



CHATEAU DE LA GAUDE
AIX EN PROVENCE

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RENAISSANCE OF A PRESTIGE ESTATE

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Located at the heart of Aix-en-Provence, and close to the beautiful towns of Puyricard and Sainte-Victoire, Château de la Gaude is the only wine-growing estate in the town where Cézanne was born.

The estate, with views of Sainte-Victoire, a symbol of Provence, is located in the famous Pinchinats quarter, 10 minutes from the City Centre. Its name comes from the Provençal word 'Pinchinats', describing the wool-combing mills of the Middle Ages. This quarter, very popular with the upper classes of Aix-en-Provence, has held on to every ounce of its beauty. It has a rich natural heritage: a water source, discovered for the first time in the 12th Century, which provided water for the whole city.

The quarter is remarkably sheltered from the strong mistral winds. In summer, its position ensures a welcome break from the heat, with a pleasant coolness. The land of the La Gaude estate varies in height from 250 to 400 metres in altitude. The «le Capéou» plot is the highest point in Aix-en-Provence, and the perfect spot from which to admire the exceptional views of the estate!

THE 'TERROIR' OF LA GAUDE

The Château de la Gaude is situated in a privileged location: the large Sainte-Victoire site. In fact, this 'terroir' is the ancestral homeland of the best-quality wine. It is for this reason that, since its creation, the grapevines have been cultivated using organic farming, helping to preserve this heritage.

The idea of 'terroir' lies in the interaction between the soil and the climate. We are not able to control the processes but we know that it exists. La Gaude has a temperate Mediterranean climate, with mild, humid winters, and hot summers and is influenced by the sea. As far as the 'terroir' is concerned, the bedrock is made up of marls and limestone, on which lie the Quaternary-era terraces. Each plot is studied in order to cultivate our grapevines according to their production potential and their typicality.

THE GRAPEVINES

The aforementioned 'terroir' is extremely rich. Aware of the impact of wine-growing on the environment, the aim of increasingly more responsible wine-growing is at the heart of Château de la Gaude's concerns.

This is why the estate has always cultivated its vines according to the principles of Organic Farming and is a proponent of Biodynamics. The grapevines happily grow under the sunshine of Provence, providing the wine with finesse, freshness and complexity. The estate has around 15 hectares spread over 21 plots with the «Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence» AOC designation of origin label, the grape varieties are mainly made up of Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Cabernet Sauvignon, Rolle, Semillon, white and Clairette. The estate's grapevines yield small quantities that are both concentrated and fruity.

Our oldest grapevines are of the black Grenache variety dating from 1958. They are planted using the 'gobelet' method, which is an old pruning technique that was very common in the south of France, but much rarer these days. We have wanted to preserve them, as they provide us with a very interesting quality of grape, in addition to this plot being located on the highest point in Aix-En-Provence (400m).

Respect for nature and organic farming have been our guiding words since the very beginning, and are at the heart of our philosophy, both for the grapevines and in the cellar.

Thanks to studies carried out by our agronomists, new planting choices are under way. Our aim is to create an haute-couture wine.

« MY MOTHER'S CASTLE »

With this great adventure, we couldn't miss the opportunity to bring Marcel Pagnol's fabulous story to life once again.

In fact, the Chateau de la Gaude provided the set for the film produced by Yves Robert, turning the famous book into a film. This adds another layer of richness to this place that is already abound with stories and anecdotes. In 1990, part of the filming took place in the gardens of la Gaude, showcasing the Château majestically.

This has led to the partnership today between the Château de la Gaude and the Bamboo publishing house. With this partnership, and following several months of work with authors and publishers, a comic strip adaptation was designed. Precision has been our guiding factor throughout this creative process, and that is why you can even see our bottle in some of the thumbnails of this comic strip.

