



## VAL DE L'OURS MERLOT 2017

There's a place on the hills bordering the Mediterranean shores where nature has always been so abundant that brown bears had chosen it to settle down, knowing that the rocky hillsides and forest would provide them a safe habitat, and the thick vegetation ample supplies of food and water. Today human activity has reclaimed this fertile valley, pushing the bears further up towards the Pyrenean mountains and allowing us to produce a range of generous wines.

### ■ VINEYARD ATTRIBUTES

**Appellation** : IGP Pays d'Oc, France

The estate is nestled in the rugged hills just behind the Mediterranean coastline of Narbonne, in the South of France.

**Terroir** : The soils are very shallow and rocky on the slopes, and deeper and sandy on the plain. Yields are voluntarily kept very low in order to preserve the vines and ensure the production of high quality grapes.

The grapes come from flatter, lower lying parts of the estate where the deeper soils with underlying sandysilt provide the optimal growing conditions for grape varieties more associated with the Bordeaux region : Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc.

### ■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The Languedoc is usually subject to major climatic differences, but in this 2017 vintage it showed atypical uniformity. From end January to end March, the region saw good rainfall, which allowed water reserves to be built up, indispensable for a good start to the growing season. This unusually wet start to the season was to be followed by some major climatic incidents : like the rest of France, and indeed Europe, at the end of April the Languedoc saw two frosts, unprecedented in the region in 25 years, which destroyed hundreds of hectares. Aussières thus saw nearly one-third of its vineyard hit by these late negative temperatures, and one part even suffered total destruction of the crop. For all that, for the areas not affected by this calamity, the vintage has proved to be of very high quality, with temperature and rainfall balance very similar to the excellent 2015 vintage. The vineyard saw good vegetative expression, from bud burst through to ripening, and including flowering. The exceptional weather conditions in September and October allowed us to reach very good levels of ripeness over all our grape varieties, with nice aromatic expression and good balance in all vineyard plots.

Once again this year,

Val de l'Ours Merlot is a blend of estate wines with wines selected from the best Languedoc terroirs for Merlot.

### ■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

Grapes are harvested before daylight when temperatures are at their lowest. After a few hours of cold maceration, they are pressed and fermented at low temperature in stainless steel tanks to preserve their aromatic potential. The wine is aged in tanks in order to retain the purity of the fruit.

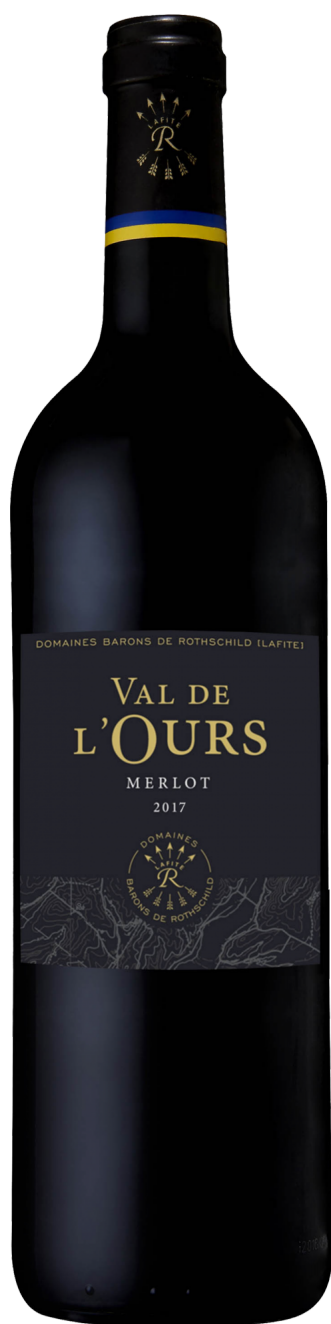
### ■ TASTING NOTES

Deep red color with purple tint.

On the nose, the varietal expression of the Languedoc Merlot is present.

The attack is nice and complexe. The wine immediately takes a lot of amplitude in the mouth with fine tannins and well matures bringing a sensation of big roundness.

The long finish, expresses liquorice and spices.



#### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

**Varietals** : Merlot 100%

**Yield** : 40 hL/ha

**Alcohol content** : 14 % vol.

**pH** : 3.56

**Total acidity** : 3.46 g/l