

Chateau Musar Red 1978

Overview

A great vintage. I thought it would be special, if quite awkward, but it became great – Serge Hochar

The evolution of this vintage is an example of the unpredictable nature of Musar wines. From its early days in the cellars where it exhibited a simplistic, almost backward characteristic, with time the wines fleshed out to become what many considered a classic vintage of Chateau Musar.

Grape Varietals

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan

Winemaking

The three varietals were fermented separately in the winery's concrete vats. Fermentation was completed unusually quickly this year which resulted in wines that were light and delicate in their youth. 12 months ageing in French oak before approximately equal parts of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan were blended. Bottled in 1981.

Tasting Notes

When released the wine was a bright, deep garnet-red. The nose quite open, with notes of roasted, spice and cardamom. A great depth and richness were apparent on the palate, conveying flavours of cassis, caramel, spices, and nutty oak. A definite but not excessive acidity was complemented by firm, dry tannins. A sweet fruit, full-bodied vintage; velvety in the mouth with a long, warm finish.

In its maturity, the wine still retains its acidity and spice element, with an emphasis toward liquorice and dark fruits with the underlying sweet/savoury note that is the hallmark of a now elegant and mature vintage.

The 1978, now just becoming available, was more discreet, with a firm, lean fruit that will blossom out – Steven Spurrier, The Field, December 1984

(Compared to 1977...) the 1978 is slightly less black and dense, slightly more forward. Those who objected to the massive concentration of the 1977 will take to the 1978 more readily since it is a more conventional wine. But they are both magnificent wines. The 1978 is already a truly lovely wine, whose equivalent in quality from France would cost well over twice...if such an equivalent existed – Auberon Waugh, The Spectator, February 1985

There's a pretty tawny colour to this one, and nice aromatics of tobacco, earth, rubber and tarragon. Quite bold and forward, with dried cherries, tomato and almond flavours. It's still jumping at the age of 22, showing nearly perfect structure and freshness – Michael Schachner, Wine Enthusiast, 2000

Very mature orange brick red notes. On the nose, slightly sweet but beautiful, with lovely aromas of very old cellars, old leather armchairs, old bibles and very old pews of an ancient church – a delight to connoisseurs of very old wine. High acidity should carry it for years. Palate very thick and syrupy in texture. Enormous flavours. Spicy. A little tannin showing on the very long finish with perhaps a touch of tartness. Completely mature – over-mature to the uninitiated but lovely to the diehard Chateau Musar fans. Perhaps a taste of copper coins on the finish – Bartholomew Broadbent, October 2019

Alcohol

14% Alc./Vol.

