



Domaine Duseigneur

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhône, France

History of the Winery

Bernard Duseigneur hails from a family of winemakers, originally from the other side of the Rhône Valley, who still have holdings in Lirac, in addition to the main estate in Châteauneuf. He took charge of the estate in 2002 after returning to his ancestral home from a first career in banking. He took over from his father and uncle, and now his son has joined him in the family business as well. Bernard and his team are most passionate about their domaine's terroir within Châteauneuf-du-Pape, as they are one of the few estates that has vineyards planted on all three of the soil types found there: not just the rolled pebbles of fame, but also the sandy soils, and white limestone. Extensive information about their terroir and its soils is found on their website via [this link](#). Domaine Duseigneur also has holdings in Lirac, where the vines are also planted to Châteauneuf-like rolled pebbles.

Bernard feels strongly that “owning a great terroir is not sufficient to producing great wines,” and follows the practices of biodynamics to make sure his wines are fully representative of their terroir. Today, the estate is fully biodynamically certified. Bernard has just acquired an additional parcel that is currently organic, and he plans to convert this new estate over to biodynamics as well.

JS & Domaine Duseigneur

We were lucky to be connected to Domaine Duseigneur through the collaborative group Vignerons de Nature, a collective of winemakers who are all committed to low-intervention farming and wine making. We had the opportunity to visit the estate in early 2023 and meet Bernard, a tall, commanding, and gregarious sort, who welcomed us with great hospitality. After an extensive tasting through the Duseigneur wines, we piled into our rental car and his way-too-nice-for-vineyards-Lexus and got a full tour of his vines and the greater Châteauneuf region, including a jaunt up into the hilly, wilde part, where Bernard's white limestone vineyards are planted. This was a particular treat, as the terroir in this part of the appellation is starkly different from what you would expect of such a famous wine region, known for its tidy rows of vines planted to gentle slopes on large pebbles planted around handsome, civilized mansions with barrel-laden cellars beneath. No, these vineyards are planted in small plots on wild, white, rocky hillsides surrounded by trees and brush, and the road to get to them is, well, let's just say we are glad our rental car didn't suffer any minor damage.

Viticulture

100% Certified biodynamic farming. A note on biodynamics from Bernard puts it best:

"Being a winemaker is also being part of a thousand years old tradition; it means receiving and cultivating a know-how and conscience; it means being the vector of a cultural heritage, and being responsible for future generations to whom everything must be transmitted.

The quality of the wine is entirely dependent on the work in the vineyard. Our choices are dictated by the plant during its development and maturation. Every year, conditions change, but our mission remains: allowing the underground forces to turn into energy.

In order to achieve this, we enhance the vitality of the soil by favoring a flora and a fauna that mobilize the trace elements and allow the symbiosis between the plant and the soil.

Enriching the vitality of the soil aims at respecting the natural elements, maintaining the organic integrity of the terroir while expressing its potential in every vintage. *Seizing the opportunity that nature gives us; that is the essence of biodynamics for me.*"

- Vines range from 20-100 years old
- Soils include the round pebbles, sand, and white limestone

Vinification

- Indigenous yeasts are used for all wines
- Minimal SO₂ is used
- Fermentation takes place in concrete vats for all wines

- Aging takes place in barrels for most wines
- Some wines are lightly filtered, no wines are fined

Wines

La Goutte Duseigneur 2022

This is the estate's "easy drinking" red, made under the AOC Côtes du Rhone. Vines are 15-20 years old, planted on various soil types typical to the area. 50% Grenache and 50% Syrah compose the blend, and are co-fermented with indigenous yeasts. The grapes are macerated for 2 weeks in concrete tanks. The wine is briefly aged in concrete before bottling. SO₂ 26mg/L.

"Catarina" Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2019

From a few different lieu-dits located around the village, "Colombis," planted on rolled pebbles, "Bois de la Ville," planted in sandy soils, and "Grand Devès," planted on white limestone. 100% Grenache. The grapes from each parcel are vinified separately. Fermentation takes place for 4-5 weeks in concrete tanks, and aging takes place in demi-muids that are at least a few years old, for 12 months. 15% ABV.

"Matteo" Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2018

A parcel selection from lieu-dit "Les Gallimardes," which contains sand, gravel, and clay-limestone soils. Vines are 50 years old on average. 80% Grenache and 20% Syrah. Fermented in concrete tanks and macerated for 20 days, then aged in old barrels. Total SO₂ 49mg/L. 15% ABV.

"Antares" Lirac 2020

From clay and sandy soils combined with layers of pebbles and alternating with some deep limestone soils as well. A north-facing site at the western extremity of Lirac, at 160m of altitude. From 50 year old vines of 60% Grenache and 40% Mourvèdre. Grapes are destemmed and fermented in concrete. Vinification is separate for the two varieties. The Grenache is aged in concrete, whereas the Mourvèdre is aged in 1-year-old demi-muids for 12 months. Total so₂ 38mg/L. 15% ABV.