

MAISON
TARDIEU - LAURENT
FAMILLE TARDIEU



Maison Tardieu Laurent - Châteauneuf du Pape - Vieilles Vignes

AOC Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Vallée du Rhône, France

Still discrete at this stage, showing charm and finesse provided by a mouth that is powerful but not heavy.

THE VINTAGE

I will not begin to extol the quality of the quite exceptional 2009 vintage. Others have done this and some long before the wines were finished fermenting, which for me to do would be strange as I don't see myself as a fortune teller reading tea leaves!

In fact, I wished to be a little more cautious. Perhaps it is my hidden pessimism, which was telling me to hold back. Or, maybe it is the obvious difficulty of finishing wines from a rather whimsical (very low quantities) and late (especially in the southern Côtes-du-Rhône) vintage. In any case, I was both right and wrong. In the north, the vintage is superb. There were no great difficulties, the rains arrived at the right time, and the harvest and vinification ultimately went well.

The wines are concentrated, yet without aggressive tannins. They show both fruit and mineral with unusual balance. 2009 is akin to 1999, which produced rather exceptional wines. All of this you will experience for yourself with your first glass of wine from this vintage!!!

I will not detail the climatic conditions of the 2009 vintage except to say the Mistral was missing and a very hot period at the end of August placed rather stressful water conditions on certain parcels. As is often the case, we had to wait for the first rains to restart everything. The harvests were slow and difficult—we had to work on a parcel-by-parcel basis and not hesitate to stop and wait for more favorable conditions.

In the end, after a particularly tough vinification we can report the best wines will be quite exceptional. Not in the tannic way we predicted at the start of fermentation, but in a pleasant, concentrated way with incredible finesse. The maturation of the wines will reveal the full potential of the vintage—we have not seen the last surprises from this rather refined, unusual, and still secretive vintage.

Finally, a quick word to say that more and more of our sources, particularly in the southern Côtes-du-Rhône, have converted, or are in the process of converting, to organic methods, which we are most happy about. We do not wish to stress this information from a commercial perspective, but we have included this new information in the fact sheets. It is important enough in our relationship to be highlighted and each year you will be able to track the progress.

TERROIR

La Crau, les Serres, le Belvédère.

AGEING

Allier and Tronçais new oak and one Wine casks

WINEMAKING

100% destemmed



VARIETALS

Roussanne 60%, Grenache blanc 40%

14% % VOL.

Bottling: Light filtration.

TECHNICAL DATA

Age of vines: Roussanne 20 years, Grenache 60 years
years old

REVIEWS AND AWARDS

92/100

"A blend of roussanne (60 percent) and grenache (blanc), this is redolent of toasted brioche, slivered almonds and peach preserves, yet its significant stony tones keep it in the savory realm. It feels sumptuously rich yet light as a mousse, a good companion for early summer dishes, like halibut with fresh peas and morels."

Tara Q Thomas, Wine & Spirit, 01/06/2011

92/100

"Bright yellow-gold. Ripe orchard and pit fruit aromas are complicated by notes of pungent herbs and anise. Fleshy and smooth in texture, with deep pear and peach flavors lifted by tangy acidity. Shows excellent clarity and power on the finish, which lingers with impressive tenacity and persistent spiciness."

Stephen Tanzer, Stephen Tanzers International Wine Cellar, 01/02/2012

93/100

"A serious and concentrated white, the 2009 Tardieu-Laurent Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc Vieilles Vignes, a blend of 60% Roussanne and 40% Grenache Blanc, shows a decidedly rich, mineral-driven bouquet of juiced pear, lemon rind, toast, and buttered almond. There's a touch of new wood here, but the wine stays very fresh and focused on both the nose and in the mouth. This medium to full-bodied, concentrated and solidly textured wine has loads of texture, plenty of focusing acidity, and a classic, very long finish. It should either be consumed over the coming year or so, or after a solid 8-10 years."

Jeb Dunnuck, The Rhone Report, 01/09/2011

Wine Spectator

92/100

"A ripe, flashy style, with buttered almond, green fig, creamed apple and toasted brioche notes all carried by a creamy texture. Weighty, but offset nicely on the finish by floral and mineral notes that are buried deep."

James Molesworth, Wine Spectator, 31/10/2010



92/100

"A wine not to be overlooked is the 2009 Chateauneuf du Pape Blanc [Vieilles Vignes], an equal part blend of Roussanne and Clairette. Honeysuckle, quince, white flowers, and hints of white peaches and apricots are all present in this complex, aromatic wine, which has a light golden color, full body, and remarkably fresh acids and length."

Robert Parker, Wine Advocate, 01/10/2010

