



# *Provence!*

**CHEVALIER**

NOVEMBER 2020

# PROVENCE!

Perhaps no region is more closely aligned with the history of KLWM than Provence. Richard Olney, an ex-pat food and wine writer, lived in Provence and introduced Kermit to the region's great producers, most importantly Domaine Tempier of Bandol. Tempier and Clos Sainte Magdeleine of Cassis, another domaine featured here, represent two of our longest-standing imports; both relationships date back to the late 1970s. Also, since the 1980s, Kermit has spent half of each year at his home in a small town just outside of Bandol, giving him an intimate look at the development of Provençal wine over several decades. Each bottle in this month's shipment is here because of his passion for, and deep attachment to, this beautiful and generous land.

The grapevine is believed to have first arrived in France via Provence, landing in the modern-day port city of Marseille via Greek settlers in 600 BC. Throughout the centuries—from the Greeks to the Roman period and on to modern day—viticulture has played a key role in the region's economy and culture, as the inhospitably dry, rocky terrain that dominates southern France cannot support many other forms of agriculture. The influence of *terroir* on Provençal wines goes well beyond soil: the herbs from the pervasive scrubland, called *garrigue*, as well as the mistral—an infamous drying wind from the northwest that helps keep the vines free of disease—play a significant role in the final quality of the grapes. The seemingly ever-present sun and cooling saline breezes

from the Mediterranean also lend a hand in creating a long growing season that results in ripe grapes saturated with local flavor.

Rosé is arguably the most well known type of wine from Provence, accounting for 85% of production. These dry, herbaceous thirst-quenchers are ideal for apéritif hour, yet their versatility at table makes them suitable for any and all occasions. Pink wine's astronomical rise in popularity in recent years should not overshadow the region's historically acclaimed reds, also made from blends of Mourvèdre, Grenache, and Cinsault. From top appellations—namely Bandol—these *rouges* possess a deep, earthy complexity with a capacity for long-term aging. Provence's rare whites, typically crafted from Clairette, Bourboulenc, Ugni Blanc, Marsanne, and Rolle, combine rich, sun-ripened fruit with stimulating minerality, brilliantly complementing locally caught seafood.

Countless visitors are drawn to Provence each year to witness its natural assets: the sparkling blue Mediterranean and its rocky coastline, the rugged hills of the interior covered with aromatic herbs, and, of course, an enticing climate defined by long hours of sunshine and expansive blue skies purified by the ruthless mistral. These very attributes are what make Provençal wines so unique. The six bottles featured here express the region's broad range of styles across its various *terroirs*, interpreted by some of its most skillful vigneron—that's unparalleled character and a whole lotta soul in each glass. —ANTHONY LYNCH

## 2019 CÔTES DE PROVENCE ROSÉ

◆ CLOS SAINTE MAGDELEINE \$29

THERE IS A BRAND-NEW ROSÉ in the Clos Sainte Magdeleine lineup. The Côtes de Provence is sourced from a vineyard in La Ciotat, about halfway between Cassis and Bandol and not far from the Mediterranean coast. Using a similar blend to his Cassis rosé, vigneron Jonathan Sack has crafted what is perhaps the quintessential Provençal refresher—an uplifting nectar of bright citrus, fresh berry fruit, wild herbs, and salty sea air—that is a far cry from the countless technological, mass-marketed examples in production throughout the region.

Sack's bears a distinct sense of place, and it's someplace we all want to be: under the sun, by the sea, glass in hand, a bowl of briny olives within reach. *Monsieur*, a refill, *s'il vous plaît!*



## 2019 BANDOL ROSÉ

◆ DOMAINE TEMPIER \$56

WITH TEMPIER ROSÉ, all it takes is one sniff to be carried back to Provence, conceiving a dreamy fantasy of sunshine and ice-cold pink wine. Suddenly we are in the shade of a massive umbrella pine tree at Domaine Tempier, refreshed by a soothing breeze and generous sips of rosé. The *cigales* chirp buzzingly in the background, while the sound of laughter complements their constant hum. Your glass of Bandol, evocative of rosemary, ripe peaches, and citrus, is the perfect elixir to wash down the assortment of snacks that has spontaneously materialized: garlic-rubbed toasts with cured anchovies, olives marinated in herb-infused oil, and slices of salty *saucisson*. This is what Tempier rosé is all about—celebration, gaiety, and delicious simplicity.



