

Monty's French Red 2007 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes

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Regular visitors to this site will know that I do my utmost to cater to those tens of thousands of you who live outside Britain. Every now and then however I find a wine that's available only in the UK and is of sufficient interest to be chosen as a wine of the week.

Monty's French Red 2007 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes

is one of these. Virtually all wines have some sort of story but the story of this particular wine is of such interest that it is to be told over six half-hour programmes on Channel 4 in the UK from 8.30pm on Thursday 4 Sep in the tv series *Chateau Monty*. It's not the earliest site and the graphics are not the best thing about it but from what I have seen of the first episode it should prove riveting viewing for anyone remotely interested in wine. The fact that Monty is so easy on the eye doesn't do any harm either, and presumably helped to pique the interest of the producers Tiger Aspect.

Like all these 'weekly' affairs, the focus doesn't quite hold water, or wine. Specially Monty, after years as a UK-based wine writer specialising in organic and biodynamic wines, is asking everything he has into writing a email straight in the form [JancisRobinson.com](#) - conveniently close to Eric Lapeyre and Gerard Gaulty of Le Zouls, who have been his biodynamic mentors. Doubtless they will feature in future episodes. Of course the commentary and associated literature, which includes a book, makes much of 'the BIC garden' and 'he has only 18 months to prove himself', 'will he lose everything?' Of course he won't, you silly swine. This series will make him a household name.

Those who remember Britain's best loved wine merchant, the late [John James](#)

will find scenes of him pouring some of Monty's rather potent and lunar cycles in his inevitably larger than life way particularly poignant. I hope that the series will eventually be shown outside the UK. It deserves to be for its managing to humanise the processes of wine-growing, albeit with a, probably necessary, quality bias.

This Coteaux-based wine was fermented initially by carbonic maceration (in an enclosed vat) and then given light pumpkins (squishing the mud over the cap of skins) towards the end of fermentation, thereby 'adding Saccharomyces to Saccharomyces', as Monty puts it. But it is all the careful biodynamic work in the vineyard that really created the wine and the tv series. You can't have spreading municipal compost from nearby Puygiron plus a bit of farm manure and horse shit. All operations, including budding, were performed according to the most propitious dates on the lunar calendar. Etc. About a fifth of the wine is made up of a blend of the other varieties planted in this vineyard high up in the fashionable Agly Valley in Roussillon: Syrah, Grenache and the white Macabeus. Purple pages can access Monty's own story of how he grew and made it [here](#).

I really liked the wine. It's not grand and it's not ambitious. It's nice, truly, thoroughly healthy, naturalising southern French red that has none of the usual hardness of Coteaux (unless from very, very old vines). I would gladly drink it any time over the next six months. It tastes so round and ripe that I had to enquire whether it has any perceptible residual sugar. It doesn't and is a very serviceable 12.5% alcohol.

This debut vintage can be bought, at £7.99 or £8.9 a dozen, from Adams of Suffolk and Richmond-upon-Thames. [Click here](#)

for a list of all Adams stores with contact details. Robinson of London 118 will also be selling it at £7.95.

[Click here](#)

to order. If I know this link is going a bit further than I normally do but I have no commercial connection with the wine, Monty or Adams whatsoever. Just thought it might be helpful.

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