

ROTEM AND MOUNIR SAOUMA

(Above) One of the eight vineyards across five villages of the appellation that Mounir has been able to acquire, allowing for 100% estate fruit.



Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc Magis 2020

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France

ESTATE

Burgundy meets the Rhône. An utter respect for tradition, in some ways a total break. We have watched as Mounir and Rotem Saouma, of Burgundy producer Lucien Le Moine, slowly developed their estates and wines in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and the results today are too extraordinary and distinct to ignore. The wines are stunning: precise, intense, complex, expressive visions of Châteauneuf. They somehow speak to the past, but also to the present (and we would guess, the future), all in their own voice.

WINE

Although only about 6% of the Châteauneuf du Pape production is white wine, Mounir saw extraordinary potential in these wines, and he vinifies and ages Magis with the same care he applies to his Côte de Beaune Grand Cru whites. Reductive élevage and long aging produce a wine of great concentration, density and freshness: a wine that speaks eloquently of its origins.

VINEYARD

Soils: Straddling the border of the communes of Châteauneuf du Pape and Beddarides, the Pierredon lieu-dit is composed of poor sand and clay soils covered partially by large river stones ("Galets Roulés"). The subsoil is limestone ("Grès"), making this site one of the very best in the region for producing mineral-driven whites.

Yields: The vineyard was planted at high density and is farmed organically. All vineyard work is done by hand.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 75% Grenache Blanc, 10% Clairette, 10% Rousanne, 5% Bourboulenc

Fermentation: After a hard pressing of whole cluster grapes in an old (1978) basket press, the must is decanted into 100% new 500 liter barrels. Fermentation proceeds naturally (no commercial yeasts)

Aging: The wine remains undisturbed for a minimum of 24 months on its original lees – no racking, fining, or filtration, just occasional stirring.

Alcohol: 15.0%

VINTAGE

2020 is another excellent vintage for the Rhône Valley. Another dry spring was followed by a moderate summer featuring, this time without the extreme heat spikes of 2019. Harvest occurred early – particularly for whites and Rosés – but the weather was even and temperate throughout. The grapes were ripe and concentrated with superb natural acidity – superb raw materials across all AOPs. The wines are rich, balanced, and expressive.

TASTING NOTES

Mystifying how this wine exhibits both suppleness and tension, and a piercing minerality that is unique among Châteauneuf whites we have experienced.