

Chateau Musar Red 1974

Overview

A higher than usual alcohol content suggests more fermentable sugars in the grapes – something we weren't to see again until many years later with the 2012 vintage, however unlike that year the 1974 was much more delicate in its youth and wasn't to develop its character until a longer spell ageing in the Chateau Musar cellars at Ghazir had passed.

Grape Varietals

Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignan, Cinsault

Winemaking

After around two weeks of maceration, the fermented wines are racked into 225 litre Bordeaux-style barrels made of Nevers oak and matured for up to twelve months. Each component was then blended together. At this stage, the *assemblage* had greater proportions of Cabernet Sauvignon and Carignan; the Cinsault element was to increase in later years.

Tasting Notes

The colour is bright, even brilliant – of tile and ruby. An intensely powerful nose, gamey, minerally with grilled meats and spices. It is fine and pure. A supple wine which is quite powerful on the palate. Tannins are still firm and balanced by good sweetness. Harmonious with long length. It is recommended to allow the wine to breathe for at least two hours and to decant before serving at room temperature.

In his notes at the time, Serge Hochar thought the 1974 a lighter vintage, though by 2000 it had filled out and was approaching maturity.

The first time I tasted '74 red was in the winery's deepest cellar, where the air is cool, and so humid that your skin and clothes feel wet. Amazing! Flowery! Peppery! Sweet spices finish – Kevin Gould

Delicate strawberry, faded violet, aromatic spices, orange peel and dried fruits on the Tawny-like nose and palate. Marvellously balanced and extremely refined lightweight wine in the twilight of its lifespan but still vibrant and lovely – Andrew Jefford, November 2015

Good depth but still light, with a mature looking, orangey rim. Very vibrant nose, alive and drawing attention to itself: sweet fruited but a bit dry on the back of the nose. Very old, elegant fruit and a touch of old cheese rind. Extraordinary texture: velvety and syrupy at the same time. Extremely deep, with high acidity and a very long finish. Biscuity flavours ('Playbox' biscuits: if you are English and of a certain age, you'll remember licking the sugary coat of those). Although past its prime, it is fascinating, like an old man with many stories to tell. You can imagine the war time conditions through which this wine has aged; it has endured much and remained strong, until now as it loses its way a bit – Bartholomew Broadbent October 2019

It is the one to track down if you can. My tasting note from two years ago tells me that it had very good depth in colour but still very light, warm and orange tones. Very vibrant on the nose, alive with sweet fruits but a dry nose to it. Shows extraordinary texture in the aromas, earthy and aged. The palate is velvety, textured, extremely deep. This is a big wine with a very long finish and high acidity. Combining older fruits with notes of sweet biscuits. A fascinating wine, like an old man with many stories to tell – World Wine Consultants, December 2019

Alcohol

14.5% Alc./Vol.

