



*Isabelle, Aimé and Christophe Sabon*



## DOMAINE LA JANASSE

Over the last quarter century, Domaine de la Janasse has become one of the most highly-regarded estates in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Led by siblings Christophe and Isabelle Sabon, the estate combines the best of both traditional and modern techniques to craft a collection of truly riveting wines from “simple” value-priced VDP’s to their benchmark Châteauneufs.

The estate was founded in 1976 by Aimé Sabon, the father of Christophe and Isabelle, who still oversees the vineyards. The property consists of 40 hectares, spread over as many as 70 different parcels throughout the appellation. The terroirs range from sandy soils, as can be found in their well-known plots in the North of the appellation – Chapouin and La

Janasse— to lightly-colored clay limestone soils and gravelly red clay and galets, most notable in their plots in Le Crau in the South. While Aimé works the vineyards organically, his children, Christophe and Isabelle, are in charge of wine production. Christophe is a self-proclaimed “great defender of Grenache,” which still represents 75% of their vines. With assistance from Aimé’s farming and Isabelle efforts in the cellar, he harnesses the typical exuberance of Grenache-based wines through careful vinifications that respect both terroir and vintage. The results are a wide range of rich and flavorful Châteauneuf-du-Papes, Côtes-du-Rhône and Vins de Pays that are complex and balanced – often in contradiction to a region better known for sheer size and power.





In attempting to describe the wines at Janasse one is confronted with the inadequacies in using “style” to express their qualities. While there is a modern facet to the richness of the fruit, it is beautifully paired with a pronounced sense of place and complexity. The reds are not entirely destemmed and see long and gentle macerations lasting up to a month, which may account for some of the earthiness and finesse in the wines. Aging takes place in various vessels from large concrete tanks to foudres, and demi-muids. The barrels are mostly neutral and darkened with age and repeated use. The Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blancs here are frequently overlooked and are some of the best examples in the appellation. Coming mainly from sandier soils, only the Roussanne sees time in barrel while the Grenache and Clairette are age entirely in tank. Minuscule quantities of a reserve Blanc, the Prestige, is aged entirely in demi-muid from 1-3 years old.

The reds from Janasse are frequently considered to be among the best in the region whether it is their pleasingly complex Côtes-du-Rhone and Côtes-du-Rhône Villages or their three bottlings of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Not surprisingly the aptly named Tradition is the most reserved of their Châteauneufs while Chaupin and Vieilles Vignes are studies in contrast, between the purity of Grenache from sandy soil clearly evident in the former, to the intensity and power of the later – an indication of the age of the vines, the range of soils from which they are sourced and the density afforded by the addition of old-vine Syrah and Mourvedre to their centenary Grenache.



## FACTS at a GLANCE

Founded	1973
Proprietor	Famille Sabon
Winemaker	Christophe & Isabelle Sabon
Size	80 ha
Elevation	65 – 120 meters above sea level
Soils	Sand, clay limestone, red clay, galets
Vine Age	10 – 100+
Varieties	Grenache, Mourvedre, Syrah, Cinsault, Merlot, Carignan, Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc, Viognier
Farming	Practicing organic and biodynamic
Harvest	Manual
Cellar	Whole cluster pressing and fermentation in tank for the whites, the reds are 80% destemmed and fermented in concrete, long, gentle macerations lasting up to one month. Aged in tank, concrete, foudre and demi-muid depending on cuvée