



*One of the vineyards of Roger Sabon located on gravelly, sandy, limestone-rich soils*



## ROGER SABON

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The Sabon family is an ancient and well-regarded name in Châteauneuf-du-Pape first mentioned in documents dating to 1540. Perhaps not as venerable as the Ameniers of Domaine de Marcoux and Domaine Giraud, but still eminently respectable. A more recent patriarch of the family, Seraphin Sabon first bottled wine in the appellation under the family's name in 1921. He also fathered three very enterprising sons, all of whom established their own domaines: Joseph Sabon at Clos du Mont Olivet, Noel Sabon at Chante Cigale and Roger Sabon. The Sabons are like the Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young of the village.

Domaine Roger Sabon was founded in 1952 and is currently run by Roger's sons Denis and Gilbert. A third son, Jean-Jacques is deceased but his son-in-law Didier Negron is the current winemaker. Denis and his son Julien oversee the farming while Gilbert and his niece, Delphine run the office. It is quite the family affair!

The size of the domaine has grown slowly over the years with 18 hectares in Chateauneuf du Pape, 8 hectares in Lirac and 8 hectares in Côtes-du-Rhône. Most of their holdings in Châteauneuf-du-Pape are located in the northeast-



ern part of the appellation, where the soils are sandier with a high concentration of limestone. They also own a few parcels in Le Crau famous for its red clay under a deep layer of galets deposited from the alps eons ago. These two soil types combine to make wines that are equally rich and nuanced.

Since 2001 Didier Negron has made the wines at Domaine Roger Sabon, but recently he's begun to move away from demi-muids and barriques in favor of aging his family's wines in concrete and large French oak foudres. While the terroir of Roger Sabon, with its high concentration of sand and limestone, has always been inclined to a more ethereal and delicate style of Châteauneuf, Didier's changes in the cellar have amplified these qualities – the wines have never been more engaging and lovely.

While Grenache is the mainstay at the Domaine, they also grow Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsault, Terret Noire, Cunoise, Vaccarèse Muscardin, Roussanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc and Grenache Blanc. They own some fairly old Syrah, about 60 years old, located on limestone soils which is an important component in the Prestige bottling. Their oldest vines, topping 100 years old, are located in two plots near Courthézon, and are the source for the Secret des Sabon. While details are sketchy and the Sabons are shy about divulging any information about this cuvée, it is safe to assume that these vines are primarily Grenache. In the cellar there is a single demi-muid in the shadows which is presumably the Secret des Sabon, but once again polite inquires are met with a Gallic shrug.



## FACTS at a GLANCE

Founded	1952
Proprietor	Famille Sabon
Winemaker	Didier Negron
Size	34 ha
Elevation	50 – 130 meters above sea level
Soils	Sand, clay limestone, red clay, galets
Vine Age	40 – 100+
Varieties	Grenache, Mourvedre, Syrah, Cinsault, Terret Noir, Cunoise, Vaccarèse, Muscardin, Roussanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc, Grenache Blanc
Farming	Sustainable
Harvest	Manual
Cellar	Fermentation in tank, maceration from 20-30 days with daily remontage or delestage, aging in tank, concrete, foudre or 600L demi-muid