

# James Molesworth's Recommended Wines From the Northern Rhône

For complete reviews, see the Buying Guide of this or previous issues or [www.winespectator.com](http://www.winespectator.com).  
An alphabetical listing of all wines tasted for this report begins on page 228 of this issue's Buying Guide.

## TOP 2003 NORTHERN RHÔNE REDS

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> <i>Ermitage L'Ermite 2003</i> Shows the character of the vintage. A wall of cocoa, tar and bacony toast covers the exotically ripe plum, blackberry and boysenberry fruit. Dense and muscular.	99	\$300
<b>JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE</b> <i>Hermitage 2003</i> Captivating aromas of exotic fig and boysenberry. Delivers waves of dark plum and black currant fruit. The greatest young red I have ever tasted.	99	\$250
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> <i>Ermitage Le Méal 2003</i> Terrific focus to this extremely dense red, with a massive core of raspberry and red currant fruit holding sway over mineral, mocha-infused toast, floral and truffle notes.	98	\$255
<b>DELAS</b> <i>Hermitage Les Bessards 2003</i> Tremendous depth of fruit right from the start, with layers of freshly crushed blackberry, fig paste and currant confiture. Entrancing finish.	97	\$146
<b>DELAS</b> <i>Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2003</i> Extremely dark, showing blackberry and fig fruit, yet remarkably lush and pure, with mineral, coffee and mocha notes. The exotic fruit notes reverberate through the finish.	96	\$146
<b>PAUL JABOULET AÎNÉ</b> <i>Hermitage La Chapelle 2003</i> Deceptively graceful at first, yet quickly delivers a torrent of fruit—blackberry, boysenberry, black currant—with flavors of mocha, mineral, tar and violet.	96	\$155
<b>JEAN-PAUL &amp; JEAN-LUC JAMET</b> <i>Côte-Rôtie 2003</i> Terrific aromas of game, roasted plum and espresso lead into a ripe, full-throttle palate of black currant, fig and tar. Long and smoky, with a piercing minerality.	96	\$70
<b>R. ROSTAING</b> <i>Côte-Rôtie Côte Blonde 2003</i> Supersilky and refined, showing layer upon layer of ripe red and dark berry fruit, with anise, lavender and white pepper notes. Beautiful balance and elegance.	96	\$220
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> <i>Ermitage Le Pavillon 2003</i> Zesty up front, with lots of wild dark and red berry fruit. Gives way to bass notes of cocoa powder, bacony toast and black truffle. Big, muscular finish.	95	\$265
<b>YANN CHAVE</b> <i>Hermitage 2003</i> Fine expression of Syrah. Blackberry, cassis, mineral and sanguine notes pump through the dark, alluring midpalate, with cocoa, grilled beef and truffle.	95	\$76
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> <i>St.-Joseph Vignes de l'Hospice 2003</i> Lots of sweet spice and mocha-infused toast, with black currant, fig, game, bacon and briar. Long, velvety, exotic finish. Combines tremendous power and finesse.	95	\$90
<b>R. ROSTAING</b> <i>Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2003</i> Silky and long, with very dark cherry, cocoa and game flavors backed by mineral and grilled herb notes. Tight now, but has depth and complexity for the longer haul.	95	\$165
<b>TARDIEU-LAURENT</b> <i>Côte-Rôtie 2003</i> Modern in style, with layers of chocolate and bacony toast, but with an immense core of black currant and fig fruit. A very, very large wine.	95	\$73

