

Vintage 2016



93-95

Saint-Joseph, Sainte-Epine, Red, 2016

The Delas wines are among the best in Saint Joseph, and the 2016 Saint Joseph Sainte-Epine doesn't miss a beat. It shows spicy-herbal complexity on the nose, combined with ripe black cherries. Medium to full-bodied, it's supple, plush and long. It should be a beauty, capable of rivaling the impressive 2015.

Hermitage, Domaine des Tourettes, White, 2016

The blend of Delas' white Hermitage is 90% Marsanne and 10% Roussanne, barrel fermented and aged in approximately one-third new oak. The 2016 Hermitage Domaine des Tourettes Blanc features subtle notes of pencil shavings, ripe, tropical fruit and tremendous presence on the palate. That feeling (it's not exactly weight per se) extends through the long, slightly honeyed and cedary finish. While attractive now, I wouldn't be surprised to see this wine still going strong in 2026 and beyond.

93



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Condrieu, Clos Boucher, 2016

The 2016 Condrieu Clos Boucher nevertheless exudes the essence of Viognier with its spicy-floral aromas and flavors. Ginger, white pepper and nasturtium blossom all feature in this medium to full-bodied wine, plus layers of ripe apricots and candied pineapple emerging in support

Côte-Rôtie, la Landonne, 2016

The 2016 Cote Rotie la Landonne will need a few years after release to resolve some of its rough edges. There's plenty of raspberry fruit to handle it, as well as those classic notes of black olive and tar to add complexity. Lovely grilled meat and tea-like nuances emerge on the finish.

92-95



92-94

Hermitage, Les Bessards, 2016

The 2016 Hermitage les Bessards is a gorgeous if somewhat easygoing expression of its terroir, combining savory notes of asphalt and smoked meat with plum and black raspberries. It shows the classic tannins of its granite bedrock, but they're firm rather than hard, suggesting this will be approachable relatively early.

Hermitage, Domaine des Tourettes, Red, 2016

Based on the granitic western side of the appellation, the 2016 Hermitage Domaine des Tourettes sees about one-third new oak, which has given it a cedary cast. It's dark and savory, showing hints of grilled meat, espresso and black olives, but it's also supple on the palate, ending ripe and plush.



[Montage]



Condrieu, La Galopine, 2016

Not the most aromatic wine of the appellation, the 2016 Condrieu la Galopine relies instead on texture and charm. This medium-bodied wine was partly barrel fermented, and there is a vague sensation of roasted nuts, although apricots and melons dominate the palate before fading quickly into peppery-gingery spice on the finish.

Crozes-Hermitage, Le Clos, 2016

Espresso and black olive notes mark the nose of the 2016 Crozes Hermitage le Clos, which is still in barrel. Hints of crushed stone, black cherries and plums give this serious Crozes a real dose of complexity, while it still maintains the suppleness and approachability of the vintage.



Côte-Rôtie, Seigneur de Maugiron, 2016

The aromatic 2016 Cote Rotie Seigneur de Maugiron lacks the tannic backbone of the La Landonne, but it will be approachable on release. Violet, herb, black olive and tar notes add complexity to the ripe raspberry fruit in this medium to full-bodied wine that's already supple and seductive.

Crozes-Hermitage, Domaine des Grands Chemins, 2016

The medium-bodied 2016 Crozes Hermitage Domaine des Grands Chemins stays true to the vintage character of charm and accessibility. It's supple, easy to drink, and its combination of pain grillé, black cherries and licorice add up to being just outright fun.



[Montage]



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Saint-Joseph, Les Challeys, White, 2016

The 2016 Cote Rotie la Landonne will need a few years after release to resolve some of its rough edges. There's plenty of raspberry fruit to handle it, as well as those classic notes of black olive and tar to add complexity. Lovely grilled meat and tea-like nuances emerge on the finish.

Saint-Joseph, Les Challeys, Red, 2016

The 2016 Saint Joseph les Challeys is already wonderfully drinkable. Ripe cherries and toasted almonds provide an almost dessert-like profile, but savory notes of black olive provide grounding. The supple tannins make this delicious and easy to drink, yet it should age through 2025.

89-91



Vintage 2015



99+

Hermitage, Les Bessards, 2015

With approximately 500 cases produced, the 2015 Hermitage les Bessards is probably among the most available of the vintage's top wines. Jump on it if your means allow, as I suspect this wine will be a candidate for perfection once it sheds some tannin. It's perfumed on the nose, concentrated on the palate and amazingly long yet also elegant from start to finish. And amid the power, oak and massive cassis and blackberry fruit, it also manages to include hints of crushed stone evocative of its granitic terroir. It's breathtaking stuff, virtually guaranteed to bring a smile to any wine lover's face.

