

# SÉMAPHOR

N°17 - JANUARY 2005

THE NEWSLETTER OF LE VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE, DOMAINE LA ROQUÈTE AND DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES



## A ROSÉ FROM LES PALLIÈRES.

For the first time since we've been running the estate, we made a rosé at Domaine Les Pallières in 2004.

After several years of work, observation and results, we felt it desirable to separate a few acres of vines – given the personality of their soil/grape pairing – and dedicate them to an easy-drinking rosé.

This first vintage, made mainly from Cinsault, Clairette and Grenache, has been given a very French-sounding name: "Au Petit Bonheur - Les Pallières". The idea being to remind drinkers of the feelgood, convivial side of summer wines, but also to underscore this product's providential nature – there's nothing technological about it and, in a sense, it has come into our lives quite by chance.

We repeated the experiment in 2005, and from April we'll be able to share with you the "little piece of happiness" procured by uncorking an unassuming bottle of wine. And, after all, isn't that its prime purpose?

**Daniel Brunier**

## THE 2003s ARE HERE – AND HOW!

*It goes without saying how pleased we are to be able to present our 2003 reds after waiting for them – or, rather, feeling as if we had waited such a long time. Coming after 2002, which yielded little red wine, the ageing of the 2003s seemed to drag on.*

*But there was never any question of taking a diminishing short-cut, given this vintage's personality and overall structure: the region's finest terroirs, coupled with the summer of 2003, have produced some seriously good wines.*

*They were bottled in early summer 2005, and, after being left to settle for two months, went on sale in September.*

*The Vieux Télégraphe red has a complex nose: slightly smoky, a strong mineral streak, fresh and spicy. On the palate it's a little austere, though promising, with notes of dark chocolate, super-ripe cherries, garrigue and currants; a rich mouthfeel and fairly prominent tannins. All in all, balanced, mineral and powerful. You sense the deep roots of the 70-year-old Grenache vines, and tremendous laying-down potential. Comparing it to a previous vintage isn't easy – a chunkier version of the 2001, perhaps.*

*The 2003 La Roquette red, ushering in its new presentation, is deep in colour, with a quite amazing nose: dominated by aromas of very ripe Grenache, with a fresh-fruity sensation; there's nothing heavy about it.*

*On the palate, a lush creaminess with ample liquorice and strong Grenache flavours too; the freshness on the nose translates into a nerviness on the palate – a very noteworthy feature for this vintage, which has grown out of a heatwave summer and grapes of unsurpassed maturity.*

*It strikes a tidy balance between richness, fruit and tannin; the structure is there, but well integrated; it's fleshy, lively and gourmand. A*

*fine expression of La Roquette.*

*The young-vine wines (Vieux Mas des Papes, Télégramme) have also turned out very interesting: fresh fruit, nicely firm and gourmand, with a tinge of liquorice; creamy but not heavy. Pleasure to be savoured as from now.*

*In 2003 we were fortunate to open the new winemaking cellar at Les Pallières.*

*The timing was ideal for what is a vibrant vintage: very appealing colour, a nose of very (and perhaps excessively) ripe fruit, of cocoa and spice.*

*On the palate: plenty of contrast, ample, with the mineral traces of the great years and the spices we've now learned are typical of this terroir.*

*Ripe, forthright tannins with a bright future. Here too, the old vines played their role to perfection.*

*As for the whites, we're currently marketing the 2004s. These were made from a very ripe crop; they have depth, creaminess and personality.*

*More a vintage for the palate than for the nose; potent honey, anis and floral flavours that conjure intense Mediterranean summers.*

*As usual, Le Pigeoulet rounds off our review. For the moment, it's the sole market ambassador of the 2004 reds, which, generally speaking, are things of great beauty. This Pigeoulet is arrestingly fresh, creamy, grapy and gourmand, and very serious with it. A very fine sample of this vintage, to be released in late 2006.*

\**Sémaphore*: n. (from sema- and -phore). In days gone by, an arm-waving transmitter of Claude Chappe's aerial telegraphy.

# DOMAINE LA ROQUÈTE: TAKING STOCK.

Since 1986, Domaine La Roquette has been part and parcel of Vignobles Brunier, just like Vieux Télégraphe, and now covers 29ha of Châteauneuf-du-Pape vines, eight per cent of which yield white grapes: the vines' average age is nearly 50 years for the red varieties (Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre) and 20 years for the Roussane, Grenache Blanc, Clairette and Bourboulenc.