## TOP 2004 NORTHERN RHÔNE WHITES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>FRANÇOIS VILLARD</b> <i>Condrieu DePoncins 2004</i> A bold, honeyed version, with very lush, almost oily, layers of mango and guava, followed by captivating quince, anise and persimmon flavors. Gorgeous.	95	\$55
<b>YVES CUILLERON</b> <i>Condrieu Vertige 2004</i> Big and powerful. Ripe apricot, star fruit and persimmon, with lots of anise and floral notes. Great length and depth.	94	\$120
<b>GEORGES VERNAY</b> <i>Condrieu Coteau de Vernon 2004</i> Round up front, with layers of pear, anise, fig and mineral flavors. Very pure, with the minerality really shining in the end.	94	\$75
<b>LES VINS DE VIENNE</b> <i>Condrieu La Chambée 2004</i> An intense minerality runs through the bright pear, apple, anise and peach flavors. Chiseled precision from start to finish, with impeccable balance and purity. Very long.	94	\$56
<b>FRANÇOIS VILLARD</b> <i>Condrieu Le Grand Vallon 2004</i> Pure and very racy, with apricot, anise, acacia honey, pear and fig flavors. Very long fruit- and mineral-filled finish.	94	\$50
<b>PHILIPPE FAURY</b> <i>Condrieu 2004</i> Very plump, almost sweet, with fig, Bosc pear, anise and honeydew flavors that glide through the long, lush, creamy finish. Lingering fennel hint keeps it honest.	93	\$42
<b>ANDRÉ PERRET</b> <i>Condrieu Chéry 2004</i> Rich yet very bright, with a stony spine keeping the apricot, white peach and almond flavors racing along.	93	\$75
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> <i>Hermitage White Chante-Alouette 2004</i> Lovely mouthfeel, with creamy peach, almond cream, macadamia nut and acacia blossom notes that glide effortlessly through the finish. Nice minerally encore.	92	\$70
<b>JEAN-LUC COLOMBO</b> <i>Condrieu Amour de Dieu 2004</i> Very pure, with a lovely, creamy mouthfeel. Sports melon, mango, peach and butter notes, with a fine minerality buried on the finish.	92	\$66
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> <i>Condrieu La Doriane 2004</i> Tropical for the vintage, with butter and mango flavors leading the way, followed by hints of almond and toast. Round and fat. Quite showy in style.	92	\$90
<b>R. ROSTAING</b> <i>Condrieu La Bonnette 2004</i> Delightfully plump, with juicy anise, pineapple, mango and quince fruit backed by a fine minerality.	92	\$65
<b>GEORGES VERNAY</b> <i>Condrieu Les Chaillées de l'Enfer 2004</i> Very bright and floral, with a strong minerality. Shows fig, pear and honeysuckle flavors. Lovely purity and length.	92	\$75
<b>LES VINS DE VIENNE</b> <i>Condrieu Cépées Caties 2004</i> An exotic stickie. Maple syrup in color, with a green edge. Sports intense date, green tea, clove and chocolate-covered orange peel flavors and a long, vibrant finish.	92	\$49 500ml

