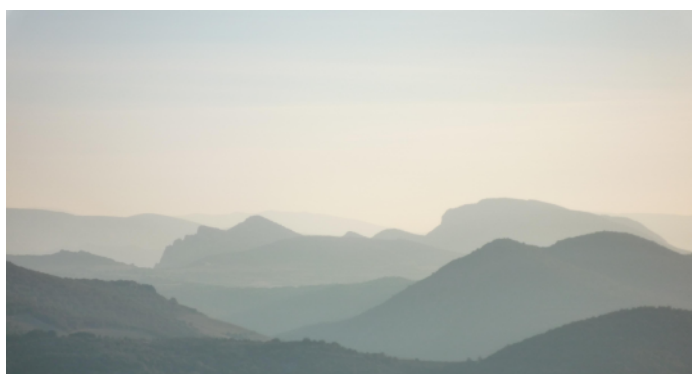




# LE SOULA

*Vin du Fenouillèdes - Terroir d'altitude*



## Revue de presse

*2014*

# Le rouge conseillés par le sommelier de Takashimaya de Nihombshi

6 janvier 2014



A banner for sales specialists. On the left is a female specialist in a black beret and uniform. On the right is a male specialist in a tuxedo. In the center, a red box contains the text 'セールススペシャリストの おすすめ商品' (Sales Specialist's Recommended Product) with three stars. Below this, it says '高い専門知識を持った 高島屋のセールススペシャリストが こだわりの逸品をご提案いたします。' (With high specialized knowledge, Takashimaya's sales specialists recommend special products with passion.)

## セールススペシャリストとは？

ギフトアドバイザー、シューフィッター、フィッティングアドバイザー、ベビーコンサルタント、きものコンサルタントなど、高島屋では全店計60資格、約2,400名のセールススペシャリストが、お客様のお買い物に関する様々なご相談やお品選びのお手伝いをいたします。

**ギフトアドバイザー**  
お客様のご要望に応じて素敵なギフト選びのお手伝いをいたします。

冠婚葬祭やしきたりなどに詳しい専門スタッフが、ご進物品選びのお手伝いをいたします。

**ソムリエ**  
ワインについてのさまざまなご相談・ご質問におこたえいたします。

ワインの歴史から特性・ブドウ品種・醸造方法などさまざまな知識はもちろん料理との合わせ方から保存方法、テイस्टイングの知識まで総合的にアドバイスいたします。

**ワインアドバイザー**  
お客様のワイン探しをサポートいたします。  
「社団法人 日本ソムリエ協会」認定のアドバイザーが、お客様のご相談を承り、お食事にぴったりのものや、ギフトとして最適なものをご紹介いたします。

**日本酒嗜酒師**  
日本酒についてのさまざまなご相談・ご質問におこたえいたします。

「日本酒サービス研究会・酒匠研究会連合会」認定資格。日本酒の歴史・生産地・商品ごとの特性はもちろん、料理との合わせ方から保存方法まで総合的にアドバイスいたします。

**焼酎嗜酒師**  
お好みにピッタリの焼酎選びをお手伝い。  
焼酎の歴史、新しい焼酎の情報、テイस्टイングの仕方など、幅広い知識を基にお好みにぴったりの焼酎選びをお手伝いします。

**玩具アドバイザー**  
お子様の成長に合ったおもちゃの選び方をアドバイスいたします。  
「社団法人 日本玩具協会」認定。玩具に関する知識とともにお子さまの成長や発達についての医学的知識、世界の玩具文化など、幅広い知識を基に玩具選びのお手伝いをいたします。

## 「各店舗のセールススペシャリスト」と「おすすめ商品」のご紹介！



A row of four small portraits of sales specialists with their names and titles below them: 新宿店 ギフトアドバイザー, 日本橋店 ソムリエ, 横浜店 玩具アドバイザー, 大阪店 ワインアドバイザー 日本酒嗜酒師 焼酎嗜酒師.

### 日本橋店 ソムリエ

「味の違いがなぜ出るのか」「産地が違ふとどういふ変化がみられるか」「価格が違ふ理由は何か」といったお話をしながら、お客様が求めているお味やお好みを探っていきます。会話がきっかけでワインの奥深い魅力に目覚められ、世界が広がったとお喜びいただいたり、ご来店の度に違うものを教えてほしいとご指名いただくこともあります。ワインの楽しみ方は無数にあり、どんな料理に合わせたいのか、週末のパーティー用に何種類か選ぶならどんな組み合わせが良いか、記念日の1本を選ぶなら...など、なぜそのワインなのかというストーリーがあると、召しあがる際の楽しみが何倍にも広がっていくのです。その時々にはふさわしい1本を選び抜きます。

和洋酒売場 塩川 昌能

[日本橋店のその他のセールススペシャリストはこちら！](#)



## おすすめアイテム!



### おすすめコメント

このワインが手に入るのは、世界中で高島屋だけという希少な1本です。2011年は天候不順で不作の年とされていますが、ルロワに関しては、例年どおり素晴らしい仕上がりを見せています。特筆すべきはその香り。コルクを抜くと、部屋中にイチゴやチェリーのアロマが漂い始め、グラスに注ぐと、さらにその香りは立ち上っていきます。口に含まると、チェリーの酸と甘みが優しく広がり、搾り立ての果実を飲んでいるかのような味わいです。

優しいながらも、存在感を感じさせるタンニンが後味をぐっと引き締めます。和食から洋食、お肉料理まで幅広く対応できるワインです。

Domaine Leroy (ドメヌ・ルロワ)

[【高島屋限定】ブルゴーニュ・グランオーディネール・ルージュ 2011](#)

税込 5,250円

### おすすめコメント

このロゼワインの生産者であるマルク・アンジェリ氏は、味と製法へのこだわりが強く、フランスワイン法のAOCアンジュ(原産地呼称)を名乗ることができない程です。アンジェリ氏曰く「AOC認証は時代遅れでナンセンス」なのだそうです。貴腐が付いたぶどうから造られた、優しい甘さと香りを持つとても美しいロゼワインで、色合いは少し薄い赤ワインの様。まさに一度飲んだら忘れられない味わいで、氏の個性とこだわりを感じずにはいられません。デザートに合わせるのにおすすめです。

ラ・フェルム・ド・ラ・サン ソニエール

[サンソニエール ロゼ ダンジュール 2010](#)

税込 3,360円



### おすすめコメント

南フランスの約600mという高地にて、ビオディナミで栽培されるぶどうは、高度からもたらされるフレッシュさ、南仏の持つフィネスとエレガンスさをとても素晴らしく表現しています。カリニャンをベースにグルナッシュとシラーをブレンドしており、ブラックオリーブやスパイスを感じさせる味わいです。イギリスのヴァージン・エアー機内で複数のヴィンテージが提供されている事からも、そのレベルの高さが証明されています。肉料理・きのこをふんだんに使用した料理におすすめ。幸せのシンボル「鯉」のイラストが特徴です。

ル・スーラ

[ル・スーラ ルージュ 2006 ヴァン・ドゥ・ペイ・デ・コート・カタラン](#)

