



Above: The Guigal family spent nearly 15 years restoring Château d'Ampuis, the iconic 11th century property perched on the banks of the Rhône river. For generations, the building has remained a symbol of the region and of the world-renowned vineyards which surround it.



Saint-Joseph 2018

Saint-Joseph, France

ESTATE

The more you learn about the Guigal family, the more astounding their story becomes. Their wines are the benchmarks for every Rhône appellation, and over the last thirty years they have become arguably the most lauded producer in the world. Year after year the Guigal family produces wines of exceptional quality that in all classes offer exceptional value.

WINE

The Guigal family lives and works just 45 minutes north of Saint-Joseph, but it was circumstance in 1999 that brought them to several extraordinary sites in Saint-Joseph they eventually purchased. They are not only converts, but among the most vocal advocates about the extraordinary depth and complexity that wines from the great sites of Saint-Joseph can display. The wines can share some of the same smoldering black fruit and spice character as their neighbors across the river in Hermitage, but they are less brooding, more composed when young, and in general wines of finesse rather than power.

VINEYARD

Soils: The best vineyards are planted on granite outcroppings of the Massif Central, intermixed with some limestone and sand. Fruit is sourced from exceptional Estate vineyards in the key Saint Joseph sectors of Mauve, Tournon, and Sarras, including vineyards from Domaines J. L. Grippat and de Vallouit (mostly bottled as selections parcelaires). Additional fruit and wine sourced from vineyards south of Sarras.

Yields: Average of 1.8 tons per acre, average age of the vines is 20 to 50 years

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 100% Syrah

Fermentation: In stainless steel, left to rise to high temperature

Aging: 24 months in second use barrels, all coopered by Guigal at Chateau d'Ampuis.

Alcohol: 13.5%

VINTAGE

2018 is shaping up to be one of the truly great vintages in the Northern Rhône valley. Following a very wet Spring, Summer was dry and hot – the warmest vintage since 2003. Harvest was quick and early, starting on the last day of August and finishing in Côte Rôtie on September 20th. The Guigal estate Saint-Joseph vineyards in Mauve and Tournon were harvested over five-six days, from September 3-8, while harvest in the northern parts of the AOP lasted until the 20th. Yields were slightly above average but still well below the appellation maximums, and the fruit was uniformly ripe, with some vineyards coming in at 150 potential. The resulting red wines are dense and concentrated, with exceptionally deep color and rich tannins, similar to 2015 but with even more intensity. The whites are rich with adequate acidity and exceptional aromatics.

JEB DUNNUCK

"A step up, the 2018 Saint Joseph has a touch more density yet is still more medium-bodied, elegant, and balanced. Notes of black raspberries, violets, flowers, and ample minerality define the aromas and flavors, and it should evolve nicely for a decade." - J.D., 2/2022

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