

FRANCE-RHÔNE

SPECIFICATIONS (What you have to know)	DISTRICTS, COMMUNES AND VINEYARDS Northern Rhône: Côte Rôtie, Condrieu, Château-Grillet, Saint-Joseph, Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage, Cornas Southern Rhône: Côtes du Rhône, Côtes du Rhône-Villages, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Gigondas, Vacqueyras, Lirac, Tavel, Vinsobres Outlying regions: Luberon, Ventoux, Costières de Nîmes Indication Géographique Protégée: Collines Rhodaniennes, Ardèche, Drôme, Vaucluse, Bouches-du-Rhône KEY LIGHT WINES Red Côtes du Rhône Côtes du Rhône-Villages Châteauneuf-du-Pape Crozes-Hermitage Côte Rôtie or Hermitage IGP (eg Ardèche, Bouches-du-Rhône, Vaucluse) White Condrieu Rosé Any Rhône rosé KEY FACTORS Grape varieties: Syrah, Grenache, Carignan, Cinsault, Mourvèdre, Marsanne, Roussanne, Viognier, Clairette, Bourboulenc Climate & Weather: Mediterranean, wind Viticulture: Gobelet, terraces Producers: Jaboulet, Chapoutier, Guigal, Château Grillet		
HISTORY	- 1st AD: Romans used the Rhône to carry up wine from Spain. - 71AD: Pliny mentions an excellent wine from Vienne (Northern Rhône). - 1309: Clement V brings his court to Avignon and wines starts getting recognition - 15-16th: Burgundy restricts transportation & hence development to east & north via Saône (only way to transport) - 18-19th: easier transportation increases reputation of the region but still relatively minor region ('gros rouge') - 1970s: positive side effects of international interest in Burgundy & Bdx + Guigal's push for quality - Now: 71,000ha for 3m hl/year		
KEY REGIONS	Rhône septentrional (Northern Rhône): 8 Crus = 5% of total production Rhône méridional (Southern Rhône): 22 grape varieties, 9 crus Satellite appellations (Vivarais, Grignan les Adhémar, Luberon, Ventoux, Costières de Nîmes, etc.) IGP collines rhodaniennes if declassification		
NORTHERN RHÔNE			
CLIMATE & WEATHER	- Continental climate w clearly marked seasons: hard winters & hot summers (23°C avg July temp) - Cool, dry northerly winds & rain-bearing southerly winds. - 2,350h of sunshine / 900mm rainfall		
SOILS & TOPOGRAPHY	- Steep slopes (up to 460m) contribute to reinforce the climate's influence + maximise sunlight - Most appellations on the right bank of the river (better exposure) - Granite in best sites. - Steep slopes > soil erosion = constant threat.		
GRAPE VARIETIES	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <u>Reds</u> 1. Syrah Only red grape authorised in Northern Rhône Uncertain origin: 1. From Shiraz in Persia & brought by the Phocaeans 2. From Syracuse & brought by the Romans 3. Grew wild in Rhône. Needs warm climate Relatively productive & disease resistant Late budding but doesn't ripen too late. Loses aroma & acidity rapidly when yields increase Hi proportion of anthocyanins (i.e. dark colour) > responds well to oak maturation when grapes really ripe. </td><td style="vertical-align: top;"> <u>Whites</u> 1. Viognier Potential relative of Nebbolio via Freisa No evidence of origin: from Dalmatia by Probus? Needs a relatively warm climate, can withstand drought but prone to powdery mildew Deep yellow grapes, hi in colour & alcohol; lo acidity Typical apricot, peaches & blossom aromas Only used for Condrieu, Chateau Grillet & sometimes blended w Syrah in Côte Rôtie as perfuming & stabilising agent. 2. Roussanne Named after russet coloured skin Irregular yields, tendency to powdery mildew & rot, poor wind resistance makes it an evident 2nd or 3rd choice Often blended. Only other grape with Marsanne authorised in Northern Rhône appellation whites Aromatic & hi acidity wines -> better ageing 3. Marsanne Originating from Northern Rhône Sturdy, hardy productive grape w tendency to flab -> often blended with Viognier or Roussanne to balance acidity Produces deep-coloured, full-bodied wines with aromas of glue, honeysuckle & sometimes almonds </td></tr> </table>	<u>Reds</u> 1. Syrah Only red grape authorised in Northern Rhône Uncertain origin: 1. From Shiraz in Persia & brought by the Phocaeans 2. From Syracuse & brought by the Romans 3. Grew wild in Rhône. Needs warm climate Relatively productive & disease resistant Late budding but doesn't ripen too late. Loses aroma & acidity rapidly when yields increase Hi proportion of anthocyanins (i.e. dark colour) > responds well to oak maturation when grapes really ripe.	<u>Whites</u> 1. Viognier Potential relative of Nebbolio via Freisa No evidence of origin: from Dalmatia by Probus? Needs a relatively warm climate, can withstand drought but prone to powdery mildew Deep yellow grapes, hi in colour & alcohol; lo acidity Typical apricot, peaches & blossom aromas Only used for Condrieu, Chateau Grillet & sometimes blended w Syrah in Côte Rôtie as perfuming & stabilising agent. 