



DOMAINE LAFAGE

Ambre

For twenty years, we have worked with Jean-Marc Lafage at his estate in the Roussillon and across the border in Spain, where he consults on several projects. As good as his wines were when we first met him, they only get better with each vintage.

While his family has been growing grapes and making wine in the Roussillon since 1791, it was Jean-Marc's early insight into the potential for the Roussillon to make a wide range of dry wines at very affordable prices that established his "new" estate. While his grandfather and father made wine for the family, Jean-Marc was the first to break away from selling most of his grapes to the local cooperative. Over the generations, his family had amassed scattered vineyards throughout the region, which now totals over 160 hectares of vines, most of them in excess of 50 years in age.

ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Rivesaltes Ambré

SOIL

Alluvial gravel

AGE OF VINES

40

ELEVATION

150 meters

VARIETIES

Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris

FARMING

Practicing organic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, selection of berries with 17.5% potential alcohol, fermentation halted by neutral grape spirits

AGING

5 months in neutral French oak barrels

Another factor in Jean-Marc's success is the diversity of the terroirs in the Roussillon. Squeezed between the far southern edge of the limestone Corbières Massif to the north and the granitic Pyrenees mountains in the south, the Roussillon is an undulating terrain of complex soil types, orientations, and exposures. Three river valleys, the Agly, Têt, and Tech, drain the region generally flowing west to east, where they meet the Mediterranean. Within its borders, Jean-Marc has identified six principal sub-zones in the appellation: the Crest, the Upper Agly Valley, the Uplands of Fenouillet, Les Asprès, the Mediterranean Plain, the Rocky Coast. Each region has its own expression and when you factor in the various varieties Jean-Marc has planted, you can understand why he can make so many riveting wines at such reasonable prices.

An homage to the traditional *vin doux* style of wines from the Roussillon, Jean-Marc makes his Ambre from a hand selection of the ripest berries of Grenache Blanc and Grenache Gris with at least 17.5% potential alcohol. After fermentation is halted with the addition of neutral grape spirits, the wine is aged in French oak barrels in a solera-like system stored in a cool cellar. Each year a selection from these barrels of varying age is blended and bottled.

ACCOLADES

91 – NV Ambre – Wine Advocate

