

featured flight of the month
domaine de la solitude, châteauneuf-du-pape
\$40 wine flight + \$20 cheese pairing



The Lançon family, owners of Domaine de la Solitude, descend directly from the 12th Century Barberini family of Rome. The best known of the family, Maffeo Barberini, was a papal nuncio, or diplomatic representative, in Paris from 1604 to 1606, and was made Pope in Rome under the name Pope Urban VIII. Two of his nephews became cardinals and a part of the family then settled down in Avignon. In the 1980s, brothers Michel and Jean Lançon took the future of Domaine de la Solitude in their hands, focusing attention on the vineyards. Over the past several years, Michel's son Florent Lançon has taken over the day-to-day operations of Domaine de la Solitude, continuing to make improvements while preserving the traditions of his father and uncle. The Estate is a contiguous 100 acres, planted to 86 acres of red grapes and 14.8 acres of white grapes, with vines averaging 50 years of age.

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Châteauneuf-du-Pape was the very first French wine appellation, created in 1936, and sits towards the bottom of the Rhône Valley, close to the border of Provence. The name means ‘Pope’s new castle,’ and refers to a time when the seat of the Roman Catholic Church was in Avignon [between 1309–137]. Châteauneuf-du-Pape is one of 19 official crus or ‘growths’ of the Côtes du Rhône wine region. These 19 crus represent Côtes du Rhône’s top wine-growing zones. Châteauneuf-du-Pape is considered by most to be the benchmark of the Southern Rhône and includes five communes: Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Courhézou, Orange, Bédarrides, and Sorgues [ordered from largest to smallest].

One notable feature in the region is the La Crau Plateau. This raised area is home to some of the region’s most famous Châteaux and it is marked by round stones over iron-rich red clays left during the Villafranchian Age [in between the Ice Age and Pliocene Epoch – around 1–3 million years ago]. The Domaine de la Solitude estate is on the western edge of La Crau Plateau.

There are three main soils found in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, including *galets roulés* [rounded stones over sandy, iron-rich red clay *see picture above*] *safres* [sand-dominant soils], and *éclats calcaires* [more chalky-colored, limestone rich clays]. More robust wines with higher tannin tend to come from the clay-based soils. More aromatic and elegant wines tend to grow on the soils with a higher prevalence of sand.

A great bottle of Châteauneuf-du-Pape *Rouge* bursts with rich raspberry and plummy fruit flavors. As it evolves, you’ll taste notes of dusted leather, game, and herbs. The Francophiles – and the actual French – call this herbal play “garrigue,” after the region’s scrubland of sage, rosemary, and lavender. CdP Rouge often finishes on a sweet-strawberry tingle that glows in the back of your throat from elevated alcohol. The finish ranges from sweet to savory, depending on the vintage.

Châteauneuf-du-Pape *Blanc* is harder to find because only about 7% of the region’s vineyards are white grapes. Still, you’ll find many producers make small amounts that are usually a blend of the region’s white grapes, most notably, Grenache Blanc, Clairette, and Roussanne.

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2021 WHITE RHÔNE BLEND, CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE
\$37|\$133



40% Roussanne/35% Clairette/20% Grenache Blanc/5% Bouboulenc

Complex nose of tropical fruit and brioche. Mouth combining vivacity and smoothness with notes of citrus, tropical fruit and flowers with a very mineral finish. Sorting the grapes by hand, gentle pressing of champagne type using pneumatic presses. Fermentation and aging are done in barrels for Roussanne, and Grenache Blanc. Clairette, Bouboulenc and Picpoul are co-fermented in vats. Malolactic fermentation is carried out for the Roussanne. This year 10% of the blend is vinified by long maceration, which means that those white grapes were vinified like red grapes. This cuvée is aged for 40% in barrels, on fine lees, for 10 months.

paired perfectly with
MONTBOISSIE MORBIER
FRANCHE-COMTÉ, FRANCE

Montboissié is a Morbier-style *raw cow's milk* cheese that is produced in the highest part of the Jura Mountains in a small farm village in the Franche-Comté region. It dates back to the 19th century when producers of Comté cheese decided to make a smaller cheese from the day's leftover curd for their own consumption. They'd sprinkle the curd with ash to keep the cheese from drying out over night. The next morning, new curds were laid on top of the thin layer of ash and the wheels were pressed and washed with brine to form a protective rind. Today, Montboissié cheese is made from a single milking and the ash is added for purely decorative purposes.

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2021 ROSÉ OF GRENACHE, CÔTES DU RHÔNE
\$10|\$36

50% Cinsault/40% Grenache/10% Syrah

A pretty pale with salmon-colored hints and a floral nose of rose petals and wild strawberries. It is a mouthful mingling with vivacity and roundness with aromatic notes of pink grapefruit and a good length. Direct pressing, temperature controlled vinification. No malolactic fermentation. Aging in vats, on fine lees, with stirring, for a period of 5 months.

paired perfectly with
FLEUR VERTE CHEVREFEUILLE
PERIGORD, FRANCE

Since 1982, Chevreuille has been specializing in goat's milk cheeses produced in the heart of the Perigord region of France. The word *chevreuille* translates to "honeysuckle" and is a perfect representation of these delicate cheeses. The "Fleur" line of Chevreuille cheeses are made with *pasteurized goat's milk*. It is covered in a combination of herbs: tarragon, savory, and thyme and pink peppercorns all pressed into the rind.

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2020 SO. RHÔNE BLEND, GIGONDAS BELLECOSTE
\$34|\$122

70% Grenache/15% Syrah/8% Cinsault/7% Mourvèdre

The aromas of black fruits along with red fruits join the flavors of garrigue and black olives. Powerful tannins blend into a long finish. The grapes are vinified in whole bunches in concrete tanks. The vatting lasts a fortnight with gentle extractions. Aging takes place for 70% in vats and for 30% in barrels of several wines.

paired perfectly with

THREE-MILK GOUDA, OLD CHATHAM CREAMERY
GROTON, NEW YORK

In this three-milk Gouda made from *pasteurized cow, goat and sheep's milk*, aromas of cream and cooked butter are prevalent alongside hints of macadamia nuts. Its semi-soft texture delivers a smooth, creamy mouthfeel that saturates the palate and gives a long finish. While subtle earthy undertones are at play throughout, butterscotch flavors greet the palate, followed by a distinct tang and finish with notes of sour cream.

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2020 SO. RHÔNE BLEND, CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE
\$36|\$130

60% Grenache/15% Syrah/10% Mourvèdre/10% Cinsault/5% Counoise

Historical Cuvée from the Domaine produced since the XVII century, from all their vineyards on safres and Gallets roulés. A blend of terroir and grape varieties of excellence it contains the 8 reds grapes varieties of A.O.C. and even some white or pink grape in small proportion.

A bouquet nose of garrigue, flowers of cistus, blackcurrant buds. A mouth full of freshness and balance, with aromas of cocoa and morello cherry, with a long and liquorice finish.

After a double selection of the best bunches in the vineyard then on the sorting table. The grapes are vinified as whole or destemmed according to the grape varieties. They are vinified in truncated concrete vats. The wines are then aged for 25% in barrels, demi muids and foudre and 75% in vats for 18 months. The wine is bottled without filtration or fining.

paired perfectly with

TOMME DE SAVOIE
SAVOIE, FRANCE

Tomme is a name given to a family of cheeses produced in the French Alps and Switzerland. It is made from *raw, skimmed cow's milk* after the cream is drained to make butter. The taste of the cheese varies throughout the year depending on whether the milk comes from cows eating winter hay or fresh summer grass. Tomme de Savoie is a semi-soft, pressed cheese with a pliable, firm texture and grassy, nutty flavor. It has numerous irregular eyes spread throughout the ivory-colored paste with some tangy, slightly citrusy and mushroomy notes underlined by the odors of a cave.