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WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON



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HIS THE PRINCE OF WALES
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CORNEY &
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INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



TARDIEU-LAURENT, THE RHÔNE

2015 VINTAGE EN PRIMEUR

TARDIEU-LAURENT, THE RHÔNE

2015 VINTAGE EN PRIMEUR

Corney & Barrow started working with Tardieu-Laurent in 2002 and we have loved being involved in the evolution of this family-based business.

Established in 1996, the Tardieu-Laurent wines turned heads from the outset. Michel Tardieu is a micro *négociant-éleveur*, buying wines, according to the quality of the vineyard, in their raw, fermented state. The wines generally undergo malolactic fermentation under the watchful eye of Michel and his oenologist son Bastien. Together, they look after both the maturation and the blending.

Given that the accurate translation of *terroir* and vintage is fundamental to the Tardieu-Laurent mind-set, intervention is wonderfully minimal. None of the wines are fined and only a few have a very light filtration. An important ingredient, in the early days, was the barrels, the levels of toast introducing a certain controversy. The oak has however been scaled back over a number of years and for four years Michel and Bastien have favoured large oak *foudres*, preferring the slow, measured exposure to oxygen rather than a *per-se* oak character. Since translation of the sites is key, any element which obscures or skews balance is avoided.

Top quality ingredients are essential here. To that end, a huge part of Michel's and Bastien's work involves building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with a network of low-yield producers, who own specific, top quality parcels, almost always of old vines. Michel and Bastien work closely with them, throughout the Rhône, ensuring the very best possible vine husbandry. Father and son know by heart both the vineyards and the specific parcels within those vineyards, which are of interest to them.

The vines selected are naturally low-yielding old vines of over 50 years of age, or even much older. Often the size of the individual parcels is too small to be independently viable, but by buying a number of them, there is the wherewithal to produce a workable blend. The naturally-restricted volumes result in increased complexity and intensity. These are world-class wines that thoroughly deserve their international acclaim.

To find out more about Corney & Barrow visit
www.corneyandbarrow.com



"Vintages ending in '5'
are success stories in the
Vallée du Rhône!"

MICHEL TARDIEU,
September, 2016



2015 VINTAGE NOTES

It may be neither logical nor scientific but Michel cites the fact that, historically, vintages ending in a “5” have been a great success in the Rhône Valley – indeed in France on the whole. 1985, 1995, 2005 and now 2015 is primed to hit the heights.

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On paper the vintage is exciting. In the glass it screams “BUY ME”. The wines are amongst the most exciting I have ever tasted here and Michel and Bastien could barely restrain their enthusiasm when showing them.

All the odds were stacked in their favour with almost perfect weather conditions throughout the growing season. Winter was rainy, establishing good water reserves. Spring was a little late but flowering went well. Summer provided hot weather in June, July and August, even hotter than 2003 yet, very important and unlike 2003, the nights were cool. The grapes were therefore able to retain a lovely, natural acidity. Benign conditions continued through to a fine, healthy harvest.

We often stress that the northern and southern areas of the Rhône are markedly diverse, geologically, topographically and, for the wines, stylistically. Based in Lourmarin, the Tardieu family are about 150 miles from the vineyards in the north, a distance akin to London and Stafford. In 2015 however the distances meant little. The climate favoured both the north and the south.



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“Never, ever had we tasted such quality of juice. The wines are both dense and fresh: the perfection of their balance is astonishing.”

MICHEL TARDIEU,
September, 2016

SOUTHERN RHÔNE

The crop was ripe but not over-ripe. Summer, whilst hot, also enjoyed some rain, so that there was no stress for the vines. The cool nights made for a long maturation period- great for complexity. The resulting wines in the south are silky, sappy and offer bags of charm.

NORTHERN RHÔNE

Here there were rains at the end of August which both facilitated and accelerated maturation. Very unusually, Côte-Rôtie was the first to be picked, the grapes being both physiologically and phenolically ripe.

2015 TASTING NOTES

While I strongly recommend all the wines on offer here, we felt it might be useful to add some focus. Our particular staff picks are highlighted in grey boxes. These are the wines not to be missed!

Alison Buchanan

ALISON BUCHANAN
September, 2016

WHITE - SOUTHERN RHÔNE

CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE BLANC, LES BECS FINS

This is a fantastic insight into the sheer value of Rhône wines in general and the whites in particular. The blend offers lots of Rhône character, bright with stone fruit aromatics, unleashed in their fresh purity, nothing embellished or dampened by oak. Peach, apricot and stony minerals prevail on both nose and palate, gentle and unassuming yet with real personality and a rare flexibility in food pairing. Good with seafood, chicken and fish dishes.