税込 5,250円

### おすすめコメント

カリフォルニア州サンタインネスで育てられ、低収量収穫されたシラー種で造られたワインは、フィネスと凝縮感、そしてパワーを兼ね備え、エレガントなアロマ・深い味わいが得られます。仕上げにフランス産の新樽をわずかな期間使用する事で、ボリューム感がありながらも、まろやかで飲み易い味わいを造り出しています。生産者の父の名「ロベルト」を継承したこのワインは、まさに父親のような「強さ」と「愛情」を持つ一本。しっかりと焼いた肉料理に合わせてお召し上がりください。

フィネス=繊細さ、優雅さ、上品さ、そして血統の良さなどもある高貴なワインを表現する言葉  
エマニュエル・トレス

[ティント・ロベルト](#)

税込 4,095円





21 February 2014

## A vertical tasting of Le Soula



I love vertical tastings, and when they finish with a jeroboam, that is even better. Le Soula is one of the estates that has helped create the reputation of the Agly valley. When the first wine made in 2001, the *vin de pays*, Côtes des Fenouillèdes still existed; sadly it has since been incorporated into the much larger and less distinctive Côtes Catalanes, which covers most of Roussillon. The name Fenouillèdes was particularly appropriate as wild fennel is a significant part of the vegetation of the garrigues, and it is no coincidence that many of the white wines have more than a hint of fennel and aniseed on the nose. The estate of Le Soula comprises 23 hectares, with the vineyards at an altitude of 350 – 600 metres. Le Soula is an Occitan term, meaning south, sun, or south facing slope, as the translator fancies. However, the nights are always cool at that altitude. The estate has been organic since the beginning and is now biodynamic, with the observation biodynamics help develop a resistance to oxidation in the wine.

It was Gérard Gauby who first discovered these abandoned vineyards back in the late 1990s and in 2001 he formed a partnership with his British importers Richards Walford to create a new estate. Gérard made the first wine, and then Thomas Lubbe took over, and since 2007, the winemaker has been Gerald Stanley.

I followed Mark Walford's advice to taste the red wines first, kicking off with

### 2010 Le Soula

We were given very precise blends, which I will share with you. 71% Carignan, 25% Syrah and 4% Grenache Noir. Yield 13 hl/as. 20 months élevage in tank, new and old French 500 litre barrels. Medium colour. Quite a firm nose; with some garrigues and a touch of balsamic. The wine is still very youthful. A hint of oak. Some firm tannins and some acidity. Quite peppery; a certain rustic note, and a touch of elegance on the finish. The alcohol level is always around 13 – 13.5°.

### 2009

67% Carignan, 30% Syrah and 3% Grenache Noir. 18 h/ha. Twenty months in tank, foudres and old French 500 litre barrels. Medium colour. I found a slightly viandé animal note on the nose which slightly disturbed me, and also on the palate. But there was also some red fruit and some supple tannins. Medium weight and an elegant finish.



## 2008

55% Carignan, 35% Syrah 10% Grenache. 14 hl/ha 21 months ageing in tank, new and old 500 litre barrel. Medium colour. Quite a firm nose. Quite a tight knit firm palate. Some peppery spicy fruit. Quite structured with some tannin. Medium weight.

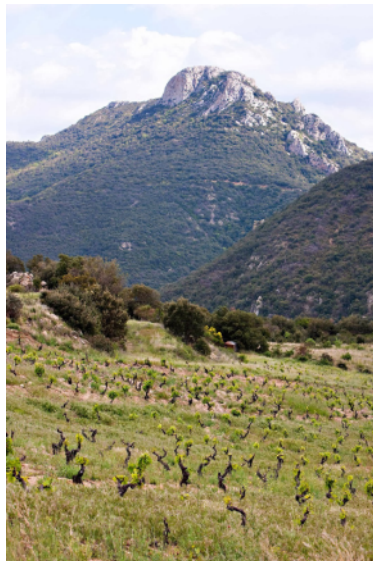
## 2007

41% Syrah, 40% Carignan. 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Sauvignon was in the original vineyard but has since been pulled up as it was considered too domineering in the blend, nor is it indigenous to Roussillon viticulture. 18 hl/ha. 21 months ageing in foudres and 500 litre French oak barrels. Medium colour. Quite firm fruit on the nose, while the palate has filled out. Quite sturdy, Medium weight, A fresh finish.

## 2006

45% Carignan, 20% Grenache Noir, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Syrah. 17 hl/ha. Fourteen months in foudres and 500 litre French oak. Medium colour. Quite rounded ripe fruit on the nose ,and on the palate some nicely evolved ripe fruit, with some furry but soft tannins. Medium weight.

**2002** in jeroboam. Mark explained. ‘This was our worst year ever, it rained heavily, but now the wine has come round from what initially seemed a very unpromising start. Quite a deep colour. Quite a solid dense furry confit nose. And on the palate quite solid and surprisingly tannic, but with some rounded ripe fruit, and some attractive evolution. In fact this served to illustrate how much more elegant the wines have become over the years.



And now for the whites:

## 2010 Le Soula

59% Macabeu, 18% Sauvignon blanc, 13% Grenache blanc, 6% Chardonnay, 3% Malvoisie du Roussillon (otherwise known as Torbato) and just 1% Vermentino. 21 hl/ha 21 months ageing in tank and new and old French 500 litre barrels. Light golden, quite rounded, quite herbal and leesy with a hint of fennel. On the palate quite textured and rounded with ripe fruit balanced with fresh acidity. Lots of nuances. Still very young.

## 2009

54% Sauvignon blanc, 27% Macabeu, 10% Grenache 6% Chardonnay, 3% Grenache Gris, Vermentino, Marsanne and Roussanne. 20 hl/ha. Eight months in tank and new and old oak. Light golden, Elegant herbal and fennel notes. Quite rounded. Soft oak notes. Quite textured and layered palate. Youthful.

## 2008

38% Sauvignon, 35% Macabeu, 19% Vermentino 6% Grenache Blanc and Gris, 2% Marsanne, Roussanne, Malvoisie du Roussillon and Chardonnay. 15 hl/h. Fifteen months élevage. Light golden, quite a firm slightly resinous nose, and also on the palate, quite solidly so, with some oaky leesy notes, and quite a honeyed finish.

## 2007

45% Sauvignon blanc, 15% Grenache blanc, 15% Marsanne and Roussanne 15% Macabeu, 5% Grenache Gris 5% Malvoisie. 20 hl/ha Fifteen months ageing in new and old French oak 500 litre barrels. Light golden colour. Quite perfumed, rich and oaky on the nose, and on the palate, quite rounded leesy. Ripe honeyed balanced with very good acidity. Quite textured.

## 2006

30% Sauvignon blanc, 25% Grenache blanc, 25% Marsanne and Roussanne, 10% Macabeu and 10% Malvoisie. 19 hl/ha. Ten months in new and old French 500 litre barrels. In a magnum Quite golden. Quite a rich ripe nose. Characterful palate. Quite leesy and rich with firm acidity and quite a powerful finish.

## 2001

No details of the blend. A very intriguing nose. Quite firm and fresh. Very slatey, mineral and tight knit palate. Very good acidity. Quite youthful, yet with a note of maturity. Very intriguing and absolutely delicious.

**L10** : La macération du Soula, Terroir d'altitude, Vin des Fenouillèdes. A white wine, but with no details of the blend. The winemaking entailed two weeks on the skins, which gives it a bit of colour, making a lightly orange colour. Minimal use of sulphur. Very intriguing, with lots of nuances. An orange note on the nose. Quite perfumed, with firm acidity on the palate. An opportunity for Gerard to experiment. And a grand finale to the tasting.