2. Roussanne Named after russet coloured skin Irregular yields, tendency to powdery mildew & rot, poor wind resistance makes it an evident 2nd or 3rd choice Often blended. Only other grape with Marsanne authorised in Northern Rhône appellation whites Aromatic & hi acidity wines -> better ageing 3. Marsanne Originating from Northern Rhône Sturdy, hardy productive grape w tendency to flab -> often blended with Viognier or Roussanne to balance acidity Produces deep-coloured, full-bodied wines with aromas of glue, honeysuckle & sometimes almonds
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VITICULTURE	- Terraced vineyards - No mechanisation possible so vines individually staked - Low yields - Eroded soil often carted upslope via pulley system - 8000 vines/ha
WINEMAKING	- Traditionally, long maceration & up to 3 years barrel aging - only top whites see oak; carbonic for cheaper wines - Tannin management via: - Picking at the right time & sorting - Cold soaking before fermentation for colour extraction mainly (not tannins) - Tannin extraction by lower temperature fermentation - Pumping over is watched to limit tannins too
WINE APPELLATIONS & STYLES	1. Côte Rôtie AC – 308ha 12 600 hl 41hl/ha on average (●) - o Most northerly vineyards in Rhône. 500m hi & can be exposed to the sun all day + soil retains heat - o Narrow terraces on south-east facing steep slopes – up to 60% gradient -> 2nd steepest vineyard slopes after Mosel Côte Blonde: sandy limestone over granite > racier wines, approachable early, 15yr lifespan Côte Brune: iron-bearing schist over granite > more intense & tannic, not ready before 10yrs, 30yr lifespan - o 2-3wks fermentation + maturation for 18-36mths (42 for Guigal) - o Generally deep coloured, intense dark fruits, violet & spice, velvety texture. - o Up to 20% of Viognier authorised in the blend but most often 5% if any. COURSE TASTING NOTES: Côte Rôtie - Clear deep ruby colour. Clean medium + intense nose of blackberry, black olives, redcurrant, liquorice, cured meat, toast, farmyard. Dry palate with high acidity, medium + fine grained tannins, medium + alcohol, long finish. Very good quality and long term ageing potential. 2. Condrieu AC – 192ha 7400 hl 39hl/ha on average (●) - o Steep slopes w terraced vineyards on granite and decomposed mica (“arzelle”). Constant ventilation prevents rot. - o Low acidity, high alcohol and flavours of peach, apricot, rose water & candied citrus. Best drunk within 5yrs. - o Guigal: ~40% of production COURSE TASTING NOTES: Condrieu - Clear pale lemon colour. Clean medium + intense nose, very floral and exotic, with aromas of white flowers (verbena, acacia), stone fruit (ripe apricot, nectarine, yellow peach), tropical fruit (mango), oak (vanilla). Dry palate with medium acidity, high alcohol, full bodied, creamy texture, medium + finish. Very good quality, has potential for ageing. 3. Chateau Grillet AC – 3ha 62hl 21hl/ha on average (●) - o 1 vineyard, 1 owner - o Amphitheatre single estate with south-facing steep terraces made of granitic soils. Protected from northerly winds - o Grapes are picked earlier, fermented at hotter temperature with MLF and aged in wood for min. 6mths. - o More austere wines with longer ageing potential // Condrieu and commend very high prices. 4. St Joseph – 1,200ha 49 000 hl 40 hl/ha on avg (●●) - o Grown on less steep banks of the Rhône and also on the cooler plateaux for large volume production - o Lighter & fruitier style with blackcurrant & raspberry notes but some growers design intense tannic style too - o 88% red production; small percentage of whites from Marsanne mainly & a hint of Roussanne. 5. Crozes-Hermitage AC - 1,600ha 80 000 hl 48 hl/ha on avg (●●) - o At the top and behind the slopes of Hermitage. Mostly flat with less shelter from the Mistral wind. - o 15% of whites grapes allowed in the blend but normally 100% Syrah - o Lighter & less intense wines vs. Hermitage. Will mature quicker. - o 92% or red wine 8% full bodied floral whites. - o 60% of production comes for the cooperative of Tain L'Hermitage. Rest from négociants e.g. Jaboulet Aîné. COURSE TASTING NOTES: Crozes Hermitage - Clear deep purple colour. Clean medium + intense nose of fruit (plum, prune), floral (violet, peony), spice (liquorice, black pepper, cocoa). Dry palate with medium + acidity, medium + ripe tannins, medium + alcohol, medium + bodied, medium + finish. Very good wine with some mid term ageing potential