35% Grenache Blanc (40 years old)
35% Viognier (20 years old)
20 % Roussanne (20 years old)
10% Clairette (40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2020

£120/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE BLANC, GUY LOUIS

From the northern and southern Rhône – named as a tribute to Michel’s father and uncle – this is a perennial favourite – always a stylish palate and excellent value. The northern element is from a Crozes-Hermitage parcel, the south from Cairanne and Rasteau. The nose and palate here offer a rather decadent brew with enticing hints of warm pastries, intense old vine fruit layered with vanilla cream. There is light and shade, spun sugar notes offset by stony minerals – complex and refined. The palate, a seamless continuation of the aromatics, adds a citrus dimension, a levity which complements a long, layered finish.

35% Marsanne (60 years old)
30% Grenache Blanc (70 years old)
20 % Roussanne (40 years old)
10% Viognier (40 years old)
5% Clairette (40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2022

£135/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE BLANC VIEILLES VIGNES

Michel and Bastien have selected especially fresh vineyard parcels here, seeking out cooler areas, sacrificing quantity to enhance the quality of the finished wine. They have also found a new producer of Bourboulenc and Clairette – in their constant search for ways to improve. Rich gold in colour, the wine clings to the glass. The nose is reminiscent of apricots again... although there is no Viognier here, fresh herbs and grilled fennel – appetising. Rich and supple the palate emulates liquidised fruit salad with tropical, orchard and stone fruit all in the mix. Super-rich in texture, full and ripe, rounded and long, big but elegant – a triumph.

50% Grenache Blanc (60 years old)
35% Roussanne (30 years old)
10% Clairette (40 years old)
5% Bourboulenc (40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2028+

£275/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (eg 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a ‘+’ is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

WHITE - NORTHERN RHÔNE

SAINT-PÉRAY VIEILLES VIGNES

Saint-Péray has gone from relative obscurity as an appellation to being an almost instant sell-out.... and I almost always miss the boat! Customers, quite rightly, come first. Rarity almost always facilitates ambitious pricing – but not here. This offers tremendous value. Lovely gold in colour, this is just gorgeous, rounded yet with an edge, full and ripe. Powerful, harmonious, rich, elegant and long, this is unctuous and very fine. The palate presents caramelised fruit and warm pastry notes, reminiscent of pear *tarte tatin*.

50% Marsanne (50 to 100 years old)
50% Roussanne (over 40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 19+
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2021+

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

HERMITAGE BLANC

Pale gold in colour – enticing – this presents a gorgeous, buttery Danish pastry nose, topped with apricot and peach. An extraordinary wine, it seems simple initially but, on the palate, there are so many layers - luscious, full, exotic, wonderfully ripe, yet exquisitely balanced. White Hermitage is an intellectual wine, deserving patience. It also warrants the care afforded to a red, responding particularly well to decanting.

80% Marsanne (over 50 years old)
20% Roussanne (over 40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 19+
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2026

£325/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£335/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

12 CONDRIEU

Once again we welcome a new vigneron to the party – from Vernon – a source of fruit bought where a particular crystalline loess contributes a lovely purity, fresh acidity and adds to the potential longevity. How they achieve this style is extraordinary, attaining preserved peach and apricot with a rather haunting balance of opulence and sprightliness – luscious, full, concentrated and very long, the finish reminiscent of peach melba.

This certainly had the capacity to age but, in common with most of our white wines we offer, we advise enjoying their first flush of youth.

100% Viognier (45 years old, from parcels in Paton, Chanson and Rocharde and Vernon)

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2020

£295/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

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RED - SOUTHERN RHÔNE

CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE VILLAGES, LES BECS FINS

Deeply coloured, this has a characterful, peppery nose. The palate is bright, rich and intense. Cinsault provides fruit character, Grenache delivers attractive accessibility and Syrah delivers a sense of poise allied to silken tannins. This offers a darkly fruited style, pure fruit unadulterated by the use of any wood, being aged in concrete only – a real wow factor in 2015 – a lovely wine, which really delivers value for money. As Michel and Bastien agree “*un vin à partager entre amis*”.

50% Grenache (60 years old)
40% Syrah (30 years old)
10% Cinsault (60 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2019+

£95/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE, GUY LOUIS

Intense black plum in colour, clinging to the glass, this immediately looks like a serious glass of wine. Sweet red and black fruit dominate the nose, which is very fresh and perfumed. This has gorgeous weight and texture, silky tannins and again, lovely freshness and aromatic character on the palate. Bastien is certain that the bright, breezy character results from around one third of the crop not having been de-stemmed and then there is a richness mid-palate from one and two year old barrels – beautifully handled. Super-elegant, ripe and upbeat, this is a fine ambassador for the appellation and the vintage, at a very good price.

