Vineyard McLaren Vale Grenache	Australia	McLaren Vale	2021	Master
Charles Melton	Nine Popes	Australia	Barossa Valley	2018	Master
Bodegas Bilbainas	Viña Pomal Garnacha	Spain	Rioja	2021	Gold
Paragon Wine Estates	Chapel Hill Old Vine 1952 "McLaren Vale Grenache"	Australia	McLaren Vale	2021	Gold
Langmeil Winery	The Fifth Wave Grenache	Australia	Barossa Valley	2021	Gold
Casa Dumetz Wines	Clementine Carter West End Grenache	USA	Santa Barbara County	2021	Gold
Casa Dumetz Wines	Clementine Carter Santa Rita Hills Grenache	USA	Santa Barbara County	2021	Gold
Casa Dumetz Wines	Clementine Carter Peake Ranch Grenache	USA	Santa Barbara County	2021	Gold
Domaine le Prieuré des Papes	Vieilles Vignes	France	Châteauneuf-du-Pape	2020	Gold
Domaine of the Bee	Les Genoux	France	Roussillon	2021	Gold
Abadía de Poblet	El Tossal de la Salut	Spain	Catalonia	2019	Silver
Paragon Wine Estates	Krondorf Stone Altar Barossa Valley Old Vine Grenache	Australia	Barossa Valley	2022	Silver



Still Red – Oaked (continued)

Winery	Name of Wine	Country	Region	Vint.	Medal
£50-£70 Domaine le Prieuré des Papes	Le Couchant	France	Châteauneuf- du-Pape	2019	Master
Domaine le Prieuré des Papes	La Bessade	France	Châteauneuf- du-Pape	2019	Gold
£70-£100 Scala Dei	Masdeu	Spain	Catalonia	2018	Master
Scala Dei	Sant Antoni	Spain	Catalonia	2020	Gold
Bodegas Remírez de Ganuza	Iraila	Spain	Rioja	2020	Gold

BEST-VALUE BLEND: CINNABAR GSM 2022

Producer: Gemtree Wines, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia

Grape varieties: 60% Grenache, 34% Shiraz, 6% Mataro

Approx. retail price: £15

Family-owned and operated, Gemtree Wines farms these grapes biodynamically because of a belief that the best wines are made from healthy vineyard soils. These techniques lead to great grapes, thus producing exceptional wines. This expression is an excellent blend, having deep ruby colour, mixed red and black fruits, and cedarwood. Dry, but sweet-fruited and full-bodied, there is brisk acidity and supple tannins supporting the flavours, with complexity added by accents of mint, herbes de Provence and a floral lift. A flexible wine, but a rare grilled beefburger in a brioche bun with all its condiments and a little mustard seems a rational choice.



BEST SUB-£20 GRENACHE: CHAPEL HILL THE MV 2022

Producer: Paragon Wine Estates, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £18

The reclaimed ironstone chapel after which Chapel Hill is named was built in 1865 by Methodist settlers and now forms the centrepiece of the Chapel Hill Winery.

The grapes for this delicious 100% Grenache are sourced from a single vineyard of bush vines, oddly enough named 'Mataro Vineyard' – hence 'MV'. Deep ruby in colour with a pink-purple rim, the wine shows vibrant red berries with tobacco and white pepper accents. The medium-bodied palate has zippy acidity and line-textured tannins, with nutmeg, paprika, rosehips and a minty, herbal note. The wine would be a good match for pissaladière or Italian-style pizza.

