



DOMAINE DE COURBISSAC

Pandore

The Languedoc, often touted as the “next big thing,” has struggled to gain attention from retailers and consumers alike. European Cellars, over the past 25 years, has represented various growers in the region. Despite the region’s historical focus on grape variety and modern winemaking trends, Domaine de Courbissac stands out for its commitment to terroir. Founded in 2002 by German film producer Reinhard Brundig, the estate prioritizes the respect and nurturing of soil and site. With biodynamic farming practices in place since its inception, Domaine de Courbissac, led by vigneronne Brunnhilde Claux since 2013, emphasizes the importance of established vines and complex soils, particularly in the La Livinière sub-zone of Minervois.

Situated near La Montagne Noire, Domaine de Courbissac’s vineyards, ranging from 250 to 450 meters above sea level, benefit from the influence of nearby mountains and a semi-Mediterranean climate. The estate’s unique terroir, characterized by clay-limestone soil with gravel and sandstone bands, allows for the successful cultivation of Grenache, Mourvèdre, Carignan, and Syrah. Brunnhilde employs a hands-off winemaking approach, continuing the biodynamic practices, manually harvesting each plot separately, and conducting fermentations in concrete vats and open-top wooden fermenters. Whole cluster fermentations are made possible by the grapes’ synchronized ripeness, resulting in fresh and balanced wines. The commitment to minimal intervention is evident, with the use of SO₂ only introduced just before bottling, showcasing a dedication to the authentic expression of the Languedoc terroir in Domaine de Courbissac’s wines.

While most of the vineyards of Courbissac cluster close to the Domaine, there is a plot of 45-year-old Syrah grown in a sheltered site on chalky clay-limestone soils in the neighboring village of Les Félines. Capable of producing a style of Syrah more characteristic of the Northern Rhône, Brunnhilde and Reinhard have drawn their inspiration even further to the north – Burgundy. They harvest this Syrah once it has reached 13% potential alcohol, ferment it whole cluster with ambient yeasts, and press it after a 10-day, undisturbed maceration, followed by aging in clay eggs—all necessary steps to ensure a floral, lively, and lithe Syrah.

ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Minervois

SOIL

Chalky clay-limestone

AGE OF VINES

45

ELEVATION

350 meters

VARIETIES

Syrah

FARMING

Certified organic

FERMENTATION

Hand-harvested, whole cluster, natural yeast fermentation in vat, 10-day maceration without pigeage or remontage

AGING

12 months in clay eggs, vegan