	6. Hermitage - 137ha 3000 hl 24 hl/ha on avg (●●) o 76% red 24% white o Vines cultivated since Gallo-Roman times but reputation dates back from 18th century. Some top Bordeaux at the time were 'Ermitagé' for extra strength, depth and colour. o Various climats with different altitudes, exposures & soil types. Best sites are steep southerly slopes with sunshine all day & granitic soils. Non-granitic soils used for whites. o 15% of whites grapes allowed in the blend but normally 100% Syrah o Deep intense powerful wines; approachable at 10+ years and can age up to 30+ years. o 75% red production but top white made from Marsanne & Roussanne. o Tain L'Hermitage cooperative accounts for 1/3 of production; Chapoutier and Jaboulet Aîné follow. 7. Cornas – 145ha 5000 hl 36hl/ha on avg (●) o Northwest of Valence vineyards in south-facing amphitheatre (suntrap & protection from winds). o Granite soils on very steep terraces supported by small retaining walls. o Overtaken by neighbours Hermitage & Crozes Hermitage in popularity (no superstar producer). o Must be 100% Syrah. o Similar to Hermitage (full bodied & intense) but a bit more rustic & faster maturing (min 6-8 yrs and max 20). o Jean-Luc Colombo introduced the use of new oak barrels & destemming in 80s 8. St Péray 85 ha 3000 hl (●/Sparkling) NOT IN THE SYLLABUS o Small volume of white, still & sparkling made from Marsanne & Roussanne.
PRODUCTION & BUSINESS	- Northern Rhône produces less than 5% of the total production w a higher proportion of domaines. - 50% sold by négociants - Key Northern Rhône producers: o Guigal - Family-owned merchant-grower established in 1946 by key figure responsible for revival of Northern Rhône - Introduction of new small oak barrels in 80's - Low yields, 42 months in new oak maturation & no filtration -> intense reds praised by Parker since mid 80s. - Key brands: E Guigal, Vidal Fleury. Purchased Château Nalys in Châteauneuf du Pape in 2017 - Top wines: Côte Rôtie (La Mouline, La Landonne & La Turquie), Chateau d'Ampuis and Condrieu (La Doriane) o Chapoutier - Family-owned merchant-grower established in 1808 and run by Michel Chapoutier since 90. - Owns 230ha in Northern Rhône incl. 32ha in Hermitage. All vineyards biodynamic -> largest in the world - Low yields, oak ageing (new when appropriate) and no filtration or fining. - Top wines: white Hermitage « Chante Alouette », Ermitage Le Pavillon & Côte Rôtie La Mordorée. o Jaboulet Aîné - Négociant established in the 19th century - Not family-owned anymore, purchased by the Frey family of Château la Lagune in Bordeaux in 2006 - Owns 95ha of vineyards and sources the other 2/3 of his grapes - All vineyards organic and in biodynamic conversion - Top wines: La Chapelle Hermitage, Domaine de Thalabert Crozes-Hermitage. o Frères Delas - Owned by Deutz Champagne house (i.e. Roederer) - Top wines: Hermitage Les Bessards and Côte Rôtie La Landonne.
SOUTHERN RHÔNE	
CLIMATE & WEATHER	- Hot Mediterranean climate: hot, dry summers & most of the rain in the winter (23°C avg July temp) - 2,750hours of sunshine / 700mm rainfall; Mistral wind generally chases away diseases
SOILS & TOPOGRAPHY	Flat with rolling hills. Some vineyards covered in stones which retain heat. Mainly clay, limestone & alluvial soils.
GRAPE VARIETIES	