BEST GSM BLEND (£20 AND UNDER): WAKEFIELD RESERVE PARCEL 2021

Producer: Wakefield/Taylors Wines, **Region:** South Australia

Grape varieties: 50% Grenache, 40% Shiraz, 10% Mourvèdre

Approx. retail price: £20

Three generations of the Taylor family have been based in the Clare Valley, crafting smooth, flavourful wines originally from Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. More recently, Wakefield/Taylors has been producing fantastic, elegant wines from other black varieties, including this Grenache-dominated blend. Deep ruby in hue, the wine shows crunchy red and black fruits, and nuances of smoked meat and cracked pepper. Sweet-fruited, the palate displays crisp acidity and silky tannin texture, with complexity of orange zest, black olive, chocolate and kitchen spices. Lovely fruit and integrated oak flavour give a crowd-pleasing wine to pair with beef or lamb.



grenache masters

BEST £20-£30: ANGOVE MCLAREN VALE GRENACHE 2022

Producer: Angove Family Winemakers, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia

Grape variety: 100% Grenache

Approx. retail price: £22

In 1886, Angove Family Winemakers began as a hobby for William Thomas Angove, a medical doctor, who used the grapes to make tonics for his patients. Today Angove Family Winemakers oversees almost 300 hectares of organic vineyards in South Australia and along the Murray River near Renmark. The resulting wines are amazing, this McLaren Vale Grenache being an excellent expression. Mid-ruby-coloured, the wine has crunchy strawberry and cranberry fruit, with white pepper and earthy nuances. The palate shows zesty acidity, and satin-textured tannins frame the flavours, with creamy oak adding interest. A lovely wine, perfect for an afternoon 'barbie'.



BEST RIOJA: IRAILA 2020

Producer: Bodegas Remírez de Ganuza

Region: Rioja Alavesa, Rioja

Grape variety: 100% Garnacha

Approx. retail price: £95

Located in the centre of Sanmaniego in Rioja Alavesa, near the Sierra de Toloño, the bodega is surrounded by a hamlet of old buildings. The winery, modern on the inside, is faced in recovered brickwork, in keeping with the village. The 80ha of vineyards are spread over six plots: Sanmaniego, Leza, Elciego, San Vicente de la Sonsierra, Laguardia and Álalos. This wine comes from two very old vineyards in San Vicente de la Sonsierra, and its name, Iraila, is the Basque word for September. Deep ruby with a pink-purple rim, it exhibits brambles and cherries, with tobacco and accents of oregano, rosemary and hazelnuts. The palate is bold and richly-fruited, framed by fresh acidity and grippy tannins. Still very young, it has a mouthwatering finish and plenty of potential. It could be drunk now with robust dishes.





BEST PRIORAT (SUB-£30): CREU CELTA 2020

Producer: Celler en Números Vermells

Region: Priorat

Grape varieties: 95% Garnatxa, 5% Samsó

Approx. retail price: £26

A small cellar in Priorat, En Números Vermells winemaker Sylvia Puig made her first wine in a small garage in Torroja del Priorat in 2008. This beautiful expression exhibits a deep ruby hue, with masses of blackberry and dark cherry fruit and smoky oak, plus an exotic floral overlay. Sweet-fruited, the wine is full and rich, balanced by tangy acidity and grainy tannins. There is good definition and length, with the sappy finish lifted by a balsamic hint. A fabulous wine for cabrito (roasted kid goat).



BEST GSM BLEND (OVER £20): ST HUGO GRENACHE- SHIRAZ-MATARO 2022

Producer: St Hugo

Region: Barossa Valley, South Australia

Grape varieties: 71% Grenache, 18% Shiraz, 11% Mataro

Approx. retail price: £30

St Hugo honours the tradition of winemaking legend Hugo Gramp, grandson of pioneering Barossa vigneron Johann Gramp. Each vintage celebrates Hugo's love of this land. This red is elegant, showing a bright ruby-red colour with complex fruit of blackberry, bramble, raspberry and dark cherry, supported by dark chocolate and vanilla oak with a hint of black olive. Rich across the palate, the flavours are framed by crisp acidity and velvet-textured tannins, leading to a long, aromatic finish. The wine would make an excellent match for seared pork kidneys added to a sautéed mixture of onions, leeks, celery, apples, beets and garlic.

