

# VAL DE L'OURS

## MERLOT 2020

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 sandsilt provide the optimal growing conditions for grape varieties more associated with the Bordeaux region : Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc.

### ■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The relatively mild winter in 2020 led to an early bud break and increased the threat of fungal diseases. A warm, relatively wet summer, with a hot, dry late summer period, without scorching high temperatures, allowed the grapes to reach their optimal aromatic potential slowly, while maintaining a sufficient level of acidity.

As the growth cycle progressed, the vines lost some of their earliness and the grapes were harvested about ten days earlier than the previous vintage.

### ■ 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

Beautiful deep red colour with glints of violet.

On the nose, the characteristics of the Languedoc expression of Merlot are very noticeable. Scents of liquorice mingle with black fruit and ripe red berries, in the form of strawberry and blackberry jam, as well as notes of pomegranate and wild cherry. On the palate, the wine offers a pleasant complexity and quickly develops volume. Thanks to the fine, plump, mature tannins, there is a superb sensation of roundness. The relatively long finish offers an even broader aromatic palette with liquorice and sweet spices such as cloves. The richness and finesse of this vintage suggest an excellent potential to improve with age.



#### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

**Varietals** : Merlot 100%

**pH** : 3.71

**Total acidity** : 3.08 g/l