

Wine tasting in Alsace and the Rhône Valley

Asher Tishler

The winery tour in Alsace and the Rhône Valley during March of 2018 included Nurit and Asher Tishler. We visited 7 wineries in Alsace and 11 wineries in the Rhône Valley (8 in the Châteauneuf-du-Pape region and 3 in the Northern Rhône). We tasted the wineries' current releases (sometimes from barrels) and, often, older ones.

High quality mature wines from Alsace and the Rhône Valley are often unavailable for purchase in the wineries, but are likely to be accessible in professional wine stores or other professional outlets (local importers, internet stores, etc.). High quality wines from the last release and, sometimes, from the last 2-3 releases, may be available in some, but not all, wineries.

There are numerous hotels, B&Bs, quality restaurants and professional wine stores in both Alsace and the Rhône Valley. We stayed in B&Bs in Laudun-l'Ardoise (Rhône Valley) and Gundolsheim (Alsace). Both (small) towns are surrounded by some of the region's most famous wineries and offer many interesting attractions.

Our trip was planned several months in advance and focused on high quality wineries. Thus, no wonder that we ranked many of the wines that we tasted as 'very good' or even 'excellent'. Almost all of the high quality wines that we tasted will age and continue to develop, most of them for many years.

Finally, there are numerous sources of information on Alsace's and the Rhône Valley's wines, wineries, history, culture, climate and geography. Wikipedia and references therein is a good place to start.

Wineries in Alsace

Weinbach

Pinot Noir Reserve, 2016. 24 €. 13.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Some complexity. Fairly elegant. Light. Very dry. Drink now up to 5-6 years. Good wine.

Cuvee Theo, 2016. 20.5 €. 13.5% alcohol. 100% Riesling. Less than full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Fairly elegant. Round. Dry. Drink now up to 4 years. Good wine.

Cuvee Colette, 2016. 31.5 €. 13% alcohol. 100% Riesling. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Elegant. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Reserve Particuliere, 2016. 19 €. 14% alcohol. 100% Pinot Gris. Less than full body. Balanced. Little complexity. Some sweetness. 1.5% residual sugar. Drink now up to 10 years. Good wine.

Cuvee Saint Cathrine, 2016. 34 €. 14% alcohol. 100% Pinot Gris. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Fairly elegant. Somewhat sweet. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Cuvee Laurance, 2016. 24 €. 13.5% alcohol. 100% Gewurztraminer. Less than full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Fairly elegant. Sweet wine. Drink now up to 20 years. Very good wine.

Grand Cru Furstentum, 2016. 45 €. 13.5% alcohol. 100% Gewurztraminer. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Sweet wine. Drink now up to 25 years. Very good wine.

Grand Cru Mambourg, 2006. 202 €. 11.5% alcohol. 100% Gewurztraminer. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Sweet. Dessert wine. Drink now up to 30 years. Excellent wine.

A medium-size winery. Nice tasting facility. Wonderful hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Leon Beyer

Cuvee Leon Beyer, Les Classique, 2015. 9.8 €. 12% alcohol. A blend of Muscat, Riesling, Pinot Blanc and Silvaner. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Somewhat elegant. Simple wine. Drink now up to 2 years. Good wine.

Riesling, Les Classique, 2016. 13.5 €. 12.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Some complexity. Simple wine. Drink now up to 5 years. Good wine.

Riesling, Reserve, 2012. 16.7 €. 12.5% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Comtes d'Eguisheim, Les Grande Cuvee, 2009. 31.7 €. 13.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Very soft tannins. Nice finish. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Riesling R de Beyer, Les Grandes Cuvee, 2010. 31.7 €. 13.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Nice finish. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Vendange Tardive, 2011. 29.9 €. 12.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Semi sweet. 2% residual sugar. Nice finish. Drink now up to 10 or more years. Very good wine.

Pinot Gris, Les Classique, 2016. 15.7 €. 13.5% alcohol. Less than full body. Balanced. Some complexity. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good wine.

Pinot Gris, Reserve, 2010. 19.2 €. 14% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Some floral aroma. Pleasing finish. Drink now up to 5-6 years. Very good wine.

