We are delighted to offer an extensive range of fantastic wines from consultant œnologist Xavier Vignon. Over the last two decades, Xavier has forged a reputation as one of the southern Rhône’s top consultants and has delighted us with a ranged of wonderfully individual wines from the early release “Début” (long gone) to more recent cuvées such as “Anonyme”, “Sacrilege” and its marginally less controversial replacement, “SM”.

I had a socially distanced meeting with Xavier earlier in the summer and left with a couple of boxes of some of the most intriguing wines I have tasted this year including a Châteauneuf-du-Pape from 1972, another from 2001 to celebrate the year his son was born, two new wines from the “Arcane” range and both releases of “SM”, his north-south blend.

**About the wines**

Most of the wines in this offer are red but we have included two delightful – and inexpensive – white wines: a 2019 Côtes du Rhône and the “Petit Xavier” from the same vintage, the latter a blend including Rhône varietals alongside some Sauvignon which brings a very pleasant zing to the wine. Both are highly quaffable and offer exceptional value.

Otherwise, the red wines broadly fall into three categories. Starting with the fabulous “Arcane” range, this is a selection of cuvées intended to show what a *terroir* or grape variety can and should achieve in the region. At the top of the ladder is “Le Pape” an old-vine Grenache from Châteauneuf but there are other, more affordable Grenache wines in the range, some of which are already in stock but there are two new cuvées” “Le Fou”, a non-vintage (ie. multi-vintage – remember Xavier likes to have some fun with his creations) Grenache and “L’Etoile” which surely must be the best red wine ever to have come out of Beaumes-de-Venise. Syrah fans take note: there are only a few bottles of “Lune” remaining.

The other prestige range includes “1972”, an intriguing (if expensive) wine from that vintage. With a proportion of white grapes in the blend, as was customary half a century ago, acidity levels were sufficiently high to keep this wine wonderfully perky for all this time. It was without a doubt the most revelatory wine of the summer. “Ange” is another top-drawer Châteauneuf, as you would expect but for more affordable wines, my great value recommendations are the two editions of “SM”. These are made from more or less equal parts Septentrionale (ie. Northern Rhône) Syrah and Meridionale (Southern Rhòne) Grenache. The earlier edition, drinking fabulously well now, is from 2011 and 2012 whilst the later bottling is from 2015 and 2016. I thoroughly recommend a mixed now-and-later case of the two.

Everyday wines are not excluded from the range, of course. The 2017 Ventoux is Syrah-driven and punches well above its weight whilst the “100%” is the closest thing to the old “Début” cuvée made from a range of varietals and *terroirs*. Unlike “Début” though, everything is sourced from the region, hence its appellation status.

**Ordering wines**

If you would like to order any of the wines or have any questions about anything in the offer, please contact me. Otherwise, for pricing, please [click here](https://www.bigredwine.co.uk/Xavier_EP.pdf).