	<u>Reds (14 varieties)</u> 1. Grenache Early budding, late ripening Tendency towards hi sugar & alcohol Best in sandy soils & dry climates Produces sweet, fruity & low tannin wines 2. Mourvèdre Best in warm areas to fully ripen Gives wines with structure, intense fruit & ageability Ripe & earthy when young; meaty & smoky aged 3. Cinsault Hi yielding, early ripening; best in hot weather Low in tannin; Adds spice & acidity to blends 4. Carignan Late ripener, high in acid, tannins & colour Difficult to grow; often high yields > no finesse 5. Syrah Others: Counoise, Muscardin, Vaccarèse, Piquepoul noir, Calitor	<u>Whites (8 varieties)</u> 1. Roussanne Named after russet coloured skin Irregular yields, tendency to powdery mildew & rot, poor wind resistance makes it an evident 2nd or 3rd choice Often blended Aromatic & hi acidity wines -> better ageing 2. Marsanne Sturdy, hardy productive grape, unbalanced > often blended with Viognier or Roussanne to balance acidity Produces deep-coloured, full-bodied wines with aromas of glue, honeysuckle & sometimes almonds 3. Viognier 4. Clairette Adds acidity & aroma (esp. when picked early) 5. Bourboulenc Ripens late but keeps high acidity; prone to rot Others: Grenache blanc, Muscat, Piquepoul, Ugni Blanc, Picardan, Rolle, Maccabeu.
VITICULTURE	Wind breaks key to protect vines (no natural barrier) Low pruning increases ripening from reflected heat Bush spur-pruned except Syrah 4000 vines/ha (lack of water)	
WINEMAKING	Several techniques used; Carbonic maceration is often used for early drinking reds Traditional fermentation is followed by long oak aging	
WINE APPELLATIONS & STYLES	1. IGP (Collines Rhodaniennes, Ardèche, Drôme, Vaucluse & Bouches-du-Rhône, Principauté d'Orange) o Often wine produced from declassified grapes or from vines too young to be AC. 2. Côte du Rhône – 42,000ha – 48% of overall Rhône production (●●●) o Can be produced in Northern & Southern Rhône but vast majority produced in Southern Rhône o Requirements: max 52hl/ha / Min 40% Grenache / Min 11% abv o Most wines from flat, wind-swept vineyards with light & fruity style (some carbonic maceration) o Only 4% white wine & 7% rosé. o % of production made by cooperatives. COURSE TASTING NOTES: Côtes du Rhône - Medium purple colour. Clean medium intense nose with predominant 1ary fruit: plum, black cherry, dried figs, cooked strawberry, raspberry. Floral (violet), spice (liquorice, pepper, cocoa, roasted coffee), vanilla. Dry palate with medium + acidity, medium – ripe tannins, high alcohol, medium + bodied, medium finish. Good wine to enjoy in youth to keep the fruit 3. Côte du Rhône villages – 11% of total production (●●) o Step up in quality with villages able to be promoted to full ACs afterwards (e.g. Vinsobres) o Max 45hl/ha / Min 50% Grenache / Min 12.5% abv o Vinsobres promoted to AC in 2006 as well as Beaumes de Venise. Cairanne, Rasteau. 4. Rhône Crus – 12% of total production, yields 30 hl/ha on average: Châteauneuf du Pape – 3,100ha (●●) o Takes its name from the Papal summer quarters created here in the 14th century. John XXII is credited with devt of a papal vineyard in the area. o First French AC created in 1923 following Baron Le Roy's efforts to protect against fraud. o Driest climate in Southern Rhône w Mistral, 2,800h of sunshine & heat stored in stony soils o Many soils but galets famous for retaining the day's heat and redistributing it at night o 13 varieties allowed -mainly Grenache, Cinsault, Mourvèdre, Syrah, Muscardin, Counoise, Clairette, Bourboulenc o Key is to balance hi sugar (& alcohol) with phenolics & tannins. 3 different styles co-exist: i. <i>Négociant style</i>: carbonic maceration -> wines ready to drink earlier ii. <i>Modern</i>: shorter maceration & time in wood -> approachable early but can age e.g. Chateau de Beaucastel, Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe	

