

VAL DE L'OURS

GRANDE RÉSERVE 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 : Val De L'Ours is made from vines planted on deeper soils that confers the vines less water stress than the shallow soils of the plots going into the Grand Vin. The resulting wines are comparatively fruitier and more accessible in style. The traditional Corbières blend is made predominantly of Syrah, with Carignan, Mourvèdre and Grenache, whilst the cooler terroir of Ausières confers the wine its exceptional balance and finesse.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

The weather usually varies enormously across the Languedoc region, but was uncharacteristically uniform in 2017. There was plenty of rain between the end of January and the end of March, enabling the replenishment of the water reserves essential for a good start to the growth cycle. This unusually wet start to the season was followed by some major climate incidents : like everywhere else in France, and indeed in Europe, the Languedoc experienced two frosts at the end of April of a severity that had not been seen in the region for more than 25 years, and which destroyed hundreds of hectares of vines. Nearly a third of Ausières' vineyard was affected by these late sub-zero temperatures, and in one area the entire harvest was lost. Nevertheless, in the areas not affected by this disaster, the vintage proved to be of very high quality, with temperature and rainfall patterns similar to the excellent 2015. This enabled a good expression of the vines throughout the growth cycle, from bud break to flowering and, finally, the ripening stage. Superb weather in September and October allowed for excellent levels of ripeness to be reached by all the grape varieties, with beautiful aromatic expression and good balance across all of the plots.

The plots used to produce Val De L'Ours Grande Réserve were harvested between 2 September and 8 October 2017.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

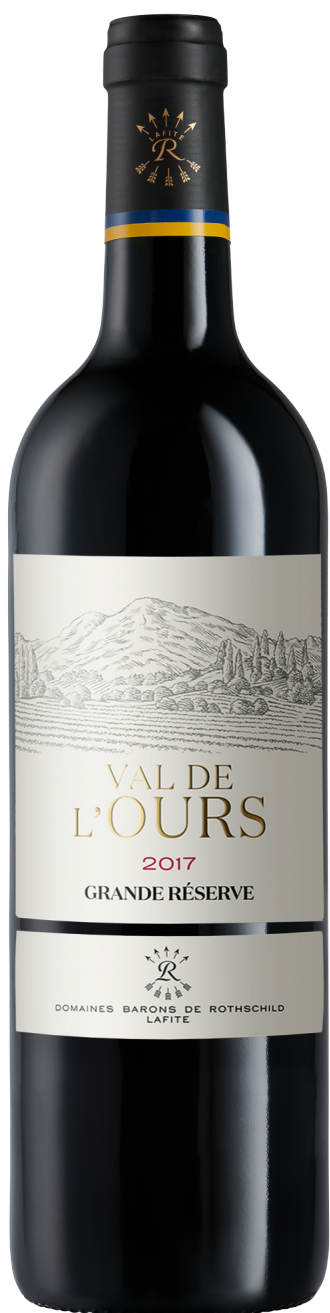
Val De L'Ours Grande Réserve is made according to the traditional method. Alcoholic fermentation takes place in temperature-controlled stainless steel and concrete tanks. The Carignan partially undergoes carbonic maceration, contributing to its distinctive style. During fermentation regular pump over allows a gentle extraction of the tannins and phenolic compounds. Once the fermentation is completed, the wine is left untouched for a couple of days. Total maceration time stretches 15-20 days.

■ TASTING NOTES

Beautiful, deep dark-red colour.

The nose is still somewhat reserved, offering aromas of spices and garrigue mingled with toasted notes from the barrel ageing.

A generous, harmonious wine on the palate, revealing black fruit and spices, supported by silky, elegant tannins. Well-balanced, this wine can be enjoyed now, but will also keep for several more years.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Syrah 34%, Carignan 33%, Grenache 23%, Mourvèdre 10%

Yield : 45 hL/ha

pH : 3.5

Total acidity : 3.30 g/l