Having labored for a decade in near anonymity at Domaine Bila-Haut, Gilles Troullier, a native of the Rhône, and an expert in biodynamic farming has been liberated from his contractual relationship with his former employer. How a scattered four hectares of vines represented a threat to a wine empire seems curious, but at least we can now give Gilles the attention he so rightfully deserves. His vineyards are located in the northern region of the Roussillon in a sub-zone formerly made famous by the fortified wine, Maury. As tastes have moved away from these sweeter styles of wine there was a brief moment when vineyards in the area were favorably priced – especially considering the range of terroirs: limestone, schist and granite, the elevation of the vineyards and the average age of the vines. This was the opportunity that brought Gilles Troullier to the Roussillon.

Ripeness in the Roussillon has never been a problem. The struggle is how to achieve balance in such a warm, dry climate. Biodynamics plays an important role but great wine is not solely a creation of the vineyard. Hand harvesting, indigenous fermentations and a preference for large, neutral aging vessels as well as an approach that seeks infusion rather than extraction are human decisions that result in balanced, vigorous and fresh wines. They not only transmit varietal characteristics but the minerality of the soil as well.

L’Esprit du Temps is a cuvée of pure Grenache from two sites of old-vines on schist and limestone soils near the villages of Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillet and Latour de France – both within the historic borders of Maury. This cuvée, however, is a far cry from those rich, fortified and fabled dessert wines, as it shows the deft vineyard and cellar work of Gilles. He captures the intensity of the terroir while coxing an elegant and nuanced aspect of these ancient Grenache vines. Farmed biodynamically and harvested by hand, Gilles ferments L’Esprit du Temps in a concrete tank with indigenous yeasts before aging the wine in a single 600L neutral French oak demi-muid or a slightly larger Stockinger foudre – depending on the volume of the vintage.

**ACCOLADES**

93 – 2016 L’Esprit du Temps – Jeb Dunnuck
91-93 – 2015 L’Esprit du Temps – Wine Advocate
93 – 2014 L’Esprit du Temps – Wine Advocate