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Subject: Southern and Northern Rhone Tasting
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To: tasting@santiamwine.com

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Good Evening, Join us for this epic wine tasting! We have never done these two regions together before. Bring your family and friends!

Special Food pairing: Double stuffed Mushrooms!

When: Friday, November 13th don't let this bother you!

Time: 4-8 P.M.

Cost: Full Pour \$30 Half Pour \$15

More about the Rhone Regions below.

The Wines:

2010 E. Guigal Châteauneuf du Pape \$50 Southern Rhone

A stunning effort and showing the class of the vintage, the 2010 Châteauneuf du Pape is comprised of 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah and 10% Mourvedre that spent 24 months in foudre prior to bottling. Rich, textured and medium to full-bodied, with ample black cherry, olive tapenade and subtle meatiness, this traditional effort stays pure and lively, with fine tannin emerging on the finish. It can be consumed now or cellared for over a decade. **93 points parker**

A solid, brick-house version, with roasted mesquite and alder notes providing the frame while the steeped plum, raspberry and black currant fruit core waits in reserve. A charcoal accent pins down the finish. Should open steadily with cellaring, though this will likely maintain a pleasantly rugged feel. Best from 2017 through 2025. **92 Points Wine Spectator**

2011 St Cosme Cote Rotie \$65 Northern Rhone

The 2011 Cote Rotie offers the classic perfume of the appellation, with savory meatiness, cracked pepper, rendered bacon fat, currant bud and lavender-like qualities all soaring from the glass. Coming mostly from schist soils (think Cote Brune-esque), it shows thrilling minerality on the palate, with medium to full-bodied richness, polished tannin and serious length. Count me a fan and this top-notch effort will evolve gracefully for 10-12+ years.

2012 Sang des Cailloux "Azalais" Vacqueras \$30 Southern Rhone

Bright ruby. Powerful, smoke-accented aromas of cherry compote, blueberry and licorice are lifted by peppery spices and a subtle floral nuance. Sweet, smooth and expansive, conveying a velvety texture to its ripe cherry and dark berry flavors. The licorice quality comes back strong on the finish, which lingers with very good smoky persistence.

90 Points Vinous

2012 Clos de Cauzaux Gigondas \$33 Southern Rhone

70% Grenache, 15% Syrah, 15% Mourvèdre.

Aromas of pepper, red fruits, are intense and persistent; very interesting to discover young. Its robe is steady, stable, the tannins silky, some say feminine compared to the more rustic Vacqueyras.

2012 St Cosme St Joseph \$36 Northern Rhone

The 2012 St Joseph has a northern St Joseph style in its perfumed, elegant bouquet of violets, olive, smoked bacon and peppery dark raspberry-like fruit. It's medium-bodied, seamless and lightly textured, and will have upward of a decade of longevity. **90 Points Robert Parker**

2012 Beurenard Rasteau \$20 Southern Rhone

The 2012 Rasteau is a solid value and offers plenty of black cherry, scorched earth and some meatiness in its medium-bodied, focused, straightforward personality. Made from 80% Grenache and 20% Syrah and aged 12 months in both foudre and barrels, drink it over the coming 5-6 years. **88 Points Wine Advocate**

About the Rhone Region of France:

Southern Rhone:

This is the region of France's most user-friendly wines, and, with Bordeaux, an important source of appellation contrôlée wine. Côtes du Rhône is south-east France's warmer, richer, spicier answer to the dry austerity of AC Bordeaux. The wines of the southern Rhône are France's most alcoholic, with 14-15% by no means uncommon for its most famous appellation, Châteauneuf-du-Pape (and no chaptalisation, or extra alcohol from added sugar, is allowed this far south).

Perhaps it is the alcohol that makes these southern Rhône reds so easy to appreciate. Perhaps it is the openly fruity character of the Grenache grape, which dominates here, concentrated by the relatively low yields forced upon it by the stony soils and low rainfall. Perhaps it's because the southern Rhône is the gateway to Provence, a land of olive trees, cicadas, sunshine and Impressionist summer landscapes.

