

Mikael Boutin



Mikael Boutin works just two of the 949 hectares within the appellation of Rasteau. His vineyards—averaging 40 years of age—are dispersed among eight different parcels located in several different parts of the appellation. The diversity of his small holdings captures the multiplicity of soils and varying exposures that make up Rasteau, thus insuring that his wine reflects the true expression of Rasteau. The soils in Rasteau are mainly a mixture of limestone and clay, with the steeper hillside sites (which comprise 80% of his holdings) offering a greater percentage of limestone, and the flatter parcels containing a higher percentage of clay. A fifth-generation vigneron, Mikael gained access to his parcels after his uncle retired in 2008. A few of the holdings his uncle was selling had belonged to Mikael's father and were also passed down to Mikael for him to farm. He bottled his first wine in 2011. Because of the microscopic size of his holdings, there is only one wine made each year, with an annual production of about 800 cases. Working on this scale, he is fortunate to have a day job as the winemaker for Clos de Caveau in Vacqueyras, which helps provide a living for him and his family. All work in Mikael's vineyard is done organically (he was certified in 2012) and the harvest, which takes only a few days with a small team, is all done by hand. Mikael's professed love for Burgundy motivates him to work as gently and naturally as possible in the cellar. He is not inclined to intervene or depend on the outside help of an oenologue, confident that the good work he does in the vineyard will carry the wine through its élevage. Fermentations begin spontaneously, with no addition of yeast, and typically last fifteen to eighteen days in concrete tanks, with pumping over performed once per day. The wines are then pressed manually, using the aforementioned basket press, and are left to age on the fine lees for another six months. Once bottled (usually right before harvest), he holds the wine for another half a year or so before bringing it to market.

Viticulture:

- **Farming:** Certified organic by Ecocert since 2012, practicing organic since 2003
- **Treatments:** Only copper sulfate
- **Ploughing:** Annual ploughing to maintain vineyard health
- **Soils:** Blue clay endemic to Rasteau
- **Vines:** Trained in Gobelet, vines average 40 years old
- **Yields:** Controlled through pruning and debudding, yields average 30 hl/ha.
- **Harvest:** Entirely manual, usually mid-September
- **Purchasing:** Always entirely estate fruit



Vinification:

- **Fermentation:** Following total destemming, wine ferments spontaneously in concrete vats. Cuvaison lasts c. 15-18 days.
- **Extraction:** Wine sees pumpovers during fermentation.
- **Chaptalization and Acidification:** None
- **Pressing:** Vertical basket press
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, in vats directly following alcoholic fermentation.

Aging:

- **Élevage:** Wines age c. 8 months in concrete vats.
- **Lees:** Wine remains on its fine lees until assemblage prior to bottling.
- **Fining and Filtration:** Wine is unfinned and sees plate filtration.
- **Sulfur:** Applied after malolactic and at bottling.

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Rasteau



At a Glance:

- **Appellation:** AOP Rasteau
- **Encépagement:** Grenache (60%), Syrah (10%), Mouvèdre (10%), Carignan (10%), Cinsault (10%)
- **Average Annual Production:** 9,600 bottles
- **Average Alcohol by Volume:** 14%
- **Average Residual Sugar:** <5 g/l
- **Average Total Acidity:**

In The Vineyard:

- **Parcel Names, Slopes, and Locations:**
- **Soil Types and Compositions:** Deep blue clays endemic to Rasteau
- **Vine Age, Training, and Density:** Trained in Gobelet, vines average 40 years old.
- **Average Yields:** 30 hle/ha
- **Average Harvest Date and Type:** Manual harvest, mid-September

In The Cellar:

- **Fermentation:** Following total destemming, wine ferments spontaneously in concrete vats. Cuvaison lasts c. 15-18 days.
- **Pressing:** Vertical Basket Press
- **Time on Lees:** Wine is racked following malolactic and remains on its fine lees until assemblage prior to bottling
- **Malolactic Fermentation:** Spontaneous, in vats following alcoholic fermentation
- **Élevage:** Wines age c. 8 months in concrete vats.
- **Press Wine:** Blended after malolactic
- **Fining and Filtration:** Unfined, plate filtered
- **Sulfur:** Applied after malolactic and at bottling.

In The Glass:

Boutin's Rasteau shows a balance and purity of fruit that is especially attractive compared to the many over-ripe and heavily extracted wines found in the Southern Rhône. The bright, pure nose shows clean, fresh cherry-laced fruit undercut with warmer notes of licorice and dried herbs. Not too showy, it lets the terroir do its work. The brisk and lively acidity lends a freshness and energy to the fruit – a testament to Boutin's love for Burgundy.