

DOMAINE DE CASSAGNAU CHARDONNAY

IGP Pays d'Oc White



OWNER/COMMUNE Jacques Abet / Pauligne



Jacques Abet

PITCH

Of all the southern French terroirs, the Limoux region – at the Languedoc's western extremity – has those that are best suited to the making of quality Chardonnay. The freshness and humidity of the Atlantic influence attenuates the heat of the Mediterranean climate. The foothills of the Pyrenees give the landscape its relief, forming slopes and valleys. It's at the heart of this excellent terroir that Jacques Abet is lucky enough to grow, tend and cherish Cassagnau's plot of Chardonnay, called "Le Verger" – the fruit orchard. In times gone by, it was the site of a mediaeval hamlet, which was inhabited from the fifth to the thirteenth century, as evidenced by certain remains uncovered during my viticultural labours.

BACKGROUND

Family-owned since the eighteenth century, the estate owes its longevity to its women. Jacques' grandmother Berthe, who managed the estate for six decades, took it through two world wars and many a viticultural crises. He inherited this family property from his mother, Jacqueline. Today, it's thanks to his wife Colette that Jacques, who had chosen to pursue a career in medicine, is able to satisfy his passion for winegrowing and for the terroir in which he grew up. You'll find Jacques in the tiny village of Pauligne near Limoux, at the heart of "Cathar country". For the past few years, thanks to passionate dedication, strict standards and an authentic approach, he has been breathing new life into the estate. Whenever the vines need him, he swaps his doctor's coat for winegrower's gear, driving the tractor, pruning or working in the winery with his oenologist. The scientist in him gives way to the farmer, repeating the same gestures as his ancestors before him. An enthusiastic head of a magnificent estate, this bon vivant has succeeded in reconciling his two activities of GP and winemaker.

SURFACE 30 ha

GRAPE VARIETIES

One of the estate's master cards lies in its hugely diverse mix of varieties – proof of the curiosity and open-mindedness of its renovator! Besides the Mediterranean varieties, Syrah and Grenache, you'll also find Atlantic varieties more typical of Bordeaux – Merlot, Cabernet and Malbec (or Cot) – the Burgundy varieties of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, and last but not least, the time-honoured local varieties, Mauzac and Chenin Blanc.

TERROIR

The geographical situation of the Languedoc and the Atlantic climate are the defining influences when it comes to explaining the excellence and uniqueness of this terroir. Here, by an almost magical stroke of luck, two climates come together: the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. The Mediterranean influences make for generous wines, with the sunshine providing ripeness, while the westerly influence maintains the humidity and freshness that is necessary for the fruit to express itself fully. Rounding out the picture is the diversity of the soils: gravel terraces with large round pebbles predominate on the low slopes of the foothills of Pyrenees.

WINEMAKING/MATURING

What a pleasure it is every year to gather in these beautiful, golden grapes, to carefully transport them to the vatting room and lightly press them in a pneumatic press to obtain rich, aromatic must. After cold-settling, the wine is vinified and clarified must in the vat. Once the alcoholic fermentation is completed, élevage begins on the lees and continues until the month of January. The wine is clarified before bottling with bentonite to ensure its dazzling brilliance.

VINTAGE 2017

Alc: 13.5%

TASTING NOTES

What sets this Chardonnay apart is its brilliance and shimmering green tints. The nose – of mango, passion fruit and mild spices – takes you on an exotic voyage. The palate is all roundness, softness and finesse, with more than a hint of tangy vivacity that lends balance. Let yourself be charmed by its suppleness and freshness and its deliciously floral and exotic aromas. Serve chilled. Share this wine with friends and family either as an aperitif drink or with a meal of summer vegetables accompanied by cooked or raw fish. Pairs wonderfully with modern vegetarian cuisine.

AGEING

To drink young, within the 2-3 years following its vintage.

Blend

100% Chardonnay

BOTTLING

Bottled for Maison Sichel