

FT Series Jancis Robinson's Christmas wineOpinion **FT Magazine****Jancis Robinson: dreaming of a red (wine) Christmas**

Seasonal tipples, from classical structures to something that dances on the palate

JANCIS ROBINSON

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Jancis Robinson 6 HOURS AGO

A plethora of reds in the second set of my seasonal recommendations, listed in ascending price order. Many retailers give further discounts when a dozen mixed bottles are bought; others require a minimum order of a mixed, or occasionally unmixed, dozen.

Ostoros Pinot Noir 2016 Eger, Hungary*£6.75 The Wine Society*

Delightfully inexpensive wine that really does taste (a bit) like Pinot. Spicy and only very slightly syrupy. 13.5%

Vignerons Ardéchois, Grand Aven 2015 Côtes du Vivarais, Rhône*£8.95 The Wine Society*

This Grenache/Syrah blend from the Ardèche aged in subterranean caves has lots of life and finesse. Waves a charming farewell. 14%

Leconfield, Warner's Corner Cabernet Sauvignon 2016 Coonawarra, Australia

£8.95 *The Wine Society*

Take advantage of how (regrettably) unfashionable Cabernet is now in Australia. Early-drinking version of an Australian classic. 14.5%

Dom du Carjat, Les Capitans 2017 Juliéna, Beaujolais

£9.95 *The Wine Society*

The first of many Beaujolais recommendations; the region is on fire with underpriced artisanal magic. Great purity and a certain stoniness. 13%

Ch Barréjat, Tradition 2016 Madiran, SW France

£10.50, £21.50 a magnum, £87.50 a five-litre jeroboam; *Stone, Vine & Sun*

Pure fruit trumps the notorious tannins of the Tannat grape in this bright, energetic, unoaked wine. Lay in some big bottles for entertaining. 13%

Dom du Père Caboché, Le Petit Caboché 2017 Vaucluse, Rhône

£10.50 *Yapp Bros*

Quite a triumph of character and authenticity for the money. A precocious baby Châteauneuf? 15%

Dom de la Pigeade, Les Sables 2016 Ventoux, Rhône

£10.95 *Stone, Vine & Sun*

Rich fruit with herbal overlay. Lovely, round; freshness too. 13.5%

Aldonia 2016 Rioja

£11.40 *Tanners*

Unusually, mainly Garnacha. Lots of sweet fruit but vibrancy too. Belies alcohol level. 15%

Ch Argadens 2015 Bordeaux Supérieur

£11.50 *Tanners*

Entre Deux Mers estate revitalised by the Sichel family. 13.5%

Ch Cabos 2015 Bordeaux

£11.50 *Lea & Sandeman*

Another mainly Merlot bottle of structure and excitement that's the product of Entre Deux Mers in 2015. 14%

Ch Les Gravières de la Brandille 2015 Bordeaux Supérieur

£11.50 *Stone, Vine & Sun*

And one from the right bank, a sort of baby Pomerol with a medicinal hint and great richness. Drink over the next few years. 13.5%

Talosa 2016 Chianti Colli Senesi, Tuscany

£11.50 Stone, Vine & Sun

Juicy, correct expression of Sangiovese. Very direct and fully ripe but with an authentic tanginess on the end. 13%

Dom du Grand Prieur 2016 Vacqueyras, Rhône

£14.50 Montrachet

Food and caution definitely needed with this youthful, potent wine, but there is freshness too, thanks to the elevation. 15%

Ch de Pizay 2016 Morgon, Beaujolais

£14.50 Le Bon Vin

Fragrant and rather Burgundian with a definite future. Just the job for refugees from the Côte d'Or. 13%

Ch Fleur Haut Gaussens 2015 Bordeaux

£29 a magnum Berry Bros & Rudd

I tasted this last year and noted, "perfect for Christmas 2018". A recent re-taste did not change my mind. 13.5%

Manzanos, De Alto Reserva 2011 Rioja

£14.55 Cellar Door Wines

Good old Riojans believe in ageing their wines before selling them. This is so transparent, vivacious and fresh you could drink it with fish. 13.5%

René Lequin-Colin, Pinot Noir 2015 Bourgogne

£14.95 Stone, Vine & Sun

A rare, affordable burgundy — but it needs a bit of air before serving. Decant this one. Beautifully balanced. 12.5%

