

Chateau Musar Red 1981



Overview

This was a fantastic vintage and one of Serge's favourites, where Cabernet Sauvignon outshone the other varietals, surpassing them in opulence and producing brilliant wine.

Grape Varietals

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan

Winemaking

The classic Musar blend of equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan where each varietal is fermented with natural yeasts and minimal sulphur additions. Aged for twelve months in French (Nevers) oak barrels. Blended and bottled, unfiltered and unfiltered in the third year. Aged for four years in bottle before release.

Tasting Notes

At release: rubier in colour than the 1982 and weightier on the palate, this vintage seemed younger than the 1982. Subtle, developed aromas of cedar, cigar box and leather lead into perfumed sweet currant and strawberry fruit. Medium bodied with very fine tannins and a superb, soft texture. Perfect balance of ripe fruit flavour, coffee, tobacco and spice, then lifted by a fresh acidity. It is quite tannic, although not aggressively so. A wine of strong character; distinctive and powerful.

When tasted at London Wine Fair in May 2018 the tannins had naturally faded, but the above notes would still be accurate. One of the best in an impressive line-up of library vintages. Still exceptionally powerful, with a minty, eucalyptus note.

*The first note made at Chateau Musar in December 1999. Lovely colour; sweet, ripe, rather rustic bouquet; full, rich, good fruit, grip. Last tasted pre-sale at Christie's, April 2000 **** Should be delicious now – Michael Broadbent*

Undoubtedly the class of the older field [ten vintages tasted from 1993 to 1977] (...) Very impressive, and shows no sign of an impending drop-off – Michael Schachner, The Wine Enthusiast, October 2000.

Firm herby, spicy nose with some subtle herby complexity. Nice weight to the spicy palate with good structure and balance. Classic. Very good+ – Jamie Goode, Musarathon, 2003

This (...) has a beautiful colour, with a brick-red core fading to an orange rim. The nose, initially a little reticent, yields to reveal sweet meats, camomile, liquorice and leather, and then a metallic and vegetal richness. Beautiful texture on entry, the midpalate loses its initial hollow streak to show a creamy svelteness. Great character, so typical of Musar, with meaty-leather flavour. You can sense (...) a little grip, particularly in the finish which is stained with tannin. Still going strong at twenty-three years of age! Excellent – Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor, May 2005.

A scent of fragrant sweet roses, and sweet, exotic fruits with a raisiny edge to taste. Despite this sweetness, the flesh and the sensual Cinsault 'skin' of the wine was still much in evidence. As we drank the wine (at dinner on my first night in the Lebanon in 1993), it became cleaner and more refreshing: another Musar hallmark – Andrew Jefford, December 2013

(High shoulder.) Fine deep mahogany-red, tawny rim, still vigorous and not fading at all. Very good impression of warm fruit on the nose, quite earthy but pure and naturally ripe youthfulness that encourages one to move to the palate which confirms the richness and balsamic warmth. Acidity is there as a back-up but not taking over. This is a really fine wine, quite remarkable from a half bottle at 38 years old; the sweetness of fruit will remain for another few years – Steven Spurrier, October 2019

Alcohol

14% Alc./Vol.