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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

- 2002 TÉLÉGRAMME
- PRIZES FROM THE LOIRE
- SAUTERNES MASTERPIECE

OPEN • TUESDAY–SATURDAY 11 A.M. to 6 P.M. CLOSED • SUNDAY & MONDAY

JULY 2004

PRIZES FROM THE LOIRE

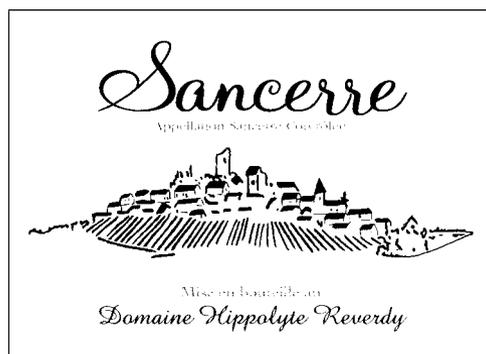
My trip to the Loire in May was quite a treat. There seems to be nothing but exciting vintages, including the extravagantly rich 2003s, the classic 2002s, and the endlessly intriguing 2001s (especially the reds). Here we go from east to west along the Loire, following my route:

2003 SANCERRE BLANC DANIEL CHOTARD

Such a big generous bouquet, and such a fine one, too. I tend to idolize winemakers who can make expressive wines without seeming to go too far, if you know what I mean. On the palate, and true to its year, this Sancerre is rich and supple . . . voluptuously fine!

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE **\$215.46** PER CASE

2002 SANCERRE ROUGE HIPPOLYTE REVERDY



For fifteen years Reverdy has bottled our red Sancerre unfiltered, but then he filtered the rest of it for everyone else. This year he announced that he was going to bottle all of his 2003 unfiltered. “Everyone always prefers your bottling,” he said, “even my buddies, and after a couple of years even the filtered wine throws a deposit, too. So, why filter?”

Yes, folks, another anti-filtration victory, and this one only took fifteen years. Reverdy’s 2002, our unfiltered version, 100% Pinot Noir by the way, has a light, bright color, a delicious nose of raspberry and cherry fruit, and, on the palate, an excellent balance of flesh and bone. Very 2002.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE

2003 VOUVRAY • DOMAINE CHAMPALOU

You have to go back about one hundred years to find a vintage as hot and dry as 2003 at Vouvray. Yes, I said dry. The French cannot irrigate their vineyards like we do. Mother Nature is free to wreak havoc or fashion once-in-a-lifetime miracles. So the 2003 grapes were ripe and loaded with sugar but with lower acidity than usual. The 2003 Vouvrays don't show the exuberant freshness of an ordinary year, but the richness of body and flavor is amazing. And the grapes were almost roasted, shriveled, so the 2003 grapeskins gave a lot of flavor to the juice.

At ten o'clock in the morning, after our tasting, they brought out a fresh goat cheese to snack on, and this wine was absolutely delicious with it. I was impressed by how vividly the wine's character was revealed.

\$7.95 PER TENTH **\$171.72** PER CASE

\$12.95 PER FIFTH **\$139.86** PER CASE

2002 CHINON "FRANC DE PIED" DOMAINE BERNARD BAUDRY

Here is a special bottling from 100% ungrafted vines. You might be familiar with the tragedy of the phylloxera attack in the French vineyards at the end of the nineteenth century. Most vineyards were wiped out by the pest until the United States came to the rescue, because our root stock turned out to be resistant to phylloxera. French viticulture was saved when someone had the bright idea of grafting their grape varieties onto our root stock.

Some spoilsports claimed that, uh oh, the wines were never precisely the same. I have not been lucky enough to taste many pre-phylloxera French wines, so I'm no expert, but I have tasted a few contemporary wines (there exist only a handful) made from ungrafted vines. Yes, I think there is a difference. See what you think.