Sottimano, Bric del Salto 2016 Dolcetto d'Alba, Piemonte

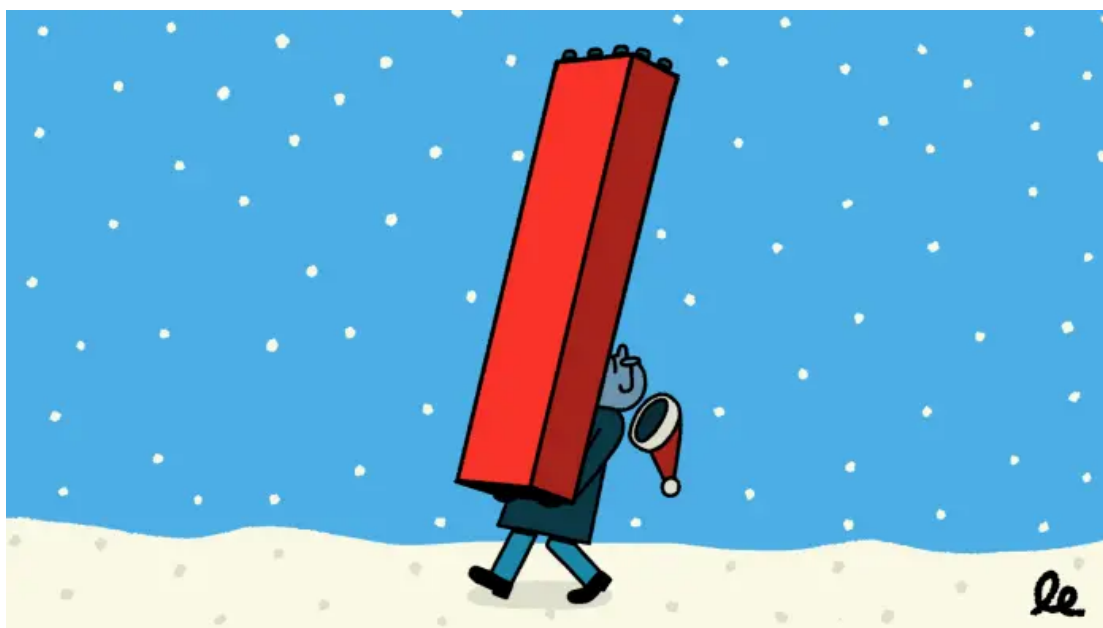
£14.95 Lea & Sandeman

L&S has a range of bargains from this producer. This tight, nervy, crisp Piemontese wine is a good introduction. The 2015 Nebbiolo at £19.75 is also well worth it. 13%

Le Galantin 2012 Bandol, Provence

£15.95 Tanners

Great price for a mature essence of Provence made by Céline Pascal for her family business. Warm and spicy. 13.5%



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Ben Glaetzer, Wallace Shiraz/Grenache 2016 Barossa Valley, Australia
£16 The Wine Society

Wonderfully silky, satisfying, well-balanced wine with the alcohol well hidden. 14.5%

Rocca di Fabbri 2013 Montefalco Rosso, Umbria

£16.50 Tanners

Not totally unlike a Brunello di Montalcino with a few years in bottle. 13.5%

Cape Rock, Capa Roca 2015 Olifants River, South Africa

£17.50 Stone, Vine & Sun

Seriously complex, luscious blend of mainly Portuguese varieties with some Atlantic influence. Great stuff. 14.5%

Dom de Cébène, Bancelis 2015 Faugères, Languedoc

£17.75 Leon Stolarski

Unoaked Syrah/Grenache blend made with great sensitivity. Dances on the palate. 14%

Ch Les Moines 2009 Médoc, Bordeaux

£17.95 Tanners

Cabernet-dominated Cru Bourgeois is now fully mature. Opulent and generous thanks to the vintage. 14%

Dom Lyrarakis, Aggelis Liatiko 2015 Crete

£17.95 Berry Bros & Rudd

Rich island wine from 80-year-old examples of a rare vine variety. 13.5%

Ch Fontesteaun 1999 Haut-Médoc, Bordeaux

£18 The Wine Society

The Society lists many a vintage of this wine. The fully mature 1999 would be great with game. 12.5%

SC Pannell, Basso Garnacha 2017 McLaren Vale, Australia

£18.99 Oz Wines

Award-winning debut low-sulphur wine for early drinking from a great champion of Grenache. 13.5%

Wickhams Road Pinot Noir 2017 Gippsland, Australia

£19.50 Stone, Vine & Sun

Sweet, floral, slightly gamey. Pure and flirtatious from a cool coastal site. 13%

