

Clos de la Roilette

Profile

The Clos de la Roilette, in the village of Fleurie, covers nine hectares of one of the best slopes in the Beaujolais Crus. The clos has an eastern exposure, borders the Moulin-à-Vent appellation, and produces wines that are beautiful when young and have the capacity to age 5-10 years, depending on the vintage.

In the 20's, when the Fleurie appellation was first created, the former landowner was infuriated with losing the Moulin-à-Vent appellation under which the clos had previously been classified. He created a label, using a photograph of his racehorse Roilette, and used the name Clos de la Roilette, without mentioning Fleurie. The owner vowed not to sell a drop of his wine on the French market and the production went to Switzerland, Germany and England.

By the mid-1960s, the owner's heirs had lost interest in the clos and a large portion of the land had gone wild and untended. In 1967, Fernand Coudert bought this poorly maintained estate, and replanted the vineyards. His son Alain joined him in 1984, and has been the winemaker since.

The Couderts say their particular *terroir* (mainly clay and manganese), and the age of their vines (25 to 33 years-old) account for the richness of their wine. It has a deep blackcurrant color with a hint of purple, a restrained nose of crème de cassis, a rich, full mouth with aromas of cassis, black cherries, and a nutty character, and finishes with zesty acidity. This is a wine that ages gracefully and takes on the aromatic character of a Pinot Noir.

With the 1998 vintage, the Couderts introduced a new wine, Cuvée Christal, which is lighter and meant to drink younger. Also, a few vintages ago, they started a selection of old vines cuvée that is partially aged in older oak barrels. They call this Cuvée Tardive, meaning that it needs more aging time and has even greater longevity than the Clos cuvée.