## Yes, you can drink and stay slim

Jane MacQuitty



Just how useful is it to list the calorie content on wine labels? No doubt, the anti-alcohol police are delighted at the recent news that Sainsbury's is to join the Co-op and Waitrose in labelling the calorie content of 20 of its cheap and cheerful Winemakers' Selection range. The three components in wine that affect the calorie count are its acidity level, residual sugar and alcohol content, with the residual sugar clearly having the biggest effect. Even dry reds and some dry whites will have 1-4 grams of residual sugar per litre (RS/l) owing to grapes' natural fruit sweetness. Yet if a table wine has a high tannin or acid content, then even with as much as 25g RS/l it could still taste dry to some drinkers. Pudding wines such as a honeyed sauternes or luscious late-harvest German could have anything from 120g up to 240g RS/l, with the sweetest, most syrupy wine styles of all, such as Tokay Essencia and Pedro Ximenez sherry, occasionally registering twice that.

With the recommended daily allowance for women of 2,000 calories and for men of 2,500 calories, putting the calorie content on every bottle of wine and expecting drinkers to tailor their drinking accordingly does seem to me to be a bit of a lopsided message. We all have choices in life: what we want to eat, what we want to drink and how much exercise we want to take. Frankly, I'd rather walk both ways to the Tube, have a salad for lunch and skip two milk chocolate digestive biscuits every day than forgo my three large glasses of wine every night.



A 125ml glass of white wine contains at least 90 calories

the average wine drinker puts on half a stone of fat every year. How come I am the same weight now as I was 20 years ago — and so are most of my wine world colleagues? Don't get me wrong, I am all for clear labelling, transparency and encouraging responsible drinking and, yes, it is scary to discover that a gram of pure alcohol is 7 calories, the same as 1 gram of pure carbohydrate and not far off the 9 calories that 1 gram of pure fat adds up to. Yet, as even Fiona Wilcock, Sainsbury's company nutritionist, admits, "Alas, the people who most need healthy messages are the most difficult to reach and the most impervious."

Just in case this is you, tuck into the Co-op's new Truly Irresistible 2012 Godello (£8.49) from Galicia in Spain, all juicy, herby, nutty, stone fruit and 90 calories per 125ml glass. Or try the seductive mocha and vanilla-laden, bramble fruit of its red 2012 Châteauneuf-du-Pape, 105 calories, at £15.99. At Waitrose I'd reserve calories for a glass of their delicious, digestive biscuit-scented Blanc de Noirs Brut Champagne, £21.99, 95 calories, and gorgeous, marmalade-scented 2007 Waitrose Sauternes from Suduiraut (half bottle, £16.99, 150 cals). At Sainsbury's it's perhaps best not to ask the calorie content of their caramel, fig and walnut-licked Taste the Difference 12 Year Old Sweet Pedro Ximenez sherry (50cl,

“I am the same weight now as I was 20 years ago — and so are most of my wine colleagues”

### This week's best buys



**Ionos White, Greece**  
Wine Society, £6.50,  
01438 741177

Quirky, elegant, easy-glugging Greek duo, both from the 2013 vintage, though it doesn't say so on the label. This juicy, aniseed, stone fruit and basil-scented white is a real charmer.



**Ionos Red, Peloponnese, Greece**  
Wine Society, £6.50

More mouthwatering than the white, enjoy this sunny, plum and herb-stashed, agiorgitiko-dominant red, enhanced with a squirt of spicy syrah, with moussaka or Greek meatballs.



**2012 Lava Greco di Tufo, Campania, Italy**  
Tesco, £12.99

Made from the greco grape, partly finished off in American oak barrels, this stylish, floral, mineral '12 has an enticing volcanic twist, plumped up with



**2010 Lava Beneventano Aglianico, Campania, Italy**  
Tesco, £9.79

Also from the cool, high Irpinia hills that fan out behind Naples, this gorgeous red oozes richly fruited, spicy savoury,

### The keeper



**2010 Le Soula White, Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes, France**  
Berry Bros & Rudd (0800 2802440), £23.95;  
Roberson (020-7381 7870), £29.95

Le Soula produces some of the greatest red and white wines in Roussillon. The first vintage was made here in 2001 and ever since I have been bowled over by the quality of its organic and now biodynamically tended vines. This white is mostly maccabeu grape but spiced up with a good dollop of sauvignon and grenache blanc, plus a dash each of chardonnay, malvoisie and vermentino. Enjoy this heavenly, racy, nutty, complex, honeyed, intensely flavoured white now or tuck it away.



## LES PÉPITES DE SYLVIE

D'un **salon** à l'autre, le début d'année est propice aux **découvertes**. Millésime Bio, Biotop, Salon des vins de Loire, voici une très courte sélection de flacons **originaux, bios** et surtout **très bons**.



PAR SYLVIE TONNAIRE  
Rédacteur en chef de « Terre de vins »



LE SOULA  
LA MACERATION DU SOULA  
VIN DE PAYS DES CÔTES CATALANES

C'est la dernière tendance chez une poignée de vignerons européens à la pointe de la recherche viticole et vinicole. Qualifiés de vins orange, ces blancs sont vinifiés comme des rouges, souvent en grappes entières, avec de longues macérations. C'est le cas pour cet assemblage de vermentino et de macabeu, cultivés en gobelet par Gérard Gauby et Gérard Standley sur des terroirs de granit décomposé, au-delà de 400 mètres, dans la région rousillonnaise des Fenouillèdes. Tisanes, huiles essentielles, argile et cuivre pour les soins, demi-muids et assemblage de deux millésimes, 2009 et 2010 à la cave. De quoi faire hurler les conventionnels, mais, pour les autres, cet ovni au bouquet de bigarade et de rose ancienne, au palais structuré et net, avec des saveurs de chaume et de poire séchée, assure une dégustation hors des sentiers battus. Et comme c'est bon !

**À table :** Oui aux ris d'agneau à la crème, il aime aussi le gras et les épices (curcuma).

23 €

66220 Prugnanes,  
04 68 35 69 31

# Terre de Vins French Mediterranean Wine

*Richard M James*

2 April 2014

## French Mediterranean Wine

Roussillon: Le Soula, Fenouillèdes

Le Soula has featured on FMW.com before – see [HERE](#) ("Roussillon: three whites" from 2011 featuring their 2006 vintage) and [HERE](#) (notes and blurb spanning the period 2006 to 2010 on Domaine Gauby, who sought out, set up and part-owns Le Soula) - so it seemed like a good idea to add a few background words complementing my comments on recent vintage releases of some of their reds and whites...



Mark Walford, Roy Richards and Gérard Gauby bought about 20 ha (49 acres) of vineyards on the lost lofty frontier of the northwestern extremities of the Roussillon, known as the Fenouillèdes or upper Aude valley. Initially the wines were made in a small cellar in St. Martin du Fenouillet (the different plots are found around here and the villages of Feilluns, Saint Arnac, Le Vivier and Lesquerde) from the first vintage in 2001; and in 2008, they acquired the old cooperative winery building in Prugnanes, which was completely refitted, and Gérard Standley (pic.), who has a good deal of experience working in several wineries in different places, took over running the operation in the same year. He was undergoing official 'conversion' with full-blown organic certification due from the 2012 vintage, although they've been organic/biodynamic from the very beginning in any case (as if Gauby would have it any other way...). He also started the process of becoming certified biodynamic last year. The 'Macération' white wine is Gérard's baby, where he did whole bunch maceration before pressing giving wackier results, and more complex if it works (I liked it)...

