



**DNS** WINES

# Le Clos du Caillou Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Quartz 2017

## THE BACKGROUND STORY:

The winery, Le Clos du Caillou, was founded in 1895. Originally a hunting preserve, the land was soon developed into a vineyard. Years later, the winery was infamously excluded from the original Châteauneuf-du-Pape appellation when government surveyors showed up to outline the estate and were immediately greeted with armed individuals and lots of shouting. This is also the reason Le Clos du Caillou continues to produce Côtes du Rhône within the Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC while also now producing a variety of Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines.

Claude Pouizin, father of the current owner, served as a négociant for years before releasing the first Le Clos du Caillou labels in the 1970s. Today, the winery is run by Claude's daughter, Sylvia, and winemaker, Bruno Gaspard. Sylvia runs the vineyard in homage to her father and her late-husband, producing Rhone wines in a Burgundian style – lots of finesse and all the elegance.

## THE WINE ITSELF:

**VARIETAL:** 75% Grenache, 25% Syrah

**VINE AGE:** 57 years old, on average

**SOIL:** Sandy soil composed with round polished stones on the surface, located on the name place 'Les Cassanets.'

**PRODUCTION:** 6,000 Bottles

**FARMING PRACTICES:** Certified Organic 

**VINIFICATION:** The Syrah and Grenache are hand-picked, harvested and fermented separately. With 100% destemming, the Syrah ferments in wooden tanks, while the Grenache is done in concrete. Ninety percent of the wine is aged in 600L oak casks, and the other ten percent in Terracotta amphoras for a total of 14 months.

## IMPRESSION:

The aromas encompass everything from orange peel to fresh strawberries, oak and turmeric. The dark fruit is structured, offering up powerful but balanced tannins that enhance the clove, black pepper and vanilla notes. Great to drink now, or lay down for 20 years.

*Le Clos du Caillou*  
Fondé 1895



CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE

CÔTES-DU-RHÔNE

SAFRÉS

RÉSERVE

QUARTZ

GARRIGUES

COURTETON

NATURE

RÉSERVE QUARTZ CAILLOU

REDARDES

SORGUES

96 Points

FROM WINE WRITER JEB DUNNUCK



# LOOKING AT LE CLOS DU CAILLOU'S CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE LES QUARTZ

by JEB DUNNUCK

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

One of my favorite estates in Châteauneuf-du-Pape is unquestionably that of Le Clos du Caillou, which is in the eastern part of the appellation, in the Courthezon district. It has been in the Pouizin family since 1956, with Claude Pouizin running the estate up through 1996.

Most of the production was sold off to négociants until around 1993, but in 1995, Claude's daughter, Sylvie, married Jean-Denis Vacheron, and the couple took over running the estate at that time. Unfortunately, Jean-Denis died in a tragic traffic accident in 2002. Today the estate is run by Sylvie Vacheron, with more and more help from her children Marilou and Axel, and Bruno Gaspard and consultant Philippe Cambie in charge of the winemaking.

This tasting, which took place at the estate late in 2019, focuses on their Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Quartz. While the flagship from this exceptional estate is certainly their Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Réserve, which comes mostly sandy soils, *the Les Quartz comes from more rocky, pebbly soils and holds a special place in my heart with its more exuberant, Provençal style.* This cuvée was first made in 1999 and comes mostly from 60-year-old vines in the Les Cassanets lieu-dit yet also incorporates a small amount of Syrah from the Les Bedines lieu-dit. It's always a destemmed blend of roughly 75%-85% Grenache and the balance Syrah, with the Grenache aged in a combination of neutral oak tanks, demi-muids, and foudre, and the Syrah in demi-muids. There was a small amount of new oak used in the past for the Syrah, yet I think that has changed today and the estate is also experimenting with small amounts of clay amphora. It's bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

As I hope the reviews show, *this is a brilliant, age-worthy Châteauneuf-du-Pape that's loaded with Provençal charm and character!*



96 Points

FROM WINE WRITER JEB DUNNUCK

"Kirsch, blackberries, crushed flowers, blood orange, and tons of spice all emerge from the 2017 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Quartz. It's one of the richer, sexier wines in the lineup, which is certainly what this vintage delivers in spades. Full-bodied and concentrated, with a beautiful mid-palate, it's going to evolve positively for 2-4 years and drink brilliantly for 20 years or more. This is an incredibly fine, elegant version of this wine."