

Domaine Viranel Alicante Bouschet Languedoc France 2019

Selected by: Master Sommelier Evan Goldstein, Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon, and Master Sommelier Tim Gaiser



Final Deductions

VINTAGE 2019
GRAPE Alicante Bouschet/Blend
GEOGRAPHY Old World
COUNTRY France
LARGER REGION Languedoc-Roussillon
SMALLER REGION Languedoc

Rationale

The Alicante Bouschet grape is a crossing of Petit Bouschet and Grenache, first cultivated by viticulturalist Henri Bouschet in 1866. Originally designed as a blending grape to improve the depth of color of such popular 19th Century grapes as Aramon. Alicante Bouschet quickly became popular, not just for its intense coloring but for its generous yields. Easy-to-grow vines, Alicante Bouschet was used to help rebuild devastated European wine industries following the phylloxera epidemic.

Though it was more popular in the 20th century in France, there are still sizable plantings in the Languedoc, Provence, and Cognac regions. However, many will argue that it is the most Portuguese non-Portuguese grape as it thrives in the arid climate of Alentejo, where it is the flagship red grape. Indeed, it is generally celebrated as a Portuguese gift to the wine world rather than an offspring of France's southwest!

The wines are deep purple in color and known for being firm, with massive structure, and often, rustic tannins. They can be higher in alcohol but lower in acidity, which is why the grape's often blended in order to provide balance and color. Classic aromas include dark berries, pepper, cocoa, and olives.

The Bergasse brothers, Arnaud and Nicolas, they have taken over the 400-year-old family estate from their father. Their Alicante Bouschet vines were planted in 1939 on three different soil types. Based in Saint Chinian AOP, this wine falls just outside of the appellation's rules because it is 100% Alicante Bouschet.

Sight

BRIGHTNESS Day Bright
CLARITY Opaque
COLOR DEPTH Deep
COLOR Ruby
RIM VARIATION Purple
Stained Tears: High

Structure

RESIDUAL SUGAR Dry
ACID Med+
ALCOHOL High
TANNIN High
TEXTURE Gritty / Astringent
FINISH Long
COMPLEXITY Med+

Aroma & Taste

RED FRUIT Red Currant • Cherry / Red Tomato • Red Plum • Red / Sour Cherry
Condition: Ripe, Jammy / Baked

BLUE FRUIT Blueberry • Boysenberry *Condition: Fresh, Jammy / Baked*

BLACK FRUIT Black Cherry • Black Fig • Black Plum • Blackberry *Condition: Ripe, Jammy / Baked*

FLORAL Lavender • Violet *Condition: Fresh, Dried*

GREEN VEGETABLE Dark Leafy Greens

OTHER VEGETABLE Peppers (Red/Yellow) • Beet (Purple) • Fennel / Anise • Olive (Black) • Beet Root

HERBAL Tea Leaf / Bergamot • Thyme • Sage • Garrique / Provence • Chicory

OTHER SPICES White Pepper • Black Pepper • Green Peppercorn • Cocoa Powder

ORGANIC EARTH Forest Floor • Turned Dirt / Clay

INORGANIC EARTH Mineral / Rock • Graphite

ANIMAL Meat • Musk

OAK AGING No

OXIDATION/NUTTINESS Pistachio • Walnut

CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS Volatile Acidity