

# Bastide du Claux



The Bastide du Claux was born in 2002 and is located in the heart of the Luberon National Park in the high hills of western Provence. Sylvain works a diverse group of parcels totaling 15 ha, planted to 14 different varietals scattered throughout the region. Many Luberon growers valued quantity over quality and began to replant vineyards so that they could maximize production and minimize costs harvesting by machine. These trends made it possible for Sylvain to affordably purchase interesting, low-yielding old-vine parcels that were no longer valued. The Syrah from the Malacare lieu-dit, though younger than the Domaine's other varieties, is the oldest in the region, planted by the former president of the local co-operative. The Luberon's vineyards are relatively high, at 400-450m above sea level, and benefit from cooler temperatures compared with other parts of Provence and the Southern Rhone, an excellent location for producing balanced, elegant wines both red and white.

## Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Organic certification anticipated in 2021, practicing organic since 2014, organic methods since the estate's founding.
- **Treatments:** Only copper sulfate
- **Ploughing:** Annual ploughing of the vineyard to maintain soil health
- **Soils:** Southwest and northwest-facing hillsides of clay, silt/sand, and limestone.
- **Vines:** 70-year old Ugni Blanc, 65-year old Carignan, 55-year old Grenache and Cinsault, and 25-year old Syrah.
- **Yields:** Old vines naturally lower yields, no green harvest
- **Harvest:** Exclusively by hand, and later than in many other parts of the Rhône and Provence due to the Luberon's high altitudes. Harvest date shifts dramatically with each vintage.
- **Purchasing:** Always entirely estate fruit



## Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** in concrete vat for rosé and white wines, which undergo direct pressing. Stems have lignified more regularly with climate change, and the red thus sees c. 30% stem retention.
- **Extraction:** Sylvain prefers the gentle effects of pumpovers, and does not seek exaggerated levels of extraction in his wines.
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** Pneumatic pressing
- **Press Wine:** Press wine and free-run wine are, in most vintages, blended prior to élevage. Press wine is included in red wines to bring structure. Rosés are c. 75% free-run wine, 25% press wine.
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** not sought for rosés and whites, occurring

## Aging:

- **Élevage:** Rosés are raised entirely in concrete vat; reds and whites age in a combination of concrete vats and neutral wood. Sylvain is transitioning away from neutral barriques to larger, neutral demi-muids.
- **Lees:** All wines rest on their lees, most for the vast majority of their élevages.
- **Fining and Filtration:** Casein fining for whites and rosés, and diatomaceous earth filtration for all wines
- **Sulfur:** 20-25 g/l free, 60-80 g/l total, applied at harvest, during élevage, and at bottling