

## "250 Best Wines Wine Buying Guide 2009"

By Oz Clarke

### 100% Xavier Blanc

*"The producer isn't allowed to say which grape varieties he uses, nor where they are grown. He can't even put a vintage on the bottle because he's quite purposefully broken some stupid French wine laws to make the wine that he wanted to. So, I'd guess that this is a good example of old southern Rhone Valley white varieties performing very well in modern hands. It has a lovely peach blossom scent, a smell of pears and kitchen spice, and a bright, clear flavour of nectarines and white peach cut with peach skin acidity and rounded off with ginger and cinnamon spice."*

### 100% Xavier Rouge

*"Well, I've learnt that this is a blend of eight grape varieties. But Xavier Vignon isn't allowed to give any information on the label because this is a 'mere' vin de table. What the varieties are is still tasking me, but they're old French Rhone Valley performers on top form here. this has a fabulous aroma of Belgian milk chocolate that makes you think the wine will be soft and mellow, but it's strongly influenced by wind-blown stony dust and an insistent but surprisingly soft tannin. It has fascinating wild hillside seasoning of bay, thyme and rosemary all badgering the dark mulberry, sloe and blackberry fruit. Visceral stuff, a mixture of mature and young, herb and fruit, tannin and softness, youthful vigour and the more contemplative snug bar mellowness of age."*