60% Grenache (50 years old),
35% Syrah (40 years old)
5% Mourvedre (30-40 years old)
From parcels in Lirac, Rasteau, Beaume de Venise, Vacqueyras and Cairanne

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2023

£130/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTE-DU-RHÔNE CUVÉE SPÉCIALE

From a vineyard near Vacqueyras, this is, in fact, a declassified Cairanne *cru*, the Cairanne sacrificed to make a really serious Côte du Rhône. That they have certainly done, in spades. This is a deep plum- ruby in colour, clinging to the glass. 100% whole bunch pressed it exudes dark, dark, fruit on the nose undergrowth and earthy spice. The depth and intensity is impressive through to a long, poised finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2025

£180/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

RASTEAU VIEILLES VIGNES

In warm sunny vintages, Rasteau can sometimes be almost a bit too much, as Bastien says “*il y a toujours une exception pour confirmer la règle*” – “*there is always an exception to prove the rule*” and this is really beautifully balanced. Peppered, savoury notes complement dark and red fruit on both the nose and palate. This is sweet and rather sexy, spiced and upbeat with real richness and gorgeous fruit. There is something special here. Somehow it combines being pretty with innate power, all set within a rather hedonistic texture – a great choice.

65% Grenache (80 years old)
25% Syrah (40 years old)
10% Mourvèdre (40 years old on limestone clay and blue clay)

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2023

£155/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BANDOL

Last year, Oliver Hartley and I were privileged to meet Michel’s and Bastien’s grower, based in the heart of Bandol. It was like stepping back in time. Tradition is the order of the day here and, whilst fertilisers and pesticides have never been used, organic certification will never be sought. The wine reflects an extraordinary, almost pathological passion and attention to detail in vineyard and cellar, the latter effectively a naturally cool cave.

The wines are aged in one year old oak. From such humble beginnings emerges a characterful wine, pure and distinctive. Deeply coloured, this presents gorgeous concentration of fruit on the nose and palate, high-toned and focused, super-fresh and aromatic with bright tannins. It is a splendid example of both vintage and appellation, with vibrant fruit and super, spicy structural force – a very good buy, which will give much pleasure in the short term but will also age well, given the very unlikely opportunity.

95% Mourvèdre (over 50 years old)
5% Grenache (over 50 years old)
Clay-limestone soils on Le Castellet

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2026

£185/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

VACQUEYRAS VIEILLES VIGNES

Organically produced, this was rigorously selected, reducing volume in order to put the wines on a pedestal. Here we have a new grower this vintage, with very old vines. Intense, plum-ruby this shows a wonderful array of fruit. The tannins are present but incredibly fine and silky, coated in fruit. It is clear that Bastien and Michel would like to re-position Vacqueyras in people’s minds. To intensify the quality, yields are dramatically down. It shows in the wine – a lovely drop.

70% Grenache (over 60 years old)
25% Syrah (40 years old)
5% Mourvèdre (40 years old)

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 - 18
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2028

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

GIGONDAS VIEILLES VIGNES

Deep plum-ruby, this has a very exotic nose, scented woods, spice, cherries and wild blackberry allied to more savoury notes. There is a sense of opulent fruit having been marinated with spice. The palate packs a punch and we sense a real step up. This is a serious wine, opulent, rounded and ripe with such silky tannins and yet there is understated power here too – a tremendous wine.

85% Grenache (80 to over 100 years old)
10% Syrah (80 to over 100 years old)
5% Mourvèdre (80 to over 100 years old)
From the Dentelles, Boussière, Garrigues and Teyssonnières

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2023

£195/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£205/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE CUVÉE SPÉCIALE

I am sure that we can forgive just 1% of mystery in vines of such a venerable age – vines which despite being planted on sand, produce wines which can stand proud amongst those from those hallowed *galets roulés* – it’s an age thing. The fruit is 100% whole bunch pressed, delivering extraordinary results. The nose is hot and spicy, rich in sweet old vine fruit, if measured at this stage. Super fresh and elegant this explodes on the palate before becoming more disciplined, albeit champing at the bit, rippling with innate power – very long and poised on the finish – splendid, just splendid.

99% Grenache (over 100 years old)
1% mystery grape!
Bottom of La Crau on sandy soils

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5++
Recommended drinking from 2019 - 2025

£325/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£335/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

RED - NORTHERN RHÔNE

CROZES-HERMITAGE VIEILLES VIGNES

Kermit Lynch, in “Adventures on the Wine Route, A Wine Buyer’s Tour of France” states “*an extraordinary Crozes is hard to find.*” I would argue that this is one such.

