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Subject: Affordable Luxury: my finest French finds!
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To: The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

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The BrightWines Beacon for 7/22/23: Affordable Luxury, my finest French wine finds!

My annual “Bastille Day and Tour de France” midsummer feature on French wines is underway, and will be hitting it’s apex next week! Over the past week I’ve received shipments of dozens of new French wines, and well over a hundred cases of exciting fine wines from France have arrived into stock here in July. Last year’s version of this feature included fifty different French finds, and while we’re not quite up to that number just yet this year - there is MORE to come next week yet too! My goal is to be able to send out the FULL LIST of French wines, either as a PDF or as an extensive newsletter listing, sometime early next week - and I’ll be highlighting French wines for the rest of this month!

I need more time to go through this week’s shipments and to research the details on all these great new wines. This feature is the result of about a month’s worth (or more, in some cases) of research and sampling of French wines availability with all of my suppliers of French wines. It takes a while, as you can imagine. I have tasted well over 100 different wines from France this summer, probably far more in fact. Reds and whites and roses and sparklings. Some good, some bad. Some great some boring. Some that are too expensive for their pedigree or vintage, some that are worth every penny regardless of their price. And of course, I’ve tasted everything in between!

So how will I ever be able to decide WHICH wines to feature?? And perhaps more importantly, how will I ever be able to write a newsletter that covers ALL of the great wines I have decided to bring into stock here at BrightWines?!? Well, it may be a lot of work but I will get it done... as I’ve done every year for over 20 years worth of French wine features here. As you probably know, my mission statement here - as stated on my website - is that “BrightWines seeks out wines that offer the highest quality for the price, regardless of whether that price is \$10 or \$50 per bottle” which is why motto is that The Right Wines are BrightWines! And that has been my guiding principle for selecting wines for this annual feature.

Last weekend we got the wheels rolling on this tour de France with “les Vins neuf” which highlighted 9 new wines as part of a “baker’s dozen” of 13 different French wines in-stock now. note: I still have stock available of most, but not all, of those wines (see last weekend’s newsletter). THIS weekend I am going to narrow the focus a bit, and tell you about the finest of my recent French finds! Wines that really impressed me, in the category I call “Affordable Luxury.”

**** HIGHLIGHTS include:**

great new **Red Burgundy in two styles (with great ratings) priced from \$25.99 to \$35.99 per bottle**, plus a fantastic **White Burgundy from a 1er Cru (premier cru) vineyard drinking at peak form** and just \$31.99 per bottle. I’ve also found a **prime-drinking Cru Bourgeois Haut-Medoc Bordeaux** owned by (and made to the same standards as) a top-flight classified-growth Margaux chateau priced at \$29.99 per bottle, and I’ve got a very impressive **new Rhone red too for just \$21.99 per bottle**, and MORE...

read BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the **details on ALL five of these FANTASTIC new French finds**, and others too!

THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours this weekend and next week during this focus on France

**** SATURDAY July 22nd: OPEN from 10:30am until 5pm** for order pickups

BrightWines will be OPEN this Saturday/tomorrow for order pickups from this newsletter or other recent newsletters. email orders are preferred, just reply to this newsletter or contact Dave and be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so I can reply and prepare accordingly.

**** SUNDAY July 23rd: CLOSED** per usual

**** MONDAY & WEDNESDAY** weekday summer hours: **OPEN from 11am until at least 5:30pm**
BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours next week for order pickups from this newsletter or other recent newsletters. email orders are preferred, just reply to this newsletter or contact Dave and be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so I can reply and prepare accordingly.

**** TUESDAY & THURSDAY** weekday summer hours: OPEN from 11am until about 5:15pm
BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours next week for order pickups from this newsletter or other recent newsletters. email orders are preferred, just reply to this newsletter or contact Dave and be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so I can reply and prepare accordingly.

**** next FRIDAY and SATURDAY:** OPEN from 10:30am on the weekends
Stay tuned for next week's newsletter with MORE great French wine features, with the FULL LIST of French finds, continuing through the month of July!

BRIGHT LIGHTS: five fantastic new French finds, and more!

These are simply the best wines I've tasted from France over the course of this month-long, or longer, process of selecting wines for this feature. Sure, there have been some very impressive big-ticket wines I've sampled - several just recently, in fact. But these wines are the ones that impressed me the most as being the BEST quality for for their category and price-range. They are all truly impressive, yet affordable, luxuries!

**** Red Burgundy: impressive, luxurious, top-rated, yet affordable ****

Devaux 2019 Hautes Cotes de Beaune "La Perriere" @ \$27.99 per bottle

*From a fantastic red Burgundy vintage, a wine that **tastes like \$50** in the modern market.*

Domaine Bourgogne-Devaux was established in 1899 and has only 6 acres of vines in the domaine. This vineyard parcel is 40-year old vines in the lieu-dit 'La Perrière,' facing south on a gradual slope, at 1,050 feet elevation. Winemaker notes: "**Aromas of summer berries, light earth, peppery spice.** Dominated by red, ripe fruit; moderate tannins. Structured yet fresh. This parcel produces a well colored wine, with aromas of blackberry, black cherry and violet. Like liquid silk on the palate, conveying terrific depth to its flavors of raspberry, warm spices and smoked meat. \$39 retail."

