



The Cocalières vineyard © Domaine d'Aupilhac

2022 LANGUEDOC BLANC “LES COCALIÈRES” DOMAINE D’AUPILHAC \$42

The Languedoc is certainly not known for its white wines, but planting the right grapes in the right site can yield great results. Retaining freshness is the crucial determinant here, as the hot meridional climate favors low acidity, and grapes like Marsanne and Grenache Blanc are lacking in natural acidity to begin with. At 350 meters above sea level, Les Cocalières experiences diurnal temperature shifts crucial to preserving this acid, while the northwestern sun exposure prevents excessive ripeness and correspondingly flabby wines. The vineyard also boasts a curious and unusual soil: the land was once a lake that formed after the eruption of an ancient volcano, resulting in a mixture of limestone and basalt—a rare geological phenomenon.

Sylvain Fadat, founder of Domaine d'Aupilhac, ferments the juice wild and ages the wine for more than a year in neutral casks, where it completes its malolactic fermentation before an unfiltered bottling. The Cocalières *blanc* perfectly reflects its terroir: taut, mineral—almost salty—and suggestive of the wild thyme and fennel that grow abundantly around the vines. It also has tremendous aging potential; a 2002 opened recently showed astonishing complexity, reminiscent of honey, almonds, wildflowers, and liquid rocks. —Anthony Lynch



Sylvain Fadat © Joanie Bonfiglio



*Pairs well with seared scallops, creamy zucchini fettuccine, brandade,
macadamia crusted fish, or Crab Louie salad.*

2022 FRIULI COLLI ORIENTALI PINOT GRIGIO “RONCO PITOTTI” VIGNAI DA DULINE \$47

Here, have a glass of Pinot Grigio.” Sounds good to me. Wine fans dream of drinking a good Pinot Grigio, but they usually end up with a glass of something as generic as your standard-issue Côtes-de-Provence rosé.







Anyway, it was below zero degrees Fahrenheit when this California native landed in Munich, and after the short hop to Venice, I couldn’t take a water taxi to my hotel because the lagoon was frozen. Imagine that. There was, however, a bright side—I had Venice pretty much to myself, because hardly anyone else ventured outside. How rare is that? Venice without the mobs.

How wines are discovered can be of interest, I hope. The wines of Hubert de Montille, for example. I was tasting at Romanée-Conti back in 1975 and André Noblet told me he considered de Montille the best winemaker in Burgundy. Henri Jayer? I saw his name in a little list of gold-medal winners at the Mâcon wine fair. Leonard Humbrecht? In 1981 he strode largely into my hole-in-the-wall wine shop in Albany, California, bearing samples. And Vignai da Duline? At a restaurant in Venice one painfully frozen night seven years ago, two pals and I were the only clients. When the proprietor poured Duline’s Pinot Grigio into my glass, I almost yelled *Eureka!* or *Hallelujah!* I didn’t, however, because that’s not my style. But there I was, on a cruel night, drinking the best Pinot Grigio of my life. It was what I’d dreamed Pinot Grigio could be during forty years of endlessly entertaining trips to the Friuli.

Vignai da Duline is on my all-star team. I found gold in those beautiful Friuli hills—finesse, touch, and class. Delicious and interesting. —*Kermit Lynch*



Pairs well with fried artichokes, caprese salad, lemon pasta with peas, or pesto pizza.

					
2022 LANGUEDOC BLANC “LES COCALIÈRES” Domaine d’Aupilhac <i>Languedoc</i>	30% Roussanne, 30% Vermentino, 20% Marsanne, 20% Grenache Blanc	Vines planted in 1999-2002 Limestone, basalt	Serve cold 50–54° F	Nectarine, wild herbs, bees wax, wet stone Saline, chiseled, complex	Drink now through 2032
2022 FRIULI COLLI ORIENTALI PINOT GRIGIO “RONCO PITOTTI” Vignai da Duline <i>Friuli</i>	Pinot Grigio	Planted in 1940 & 1958 Marl-sandstone and limestone flysch	Serve cold 48–52° F	Peach, honeydew, toasted almond Concentrated, stony, refreshing	Drink now through 2032

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