

Château Moulin Pey-Labrie

Profile

This is the antidote to overspoofed, overextracted, garaged Bordeaux.

Bénédicte and Grégoire Hubau bought this 6.5 hectare estate in 1988. It is planted 99% in Merlot and 1% in Malbec. They had run large-scale agricultural enterprises and wanted to work as artisans, with a hand-on approach.

As wine lovers, what appealed to them about Château Moulin-Pey-Labrie was the site itself, on a rather steep chalk hillside, the age of the vines and the absence of clones.

The vines are on average 60-years-old but range from 40 to 120-years-old. The Malbec is 75-years-old and that little 1% adds just a tiny bit of spice.

Most importantly, all the vines are selection massale; no one has planted clones, and only the original vine stock has been used over several generations. Clones increasingly are used throughout the world and tend toward monotone expressions of sites and grape varieties. Pey Labrie's use of only original vine stock gives an originality and complexity to their wine.

Harvesting is by hand, using small cases, and the vinifications are long, slow and natural. The Hubaus are part of a movement in France back to natural wines and often appear at wine shows with Marcel Lapierre, Antoine Arena, Selosse, Pierre Breton, Thierry Puzelat, Marcel Richaud and all the other stars of French natural winemaking.

The wines are aged in 30% new oak and we delighted to have the 1999 available for our first release.

French wine writer, Michel Bettane, has written of the estate:

"has, for a long time, enjoyed a special reputation in Bordeaux, of which it has never been more worthy than it is today. The different parcels and the careful study of the varieties used give it a complexity and aromatic personality way beyond all the others. Over the years the wines have become more civilised without in any way losing their indomitable personality."

The Hubaus met Michel Rolland when they first bought the estate and he remains a friend and advisor. This causes us considerable embarrassment here at Louis/Dressner Selections, but what can you do?

The wine is superb.