



Maison Les Alexandrins

TAIN L'HERMITAGE - FRANCE

Maison Les Alexandrins Hermitage - 2020

AOC Hermitage, Vallée du Rhône, France

Maison Les Alexandrins, a signature modern in approach and contemporary in style. Our red Hermitage comes from three terroirs that complement one another beautifully and are the source of all its strength. This wine offers a fine aromatic palette with fruity, spicy, woody and smoky notes. A remarkable blend that brings out the complexity of this wine.

DESCRIPTION

A partnership between two winegrowers from the Rhône Valley – Nicolas Jaboulet and Alexandre Caso – Maison les Alexandrins produces northern wines in a style at once contemporary and timeless, always from exceptional vineyards unearthed by Alexandre Caso, a specialist in the terroirs of the northern Rhône Valley. Classics with a twist, these wines and how they are aged and blended are guided by the quest for perfect harmony from a very young age. The grapes come from places called "Grandes Vignes", "Greffieux" and "Murets".

TERROIR

The terroir is complex and varied, comprising granite, pebbles and limestone. In the locality of Grandes Vignes, the soil is dominated by granite. The wines produced here have a certain minerality but also a fine tannin structure. This sector accounts for 30% of our blend. The wines we produce from pebbly terroirs are aromatically rich and complex. They represent the backbone of our wine and make up 60% of our blend.

Lastly, the chalky soil provides the finishing touch of the wine's finesse and elegance.

These three complementary terroirs all play a role in the final blend.

THE VINTAGE

After the hail damage of 2019, we had to nurse our vineyards back to health with a range of gentle but complementary nutrients. This made 2020 a technically exacting year, especially since the weather reserved many surprises for us. Spring was extraordinarily hot and dry and, despite a short break in June when some welcome rain fell, summer saw a continuation of drought conditions right up until the harvest. With a high risk of mildew at the start of the season, constant and unpredictable winds, powdery mildew half way through the season and the threat of high temperatures and scorching, we were spared nothing, and it required a major effort to cope. Fortunately, the occasional shower, fairly cool nights and morning dew meant the vines did not suffer too much from the summer heat, and all our hard work seems to have paid off with the promise of a fine vintage. To avoid the hottest moments of the day, we began picking from 6 am so as to pick the grapes while they were cool. We began with the whites on August 19 and continued with the reds through until September 16. First tastings revealed aromatic wines of great freshness, with degrees rarely exceeding 13.5°. After so many twists and turns, it is a vintage that reverts to origin in a very "Northern Rhône" style, after the mediterranean vintage of 2018 and 2019.



LOCATION

This Grand Cru's classic reputation has been built over the centuries around one hill and a history steeped in legend. Appreciated as far back as Roman times when they were called "Vienne wines" (like those from Côte-Rôtie), Hermitage wines then became known as "wines of the slopes of Saint-Christophe", named after the local chapel dedicated to the saint. It would seem that the name Hermitage first appeared in the 17th century in memory of the knight Henri Gaspard de Stérinberg who, in the 13th century, on his return from the Albigensian Crusades, decided to live as a hermit on this hill, granted to him by Blanche of Castile, Queen of Spain. He is said to have replanted a vineyard which went on to take the name of Ermitage, and then Hermitage. This was only the beginning of the vineyard's success; it is said that under the reign of Louis XIV, Hermitage was the favourite wine of the Russian tsars. The list of Hermitage enthusiasts is as long as it is illustrious, including as it does Henry IV, French poet Boileau, Louis XIII, Louis XIV, Nicolas II and Alexandre Dumas.

PROCESS

Pre-fermentation cold maceration.

- Then maceration and fermentation, with pumping over followed by punching down towards the end for 28 days.

- Aged in new barrels (30%) and one year-old barrels for 15 months.

VARIETAL

Syrah 100%

TASTING

Superb intense black colour revealing a wine of great depth. The nose already shows a beautiful aromatic expression with powerful aromas of undergrowth and black fruit. Perfectly balanced between a powerful and distinguished structure and an infinite delicacy, the palate is gracious.

FOOD PAIRINGS

This wine will be perfect with a nice matured rib of beef and spicy dishes.

SERVING

Open the wine 3 to 4 hours before serving, then serve between 17°C and 18°C. This wine has a good aging potential, of at least 10 years.

REVIEWS AND AWARDS

Decanter 94/100

"Full-bodied - there's some sweetness to the fruit here - it's bold, juicy, straight, long and harmonious. This is very well made, with the quiet majesty you'd want from Hermitage. There's sweet oak spice throughout the long finish. A classic wine that will be long lived. This is the best wine I've tasted to date from Les Alexandrins."

Decanter, 01/10/2021

