

Your French Wine Collection

From the Bonner Private Wine Partnership



BONNER
PRIVATE WINE
PARTNERSHIP

Cover Photo: Domaine des Florets
Back Cover: Domaine de Noiré

An Adventure in Every Bottle

Searching the world for astonishing
wines from little-known winemakers

Our Online Store is Open!

Don't Run Out Of Wine! Certain bottles are available for purchase at our online shop. Log into your profile on www.bonnerprivatewines.com to see what's in the cellar. You can also always give us a call at 844.733.5249.



Photo: Château Romanin

Dear Member,

Many of the vines that birthed the six bottles before you have seen more than one French Republic rise and fall. In that time, many fashions have gone from boom to bust, and countless summers given way to fall.

Longtime members know that old vines, 30 years and older, are a rarity. Being in “the business” of wine means catering to the whims of the market and therefore ripping out and replanting every couple decades.

But for the winemaker willing to adopt a multi-generational time horizon rather than one limited to his own career, there are rewards in, say, an 80 year old vine. We like them here at the Partnership not just for the wine that they produce — concentrated, deep, lingering — but also for what they tell us about the winemaker himself. His is not a mass market concern, but an expression of time, place, and history.

In other words, the old vine wine is a sort of living artwork, to be considered, to spark thought, or conversation. The bottles we’ve sourced for this year’s French Collection are precisely those kinds of wines.

And what better season for such than fall? The season of thoughts, of reminisces, of plans for the days ahead, of hopes for what might be, and warm affection for what was. Of course, one need not think alone. While perfect for a moment’s reflection at the end of the day, these bottles will be an excellent accompaniment to any dinner table (or Thanksgiving) patter. They will *émerveiller* your guests and family as surely as they will spark internal dialogue.

To that end...

In this box, you will find six bottles:

- ① Domaine des Florets Alliance 2022
- ② Champagne Allouchery DeGuerne Premier Cru Selection
- ③ Domaine de Noiré Caractère 2018
- ④ Château Romanin Grand Vin Rouge 2018
- ⑤ Château Tasta T de Tasta 2019
- ⑥ Domaine des Deux Fontaines Fleurie La Presle 2022

They run from the northernmost of French terroirs (Champagne and Beaujolais) down through the Rhône Valley (with a detour by the banks of the Dordogne in Bordeaux) to the old mountain caves of Provence.

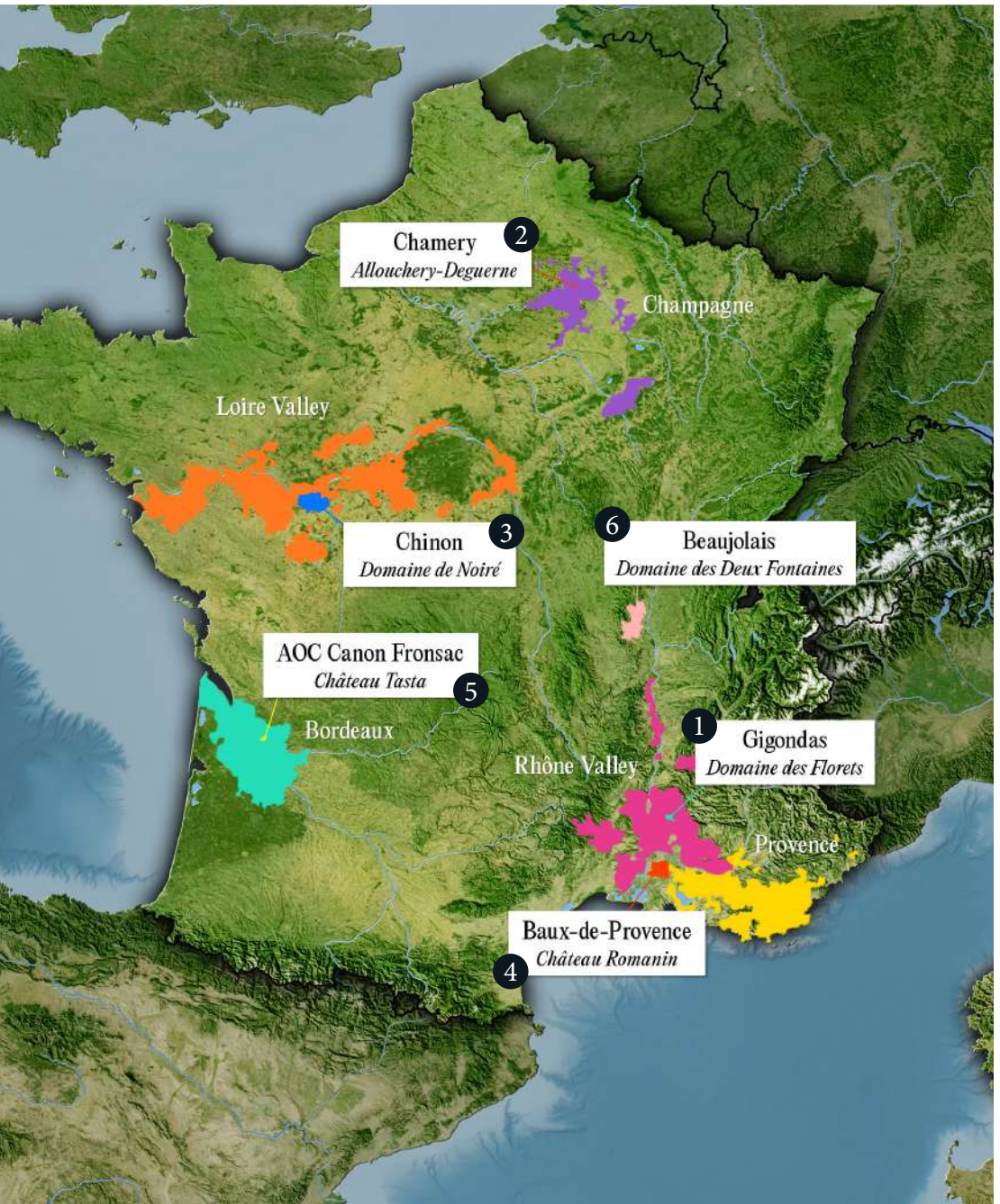
In the course of sourcing this collection I heard, on good authority, that people have been living in those caves for eight thousand years. Perhaps 80 isn't so old after all.

