

Chateau Musar White 2006

Overview

Chateau Musar White is a truly unique white, made from ancient Lebanese varieties Obaideh and Merwah. Dating back thousands of years, they are among only 6 indigenous grapes still cultivated in Lebanon. The vineyards were planted between 50-90 years ago, at around 1,300 metres above sea level in the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains near Ain Arab on stony, chalky soils, and on the seaward side of Mount Lebanon in Baqa'ata, on calcareous gravels. The vines remain phylloxera-free and are still on their own roots. Few vineyards of this calibre and history remain in the world.

2006 was a challenging year in Lebanon as in July, without warning, the country came under siege – naturally everybody thought that the vintage would be lost. Our initial impressions then were that the whites from 2006 would be outstanding – the Merwah matured unusually slowly this year and was harvested as late as the 18th October.

Grape Varietals

2/3rd Obaideh and 1/3rd Merwah

Vineyard Region

Mount Lebanon slopes

Winemaking

Fermented with natural yeasts and aged partly in oak barrels for 9 months and partly in stainless steel vats, with temperatures ranging between 18°C and 22°C.

Tasting Notes

The Chateau Musar White 2006 is an immensely appealing honey colour with a nose and palate of orange blossom, honey, toasted bread, almonds and basil. A very well-balanced wine with good fresh lemon acidity and a long finish of citrus leaves, vanilla and honey.

The style is reminiscent of a dry Sauternes or a mature white Graves: rich and intensely zesty, with very complex, long-lasting flavours. As such, the wine benefits from decanting and is best served at around 15° C ('cellar cool' rather than chilled) with fine foods of similar richness: foie gras, rillettes, duck and spicy Asian dishes, goat cheese, baked apple pie/tarte Tatin

The 2006 white has a million lessons to teach us. It's already showing the infinite layers of aroma that can exist in a wine – Gaston Hochar

...Tastes of fruit and cream. It's an acquired taste, but once acquired, not forgotten. Perfect with rich meats or fresh fruit – Simon Hoggart, The Spectator, February 2012

Light medium yellow colour; aromatic, lanolin, lemon oil, saffron, orange oil nose; delicious, rich, oily textured, lanolin, lemon oil, saffron, orange oil palate; medium-plus finish – Richard Jennings, June 2015

Medium deep golden yellow, bright and vibrant. A bit sleepy on the nose: subdued, creamy, with Petite Suisse cheese and Cheddar rind. A touch autumnal. Subdued and lean on the palate until the soft, creamy aftertaste, which brings the wine alive and indicates it will develop well. In no mans land right now. Beautiful Musar but definitely would put off anyone who is not familiar with the wine. Needs 20 years. The next morning, the acidity became brighter and more pronounced on the nose; the fruit on the palate had gained complexity and intensity. By day three, the nose had developed even greater depth – Bartholomew Broadbent, October 2019

Alcohol

12.5% Alc./Vol.