Le Soula's wines are available in several top restaurants and independent merchants in the London area and across England via Berry Bros. & Rudd, in Scotland via Raeburn Fine Wines, Edinburgh (the £££ prices quoted below); Chapeau Wine in Dublin, Paul Young Fine wines in Los Angeles and in Canada, Japan etc: see full list on [www.le-soula.com](http://www.le-soula.com). They're pretty expensive, in Gauby-esque style, but good for sure and do age well too, especially the whites actually; so who am I to knock an obviously thorough job of creating a well-distributed premium Roussillon range...

Trigone blanc L11 Côtes Catalanes (mostly Macabeu with Malvoisie du Roussillon and drops of Grenache blanc, Grenache gris, Vermentino, Chardonnay, Sauvignon, Marsanne and Roussanne of different ages; a blend of mostly 2011 and 12 vintages with a splash of 10 and 09; nearly half the wine aged in used demi-muids barrels; total sulphites 38 mg/l) – juicy honeyed and nutty, rounded and smooth vs nice crisp bite, attractive balance and style, fairly easy going.

2010 Le Soula blanc Côtes Catalanes (mostly Macabeu with Sauvignon and Grenache blanc plus Chardonnay, Malvoisie and Vermentino; about 30% aged in demi-muids including small portion of new wood; total sulphites 5 mg/l) – richer and creamier with nutty notes, lees-y with buttered toast, concentrated and lush with powerful yet still fresh finish. Yum. £21-£24

La Macération du Soula blanc L10 Côtes Catalanes (mostly Vermentino with Macabeu; blend of 2010 and 2009 vintages; mostly barrel aged; total sulphites 25 mg/l) – aromatic orange peel nut and peach blossom, richer hazelnut and sweet fruit flavours coming in vs intense finish; different.

Trigone rouge L12 Côtes Catalanes (mostly Syrah and Carignan with a touch of Grenache; a blend of mostly 2011 and 12 vintages with a splash of 10 and 09; 25% barrel aged; total sulphites 16 mg/l) – slightly 'reduced' and funky at first, moves on to lively spicy Syrah style with black cherry vs crunchier blueberry fruit; nice depth and subtle grip developing more liquorice fruit on the finish.

2010 Le Soula rouge Côtes Catalanes (mostly Carignan and Syrah with a touch of Grenache; mostly barrel aged including portion of new wood; total sulphites 27 mg/l) – wilder and peppery, intense crunchy fruit vs dark and smoky edges, light chocolate oak undertones on the attractive finish. £21-£25



2010 Le Soula

A Proprietary Blend Dry White Table wine from Languedoc Roussillon, France

## **Le Soula red 2010**

**Rating: 93**

A serious white, enjoy it with food over the coming couple of years. Even better, but not by much, the 2010 Vin de Pays Cotes Catalanes Blanc is 59% Macabeu, 18% Sauvignon, 13% Grenache Blanc and the balance Chardonnay, Malvoisie and Vermentino. Aged mostly in tank, with 7% in new barrels, it offers up a fabulous bouquet of lemon curd, dried hay, herbs and hints of pineapple to go with a medium-bodied, layered, rich style that has juicy acidity, solid concentration and a great finish. It's a rock star bottle of white that should not be missed!

An exciting new project involving Gerard Gauby (of Domaine Gauby), who is a part owner, Le Soula lies to the west of Perpignan, high up in the hills of the Fenouilledes region. The wines are made by Gerald Stanley (also a part owner) and are first-rate, with the whites being some of the best to come out of the region. If you get a chance, don't miss these. [www.le-soula.com](http://www.le-soula.com)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 232-5199

## **Le Soula white 2010**

**Rating: 89**

Drink: 2014 - 2019

The top wine of the estate, and a lively, complex effort, the 2010 Vin de Pays Cotes Catalanes is a blend of mostly Carignan (70%), with smaller components of Syrah and Grenache, that comes mostly from decomposed granite soils and spent 20 months in a combination of demi-muids (10% new) and tank. It offers a gamey, spice-laced bouquet of sweet black cherries, leather, rock salt and dried flowers that gives way to a medium-bodied, lightly textured, savory, yet decidedly juicy profile on the palate. Relatively open and already drinking nicely, enjoy bottles over the coming 3-5 years.

An exciting new project involving Gerard Gauby (of Domaine Gauby), who is a part owner, Le Soula lies to the west of Perpignan, high up in the hills of the Fenouilledes region. The wines are made by Gerald Stanley (also a part owner) and are first-rate, with the whites being some of the best to come out of the region. If you get a chance, don't miss these. [www.le-soula.com](http://www.le-soula.com)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 232-5199

## **NV Le Soula Vin de Fenouilledes Trigone L11 Blanc**

**Rating: 92**

Drink: N/A

Looking first at the whites, the NV Vin de Fenouilledes Trigone L11 is made from mostly Macabeu, with 11% Malvoisie and the balance Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris, Vermentino, and a number of other varieties. As with the red, it's from a mix of vintages, primarily 2012 and 2011, but with small components from each vintage back to 2009 as well. Light gold in color, it has a rocking, Chardonnay-like bouquet of ripe orchard fruits, light citrus, mineral, toasted bread and honeysuckle to go with a medium-bodied, layered and fresh profile on the palate.

An exciting new project involving Gerard Gauby (of Domaine Gauby), who is a part owner, Le Soula lies to the west of Perpignan, high up in the hills of the Fenouilledes region. The wines are made by Gerald Stanley (also a part owner) and are first-rate, with the whites being some of the best to come out of the region. If you get a chance, don't miss these. [www.le-soula.com](http://www.le-soula.com)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 232-5199

## **NV Le Soula Vin de Fenouilledes Trigone L12**

**Rating: 90**

Drink: 2014 - 2018

The NV Vin de Fenouilledes Trigone L12 is a smoking blend of 58% Syrah, 40% Carignan and the balance Grenache, aged mostly in tank, that's a mix of 52% 2012, 35% 2011, 9% 2010 and the rest 2009. Aromatic and perfumed, with complex black and blueberry fruits, scrub brush, resinous herbs, exotic pepper and assorted floral notes, this beauty hits the palate with a supple, medium-bodied profile that carries sweet fruit, light tannin and an excellent finish. It's a delicious and character-filled effort to buy by the case and enjoy over the coming 2-4 years.

