



KERMIT LYNCH | WINE MERCHANT

HÉRITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP

Country: France

Region: Languedoc

Appellation(s): Pic Saint Loup, Languedoc

Producer: Xavier, Pierre, and
Jean-Marc Ravaille

Founded: 1992

Annual Production: 8,300 cases

Farming: Biodynamic (since 1999),

Certified Organic

Website: n/a



Legends seem to converge at the Héritage du Pic Saint Loup (formerly known as Ermitage du Pic Saint Loup). The hermitage dates back to the Middle Ages, when it was the former home of the bishops of Maguelone. The limestone peak or “pic” perched above the vineyards was named for the legendary Saint Thieri Loup, one of three pious, crusading brothers and suitors to the beautiful Bertrade. After her untimely death, Loup became a hermit. In 1992, the Ravaille brothers (Xavier, Pierre, and Jean-Marc) joined forces to plant a vineyard in what has traditionally been land dominated by sheep farming and cheese production. The three fish on the label’s emblem therefore not only evoke the story of Saint Loup, but also their fraternal collaboration and noble quest of their own: to create serious wines that expresses the complexity of their *terroir*.

According to James E. Wilson, from his fabulous book, *Terroir*, the complexity and variety of soil types in the Languedoc is attributed to the geological phenomenon known as the “Languedoc-Roussillon Symphony.” This slowly evolving collision of continents and bodies of water has perpetrated upheaval, creasing, and erosion, leaving a medley of sedimentation. Soils from the Ravaille’s higher-altitude vineyard slopes vary between the dominant marly limestone and dolomite, to red and white clay, to sand, and round *galets*. The microclimate in Pic Saint Loup is also particularly unique in this otherwise dry region. Though the summers are typically quite arid, cool nights and winter rainfall allow for long ripening of the grapes and sufficient water supply. Convinced of the benefits of a more holistic approach to viticulture, the brothers have embraced biodynamic farming practices since 1999. They also keep their vinification as non-interventionist as possible. Their philosophy and methodology translate into wines with a purity of fruit, extraordinary delineation of layers, and a distinct sense of place.

Their personal wine cellar is filled with masterly bottles from the likes of Coche-Dury, Raveneau, Tempier, among other gems. They aim high.



HÉRITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Pic Saint Loup Rosé	40% Syrah 30% Mourvèdre 20% Grenache 10% Cinsault	10 – 50 years	Red Clay, Marly Limestone	4 ha
Languedoc Blanc “Cuvée Sainte Agnès”	50% Roussanne 30% Grenache Blanc & Gris 15% Marsanne 5% Clairette	15 – 80 years	Clay, Limestone, Dolomite	8 ha
Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Tour de Pierres”	50% Syrah 40% Grenache 10% Mourvèdre	30 – 40 years	Red Clay	20 ha
Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Cuvée Sainte Agnès”	50% Syrah 40% Grenache 10% Mourvèdre	40 – 50 years	Limestone	10 ha
Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Guilhem Gaucelm”	50% Syrah 50% Grenache	85 years	White Clay, Round Stones	2 ha

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

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Biodynamic farming since 1999
- All wines fermented with indigenous yeast

Pic Saint Loup Rosé

- Direct press
- Fermented and aged in stainless steel
- Completes malolactic fermentation

Languedoc Blanc “Sainte Agnès”

- Fermented and aged in *foudres* for 10 months
- Completes malolactic fermentation

Pic Saint Loup Rouge “Tour de Pierres”

- Sourced from lower-lying parcels on rocky clay soils
- Aged for 12 months in *foudres* and *barrisques* (10-20% new oak)
- Bottled unfiltered



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HÉRITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP (continued)

Pic Saint Loup *Rouge* “Sainte Agnès”

- Sourced from the backside of the Pic itself, at higher elevation on rocky limestone soil
- Aged for 12 months in *foudres* and *barriques* (10-20% new oak)
- Bottled unfiltered

Pic Saint Loup *Rouge* “Guilhem Gaucelm”

- Aged for 12 months in *foudres* and *barriques* (10-20% new oak)
- Bottled unfiltered

MISCELLANEA

In 2023, the domaine's name changed from *Ermitage* to *Héritage* du Pic Saint Loup as the result of an agreement with the INAO and the AOC Hermitage. While the former name invoked the presence of an ancient hermitage at the site of the vineyards, the new name brings to mind the Ravaille family's long history on the slopes of the Pic, since the 13th century!

In 2001, the vignerons of Pic Saint Loup filed a request with the INAO, asking for the right to their own AOC. In 2007, Pic Saint Loup was promoted from the generic AOC Languedoc to the more specific Languedoc Pic Saint Loup. Finally, as of the 2016 vintage, rosés and reds from Pic Saint Loup are entitled to full *cru* status under the AOC Pic Saint Loup.