

DOMAINE DES TOURELLES

Merweh & Obeidi Vieilles Vignes



ORIGIN

Lebanon

APPELLATION

Bekaa Valley

SOIL

Clay limestone

AGE OF VINES

50-100+ years old

ELEVATION

1100-1400 meters

VARIETIES

Merweh, Obeidi

FARMING

Practicing organic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, separate natural yeast fermentation for each variety in stainless steel tanks

AGING

3 months in stainless steel tanks

While only 30-50km from the Mediterranean coast, the Bekaa valley in Lebanon is at an average elevation of 1000 meters and surrounded by mountains – Mount Lebanon in the west and the Anti-Lebanon range in the east. Both ranges are composed of limestone, sandstone, and dolomite which has weathered to form heavy clays in the center of the valley where cereal grains are grown, and poor, gravelly, clays on the edges where vines and olive trees thrive. Despite its southern latitude, its elevation ensures warm, dry days and cool nights during summer. In winter, the oak- and cedar-clad mountains are snow-covered ensuring plenty of groundwater year-round.

Blessed with an ideal climate for growing grapes, Faouzi Issa and Domaine des Tourelles have a simple philosophy of sustainable and manual farming, social responsibility, hand harvesting, indigenous fermentation, minimal SO₂, and a preference for neutral oak aging for their red wines except for the Marquis des Beys and Syrah du Liban. Temperature control for the red wines is entirely passive and based on centuries of knowledge on how to keep cool in a hot climate. While the majority of the wines ferment in cement tanks dating back to the mid-19th century, the whites and rosé are fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to preserve their freshness. The byproducts from the fermentations are composted and returned to the soils. These are not only sustainably-made wines, but they are wines of tremendous authenticity, minimally made, and nourishingly Mediterranean.

For winemakers in Lebanon, Merweh & Obeidi are the indigenous white varieties of their homeland. Merweh provides texture and aromas of almonds, while Obeidi contributes floral and herbal aromatics. Faouzi Issa has been searching for old vines of these varieties as a white counterpart to his Cinsault and Carignan old vine cuvées, and 2020 will mark his inaugural vintage of this wine. The Merweh is from 100+-year-old vines located in the Bsarreh mountains in the north of Lebanon, while the Obeidi comes from 50-year-old vines near the capital of Bekaa, Zahleh.

