



NEW ARRIVALS ♦ MAY 2010

DOMAINES PAUL MAS

Vins de Pays

As we collectively drag ourselves out of what seems to have been an unusually long and wretched winter, battered numb by recession, with the prospect of another week of political point scoring ahead of us (and who knows what beyond), the mind does not necessarily turn to the purchase and consumption of rare or expensive wines. It therefore seems an appropriate moment to remind our customers old and new alike that we currently focus most of our energies into sourcing delicious wines that we can offer at as far under a tenner a bottle as is practicable, given both that the pound sterling is languishing close to parity with the euro, and that Mr Brown's irritating presbyterian instinct has ensured that duty has increased in excess of 25% since we closed our Epping shop 4 years ago. Indeed, our objective remains to bring to you as many wines as we can at below 7 or 8 pounds, wines that will provide both uncomplicated pleasure and a place of gentle, guilt-free sanctuary from the rigours of politics and the working day alike.

Paul Mas and his two sons Michel & Jean Claude exploit some 250 acres of vineyard across four estates situated on the hills bordering the Hérault Valley in Languedoc in the south of France. They are near the Mediterranean sea and close to the small town of Pézenas, an area noted for its increasingly exciting wines. An enlightened attitude in vineyard and cuvée, as well as towards marketing in a region where failure to make yourself heard above the crowd means certain commercial obscurity, have led to a range of wines that are both delicious to drink as well as good, and sometimes amusing, to look at.

CLAUDE VAL

The Claude Val label represents the range opener for Les Domaines Paul Mas, and we are delighted to be introducing it as our 'up-scale' house selection. The wines are made from grapes sourced in the Limoux, Carcassonne and Pézenas regions. Modern wine making equipment - yes, the the oh! so sexy Vaslin Bucher pneumatic press, refined temperature control, and so on - combined with French and Australian viticultural and wine-making know-how (there is a resident winemaker from down-under) have resulted in some beautifully crafted, elegant, simple and delightful wines which we have no hesitation in commending to you.

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2009 CLAUDE VAL BLANC
VIN DE PAYS D'OC

An eclectic blend of Grenache Blanc, Vermentino, Chenin Blanc, Chasan, Ugni blanc, Terret Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc grown on clay and limestone with gravel, with vinification geared towards maximum fruit, aromatic freshness and softness on the palate.

Pale, with green tints (green is good in white wine), with aromas of citrus and white flowers evolving subtly toward tropical fruit. Fruity, rich and bright on the palate. Ample, well balanced and long.

Drink with all fish dishes, chicken dishes, curry and light meals. Delicious on its own too. A huge hit in the Wood Farm hospitality tent at the recent High Easter Point-to Point, that essential starting point of the rural Essex, Herts and Cambs 'season'.

2009 CLAUDE VAL ROSÉ
VIN DE PAYS D'OC

Grenache Rouge, Carignan, Cinsault, Syrah, Grenache Blanc grown on clay and limestone, destemmed with separate vinification for each varietal. The wine is aged on its lees with regular "batonnage."

Bright pink cherry colour. Complex with cherry and floral aromas evolving toward soft fruit notes. Rich and smooth, well balanced. Fruity, with a long finish.

Serve with light dishes, grilled meat, salads, sausages, white meat, pasta, soft cheeses. Or just lie back in the garden and glug.

2009 CLAUDE VAL ROUGE
VIN DE PAYS D'OC

Grenache rouge, Carignan, Cinsault, Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Franc grown on clay and limestone with gravel, as well as some schist soils especially where the Carignan is grown. Winemaking is geared to maximum preservation of fruit, aromas and softness.

Light garnet red with purple tints. Complex with crisp dark fruits and raspberry notes evolving towards soft spices. Fruity, rich and round. Smooth and well-balanced, with a lovely crisp acidity giving freshness and drive.

All white meat dishes, grilled meat, salads and appetizers, soft and medium strength cheeses. And of course by itself. I accidentally and rather too easily drunk almost an entire bottle whilst preparing a terrine from some rabbits that Josh had shot last week, to a delightful Angela Harknett recipe involving duck fat. The terrine was lovely, but my recollection of the recipe is hazy at best.

2009 CLAUDE VAL BLANC, ROSÉ & ROUGE ALL £6.75 PER
SINGLE BOTTLE, £6.40 PER BOTTLE WHEN BOUGHT BY
THE DOZEN.

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER
BUY A SAMPLER CASE OF 4 BOTTLES EACH WHITE, ROSÉ
& RED FOR £71.40, equivalent £5.95 PER BOTTLE.
