



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE

Country: France

Region: Languedoc

Appellation(s): Languedoc, Languedoc Pic Saint

Loup

Producer: Jacques Figuette

Founded: 1259

Annual Production: 10,800 cases

Farming: Organic (since 2004), Biodynamic (since 2008)

Website: www.chateau-laroque.fr



The picturesque landscape surrounding the historic Château La Roque appears largely unchanged from how it must have been two thousand years ago. Ownership has changed hands many times since the Romans were first here, yet the soul of this special place remains in tact. Romans were said to have planted the first vines, and Benedictine Monks created the sturdy vaulted-ceiling cellars that still house the bottles today. Winegrowing resumed in the thirteenth century when the de la Roque brothers planted new vines. By the 15th century, another branch of the de la Roque family added glass blowing to the farm's production. Today, Château La Roque is in the capable hands of Cyriaque Rozier, who converted the domaine to organic (certified in 2004) and now biodynamic (certified in 2011) viticulture, as planned by his mentor, previous owner, and Languedoc legend, Jack Boutin. Cyriaque makes the wine both here and at Château Fontanès.. Though the property has responded to circumstance, its destiny seems irrevocably intertwined with its vines.

Thirty-two of the Château's eighty hectares are consecrated to terraced vineyard land with south-southeast sun exposure, on clay and limestone soils. This is unique *terroir*. Garrigue, the aromatic scrub brush that dominates the landscapes of the South, asserts its presence among these vines. Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvèdre, the noble varietals that Jack Boutin planted here years ago, make up the reds. The whites include Viognier, Rolle, Grenache Blanc, Roussane and Marsanne. In the wise words of KLWM salesperson and legend, Michael Butler, "Lay down a few cases of history."



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CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Languedoc <i>Blanc</i>	30% Marsanne 30% Rolle 25% Grenache Blanc 15% Viognier/Roussanne	30 years	Scree slopes, Clay, Limestone	6 ha for both white wines
Languedoc <i>Blanc</i> "Clos des Bénédictins"	45% Rolle 45% Marsanne 10% Roussanne	30 years		
Languedoc Pic Saint Loup Rosé	30% Mourvèdre 30% Cinsault 20% Grenache 20% Syrah	20 years		3 ha
Languedoc Pic Saint Loup <i>Rouge</i>	65% Grenache 25% Syrah 10% Mourvèdre	20 years		18 ha for the three red wines
Languedoc Pic Saint Loup <i>Rouge</i> "Cupa Numismæ"	65% Syrah 35% Mourvèdre	40 years		
Languedoc Pic Saint Loup <i>Rouge</i> "Cuvée Les Vieilles Vignes de Mourvèdre"	70% Mourvèdre 20% Syrah 10% Grenache	50 – 60 years		

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

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

Languedoc *Blanc*:

- Fermented with indigenous yeasts
- Fermented in stainless steel tanks (80%) and *demi-muids* (20%)
- Aged in cement tanks (80%) and *demi-muids* (20%) for 6 months
- No malolactic fermentation

Languedoc Pic Saint Loup Rosé:

- Rosé is made by direct pressing
- Fermented with indigenous yeasts
- Fermented in stainless steel tanks
- Aged in stainless steel tanks for 4 months
- Wine undergoes malolactic fermentation

Languedoc Pic Saint Loup *Rouge*:

- Hand harvested
- Completely de-stemmed
- Fermented with indigenous yeasts
- Fermented in cement tank
- Aged in cement tank for 1 year



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CHÂTEAU LA ROQUE (continued)

Languedoc Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Cupa Numismae”:

- Hand harvested
- Partially de-stemmed
- Fermented with indigenous yeasts
- Fermented in cement tank
- Aged in barrel (15% new)
- Aged in bottle for 12 months

Languedoc Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Cuvée Les Vieilles Vignes de Mourvèdre”:

- Hand harvested
- Completely de-stemmed
- Fermented with indigenous yeasts
- Fermented in cement tank
- Aged in *demi-muids* (2,3,4, and 5 years old) for 18 months
- Aged in bottle for 6 months

MISCELLANEA

A TRIBUTE TO JACK BOUTIN by Kermit Lynch

Jack replanted the slopes with noble varieties like Mourvèdre and Syrah and never let the craze for blockbusters influence him. His was the Languedoc wine I found myself reaching for most often because I knew it would not assault my palate. On the contrary, it pampered my palate. I had a 1989 the other night with some winemakers and the wine was not only alive and well at twenty years old, it was also delicious drinking, generous and fine. When he and his son had a relation-ending falling out, and then his doctors had trouble healing a leg injury that caused him more and more anguish, he made the decision to sell the château. I tried to talk him out of it. He tried to talk me into buying it! I was tempted. I considered it a jewel in so many ways. Now Cyriaque Rozier, Jack's second in command during the last few years, is doing a great job of continuing the adventure at La Roque that began back with the Romans, if not before.