



Chateau Musar

HOCHAR PÈRE ET FILS RED 2003

Hochar Père et Fils Red has been referred to by some as the 'second' wine of Chateau Musar, but this is not an entirely accurate description. Rather than being made from 'declassified' grapes deemed unsuitable for inclusion in the 'Grand Vin', it has always been sourced (since the first vintage, in the late 1980's) from a single vineyard planted over 50 years ago at 1000m above sea level near the village of Aana in the Bekaa Valley, characterised by deep soils over limestone. Low yields (25-30 hectolitres per hectare) result in concentrated, complex wines. Altitude keeps the average yearly temperature low at 25°C, encompassing snowy winters and hot summers.

A blend of mostly Cinsault and Carignan, with lesser amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache, the wine is fermented in cement vats, with 9 months in French (Nevers) oak barrels before blending and bottling (unfined and unfiltered).

In 2003, wines of considerable richness and complexity were produced at Musar. After the rainiest winter in 15 years, no rain fell after April and it became very hot and sunny. In May, a 10-day heatwave affected flowering, reducing yields by around 30%, and concentrating sugar and acidity in the remaining grapes. July and August were cooler than usual. Picked by hand, the grapes arrived at the winery in excellent condition, with good maturity and ripeness.

The grapes for the Hochar Père et Fils Red 2003 fermented at 29°C, with 15-20 days' maceration. An alcohol level of 13% was reached. For the first time, the quantity of Grenache in the blend exceeded 10%.

This smooth vintage has aromas of baked plums, toasted bread, leather, earth and thyme. Silky-textured and spicy on the palate, with intense red fruit flavours, it finishes on notes of dark chocolate and tea leaves.

An ideal choice for casseroles, roasted meats, seared tuna steak and Mediterranean cuisine, the Hochar Père et Fils Red 2003 would benefit from decanting and serving at between 16-18°C. Cellared in a steady environment, it will keep for decade or so.

"The little brother of Chateau Musar leaves an equally big impression, but there's a fruity innocence about it."

- Kitty Johnson, Sunday Express, 15th September 2002.

