

Praise from Steve Tanzer for Domaine des Martinelles' 2004s and 2005s

Stephen Tanzer's

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Domaine des Martinelles. The Fayolle family, which has grown grapes at Crozes and Hermitage for generations, only began this estate with the 2004 vintage after breaking away from the Cave de Tain. They still sell a healthy percentage of their juice to *négociants*, as evidenced by the collection of barrels in the cellar with some notable names attached. Pascal Fayolle is a quiet, confident young man with the stated goal of producing fresh, fruit-driven wines. He owns a large chunk of Hermitage (almost 6 hectares) and 14 hectares of Crozes, so his efforts will be worth following. (Russell Herman/World Wine Source, Berkeley Heights, NJ; importers include V.O.S. Selections, New York, NY; Carolina Wine Co., Norwood, MA; and Vin de Garde Wines, Portland, OR)

2004 Crozes-Hermitage (\$18): Bright red. Fresh, spicy red berry aromas lifted by a violet nuance. Vibrant red fruit flavors are accented by a spicy quality that carries through a long, mineral-laced finish. This is drinking well now. 87. 2004 Crozes-Hermitage Les Coteaux (\$22): Bright red. Spicy, mineral-accented redcurrant and strawberry aromas, with a light hint of tobacco. Clean and zesty, showing brisk red fruit character and fine, dusty tannins. Finishes quite long, with vibrant raspberry and strawberry flavors and a lingering note of tangy minerality. 89. 2005 Crozes-Hermitage (\$18): Bright red. Deep blackberry and cassis scents complicated by game, minerals and a whiff of bitter chocolate. Powerful, spicy dark fruit flavors show good concentration and focus. Finishes with good length and a lingering note of cracked pepper. 89. 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Les Coteaux (\$22): Bright ruby. Sexy oak spices and a vanilla overlay accent *kirsch* and wild strawberry aromas. Round, suave and velvety, with ripe red fruit flavors and a complicating graphite accent. Finishes with fine, dusty tannins, very good length and a chewy texture. 90. 2004 Hermitage (\$52): Ruby-red. Exotic black cherry and raspberry scents perked up by oak spices and an intriguing blood orange quality. Silky, sweet flavors of red and dark fruits, smoked meat and graphite. Finishes with well-knit tannins and a fresh note of violet. Graceful and complex. 91. 2005 Hermitage: Deep ruby. Lush aromas of cherry, spicy oak, mocha and graphite. Youthfully taut and focused, with sweet *kirsch* and red berry flavors braced by a tangy minerality and dusted with fine tannins. A graceful rendition of Hermitage, showing impressive energy and precision on the long, sweet finish. 89-92. 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Blanc (\$20): Pale gold. Brisk pear and quince aromas, with a hint of anise. Fresh and light, offering a blend of bright orchard fruits and deeper fig flavors and silky texture. Finishes juicy, with good length. 87. 2005 Hermitage Blanc (\$52): Pale gold. Initially rather oak-spicy on the nose, but opened quickly to reveal lush peach, poached pear and nectarine aromas. Plush and supple, with a sweetness to the ripe orchard fruit flavors and a late-arriving note of floral honey. Youthfully taut on the finish but with impressive depth and energy. 91.