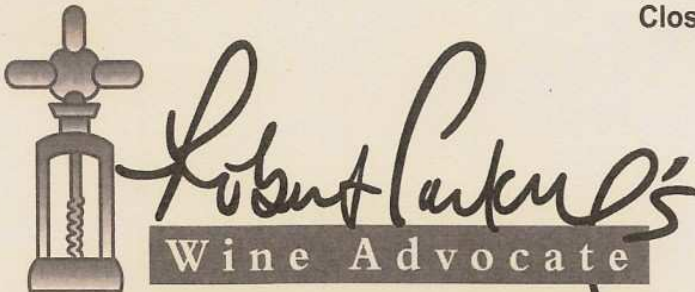


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The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine

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 DE LA SOUFRANDISE 2009 BEAUJOLAIS-LEYNES

(unknown)

RED

(89-90)

The talented Bret brothers – on whose outstanding Mâconnais offerings both as *négociant* and estate I'll report later this year – have an abiding love for the Gamay grown immediately to their south, which in the case of their **2009 Beaujolais-Leynes** – tasted just after it had finished malo in *demi-muid* in April – has been put into practice with obvious success. (Hail decimation rendered the 2008 crop from this parcel – which the Brets are converting to a biodynamic regimen – too small for commercial release.) Rich, almost candied cherry, cassis, and plum; brown spices; and game in the nose are

allied on a deeply concentrated palate with the exuberance and energy that characterize this vintage's best wines, fresh berries, tart fruit skin, peat smoke, and salinity complementing the sweetly ripe side of the wine and serving for invigoration. Amazingly, this was already picked September 2, and offers further proof of the potential for Gamay in this village where granite meets and occasionally mingles with chalk.