

# Forbes

## Wines Of The Week: Champagne And Châteauneuf



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Food & Drink

*I cover food, wine, drinks, travel; host dinners; and consult on wine*

My red Wine of the Week is more expensive yet no less worth the money, as it represents a renowned appellation (in this case, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, in the Southern Rhône Valley), a producer at an inflection point (Château de Nalys was purchased by E. Guigal in 2017), and a vintage that culminated in what *Wine Spectator* called “an ideal harvest.”

Indeed, the Château de Nalys Châteauneuf-du-Pape Grand Vin 2016 has everything going for it. Generous fruit and spice make it eminently rewarding to drink right now, especially with an hour or so in the decanter, but it also has the structure to evolve in the cellar for another decade-plus. It’s a blend of 59% Grenache, 32% Syrah, 5% Mourvèdre, and the rest composed of the less-well-known varieties Cousoise and Vaccarèse. The result is a wine that shows all the spice and mineral savoriness that fans of the best reds of the appellation look for, alongside the ripe berry fruit and floral peppercorn notes that make it so beautiful to drink right now.

If the Feuillette, then, is perfect as a house Champagne for the holidays—and, of course, for ringing in the New Year—then the Nalys is the sort of wine I would open up on New Years Eve to pair with dinner, when my habitual plan is staying home with my family, cooking up a flank steak in an old cast iron skillet with a ridiculous amount of butter, olive oil, and herbs, and watching movies on the couch until the kids pass out and my wife and I carry them upstairs to bed.

## Château de Nalys Châteauneuf-du-Pape Grand Vin 2016

Quintessential Southern Rhône aromas of mineral-tinged brambly berries are complicated by a whiff of raw meat and a lift of floral peppercorns: If you can smell this without craving barbecue, I'd be impressed...or incredulous. These precede allspice- and peppercorn-laced flavors that are already rich and providing a great deal of pleasure, though this is clearly a wine made for the long haul, too. Still, its purple berries, black cherries, and plums are given real vivacity by perfectly balanced acidity and a lingering note of hot rocks and lavender on the finish. Drink this now with some time in the decanter, or cellar it until the early-2030s, and possibly beyond. SRP: \$105



The famously rocky vineyards of La Crau, above, in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, result in wines of deep savoriness and character that often have the ability to age for years. This one, from Château de Nalys, certainly does (Credit: E. Guigal). E. GUIGAL