iii. *Traditional*: late harvesting, high proportions of Grenache, 4yrs élevage (2 cement / 2 old oak)
e.g. **Bosquet des Papes**
o **93% reds**; 7% of whites made from Clairette, Grenache blanc, Bourboulenc, Roussanne, Picpoul, Picardan.

COURSE TASTING NOTES: CDP - Clear deep purple colour. Clean medium intense nose of black fruit (blackberry, blueberry), red fruit (raspberry, kirsch), spice (clove, pepper, liquorice), herbal (lavender), oak (vanilla), dried fruit (prune, fig). Dry palate with medium acidity, medium + fine grained tannins, **high alcohol**, **full bodied**, long finish. Very good wine with long term ageing potential

Gigondas – 1,200ha (●●)

o **Dry, hot climate w 2,800h of sunshine**; mostly on limestone & clay slopes up to 400m high.
o Requirements: Max 80% Grenache & min 15% of Syrah & Mourvèdre & max 10% of other CDR varieties
o Similar style as Châteauneuf du Pape but less structure. Mature around 10yrs.
o 99% red; 1% rosé

Vacqueyras – 1,400ha (●●●)

o Promoted to cru in 90; similar soil to Gigondas; Requirements: minimum 50% Grenache
o Wines are concentrated and a bit more rustic than Gigondas. Mature around 3-6 yrs.
o 95% red 4% white 1% rosé

Tavel – 911ha (●)

o Limestone soils; full bodied, intensely fruity rosés mainly from Grenache & Cinsault. 7 other grapes allowed

COURSE TASTING NOTES: Tavel - Clear medium salmon colour. Clean medium intense nose of liquorice, red fruit (strawberry, raspberry, pomegranate), **orange peel**, white pepper. Dry palate with medium acidity, medium + alcohol, medium bodied, medium finish.

Lirac – 771ha (●●●)

o 87% red 10% white 3% rosé
o West bank of the Rhône at similar level to Châteauneuf du Pape
o Robust & meaty reds; heady rosés.

Vinsobres 580 ha (●)

o Big night/day temperature difference

Beaumes de Venise 635 ha (●●)

outside the syllabus

Muscat de Beaumes de Venise 395 ha 17hl/ha on avg (● sweet)

outside the syllabus

Rasteau 950 ha (●)

outside the syllabus

Rasteau VDN 22 ha (●●● sweet)

outside the syllabus

Other ACs – 25% of total production

A. Ventoux – 5,700ha (●●)

o 68% red 4% white **28% rosé**
o Vineyards situated on west & south slopes of Mont Ventoux up to 500m high -> **cooler** w hi diurnal range
o The wines, mainly reds, are fresh and fruity with a marked acidity. Small percentage of light floral whites.

