

**Recommended (continued)** 15-16.75pts (83-89pts)

Wine	Score	SF	MOW	MW	Tasting note	Alc	Drink	Price	Stockists
Domaine des Auzières, Réserve, Roaix 2011	15.25	14.5	15	16.5	Hedonistic oak dominates the nose and palate with aromas of fruit cake, chocolate and black cherry. Very full and rather rustic.	15%	2015-2019	£10.95	Drinks of France
Domaine Philippe Plantevin, La Daurelle, Cairanne 2011	15.25	14.5	17	14.5	Stewed plum, damson and cooked meats. Has evolved quickly and has a slightly caramelised character which may limit its appeal.	15.5%	2014-2019	£13.95	La Cave de Bruno
Famille Quiot, Château du Trignon, Sablet 2011	15.25	15.5	16.5	14	Plenty of dark fruit here with a hint of spice. The palate is both youthful and complete, though lacks a bit of charm.	14.5%	2015-2019	POA	PLB
La Bastille St-Vincent, Florentin, Plan de Dieu 2012	15.25	15	15.5	15.5	Jammy black fruits and herbs. A big-boned but generous wine, with powerful tannins, yet has balance and freshness.	14.5%	2015-2019	£13	Fields Morris & Verdin
Les Vignerons de Roaix-Séguret, La Porte des Vents, Séguret 2012	15.25	16.5	15	14.5	An expensive nose of plums and griotte cherries. The palate is rich, and has poise and concentration; a nice example from a most beautiful village.	14%	2015-2018	POA	Bottle Green
Michel & Stéphane Ogier d'Ampuis, Le Temps est Venu, Plan de Dieu 2011	15.25	14	15.5	16	Earthy and spicy currant aromas. The palate is a bit rustic and disjointed but has good length and is somewhat hedonistic.	14%	2014-2017	£11.95	Berry Bros & Rudd, Montechet Fine Wines
Michel Collomb, Clos d'Alzan, Signargues 2011	15.25	15.5	14	16	Slightly closed with black fruits and herbal hints. The palate is a little drying, but generally the oak is cleverly integrated and adds to the ensemble.	14%	2014-2016	£10.65	Vineyards Direct
Philippe Cartoux, Domaine des Espiers, Sablet 2011	15.25	13.5	16	16.5	Dark fruit overlaid with a touch of menthol and oak spice; quite enticing. The palate is starting to show signs of ageing but has good acidity.	14.5%	2014-2018	£12.95	Stone Vine & Sun
Rémy Ferbras, Le Mistral, Plan de Dieu 2011	15.25	15	15	16	Mellow and relaxed with slightly jammy fruits. Good acidity holding it together with fair length. Lacks a little in long-term structural potential.	14.5%	2014-2016	£9.99	Laurence Hayward
Vignerons Terras d'Avignon, Château Grand Dignitaire, Gadagne 2012	15.25	14.5	15.5	16	A smoky nose that is a touch closed. The palate is vibrant with smooth and mellow fruit. The alcohol is quite marked.	15%	2014-2017	£15	The Sampler
Château St-Estève d'Uchaux, Vieilles Vignes, Massif d'Uchaux 2011	15	15	14	16	An oaky, indulgent nose with hints of leather and herbs. Very drinkable with decent length - pretty serious and tannic.	14.5%	2015-2018	£12.95	The Wine Society
Domaine La Florane, Visan 2012	15	15	16	14	Nose of red berries and undergrowth - indicative of oak, but not too excessive. The finish has a nice peppery touch.	14%	2015-2018	£10	Countleys

**Fair 13-14.75pts (76-82pts)**  
 ■ Château Signac, Cuvée Combe d'Enfer, Chusclan 2012 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine de la Renjard, Massif d'Uchaux 2011 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine de L'Échevin, St-Maurice 2012 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine La Romance, Chusclan 2012 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine Pique-Basse, L'as du Pique, Roaix 2012 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine Richard, Cairanne 2011 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine Rose-Dieu, Plan de Dieu 2012 14.75 (82) ■ Famille Quiot, Château du Trignon, Plan de Dieu 2011 14.75 (82) ■ Les Vignerons du Castel, Domaine du Fournier, Signargues 2012

14.75 (82) ■ Paul Jaboulet Aîné, De Père en Filles, Plan de Dieu 2011 14.75 (82) ■ Domaine des Pasquiers, Sablet 2011 14.5 (81) ■ Les Vignerons de Roquemaure, Les Barryes, Laudun 2011 14.5 (81) ■ Vignobles de Balma Venitla, Terrasse Pavée, Séguret 2012 14.5 (81) ■ Domaine de la Présidente, Grands Classiques, Cairanne 2012 14.25 (80+) ■ Les Vignerons de Roaix-Séguret, Domaine Canta Granouloa, Séguret 2012 14.25 (80+) ■ Vignobles La Coterie, Cuvée Ferdinand De Laye, Visan 2012 14.25 (80+) ■ Vignerons Propriétés Associées, Domaine Allégret, Laudun 2011 14 (80) ■ Château

Signac, Cuvée Terra Amata, Chusclan 2011 13.75 (79) ■ Ravoire & Fils, Olivier Ravoire, Cairanne 2011 13.5 (78) ■ Vignobles La Coterie, Anvis, Visan 2012 12.75 (75+) ■ Poor 11-12.75pts (70-75+pts)  
 ■ Vignobles de Balma Venitla, Porte St-Martin, Visan 2012 11.75 (72) ■ Christophe Coste, Domaine Charité, Cayenne, Signargues 2011 11 (70) ■ Domaine des Pasquiers, Plan de Dieu 2011 11 (70)  
 For full UK stockist details, see p100

