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FRENCH MEDITERRANEAN REDS



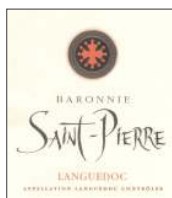
The Mediterranean climate with its mild winters and warm dry summers is the perfect holiday destination. It is also makes it ideal for growing grapes, especially along the arc of coastline running from Perpignan to Montpellier. This is France's Languedoc region and ensuring ripeness on the hot, fertile plains is not a problem. The difficulty, at least for quality minded producers, is avoiding cooked flavours and excessive alcohol levels. This had led to a move into the hills, where the cooling effect of altitude and the limitations of poor, shallow soils combine to produce premium quality grapes with more elegance and balance.

In the last thirty years passionate *vignerons* aiming to make the best possible wines have shown that particular areas of this extensive region can produce outstanding wines. Some of these, like Saint Chinian, have become appellations recognised in their own right. Others like Pic Saint Loup and Montpeyroux remain relatively unknown and so comparative bargains.

This focus offer brings together four Mediterranean wines that show what can be achieved by dedicated and talented producers on some of the special *terroirs* of the Languedoc. These are wines of character and individuality and we highly recommend them.

BARONNIE ST. PIERRE Rouge 2008

LANGUEDOC 13%



Established in 1994, Signatures du Sud is a negociant operation based in Plaissan west of Montpellier. They buy grapes to make wine to sell under their own label but also produce a number of domaine wines from properties that are simply too small to do it themselves. Baronnie Saint-Pierre is a blend of 60% Grenache and 40% Syrah from vineyards around the village of Villeveyrac north of Sete. Skilled oenologist Roger Jean Jean (his real name!) selects the grape and oversees the winemaking. The result is a modern, fruit-driven wine that is less expressive of the *terroir* than the other wines featured here, but is extremely enjoyable nevertheless.

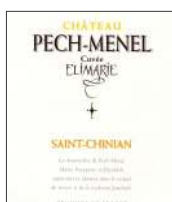
Deep plum/purple colour with intense aromas of black pepper, cherry, damson and liquorice. Full of ripe, redcurrant and red cherry flavours with notes of plum and vanilla spice and an under-pinning savoury core provides freshness. Young, robust and slightly earthy, this is a hearty, mouth-filling red.

At Peak Now - 2012

FR3028R £6.99

Chateau PECH MENEL 'Cuvée Elimarie' 2007

SAINT CHINIAN 13.5%



Ch. Pech Menel is a 55ha domaine in the southern part of St. Chinian, some 20 miles north of Narbonne. Only 20ha of south-facing land is planted to vines, mainly Syrah, with some Mourvedre and Grenache. Most of the undulating terrain has been left as natural 'garrigue' with pines, oaks, lavender and thyme. The chateau is owned and run by two sisters, Marie-Francoise and Elisabeth Poux, who were born there and manage the land in a natural and respectful way. This is not a place of technology and innovation but of natural, un-manipulated wines that express the region's distinctive *terroir*.

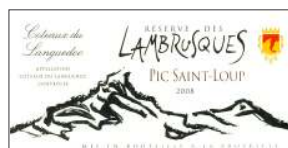
Complex aromas of redcurrant, damson and blackberry with notes of vanilla oak, pain grillé and Asian spices. Supple and generously flavoured with plenty of summer fruits and sweet liquorice. Lovely rounded mouth-feel and lingering, gently spicy finish. There is the structure and balance to age well, but this is quite delicious now.

At Peak Now - 2012

FR3667R £8.49

Domaine des LAMBRUSQUES Pic Saint Loup 2008

COTEAUX DU LANGUEDOC 13.5%



Pic St Loup is a small, extremely high quality sub-region of the Languedoc, high up in the hills north of Montpellier. Here in the village of Claret (!) you will find Domaine des Lambrusques. This is the modern face of the very ancient Domaine de Villeneuve, purchased in 1980 by Myriam and Christian Florac and then extended in 1989 by the inclusion of vineyards from Myriam's father. Since 2005 the 40ha of vines and garrigue have been managed by their daughter Anne-Lise and it is her ability and enthusiasm that is shown in this wine. She is a very talented and ambitious winemaker making impressive *terroir*-driven wines, at a very reasonable price.

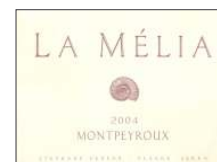
Deep purple colour with lovely perfumed aromas of ripe plums, violets, black cherry, leather and spice. Soft and very fruity on the palate on the palate with crushed berry fruit flavours, some savoury tannins and notes of wild garrigue. The finish is long and spicy with notes of white pepper.

At Peak Now - 2013

FR3658R £8.99

Stephane VEDEAU 'La Melia' 2004

MONTPEYROUX 13.5%



Renowned winemaker Stephane Vedeau makes lots of different wines but La Melia is something rather special. It comes from a small vineyard owned by his wife, situated in the over-achieving Languedoc Cru of Montpeyroux, high up in the hills north of Agde. From the ancient vines planted at over 1000 feet he has set out to produce the most fantastic wine possible and dare we say achieved it. If this blend of Grenache, Carignan, Syrah and Mourvedre was from Chateaufeu du Pape, as with Stephane's Deux Rhones, it would be at least twice the price. Bottled without fining or filtration this is a wine that may be expensive for the Languedoc, but shows the heights that can be achieved.

Aromas of ripe cherries and other red fruits, Mediterranean garrigue and minerals. Velvety mouth-filling flavours of bramble fruits, spicy liquorice and wild herbs. Rich, rounded, yet fresh and elegant with fine tannins and long aromatic finish. Lovely wine.

At Peak Now - 2013

FR3564R £10.99

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