



Les Vignerons d'Estézargues

Côtes du Rhône, France

History of the Winery

Les Vignerons D' Estézargues is a co-operative cellar in the small town of Estézargues, very close to Avignon and the Pont du Gard in the southern Rhone valley. Co-ops typically are not known for their sustainability or artisan nature – receiving grapes from members and making large bulk blends, without mentioning the vineyards or families associated with the final product. Les Vignerons d'Estézargues is different.

The Co-op was established in 1965 and shifted towards natural winemaking as early as the 1980s thanks to the arrival of winemaker Jean-François Nicq, who put the cave firmly on track towards respectful farming and practically no additives in the cellar. No commercial yeast, no enzymes, no gum arabic, no acidifiers, and almost no sulfur are used for any of the wines produced by Estézargues. Today, every member is certified organic or in the process of certification.

They are also unique because of their openness to vinify their member estates separately, showcasing the distinct personalities of their growers' terroirs. The current winemaker at Estézargues, Armelle Rouault, feels that this is “a great way to valorize the work of each grower—we vinify the wines in almost the same way so it's really up to the grapes to show what's in them. And I can't help but see the personality of each grower in the final wine as well.” Armelle affectionately calls the community “village gaulois” in a reference to the beloved Asterix & Obélix comics and the fact that most of the original founding families are still members today, with the third generation now in command.

JS & Estézargues

You may notice that these are new cuvées than those you have seen in our portfolio before, and here's why. As Estezargues is a co-op with many internal brands, different lines of wines are available to various import partners. Previously, we have imported these via Jenny & Francois Selections, but we were recently given the opportunity to directly import a different selection of wines in partnership with Stork Imports, and we are excited to bring some new cuvées from this well-known winery to the Oregon market.



Viticulture & Vinification

All of the 12 member vineyards are in the process of obtaining organic certification, or are already organically farmed. Between them, they have 550 hectares total, planted to the typical Rhône varieties. Soils are mostly rolled pebbles over clay and limestone soils, similar to nearby Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

In the cellar, most wines are vinified in concrete or stainless steel vessels. All fermentations are spontaneous with indigenous yeast and no entrants are used other than a small amount of sulfite.

Wines



Taparas Blanc

From 25 year-old vines, 50% Grenache Blanc, 25% Roussanne, 25% Viognier. Grown on limestone and clay soils. In the cellar, grapes are destemmed and macerated for four hours. Fermented with native yeasts, aged 7 months in concrete tanks. Lightly filtered, unfiltered, total SO₂ 20mg/L.



Taparas Rouge

50% Grenache, 30% Syrah, 20% Carignan from 25 year-old vines planted on rolled pebbles and clay. Grapes are destemmed and macerated for 12 days while fermenting with native yeasts. Aged 9 months in concrete tanks, unfiltered and unfiltered, total SO₂ 20mg/L.



Carambouille

Vin de France designation. From 25 year old vines of 65% Cinsault, 32% Carignan, and 3% Grenache, grown on clay soils with rolled pebbles. Grapes are destemmed and macerated for just 5 days. Fermented with natural yeast and aged 6 months in concrete tanks. Unfiltered and unfiltered, total SO₂ 20mg/L.