An exciting new project involving Gerard Gauby (of Domaine Gauby), who is a part owner, Le Soula lies to the west of Perpignan, high up in the hills of the Fenouilledes region. The wines are made by Gerald Stanley (also a part owner) and are first-rate, with the whites being some of the best to come out of the region. If you get a chance, don't miss these. [www.le-soula.com](http://www.le-soula.com)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 232-5199

## **Le Soula white 2010**

**Rating: 91**

Drink: 2014 - 2016

The white 2010 Le Soula - composed more than half of Macabeu, with substantial shares of Sauvignon Blanc and Grenache Blanc (plus smidgeons of Chardonnay, Malvoisie and Vermentino) - was picked from mid-September through mid-October and raised largely in tank, with less than a third this year vinified and matured in demi-muids of varying ages. An utterly intriguing nose of musky narcissus, honeysuckle, lily-of-the-valley, white truffle, and diverse melons, leads to a luscious palate; profuse inner-mouth perfume; and delightful counterpoint from pine nut and sprout-like nutty and vegetal piquancy. There is a fine balance here between textural polish and lees-enrichment on the one hand and energy and refreshment on the other. What's more, although 13.5% alcohol - as reported on this wine's label - is low by Roussillon standards, it's hard for me to believe given its sense of buoyancy that this wine harbors even that much. The perfumed finishing floral persistence here is ravishing. Plan to relish this beauty through at least 2016.

Having not had chance this year to meet-up with owner Roy Richards or his vineyard and cellar manager Gerald Standley at Le Soula - although their venture continues to be in collaboration with Gerard Gauby, whom I as a matter of course visited - I tasted the most recent Soula releases as samples at their friend Marc Barriot's. (For more about this pioneering estate that focuses on the largely granitic northwestern limits and highest elevations of Roussillon, consult my issue 195 report.)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA (213) 232 5199

## **Le Soula red 2010**

**Rating: 87+**

The red 2010 Le Soula is Carignan-based with 25% Syrah and a jot of Grenache. While harvested until past the middle of October, it still exhibits a mere 13% alcohol. Game and stewed cherry tinged with marjoram on the nose migrate to a sappy mid-palate tinged with salt, but there is a surprising degree of drying to the finishing tannins, which I am not entirely convinced are going to resolve themselves. Enjoyable and no doubt versatile as it stands, I would want to revisit this before attempting to forecast its longer-term bottle evolution.

Having not had chance this year to meet-up with owner Roy Richards or his vineyard and cellar manager Gerald Standley at Le Soula - although their venture continues to be in collaboration with Gerard Gauby, whom I as a matter of course visited - I tasted the most recent Soula releases as samples at their friend Marc Barriot's. (For more about this pioneering estate that focuses on the largely granitic northwestern limits and highest elevations of Roussillon, consult my issue 195 report.)

Importer: Paul M. Young Fine Wines, Los Angeles, CA (213) 232 5199



8. April 2014

## ProWein 2014 - meine besten Entdeckungen (II)



Ich dachte immer, Gérald Standley von Le Soula wäre ein waschechter Engländer, dem die Franzosen zwecks Eingemeindung einfach so ein accent auf den Vornamen gesetzt hätten. In Wirklichkeit ist Gérald Standley ein waschechter Franzose und Leiter von Le Soula, dem Weingut, dessen Reben im letzten Dorf der Fenouillèdes vor den großen Bergen Gérard Gauby einst entdeckt hatte. Gérard Gauby ist immer noch beteiligt, aber er hat mit seinem eigenen Weingut wahrhaftig genug zu tun, weshalb sich nun halt Gérald Standley um alles kümmert, um das man sich kümmern muss. Ich mochte von Le Soula eigentlich immer den Weißen lieber als den Roten, wobei letzterer auch nicht von schlechten Eltern ist. Die Zusammensetzung der Rebsorten wechselt jedes Jahr, je nachdem, welche Rebsorte wie gedeiht. Im Jahrgang 2010 beispielsweise litten einige Parzellen stark unter einem Hagelgewitter, so dass der Weiße diesmal zu 60% aus Macabeu besteht. Und das Ergebnis überzeugt total: ein gleichzeitig erstaunlich frischer wie nachhaltiger Weißer aus dem Süden, bestens geeignet zum Begleiten gegrillter Fische.

Der Wein rechts auf dem Foto ist dagegen, wie Gérald sagte, einfach so aus Spaß entstanden. Er hatte einige "Orange Wines" probiert und wollte sich nun auch daran versuchen, allerdings nicht auf die strenge Gravner-Art, sondern der Wein sollte irgendwie schon ein bisschen trinkiger sein. Gesagt, getan, Trauben aus einer Parzelle mit lächerlich niedrigem Ertrag geerntet (11 hl/ha), hauptsächlich Vermentino, dann je nach Art der Fuhre zwischen 5 und 15 Tagen auf der Maische gären lassen, ein Verschnitt aus hauptsächlich 2010 mit einem bisschen aus 2009, im 500-Liter-Fass ausgebaut – und fertig ist ein Wein, der mich an die "Gräfin" von Sepp und Maria Muster aus der Steiermark erinnert. Schon vom Charakter her ein orange wine, aber eben weicher, gleitender, nicht so extrem – und vor allem ohne viel flüchtige Säure oder harte Oxidationsnoten. Trotzdem meint Gérald, dass viele Leute den Wein nicht mögen würden. Sie erwarten halt etwas anderes.

## Le Soula 2010 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes



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### Le Soula 2010 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes

25 Mar 2014 by RH

Sumptuous fruit, yet with an edginess that has natural tendencies - but this only adds complexity rather than distracting. Ripe red fruits, charred meat, milk chocolate. Rounded and silky, but with just a bit of grip on the finish, and really smart acidic finish. (RH)

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Date tasted	01 Mar 2014
Producer	Le Soula
Appellation	Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes
Vintage	2010
Region	Languedoc-Roussillon
Country	France
Score	17
Colour	Red
Alcohol	13%
When to drink	2014 to 2017
Date tasted	01 Mar 2014
Reviewer	RH

## Le Soula 2010 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes



Jancis Robinson  
JancisRobinson.com

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### Le Soula 2010 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes

28 Feb 2014 by RH

Orange peel scent - just a little bit oxidative, in a good way. Sweet spice, floral, moderate acid, little bit of nutty character. Just doesn't quite sustain as long as it should. (RH)

[Find this wine](#)

    
[\[Previous\]](#) [\[Next\]](#)

Date tasted	27 Feb 2014
Producer	Le Soula
Appellation	Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes
Vintage	2010
Region	Languedoc-Roussillon
Country	France
Score	16.5
Colour	White
Alcohol	13.5%
When to drink	2012 to 2020
Date tasted	27 Feb 2014
Reviewer	RH
Price/Stockist	£23.95 RRP



## L'accord minute d'Olivier Poussier

Fiancez  
le maquereau  
avec un vin  
blanc minéral

OLIVIER POUSSIER  
EST MEILLEUR SOMMELIER  
DU MONDE 2000.



FIEFS-VENDEËNS BLANC  
LES CLOUS 2013  
DU DOMAINE  
SAINT-NICOLAS.  
Cette cuvée originale est  
la compagne idéale pour  
savourer de gourmandes  
rillettes de maquereau.

Le populaire maquereau appartient à la catégorie des poissons gras comme le thon, la sardine et le hareng. Bon marché, apprécié pour ses vertus gustatives et nutritionnelles, il se prête à de nombreuses recettes.

Ce poisson est le plus souvent servi en rillettes, en marinade avec du vin blanc ou grillé au barbecue. Mais mariné ou cuit, il garde une saveur prononcée très caractéristique. Selon la recette, le vin qui l'accompagne doit donc être mordant, incisif, ou doté d'une trame minérale de belle envergure afin de s'opposer à la chair grasse du maquereau.