BEST RIOJA (SUB-£50) VIÑA POMAL GARNACHA 2021

Producer: Bodegas Bilbaínas, **Region:** Rioja, **Grape variety:** 100% Garnacha **Approx. retail price:** £35

Viña Pomal, established in the town of Haro in the early years of the 20th century, is one of the oldest and most prestigious of all Rioja wine producers. This Garnacha is part of a collection of monovarietals from the winery, and grapes grown at altitudes above 600m are fashioned into this lovely wine. Mid-garnet in colour, it displays cherry and strawberry fruit, with smoke, earth and creamy notes. The well-defined flavours are balanced by crisp acidity and abundant, satin-textured tannins. A mid-weight wine with a mouthwatering finish, it will pair well with jamón Ibérico or paella. Interestingly, Viña Pomal recommends The Rolling Stones as an accompaniment.



BEST MCLAREN VALE: YANGARRA ESTATE VINEYARDS OLD VINE GRENACHE 2021

Producer: Yangarra Estate Vineyards, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £37

Sourced exclusively from 13.3 hectares of unirrigated bush vines planted in 1946 near Blewitt Springs in McLaren Vale, the wine is best served in Zalto Denk Art's Bordeaux glass. Grown and made using biodynamic principles, for this wine Yangarra retains about 50% whole berries. The result of careful winemaking, this is a fabulous wine. Deep ruby-coloured, it shows summer pudding fruits accented by roasted coffee beans, black olives and white pepper. The sweet-fruited, succulent palate is underpinned by brisk acidity and dense tannins, leading to a lingering finish. Complex, layered and textured, this is a great wine for tamarind-glazed lamb chops.

BEST ORGANIC: ANGOVE WARBOYS VINEYARD GRENACHE 2021

Producer: Angove Family Winemakers, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia,

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £40

From the historic Warboys Vineyard in Australia's McLaren Vale region comes this exciting organic wine from Angove Family Winemakers. Mid-to deep ruby in hue, the bouquet shows raspberry, cranberry and pomegranate, overlaid with creamy oak and white pepper. The flavourful palate is supported by well-integrated lively acidity and grainy tannins. Well-defined, concentrated and long, the wine will pair nicely with exotic meats, such as kangaroo, marinated and simply grilled, or, because of the sweetness of fruit, many Chinese dishes.



BEST SINGLE VINEYARD: CHAPEL HILL '1952' VINE, 2021

Producer: Paragon Wine Estates, **Region:** McLaren Vale, South Australia

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £35

Grown from old vines on ancient soils in McLaren Vale and, because the sub-region is a mere 50km from the coast, the vineyards experience a Mediterranean climate, though cooled by altitude. This wine shows why old, bush-trained vines produce such exceptional wines: Deep ruby-coloured, the aromatics are wild berries, smoked meat, roasted coffee beans, dark chocolate and black olives. The palate is very ripe with plums, prunes and nuts coming through, supported by fresh acidity and grippy tannins. Powerful and peppery, a good match for grilled rib-eye with a red wine-infused sauce and blackened potatoes.





BEST BAROSSA (SUB-£50): FIFTH WAVE GRENACHE 2021

Producer: Langmeil Winery, **Region:** Barossa Valley, South Australia

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £45

Farmer Christian Auricht first planted grapes in 1843, and his grandson Theodor Hanisch established the first winery in 1932. Today Langmeil is owned and operated by the Lindner family and is a 'must-visit', with an incredible cellar door experience. Fifth Wave is Langmeil's most treasured Old Vine Garden Grenache and is dedicated to the fifth generation of the Lindner family. The vineyard was planted in 1973 and expresses the desire to preserve, protect and promote the best of Barossa, including this often-derided variety. Very deep ruby-purple-coloured, this wine exhibits blackberry and Morello cherry fruit, vanilla buttercream and caramel notes. The palate flavours are supported by racy acidity and velvet tannins, with herbal accents and a creamy finish. Gamey and warming, this wine is perfect for grouse or venison.



