

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME
“Syrah and Syrah Blends”
Thursday, October 1, 2009

PRICES ARE FOR:
1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES

Chateau de Montfaucon Les Gardettes Rouge 2007
(Rhône Valley, France) 50% Syrah, 15% Carignan,
15% Cinsault, 10% Mourvèdre, and 10% Grenache
\$10 each - \$9 (6) - \$8.50 (12)

The nose speaks Syrah, with red and black berries and cherries. The palate is tart, with red fruit on entry and black on the finish. Slightly drying tannins structure the wine. In another few months, the fruit will be more assertive. Open early or drink with Mediterranean food.

Nine Stones Hilltops Shiraz 2007 (New South Wales,
Australia) 100% Shiraz
\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

Black currant and plum open the aromas, leading to smoke and spice. Chocolate, black plums and raspberries, blueberry, and tea on the palate; pepper on the finish. All about elegance rather than power. Duck, anyone?

Laurent Miquel Syrah Grenache 2007 (Languedoc,
France) 75% Syrah, 25% Grenache
\$9 each - \$8.10 (6) - \$7.65 (12)

Cherry compote and raspberries on the nose. Flavors of spicy, jammy red and black berries with round, integrated tannins; nice touches of mocha, herb, and spice. Try with warm goat cheese salad or vegetable lasagna.

Stephen Vincent Crimson 2007 (California, US)
75% Syrah, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon
\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

Impressive aromas of barn, smoke, and leather over blackberries with a lick of bacon at the end. The flavors are fruit-dominated—black currant, cassis, and plum—with vanilla and bitter chocolate of the finish. Lovely structure, silky tannins, and a long finish.

Thorn-Clarke Terra Barossa Shiraz 2008 (Barossa,
Australia) 100% Shiraz
\$16.50 each - \$14.85 (6) - \$14.03 (12)

This is a big boy, aromatically rich with cassis, meat, black cherry, smoke, leather and a hint of mint. The flavors are strong, too—char, ripe round black fruit, and vanilla—supported by soft tannins. Full bodied with a long finish.

See you next Thursday for HANG TIME!
Our subject next week will be “Northern Italy” with
special guest Cinzia Canzia, from Alice Winery.
EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.

Syrah, Shiraz, what’s the difference? Same grape, different name, but the name reflects a style of wine. Shiraz is the Australian (New World) standard—fruity, full throttle, high in extract and alcohol. Syrah, on the other hand, hearkens to the tradition of the northern Rhône, dark, brooding, tannic in youth, gamy, peppery, and leathery. Both are spicy.

There are many stories about the origin of the grape. One apocryphal tale tells of Crusaders returning to France via Cyprus, bringing with them vines from the Persian capital Shiraz. DNA profiling in France and California has shown that the grape derives from two southeastern France forebears, Dureza and Mondeuse Blanche. Syrah is relatively productive and disease resistant, late budding but not late ripening. It thrives in warm, dry climates; the bunches of small, deeply colored berries are compact. Syrah adds longevity to any wine in which it’s blended.

Syrah/Shiraz has increased greatly in popularity and plantings over the last three decades, appearing on its own and in blends. Old World blends include Grenache, Carignan, Cinsault, Mourvèdre, and Cunoise; New World combinations involve Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Malbec. Reasonable yields produce fruity wines with a supple texture, black fruit, and light savory notes. Low yields result in a complex interplay of fruit and savory flavors with firm structure. Soil and oak also affect the wines’ flavor and texture to a great extent.

A quick rundown of today’s wines, in order of increasing Syrah content. **Montfaucon Les Gardettes 2007** is half Syrah, half a mix of other Rhône varietals. Spice and structure are evident, with firm tannins, black and red fruits, and a lighter body due to the blend.

Laurent Miquel Syrah Grenache 2007 is 75% Syrah, 25% Grenache—supple, with warm black fruit dominant, and the red fruit of Grenache lightening the wine a bit. **Stephen Vincent Crimson 2007** from California’s Central Coast is 75% Syrah, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon. Both grapes are rich and dark, with black berry flavors sweetened by oak and spicy touches.

Australia provides two 100% Shiraz wines made in different styles. The **Nine Stones Hilltops Shiraz 2007** comes from high altitude grapes. The region is somewhat cool, resulting in a wine with fresh acidity and a lighter body—plums and raspberries, spice, and subtle oak notes. **Thorn-Clarke Terra Barossa Shiraz 2008** comes from four sites in the Barossa Valley, Australia’s most famous Shiraz area. Loaded with upfront fruit and a rich mouthfeel, it spent 12 months in American oak, adding spice and toast.

Try these and others—Washington State produces great Syrah, as does South Africa.

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