

## Dom du Joncier, Le Classique 2006 Lirac Rouge

18 Nov 2008 by Jancis Robinson

From £6.83, €10, Can \$19.99 and \$22.25

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I'm highlighting this hugely appealing, well- distributed southern Rhône red because, of use to many British wine lovers at least, it is currently on special offer at 192 Waitrose supermarkets, down from £8.99 to £7.19 a bottle until 2 Dec if bought in store, or just £81.96 a dozen online from Waitrose Direct, which works out at £6.93 a bottle. Lirac can now offer some great value alternatives to Châteauneuf- du- Pape (and, in pink colourway, Tavel) and seems to have outgrown its old tendency to flab.

This bottling, **Dom du Joncier, Le Classique 2006 Lirac Rouge** is made from a selection of grapes from vines more than 30 years old on sandy loam, which yields this particularly round and appealing wine so full of beguiling fruit. It has lots of intriguing spicy character on the nose with a hint of beef extract, and then on the finish there is the chew of dry- grown fruit. With all the hoop- la surrounding the 2007 vintage in the southern Rhône, don't forget how many really lovely, and probably more forward, wines were also made in 2006. You can find my extensive tasting notes on well over 220 2006 Châteauneuf - du- Papes via the list of [Tasting articles by region](#).

Next week I'll be in the southern Rhône tasting the 2007s, although as purple pager Laurence Bernes has pointed out in this [2007 Rhône thread](#) on the forum, the Parker effect has already seen prices of Clos des Papes 2007 double.

The shortcut to value in the southern Rhône is to steer regretfully clear of these big fish and pick out the best wines among the minnows such as this great buy. But be warned. Summers are hot in this part of the world. Vines are traditionally pruned low, which only increases the ripening effect. Wines from down here tend to be pretty potent and this one is 14.5%. I would drink it with pleasure, and care, any time over the next three or four years with a rich wintry dish.

The blend is 60% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre, 5% Cinsault and 5% Carignan and it was fermented in trendy (again) cement tanks for four weeks before being matured in large oak foudres for six months. Waitrose, whose buying team carefully analyse fining materials cited etc, assure us that the wine is suitable for both vegetarians and vegans, although I think they will have to be creative in choosing suitable foods to eat with this wine. Lentils?

Marine Roussel of Dom du Joncier also produces a rather cheaper, lighter cuvée called **Le Gourmand** with a little more Cinsault in it and a Mourvèdre- dominated **Les Muses** that Simon Taylor of Stone, Vine & Sun, which is currently selling the 2005 for £11.95, calls 'poor man's Bandol'.

Go ye, and profit. The wine is currently also available in France, Holland, Canada and the US.

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