Pinot Gris, Vendange Tardive, 2007. 37.3 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Pleasing sweetness. 3-4% residual sugar. Long finish. Drink now up to 10-15 or more years. Very good wine.

Pinot Gris, Selection de Grains Nobles, 1997. 57.2 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Sweet. Pleasing sweetness. Nice long finish. Drink now up to 10 or more years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Les Classique, 2015. 16.3 €. 14% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Some complexity. Dry. Simple wine. Drink now up to 3-4 years. Good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Reserve, 2010. 19.2 €. 14% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Dry. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Vendange Tardive, 2012. 37.5 €. 13% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Sweet. 4% residual sugar. Dessert wine. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Selection de Grains Nobles, 1998. 64.6 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Pleasing sweetness. 7% residual sugar. Pleasant long finish. Drink now up to 10 or more years. Very good wine.

Pinot Noir, Les Grandes Cuvee, 2015. 31.7 €. 13.5% alcohol. Less than full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Dry. Noticeable soft tannins. Drink in 3-4 up to 10 years. Good wine.

A medium-size winery. Nice tasting facility. Great hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Trimbach

Pinot Blanc, 2016. 11.4 €. 13% alcohol. 70% Pinot Auxerrois, 30% Pinot Blanc. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Somewhat elegant. Simple wine. Drink now up to 2 years. Good wine.

Riesling, 2015. 14 €. 13.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Dry. Simple wine. Drink now up to 5 years. Good wine.

Riesling Reserve, 2015. 18.5 €. 13.5% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Dry. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Nice acidity. Drink now up to 7-10 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Selection de Vieilles Vignes, Reserve, 2015. 23.5 €. 14% alcohol. Full body. Balanced, but somewhat low acidity. Complex. Fairly elegant. Dry. Feminine. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 10 years. Good to very good wine.

Cuvee Frederic Emile, 2008. 47.25 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Very dry. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Cuvee Frederic Emile, 2007. 43.35 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Very dry. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good to excellent wine.

Clos St. Hune, 2012. 154 €. 12.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Nice lingering finish. Approachable now. Drink in 3-5 up to 20 or more years. Excellent wine.

Gewurztraminer Cuvee des Seigneurs de Ribeaupierre, Reserve, 2011. 34.3 €. 14.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Pleasant and gentle sweetness. Pleasing finish. Drink now up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Vendanges Tardives, 2011. 38.4 €. 13.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Pleasant sweetness. Pleasing long finish. Drink now up to 15-20 or more years. Very good to excellent wine.

Pinot Gris, Selections de Grains Nobles, 2005. 91.8 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Sweet. Pleasing sweetness. Nice long finish. Drink now up to 15-20 or more years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer Hors choix, Selections de Grains Nobles, 2008. 155 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Pleasing sweetness. Elegant. Enduring finish. Drink now up to 20 or more years. Excellent wine.

A medium-size winery. Nice tasting facility. Great hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Hugel

Riesling, 2015. 14.4 €. 12.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Some complexity. Simple wine. Dry. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good wine.

Riesling Estate, 2013. 20.9 €. 12.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Fairly simple wine. Soft tannins. Nice finish. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Grossi Laue, 2011. 42.5 €. 14% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 20 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Schoelhammer, 2008. 89 €. 12.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Noticeable soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 20 years. Very good to excellent wine.

Pinot Gris, Grossi Laue, 2011. 40.5 €. 15% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Some sweetness. 1% residual sugar. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Grossi Laue, 2010. 43 €. 14% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Sweet. 1% residual sugar. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Vendange Tardives, 2011. 54.5 €. 12.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Riesling, Selections de Grains Nobles, 2010. 145.8 €. 10.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Very elegant. 4.5% residual sugar. Sweet. Pleasing gentle sweetness. Nice lingering finish. Very soft tannins. Drink now up to 20-30 years (open 1-2 days before drinking). Excellent wine.

Riesling, Schoelhammer, 2007. 89 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Very dry. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 20 years. Excellent wine.

Riesling, Schoelhammer, 2009. 98 €. 13.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Dry. Soft tannins. Nice lingering finish. Drink now up to 20 years. Excellent wine.

