

ROUGE

APRIL
2021









2018 PIC SAINT LOUP “CUPA NUMISMAE” CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE

FORTY-FIVE MINUTES due north of Montpellier, in one of France’s most uncharted regions, sits Château La Roque, a domaine that pursues some of the most forward-thinking farming techniques anywhere. The Languedoc may have a reputation for being sleepy, but vigneron Cyriaque Rozier has been on the vanguard of organic and biodynamic viticulture and natural winemaking for more than a decade. His unwavering dedication to more difficult and expensive practices in the vines demonstrates just how much he believes in Pic Saint Loup and its special terroir, distinguished by scree slopes and the cooling influence of the nearby Cévennes mountains. This devotion shows across all of the domaine’s outstanding wines. Take this *rouge*, for example, La Roque’s top bottling, named after a centuries-old gold coin found buried in its soil bearing the words “Cupa Numismæ.” Made from Syrah and Mourvèdre, the wine displays some dark wildness befitting the region and blend, but at the same time it is remarkably fresh, lively, and plush. While this bottle can certainly age for ten years or more, it is exceptionally well balanced and approachable today, a testament to the terroir and Cyriaque’s translation of it. —Tom Wolf

\$31.00 PER BOTTLE \$334.80 PER CASE



					
2018 Pic Saint Loup “Cupa Numismæ” <i>Château La Roque</i>	65% Syrah, 35% Mourvèdre	40-year-old vines Clay, limestone scree	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Cranberries, strawberries, iron Dark, plush, lively	Drink now through 2030
2017 Gigondas “Racines” <i>Les Pallières</i>	80% Grenache, 8% Syrah, 7% Cinsault, 5% Clairette	80-year-old vines, on average Red sandy clay, limestone scree	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant recommended	Black cherries, spices, earth Stately, powerful, elegant	Drink now through 2035

2017 GIGONDAS “RACINES” LES PALLIÈRES

IN THE SPRING OF 1998, Kermit met with Daniel Brunier, famed wine-maker of Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe, for lunch at Chez Panisse. Daniel casually mentioned that Les Pallières in Gigondas had just come up for sale. The same family had overseen the property since 1400, but now there was no successor to inherit the legendary domaine. Kermit told Daniel, “It is almost too perfect. Let’s do it, let’s buy it together.” When they started this joint project, Les Pallières produced only one wine. Beginning in 2007, they divided the vineyard holdings, preferring to bottle two cuvées, which they felt represented the distinct natures of the parcels. Racines showcases the vineyard parcels immediately surrounding the winery at the base of the Dentelles de Montmirail, where vines averaging eighty years old yield a deep, elegant red with a special emphasis on freshness and vibrant fruit. With the 2017, you can taste this character of Racines in all its glory. It has power and structure—we’re in the southern Rhône, after all—but this stately *rouge* is also defined by astonishing finesse and balance. Gorgeous notes of black cherries, spices, and earth rise out of the glass, ultimately reminding us that Gigondas is among the great AOCs of southern France. —Tom Wolf

\$40.00 PER BOTTLE \$432.00 PER CASE



ABOVE *Les Pallières*. © Gail Skoff

COVER *Château La Roque*

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CLAPASSADE

by Christopher Lee

This unusual and intriguing recipe is from Montpellier, in France's south. Montpellier has long been known for its honey and licorice, and one of its emblematic sweets—Grisettes de Montpellier—made with that honey and licorice, dates back to the twelfth century. Lightly brined Lucques olives, a local variety, help build the salty, herby character of this dish. Clapassade stands up to the rich flavors of the Pic Saint Loup—a perfect regional pairing—and picks up the voluptuous fruit of Les Pallières' Gigondas. The wines echo the complex marriage of the lamb with honey, olives, and woody citrus-like flavors of the licorice. Find good spring lamb, which many farmers' markets sell in abundance these days.

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| 2½ pounds neck of spring lamb
on the bone, or 1¾ pounds
spring lamb shoulder, fat
trimmed, cut in 2-inch cubes | 1 bay leaf |
| 3 tablespoons olive or grapeseed oil | Two 3-inch stalks licorice root
or ½ ounce shaved root
tied in muslin bag |
| 1 tablespoon sea salt | ¼ teaspoon white pepper, ground |
| 1¼ cups onion, finely chopped | 1½ tablespoons honey |
| ⅔ cup dry white wine | 2 cups chicken stock or water |
| 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour | 2 large carrots, peeled, top
removed, cut in 1-inch pieces |
| 1 cup pitted green olives,
preferably Lucques | 3 tablespoons curly parsley,
finely chopped |

In a mixing bowl, toss lamb in 2 tablespoons oil and sprinkle with sea salt to coat evenly. Heat a heavy-bottom pan just until it begins to smoke, and brown lamb on all sides—in two batches, if necessary—using tongs to turn pieces. Transfer browned lamb to a side plate. Tip off all but a thin coat of oil from pan. Lower heat to low, add remaining tablespoon of oil to pan, and add chopped onion. Sauté until onion is golden brown, stirring often to avoid burning. Add white wine and reduce until nearly evaporated. Add flour to pan and stir for 30 seconds. Add green olives, bay leaf, licorice root, and white pepper and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Add honey and chicken stock and stir while sauce begins to thicken. Scrape bottom of pan to loosen flavorful bits. Add lamb and carrots to pan, raise heat to bring to a simmer, and then turn heat to low. Cover and simmer with lid ajar for 2 hours, until lamb is tender and sauce is reduced. Stir occasionally to avoid scorching sauce. If sauce needs thickening, remove lamb and carrots to a side dish and reduce sauce to desired consistency. Return lamb and carrots to pan to finish. Serve garnished with chopped parsley.

Serves 4



Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.