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BEST FROM AUSTRALIA: NINE POPES 2018

Producer: Charles Melton Wines

Region: Barossa Valley, South Australia

Grape varieties: 52% Grenache, 46% Shiraz, 2% Mataro

Approx. retail price: £45

From iconic winemaker Charles Melton, an early proponent of retaining and developing Shiraz and Grenache in Barossa, comes this fascinating wine from very old bush vines. It's been around for quite a while, and there is a – probably apocryphal – story that Melton purposefully misnamed the wine after French icon Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Deep ruby in hue, the wine is packed with bramble, Morello cherry and cranberry fruit, accented by smoke, earth and milk chocolate. Dry, the palate has bright acidity and grainy tannins framing the black fruits. A hint of spearmint on the finish lifts the wine. Absolutely superb, the wine will pair with barbecued pork spare ribs or calves' liver with onions and mushrooms.



BEST FROM THE US: CLEMENTINE CARTER WEST END 2021

Producer: Casa Dumetz Wines, **Region:** Santa Barbara, California

Grape variety: 100% Grenache, **Approx. retail price:** £43

"Ground. Grapes. Grit." Sonja Magdevski believes in this phrase as a motto for producing great wine. The estate was created in 2004 by Magdevski to focus on Pinot Noir, but she discovered that the terroir is equally, or perhaps even more, suited to the Rhône varieties. And this example perhaps justifies 'morphing' into grapes like Grenache. Mid-ruby-hued, the wine has vibrant raspberry, strawberry and red cherry fruit, overlaid with toasty oak and a haunting floral nuance. The palate is dry with good freshness and linen-textured tannins, good definition and a savoury finish. A hint of tarragon adds interest and suggests that tomato mille-feuille would be a good pairing.



BEST FROM FRANCE (SUB-£50): LES GENOUX 2021

Producer: Domaine of the Bee, **Region:** Roussillon

Grape varieties: 70% Grenache, 15% Carignan, 10% Grenache Gris, 5% Grenache Blanc, **Approx. retail price:** £40

From very old bush-trained vines grown on black schist and limestone soils in the shadow of the Cathar Château Quéribus comes this exciting wine – literally 'the bee's knees' – produced by Justin Howard-Sneyd MW, his wife Amanda and third partner Philippe Sacerdot. Deep ruby, the wine shows ripe blackberry, dark cherry, plum and wild strawberry fruit with creamy wood. The palate flavours are framed by crisp acidity and abundant linen-textured tannins, accented by spicy pepper and garrigue herbs. Well-integrated, though still very youthful, the wine could be consumed now with wild boar ragout.



BEST FROM SPAIN: SCALA DEI MASDEU 2018

Producer: Scala Dei

Region: Priorat, Catalonia

Grape variety: 100% Garnatxa

Approx. retail price: £70

Wine has been produced on this property since the monks began in 1263. They abandoned the monastery in 1835 and, in 1844, five families purchased the property and vineyards, establishing La Sociedad Agrícola La Unión and, through it, Cellers Scala Dei. From a single southeast-facing vineyard at 800m on the steep slopes of the Sierra de Monsant comes this exquisite example. Mid-ruby in hue, the wine has aromatic cranberry, strawberry and damson fruit with hints of yellow roses, tangerine zest, vanilla and cedarwood. Full and rich, the palate flavours are balanced by lively acidity and satin-textured tannins, sowing spice on the lingering finish. A fantastic wine to pair with slow-roasted fennel and sage-infused stuffed pork.



BEST FROM FRANCE: DOMAINE LE PRIEURÉ DES PAPES, LE COUCHANT 2019

Producer: Domaine le Prieuré des Papes, **Region:** Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhône Valley, **Grape varieties:** 60% Grenache, 40% Mourvèdre

Approx. retail price: £58

Another single estate wine from this highly-rated domaine with north-facing vineyards. Owned by Arnaud and Isabelle Strasser, the winemaking team is headed up by Christian Agut. His lead for this 'stable' of wines is superb, and this wine absolutely deserves its Master medal. Deepish ruby-coloured, the bouquet is packed with dark fruits, supported by tobacco and roasted cashew oak and accented with tangerine and hedgerow notes. The palate is beautifully balanced, though powerful, with excellent acidity and firm, satin-textured tannins well-integrated through to a long finish. This wine calls for a full-bodied meaty dish: venison chilli (not too spicy), for instance, or perhaps duck confit.