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### TOP 2004 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>CLOS DES PAPES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2004 Refined, with a pure, silky current of raspberry ganache and cassis. Serious structure, yet it's all about balance and finesse.	96	\$80
<b>DOMAINE DE LA MORDORÉE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>La Reine des Bois 2004</b> A powerhouse for the vintage, with loads of blackberry and black currant fruit. Marvelously balanced despite its weight.	95	\$135
<b>DOMAINE DES RELAGNES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Petits <b>Pieds d'Armand 2004</b> A huge core of fig, black currant and plum preserve, with mocha, dark bittersweet cocoa and tar. Stays lush and pure.	95	\$73
<b>CHARLES BRAVAY</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Domaine de Ferrand 2004</b> Very pure. A big beam of raspberry and boysenberry confiture runs through the middle, with licorice, violet and graphite.	94	\$55
<b>PAUL COULON &amp; FILS</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Boisrenard 2004 Silky and pure. Beautiful black cherry, currant and blackberry fruit, with plenty of tobacco, toast, mineral and graphite.	94	\$85
<b>DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Vieilles Vignes 2004</b> Packed with fruit—dark plum, boysenberry, blueberry—along with graphite, black tea, sweet smoke and licorice.	94	\$100
<b>DOMAINE DE MARCOUX</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Vieilles Vignes 2004</b> Round and supple up front, with raspberry and fig fruit. Long finish shows kirsch, mineral, graphite and dark chocolate.	94	\$165
<b>ROGER SABON &amp; FILS</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Prestige 2004 Very supple, with pure, Burgundy-like notes of red and black cherry, raspberry and incense. Long, supersilky finish.	94	\$65
<b>DOMAINE ST.-PRÉFERT</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Auguste Favier Réserve 2004</b> Silky, layered raspberry, boysenberry and fig fruit pumps from start to finish, with notes of spice, tobacco and mineral.	94	\$45
<b>PIERRE USSEGLIO &amp; FILS</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Cuvée de mon Aïeul 2004</b> Packed with pure, ripe fruit—raspberry, boysenberry, fig—along with cocoa, tar and violet notes. Long, rich, dark finish.	94	\$93
<b>LE VIEUX DONJON</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2004 Tight on the nose, but with a beam of red and black fruits. Hoisin sauce, olive, cocoa, tar and raspberry ganache.	94	\$45
<b>DAUMEN PÈRE &amp; FILS</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Domaine de la Vieille Julienne 2004</b> Fig, blackberry and black currant fruit, with racy acidity and fine-grained tannins that are the hallmark of 2004.	93	\$55
<b>FÉLICIEEN DIFFONTY &amp; FILS</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Cuvée du Vatican Sixtine Réserve 2004</b> Offers a gorgeous blast of pure blueberry and boysenberry fruit, with a round, creamy texture. Sails along beautifully.	93	\$61
<b>DOMAINE FERRANDO</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Colombis 2004 Velvety texture from beginning to end, with raspberry, fig, mineral and spice flavors and hints of shiso leaf.	93	\$55

### TOP 2004 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPES (cont.)

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>DOMAINE FONT DE MICHELLE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Cuvée Etienne Gonnet 2004</b> Rich and smoky. Shows coffee, truffle and tar notes up front, with plenty of plum, black currant and fig fruit.	93	\$69
<b>DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Chaupin 2004</b> Pure and driven. Great acidity moves the red licorice, plum and raspberry fruit along, with mineral and hot stone notes.	93	\$60
<b>DOMAINE ST.-PRÉFERT</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape <b>Collection Charles Giraud 2004</b> Silky, with racy red cherry and red currant fruit woven with sandalwood, mineral and herbes de Provence. Long finish.	93	\$55

### TOP VALUES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>PAUL AUTARD</b> Côtes du Rhône 2004 Racy style. Lots of black cherry, raspberry, tobacco, tar and game, with a smoky, mineral finish. Nice purity and drive.	89	\$13
<b>CHAPELLE-ST.-ARNOUX</b> Côtes du Ventoux 2004 Juicy, with briar, raspberry and mineral notes that run through the finish. Shows solid fruit, with a nice tug of earth.	89	\$8
<b>PERRIN &amp; FILS</b> Côtes du Rhône-Villages 2004 A big, modern-style wine. Loaded with dark, plush fruit—black currant, blackberry, fig—with mocha, mineral and tar.	89	\$15
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Côtes du Rhône Belleruche 2005 Juicy and pure, with the vintage's textbook raspberry and licorice flavor profile, backed by a graphite hint on the finish.	88	\$12
<b>LES COTEAUX À CAIRANNE</b> Côtes du Rhône-Villages <b>Val Bruyère 2004</b> Bouncy black cherry and plum fruit is backed by lots of pepper, tobacco and toast. Fresh, juicy finish. Tasty.	88	\$10
<b>GILLES FERRAN</b> Côtes du Rhône Les Sablières 2004 Racy, with lots of graphite, raspberry and cocoa notes running through the juicy finish.	88	\$12
<b>PAUL JABOULET AÏNÉ</b> Côtes du Rhône Parallèle 45 2005 Pure and fresh, with purple and blue fruits followed by tar, violet and mineral. Open-knit, but has grip. Delicious.	88	\$12
<b>GABRIEL MEFFRE</b> Côtes du Rhône La Châsse du Pape <b>Prestige 2004</b> Red plum and currant fruit, with a juicy texture. Shows tobacco and mineral on the moderately structured finish.	88	\$10