

Bernard Grippa, Les Pins 2007 St- Péray

20 Apr 2010 by Jancis Robinson

From €13, £17.25

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I first enjoyed this wine in the fashionable new brasserie Thoumieux in Paris over dinner with Tim 'Juveniles' Johnston and his wife Stephanie. (See [here](#) for Michael Steinberger's description of it in a recent *Financial Times* article.) I was impressed then by how well it stood up to our four different very vivid first courses. Even though it is now well into its third year, it is only approaching the peak of its performance, I'd say. Very full bodied but with great vivacity too - much livelier than most Marsanne- dominated wines grown somewhere as hot as Australia or California, for example. In this mid- Rhône Valley instance, about a fifth of the blend is the nervier Roussanne.

I was delighted to see the wine again in a recent line- up of finds from the Rhône organised by first- rate wine- finder Vine Trail, the UK importer who hand picks his selection at the domaines themselves rather than depending on brokers and agents (see [Hand picked in the Rhône](#) for my notes on a few dozen of the Vine Trail current selection). I ended up giving the wine 17 points out of 20, a sign of real enthusiasm on my part, and thought the wine would still be drinking well in a couple of years' time. See [here](#) for Vine Trail's technical specification of this wine. The image of a budding vine is also from [Vine Trail's website](#).

Second time around, in more analytical mode, I noted a particularly intense mineral nose with more than a hint of lime - though again I thought it best to drink this wine with a meal. Although it's 'only' 13% alcohol, it is too full bodied to wallop as an aperitif, I think. But it really does serve as yet another illustration of the dramatic recent improvement in dry whites from the Rhône valley (see for example my review of [white 2006 Châteauneufs](#)).

For the moment the wine is available only in France and the UK according to wine- searcher.com but I would be surprised if it didn't make it across the Atlantic. Grippa's Figuier bottling of 2006 St- Péray is widely available in the US and is also in Japan and Switzerland.

I'm thrilled to present this fine proof that St- Péray does not have to sparkle from the acknowledged top producer of the appellation in a great vintage for the Rhône. A fine alternative to white burgundy...

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