

CHÂTEAU PUECH-HAUT

Le Benjamin



ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Pays d'Oc

SOIL

Clay limestone

AGE OF VINES

From various young vines on the property

ELEVATION

120 meters

VARIETIES

Syrah, Grenache, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon

FARMING

Practicing biodynamic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, destemmed, fermented in tank

AGING

At least 6 months in tank

One only needs to glance briefly through the notes of Jancis Robinson, Robert Parker, Andrew Jefford and David Schildknecht (among many others) to discover their love affair with the Languedoc. And by that, we mean head-over-heels, butterflies-in-the-stomach kind of love. We have had affection for the region since the humble beginnings of European Cellars when our motto was “unknown...and unsold” – an affection that remains as exciting to us today as it did 25 years ago.

Château Puech-Haut has been on the critic’s radar for some time – which makes sense since the property has employed Michel Rolland, Claude Gros and now Philippe Cambie as consulting enologist. Visionary owner Gérard Bru spares no expense in his quest for excellence. Located quite close to Pic Saint-Loup, in Saint-Drézéry, Puech-Haut is near the far western border of the Rhône valley and benefits from both its proximity to the Mediterranean and the rugged, mountainous interior of France.

Among two of Gerard Bru’s many passions are art and wine and for over a decade he has invited artists to Château Puech-Haut to paint decommissioned demi-muids from his cellar. These barrels are on prominent display in his tasting room but also serve as inspiration for the packaging of one of his newest cuvées – Le Benjamin. Many estates in the south of France make bulk wine intended for everyday, uncomplicated drinking, either carried away in your own vessels or sold as bag-in-a-box. Gerard, being Gerard, decided that bag in a barrel was more suitable format for his estate, and having so many sources of inspiration for this project on hand, he decided that rather than settling on one design, he has chosen to cycle through them all. This 3L bag in a barrel, or bib-art, is a blend of younger vine fruit from his vineyards. While mainly Grenache and Syrah, it includes a small amount of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. These varieties are harvested by hand, fermented in tank and aged for at least 6 months before the final blend is made and “barreled.” His first release in 2016 was heralded by Jeb Dunnuck who remarked, *“As good as I’ve ever tasted from this format, it offers rich, ripe notes of black cherries, bouquet garni and peppery herbs as well as a medium to full-bodied, textured, rounded style on the palate. It will be hard to beat for drinking over the coming couple of years.”*

ACCOLADES

89 – NV Le Benjamin – Wine Advocate, April 2016



ERIC SOLOMON
SELECTIONS