NEWS RELEASE

Languedoc Roussillon Wine Over-Delivers Again And Again

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The Languedoc-Roussillon region of France delivers out of this world value because it's insanely good quality and ridiculously low price.

I love the Languedoc so I'm giddy with excitement that this month's Angel sample (Virgile Joly Merlot) is from the region. That means I get to shout from the mountaintops about how perfect this part of France is for making world class wine.

Languedoc Roussillon wine has everything going for it

- Perfect weather
- Very diverse climate and geology
- Old old winemaking region
- Insanely talented winemakers

First of all, the weather's to die for. Sunny Mediterranean hillsides where the vines always get ripe.

A lot of France actually has trouble getting fully ripe grapes (especially on off vintages) which is one of the big reasons French wines have a reputation for leanness and austerity. In a famous region like Bordeaux, you always have a nice acidity, but it can be a real struggle to get nice ripe fruit.

In the Languedoc, perfectly ripe fruit can happen virtually every year, and the real trick is maintaining a nice freshness to the wines without over-ripening.

Then you've got an incredibly diverse climate and geology.

The region has a giant mountain range on its southern border (the Pyrenees) and a giant mountain range on its northern border (the foothills of the Massif Central). It's got extreme Mediterranean influence from an enormous coastline on the sea and Atlantic influences from winds that blow in from the west and northwest.

And it's got loads of different microclimates and soil variations – you'll see everything from chalky clay to volcanic soils to stony outcroppings of bright red ruffes (yes that's a thing!)

Obligatory pictures of vineyard soils:

This diversity means you can grow almost anything in the Languedoc.

While some French regions specialize entirely in one grape (like every red Burgundy appellation being restricted to Pinot Noir), the Languedoc is authorized to make all kinds of wines with all kinds of grapes.

- Sparkling made of Mauzac in the mountains of Limoux
- Fortified wines (made in a way similar to Port) in Banyuls
- Dry Mediterranean reds made of Syrah, Grenache, Carignan, Mourvedre and a plethora of other "Rhone" grapes (I hate that term because a lot of these grapes are native to the Languedoc before the Rhone!)
- Bizarre grapes like Colombard and Fer Servadou from the southwest of France can be planted in the Languedoc's western-most appellations
- Atlantic varieties typical in Bordeaux like Cabernet Sauvignon are part of the most northwestern appellations in the Languedoc. And they've found acclaim in non-appellation wines in cool foothill regions like the Terrasses du Larzac as well
- Light Rosés like in Provence, big meaty rosés like in Rasteau and everything in between

If you can make it out of fermented grapes, you can find it somewhere in the Languedoc – and being done very well!

Plus Languedoc wine has been around for a loooong time
That means they have all the infrastructure to make great wine. Old vineyards, experienced locals, one of the world's leading wine universities (**SupAgro**), and a knowledge of how different grapes perform in different parts of the region.

It's not like a newer wine growing region where you have to spend a lot of time just discovering some of the basics. Or a lot of money importing all the equipment for a private lab or state-of-the-art bottling line. In the Languedoc, there are little winemaker shops next door to my bakery and my cafe.

And there are big labs and bottlers with cutting edge equipment, so winemakers can focus on the vineyard and winery. In the meantime, professional scientists and ops people maintain the big expensive machines that a small winemaker can't afford to keep.

Languedoc Roussillon wine draws and inspires the world's most passionate winemakers
Passion projects abound in this region.

If you're in the French wine business for money or prestige, you go drop millions in Bordeaux, Burgundy or Champagne. The Languedoc is for lovers.

First of all, before I list a bunch of technical reasons, I should just repeat that the place is GORGEOUS. That's probably true about all wine country. But the Languedoc Roussillon has a rugged, savage beauty that I don't quite find anywhere else on earth. Every vineyard reminds me of it, but none could replace it.

Now, for the technical/rational reasons winemakers love the region:

- the land is more affordable
- The robust wine infrastructure allows small winemakers have access to state of the art technology
- diversity means winemakers can try anything
- it's less rigid than other parts of France so winemakers have more freedom

And that brings us to the insanely talented Virgile Joly

Virgile came to the Languedoc to explore its vast potential, and he has an amazing story. How amazing?

He's actually the subject of an entire novel called **Virgile's Vineyard**. He's got a classic David and Goliath story – tiny independent winemaker whose every effort was frustrated by a big brand producer in his neighborhood (the gorgeous St Saturnin featured in the photos above)…

And he overcomes all the obstacles to follow his dream and make a bit of his own wine. And then Angels come in and give him wings. Now he's making wine like this Merlot vin de pays d'Oc, an excellent example of the versatility, warmth and value of the region.

If you're an Angel, you get to sample Virgile's Merlot this month
Angels who order this month can get a sample of Virgile's Merlot included in their case (as long as their state laws allow it).

Just **pop 11 other bottles into your basket** and checkout with the sample.

Here's the email Rowan sent out describing the offer:

You're about to discover why Virgile's wines deliver
Angel, **meet one of the most delicious wines in France,** made by a winemaker so admired, he's the subject of a novel on French winemaking. Yes, Virgile is that good – and his 2015 Pays d'Oc Merlot follows suit.

But nobody knows how good Pays d'Oc wine is… so I'm giving you a bottle to show you
Imagine you're standing in the countryside of southern France, cooled by coastline breezes and warmed with loads of toasty Mediterranean sun. That's Languedoc, and it's a known Rhone varietal paradise. But its true gems are more elusive creatures…

To **get the region's true wine treasures,** you need a local's help. And Virgile Joly is the best (and most aggravatingly handsome) Frenchman in town. In the land of Grenache and Mourvedre, Virgile's off producing highlands-grown Merlot – and it's an absolute champion.

If up until this moment you've never heard of Virgile, or Merlot from Languedoc… it's time we changed all that. There's no excuse to be kept in the dark any longer.

Get ready for this 2015 Merlot from Languedoc… up-and-coming never tasted so good
I know it might be new to you, but…

…this wine is French red at its best…

It's strong and classic, packing a punch of plums and rich earth so vivid you'll think your kitchen's transformed into a French bistro.

Virgile's Merlot has traveled halfway across the world to be your well-deserved thanks – and you don't have to drop a dime to enjoy it. Grab the soft cheese and warm baguettes – this month's Angel sample's already in your basket.

The post **Languedoc Roussillon wine overdelivers again and again** appeared first on **The Truth About Wine**.

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