

# Wine Spectator Insider

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**INSIDER SPECIAL REPORT: CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE 2007** Here's another full issue of noteworthy Châteauneuf-du-Pape releases from the 2007 vintage. See my Southern Rhône 2007 vintage analysis for more on this potentially classic year for Châteauneuf.

This group is led by Clos St.-Jean, run by brothers Vincent and Pascal Maurel with a little help from consultant Philippe Cambie. The 2007 vintage plays right into the new house style here (a dramatic change in winemaking philosophy started with the 2003 vintage), with remarkably silky textures, loads of black fruit and plenty of buried minerality. The magnum-only bottling of Sanctus Sanctorum is sure to be a collector's item. You'll find it among the Hot Wines, on page 4.

From the silky, Burgundian-style wines of Domaine Roger Sabon & Fils to ripe, muscular versions now being made by young Stéphane Usseglio at Domaine Raymond Usseglio & Fils, there's plenty to choose from in this outstanding vintage. —James Molesworth

## France Rhône / Châteauneuf-du-Pape

### DOMAINE CHARVIN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**95 points | \$75 | 600 cases imported | Red**

Even though this is crammed with fig and currant paste notes, it maintains a racy, silky feel, thanks to perfectly embedded structure and a complex backdrop of incense, charred mesquite, shiso leaf and freshly ground espresso. This has ample grip, but it's extremely graceful—a deft act in this vintage. Best from 2010 through 2030.—*J.M.*

### OLIVIER HILLAIRE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Petits Pieds d'Armand 2007

**95 points | \$85 | 450 cases made | Red**

Shows the ripeness of the vintage, with a touch more intensity than most, as a wide range of inviting blueberry, plum, fig and boysenberry flavors are spiked with sweet spice, graphite and licorice notes. The long, rounded finish has great buried grip. Drink now through 2030.—*J.M.*

### DOMAINE DE MARCOUX

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2007

**95 points | \$180 | 365 cases made | Red**

Round and lush up front, with a huge core of crushed plum and macerated currant fruit laid over dark tar and loam notes. Starts to strut its stuff on the back end, where plenty of Kenya AA coffee, tobacco and licorice root notes fill out the fleshy, racy finish. There's a great graphite underpinning. Best from 2010 through 2024.—*J.M.*

### DOMAINE DE FERRAND

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**94 points | \$50 | 385 cases imported | Red**

This is seriously dark, with bittersweet chocolate, braised beef, fig, tar and ground espresso notes leading the charge, while dark plum and currant fruit wait in the background. Cuts a broad swath on the muscular finish. Very backward, with a ways to go, this has harnessed more grip than most in this vintage. Best from 2010 through 2030.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chaupin 2007

**94 points | \$80 | 1,732 cases made | Red**

Plush and fleshy, with crushed plum, dark currant and boysenberry notes backed by alluring sweet spice, licorice root and espresso hints. Muscular but well-rounded on the lengthy finish, with the spice notes flittering on. Best from 2010 through 2024.—*J.M.*

## PIERRE USSEGLIO & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée de mon Aïeul 2007

**94 points | \$105 | 1,500 cases made | Red**

Ripe but streamlined, with gorgeous layers of crushed black cherry, macerated currant and warm fig flavors that stretch over fresh minerality and a long finish filled with tobacco, spice and bittersweet cocoa. This has energy and drive to go with its ripeness. Best from 2010 through 2022.—*J.M.*

## CHÂTEAU DE VAUDIEU

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Val de Dieu 2007

**94 points | \$85 | 50 cases imported | Red**

This carries the lush raspberry, boysenberry and kirsch fruit notes of the vintage, but keeps them razor sharp, with gorgeous spice, incense and black tea notes adding a sense of elegance, despite its weight. The long, perfumy finish drips with fruit, while minerality ripples underneath. Drink now through 2024.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**94 points | \$80 | 2,000 cases made | Red**

Very ripe, but focused and pure, with a gorgeous core of crushed plum, pastis and raspberry ganache notes stitched together with long, velvety tannins. Spice, fruitcake and melted licorice notes echo through the superlong finish. Drink now through 2020.—*J.M.*

## BOSQUET DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chante Le Merle

Vieilles Vignes 2007

**93 points | \$73 | 1,200 cases made | Red**

This has range and depth, with mesquite, iron and shiso leaf notes up front, followed by a dense core of crushed plum, fig sauce and Kenya AA coffee notes. There's nice smoke-tinged grip on the finish. Best from 2010 through 2034.—*J.M.*

## CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2007

**93 points | \$55 | 1,100 cases imported | Red**

Alluring mulled spice, braised fig and red currant fruit is layered with mouthwatering maduro tobacco and bittersweet cocoa notes. Picks up a bright mineral edge on the finish. Excellent precision. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

## OLIVIER HILLAIRE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**93 points | \$NA | NA cases made | Red**

Fresh and driven, with a delicious core of intense blackberry and raspberry fruit laid over licorice-tinged structure, followed by a long finish of spice and graphite. Nicely focused from beginning to end. Drink now through 2020.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE MARCOUX

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**93 points | \$71 | 2,050 cases made | Red**

This is ripe and winey, with a solid core of mulled currant, crushed raspberry and bramble notes laced with hints of ganache, incense and black tea. The finish is long, solid and authoritative. Should blossom in the cellar. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

## JEAN ROYER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Sola Syrah Régalis 2007

**93 points | \$75 | 20 cases imported | Red**

Gorgeous aromas and flavors of fresh espresso, warm fig reduction, blueberry compote and bittersweet ganache course through this full-bodied wine, with well-embedded structure and a long, tar- and spice-filled finish. Best from 2010 through 2022.—*J.M.*

## ROGER SABON & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Secret des Sabon 2007

**93 points | \$220 | 35 cases imported | Red**

Very silky, with a beautiful beam of kirsch running through notes of pepper, incense, black tea and melted licorice. The long, supple finish has good latent grip, while maintaining its perfumy elegance. Drink now through 2020.—*J.M.*

## BOSQUET DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape A La Gloire de

Mon Grand-Père 2007

**92 points | \$60 | 850 cases made | Red**

Rather dark, with a brawny edge to the tobacco, wood spice, olive and fig paste flavors, which weave around a core of bittersweet cocoa and dark currant fruit. The finish is singed with a tarry hint. Best from 2010 through 2022.—*J.M.*

## BOSQUET DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Folie 2007

**92 points | \$91 | 200 cases made | Red**

Tightly wound for the vintage, with a tangy streak of minerality holding the core of red currant, fruitcake and sweet earth at bay for now. Dark spice, braised fig and tobacco fill in on the back end, where a woody edge lingers. Best from 2010 through 2023.—*J.M.*

## LUCIEN & ANDRÉ BRUNEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux 2007

**92 points | \$51 | 4,000 cases made | Red**

This gushes with blueberry, fig and black cherry fruit, all seamlessly woven with silky, fine-grained tannins. The stylish finish lets spice and incense notes check in, while buried minerality adds length. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## CHÂTEAU CABRIÈRES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Prestige 2007

**92 points | \$60 | 175 cases imported | Red**

This has the tangy, taut drive of 2006, as red currant, raspberry ganache, red licorice and shiso leaf notes race through, carried by riveting acidity. The long, fresh finish has nice minerality. Drink now through 2020.—*J.M.*

## CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**92 points | \$NA | 4,350 cases made | Red**

Superripe and friendly, but also sleek and refined, with a gorgeous mouthfeel to the black currant, crushed plum and black cherry fruit, all laid over black tea and shiso leaf notes. The finish is long and perfumy. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## FÉRAUD-BRUNEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**92 points | \$41 | 300 cases imported | Red**

A dark, brooding style, with espresso, grilled beef, bacon and tobacco notes holding the upper hand on a core of black currant fruit. The dark, tarry finish lets the slightly firm tobacco edge linger, with a hint of charred mesquite. Best from 2010 through 2019.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**92 points | \$60 | 2,200 cases made | Red**

Plush, with delicious purity to the crushed plum, macerated currant and warm fig flavors. Dark and racy through the finish, with a mouthwatering graphite edge. Superlong and precise. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## JEAN ROYER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Prestige 2007

**92 points | \$56 | 100 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and layered, with incense, fig cake, ganache, kirsch and sweet earth notes that glide through the long, mulled spice-filled finish. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## ROGER SABON & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Prestige 2007

**92 points | \$75 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Very silky, with nice deceptive depth to the perfumy crushed plum, toast, pepper and kirsch notes. A hint of shiso leaf extends the mineral- and red fruit-filled finish. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## ROGER SABON & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2007

**92 points | \$48 | 350 cases imported | Red**

This is elegant, with incense and raspberry notes up front, followed by red plum, roasted vanilla bean and black tea. The finish is long and silky. A very perfumy style, with gorgeous mouthfeel. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## RAYMOND USSEGLIO & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Impériale 2007