Sporen, 1983. (Not for sale). 12% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Very elegant. Semi-sweet. 1.5% residual sugar. Nice finish. Drink now. Interesting and enjoyable wine.

A medium-size winery. Nice tasting facility. Great hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Visiting this winery (tasting room) (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Domaine Marcel Deiss

Riesling, 2016. 21 €. 12.5% alcohol. 100% Riesling. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Somewhat elegant. Some floral aroma. Dry. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Alsace Blanc, 2015. 14 €. 13.5% alcohol. A mix of 13 types of grapes. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Simple wine. Drink now up to 4 years. Good wine.

Langenberg, 2013. 28 €. 13.5% alcohol. About 50% Riesling, 50% Pinot Gris, Pinot Beurot, Pinot Noir, and Muscat. Close to full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Dry. Soft tannins. Nice finish. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Schoffweg, 2013. 34.5 €. 13% alcohol. About 50% Riesling, about 50% Pinots, some strains of Muscat and Chasselas. Full body. Fairly balanced (somewhat low acidity). Complex. Some very soft tannins. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Good to very good wine.

Gruenspiel, 2012. 30.5 €. 13% alcohol. 50% Riesling, 25% Pinot Noir and 25% Gewurztraminer. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. 1% sugar. Nice long finish. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Grand Cru Altenberg de Bergheim, 2011. 59 €. 12% alcohol. A mix of 13 grapes. A sweet wine. 5% sugar. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Pleasant sweetness. Drink now up to 20 or more years. Very good wine.

Grand Cru Schoenenbourg, 2013. € 65. 10% alcohol. 100% Riesling. A sweet wine. 5% sugar. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Pleasing sweetness. Drink now up to 20 or more years. Very good to excellent wine.

A medium-size winery. Very nice tasting facility. Great hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Most of the wines in this winery are blends of several (sometimes very distinct) grape varieties (a controversial issue in the region). Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Emile Beyer

Riesling Eguisheim, 2016. 14.5 €. 13% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Somewhat complex. Very smooth. Fairly elegant. Dry. Pleasant. Round. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Riesling Lieu-Dit Saint Jacques, 2016. 21 €. 13% alcohol. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Nice acidity. Very dry. Sharp. Smooth. Elegant. Pleasing finish. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Riesling Alsace Grand Cru Eichberg, 2016. 28 €. 13% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Young. Dry. Smooth. Fairly elegant. Lingering and pleasant finish. Soft tannins. Approachable now. Drink in 2-4 up to 15-20 years. Very good to excellent wine.

Pinot Gris Lieu-Dit Hohrain, 2014. 21 €. 13.8% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Young. Very dry. Pleasant finish. Somewhat "heavy". Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Pinot Noir Eguisheim, 2015. 14.5 €. 13.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Very dry. Some feel of saltiness at the end. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Gewurztraminer Alsace Grand Cru Pfersigberg, 2015. 28 €. 14% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. 3% residual sugar. Pleasing gentle sweetness. Pleasant finish. Drink now up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Muscat, 1971. (Not for sale) 11.5-12% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Somewhat complex. Very old and very interesting wine. Dry. No freshness or floral aroma. Flavor of a very old wine. Drink now. An interesting and rewarding experience.

A medium-size winery. Very nice tasting facility. Great hospitality. The winery resides in a beautiful location and produces high quality wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Aimestentz

Riesling, Vin de Prestige, Grand Cru Sommerberg, 2015. 14.5 €. 13.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Very dry. Fairly elegant. Drink now up to 5-8 years. Very good wine.

Pinot Gris, Traditionnelle, 2016. 10 €. 13% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good to very good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Traditionnelle, 2016. 9.6 €. 13.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good wine.

Cuvee Amatus, Vin de Prestige, 2015. 14.4 €. 14% alcohol. 50% Pinot Blanc and 50% Pinot Gris. Some body. Balanced. Not Complex. Fairly simple wine. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good wine.

Gewurztraminer, Vin de Prestige, 2016. 16.5 €. 12.5% alcohol. Made from frozen grapes. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Dry. Fairly simple wine. Some sweetness. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good wine.