2018 CÔTES DE PROVENCE  
“BLANC DE BLANCS”

◆ CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH \$49

CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH'S *BLANC* is unlike any other Provençal white you'll encounter. While it takes the Côtes de Provence AOC, the vineyards—situated in the tiny village of Villars-sur-Var, north of Nice—are isolated from the rest of the appellation, enjoying a climate and setting more evocative of Savoie's mountains than of the nearby Côte d'Azur. Roch Sassi farms old vines in rocky limestone soils in this beautiful, remote place that combines Alpine coolness with Mediterranean warmth.



The blend features Rolle, Ugni Blanc, Sémillon, and Clairette, fermented and aged in a combination of *barrisques*, *demi-muids*, and cement *cuves*. A delicate, floral aroma prefaces this textured white that is both creamy and stony, with a precision not commonly found in southern whites. The low alcohol makes it easy to pour a second glass before your appetizers even hit the table.



2018 ALPILLES *BLANC* “JASPE”

◆ DOMAINE HAUVETTE \$42

DOMINIQUE HAUVETTE IS A RARE BREED: intensely stern, unyielding in her convictions, and at times cynical, she is not the jolly Provençal character we are accustomed to from Occitan folklore. Her wines, in turn, are made via singular methods, without artifice, and cannot be compared to anything else in the region—or, for that matter, anywhere in France. From vines deeply rooted in the *garrigue*-encrusted limestone foothills of Les Alpilles, a small mountain range near picturesque Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, Jasje is Roussanne fermented in concrete eggs and aged in stainless steel. A gorgeous perfume



of honeysuckle meets the nose, and the wine is at once lush and nervy, comforting and stimulating. It is picture-perfect with Provençal cuisine—those garlicky, herby, tomato-based dishes that sometimes give white wine a hard time.



## 2016 BANDOL ROUGE

◆ DOMAINE DE TERREBRUNE \$46

THIS PROPERTY sits less than two miles from the Mediterranean coast, surrounded by the reddish-brown clay for which it is named. Beneath the thin surface layer of *terre brune* lies bluish limestone, which vigneron Reynald Delille credits for the consistent freshness and finesse of Terrebrune's wines. A cross section of soil in Reynald's cellar reveals the many fissures that allow his vines' roots to dig deep into the bedrock, drawing moisture crucial to surviving the hot, arid Provençal summers. While this red consists of 85% Mourvèdre, a grape known for aggressive tannins and rustic flavor, the *terroir* here always seems to shine through, giving highly refined wines with a fresh mineral core. This 2016 represents an especially balanced and complete example that is certain to age extremely well. But don't hesitate to pull the cork now: with notes of black fruit over spices and a stony salinity, this Bandol has plenty to offer whenever you may wish to indulge.

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## 2012 BANDOL ROUGE

◆ DOMAINE DU GROS 'NORÉ \$68

THE REDS FROM ALAIN PASCAL of Gros 'Noré are big, brooding beasts that convey the full tannic punch of the Mourvèdre grape. You'll find Bandol's classic earthy, spiced tones, along with a healthy dollop of ripe, black Mourvèdre fruit. This 2012, however, represents a breakthrough for Alain: perhaps due to his decision to harvest slightly earlier and exercise a lighter touch in the cellar, this edition of his *rouge* shows unforeseen delicacy and elegance—words not typically associated with Alain, or his wines! The inclusion of some stems in the vinification tank has also proven an important step toward retaining freshness, something Alain works hard for in a time when each year is hotter than the last.

At age eight, this Bandol has developed lovely complexity, but don't feel the need to rush: with some more bottle age, leathery nuances and a gamey, almost animal bouquet tend to emerge. Drink it over the next twenty or so years with hearty cold-weather fare or a simple ribeye cooked over fire.