This is a great blend of styles from slope and plain, expertly balanced. This has a perfectly stunning nose, a complex array of liquorice, violet, red and black berried fruits. Beautifully perfumed, the first of the Northern wines tasted, this is a real joy, creamy, opulent and intense, with clear mineral definition and excellent focus - a fantastic Crozes, beautifully crafted – well done Michel and Bastien!

100% Syrah (60 years old)
Larnage, Battis, Gervans, Les Chassis, Slopes in Mercurol

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5 - 19
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2023+

£180/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£190/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

SAINT-JOSEPH VIEILLES VIGNES

This elicits haunting memories of Italian vanilla ice cream served with chocolate mallow wafers – the same blend of sweetness with just hints of fresh raspberry and dark chocolate for extra decadence. Opaque plum in colour, clinging to the glass, this is sweet, ripe and so promising. The palate is intensely rich and full, savoury layered and complex with pebbly minerals, tannins and toasted oak all playing a role. This deserves a little time for the ingredients fully to integrate but it is going to be soooooo good. Luxuriant in texture, it presents an outstanding, long finish.

100% Syrah, including Sérine
(Syrah 60 years old and Sérine over 100 years old)
La Madonne sur Chavanay, Coteaux Vitrine sur Saint-Pierre de Bœuf, Sainte-Épine sur Saint-Jean de Muzols, Les Oliviers sur Mauve

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5+
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2023+

£215/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£225/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

CORNAS COTEAUX

Once again, Michel and Bastien have transformed the product of three very different sites and soils – and three very individual wines into something much greater after blending. The inclusion of wine originating from more sandy soils makes for a much more accessible wine in youth whereas more granitic Cornas although well-structured, can appear rustic early on. Jet plum, opaque this has gorgeous concentration of fruit, ripe, rich and fleshy. Opulent, luxurious, super-concentrated, for the appellation this is a huge success in 2015, finishing long, supported by wonderfully melded tannins – tremendous.

100% Syrah and Sérine (60 - 100 years old)
Les Savaux, Les Chaillots, Patou at the bottom of the slopes

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2024+

£255/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CORNAS VIEILLES VIGNES

Opaque, inky, jet ruby, this has a surprisingly complex nose, given this embryonic phase in development – a characteristic of this vintage. It offers a mélange of dark undergrowth, tea, hot stones, cedar, old vine heady fruit and *crème de mûre*. Rounded, on the palate it achieves a wonderful balance between aromatic freshness and fulsome opulence, supported by chunky, structured tannins and punctuated by granitic minerals. 50% whole bunches were used, contributing to that upbeat character. The Cornas Vieilles Vignes 2015 has very special ingredients and therefore warrants time and taming – the latter being in the gift of Michel and Bastien. We have the wherewithal for a truly exceptional year here!

100% Serine and Syrah (80 to over 100 years old)
Patou and Les Eygats – on the full slope

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5+
Recommended drinking from 2019 - 2032+

£395/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£405/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

CÔTE-RÔTIE

In Michel's and Bastien's opinion Côte-Rôtie enjoyed the very best of the outstanding conditions in 2015 and was, in fact, the very first cru to be harvested. So far so promising but, then, what a line-up of complementary *terroirs* – different degrees of slope, exposure and soil providing an intriguing and complex palette from which to choose. The resulting blend is essentially opaque in colour with a tight cherry rim. It has a glorious, savoury nose, gunmetal notes, flint and graphite. Hugely powerful, there is a massive concentration of fruit, a smoky meat character and spice, richly textured. Once again there is an appetising perfumed freshness, due in part, in the Tardieu's eyes, to there being two thirds whole bunch pressing – that and the character of the vintage. Massive, all the ingredients are equally matched, achieving perfect pitch – hugely impressive and demanding patience.

*100% Sérine and Syrah (50 years old)
Landonne, Chavarache, Côtes de Rozier, Les Rochains and
Lancement*

Corney & Barrow Score 19
Recommended drinking from 2022 - 2036+

£400/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£410/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

HERMITAGE

This, at the end of the tasting, was, we thought, in danger of being dwarfed by the exceptional Côte-Rôtie yet it still stands tall, demanding respect. Deeply coloured, it makes its entrance with a stunning nose, intense dark fruit, savoury undertones, smoked meat and spice then a haunting violet character, all echoed on the palate, which exhibits astonishing concentration and intensity. Bastien reflects that Hermitage 2015 presents the tannic structure of the granitic of the north complemented by a silkiness reminiscent of the south. Luxuriant and, at 13.5% abv, relatively modest in alcohol.

*100% Sérine, Syrah (60 years old)
Rouméas, Pierelles and les Diognères*

Corney & Barrow Score 19+
Recommended drinking from 2022 - 2032+

£425/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£435/case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

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