Pinot Gris, Selection de Grains Nobles, 2013. 37 €. 12.5% alcohol. Some body. Balanced. Not complex. Drink now up to 10 or more years. Good wine.

A small winery. Nice hospitality. The winery resides in a nice location and produces good wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is recommended.

Wineries in the Rhône Valley

Le Clos du Caillou

Le Bouquet Des Garrigues Blanc, 2017. 13.5% alcohol, 13.5 €. 40% Clairette-Rose, 30% Grenache Blanc, 20% Viognier, 10% Bourboulenc. Some body. Balanced. Reasonably complex. Simple. Dry. Fresh. Drink now up to 3-4 years. Very good wine.

Le Bouquet Des Garrigues Rouge, 2015. 15% alcohol, 13 €. 85% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 5% Carignan and Mourvedre. Close to full body. Balanced. Reasonably complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Le Quartz, 2016. 15% alcohol, 17.5 €. 85% Grenache, 15% Syrah. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Some floral aroma. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Le Reserve Blanc, 2016. 13.5% alcohol, 23 €. 97% Clairette-Rose, 3% Grenache Blanc. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Some soft tannins. Closed. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink in 2-3 up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

La Reserve (Chateauneuf-du-Pape), 2011. 15% alcohol, 90 €. 65% Grenache, 35% Mourvedre. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 20 years. Very good to excellent wine.

An impressive winery located in a beautiful location. Produces high quality wines from several locations in Cotes-du-Rhone and Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.

Domaine de la Vielle Julienne

Lieu-dit Clavin, 2014. 13.5% alcohol, 15 €. 60% Grenache, 40% Cinsault, Cunoise, Syrah and Mourvedre. Close to full body. Ballanced. Reasonably complex. Drink now up to 10 years. Good to very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape 'le Trois Sources', 2014. 14.5% alcohol, 40 €. About 75% Grenache, 25% Cinsault, Syrah and Mourvedre. Full body. Balanced, Complex. Fairly elegant. Noticeable soft tannins. Drink in 2-3 up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

An impressive family winery. Produces high quality wines from vineyards in Cotes-du-Rhone and Chateauneuf-du-Pape. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Domaine de la Janasse

St. Antonim Vin de Pays, (white), 2015. 13.5% alcohol, 10 €. 40% Chardonnay, 40% Clairette, 20% Bourboulenc. Some body. Balanced. Some complexity. Fresh. Dry. Drink now up to 2-3 years. Good to very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape Tradition, 2015. 14.5% alcohol, 32 €. 65% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre, 5% Cinsault. Full body. Balanced. Complex. A slight feel of saltiness. Long finish. Drink in 2-3 up to 15 years. Very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape 'Chaupin', 2016. 15% alcohol, 56 €. 100% Grenache. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Dry. Long finish. Drink in 2-3 up to 20-25 years. Very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape 'Vieilles Vignes', 2016. 15% alcohol, 76 €. 64% Grenache, 20% Mourvedre, 10% Syrah, 6% Divers. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Closed. Very noticeable soft tannins. Desired bitterness at the end. Drink in 3-4 up to 25 years. Excellent wine.

An impressive medium-size family winery. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Domaine du Clos Saint Jean

Clos Saint Jean Blanc, 2016. 14% alcohol, 26.5 €. 1/3 Roussanne, 1/3 Grenache Blanc, 1/3 Clairette. Close to full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Fresh. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Clos Saint Jean Rouge, 2015. 16% alcohol, 26.5 €. 75% Grenache, 15% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre, Cinsault, Vaccareze and Muscardin. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Elegant. Long finish. Desired bitterness at the end. Very soft tannins. Closed. Drink in 2-4 up to 30 years. Very good wine.

La Combs des Fous, 2015. 16% alcohol, 67.5 €. 60% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Cinsault, 10% Vaccareze. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Long finish. Desired bitterness at the end. Noticeable soft tannins. Drink in 3-4 up to 30 years. Excellent wine.