Côte-Rôtie, La Landonne, 2015

With only about 100 cases produced each year, finding a bottle of the 2015 Cote Rotie la Landonne will prove much harder than drinking it. It's indeed a terrific wine but a bit closed and cedary at this particular moment, the 40% new oak standing out on the nose. But this cuvée has a long track record of excellence, so expect it to blossom with time in the cellar. It's concentrated and powerful but amazingly light on its feet, with firm, ample tannins that manage to convey a sense of ripeness as well. Tar, black olive, cassis and espresso elements all speak to the grape (100% Syrah) and the single lieu-dit origin.

97



[Montage]



94

Hermitage, Domaine des Tourettes, Red, 2015

A blend of Syrah grapes from several lieux-dits, including Les Bessards, the 2015 Hermitage Domaine des Tourettes is aged in new and second use barrels. It's a dark, concentrated wine, meaty, rich and tannic but with a bright beam of cassis fruit that lifts it and gives it great definition and shape on the palate. Give this medium to full-bodied wine at least 5 years in the cellar and drink it over the next 15.

Saint-Joseph, Sainte-Epine, Red, 2015

Less aromatic than the François de Tournon bottling, the 2015 Saint-Joseph Sainte-Epine is nonetheless a stellar effort that may be even longer lived. It shows great concentration, pouring across the palate in a single jolt of dark fruit, expanding and intensifying on the powerful finish. Black cherries and plums carry hints of molten rock, charcoal and other inorganic complexities, which are brightened by crisp acids and buffered by firm tannins.

94



94

Crozes-Hermitage, Le Clos, 2015

The 2015 Crozes Hermitage le Clos is the high-end Crozes bottling from Delas Frères, aged 14-16 months in French oak. Give it some time in the glass to open up if you try one soon, as it's tight and closed at first, gradually developing floral notes and showing more black cherry and blackberry fruit. In the mouth, it's velvety and concentrated, gradually fading on the finish into hints of licorice and black pepper. This medium to full-bodied 100% Syrah drinks well now (with air) but should evolve well for at least another decade.

Saint-Joseph, François de Tournon, 2015

Inky and concentrated, the 2015 Saint-Joseph François de Tournon is no easy-drinking Saint-Joseph. It's smoky, herbal and ashy all at once, yet it's buoyed by ample black cherry fruit and vibrant acidity. This medium to full-bodied Syrah has plenty of tannins, but they're ultimately silky and most apparent on the long, licorice-tinged finish. This is approachable now but should be even better in 3 years and should drink well for at least another 10 after that.

93



[Montage]



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Côte-Rôtie, Seigneur de Maugiron, 2015

The 2015 Cote Rotie Seigneur de Maugiron is a blend of several parcels in the Côte Brune and the Côte Blonde, aged in new and second use barrels. It's less aromatic than many of its brethren at this point, but it does offer attractive red berry aromas bolstered by red and black fruit on the palate with hints of cracked pepper and smoke. It's a serious effort, with dusty tannins that suggest it will age gracefully for a decade or two.

Crozes-Hermitage, Domaine des Grands Chemins, 2015

The 2015 Crozes Hermitage Domaine des Grands Chemins represents a middle tier in Delas' Crozes hierarchy (Les Launes is the least expensive, aged exclusively in tank; Le Clos is the most expensive, aged exclusively in barrel). This wine is perhaps the most charming of the three, revealing attractive notes of dried herbs and spices on the nose, along with red berries and black cherries. It's medium-bodied and savory, marked by flavors of black olives and espresso, then it lightens again on the richly textured finish. Drink it over the next decade or so.

91



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Gigondas, Les Reinages, 2015

Scents of dry earth, peppery spice and baked black cherries mark the nose of the 2015 Gigondas Les Reinages. It's got a warmer, rounder profile than the Genêts Vacqueyras, with supple tannins, a creamy mouthfeel and a long, silky-textured finish. Already delicious, it should drink well for the next 6-8 years.

Cornas, Chante-Perdrix, 2015

The 2015 Cornas Chante Perdrix is a blend of several parcels, vinified in concrete and aged primarily in oak. It's dark and concentrated, although admittedly not the most muscular Cornas. Black currant and cedar notes combine along with peppery hints of Montreal smoked meat to yield a savory impression. It's all held together by fine-grained, dusty tannins, which leave a lingering soft texture on the long, licorice-tinged finish. Already enjoyable, it should develop well for 10-12 years or more.

90-92



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Vacqueyras, Les Genêts, 2015

Welcoming scents of sun-warmed black cherries emerge on the nose of the 2015 Vacqueyras les Genets. That ripe fruit carries over onto the palate, where this medium to full-bodied wine shows off supple tannins, an almost creamy texture and just hints of black olive and mocha. Already very drinkable, it should be at its best over the next 5-8 years.