

VAL DE L'OURS

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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 that contribute to the complexity of this blend.

■ VINTAGE SUMMARY

In the Languedoc, after a mild winter and a cool spring, temperatures rose, reaching a peak throughout the region at the end of June; this was followed by a hot summer. Fortunately, Aussières escaped the drought and the heatwave thanks to its ally the wind; in particular from the south-east: the "Marin" which brings just the right amount of moisture for the vines' growth. Finally, some rain at the beginning of September enabled the grapes to reach the desired levels of ripeness.

The Carignan, Mourvèdre and Grenache benefited the most from these conditions and in this vintage reveal superb freshness and aromatic intensity.

■ WINE MAKING SCHEME

The grapes are picked at optimal ripeness, destemmed and then vinified using traditional maceration methods.

The maceration period varies from 10 to 12 days with gentle extraction and fermentation at fairly low temperatures (around 25°C) in stainless steel vats in order to preserve the wine's full aromatic potential. Ageing is then carried out in vats so as to keep all of the fruit's freshness and purity.

■ TASTING NOTES

This vintage has a beautiful intense colour with glints of plum and offers an excellent representation of the red Val de l'Ours character.

The nose has a rich aromatic profile, with pronounced Mediterranean aromas typical of our terroir: sweet spices, liquorice, stewed garrigue fruit such as figs, redcurrants, strawberry tree and a hint of almond.

On the palate, the wine is very harmonious, revealing a pleasant balance.

Soft, elegant tannins coat flavours of Mediterranean cuisine such as piquillo peppers stuffed with tapenade, accompanied by notes of smoked tea and cigar.

With a multi-faceted character, Val de l'Ours Red is a very flexible wine that can be consumed on almost any occasion and be paired with a wide variety of foods.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals : Syrah 36%, Merlot 18%, Cabernet sauvignon 14%, Cabernet franc 12%, Mourvèdre 6%, Marselan 5%, Grenache noir 5%, Alicante-henri-bouschet 4%

pH : 3.51

Total acidity : 3.05 g/l