En rillettes, le maquereau présente une texture moelleuse qui appelle un vin tendu par les schistes et doté de notes salines, pourquoi pas venues de l'Atlantique. Je vous propose la belle cuvée Les Clous 2013 du domaine Saint-Nicolas, en Fiefs vendéens. C'est un vin jeune et pointu issu d'un assemblage incroyable fait d'une base de chenin avec en appoint du chardonnay et du gros-lot (ou grolleau), que seul Thierry Michon peut élaborer.

Une solution méridionale est aussi possible. Choisissez alors un vin du Languedoc. La cuvée Villa Blanche 2013 du négociant Calmel et Joseph, par exemple. Cette maison, fondée en 1995, produit un excellent picpoul de pinet aromatique développant des notes d'agrumes, d'aneth et fenouil. La bouche révèle une belle fraîcheur minérale rare dans cette région où, le plus souvent, les vins restent très variétaux. Cette identité minérale suffit à trancher sur la texture moelleuse de la rilette de maquereau.

### Un sancerre né sur le silex

Le traditionnel maquereau mariné au vin blanc est accompagné d'une marinade riche en saveurs composée de carottes finement croquantes, de coriandre, de citron confit, de gingembre et de thym. Ici, optez pour un vin pointu, capable de s'opposer au gras du poisson, et finement aromatique pour rehausser le bouquet d'arômes de la marinade. Je vous suggère un vin de pays des Côtes catalanes du domaine Le Soula, Le Soula blanc 2010. Ce vin méridional possède la pureté cristalline d'un vin de Loire. L'altitude du vignoble et le terroir de granit lui confèrent une tension minérale exceptionnelle. Gérard Standley et Gérard Gauby ont élaboré un vin qui exprime avec superbe le terroir du Roussillon grâce à une association originale de cépages autochtones : maccabeu, grenache blanc et tourbat associés au sauvignon et au chardonnay, et une pointe de vermentino.

Un blanc plus septentrional est aussi un bon choix. Goûtez un sancerre issu d'un terroir de silex, qui maîtrisera à merveille l'expression variétale du sauvignon blanc, finement aromatique et dans la retenue minérale avec des notes d'ortie, de menthol et de pierre à silex. Parmi les belles cuvées de terroir de silex du millésime 2012 dans cette appellation, je vous suggère la Réserve Silex 2012 de Daniel Crochet, Les Herses 2012 d'Alphonse Mellot, ou Les Romains 2012 du domaine Vacheron. ■



## The wine list

ROSE MURRAY BROWN

@rosemurraybrown



**T**hirty years ago it was the land of cheap table wine. Now Languedoc-Roussillon, the world's largest wine region which produces one third of French wine, is undergoing a renaissance with more experimentation than anywhere else in France – and is the source of some of the best-value wines in the country. Here is my current top ten.

### WHITE

**PICPOUL DE PINET 2013**  
**DOMAINE DE HAUT-BRIDAN**  
(£8.99, Waitrose)

Once known as "lip-stinger" due to its tart acid, the piquepoul grape is grown near the vast saltwater lagoon of Bassin de Thau. Now this nippy white has been transformed into a bracing citric delight and has caught our imagination, as every UK supermarket seems to stock one. This is a brand new wine to Waitrose. Very appealing as a summery aperitif, it acts like a squeeze of lemon with a plate of fruits de mer, or it's delicious for just whiling away a Sunday afternoon with a book in the hammock. 12 per cent.

**LE VERSANT VIOGNIER 2012 LES VIGNOBLES DE FONCALIEU**  
(£8.50, Fine Wine Direct UK; Inverarity Morton, Glasgow; [www.winerack.co.uk](http://www.winerack.co.uk))

A very popular wine at our recent tasting, where it was labelled as a bargain at under £10. Le Versant is from hillside vineyards in western Languedoc where higher-altitude plantings benefit from more Atlantic influence and higher acidity, which is crucial in the rich textured viognier grape. With peachy aromas, this is a fresh and zippy example. 13.5 per cent.

**MAS DES MONTAGNE TERROIRS D'ALTITUDE BLANC 2011**  
(£9.99, Majestic Wine)

A clever blend of grenache blanc and macabeo, this "mountain wine" is named after its high vineyard sites in Roussillon, creating minerally thirst-quenching vivid whites. It's made by the Lorigeril family, who own the better-known Chateau Pennautier in Languedoc, with renowned consultant Patrick Leon of Domaines Rothschild assisting. Their grenache noir, syrah and carignan-based red blend is also good quaffing stuff and even better value at £8.99. 13.5 per cent.



A vineyard in Languedoc-Roussillon

barrel-fermented example from Chateau Ste Ferreol is seriously delicious. Jorge Maslakiewicz, the owner of this medieval priory near Nizas in the heart of the Herault where vines have been grown since 1146, has a passion for this grape. 13 per cent.

**VIN DE PAYS DES CÔTES CATALANES, LA SOULA BLANC 2008**  
(£20.99, Raeburn Fine Wines, Edinburgh; [www.terroirlanguedoc.co.uk](http://www.terroirlanguedoc.co.uk); £25, [www.bbr.com](http://www.bbr.com))

Gerard Gauby of Domaine Soula is a legend. He uses biodynamic methods to cultivate his old vines, creating unique polished wines which have been hailed by some critics as the best in France. Based close to the Pyrenees in rugged Roussillon, on schist/granite soils in an area which has been slow to change, Gauby uses nine white grapes in his blend, with an emphasis on sauvignon blanc, macabeo, vermentino and grenache blanc. 13.5 per cent.

### RED

**ST CHINIAN LES TRUFFIERES 2010**  
**CHATEAU MILHAU-LACUGUE**  
(£13.50, Yapp Bros, [www.yapp.co.uk](http://www.yapp.co.uk))

Top scorer at our tasting. I love this unoaked blend of syrah and grenache with its pungent, vivid, extracted bugle-blowing fruits – it just cries out for a plate of roast lamb. My own experience of St Chinian reds in the past has been disappointing; I often find them coarse, but this shining example is superb. I am not the only one to love this wine; it's rated as "outstanding" by *Decanter* magazine in their Languedoc panel tasting. 14.5 per cent.

**STAR BUY**



deliciously delicate and fragrant from her high-altitude vineyards. Pomaredes is her premium pinot. Forget Burgundy, this is more Loire-like. 12.5 per cent.

**EMOTION OCCITANE 2005 LE MAS D'ECRITURE**  
(£12.50, Terroir Languedoc, [www.terroirlanguedoc.co.uk](http://www.terroirlanguedoc.co.uk))

Pascal Fulla's USP is immense attention to detail: he calls his wine estate the writing lodge and there is poetry on his cellar walls. His red blends of syrah, mourvedre, cinsault and carignan have a wild fennel, sweet herby, spicy undertone. He uses both French and Russian oak. His Les Pensees red is even better, but pricier (£19.95). 14 per cent.

**CÔTES DE THONGUE CUVÉE TRADITION 2013 DOMAINE LES FILLES DE SEPTEMBRE**

(£9.75, Yapp Bros, [www.yapp.co.uk](http://www.yapp.co.uk)) Côtes de Thongue is not as well known as it should be, as this merlot, grenache and syrah blend is a cracking buy for those who like their reds simple, young, fruity and thirst-quenching. It's made by Hugues and Roland Geraud, who are exploiting this undervalued terroir. Stoke up the barbecue, chuck on the steaks and chipolatas, and fill your glass with this lusty young red. 13 per cent.