Dave says: my tasting notes match the winemaker notes. It's worth pointing out that the 2018 vintage of this same wine rated **91 points** at the (now outdated) retail price of \$25. The 2019 vintage surpasses it, yet remains very reasonably priced! In fact, for the red wines of Beaune in particular, **2019 is the best vintage in recent memory**, and along with the 2015 and 2015 one of the best three vintages of the 21st century so far! **Fans of traditional style red Burgundy need to take note of this wine!** (7 cases available, inquire for solid case pricing, the Devaux 2019 "La Perriere" is just \$27.99 per bottle, see above)

Joseph Drouhin 2020 Chorey-les-Beaune @ \$35.99 per bottle

Fans of elegant red Burgundy with a modern flair need to take note of this wine!

Wine Spectator rated **90 points**, at **\$38 retail**. "**Rich and fruity, boasting cherry, raspberry, floral and spice flavors. Charming, balanced and enjoyable now**, though this will improve over the next 3-5 years. Features fine length. Drink now through 2028. \$38. 90 points." (Wine Spectator)

Dave says: Joseph Drouhin wines are as reliable as they come, and this is **the prettiest and most seductive sub-\$50 red Burgundy I've tasted in a long time.** (6 cases available, \$35.99 best-price)

**** superstar White Burgundy with 1er Cru pedigree, drinking at peak ****

Barraud 2016 Pouilly-Fuisse "Clos Reyssier" @ \$31.99 per bottle

DAVE says: this is **not only the best French white wine I tasted for this feature, it's the BEST white wine - period - I've tasted this summer!** This wine is drinking in peak form, and yes it's 7 years of age. Great white Burgundy ages effortlessly, and this is truly great white Burgundy! The national retail for this vintage is \$32. I wish I had more cases available, but **I bought the last 7 cases of this vintage** at the price from a bygone era! This wine is drinking in peak form, and yes it's 7 years of age. Great white Burgundy ages effortlessly, and this is truly great white Burgundy! Recently, **the "Clos Reyssier" vineyard in Pouilly-Fuisse (Macon) has been elevated to 1er Cru status** for vintages going forward. So now just the more readily available version of Clos Reyssier Pouilly-Fuisse by good old Georges Dubeouf is priced at \$59 retail for the 2020 vintage. By comparison to the ever-reliable Duboeuf (and with all due respect) as Burghound notes: "I have said this many times but it's worth repeating... **Daniel Barraud is without question one of the finest growers in all of the Mâconnais** and there is a credible argument to be made that his remarkable consistency vaults him right to the very top of the list. Yes, there are other fine growers who sometimes make wines equal to those of Barraud but this man almost never misses. And as the scores and reviews suggest..." (Burghound - Allen Meadows)

(listed previously and also a Dave's Top Pick, in-stock now)

Brigitte Cerveau 2022 Petit Chablis @ \$29.99 each

**** highly rated Bordeaux with classified-growth pedigree, drink or hold ****

Chateau Bel Orme Tronquoy de Lalande 2018 Haut Medoc @ \$29.99 per bottle

Made by a Margaux 2nd growth, from a nearby vineyard and Chateau but to the same quality standards. (this is not a "second label" wine) This was awarded a Platinum medal from Decanter magazine, and rated 91-93 points by three different American and European wine magazines. The "en primeur" or futures price a few years ago would have been \$21 and now the current average retail is \$35. Nowadays, at \$29.99 per bottle, this is underpriced!!

Wine Enthusiast magazine "Editors Choice" noting: "This wine from northern Haut-Médoc is produced by the same team as classed growth Château Rauzan-Gassies in Margaux. It is richly fruity, pushing the density and alcohol but drawing back with the acidity and bright black-currant flavors. Drink this wine from 2024. 91 points." Dave says: folks know I love Bordeaux, and this one is **worth every penny of it's \$29.99 for the quality of the wine, and how it's drinking, as well as the great pedigree.**

**** Rhone reds at the top and also entry level for Affordable Luxury ****

Terre Chardon 2021 Costieres de Nimes "Bien Lune" @ \$21.99 per bottle

80% Grenache and 20% Syrah this wine sits very comfortably as a more serious and flavorful and complex version of a Cotes du Rhone without climbing too the price-ranges of wines like Gigondas and Vacqueyras - yet compares quite favorably to those! Has aromas and flavors of warm stones, pepper, and plenty of black berry and cherry fruit ripeness too. An independent vigneron doing all the right things in the vineyard and the winery. New to our market, in fact it's barely even been imported to the country at all since the 2014 vintage years ago. Well worth checking out, and has a nice solid case price of \$250 too (limited stock)

(listed previously and also a Dave's Top Pick, in-stock now)

93 pts Wine Spectator - Moulin Tacussel 2019 Chateauneuf du Pape @ \$49.99 per bottle (very limited)

That's all for this edition, ALL of these wines are in-stock now and available for email orders for pickup as soon as Saturday (subject to confirmation) or next week. Please indicate your pickup preferences when you order so I can properly allocate the wines and confirm orders in a timely manner!

There is MUCH MORE to come next week, as I will publish the FULL LIST as soon as I have it ready. This feature on France will continue through the month of July. --Dave

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

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