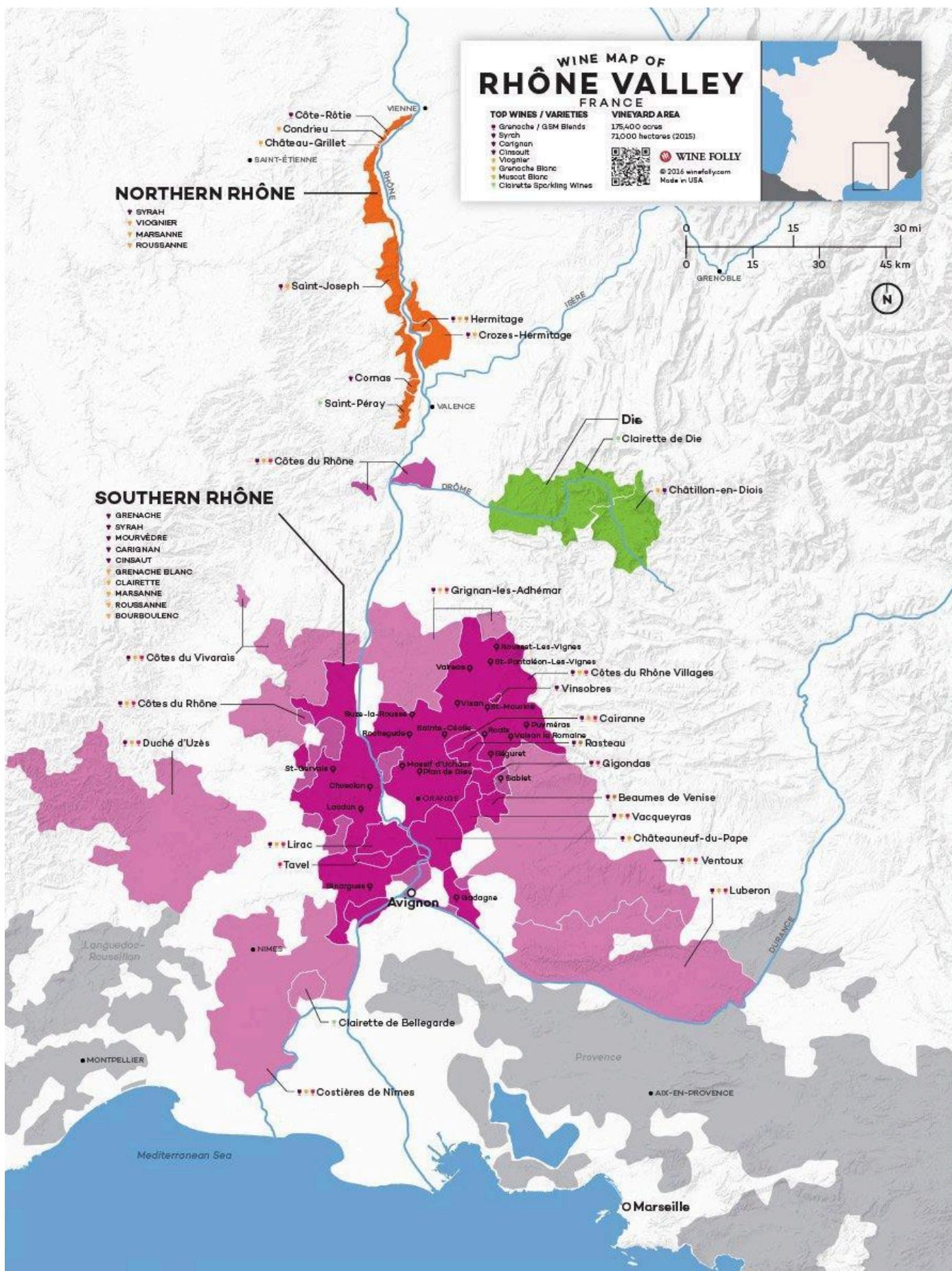
B. Luberon – 3,300ha (●●)

o 35% red 19% white **46% rosé**
o Vineyards on the slopes of Lubéron hills w slightly **cooler** climate for light, fruity reds and round & fruity whites.

C. Costières de Nîmes (●●●) – 4,000ha AC

61% red 5% white 34% rosé
One of the hottest climate in France
Soils low-lying and covered with stones (//Châteauneuf du Pape)
¾ of reds w min 25% Grenache, Languedoc influence with more Carignan -> **powerful & fleshy**