All the vines are located on the Plateau du Pielong and in the lieux-dits La Roquette, Pignan and Colombis – right at the heart of the AOC area.

On top of that, we have 10ha of Vin de Pays de Vaucluse vines, from which the red Le Pigeoulet is made. The landmark year for La Roquette was 1998 – a remarkable vintage but also the year its vat room was built, giving the wines an extra dimension.

The quality of both red and white has continued to rise consistently – as evidenced by the superb 2003 and 2004 vintages, which wed strength and balance magnificently.

But despite its increasingly assertive personality,

facilities 5km away from Vieux Télégraphe's and a very different terroir, La Roquette has lived a little in its big brother's shadow – not really achieving lift-off, even though all the feedback's positive.

Indeed its packaging design has always lacked a certain boldness: never developing its own emphatically classic marque, short of the gravitas acquired with a long-standing visual identity.

La Roquette's real place is not behind Vieux Télégraphe but alongside it. It is positioned very differently on the Châteauneuf-du-Pape market, reflecting its organoleptic qualities. There is, of course, a family resemblance between the two wines, by virtue of the strict working philosophy applied to both estates; but each year La Roquette wine yields a freshness, a balance, a slightly modern feel, an uprightness, and a fruitiness that are all its own.

To highlight this difference and escort La Roquette along its own path, its bottle presentation has also taken a new, highly distinctive direction, starting with the superb 2003 vintage.

## Refinement

We wanted something refined, elegantly simple, with a modern touch. We wanted to get away from the graphic conventions that had pretty much held sway over the AOC's bottle designs for decades.



We wanted a beautiful bottle: traditional in shape and weight, modern in the purity of its styling, and technically state of the art; with a neck, lip and glass colour designed for optimum storage, sealing and handling.

While we were drawing up the brief, we happened to make a discovery in a

land-registry book dating from 1935, which had belonged to a Monsieur Armenier: La Roquette is spelt with a grave accent and one "t".

We liked the look of the accent – written with a quill pen amidst other well-known Châteauneuf names – so we have adopted it

to restore to the lieu-dit La Roquette its personality of yesteryear.

All these criteria – which stemmed from a mix of spontaneity, reflection, self-critique and aesthetics – guided us toward

a Domaine La Roquette bottle that is very refined and whose graphic elements, though traditional, are combined in such a way as to achieve what's known as a modern design.

We're well aware that the new

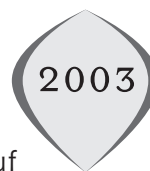
bottle will not only attract aficionados, but we are also sure there was a big need for a fresh impetus and visual

selling-points – at a time when the quality of the estate's wines is still rising substantially, when

the vines are showing their appreciation for the care we've given

them over the past 15 years, and when it's high time for La Roquette, in tandem with Vieux Télégraphe, to play its own clear, positive role.

The new design was launched with the red 2003 vintage when this was released in September 2005.



Domaine  
**LA ROQUÈTE**

Domaine La Roquette is one of the properties in Châteauneuf-du-Pape belonging to the Brunier family, who have lived and worked in this celebrated region for four generations.

The estate's vines, which are more than 45 years old, are planted on the Plateau de Pielong and in the lieux-dits La Roquette, Pignan and Colombis.

The plantation is 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah and 10% Mourvèdre. We use the most traditional growing, vinifying and maturing techniques, our priority being to express the character of the local terroir. The wine is not filtered or fined, and so may develop a slight deposit which in no way affects its quality.

**CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE**  
APPELLATION CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE CONTRÔLÉE

Mis en bouteille au Domaine CONTAINS SULFITES PRODUCT OF FRANCE  
F. et D. Brunier - Vignerons - Récoltants 750 ML ALC. 14,5% BY VOL.  
84230 Châteauneuf-du-Pape - France



# P R E S S R E V I E W

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**WINE SPECTATOR**  
DEC 31, 2005

VIEUX TELEGRAPHE  
Ranked 53rd in the 2005  
TOP 100.

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**LE MONDE**  
WINE SUPPLEMENT  
SEPT 2, 2005

VIEUX TELEGRAPHE  
RED 2003 – 16/20:  
Good colour, stone fruits,  
long on the palate, with  
depth, distinction, and  
great verve. Risky but  
accomplished.  
Domaine du Vieux  
Telegraphe is one of the  
flagship estates in the  
appellation, making very  
full-bodied but never heavy  
wines.

