

DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	CROZES HERMITAGE AUTREMENT	(\$55.00)	RED	(91-93)
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	CROZES HERMITAGE AUTREMENT	(\$55.00)	RED	94
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	CROZES HERMITAGE CUVÉE CHRISTOPHE	(\$30.00-35.00)	RED	(90-93)
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	CROZES HERMITAGE CUVÉE CHRISTOPHE	(\$30.00-35.00)	RED	91+
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	CROZES HERMITAGE CUVÉE CHRISTOPHE BLANC	(\$30.00-35.00)	WHITE	92
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	CROZES HERMITAGE CUVÉE CHRISTOPHE BLANC	(\$30.00-35.00)	WHITE	90
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	CROZES HERMITAGE PARTICULIERE	(\$25.00-30.00)	RED	90
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	CROZES HERMITAGE PARTICULIERE BLANC	(\$25.00-30.00)	WHITE	89
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	CROZES HERMITAGE PARTICULIERE BLANC	(\$25.00-30.00)	WHITE	85
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	HERMITAGE AUTREMENT	(\$150.00)	RED	(94-96)
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	HERMITAGE AUTREMENT	(\$150.00)	RED	93+
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	HERMITAGE CUVÉE EMILIE	(\$75.00-90.00)	RED	(90-92)
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	HERMITAGE CUVÉE EMILIE	(\$80.00)	RED	93+
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	HERMITAGE CUVÉE EMILIE BLANC	(\$80.00)	WHITE	93
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	HERMITAGE CUVÉE EMILIE BLANC	(\$80.00)	WHITE	88+
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2006	ST.-JOSEPH	(\$30.00)	RED	(90-92)
DOMAINE DES REMIZIERES	2005	ST.-JOSEPH	(\$30.00)	RED	90

Run by Philippe Desmeures and his daughter, Emilie, this family owned business is a rarity in Hermitage where virtually everything is dominated by the leading *négociants*, Paul Jaboulet-Alné, Chapoutier, Delas, and Guigal. There is only a handful of small, artisanal estates such as Jean-Louis Chave, Sorrel, Faurie, Yann Chave, and Desmeures. His 2005 reds have developed beautifully from barrel to bottle. The 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Particulière, his introductory offering, exhibits blackberry and cassis notes intermixed with licorice, tapenade, and earth. This dense purple-colored, medium-bodied effort possesses loads of fruit as well as a long finish. Even better, the inky/purple-hued 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Cuvée Christophe possesses notes of blackberries, cassis, cedar, and tapenade. Rich, full-bodied, firm, and structured, it will benefit from 2-3 years of cellaring, and should drink beautifully over the following 15 years. Desmeures has turned out an inky/blue/black-colored 2005 St.-Joseph, which is better out of bottle than it was from cask. It offers very good acidity along with notes of crushed rocks, acacia flowers, *pain grillé*, and spice. Consume it over the next decade. The 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Autrement boasts a dense purple color along with oily, unctuously thick flavors of blackberries, cassis, olives, mint, and spice. Ripe, rich, full-bodied, and superbly concentrated, it should hit its peak in 4-5 years, and last for two decades. The 2005 Hermitage Cuvée Emilie has also turned out better than I thought from cask. A wonderfully intense bouquet of licorice, graphite, blackberry liqueur, and stone is followed by a full-bodied wine with superb concentration, and chewy, deep flavors of espresso roast, smoke, licorice, and *crème de cassis*. With plenty of tannin, this wine looks set to enjoy 20 or more years of aging potential. A super-intense version of the Cuvée Emilie is the 2005 Hermitage Autrement.

Vinified in 550 liter new oak *demi-muids*, it is an enormously concentrated, incredibly backward, black-colored, dense, rich wine that requires a decade of cellaring. While virtually impenetrable, it is unquestionably among the most concentrated wines of the 2005 vintage.

Desmeures and his daughter believe that in the northern Rhône, 2006 has more in common with 1991 than any other vintage since. That's a legitimate comparison as the 1991s were underrated, had zesty acidity, terrific bouquets, not the greatest density or richness, but enough stuffing for 15 or more years of cellaring for the biggest wines. The component parts of the 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Cuvée Christophe were all tasted, and it is certainly going to be an outstanding wine. It is forward and more charming and upfront than the 2005, with loads of fruit, good acidity, but not a lot of tannin. The 2006 St.-Joseph may be the finest wine he has yet made from that appellation. Its dense purple color is followed by aromas of cassis, minerals, and spring flowers. The 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Autrement (I believe this is the name it will be given) is a luxury cuvée of super-concentrated wine. It is only slightly more concentrated than the Crozes Cuvée Christophe, yet it has more body as well as more staying power on the palate. The 2006 Hermitage Cuvée Emilie is an outstanding wine, but it seemed to be playing it closer to the vest, without the stunning intensity and richness of the top Crozes-Hermitage. That being said, the 2006 Hermitage Autrement reveals fabulous charcoal, *crème de cassis*, and camphor notes intermixed with truffles, meat juices, and licorice. Full-bodied, dense, rich, and concentrated, this will be one of the top Hermitages of the vintage. It should drink well for 25-30 years.

An excellent source of white wines, readers should not miss the gorgeous 2006s, which eclipse the very good 2005s. The 2006

28

Crozes-Hermitage Particulière blanc is 100% Marsanne aged in *demi-muids*. This heady, beautifully textured white offers up scents of honeyed grapefruit, citrus oil, and white currants. Consume it over the next 3-4 years. A blend of 85% Marsanne and 15% Roussanne, the 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Cuvée Christophe blanc exhibits exuberant notes of tropical fruits, hazelnuts, citrus oil, and subtle wood. It is a mouthfilling, savory, rich white that can compete with many wines selling for five to ten times the price. The 2006 Hermitage Cuvée Emilie blanc (3,500 bottles produced) is comprised of 90% Marsanne and 10% Roussanne. A more evolved light gold color is accompanied by abundant amounts of honeysuckle, marmalade, nectarine, poached pear, smoky oak, and roasted nut characteristics. It should drink well

for 7-8 years, perhaps longer.

The 2005 whites are leaner and more austere, with good acidity, but perhaps not the charming aromatics or lushness of the 2006s. The straightforward, elegant, pure 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Particulière blanc is well-made, but not distinctive. The outstanding 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Cuvée Christophe blanc reveals high acidity, but it is well-integrated with the wine's wet stone, honeyed grapefruit, and white peach characteristics. Enjoy it over the next 5-6 years. The 2005 Hermitage Cuvée Emilie blanc possesses a tannin-like component. It is backward and well-endowed, with high acidity and an austere style. It requires some cellaring. A Patrick Lesec Selection, agent for the US market: Chemin des Vins, Sherborn, MA; tel. (508) 545-1532