Lisini, San Biagio Riserva 2016 Toscana

£19.85 Berry Bros & Rudd

A bargain baby Brunello. 13.5%

Dom Piron-Lameloise, Quartz 2014 Chénas, Beaujolais

£20 Roberson Wine

Meaty, interesting perfume but delightfully refreshing. 12.5%

La Magia 2016 Rosso di Montalcino, Tuscany

£20.70 Berry Bros & Rudd

Ambitious wine made from declassified Brunello. 14%

Salomon, Finnis River Syrah/Viognier 2014 Fleurieu, Australia

£20.75 Lea & Sandeman

Not heavy, old-Oz Shiraz style but energetic, lively wine from the South Australian coast. 14.5%

Giant Steps, LDR Pinot Shiraz 2017 Yarra Valley, Australia

£21.49 Oz Wines

Phil Sexton is resurrecting an Australian classic blend with great results. Quite a serious wine. 13%

Braunewell, Essenheim Limestone Spätburgunder 2014 Rheinhessen, Germany

£21.95 Lea & Sandeman

German answer to red burgundy with nuance and “mineral” influence. Very appetising. 13.5%

Ch Les Hauts Conseillants 2012 Lalande de Pomerol, Bordeaux

£21.95 Davy's

Very good vintage on the right bank of the Gironde. This accessible wine is luscious and sweet — poor man's Pomerol? 13.5%

Muga, Selección Especial Reserva 2012 Rioja

£22 The Wine Society

Beautifully balanced, with a future that's already rewarding. 14%

Ch Thivin, Les Sept Vignes 2016 Côte de Brouilly, Beaujolais

£22-£23 Butlers Wine Cellar, Four Walls, Richard Kihl, Taurus Wines

Ch Thivin makes great wine every year that could be enjoyed at virtually any point in its life. 13.5%

Dom David Chapel, Côte de Bessay 2017 Juliéna, Beaujolais

£23.48 Uncharted Wine, £25 Quality Wines, £28 Lechevalier

Truly beautiful wine from the son of chef Alain Chapel. Ripe fruit but refreshingly irresistible. 12.5%

Prophet's Rock Pinot Noir 2014 Central Otago, New Zealand

£26 The Wine Society

One to serve blind to burgundy enthusiasts. 14%

Tongue In Groove, Cabal Vineyard Pinot Noir 2014 North Canterbury, New Zealand

£26.95 Lea & Sandeman

Far from delicate but real drama and balance. 14%

Curto, Arborina 2014 Barolo, Piemonte

£27 The Wine Society

Food is essential with this bone-dry, super-ripe emissary from the Langhe hills. Great value. 14.5%

Dom Coillot, Les Boivins 2014 Marsannay

£29.50 Stannary St Wine Co (sold only in a case of 12, £307.15)

The Côte d'Or's far north is where to look for bargains. Sweet, charming wine not for oak-phobes. 13%

Dom Agnès Paquet 2016 Auxey-Duresses, Burgundy

£29.95 Stannary St Wine Co (sold only in a case of 12, £319.15)

Very pure and ethereal. 13%

Dom Jaeger-Defaix, Clos du Chapitre Premier Cru 2015 Rully, Burgundy

£31.30 Stannary St Wine Co (sold only in a case of 12, £331.15)

Rich nose and flatteringly fruity palate, proof of the Côte Chalonnaise renaissance. 13.5%

R López de Heredia, Viña Tondonia Reserva 2005 Rioja

£32.50 *Berry Bros & Rudd*

Glorious, fully mature wine long-aged in oak. Pure, fresh, generously priced in view of the age. 13%

Miguel Merino, Reserva 2010 Rioja

£32.95 *Davy's*

Richer than the Tondonia but no less classic. 14%

Laroze de Drouhin, 2014 Fixin, Burgundy

£37 *Davy's*

A relative bargain from Dom Drouhin-Laroze's negociant business. 12.5%

Dom Nicolas Rossignol, Les Vignots 2011 Pommard, Burgundy

£45 *Lea & Sandeman*

Unusual to find a burgundy at this price with some age on it. 13%

Dom Roblet-Monnot, St François 2015 Volnay, Burgundy

£45.60 *Domaine Direct*

Really rather impressive. 13%

Vieux Château Certan, La Gravette de Certan 2014 Pomerol, Bordeaux

£54.95 *Lea & Sandeman*

Fans of VCC should definitely lap up this exciting, persistent second wine. 14%

Arnot Roberts, Que Syrah Vineyard 2016 Sonoma Coast, California

£74 *Roberson*

Convincing West Coast riposte to Côte Rôtie. Just four barrels have been made. 12%

Dom Drouhin-Laroze, Grand Cru 2013 Bonnes Mares Burgundy

£102 *Davy's*

For those who like to go the whole hog. 13%

Fuller tasting notes on *Purple Pages* of JancisRobinson.com. More stockists from winesearcher.com

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