

Chateau Musar Red 1977

Overview

A great, complex wine, which with the 1964 was Serge Hochar's reference for character and complexity.

Grape Varietals

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan

Winemaking

An important year because I settled on the Chateau Musar recipe: more or less equal quantities of Carignan, Cinsault and Cabernet Sauvignon – Serge Hochar

After fermentation under natural yeasts, a key part of Serge's minimal intervention philosophies, the wines were aged for twelve months in French oak.

This year marks the point at which Serge Hochar decided upon the future Musar blend of approximately equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan, though this vintage does incorporate a slightly higher proportion of Cabernet Sauvignon, giving a more Bordelais character to the wine. It was bottled in the third year after the vintage, then given four years bottle age in the Chateau Musar cellars at Ghazir. Released in 1984.

Tasting Notes

The colour is beautiful and now reflecting the wine's maturity. An impressive bouquet shows a whole spectrum of nature's aromas – jasmine, roses, peony and rich black fruits. This wine envelops the palate like fine silk; it is elegant, where the fruit has a surprising freshness from the acidity and earthy notes of forest floor. It is full, yet subtle. The complex, large structured body extends all the way through to the long finish.

The wine has a massive concentration; the blackberry warmth of a hot country wine with the elegance of Pauillac, and even a hint of complexity. M. Hochar has created what will eventually be recognised as a new classic ...it is bread from heaven – Auberon Waugh, The Spectator, May 1984

I thought it to be excellent, with the fruit and weight perfectly balanced, yet M. Hochar found it still too young – Steven Spurrier, The Field, December 1984

I have three notes: sweet, assertive, still tannic at Decanter's millennium dinner at Vinopolis, London, July 1999. Then next at Chateau Musar that December: singed flavour, long tannic finish. Most recently, sweet, rich, fairly full-bodied despite its misleadingly pale colour. Last tasted pre-sale at Christie's, April 2000 (Part of a collection from a neighbouring cellar near Beirut) – Michael Broadbent

Quite restrained herby, spicy complex nose. Palate is quite smooth, herby and spicy. Evolved and quite elegant. Nice stuff in a mature mould. Very good – Jamie Goode, Musarathon, Summer 2003

The 1977 is a wine for Musar purists. With such extensive bottle age, the colour of this Lebanese legend has softened to light mahogany and the flavours are almost indescribable; leather, savoury and earthy. The texture is fine, silky and delicate. This is extraordinary – The Wine Society, December 2019

Mahogany-red, tawny rim, still with some vigour but fading. Surprising freshness and natural richness on the nose, not the depth of 1981 nor 1979 but Mediterranean warmth is plainly there in a slightly leaner form. What other half bottle today could show such warmth, clarity and a sense of place after 42 years? – Steven Spurrier, October 2019

Alcohol

14% Alc./Vol.

