



A view of the Dentelles de Montmirail from Vacqueyras



DOMAINE LA GARRIGUE

Domaine la Garrigue was founded in 1850 by the same family that runs the property today, Famille Bernard. Brothers Maxime and Pierre Bernard, of the 5th generation, are at the helm of the estate with Maxime acting as chef while Pierre focuses on the family's restaurant nestled in the hills below the Dentelles, Les Florets. Their wives, children, nieces and nephews all have roles at the domaine and there is plenty of work for all, as this is the largest domaine in the appellation covering 83 hectares. They farm vines of Grenache, Mourvedre, Cinsault, Syrah, Grenache Blanc and Clairette on the three primary terroirs of Vacqueyras. The average age of their vines is about 50 years old with some vines well over a century. The reticent but very talented Vir-

ginie Combe, a member of the 6th generation, is in charge of the winemaking with guidance from Philippe Cambie.

The traditional structure of the family business carries through to the wines as well. Farming is sustainable – as much for its inherent benefits as a seeming distrust of modernity. In fact a visit to the cellars is like stepping back in time. There's nary a barrel in sight and the walls are lined with concrete tanks and stainless steel fermenters. Fermentations are conducted on the stems and macerations are long and gentle, followed by reductive aging in concrete. As a result the natural ferocity of the terroirs of Vacqueyras are captured and preserved in each bottle. These are not shy or



FACTS at a GLANCE

Founded	1850
Proprietor	Famille Bernard
Winemaker	Virginie Combe
Size	83 ha
Elevation	110 meters above sea level
Soils	Red clay with galets, sand, pale clay limestone
Vine Age	30 – 100+
Varieties	Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsault, Grenache Blanc, Clairette
Farming	Sustainable
Harvest	Manual
Cellar	Vinification by site and variety, fruit lightly crushed but not destemmed, fermentation in stainless steel tanks, long gentle maceration, aging in concrete tanks

polished Rhônes but engaging and forceful examples harkening to the past. Tasting through a series of tank samples of mono-varietal wines you can notice subtle differences in each but the overall impression is a common sense of place and the epitome of Vacqueyras.

European Cellars has worked with Domaine la Garrigue for several decades and we've witnessed a gradual evolution of the wines. They have become more pure without losing their original charm or by drastically changing their style. These wines are the very essence of Vacqueyras. The appellation itself is rather firmly in the shadow of Gigondas to the north and Châteauneuf to the west. Raised to cru status in 1990 its just old enough to have fairly decent name recognition but not quite young enough for hipster street cred. There are three terroirs in Vacqueyras: the red-clay under galets plateau of la Garrigue (incidentally where Domaine la Garrigue is located), the sand soils around the village of Vacqueyras and the rocky limestone slopes at the foot of the Dentelles de Montmirail. Each terroir contributes to the final blends at la Garrigue: power from the plateau, finesse from the sand and structure from the limestone slopes. Each terroir also benefits the varieties planted at the domaine with Grenache and Mourvedre favoring the hot and rocky plateau, Grenache Blanc and Clairette favoring the sandy soils (along with some additional Syrah, Grenache and Cinsault), while the limestone slopes are ideal for Syrah.

