

# France-Northern Rhone



## *Domaine Jean-Michel Gerin Cote Rotie La Landonne Red*

With nine hectares in one of France's smallest appellations (less than 200 hectares are planted in Côte Rôtie) Jean-Michel and Monique Gerin are a happy couple, as demand for their excellent wines has far exceeded their ability to produce them.

A recent sign on the door of the unassuming chais (or cellar) reads "No Côte Rôtie or Condrieu available until 2008"! Such are the travails of one of the Wine Spectator's "Rising Stars of the Rhône." Jean-Michel Gerin merely shrugs his shoulders, smiles a wry grin, and launches into a description of the latest plot of scrub-forest he has bought and started to clear for plantation with his beloved Syrah.

Unwilling to be satisfied by the challenge of farming slopes that most expert skiers would think twice about before descending, the Gerins have also launched into the production of one of the world's most exotic and difficult white wines, Condrieu.

Two hectares of densely planted Viognier on incredibly steep, laboriously terraced parcels, straight up from the hamlet of Vérin, complete the Gerin estate. They have been christened Coteau de La Loye.

Both Jean-Michel and Monique come from Côte Rôtie vigneron (or winemakers) families, but their domaine has been built up from scratch by their own efforts. Through acquisition of vineyards, clearing and replantation of scrub forest on suitably classified terroirs, tremendous hours of toil on the "roasted slope," and a few weeks each year experimenting with the fruits of their labor in their modern cellar, they now produce some of the world's finest wines. Three reds are made chez Gerin: Champin le Seigneur from the older vines of the Fourvier and Lesardes parcels in the Côte Brune, and two single-vineyard offerings; one from Les Grandes Places and the other from the famous La Landonne. Each wine has its own personality, an individuality born of terroir with its unique appeal, its own voice and manner of expression.

Visitors frequently describe Gerin's wines not in wine-speak but in words more suited to music, art, even meteorology.

### ***Varietals:***

100% Syrah

### ***Wine Description:***

Good color. Cranberry and game. Wild nuances of mushroom and earth. Good.

### ***Food Pairing:***

Lamb, red meat, mature cheese