Santé,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Bonner', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Will Bonner

The Châteaux



A Quick Note on Wine Tasting

On the next few pages, we've included tasting notes. Here's a quick tip on how to approach them.

What makes a “wine expert” is not just depth of knowledge — which anyone can achieve — but sensitivity to taste and smell. A great wine expert will find a hundred little aromas that most ordinary noses will never be able to detect.

Now. If you don't pick up on the same flavors, does that mean you're doing it wrong?

No. Tasting is subjective. Pronounced flavors on my palate may present themselves as secondary or tertiary notes for you. Remember, wines are always evolving in the bottle. That hint of cherry from a few months ago might present itself differently now. So, if you detect a flavor or aroma you don't see on the tasting sheet, add it. See what your friends say. Better yet, if you have a tasting that differs markedly from what's written here, send us your notes. We'd love to compare them!

Email us at feedback@bonnerprivatewines.com.

2024
French
Collection

Bonner Private Wine Partnership

Domaine des Florets

Alliance 2022

Old Vine

Grenache,
Syrah

Gigondas
(Rhône Valley)



The defining landmark of the southern Rhône Valley is a set of jagged prehistoric teeth — really Jurassic-age limestone — that poke up from the earth to form the Dentelles de Montmirail mountain range. Dentelles means “lace.” Don’t ask us how they came up with that.

Either way, if you poke around the lace (or teeth) you tend to come out with some good wines. Last year we sourced an outstanding old vine blend from the village of Vacqueyras that went down like a Châteauneuf-du-Pape but without the fuss. And if you know the Rhône, you might also be familiar with the splendid offerings of nearby Beaufort de Venise. If you triangulate using both towns as the end points of a hypotenuse, the resulting triangle has its

northerly angle sitting smack dab on Domaine des Florets.

Located practically on top of the Dentelles, Domaine des Florets is a little green mountainside nest of about 8 hectares. Old vines grow on steep, rocky slopes over beds of clay, limestone, and blue marl. Note the freshness in the nose (strawberry, pomegranate, cherry) and the accents of sweet spice. Perfect for lamb or filet mignon. 92 pts (Suckling), 16 pts (Jancis Robinson). Drink now or till 2029.

Champagne Allouchery-Deguerne Premier Cru Sélection

Méthode Champenoise
Pinot noir, Chardonnay, Meunier
Chamery (Upper Marne)



Last year, we brought you to the wilderness of Champagne’s Aube region. This year we venture north, to Champagne’s northern fringes in the hill country of *Montagne de Reims*.

Montagne de Reims runs east-west along the river Vesle – a fluttering ribbon of forests and thickets over silty clay and chalk soil. There, on a large hill near the village of Chamery, winemaker Nicolas Allouchery obsesses over every minute step of the famed *méthode Champenoise*. Nicolas describes the ideal winemaker as being *soumis* – rendered into submission – by nature. Nicolas doesn’t fight it, letting pinot dominate, bucking tradition where necessary (opting against filtration), and keeping the process as close to the terroir as possible. He has been rewarded for his deference. As of writing this,

we haven’t gotten Julien Miquel’s take on this cuvée yet but our guess is that the word “generous” will come up. And please, once again, don’t use the flutes. Let this open up with a nice wide bowl - a Reidel if you have one. You’ll be rewarded with a wine that reminds us of exactly what a great Champagne should be: clean, fragrant, crisp as a fall day on the rolling hillsides.

Drink now to 2029.

Domaine de Noiré

Caractère 2018

Organic/Old Vine
Cabernet franc
Chinon (Loire)



It was in Chinon, 63 years before Columbus sailed the ocean blue, that a seventeen-year-old Joan of Arc, inspired by visions of Saint Michael, convinced Charles VII to retake northern France from the English and Burgundians.

