



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

DOMAINE DU POUJOL

Country: France

Region: Languedoc

Appellation(s): Vin de Pays de l'Hérault, Languedoc

Producer: Robert & Kim Cripps

Founded: 1994

Annual Production: 4,100 cases

Farming: Lutte-raisonnée (since 1994)

Website: www.domainedupoujol.com

Domaine de Poujol was bought by the Cripps family in 1994—Robert and Kim, and Robert's retired parents, Dick and Ann. Robert is English, Kim is American, and they farm in what was the most unlikely of places to find foreign winegrowers at the time. They came to this part of the Languedoc as the first non-French owners of a domaine, and they quickly distinguished themselves by their experience and strong pioneer spirit. Robert had been in the wine trade in Oxford for several years, eventually going on to make wine at some prestigious wineries in California. Kim had worked for ten years in Napa in financial management. Together, they had a dream of making their own wine in France. After a year of investigating, they found Domaine de Poujol, a unique little corner of paradise where the warm Mediterranean air is quickly cooled down by the cool, southeastern breezes descending from the Cevennes (one of the great mountain ranges of the Midi). Here the vineyards enjoy southern sun exposure on slopes and terraces overlooking the river Mosson.

After buying the property, Kim and Robert discovered that their eighteen hectares of vineyards sit just outside of the Pic St. Loup appellation, and consequently had to take the Coteaux du Languedoc and Vin de Pays de l'Hérault designations. Initially, this was a great disappointment to them, because they believed their wines merited the status of a Languedoc *cru*. In spite of these constraints, the Cripps showcase the power of their own *terroir* with great success. Their secret is in the soil, which is predominantly limestone, with a high concentration of magnesium. According to the Cripps, this is what gives their wine its freshness. Their hard work and persistence have allowed them to discover their own distinct sense of place, offering wines with deep aromas of bright red berries, *garrigue*, and forest floor. After fifteen years of farming these beautiful vineyards, the Cripps have realized the potential of their *terroir* to make the freshest, brightest wines you'll find in this hot, southern climate. Thomas Jefferson, who had a pretty good palate, singled out Poujol as one of the great vineyard sites when he went tasting around Montpellier!



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DOMAINE DU POUJOL (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Vin de Pays de l'Hérault Blanc "Pico"	70% Vermentino 20% Carignan Blanc 10% Roussanne	25 to 50 years	Limestone	2 ha
Languedoc Rosé	32% Cinsault 32% Carignan 23% Mourvèdre 13% Grenache	10 to 30 years	Limestone	4 ha
Languedoc Rouge "Podio Alto"	40% Syrah, 30% Grenache, 25% Mourvedre, 5% Cinsault	10 to 35 years	Limestone	6 ha
Languedoc Rouge "Jazz"	35% Grenache, 25% Carignan, 20% Syrah, 20% Mourvedre/Cinsault	Grenache planted in 2007, Mourvèdre in 2001, Carignan in 1981, Cinsault in 1981 and 1974	Limestone	3 ha

* "ha"=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

As of 2007, all wines designated as A.O.C. Coteaux du Languedoc have been changed to a new appellation, A.O.C. Languedoc. Growers have a period of time in which they must comply. Future vintages will thus read as A.O.C. Languedoc.

- The Cripps farm in *lutte-raisonnée*, incorporating some biodynamic vineyard practices since 1998

Vin de Pays de l'Hérault Blanc "Pico":

- Grapes are pressed and undergo a temperature-controlled fermentation

Languedoc Rosé:

- Certain parcels of red grapes are grown specifically for the rosé production
- Direct press and temperature-controlled fermentation

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Languedoc Rouge “Podio Alto”:

- Grapes are all harvested by hand
- Wine is vinified in open top vats with wild yeasts
- Fermentation lasts 2 to 3 weeks
- Wine is racked to barrels (400, 500, 600-L) and aged for 1 year before bottling
- Wines are bottled unfinned and unfiltered

Languedoc Rouge “Jazz”:

- Carignan and Cinsault are harvested early and fermented together
- Grenache and Mourvèdre are harvested at optimal ripeness and fermented separately
- Immediately after primary fermentation, wine is blended together in concrete tanks
- Very little sulfur is used in the fermentation process

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