



Rhône it up this January by Bill Zacharkiw

Bill's Best Bets – January 2017

Feeling the chill of winter? While planting that butt on a sunny beach is a good way to combat the frosty temps, drinking some sunshine can help too. Lately, I have been on a bit of a Rhône kick. From Côte Rôtie, the most northern appellation, to the Costières de Nîmes in the south, there's a big variation in style to keep one interested. If you want finesse, it's there. If you want a red that'll cuddle up nicely to a flavourful and spicy meat dish, well that's there too.

There's also everything from excellent, inexpensive bargains to wines that while costly, warrant the price.

In the south is where you find the more affordable wines. Grenache is the main grape, and unlike in the northern Rhône, the wines are predominately blends, with syrah and mourvedre being the usual blending partners. There's an abundance of choice, depending on how much you want to spend.

Basic Côtes-du-Rhône might be one of the most versatile table wines out there. At well under \$20, the [Jaboulet 2014 Parallèle 45](#) is a great purchase. Even less expensive, the [Bonpas 2015 Grande Réserve des Chalières](#) is one of the better under \$15 reds at the SAQ.