**FAUGERES 2011 CLOS FANTINE**  
(£14.75, Les Caves de Pyrene, [www.lescaves.co.uk](http://www.lescaves.co.uk); L'Art du Vin, Dunfermline, [www.aduv.co.uk](http://www.aduv.co.uk); Bottle Apostle, [www.bottleapostle.com](http://www.bottleapostle.com))

Here's a funky wild Faugeres that tastes so earthy it is like liquidised schist with a sprinkling of fennel, rocket and pepper. This is untamed Languedoc from wild untrained biodynamically grown vines and without sulphur added in the winery. A typical Languedoc blend of carignan, cinsault, grenache, syrah and mourvedre, this is a vinous experience that will take you right back to the wild herbs of the

## Food & Drink

# Every little helps

WINES BY ANTHONY ROSE



You have to feel sorry for Asda. Squeezed between the devil of the discounters and the deep blue sea of Waitrose, M&S and

Majestic, life is tough for the middle-ground supermarket when it comes to selling plonk. So credit to the wine team's Philippa Carr, an experienced but unstuffy Master of Wine who's getting to grips with the need to keep prices down while raising customers' expectations of quality. One answer is to stock 500 wines, including 100 premium ones, in the Asda online Wine Shop, with free delivery and 10 per cent off Wine Shop orders until 1 June.

There was a summery feel to this Spring's press tasting in London, kicking off with a **2013 Extra Special Gavi**, £8, a juicy northern Italian dry white with crisp Cox's apple bite; a classically aromatic and gooseberry-filled **2013**

**Erruzuriz Estate Sauvignon Blanc from Chile**, £9.47, Wine Shop, and a wonderfully fresh and peachy **2013 Trivento Amado Torrontés**, Wine Shop, £14.38. The richly spiced, quite weighty, Alsace-like **2012 Yealands Estate Awatere Pinot Gris**, £12.47, Wine Shop is a welcome addition to the range. While the nutty, dry, white Burgundy-like **2013 Wolf Blass Yellow Label Chardonnay**, £10, is a reliable shelf stalwart.

There are some attractive new red wines too, most notably an aromatic, fruity **2012 Musita Syrah from Sicily**, £7.47, Wine Shop, and an excellent, typically herbal and blackcurranty **2010 Valdivieso Single Vineyard Carmenère**, £12.79, Wine Shop, while Wither Hills' **2011 Extra Special Marlborough Pinot Noir**, £8.48, offers enduring good value for those in search of the fragrantly strawberryish red Burgundy style, without having to pay through the nose for it ●

### SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

#### NIGHT IN



#### 2012 Tesco Finest\* Saint Mont

The three musketeers, gros manseng, petit courbu and arrufiac, imbue this south-west France dry white with citrus aromas and a crisp tang. £7.49, reduced to £5.99, until 1 July, Tesco

#### DINNER PARTY



#### 2011 Heggies Chardonnay, Eden

Made from chardonnay grown in the Eden Valley, this is an accomplished dry white burgundy, with rich toasty flavours. £19.99, buy 2 = £14.99, Majestic

#### SPLASH OUT



#### 2010 Le Soula, Vin de Pays des Cotes Catalanes

Pepper, spice and rosemary are followed by black fruits and a texture that's supple and bright. Around £26.49, Berry Bros, Bottle Apostle, Upton-on-Severn Wines



9th May 2014

## The Sorcerer and his assistant ...



For many, scepticism hangs over the quality of natural, biodynamic and to a lesser extent organic wines and until now I wasn't too sure either. The protectionist in me loves the philosophy of organic but my business side says it's too risky. The sceptic in me thinks biodynamics is too hocus-pocus to reap any decent results but the fairy-princess in me argues that magic must exist. As for natural wines well the mind boggles. So loose is the definition that the first of many questions asked is what does that make all other wines? Unnatural?

The fact however is that there is a growing movement in the wine world for ethically and environmentally aware wines made by winemakers whose livelihood depends on it, who are not peace-out hippies but are simply intelligent and thoughtful in the way they farm their grapes and produce their wines. Le Soula, from Roussillon's highest altitude vineyards, 45km west of Perpignan, have shown me that and are proof that while magic may not exist in the purest form it is most certainly in the air.

**Le Soula White 2010** is a blend of 59 % Macabeu, 18 % Sauvignon, 13 % Grenache blanc, 6 % Chardonnay, 3 % Malvoisie du Roussillon and 1 % Vermentino from high altitude vineyards (for France anyway). The bottle I tried was oxidised and the know-it-all in me grinned a knowing smile to say I told you so. But... **La Soula Rouge 2010** was a whole different ball game which is why the white still deserves discovering so I urge you to visit RAW in London next week to taste them both for yourself. The red is less of a witches brew than the white and made of a blend of just three grapes: 71 % Carignan, 25 % Syrah and 4 % Grenache Noir, a recipe that has created a heady and intense red that you'll want to linger and linger over. Fresh and ripe red and black fruits sing from the glass, rhubarb, plums, sweet spices and light gamey notes add depth and complexity and hints of new leather tannins give texture and length. Oh yes.

The Sorcerer and his assistant, aka winemaker/viticulturist G rald Standley who runs the Le Soula biodynamic winery in partnership with wine merchant Mark Walford will both be at RAW next week but if you can't make it pick up a bottle of either from Uncorked, Berry Bros and Fields Morris & Verdin, RRP  23.95.



# The Times Weekend Review

*Jane MacQuitty*

26th June 2014

50 best white wines for summer

## 2010 Le Soula, Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes, France

Berry, Bros & Rudd (0800 280  
2440) £23.95; Cambridge  
Wine (01223 309309)  
£23.99

43

Fenouillèdes, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, is home to Roussillon's greatest red and white estate, Le Soula. Ever since 2001, the quality of its wines, made from small parcels of very old, low-yielding vines grown on granite schist, has dazzled. Of late, the whites made from a hotch-potch of varieties are even more distinguished than its reds. Sip this honeyed, nutty, woodsmoke and white mint stashed white and decide for yourself.



## RAYMOND BLANC

surprisingly strong showing of wines from the US, South Africa, Austria, Australia, New Zealand and Germany ('we do a lot of Riesling by the glass'). There are English wines too and even an Armenian red. 'We live in a multicultural society,' says Blanc. 'Tradition is France's strength but also its weakness. If you go to Bordeaux, you only drink Bordeaux.'

How does this go down with the Manoir's well-heeled clientele? What about the celebs? Apparently they're up for it. 'There's that singer with The Beatles,' says Goubet scratching his head as he tries to remember the name. 'Paul McCartney?' I offer. 'That's him! He likes me to suggest more unusual wines to him, like Côtes Catalanes and Jurançon.'

### Personal favourites

Blanc has his own favourites. 'I drink by season. Mostly Pinot Noir, though in the summer I'll drink wines like Cabernet Franc or Gamay, which are full of freshness and flavour. In the game season I'll go for Syrah – spicier wines like St-Joseph or Roussillon, wines from Domaine Gauby, for example. And Provence is an area that is misunderstood. People think of it as producing only rosé, but I've had some great reds from there. You can age them beautifully.'

