



CLOS SAINT JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Combe des Fous

Clos Saint-Jean is a 48-hectare estate in Châteauneuf-du-Pape run by brothers Vincent and Pascal Maurel. Considered by many critics and wine-writers as the preeminent estate espousing the modern style of winemaking in Châteauneuf, this cellar is one of the oldest in the region, having been founded in 1900 by the great-great-grandfather of Vincent and Pascal, Edmund Tacussel. A short time after its founding and well before the AOP of Châteauneuf-du-Pape was created in 1923, Edmund began bottling estate wines in 1910.

The various vineyards of Clos Saint-Jean are located primarily in La Crau. This plateau is perhaps the most iconic of the many terroirs of Châteauneuf-du-Pape – iron-rich red clays topped with galets. While about 60% of their vineyards are located here, specifically in the lieu-dits of Côteau de Saint-Jean and Cabane de Saint-Jean, another 40% are located in alluvial clay and sandy soils adjacent to the plateau. They also own a small parcel of Mourvèdre in the lieu-dit of Bois-Dauphin near Château Rayas planted on sandy, limestone-rich soils.

The farming at Clos Saint-Jean is fully sustainable due to the warm and dry climate, which prevents the need for chemical inputs. Instead, Vincent and Pascal employ organic methods for pest control, mainly pheromones, to prevent pests from taking up residence in their vines, a process called amusingly enough in French, *confusion sexuelle*. The vines tended manually, and harvest is conducted in several passes entirely by hand.

Combe des Fous literally means, the hill of the fool. The hill, in this case, is located in the far southern reach of Le Crau which was left barren for many centuries because the layer of galets was so exceedingly deep that everyone assumed vines could never survive there. The fool in this situation is Edmund Tacussel, the great-great-grandfather of Vincent and Pascal Maruel who planted a Grenache vineyard on this site in 1905. That old-vine Grenache form the heart of this cuvée with a small amount of Syrah, Cinsault and Vaccarèse. La Combe des Fous is only made in the best vintages.

ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Châteauneuf-du-Pape

SOIL

Clay limestone, galets

AGE OF VINES

50-100+

ELEVATION

120 meters

VARIETIES

Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Vaccarèse

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Fermentation in stainless steel and concrete tanks

AGING

Grenache 12 months in concrete tanks, remaining varieties aged 12 months in French oak

ACCOLADES

94-96 – 2021 Combe des Fous – Jeb Dunnuck

96 – 2020 Combe des Fous – Jeb Dunnuck

96 – 2020 Combe des Fous – Wine Spectator



ERIC SOLOMON
SELECTIONS