

Château Simone



This historic estate, situated in the hills just south of Aix-en-Provence, has been in the hands of four generations of the Rougier family since 1830 and holds a virtual monopoly on the appellation of Palette.

The property totals 120 hectares, with 28 under vine, of which 23 qualify for the Palette AOC. Its vineyards sit on limestone soils at elevations between 500 and 750 feet on the slopes of the Montaignet, whose special microclimate is influenced by the encircling pine forests, the mass of the Mont Sainte-Victoire, and the Arc River.

The vineyards were reconstituted after phylloxera and many vines are over a century old. In an industry that moves quicker than ever and presents ever-increasing novelty, an estate like Simone is an anchor of meaning and a lens into Provence's patrimony.

Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Ecocert Organic Certification Pending. Viticulture has always been practicing organic.
- **Treatments:** No herbicides, chemical fertilizers, or synthetic treatments
- **Ploughing:** Extensive ploughing and working of the soil by tractor.
- **Soils:** Limestone Scree
- **Vines:** Head-trained vines, many over 100-years old, that are replanted on a vine-by-vine basis to maintain a healthy vineyard
- **Yields:** Old vines and extensive debudding lower yields and eliminate the need for a green harvest.
- **Harvest:** Entirely manual harvest, grapes sorted in the vineyard and sorted again in the cellar
- **Purchasing:** Always entirely estate fruit



Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** All wines are fermented spontaneously in large wooden *foudres* with temperature control for 2 weeks.
- **Extraction:** Punchdowns and pumpovers, per the vintage.
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** White wines pressed pneumatically, whole cluster, after a light crushing, red wines pressed pneumatically after destemming and then pressed again in antique basket presses
- **Press Wine:** Press wine is aged separately from free-run juice.
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** White and rosé wines do not go through malolactic in the Domaine's frigid cellars. Red wines are racked into a warmer part of the cellar in the spring before going through malolactic.

Aging:

- **Élevage:** Palette wines are stored in *foudres* for 18 months; red and white wines spend an additional year in neutral barrel. Grands Carmes wines spend 8 months in *foudres* followed by a year in neutral barrel.
- **Lees:** All wines spend at least 6 months on their fine lees.
- **Fining and Filtration:** No fining and no filtration for red wines. Rosé and white wines are unfinned but are plate filtered.
- **Sulfur:** Sulfur is applied only at harvest and at bottling. 50 mg/l total sulfur. 15 mg/l free sulfur at release.