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Issue 181

Robert Parker's  
Wine Advocate

## The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine RATING SYSTEM

Robert Parker's rating system employs a 50-100 point quality scale. It is my belief that the various twenty (20) point rating systems do not provide enough flexibility and often result in compressed and inflated wine ratings. THE WINE ADVOCATE takes a hard, very critical look at wine, since I would prefer to underestimate the wine's quality than to overestimate it. The numerical ratings are utilized only to enhance and complement the thorough tasting notes, which are my primary means of communicating my judgments to you.

- 96-100** An **extraordinary** wine of profound and complex character displaying all the attributes expected of a classic wine of its variety. Wines of this caliber are worth a special effort to find, purchase, and consume.
- 90-95** An **outstanding** wine of exceptional complexity and character. In short, these are terrific wines.
- 80-89** A **barely above average to very good** wine displaying various degrees of finesse and flavor as well as character with no noticeable flaws.
- 70-79** An **average** wine with little distinction except that it is soundly made. In essence, a straightforward, innocuous wine.
- 60-69** A **below average** wine containing noticeable deficiencies, such as excessive acidity and/or tannin, an absence of flavor, or possibly dirty aromas or flavors.
- 50-59** A wine deemed to be unacceptable.

### DOMAINE GRAND ROMANE 2007 GIGONDAS CUVÉE PRESTIGE (\$32.00-36.00) RED (90-92)

This 100-acre estate is owned by the well-known Pierre Amadiéu firm. Made from 50-year-old vines, this wine is a blend of 65% Grenache, 20% Mourvèdre, and 15% Syrah aged 18 months in small barrel, of which one-third are new. A deep ruby/purple color is accompanied by sweet black cherry and blackberry fruit as well as hints of tar, black

truffles, and earth. This impressively-endowed, exuberant, medium to full-bodied Gigondas can be enjoyed during its first decade of life. Importer: Fruit of the Vines, New York, NY; tel. (212) 765-2970; Total Wine & More, Potomac, MD; tel. (301) 795-1000; and Cavatappi Distribuzione, Seattle, WA; tel. (206) 282-5226

PIERRE AMADIEU	2007	GIGONDAS GRAND RESERVE	(unknown)	RED	(89-91)
PIERRE AMADIEU	2006	GIGONDAS GRAND RESERVE	(\$30.00)	RED	88
PIERRE AMADIEU	2007	GIGONDAS ROMANE MACHOTTE	(unknown)	RED	(90-92)
PIERRE AMADIEU	2006	GIGONDAS ROMANE MACHOTTE	(\$35.00)	RED	86

The huge Amadiéu empire often does not receive the recognition it deserves. The wines have gone from strength to strength, and recent vintages have shown an uptick in quality. For example, the 2007 Gigondas Grand Reserve is a blend of 75% Grenache (25% from 50-year-old vines) and 25% Syrah, aged in large foudres (80%) and small barrels (20%). It exhibits super-ripe black raspberry and cherry fruit as well as an attractive bouquet of Provençal herbs, pepper, spice, and a hint of toast in the background. This classic, full-bodied Gigondas possesses a touch of modernity. Drink it over the next decade. The dense ruby/purple-tinged 2007 Gigondas Romane Machotte offers up sweet aromas of blackberries, kirsch, licorice, and a notion of resinous pine forest. More minerality comes through in the mouth. This full-bodied, rich, deep Gigondas is a blend of 80% Grenache and 20%

Syrah, aged in equal parts old, small barrels and larger foudres. It, too, should drink nicely for a decade. The 2006 Gigondas Grand Reserve is a spicy, earthy, peppery effort displaying notes of garrigue, black cherries, and damp earth. Medium-bodied, spicy, and evolved, it is best consumed over the next 5-7 years. The solidly made 2006 Gigondas Romane Machotte is somewhat rustic, with more noticeable structure and tannin. It does not possess the depth of fruit found in its three siblings, but it is a cleanly made, spicy, firm, structured effort to drink over the next 4-5 years. Importers: Fruit of the Vines, New York, NY; tel. (212) 765-2970; Total Wine & More, Potomac, MD; tel. (301) 795-1000; Cavatappi Distribuzione, Seattle, WA; tel. (206) 282-5226, and Transat Trade, Gardena, CA; tel. (310) 516-6799

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