



Written by Jancis Robinson 18 Nov 2014

Rhône 2013 - Gigondas

My blind tasting of 94 2013 Gigondas took place overlooking the pretty little main parking place in the village as workmen savagely lopped the branches off the plane trees there, imposing a wintry look on what was still a remarkably mild autumn scene.

My visit happened to coincide with that of occasional guest contributor Yohan Castaing. As we started our work, Louis Barruol of Château de Ste-Cosme and co-president of the appellation came bounding up the stairs of the Gigondas official organisation's offices to impress on us just how different the wines were in 2013 when production of the main grape Grenache had been so devastated by coulure. We would find some very different structures and flavours from the Gigondas norm, he warned us - and of course total volumes were down.

The previous day I had tasted a wide range of reds from the Côtes du Rhône Villages and noted a pretty impressive upward step from these in the Gigondas samples, only 20 of them already bottled. A few of them were a bit obviously oaky and tasted more like 'modern red wine' than the produce of this atmospheric village overlooked by the Dentelles de Montmirail, and there was the odd example that smelt strangely floral, as though perhaps some particularly aromatic yeast had been employed. There were also a few unbottled samples that seemed a bit tired to me, although at lunch after the tasting Barruol corrected this to 'badly prepared' (by which he presumably meant not subjected to a sufficiently strong dose of sulphur).

He is not short of an opinion – and has featured in our various discussions of Côtes du Rhône assemblages on our Members' forum. He is currently trying to get Gigondas Blanc approved by the regulators and believes that thereby Gigondas could become known as the home of the Clairette grape. He is also fiercely opposed to destemming. 'Look what it's done to Côte Rôtie', he asserted gnomically. He, incidentally, sees Gigondas's north Rhône counterpart in terms of pricing parity as the rejuvenated St-Joseph appellation.

The wines below are in alphabetical order by producer surname, ignoring terms such as Dom, Ch, Vignerons, etc. Most of these wines are cask/tank samples, but we have noted the few that have already been bottled.

- **Tardieu Laurent, Vieilles Vignes 2013 Gigondas**

100% whole-bunch pressed. 95% Grenache (70-100 years old), 5% Mourvèdre (40 years old). From the Dentelles, Cayron Garrigues and Roaix Village.

Blueish crimson. Meaty and somehow reminiscent of lacquered Peking duck. Contained and concentrated with real structure and very refined, focused fruit. Cool finish. A serious wine that should age very well. Very ambitious. Not a jot of heat.

Drink 2016-2026

£175 per case of 12 ib Corney & Barrow 17.5

- **Dom du Terme, Reserve 2013 Gigondas**

Mid ruby. Sweet, violet-scented nose. Lots of voluptuous sweet fruit. Lightish sandy tannins. Pretty charming and with nice freshness.

Drink 2016-2022

16.5

- **Les Teyssonnières 2013 Gigondas**

Mid ruby. Sweet Grenache but not quite enough structure or freshness. Just a bit dull on the end.

Drink 2016-2020

15.5

- **Dom de la Tourade 2013 Gigondas**

Glossy, quite intense crimson. Not much on the nose other than a suggestion of Syrah but it also suggests there is quite a lot to be excavated. Thick and sweet on the palate with lightly drying tannins. Lots of youthful interest here. It gives the impression of being worth digging down deeper. Very long.

Drink 2017-2026

17

- **Dom de la Tourade, Font des Aïeux 2013 Gigondas**

Dark ruby with a blackish tinge. Sweet and simple on the nose for now. Juicy and rather appealing in a very straightforward way. Lots of open appeal. And some freshness. All the elements are there for a good future. A meaty finish.

Drink 2017-2026

16.5+