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**LA TRIBUNE**  
WINE SUPPLEMENT  
NOV 10, 2005

VIEUX TELEGRAPHE  
RED 2003:  
The grapes apparently  
relished the scorching  
heatwave of 2003, yielding  
a superb wine with a  
"baked" aroma that only  
develops in legendary  
vintages!

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**RVF**  
JULY / AUGUST 2005  
...The second flaw of  
Châteauneuf-du-Pape is  
that in recent years it has  
succumbed to the fashion  
for "back-room wines",  
with the spawning of  
micro-cuvées that often  
detract from the core cuvée.  
And yet a few, all-too-rare  
estates, such as Vieux  
Télégraphe and Clos des  
Papes, have amply  
demonstrated that in  
Châteauneuf-du-Pape it is  
possible to produce great  
wines in large quantities.

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VIEUX TELEGRAPHE  
RED 2003: ★★★★★(★).

A model of finesse, but  
solid and gutsy on the  
palate. Long on the finish,  
with svelte, very ripe  
tannins.

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**VINS & GASTRONOMIE**  
DEC 05 / JAN 06

VIEUX TELEGRAPHE  
WHITE 2004:

You can almost recognise  
the signature of Vieux  
Télégraphe and its consis-  
tency, so unanimous are the  
accolades it garners.

A gorgeous golden colour,  
brilliant and limpid, with  
subtly spicy and eloquent  
aromas that enhance the  
bouquet of floral notes, ripe  
fruit and even a hint of  
candied quince. On the  
palate: citrusy, a winning  
freshness, slightly fat, and  
balanced, with strong  
ageing potential. Enjoy with  
sauced fish or even a veal  
cutlet roasted in its own  
juice with morels and  
slender wild asparagus. You  
can almost feel the Vieux  
Télégraphe on your  
tastebuds.



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**WINE ADVOCATE**  
DEC 2004

PALLIERES is one of the  
appellation's classic efforts.  
It is to Gigondas as Rayas  
is to Châteauneuf-du-Pape:  
a higher altitude, a cool  
climate expression of mostly  
Grenache that possesses  
tremendous finesse.

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**TAST**  
BETTANE ET DESSEAUE  
DEC 13, 2005

DOMAINE LA ROQUÈTE  
Ranked among the blue-  
chip producers in the  
appellation, scoring ★★★

2003 VINTAGE: 15.5/20  
Deep, attractive colour, not  
at all heavy; a subtle  
bouquet of cherries and  
blackcurrants, good fruity  
length, fleshy and  
balanced. A fine,  
harmonious achievement.

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**WINE ADVOCATE**  
DEC 2004

ROQUÈTE RED 2003:  
Tips the scale at 15%  
alcohol, reveals fine tannin  
along with ripe, sweet  
strawberry and black cherry  
fruit intermixed with  
crushed stone, pepper and  
spice box characteristics. It  
is a fleshy, low acid  
Châteauneuf-du-Pape that  
should drink well for 10-12  
years

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**DECANTER**  
MARCH 2005  
ROQUÈTE RED 2003:  
★★★★ Same ownership as  
Vieux Télégraphe. New  
cellars in 1998. Fine rather  
than powerful, but dense  
and balanced.

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**TAST**  
BETTANE ET DESSEAUE  
DEC 13, 2005

ROQUÈTE WHITE 2004:  
14/20: fairly dominant  
oak, but with a supple,  
opulent and fairly  
harmonious body.

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**INTERNATIONAL**  
**WINE CELLAR**  
JAN 2006

VIEUX MAS DES PAPES  
RED 2003:  
Deep red, spicy, tangy and  
fresh, with aromas of  
raspberry preserves, wild  
strawberry, singed herbs  
and dried lavender. Quite  
fat and direct, with very  
sweet red berry and floral  
flavors accented by a  
suggestion of sweet mocha.  
Finishes broad and lush,  
very much in the style of  
the year.

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**REVUE DU VIN**  
**DE FRANCE**  
NO.498, FEB 2006

CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE  
WHITE 2004  
DOMAINE DU VIEUX  
TÉLÉGRAPHE ★★★★★(★)  
A perfectly conceived  
Châteauneuf-du-Pape, with  
admirable structure and  
high-class minerality.  
A wine just made for laying  
down. A classic in the  
making.

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**SÉMAPHORE**

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