**92 points | \$75 | 100 cases imported | Red**

Dark, with a brawny edge to the chestnut, briar and tobacco notes, which lead the way for the muscular core of black currant and fig fruit. Solid, tarry finish. Best from 2010 through 2019.—*J.M.*

## RAYMOND USSEGLIO & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Girard 2007

**92 points | \$49 | 665 cases made | Red**

Shows the ripeness of the vintage, with an almost heady core of raspberry, boysenberry and blackberry fruit. But then racy acidity, a snappy licorice edge and sweet tobacco and spice notes stretch out the grip-filled finish. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

## CHÂTEAU DE VAUDIEU

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**92 points | \$38 | 300 cases imported | Red**

This is saturated, with braised fig, melted black licorice and freshly brewed espresso notes forming the core, with bittersweet ganache, mesquite and iron notes weaving through the background. The long, tarry finish has really nice drive. A domaine on the rise. Drink now through 2022.—*J.M.*

## LUCIEN BARROT & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**91 points | \$40 | 4,000 cases made | Red**

Plump and dense, with layers of fig paste, plum jam and fruitcake backed by a broad, muscular structure. The long finish lets raisin, currant and licorice notes stretch out. This has a solid core of fruit, if not the overall range of the vintage's best. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## CLOS DE L'ORATOIRE DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**91 points | \$42 | 3,666 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and full-bodied, with a juicy core of plum, boysenberry and fig fruit backed by cocoa, espresso and black licorice notes. A nice graphite edge helps lend just enough definition on the finish. A textbook expression of the vintage. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE PONTIFICAL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**91 points | \$39 | 3,000 cases made | Red**

Ripe and succulent, with a focused beam of blackberry and black currant paste notes laid over dark licorice, espresso and spice hints. The long, layered finish shows a touch of raisiny grip, but stays fresh enough. Best from 2010 through 2019.—*J.M.*

## JEAN ROYER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Hommage à mon Père 2007

**91 points | \$90 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Dark, crushed cherry and plum fruit backed by notes of licorice and coffee. Solid and muscular, with the finish showing hints of raisin, fruitcake, tobacco and braised fig. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## CHÂTEAU CABRIÈRES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2007

**90 points | \$40 | 600 cases imported | Red**

Vibrant kirsch and macerated black currant fruit stretches out over a racy, mineral spine. The long, perfumy finish is filled with black tea and pepper, lingering nicely. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

# HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

## CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Sanctus Sanctorum 2007  
**97 points | \$350/1.5L | 8 cases imported | Red**

Pure and velvety, with an alluring raspberry ganache note that drives the blackberry, hoisin sauce, mesquite and incense flavors through the superlong finish. Shows plenty of density but stays suave and almost light on its feet, with plenty of buried graphite and pastis in reserve. A beautiful combination of power and finesse. From a single demi-muid's worth of 100 percent Grenache, sourced from 110-year-old vines. Bottled only in magnum. Best from 2010 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## LUCIEN & ANDRÉ BRUNEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux Cuvée Centenaire 2007  
**96 points | \$210 | 350 cases made | Red**

Rich, but amazingly silky and elegant, this is layered with blackberry, raspberry and fig fruit and stitched with incense, black tea and warm plum sauce notes, all of it staying remarkably lithe and suave. The superlong finish shows weight and precision as only Grenache can. Tempting now, but should put on weight in the cellar. Drink now through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina 2007  
**96 points | \$240 | 100 cases imported | Red**

This offers the heady, opulent fig, crushed plum and boysenberry fruit of the vintage, but allies it to a racy graphite and incense-infused structure. Superlong, with black tea, warm fig reduction, chocolate and roasted apple wood notes that really stretch out the finish. Great underlying acidity holds it all together. Very impressive. Best from 2010 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Combe des Fous 2007  
**96 points | \$200 | 100 cases imported | Red**

This has gorgeous aromas and mouthfeel, with freshly brewed Mocha Java, warm fig and incense notes up front, followed by dark, macerated currant and cherry fruit. The long finish is velvety and suave, with hints of mesquite, loam, licorice snap and sweet earth that just sail on. Best from 2010 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2007  
**96 points | \$115 | 1,416 cases made | Red**

This is awash in fruit-plum, boysenberry, fig and blackberry—all seamlessly intertwined, while hints of graphite, melted licorice, black tea and violet fill all the available space. The long finish has great latent grip. Best from 2010 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

### The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 14 people in three offices. They work together to review more than 18,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in Napa, New York and Tuscany. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat:  
Austria, Greece, Portugal, southern France

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York  
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**Tim Fish** (California),  
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#### Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended