

91 Domaine des Sénéchaux Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006 \$53 Ripe and well-focused, with a delicious beam of red currant, damson plum and red licorice backed by well-integrated toast and a long, mineral finish. Very sleek, but there's also depth. Drink now through 2019. 500 cases imported.—J.M.

91 Domaine de la Solitude Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2007 \$46 A fresh, stony style, with white peach, lime and honeysuckle notes backed by a rich, tiled finish. Round and pure. Drink now. 800 cases made.—J.M.

FRANCE

Rhône / Côtes du Rhône & Côtes du Rhône-Villages

91 Féraud-Brunel Côtes du Rhône-Villages Rasteau 2006 \$29 Very juicy and layered, with raspberry gascache, plum sauce and melted licorice flavors backed by well-integrated grip. Graphite and spice notes emerge on the finish. Drink now through 2010.—J.M.

91 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret G Family Reserve 2007 \$45 Very enticing, with blueberry, fig and boysenberry fruit laced with spice, fruitcake and melted licorice notes. The long, perfume- and graphite-filled finish is nicely rounded and plenty deep. Grenache. Drink now through 2011. 200 cases made.—J.M.

91 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Grande Réserve 2006 \$24 Very dark, showing fig and currant paste notes, but very racy, with graphite, freshly drawn espresso, bittersweet cocoa and black tea notes helping to extend the long, alluring

finish. Nice underlying grip. Drink now through 2011. 3,000 cases made.—J.M.

90 Château de Montfaucon Côtes du Rhône Baron Louis 2006 \$19 Very solid, with a juicy core of blackberry and plum woven with cocoa and pistachio hints. The smoky, spicy finish has nice length. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Carignan, Mourvèdre and Counoise. Drink now through 2010. 4,580 cases made.—J.M.

90 Château de Montfaucon Côtes du Rhône White Comtesse Madeleine 2007 \$19 Fresh, with ebullient peach, melon and salted butter notes followed by a round, ripe finish. Deliciously pure and very friendly. Vigneron, Marsanne, Clairette, Bourboulen and Picpoul. Drink now. 580 cases made.—J.M.

90 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret S Family Reserve 2007 \$40 Dark and broad, with crushed plum, hoisin sauce, black licorice snap and fruitcake notes backed by a fleshy, toasty finish. Racy and long, with a lingering violet notes. Syrah. Drink now through 2011. 200 cases made.—J.M.

89 Château de Montfaucon Côtes du Rhône 2006 \$14 Lowly currant and damson plum jam aromas and flavors are backed by garrigue, mineral and graphite notes that leave a mouthwatering feel on the finish. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Carignan and Counoise. Drink now through 2010. 4,580 cases made.—J.M.

89 Vignerons de Caractère Côtes du Rhône Perfection du Rhône Grés du Soleil 2007 \$10 Rock-solid, with a core of black currant and blackberry fruit laid over a graphite underpinning. Spice and garrigue hints chime in on the finish. Drink now. 12,000 cases made.—J.M.

88 M. Chapoutier Côtes du Rhône Belleruche 2007 \$15 Fleshy and ripe, with blackberry and invigorated currant fruit giving way to toast, cedar and licorice hints on the finish. Nice acidity keeps this lively. A super value. Drink now. 19,000 cases imported.—J.M.

88 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Tradition 2007 \$16 Fresh, with floral, red currant and blackberry fruit notes backed by a tangy, mineral-tinged finish. Juicy and racy. Grenache, Syrah and Carignane. Drink now through 2010. 5,000 cases made.—J.M.

FRANCE

Rhône / Crozes-Hermitage & Hermitage

97 M. Chapoutier Ermitage L'Ermité 2006 \$380
See Collectables, page 91.

96 M. Chapoutier Ermitage Le Méal 2006 \$270 Superdense but really fresh, with a wild array of zesty blackberry, loganberry, liner torte and briar notes laid over perfectly embedded tannins. Long and pure through the finish, with lots of minerality waiting in reserve. Great length. Best from 2010 through 2025. 511 cases made.—J.M.

96 M. Chapoutier Ermitage Le Pavillon 2006 \$315 Tightly wound, with a mix of loganberry, blueberry and blackberry fruit all laced with espresso, kum and black tea hints. The dense, graphite-filled finish has a lot of unmaking to do. Best from 2011 through 2025. 1,177 cases made.—J.M.