

Napoleon Red Case

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ACTING WINE CLUB MANAGER




There are some notable terroirs showcased in this selection: the formerly forgotten winemaking region Bierzo is brought to life in Pétalos by superstar winemaker Álvaro Palacios; Château Thivin's Griottes de Brûlhié gives you a taste for what can be achieved on vertiginous slopes of Beaujolais (the vineyards have a 45 percent gradient); while Eymann's Merlot is grown on terraced soils dating from the Ice Age. If that's not enough, excellent bottles from Burgundy, Rioja and the Rhône will also provide superb drinking.

2016 TOREYE MERLOT, EYMANN



Eymann, in the village of Gönheim, is located in the middle of the Pfalz. The estate's vineyards are situated on the upper Rhine terrace on soil that was formed during the last Ice Age. The estate has 15 hectares of vineyard and has been working organically since 1983; it was biodynamically certified in 2006.

Gloriously bright and typical Merlot berry fruit characters emerge on the nose, underpinned with wild herbs and a hint of vanilla spice. Smoothly textured with fine, supple tannins supported by fresh acidity and ripe red and black hedgerow fruit. Perfect to drink now.

Food matches	Slow-cooked beef ragù or venison casserole
Price	£22.50 per bottle
How to serve	Serve at room temperature
Region	Pfalz, Germany
Grape variety	Merlot
Product code	V6206B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Grown in the Mandelgarten vineyard; sandstone-gravel and loess
Buyer	Katherine Dart MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

CHILEAN MERLOT

2014 SEÑORÍO AMEZOLA, RESERVA, BODEGAS AMEZOLA DE LA MORA



Amézola de la Mora is a small family-owned estate in Rioja Alavesa run by sisters Cristina and María Amézola. When they took on the winery after their father's death (1999), they were the youngest wine-producers in the region. They have done an outstanding job of combining tradition and innovation.

This is a classic Rioja, medium ruby with an intense nose of black cherry, damson and fresher notes of raspberry, complemented by exceptionally well-integrated notes of toasty vanilla and baking spices, a result of the 22 months spent in both French and American oak. Fine-grained tannins melt in the mouth for a smooth finish. Drink now to 2021.

Food matches	Lamb tagine, roast pork or charcuterie
Price	£22.50 per bottle
How to serve	Serve at room temperature
Region	Rioja, Spain
Grape variety	Tempranillo 85%, Mazuelo 10%, Graciano 5%
Product code	V6646B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	High-altitude, cooler climate
Buyer	Catriona Felstead MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

RIBERA DEL DUERO, OLD-VINE GARNACHA OR PRIMITIVO

2016 PÉTALOS, DESCENDIENTES DE J PALACIOS



In 1999, Álvaro Palacios – famous for having revolutionised the wine scene in Priorat – along with his nephew Ricardo arrived in Bierzo. The pair brought much-deserved attention to this old wine region, and were instrumental in its revival. Their releases are all from the Mencía grape.

Pétalos is produced from 60-year-old vines and is therefore an intensely concentrated wine. Deep ruby in colour, its nose displays generous – but not overripe – notes of red and black fruits, lifted by hints of violet and wild herbs. There is a minerality and hint of graphite which creates a velvet-like finish. Drink now to 2020.

Food matches	Roast lamb or charcuterie
Price	£18.50 per bottle
How to serve	Serve slightly chilled
Region	Bierzo, Spain
Grape variety	Mencía
Product code	V3386B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Steep slate slopes and rocky soils
Buyer	Catriona Felstead MW

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

CRU BEAUJOLAIS, CABERNET FRANC OR SCHIAVA FROM ALTO ADIGE, ITALY

2014 BOURGOGNE HAUTES CÔTES DE NUITS, DIGIOIA-ROYER



Digoia-Royer: the name may not trip off the tongue, but the wines dance across it. Run by Michel Digoia, this is a tiny estate based in Chambolle-Musigny. Michel has a small parcel of Chambolle and even smaller plots of Premier Cru Nuits-St Georges, but the majority of his holdings fall under the appellation of Bourgogne Rouge and Bourgogne Hautes Côtes de Nuits.

This wine is made from a single parcel, planted in the 1950s, whose altitude (a relatively lofty 350 metres) results in wines with crunchy acidity and a real sense of energy. On the nose, expect aromas of blackberry and cherry. The tannins have softened with a few years in bottle, but there's still satisfying grip to the palate, which makes this a rewarding match for meaty dishes. Drink now to 2024.

Food matches	Boeuf Bourguignon
Price	£24.95 per bottle
How to serve	Open 30 minutes before serving
Region	Burgundy, France
Grape variety	Pinot Noir
Product code	V3609B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Clay with pockets of hard limestone
Buyer	Adam Bruntlett

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

CRU BEAUJOLAIS – PERHAPS A MORGON

2016 CROZES-HERMITAGE, LES TROIS CHÊNES, DOMAINE EMMANUEL DARNAUD



Emmanuel Darnaud is one of the most likeable and enthusiastic *vignerons* in the Northern Rhône. He is also fortunate enough to have Bernard Faurie, the legendary Hermitage producer, as a father-in-law. This *cuvée*'s name refers to the fact that different vineyards' fruit is matured differently; in 2016, 50 percent was in new or one-year-old barrel, 30 percent in *tronconique* and the balance in older *barrique*.

This has an attractive nose dominated by tapenade, wood-smoke and blackberry fruit; on the palate there are additional notes of pepper and spice. Drink now to 2021.

Food matches	Peppered steak or saucisson sec
Price	£22.00 per bottle
How to serve	Decant and serve at room temperature
Region	Rhône, France
Grape variety	Syrah
Product code	V2372B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Granite and loess
Buyer	Fiona Hayes

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

ST JOSEPH AND OTHER RHÔNE REDS

2017 GRIOTTES DE BRÛLHIÉ, CHÂTEAU THIVIN



The Geoffroy family acquired Château Thivin in 1872, but the property dates from the 14th century. Despite such a rich heritage, it's difficult to believe the château's wines have ever been better than they are today. The best, including Les Griottes, hail from old vines on the vertiginous (up to 48 percent gradient) slopes of the volcanic Côte de Brouilly, and are a study in minerality.

Griottes (Morello cherries) were once grown on this parcel and – for me at least – there's a distinct cherry-stone character to this wine. Brûlhié is the ancient name for Brouilly. The grapes were partially de-stemmed prior to fermentation in huge oak *foudres* which allow a small degree of exchange with the atmosphere to add complexity to the finished product. Drink now to 2025.

Food matches	Charcuterie or beef carpaccio
Price	£22.95 per bottle
How to serve	Consider decanting for full effect
Region	Beaujolais, France
Grape variety	Gamay
Product code	V6459B
Style	Dry, medium-bodied red wine
Terroir	Steep slopes, with thin soils on blue granite
Buyer	Adam Bruntlett

Tasting notes

If you like this, you might like:

REDS FROM THE NORTHERN RHÔNE