But do *not* think that I bought this because of some obscure intellectual interest. No, you will see why I bought it when you taste it.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE **\$215.46** PER CASE



FRANC DE PIED

BERNARD BAUDRY

**2002 SAVENNIÈRES “CUVÉE SPÉCIALE”
CHÂTEAU D’EPIRÉ**

André Ostertag once said, “a great wine cannot be like any other, and because of this fact it will be atypical, or only typical of itself.”

Which brings us to Epiré’s old-vine, cask-fermented, unfiltered 2002, a great wine with a character that you can find nowhere else. And what a character. The bouquet is complex with floral notes, pear, honey, and what I’ll call apricot pit. It is a large aroma worth spending years with. On the palate: mouth-filling, firm, structured, loaded with flavor, certainly a wine that will age a long time, but there is enough pleasure in it now to justify pulling some corks early on. It is as rich and delicious as the château’s great 1947, which I tasted back in the early eighties. Highest recommendation.



2002

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE \$215.46 PER CASE

**2003 MUSCADET SUR LIE
DOMAINE BRÉGEON**

California vintners, taste Brégeon’s 2003 and you will get a good idea of what might result if you were to make Muscadet here. Michel Brégeon says he has never seen such a hot summer or harvested such ripe grapes. It still manages to taste Muscadet-like, but it is certainly a lot richer and deeper than usual.

\$11.50 PER BOTTLE \$124.20 PER CASE



SOUTH OF FRANCE

2003 VIN DE PAYS DU VAUCLUSE *BLANC* DOMAINE DE DURBAN

Nice, simple, fresh, supple, straightforward . . . what a perfect bistro white this would make. You could drink it with all sorts of different dishes.

This is from the Domaine de Durban at Beaumes-de-Venise.

\$9.95 PER BOTTLE **\$107.46** PER CASE

2002 PATRIMONIO *BLANC* “CARCO” ANTOINE ARENA

A super cuvée here, 100% Rolle, or Vermentino, as the grape variety is called on Corsica. Check out that unusual aroma of ripe fruit, flowers, and dry stone. There is intensity, nerve, and great persistence.

\$29.00 PER BOTTLE **\$313.20** PER CASE

2001 CALVI *ROUGE* “E PROVE” DOMAINE MAESTRACCI

From 2001 we have an exceptional vintage for Corsican reds. The style of this special blend reminds me very much of Faraud at Gigondas. When I say deep and dark, I mean not only the color. The nose is fabulous and is showing off its stuff now. On the palate, great rich tannins, lots of depth.

\$16.00 PER BOTTLE **\$172.80** PER CASE

2003 BANDOL *ROSÉ* DOMAINE DE LA TOUR DU BON

Summertime and the feeling is easy, and so is swallowing our Bandol rosé from Mme. Henry at Tour du Bon. A couple of years ago in one of these brochures I called a dry wine a sweetie pie, and I feel the same way about this one. Curvaceous and tasty at the finish.

\$19.95 PER BOTTLE **\$215.46** PER CASE

A TÉLÉGRAMME FROM VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE

THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS to say about the how and why of Télégramme, but here is the important part: after my final tasting of the year 2003 at the Bruniers', they invited me to stay for lunch, and Daniel wondered aloud what vintage Vieux Télégraphe he should bring up from the cellar to drink. His father, Henri, asked, "Why don't you draw off a carafe of Télégramme from the *foudre*?"

"That's all he wants to drink these days," Daniel said, laughing. And to me, knowing well the selection of marvels aging in their subterranean cellar, that says a lot. It says that Télégramme is the kind of forward *vin de plaisir* that you want to drink not because it is so great (we could have picked a 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, you get the idea), but because it is so good.

In 2002, Vieux Télégraphe's old vines Grenache in the stones did quite well. Better, I would say, than in 1992 and 1997, for example. But the Syrah and Mourvedre were ruined by rains and deemed unacceptable by the Bruniers, who decided they would not blend them in with the Grenache. Then they decided that without Syrah and Mourvedre (25% of the normal blend) it was not truly Vieux Télégraphe. They wondered what to do. At the time, the 2002s were selling in bulk at the same high prices as the grand 2001s, but the Bruniers liked their Grenache too much to sell it off to *négociants* like that. They decided to keep only the best and create a one-time label, quite a striking label, thank goodness, and named it Télégramme.