**My top three**  
Simon Field MW

- **Domaine Les Grands Bois, Cuvée Maximilien, Cairanne 2012** Cairanne to me is all about purity and supple ripe fruit. If you want density and complexity, go a little further up the hill to Gigondas, but here ripeness is all. This example exudes uncooked charm, with a strong performance by Mourvèdre adding interest and weight at the back of the palate. **18.5 (95/100)** Drink 2014-2019
- **Domaine Roche-Audran, Visan 2012** The appeal in this wine resides in relative simplicity, with uncooked Grenache dancing an elegant pas-de-deux with Syrah. The latter proves very well suited to this village, the wines of which are supple, charming and often underestimated. **17.5 (91)** Drink 2015-2018
- **Clos Bellane, Les Echals, Valreas 2011** Honourable mention to perhaps my favourite of the 2011s; perhaps a little overworked on the oak but a fascinating and ambitious statement of what can be done with Syrah in this relatively northerly village. **17 (90)** Drink 2015-2018

**My top three**  
Marcel Orford-Williams

- **Domaine Alary, L'Estévenas, Cairanne 2011** What the Rhône does best is produce good, mouthfilling reds that are satisfying and that make the simplest, hearty food, complete. This is Domaine Alary. **17/20 (90/100)** Drink 2015-2018
- **Domaine Les Grands Bois, Cuvée Maximilien, Cairanne 2012** It's often the case that the top cuvée is little more than a more concentrated version of the basic with a little wood. Not so here. The top wine had sophistication far removed from mere Côtes du Rhône. There was oak but it was well managed and added something. This was an outstanding example of what Cairanne should be. **18.5 (95)** Drink 2014-2019
- **Domaine La Cabotte, Gabriel, Massif d'Uchaux 2012** Massif d'Uchaux deserves to be much better known; wines like this should help. What a delight to taste a 2012 that tasted of this lovely vintage: fruity and generous, but with that wonderful sense of freshness. **17 (90)** Drink 2015-2019

**My top three**  
Matt Walls

- **Domaine Les Grands Bois, Cuvée Maximilien, Cairanne 2012** This established, family-owned estate has succeeded in crystallising everything that's positive about the 2012 vintage in Cairanne in this cuvée. Incredibly vibrant aromatics backed up with concentrated dark fruit flavour and a juicy, lifted finish. **18.5 (95)** Drink 2014-2019
- **Domaine La Cabotte, Gabriel, Massif d'Uchaux 2012** This biodynamic estate belongs to the family that owns Domaine d'Ardhuy in Burgundy. A great choice if you're looking for something powerful but fresh. It's intense but balanced, with thick damson and plum fruits framed by some well judged oak. **18 (93)** Drink 2015-2019
- **Domaine Michel Mourier, 2M, Sablet 2012** A small, relatively young estate but with real potential going by the quality of this wine. Beautifully fresh, lively and aromatic, its freshness is accentuated by the relatively low alcohol level (13.5%). **17.5 (91)** Drink 2014-2017

NB: the tasters' top wines are not necessarily their top-scoring, rather those which, on learning the wines' identity, they feel are the most notable given their provenance, price or other factors

**Expert summary:** John Livingstone-Learmonth  
 Without Cairanne, the depth of this tasting would wither. Even so, there were good performances from a few co-ops as well as some less well-known cru names



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GOOD QUALITY, LOW-PRICE wines can be found across the Côtes du Rhône-Villages, especially if a canny importer has strayed off the main drag of high-profile villages. Hence Massif d'Uchaux did well, even if it isn't easy to sell. Here the flagship domaine La Cabotte was closely accompanied in the ratings by two merchant wines from Cave Les Coteaux, Arboue and the vast Cellier des Dauphins, both great value. Co-operatives are losing members who prefer to bottle their own wine or to sell their crop to a high-profile domaine in a partnership venture. Thus it is good to see that Laudun's combined cave of Laudun Chusclan, with great experience at the helm, showed well. Laudun's reputation was also upheld by Château Courac and Brotte's Château de Bord. The tasting also pointed to steady progress at Visan and at Valréas, even if the roster of names at the latter is limited. But underneath the ratings and names lurk challenges. The first is Life After Cairanne - beyond its promotion in 2014. Take Cairanne away, and the depth of the tasting sheet withers radically. At least 2015 is likely to see a valid newcomer in the shape of Ste-Cécile-les-Vignes - sound wines and domaines, and sizeable vineyards. Another concern is frustration about villages such as Signargues, which is hard to sell - the name hasn't caught on. This means that growers elect to produce more wine -

52 hectolitres a hectare - as Côtes du Rhône against 41 hl/ha of Signargues. Even at a lower price, they're more profitable. Hence the name stands still. Most trustworthy here are good merchants such as Pierre-Henri Morel and Gonnet from Domaine Font de Michelle at Châteaufort-du-Pape. Then there are the villages short on vineyards and domaines whose marketing savvy is limited. Here falls Puyméras, Rochegode, Rousset and St-Gervais. Their soils are sound, and a few domaines stand out (Ste-Anne at St-Gervais is one) but their profile is low and unlikely to rise. By vintage, it was no surprise to find 2012 preferred, although it was also the more submitted. Good 2011s are real sit-down wines, whereas the more linear features of the 2012s render them more able to after work enjoyment. High-profile names which did not make the grade here included Marcel Richard at Cairanne, Château Signac (Chusclan), Domaine Pique-Basse (Roaix) and Domaine L'Echevin (St-Maurice). Usually names of confident quality. ■  
*'Good 2011s are real sit-down wines, whereas the linear 2012s better suit after-work enjoyment'*

DOMAINE SERGUIER

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