

Château Le Lion d'Or 2016 91

£13.99 **Averys Wine Merchant**

100% Merlot. Raspberry and blueberry fruits, good structure and body, clear ripeness to the fruits but with an attractive savoury edge that suggests it hasn't been pushed too hard during ageing. Good quality with some classicism, and good value. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 12.5%

Domaine des Graves d'Ardonneau Prestige 2016 91

€10

80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Malbec. Again, the one-two punch of ripe dark fruits and vanilla. This has a lovely texture to the body, and good depth and spice to the blackberry fruit, well handed, great signature of the vintage, like this very much. My issue with the Côtes is that they can become a little too similar, even in the best years, they are obviously thinking about the consumer, which of course should not be a negative thing. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Bonnange 2016 90-91

€17

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Touch of reduction on the first nose, needs a good swirl and a minute or so in the glass. It clears, and this is enjoyable, smoky tar edges to the black fruits, good quality and nicely balanced, powerful and intense without being overdone. **Drink** 2020-2028 **Alc** 14.5%

Château Mayne Mazerolles 2016

90-91

€7.50 **Hallgarten Wines**

80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Malbec. Redcurrant and raspberry fruit on the nose, nicely balanced, there is a good balance of freshness, fruit and tannin here, with a ripeness that doesn't feel overdone or sought out through additions in the cellar. Unfussy, uncomplicated, good quality. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 13.5%

La Confidence de Château Bois-Vert 2016 90-91

€15.80

70% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Malbec. Gourmet patisserie feeling on the aromatics, going for international impact. I can see the ambition, and they just about carry it off - certainly at this price bracket, you are showcasing that the Côtes have some slicks, well tired out wines, with a lick of stone and slate. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Château Cap Saint Martin 2017 90

£12.50 **Averys Wine Merchant**

80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. 2017 at this point and onwards. Intense aromatics straight off the first nose, damson sweetness, good weight to the palate, keeps things powering forward with a sense of freshness through the core, good quality, approachable but with a sense of restraint and deftness. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Chamaille 2016 90

£25 **Freixenet Copestick**

100% Merlot. Ruby red body, with a gentle cedar and smoked hickory edge to the nose. Gentle tannins, red fruits, clear sweetness with some vanilla bean, this is ready to drink and easy to approach. On clay-limestone slopes, owned by Vignobles Glemet. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Château Haut Grelot Coteaux de Methez 2017 90

£16 **Bancroft Wines Ltd**

100% Merlot, takes a heartbeat before getting going, and is all the better for it; not trying to hard, convinces you with a murmur not a shout, clean and ripe black fruits, nicely placed tannins are already yielding but giving a sense of being held together; Enjoyable wine. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 13.5%

Château La Carelle 2016 90

£13.50 **L'ami Jac**

60% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 10% Malbec. Rich colour with some attractive spice notes. A good balance here between tannic structure and smooth black cherry fruits. A touch tight on the finish but plenty to enjoy along the way. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%



Château Haut Prieur 2017 90

£10 **Direct Wines Ltd**

90% Merlot, 10% Malbec. The dark spice of Malbec apparent in the colour and from the first nose. Soft tannins despite that, which makes this highly appealing and a good balance of fruit and freshness. It has a kick of sanity also on the finish, good quality for the price. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Château La Raz Caman 2016 90

€8.50

55% Merlot, 20% Malbec, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot. Clear potential here. Dark ruby red in colour with violet reflections. Some oak swirls on the nose, not too overpowering but clear finessing and ambition. Same thing on the palate - finesse, silky texture, touches of spice. Feels confident and approachable. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Château Le Virou Vieilles Vignes 2017 90

£12.95

70% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Cabernet Franc. Another good quality wine. This has liquorice, black chocolate, damson, all the ticks for a wine that delivers a slick overall package. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 13.5%

Château Mélignan 2016 90

€13.50

50% Merlot, 40% Malbec, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Like the nose here again, easy to say that these are as a whole good quality and speak well of the quality of the vintage; soft, silky, nicely integrated tannins, fruit and acidity. Cassis and brambles fruits, some smoked edging. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Château Montfollet le Valentin 2017 90

€10

70% Merlot, 30% Malbec. Good depth to the fruit, black cherry, and swirling with rosemary and black pepper spice. Good value, potential. **Drink** 2019-2026 **Alc** 14%

Tutiac Lion and the Lily Réserve 2016 90

€18

Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon. The use of oak is a little clumsy on the nose, although it does soften after a moment, and there is an attractively restrained balance of blackberry, cassis and patisserie cream. Ambitious, not in fact overblown once you give it a minute to relax, perhaps this is one that could do with another year in bottle. **Drink** 2020-2028 **Alc** 12.5%