Seeing our château appear, this time in a comic strip, is a way of further cementing the role of the Château de la Gaude in this uniquely Provençal story. The character that La Gaude has had for centuries, this feeling that Marcel Pagnol wanted to pass on to his readers, is something that we want to preserve, to bring back to life, we feel that it is something that we must do. This will help to pass on the culture to young people, but also reignite pleasant memories with those who are a bit older.

We would like to thank Bamboo, who opened their doors to us to bring our desire to life, and we would also like to thank Nicolas Pagnol, who gave us the great honour of writing our preface. Marcel Pagnol, thanks to his works, is still brining people together.

AT THE HEART OF AIX-EN-PROVENCE

GRAPE HARVESTS AND VINIFICATION

Harvests take place at La Gaude at the start of September.

With a view to maintaining constant quality standards, meticulous harvests are undertaken to optimise the quality of our future wines. Harvests are carried out by hand in ten kilo boxes to preserve the quality of the bunches of grapes, which have reached peak maturity. For rosés, harvests are carried out first thing in the morning to preserve all the freshness of the grapes and to avoid the risks of oxidation.

During this process, the grapes are sorted twice: Firstly by the harvesters at the grapevines, which consists of only selecting the healthiest bunches; the second is carried out by the Cellar Master and his team, who painstakingly remove the last of the bad grapes.

During the vinification process, each variety of vine for each soil is fermented, processed and matured separately. More complex than a classic grape blend, it is also about blending minerals.

Rosés, like whites, are made using direct pressing then are vinified in concrete tanks with perfect temperature control. For red wines, different vinification plans are used according to the grape varieties and the final product sought. Once alcoholic fermentation has taken place, the red grape pomace is pressed and different pressing qualities are obtained and matured separately.

Once the wines are «finished», they are matured, for the most part, in 225 litre oak barrels. In our maturing cellar, we have different volumes (barrels, ½ muids, muids) which allows us to mature our batches separately and to carry out vinification according to plot.

In order to guarantee maximum respect for the product, all operations from receiving the grape, are carried out using gravity. The final blends are only made during the final stage.

LA GAUDE'S PHILOSOPHY/VISION/OUR PROJECT

It all started in 2016, a year that is already emblematic as it stands for renewal, the renaissance of a prestigious estate.

Thanks to its history, its potential and the human resources invested in this project, the vineyard intends to rival the most prestigious wines in France and the Côteaux d'Aix-en-Provence appellation.

To get this project off to a start, we had to spend several years renovating in order to get this beautiful Provençal country house back up to scratch, after more than 15 years of neglect.

In parallel and linked to our ambitions, the plan to restructure the vineyard will be a major component of our development. Listening, understanding, reacting and visualising the grapevines, the 'terroir', the stone and the gardens were essential for our development. This quirky estate, in part due to its layout, has given us the possibility of developing luxury wine tourism.

This is why we have decided to create a hotel with several Rooms. The generosity that La Gaude offers us, means that we just have to share it with you. The Château de la Gaude is developing an exhaustive range of three colours. Having a signature for each cuvée is a recurring theme for us. And to embellish this already very complete space, several artists' residences are also being planned.

THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE

The Château de la Gaude also has another treasure...

Underground tunnels that were built in the 18th Century. They were used to provide basins and fountains with drinking water even in times of drought. This type of installation was a real sign of importance for the house.

It starts at the American plot, then passes under all the grapevines, finally ending its path at the heart of la Gaude. In fact, the roots of the grapevines reach over 3 metres underground, becoming intertwined in the underground passages, creating a landscape that is reminiscent of the books of Jules Verne, we can even say, 'Twenty Thousand Leagues Under La Gaude'!

From a few metres underground, the temperature drops to 14 degrees. After the cavities built by humans, the natural cavities provide large natural spaces with streaming water dripping through, sometimes reaching up to 50 centimetres in depth, along with calcite, stalactites and insects are in abundance on the nearly two kilometres of walls of the cavities.

It is a never-ending cave, dating back over three centuries, which, being very solid with its ingenious system, has foundations that are almost completely intact. Teams of potholers regularly come to explore this fabulous spot built by our ancestors.