Deus-Ex-Machina, 2015. 16% alcohol, 67.5 €. 60% Grenache, 40% Mourvedre. Full (powerful) body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Enduring finish. Desired bitterness at the end. Noticeable soft tannins. Drink in 3-4 up to 30 years. Excellent wine.

An impressive medium-size family winery. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Pegau

Maclura, Cotes du Rhone, 2015. 14% alcohol, 9.5 €. 60% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre, 10% Cinsault. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Simple. Noticeable tannins. Drink in 2-3 up to 10 years. Good to very good wine.

Setier, Cotes du Rhone Villages, 2015. 14% alcohol, 12 €. 60% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 20% Mourvedre. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Drink in 2-3 up to 8-10 years. Very good wine.

Plan Pegau, 2013 2014, 2015. 14% alcohol, 9 €. 30% Grenache, 30% Syrah, 20% Merlot, 20% Mourvedre, Cinsault, Alicante, Carignan, and more. This wine is a blend of grapes from 2013, 2014 and 2015. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Simple. Noticeable soft tannins. Drink in 1-2 up to 8 years. Good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape Cuvee Reservee, 2014. 14% alcohol, 36 €. 80% Grenache, 6% Syrah, 4% Mourvedre, 10% other varieties. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink in 2 up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape Cuvee Reservee, 2015. 14% alcohol, 55 €. 80% Grenache, 6% Syrah, 4% Mourvedre, 10% other varieties. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. Slight feel of saltiness. Long lingering finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink in 2-3 up to 15-20 years. Very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape Cuvee Laurance, 2012. 14.5% alcohol, 65 €. 80% Grenache, 6% Syrah, 4% Mourvedre, 10% other varieties (the blend is identical to the Chateauneuf-du-Pape Cuvee Reservee, but aged in a barrel for two more years). Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Enduring finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink in 3-4 up to 20 years. Very good wine.

Chateauneuf du Pape Da Capo, 2016. 15.5% alcohol. Not yet for sale. 70% Grenache, 7% Syrah, 3% Mourvedre, 20% other varieties. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Very elegant. Some floral aroma. Very soft tannins. Long finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 30 - or more years. Excellent wine.

An impressive medium-size family winery. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Domaine La Barroche

Barroche Liberty, 2015. 15% alcohol, 19 €. 55% Grenache, 18% Syrah, 12% Mourvedre, 10% Cinsault, 5% Carignan. Less than full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Soft tannins. Drink now up to 7-8 years. Good to very good wine.

Barroche Signature, 2013. 15% alcohol, 35 €. 62% Grenache, 13% Syrah, 18% Mourvedre, 5% Cinsault, 1% Vacarrese, 1% other varieties. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Soft tannins. Nice finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Barroche Signature, 2015. 15% alcohol, 35 €. 62% Grenache, 13% Syrah, 18% Mourvedre, 5% Cinsault, 1% Vacarrese, 1% other varieties. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Nice and long finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine. Better than the 2013.

Barroche Pure, 2013. 15% alcohol, 74 €. 97% Grenache, 3% other varieties. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. Long lingering finish. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 20 years. Excellent wine.

An impressive medium-size family winery. The new winery is impressive. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Roger Sabon

Renaissance, 2017. 13.5% alcohol, 27 €. From a barrel. 40% Grenache Blanc, 35% Roussanne, 15% Bourboulenc, 20% Clairette. Some body. Balanced. Some complexity. Fresh. Young. Drink now up to 2 years. Very good wine.

Lirac, 2017. 14.5% alcohol, 9 €. From a barrel. 70% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre, 10% Carignan. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Soft tannins. Fairly elegant. Some floral aroma. Drink now or up to 5 years. Good to very good wine.

Lirac, 2016. 14.5% alcohol, 9 €. 70% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre, 10% Carignan. Close to full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Soft tannins. Fairly elegant. Some floral aroma. Drink now or up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Olivets, 2015. 14.5% alcohol, 18 €. 80% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Cinsault. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Reserve, 2015. 14.5% alcohol, 23.5 €. 80% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Cinsault. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Very good wine.