Unlike many chefs, Blanc takes a keen interest in wine. He shows me a scrappy piece of paper with handwritten notes on some recently tasted Cabernet Francs to prove it. 'Arnaud gives me seven bottles at a time from somewhere like the Loire. I was recently trying a 2006 Chinon off the list but those wines are not a true representation of what should be a summer wine – the tannins are too



Above: the Manoir wine list features a diverse selection, including biodynamic wines

*I'm looking for wine that has total honesty to match the purity in my food'*

hard. What you want for summer is a vin de soif.' 'He is not afraid to tell us what he thinks,' says Arnaud. 'I am self-taught – I don't have prejudices,' retorts Blanc. 'Most sommeliers think the great names are untouchable.'

The winemaker he's most excited about currently is Xavier Guillaume, from the Franche-Comté, who owns one of the biggest vine nurseries in the world. 'Let's try one against some top Burgundies,' urges Blanc, getting Goubet to line them up against some Gevrey-Chambertins and a Nuits-St-Georges from Sylvain Cathiard. 'It stands up well, no?' he asks eagerly. 'I love my Pinot.'

With Blanc's encouragement, Goubet is also listing an increasing number of organic and biodynamic wines, which now account for 14% of the list (about a fifth of that total are biodynamic). 'If you grow grapes biodynamically, the vineyard can express itself,' says Goubet. 'If you put pesticides in the ground, what happens to the terroir?'

'It's immoral how many chemicals are used in the wine industry,' Blanc bursts out. 'All the great artisan winemakers are going organic. The chefs want it. I'm looking for wine that has total honesty to match the purity in my food. Arnaud is doing this with all his heart. It is my vision but I want him to own the vision as much as I do.'

### Blanc on blancs

The only time in our interview that Blanc expresses a preference for white is with cheese. At the Manoir three Comtés of 12, 24 and 36 months are served with vin jaune from the Jura, to the occasional mystification of the customers. 'We are creatures of habit,' sighs Blanc. 'We still drink red wine with cheese, but the tannins in red wine hate the lactic acid of milk. It's cheese's total enemy.'

He adds: 'Although we are cutting back the list, it's going to be more interesting, looking for jewels looking for craftsmen. We will ask our friends, sommeliers, wine writers who know particular parts of the world. You need to be humble. You need to ask for advice. Even five years ago everyone kept everything secret. Now we need to share.'

Fiona Beckett is a Decanter contributing editor and publishes the website [matchingfoodandwine.com](http://matchingfoodandwine.com)

### The sommelier's choice

Head sommelier Arnaud Goubet shares his boss's taste for regional French wines. Here are six from the Manoir list he'd select to enjoy with friends...

#### Domaine Ganavat, Les Chalasses Chardonnay, Jura 2008\*

More than a Burgundy: the same intense character with the same finesse but more alive. Just... more!

#### Ferme de la Sansonnière, La Lune, Anjou 2011\*

Rich and really mouthfilling but the noble Chenin grape makes it all appear balanced and near perfect.



#### Le Soula, Blanc, Côtes Catalanes 2008

So alive, no bottle ever tastes the same. You need to buy a lunar calendar to ensure you are in tune with the best day to drink it.

#### Producteurs de Plaimont, Le Faite, St-Mont 2009

A more complex blend than other southwest wines, which also contains the forgotten Arrufiac or Petit Courbou

grapes, depending on the vintage. It is actually the best white from France's biggest co-op. Very subtle, a touch of honey, fruit supported by a well-balanced oak ageing.



#### Domaine de la Grange des Pères, Pays de l'Herault 2005

I love the crushed strawberry character of this as well as the Burgundian touch, even though it's a Cabernet-based wine.

#### Domaine Richeaume, Rouge, Côtes de Provence 2010

A not-so-typical blend of Provence with 60% Cabernet. It always has better fruit definition than most Bordeaux, with less aggressive tannins thanks to the southern sun.

\*See p22 for other recommendations from these producers

12th September 2014

## Go Nuts for Heavier Whites

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## EATING & DRINKING

ON WINE: WILL LYONS



### Go Nuts for Heavier Whites

"COME ON THEN, Will, describe this wine to me." I was standing outside with my friend Tim. We see each other about once a year since he moved to Bologna, where he spends most of his time playing jazz and sampling the local wine. Lunch was moments away and I had just handed him a glass of chilled Chardonnay, a Premier Cru from Burgundy's Côte de Beaune.

As autumn approaches we naturally turn to heavier, smoother whites

Tim takes a keen interest in wine but, like many, is a little nervous to be the first to describe the flavor. So I gave it a sniff and did the honors: "What really strikes me about this wine," I said, swallowing a mouthful, "is its stony character." "Yes! That's it," he replied excitedly. "I tasted it too." My answer seemed to take him by surprise, but it shouldn't have.

White wine is often defined by its fruit. Flavors such as gooseberry, grapefruit, lychee, apple and citrus are often used to describe Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Gewürztraminer. But this is only one part of the tasting, usually the aroma. Many whites take on a bitter, stony or nutty character when we taste them in our mouths. Far from being unpleasant, this can add complexity, giving the sensation that you are actually tasting the earth the vine grew in.

Jasper Morris, in his 2010 book "Inside Burgundy," says he has never understood why winemakers use descriptors like mango and ripe melon to describe Chardonnay, as he cannot imagine that anyone would want these flavors in a glass of wine. "In any case," he writes, "they are rarely to be found in Burgundian Chardonnay."

At this time of year, as the hawthorn berries slowly turn red, woodland floors become littered with acorns and green-tinged leaves begin to fade, these wines suddenly have more appeal.

It's too early for the heavy, full-bodied reds just yet, but as autumn approaches we naturally turn



away from the spritzy, bright acidity that was so refreshing in summer to heavier, smoother whites.

If we can taste stone in Chablis, white Burgundy and Riesling, it is in southern French wines that we detect the most obvious nutty notes. Burgundy négociant Roy Richards points to grape varieties such as Carignan Blanc, Maccabeu, Marsanne and Roussanne. Chardonnay develops nutty notes with age, and those grown in Burgundy, particularly in Corton-Charlemagne and Meursault, often take on a hazelnut and walnut character.

But perhaps my favorites among these nutty wines are tawny ports. Aged in cask, rather than bottle, they can be smoother to taste than the more widely known ruby and vintage ports. I find they make a wonderful aperitif, served with roasted almonds. Ideal for a blustery autumnal day.

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#### DRINKING NOW: TWO NUTTY WHITES



**2010 Le Soula**  
Alcohol: 13.5%  
Price: £25 or €30  
This wine's blend is crowded to say the least: Sauvignon Blanc, Grenache Blanc, Marsanne, Roussanne and Chenin among others (nine in total). But somehow it works, throwing up flavors from lemon to honey. With age it takes on a nuttiness found in mature white Burgundy.



**2010 Bouchard Père et Fils Beaune du Château Premier Cru**  
Alcohol: 13.5%  
Price: £25 or €30  
Bouchard Père et Fils is one of the largest vineyard owners in Burgundy. Given the high price of this Chardonnay, I was somewhat skeptical of it but the wine really impressed with its complexity, stony minerality and long, complex finish.