PRODUCTION & BUSINESS	- 70% of wines sold by co-operatives - Key Northern Rhone producers: - o Chateau de Beaucastel – 100ha / 330,000btl Family estate now run by Jean Pierre & Francois Perrin. Original blend with only 30% Grenache; more Mourvèdre (30%) & Counoise (5-10%). Rest depends on vintage Unusual vinification by rapid high heating (80°C) of the grapes before fermentation to better extract tannins Rich, firm, concentrated w dark fruits, spice, game & tobacco notes with age. Exceptional vintage cuvée: 'Hommage a Jacques Perrin' - o Chateau Rayas – Châteauneuf du Pape – 25ha Owned by eccentric Jacques Reynaud; Vineyards on sandy soils (≠ galets) 100% Grenache for rich, sweet, powerful reds w summer fruits flavours. - o Chateau Mont Redon – Châteauneuf du Pape – 145ha / 640,000btl One of the largest and most consistent estate of the appellation; run by Fabre & Abeille families Recently replaced old concrete & wooden barrels with modern stainless steel system - o Chateau d'Aquéria – Tavel – 65ha / 400,000btl Known as best producer of Tavel rosé; also produces reds.
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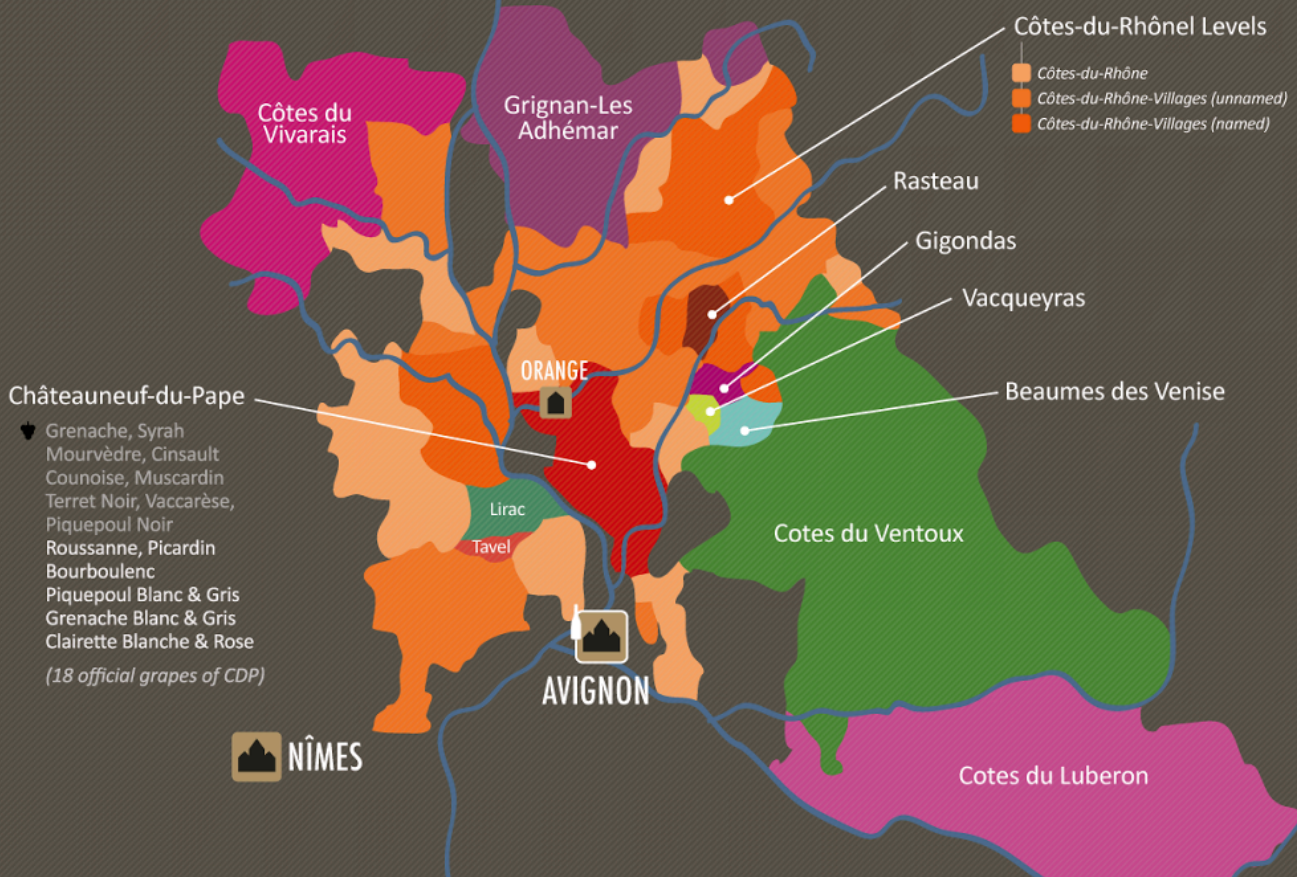


RHÔNE VALLEY MAP

Northern Rhône



Southern Rhône



Appellation d'origine contrôlée
Décret du 15 mai 1956

Décret du 15 mai 1956