\$24.95 PER BOTTLE

\$269.46 PER CASE



BURGUNDY

2001 CHABLIS *PREMIER CRU* “MONT DE MILIEU” • ANCIEN DOMAINE AUFFRAY

This *premier cru* seems ready to go to me. It is opened up, quite giving, and it has an impressive bouquet with a suggestion of mushroom or forest floor. The palate is round and fairly deep, with the acidity and minerality buried within.

\$33.00 PER BOTTLE **\$356.40** PER CASE

2002 CHABLIS *GRAND CRU* “BOUGROS” ANCIEN DOMAINE AUFFRAY

A lovely classic vintage in Burgundy, the 2002 style extends to Chablis, too, and here you will enjoy it from the rare *grand cru terroir*, Bougros. You could drink it now for its pretty floral nose or wait a few years for the additional subtleties aging will provide. Nice weight and liveliness on the palate, impeccable balance.

\$62.00 PER BOTTLE **\$669.60** PER CASE

2002 CÔTE-DE-NUITS VILLAGES *ROUGE* DOMAINE GACHOT-MONOT

Monsieur Gachot's wines are mostly from Nuits St. Georges, but he makes a small quantity of Côte-de-Nuits Villages, too, which, in the Burgundian hierarchy, is deemed a step up from a Bourgogne, but not as elevated as a village wine like Nuits St. George or Vosne Romanée.

The thrill here is in the lovely, delicious Pinot Noir fruit. Not one to study or to search within for hidden meanings, it simply tastes great. I am happy with our price.

Gachot's wines from Nuits St. Georges will arrive later.

\$18.95 PER BOTTLE **\$204.66** PER CASE



— PRE-ARRIVAL OFFER —

2002 BURGUNDY
DOMAINE BALLOT-MILLOT & FILS

Tasting with Charles Ballot, the son who has taken over Ballot-Millot's vinification, I was impressed by the touch he appears to have. His 2002s are, above all, classic in style, very fairly priced, and true to their appellations. The three *premier cru* whites, for example, could be used in wine classes to illustrate *terroir*. Perrières has the stones, Charmes the charm, and Genevrières its typical stature, breadth, and presence. The reds have abundant, picture-perfect Pinot fruit and admirable balance. Broadly textured with good depth and lovely tannins, everything is there in proportion.

| | PER CASE |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 2002 MEURSAULT <i>BLANC</i> | \$261.00 |
| 2002 MEURSAULT CHARMES | 396.00 |
| 2002 MEURSAULT PERRIÈRES | 396.00 |
| 2002 MEURSAULT GENEVRIÈRES | 396.00 |
| 2002 MEURSAULT <i>ROUGE</i> | 240.00 |
| 2002 VOLNAY-SANTENOTS | 297.00 |
| 2002 VOLNAY TAILLE PIEDS | 324.00 |
| 2002 BEAUNE ÉPENOTTES | 294.00 |

2001 SAUTERNES “CUVÉE ANDRÉ”
CHÂTEAU ROUMIEU-LACOSTE

How might I insist that you obtain for yourself some of this extraordinary Sauternes, and if you go before it does, I am sure your kids won't mind if there is a bottle or two left.

It was harvested by Roumieu's eight most experienced harvesters over a period of six weeks. Think about that. Only the most perfect super-botrytised grapes! It was vinified in new oak and bottled unfiltered.

Medium-dark, golden color. The grand aroma is deep, intense: apricot and peach-pit confit, melon, grapefruit, essence of noble rot. The unbelievable palate penetrates and persists and is about as racy as I've ever encountered.

This is a classic, a perfection such as passes our way rarely.

\$258.00 PER CASE OF 12 TENTHS

\$240.00 PER CASE OF 6 FIFTHS

Pre-arrival terms: Half-payment due with order, balance upon arrival.
