

Nice French deal: Grand Prieur of Vacqueyras



A continuing appeal to many wine drinkers are wines from an appellation in Southern France's Rhone Valley known as [Vacqueyras](#). Here, winemakers are required by "standards" to use blends that are dominated by the Grenache grape, leading to a velvety, easy-to-drink wine.

Of course, Southern France provides a seemingly endless variety of wines to choose from. But if you are interested in something that is not overly priced and easy to approach,

Vacqueyras regional wines are a value not to be overlooked. And compared to the wines from their top-class neighbor, [Chateauneuf Du Pape](#), they're downright cheap!

A prime vintner from the Vacqueyras region is Domaine du Grand Prieur. Their ability to create a reasonably priced red wine that stands up to their peers is probably the reason that they remain ever popular. In addition, they like to export to the Americas, making it relatively easy to get your hands on.

Conveniently, most of the Phoenix area [Total Wine](#) outlets have been consistently offering wines from Vacqueyras appellation. And many of the good ones are available under Total Wine's "[Alfio Moriconi Selections](#)". Priced at under \$20, the [Domaine du Grand Prieur Vacqueyras 2009](#) is a perfect choice. It is blended from 75% Grenache, 15% Syrah, and 10% Mourvedre, a fancy pedigree.

Deep red and dense, with a bouquet of dark fruit and a hint of earthy mint, it is surprisingly smooth on the palate. It finishes quickly along with food making it an ideal pair with game hens, duck, pork, or roast chicken. It is not as good a partner with char broiled steak because of its mild tannin structure.

Serve slightly chilled after 30 minutes in the fridge (60-65 degrees). This wine will age for several more years and get even smoother with a little cellaring.