<p>2019 Côtes de Provence Rosé <i>Clos Sainte Magdeleine</i></p>	<p>35% Grenache, 35% Cinsault, 20% Mourvèdre, 10% Syrah</p>	<p>Vines planted between 1979 and 1999 Clay, limestone</p>	<p>Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F Decant optional</p>	<p>Strawberry, pomegranate, herbs, rhubarb Crisp, bright, invigorating, mineral</p>	<p>Drink now</p>
<p>2019 Bandol Rosé <i>Domaine Tempier</i></p>	<p>55% Mourvèdre, 25% Grenache, 20% Cinsault</p>	<p>20-year-old vines Clay, limestone</p>	<p>Serve <i>cool</i> 50–54° F Decant optional</p>	<p>Nectarine, citrus, thyme, fennel Bold, punchy, uplifting, structured</p>	<p>Drink now through 2030</p>
<p>2018 Côtes de Provence “Blanc de Blancs” <i>Clos Saint-Joseph</i></p>	<p>40% Rolle, 30% Ugni Blanc, 25% Sémillon, 5% Clairette</p>	<p>5-, 30-, and 90-year-old vines Clay, limestone</p>	<p>Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F Decant optional</p>	<p>White flowers, anise, mountain air Pure, focused, fleshy, stony</p>	<p>Drink now</p>
<p>2018 Alpilles Blanc “Jaspe” <i>Domaine Hauvette</i></p>	<p>Roussanne</p>	<p>15-year-old vines Clay, limestone</p>	<p>Serve <i>cool</i> 50–54° F Decant optional</p>	<p>Honeysuckle, apricot, peach Waxy, lush, textured, gently bitter</p>	<p>Drink now through 2025</p>
<p>2016 Bandol Rouge <i>Domaine de Terrebrune</i></p>	<p>85% Mourvèdre, 10% Grenache, 5% Cinsault</p>	<p>20-year-old vines Clay, limestone</p>	<p>Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 60–64° F Decant recommended</p>	<p>Wild blackberry, blood, pepper, sun-baked earth Dense, elegant, restrained, saline</p>	<p>Drink now through 2045</p>
<p>2012 Bandol Rouge <i>Domaine du Gros 'Noré</i></p>	<p>80% Mourvèdre, 15% Grenache, 5% Cinsault</p>	<p>30-year-old vines Clay</p>	<p>Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 60–64° F Decant recommended</p>	<p>Game, spices, <i>garrigue</i>, black cherry Brawny, deep, rustic, chewy</p>	<p>Drink now through 2035</p>

