

Chateau Musar Red 1994



Overview

1994 was a year of intense heat. The winter was short and mild and was followed by early flowering in spring and a normal summer although we had an unexpected heat wave which lasted from August to mid-October. This caused the grapes to start drying before ripening. It was therefore decided to harvest ten days earlier than normal. The result was one of the most concentrated and fruity vintages at Chateau Musar.

A generous aroma of plums, berries, vanilla and spice as well as fine texture. 1994 was one of the country's hottest years with the result that this vintage shows deep concentrated colours of dark berries with a wonderful nose of spice and leather.

A vintage that was great when it was released in early 2000s. One US importer loved it so much, he decided to buy all our stock. A couple of years later, it went through a difficult phase. This is typical of Musar. We explained this and told the importer that all he had to do was wait a little. But he got upset so we agreed to take back some of the cases. Ten years later, we met by coincidence a day after hosting a tasting with the 94, which had been voted the best wine of the night. The importer could not believe it. He wanted to buy his cases back, but the price was now completely different! - Marc Hochar

Grape Varietals

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan

Winemaking

Natural yeast fermentation in concrete tanks, the component parts are racked into French Nevers oak barrels for 12 months ageing. Blended and bottled unfinned and unfiltered in 1997. Bottles were rested in the cellars for 4 years before release in 2001.

Tasting Notes

Coming from the wood in the spring of 1996, the wine showed green spicy oak notes on the nose, with more open Cabernet character. The palate was firm with quite good tannins, although the fruit was already beginning to show the ripe chocolatey texture so typical of Musar. An intense, richly concentrated wine.

1994 - the heat wave year, seemed almost more Syrah, of which there is none, than Cinsault - Steven Spurrier, Musing on Musar

A very attractive, forward example of Musar, one of the most individual wines on the market. Light in colour with a browning rim. Full, bold, dangerous nose (high volatile acidity that just stops short of being faulty) with sweet, exotic herbal notes and hints of old leather and tea. Spicy, rich palate is warm and sweetly fruited, with high acidity, very little tannin, ripe cherry and strawberry fruit. Overall, beautifully balanced and complete. Very good/excellent - Jamie Goode

Hot summer in the Bekaa Valley: 40°C in August and September. One can smell the singed grapes in the wine. Remarkably sweet, lovely fruit. Two recent notes, identical. Last tasted August 2000 - Michael Broadbent, Vintage Wine

Mid ruby; pale rim. Heady, animal nose. Jewel-sweet fruit and quite an aggressive attack; still quite edgy on the palate. At the moment it could do with a little more concentration in the middle, but it's certainly sweet at the beginning. Not the most refreshing but very confident and vigorous. Reminds me a bit of the 1980. Some light tannins evident on the end. Still resolving itself but admirably transparent - Jancis Robinson, March 2018

Alcohol

14% Alc./Vol.