Prestige, 2015. 15% alcohol, 35.5 €. 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 5% Mourvedre, 5% Divers. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 15 years. Very good wine.

'le Secret des Sabon', 2013. 15% alcohol, 90 €. 95% Grenache, 5% Divers. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Closed. Drink in 4-5 up to 25 years. Very good wine.

An impressive medium-size winery. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

Clos des Papes

Clos des Pape Blanc, 2016. 15% alcohol, 54 €. Equal percentage of Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc, Picpoul and Picardan. Some body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Elegant. Some floral aroma. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Clos des Pape Rouge, 2015. 15% alcohol, 56 €. 65% Grenache. 20% Mourvedre, 10% Syrah, 5% Counoise, Vaccarese and Muscardin. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Closed. Some floral aroma. Very good wine.

A nice medium-size family winery. Produces high-quality wines. Great hospitality. Visiting this winery (only with appointment) is highly recommended.

M. Chapoutier

Chante Alouette, Hermitage (white), 2015. 13.5% alcohol, 47 €. 100% Marsanne. Young and fresh wine. Close to full body. Balanced. Somewhat complex. Fairly elegant. Some minerality. Somewhat low acidity. Drink now up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Le Meal, Blanc, 2008. 13.5% alcohol, 200 €. 100% Marsanne. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Somewhat low acidity. Long and lingering finish. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Monier de la Sizeranne, Hermitage, 2012. 14% alcohol, 54 €. 100% Syrah. Close to full body. Balanced. Complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink in 2-3 up to 10 years. Good wine.

Croix de Bois, Chateauneuf-du-Pape, 2014. 14% alcohol, 83 €. 100% Grenache. Close to full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now up to 7-8 years. Very good wine.

La Mordoree, Cote Rotie, 2008. 12.5% alcohol, 150 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Dry. Aggressive. Drink now up to 5 years. Very good wine.

Quatuor, Cote Rotie, 2015. 13% alcohol, 50 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced. Fairly complex. Noticeable tannins. Drink in 2-3 up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Le Pavillon, Ermitage, 2010. 13.5% alcohol, 400 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Somewhat elegant. Desirable bitterness at the end. Long lingering finish. Drink in 3-4 up to 20-25 years. Excellent wine.

We visited the wine store in Tain L'Hermitage, which offers a large selection of wine varieties for tasting and purchase. The tasting should be reserved in advance. A very nice and interesting location to visit. The famous chocolate factory (which we recommend to visit) is 10 minutes away (on foot). Visiting the wine store is highly recommended.

Paul Jaboulet Aine

Hermitage La Chapelle, 2004. 14% alcohol, 130 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced, Complex. Earthy. Somewhat bitter. A feel of an old wine. Soft tannins. Not elegant. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Good wine.

Hermitage La Chapelle, 2006. 14% alcohol, 160 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced, Complex. Earthy. A feel of an old wine. Soft tannins. Not elegant. Drink now up to 10-15 years. Good to very good wine.

Hermitage La Chapelle, 2011. 14% alcohol, 170 €. 100% Syrah. Full body. Balanced, Complex. Earthy. A feel of an old wine. Soft tannins. Not elegant (but better than the 2006). Drink now up to 20-25 years. Very good wine.

Paul Jaboulet produces and sells a large variety of white and red wines. We tasted a vertical of Hermitage La Chapelle and several white wines. The red wines that we tasted this year and in the past were earthy, acid, and not elegant. They are not our favorites. However, many other, particularly local, people like them. The tasting room offers a very good and inexpensive lunch. Visiting this tasting room is highly recommended.

Allemand Thierry Earl

Chaillot, 2015. 13.5% alcohol, 60 €. 100% Syrah (old vines). Full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. Dry. Desirable bitterness at the end. Drink now or better in 1-2 up to 10 years. Very good wine.

Reynard, 2015. 13.5% alcohol, 80 €. 100% Syrah (very old vines). Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Dry. Desirable bitterness at the end. Enduring finish. Drink in 4-5 up to 20 or more years. Very good to excellent wine.

A small estate in the northern Rhône appellation of Cornas. Produces high-quality wines. Visiting this winery (with appointment) is highly recommended.