The wines made in this seductive countryside are, contrarily, best drunk in much cooler climates. They can seem head-thumpingly inappropriate when drunk in the place and season that produces them (although the small proportion of rosés and dry whites made in the southern Rhône solve this problem - see below).

The southern Rhône is an important hunting ground for the merchants of the northern Rhône, and a significant proportion of the wines made here are shipped north in bulk to be sold with a Tain or Tournon address on the label. Co-operative wineries are also extremely important here.

Northern Rhone:

It's not difficult to see why vine-growing is relatively uncommon on the steep, wooded banks of the Rhône south of Lyons. These vineyards, probably the oldest in France, have had to be etched into the mountainside on narrow terraces (not unlike port country in the Douro) and at dizzying gradients. Some are so steep that pulley systems have to be used for grapes and equipment as in Switzerland. This, furthermore, is countryside that has now been fully invaded by industry and is well-adapted to other, easier crops such as fruit trees on the plateaux above the river. To grow vines in the northern Rhône's only commercially viable sites, the ones that catch the sun for long enough to ripen grapes fully, you have either to inherit an established vineyard (usually on the right bank) or to be sure of fetching a high price for the resulting wine.

The great majority of wine made here is made from the Syrah grape, and the region's most famous wines are the deep-flavoured, long-lived reds Hermitage and the theoretically more fragrant and delicate Côte Rôtie.

The most famous producers of the northern Rhône are family enterprises which vinify their own grapes but also buy in grapes and wine the length of the entire Rhône valley. The three biggest are Marcel Guigal of Côte Rôtie, whose single vineyard wines are sought after worldwide: Michel Chapoutier who practises

biodynamic viticulture; and, another Hermitage specialist, Paul Jaboulet Aîné, sold by the Jaboulet family to the Frey family of Ch La Lagune in Bordeaux in 2005 .They each have their own vineyards but buy in extensively from the hundreds of smallholders who still cultivate these physically demanding vineyards. As elsewhere, an increasing number of these smallholders are now bottling their own wine and their challenge, along with that of an increasing number of ambitious newcomers to the region, has done nothing but good for the overall quality of Rhône wine.

Côte Rôtie is in fact not just one but a series of 'roasted slopes' folded above the little town of Ampuis. Only those facing south or south east on the schists of this right bank of the river are worth the extreme discomfort of cultivating them and, especially, picking their produce. Those to the south are collectively known as the Côte Blonde and the wines they produce supposedly mature rather earlier than those produced on the Côte Brune to the north, although traditionally the wines from these areas have been blended. (There are vineyards on the flatter land above these slopes but they are entitled only to the generic Côtes du Rhône appellation, which very much more commonly applies to wines made in the southern Rhône.)

One man has made a name for himself and indeed the whole appellation by flying in the face of Côte Rôtie convention. Marcel Guigal's special bottlings of La Mouline, La Landonne and La Turque, the so-called 'La-La wines', have become some of the most sought-after bottles in the world, thanks to their low yields and uniquely long maturation in new oak, which make them massively appealing in youth as well as promising an exciting old age. Guigal makes a fourth special bottling of Côte Rôtie above his regular bottling labelled Brune et Blonde named after the manor of his native town, the grand Château d'Ampuis, which he now owns.

Côte Rôtie is stereotypically distinguished from Hermitage by its perfume, which is in some cases due to the inclusion of a small proportion of white Viognier grapes (the same as those grown in the neighboring appellation of Condrieu), but in practice most Côte Rôtie is 100 per cent Syrah. The appellation's vines are trained to help withstand the twin local dangers of wind damage and soil erosion, with pairs of vines staked to meet in a point, making the roasted slopes look as though they are covered in Christmas trees. Some other reliable producers of Côte Rôtie are Gilles Barge, Bernard Burgaud, Clusel-Roch, Lvet, Jamet, Ogier, Rostaing, Jean-Michel Stéphan and Vidal-Fleury (the merchant house for which Marcel Guigal's father once worked as cellar master but which now belongs to Guigal).

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