cover: © GAIL SKOFF

gatefold: Old vintages in Tempier's cellar. © GAIL SKOFF

far left, top: © CLOS SAINTE MAGDELEINE

far left, bottom: Dream ice bucket. © GAIL SKOFF

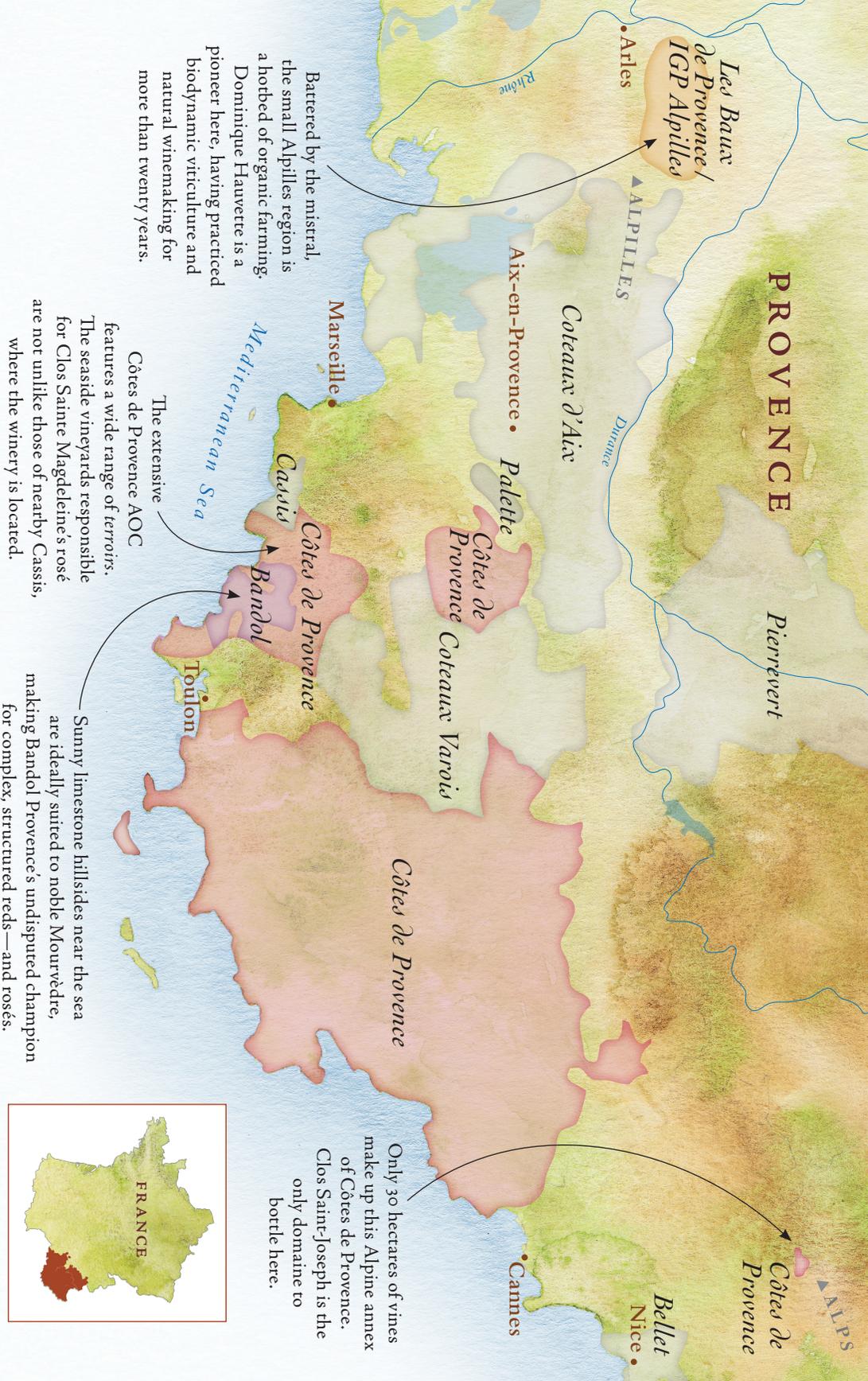
middle, top: Roch Sassi and partner Constance Malengé.

© CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

middle, bottom: Dominique Hauvette. © DOMAINE HAUETTE

near left: Alain Pascal harvesting. © GAIL SKOFF

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*Les Baux de Provence / IGP Alpilles*

• Arles

Bartered by the mistral, the small Alpilles region is a hotbed of organic farming. Dominique Havette is a pioneer here, having practiced biodynamic viticulture and natural winemaking for more than twenty years.

# PROVENCE

Aix-en-Provence •

*Coteaux d'Aix*

*Palette*

*Côtes de Provence Coteaux Varois*

Marseille •

*Cassis*

*Côtes de Provence Bandol*

*Mediterranean Sea*

The extensive Côtes de Provence AOC

features a wide range of terroirs. The seaside vineyards responsible for Clos Sainte Magdeleine's rosé are not unlike those of nearby Cassis, where the winery is located.

Toulon

Sunny limestone hillsides near the sea are ideally suited to noble Mourvèdre, making Bandol Provence's undisputed champion for complex, structured reds—and rosés.

*Côte de Provence*

*Bellefleur*  
• Nice

• Cannes

Only 30 hectares of vines make up this Alpine annex of Côtes de Provence. Clos Saint-Joseph is the only domaine to bottle here.

