

Chateau Musar White 2008



Overview

Chateau Musar white wines are truly unique, produced from some of the oldest vineyard sites in the world dating back to 5,000 BC, although it was the Phoenicians, the great maritime race of the Mediterranean, who first 'introduced' Lebanese wine to a wider public. Indigenous ancient grape varieties Obaideh and Merwah, reputedly the ancestors of Chardonnay/Chasselas and Semillon are still cultivated from un-grafted vines on original rootstock. The vineyards on the seaward facing slopes of Mount Lebanon and the foothills of Anti-Lebanon were planted between 50 and 90 years ago and are at 1,200 metres above sea level - few vineyards of this calibre and history remain in the world.

The 2008 harvest was quite remarkable, however the weather in the first two months was not - snow in January and rain until 23rd February. No further rain fell for the rest of the spring or summer, so by July the vineyards started to feel the lack of water and harvesting started unprecedentedly early. Our indigenous varieties which are harvested later in October took their time to ripen, then rain a couple of days before we were due to start picking forced us to postpone harvest for a further 12 days.

The grapes were rich and fragrant with floral and lemon notes; far exceeding our expectations.

Grape Varietals

Obaideh, Merwah

Vineyard Region

Mount Lebanon slopes

Winemaking

This vintage is a blend produced from 2/3rd Obaideh and 1/3rd Merwah and was fermented 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

Obaideh is high in natural grape sugars and low in acidity, yielding wine with a creamy texture and flavours of honey and lemons - Merwah is a light skinned grape variety with light citrus and nut flavours, and blended together they make a distinctive white wine with excellent ageing potential.

Chateau Musar White 2008 is pale gold with aromas of orange peel, peach blossom, lemon and pear. The palate has notes of stone fruits with orange zest overlaid by roasted almonds - it is very fresh despite its weighty texture. It is all at once; flowers, lemon, spice and honeycomb underpinned with a fresh acidity and very good length. Gloriously complex with a penetrating acidity that comes from old vines.

A remarkable wine, gloriously golden-hued with hints of peaches, blossom, citrus and spice on the nose and a deliciously creamy, lemony and slightly savoury finish in the mouth. If it's like anything it's like a fine white Rhône - Jonathan Ray, The Spectator, March 2018

Pale gold. Spicy (savoury, Indian spice) nose. I want to say ambergris - more out of onomatopoeia than aroma. Still rather sour without the roundness of mature fruit to counterbalance quite marked acidity which the accompanying notes attributes to the age of the vines. Definitely worth keeping until more complexity counterbalances the acidity - Jancis Robinson, March 2018

Alcohol

12% Alc./Vol.