

Last week I enjoyed myself immensely, tasting through the 2018s at Chateau de Beaucastel. The good news is that this is a phenomenal vintage combining power with finesse across the range. The Chateuneufs offer stunning aromas and great balance, the Gigondas wines are silky and elegant and the Vinsobres round and opulent.

The bad news is that an attack of mildew reduced the yield to just 12hl/ha, down around 60% on normal years. This means our allocation is considerably lower than usual and prices of the *Crus* (Beaucastel, Coudoulet, Gigondas 'L'Argnee' and Clos des Tourelles) are massively reduced. However, quality is fantastic across the range so, more than ever, it is worth looking at the rest of the range where there are some fantastic wines at more affordable prices.

Because of the tiny allocations, we cannot guarantee that everyone can have everything they want. For the top wines, preference will be given to those ordering a range from the offer. We will aim to allocate by the end of next week.

**Vinsobres 'Les Cornuds'**

**£66/12 in bond**

A fantastic wine this year. A field blend with slightly more Syrah than Grenache, it is the Syrah that dominated with sweet black fruit and spice bursting through.

**Rasteau 'L'Andeol'**

**£78/12 in bond**

Sweeter fruit than the other wines – Rasteau is warmer than Gigondas or Vinsobres. Almost beguiling and certainly very welcoming.

**Gigondas 'La Gille'**

**£129/12 in bond**

Seamless is, perhaps, the best word to describe this gorgeous Gigondas which oozes red fruit and gentle tannins.

The *Crus*

**Gigondas 'L'Argnee'**

**£204/6 in bond**

100% Grenache from very old, pre-phylloxera vines planted in sandy soils, this is very cherry. Full-bodied and silky. Stunning.

**Gigondas 'Clos des Tourelles'**

**£204/6 in bond**

Even bigger than 'L'Argnee', this is a blend of 65% Grenache with 20% Mourvedre and 15% Syrah. Full-bodied yet it has the silky elegance of the 2018 Gigondas wines from the Perrins.

**Cotes du Rhone 'Coudoulet de Beaucastel'**

**£141/12 in bond**

Medium-full bodied and elegant with classic Coudoulet characters of red-black fruits, *garrigue* and spice. It should drink well from a fairly young age.

**Chateauneuf-du-Pape, Chateau de Beaucastel**      **£270/6 in bond**

More Mourvedre than usual which is obvious from the outset: blue-black fruits, meaty and very concentrated on the nose which follows through to the very end which finishes (eventually) fabulously. Intense and extremely satisfying.