The Chinon vines that produced this 2018 aren't quite so old, but at least some of them predate France's current system of government (the 5th Republic) by about a decade. In that time, they have seen Domaine de Noiré cycle from its apogee, to a long period of decline, then finally to a rebirth under Jean-Max and Odile Manceau who took over the place about 20 years ago.

How could they resist the old vines, the dense forests, and the *tuffeau* terroir? (*Tuffeau* is the cream colored limestone used to build all the great Loire châteaux.) Concordantly, this wine is brimming with Loire *caractère* – its history, its châteaux, its visions. Silver winner at the Concours des Ligiers Vins du Val-de-Loire 2021.

Drink now or till 2034.

Château Romanin

Grand Vin Rouge 2018

Organic

Syrah, Mourvèdre
(50/50)

Les Baux-de-
Provence (Provence)



This is not a Côtes du Rhône. But serve a blind tasting to your snobbiest wine friend and see if he guesses wrong. It comes down to the grape blend (classic Rhône), and the location on the far side of the river Durance, which marks the boundary between the Rhône Valley and Provence.

Here on the Provincial side, on a northern slope of the Alpilles mountains, by the town of St Rémy de Provence, lie the ruins of a 13th century Templar castle. At its feet, or, really, underneath it, is a cave carved out of the mountain rock. Stone arches and pillars reinforce the space, giving it the look of an underground cathedral. It was here, in French oak barrels, that this 2018 aged for 19 months.

Syrah, like malbec, is one of the darkest red wines. It tends to pop early on the palate — high “attack” to use a musical term. Mourvèdre, a richer if slower wine, adds depth.

Winemaker Théo Buravand has managed to turn down the “attack” while turning up the mid-to-late palate experience to produce a wine that starts surprisingly soft for a syrah, then gradually builds into the powerhouse you expect. Look for black cherry, raspberry and smoke (the syrah) with lingering pepper. Silver medal winner at Decanter 2023; Gold winner at Concours des Vins de Terre Vins 2023. You can drink it now, but you’ll be kicking yourself a decade from now if you don’t cellar a few bottles.

Château Tasta

T de Tasta 2019

Merlot, Cab franc

Canon Fronsac
(Bordeaux)



Château Tasta, built in the 13th century, overlooks a small valley by the river Dordogne (Bordeaux's northern river, for non-initiates). Don't let the word "château" throw you – this is not the domain of the suede driving shoe but rather the weathered work boot. Château Tasta's 18 hectares are a family operation, worked by the Chevaliers since 1922. Today Patrice, 4th in his line, runs the place along with wife Frédérique. Their son Maxence, *né sous un pied de vigne* (born at the foot of the vine), stepped up to join his parents in 2021 (and younger son Antoine is well on his way too).


Alors ça, c'est un Bordeaux! From 30 year old vines in a green clay terroir, this 2019 pours into the glass like a deep garnet curtain. The nose evokes a gentleman's study with notes of cigar box, caramel, a puff of tobacco, enhanced with a touch of ripe red berry. Those same notes become three dimensional once on the palate, with a strong attack before showing a more subtle side that lingers for a finish that leaves us wanting "just a touch more..."

Drink now or cellar till 2030. 91 pts (Vertdevin).



Domaine des Deux Fontaines

Fleurie La Presle 2022



Old Vine
Gamay
Fleurie (Beaujolais)



The first thing you notice at Domaine des Deux Fontaines is that the vines have a sculpted look, like topiary. Sylvain Patareaux insists on “goblet” pruning in which the vine’s “arms” (branches) rise up skywards, as if in prayer, or perhaps surrender, to nature.

The advantage of the method is that the grapes get both maximum aeration and sun cover, which is key for Sylvain’s 80-year-old vines. And it must be said that the rather primeval look fits well with the wild, forested environs of this northern-most area of Beaujolais.

A great Gamay compares considerably well in value to a vastly more expensive pinot noir from just a stone’s throw north in Burgundy. And that’s certainly true with this 2022. The result leans less on earthiness and more on the fruits of forest and hedge-row – notably blackberries and currants. Try it with a salade de chèvre and savor the long finish. Patience rewards here if you can wait two years to open your bottle (or set some aside). In five it could get even more interesting. But you won’t be disappointed popping a bottle today either.

93 pts (Suckling).



Our Mission

At the Bonner Private Wine Partnership, our mission is to bring you unique bottles from all over the world. We seek wines that are bursting with life and character – wines with an adventure in every bottle.

Your Next Quarterly Shipment

As you read this, we are already selecting and arranging to import wines for next quarter's shipment. We will be in touch to share what we've found with you when we get closer to the shipping date. Until then, enjoy your wine! (And let us know what you think!)

Problem with Your Shipment?

Please call our customer service, 9-5 Monday through Friday at 1-844-733-5249. We want everyone to get the most out of this club and these wines. So if there's a problem, we'll do our best to make it right.