

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME “The Sexy South of France”
Thursday, July 24, 2008

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES (Mixing is OK!)

Gaujal de Saint Bon Cuvée des Dames Picpoul de Pinet 2007 (Coteaux du Languedoc) 100% Picpoul Blanc

\$13 each - \$11.70 (6) - \$11.05 (12) A nose of pear brandy and melon leads into a rich, slightly unctuous palate of pear, melon, lime and pineapple with lovely minerality and a touch of herb. The finish is long on this medium-bodied wine. Try with fish.

Laurent Miquel Chardonnay Viognier 2007 (VdP d'Oc)

65% Chardonnay, 35% Viognier

\$9 each - \$8.10 (6) - \$7.65 (12) This organic blend opens with peach blossoms and apricot aromas. The apricot continues on the palate, joined by a touch of honey, flowers, and focused Chardonnay fruit.

Dom. de Fontsaïnte Gris de Gris 2007

(Corbières)—60% Grenache Gris & Grenache Noir, 15% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre, 10% Carignan, 5% Cinsault

\$15.00 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12) Light aromatics, with touches of herb and cherry. The strawberry and cherry flavors are soft; herbs with a touch of saltiness makes this a savory rosé. Pair with seasonal summer fare and Provençal-style flavors.

Dom. de la Brillane Cuvée de Printemps 2006

(VdP des Bouches du Rhône)—60% Grenache; 15% Cinsault; 15% Cabernet Sauvignon; 10% Counoise, Mourvèdre, Syrah

\$16 each - \$14.40 (6) - \$13.60 (12) Complex meaty, earthy, plummy aromas open this organic wine. Tart black and red cherries are accompanied by soft but structuring tannins on the palate; medium bodied.

Dom. Alary “La Gerbaude” 2006 (Cotes du Rhône)—Grenache and Syrah

\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12) Herbs and black fruit such as currants are echoed in the rich flavors of spice, dark fruit, and herb. Velvety texture, with pepper on the finish of this ripe gem.

Dom. de la Janasse Terre de Bussière 2006

(VdP de la Principauté d'Orange)—55% Merlot, 25% Syrah, 10% Grenache, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon

\$18 each - \$16.20 (6) - \$15.30 (12) This big, black wine is organic. It opens with an earthy, spicy nose, and continues with deep black fruit—plums, mulberries, currants, blackberries—touched with leather and well structured by tannin. Drink with hearty fare such as lamb or beef on the grill.

The south of France, known as the Midi, generally refers to the area west of the mouth of the Rhône River down to the France-Spain border. In the past, it has produced lakes of completely undistinguished wines, but a revolution began in the 1980s. Today, this area is home to some of the most exciting developments in the vineyard, the cellar, and the bottle.

Although there is great variety in soils, grape choice, and “wine culture,” physical conditions are promising throughout most of the region, with long growing seasons, sufficient warmth and rainfall, and promising grape varieties. Improvements in matching grapes and site, vineyard management, cellar hygiene, and attention to quality in restraining yields and making wine have resulted in much more individuality in the final product. A new generation of young winemakers is working in both known and off-the-beaten-track areas to produce clean, intense wines that reflect their place of origin.

French wine categories are regulated by law and range from AC/AOC at the top of the heap (these recognize geography and climate) to VDSQ (recognizing “special qualities”) to *Vin de Pays* (VdP, refelecting political rather than viticultural units) to *Vin de Table*. The higher the level, the more aspects of growing and winemaking are regulated, and the stricter the rules. In some cases, producers will opt for a lower designation in order to incorporate grape varieties or practices not permitted by law. Such wines are often fabulous, offering great quality and interest at a bargain. Today’s tasting offers wines from the southern Rhône and Languedoc.

The wines of the southern Rhone are Grenache-dominated, with Carignan, Syrah, Cinsault, and other grapes in the blend. Located in Cairanne, one of the AC-designated villages, the Alary brothers produce a classic, well-balanced, fruity CdR loaded with plum. The VdP from practicing-organic Dom. de la Janasse in Orange is a Merlot-Syrah-Grenache-Cabernet blend of great power and concentration with intense black fruit. Limestone soils and altitude contribute to the freshness, finesse, and elegance of wines from Domaine de la Brillane, located near the mouth of the Rhône. This new winery is organic in farming and winemaking. The Cuvée de Printemps is 60% Grenache, with 15% each Cinsault and Cabernet, and dashes of three other grapes. The result: fresh, juicy red fruit with hints of herb and almond, light, smooth and refreshing.

The Languedoc area provides us with a rosé and two whites. The rosé, a Gris de Gris blend of six grapes, hails from Dom. Fontsaïnte in Corbières. Reinvented in 1971. The estate is a quality leader, being among the first in the area to harvest by hand, ferment by carbonic maceration, and age in large casks. Laurent Miquel, a mechanical engineer by training, is typical of many of the new generation. He returned to the Languedoc in the late ‘80s and studied winemaking. He makes wines at several levels, all using the *Culture Raisonnée*, a near-organic approach. His entry-level wines such as the Chardonnay-Viognier blend, show bright fruit and good concentration. Dom. Gaujal is run by a mother-daughter team using Picpoul Blanc; their very low yields are fermented with natural yeasts and left on the lees to produce a rich, full wine that still maintains the natural acidity of the grape. The palate is broad, with melon, hay, citrus, and minerals.

See you next Thursday for HANG TIME!
Our subject will be “European Whites.”
EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.
The Sexy South of France