



WINEMAKER

Michel Bernard

FARMING

Certified Sustainable

VARIETALS

Grenache (Garnacha), Mourvedre, Syrah (Shiraz)

ABV

14%

AVAILABLE SIZES (L)

0.750



Beauchêne

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 'Vignobles de la Serrière'

FRANCE, RHONE VALLEY, CHATEAUNEUF DU PAPE



WINERY OVERVIEW

The roots of the Bernard family and their Chateau Beauchene in the Rhone's Vaucluse area go back to the French Revolution. Eleven generations later, they continue to make polished, complex, classically-styled red and white wines from the Cote du Rhone and Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Current regard for the family is such that patriarch Michel Bernard (10th generation) was appointed in May 2019 as President of Suze la Rousse, University of Wine, while his daughters, Estelle and Amandine, manage the vineyard and business side of the winery.

In 1794, amidst the social, economic and political upheaval of the French Revolution, 18-year-old tenant farmer Jacques Bernard gained legal right to own land and purchased 0.8 hectares from the Berviguiet family. From that humble origin, 10th generation grower, Michel Bernard owns 70 hectares across the Cote du Rhone (48ha), Cote du Rhone-Villages (14ha) and Châteauneuf du Pape (8ha), spread among 15 parcels.

In 1971, Michel took the mantle of winegrowing from his mother Odette, who had been based south of Orange. He sold wine as "Domaine de la Serrière", named after the initial plot ancestor Jacques first owned. In 1988, he acquired the Chateau Beauchene estate, adding its land north of Orange as well as its name. Facing greater production pressures, Michel decided in 1990 to discontinue his burgeoning negociant business to focus on his estate work. While principled and ultimately successful, the decision was not, at first, commercially wise as it cut production to 300,000 bottles (down from one million bottles).

The family's estate has been HVE certified (High Environmental Value) as sustainable, recognizing their ever-evolving work in the vineyards. They do not use herbicides, relying on plowing and the inhospitable soils (especially of Châteauneuf-du-Pape). To limit damage from insects, they have erected three bat houses for two different vineyards and treat the vines with organic matter which act as homeopathic immunity boosters (e.g., natural extracts, plant matter, shrimp shells). The strong mistral wind also discourages insects, as well as mildew pressure. They also raise bees to promote biodiversity. The Bernards continue to adapt to the environment. In October 2019, the chateau initiated extensive analysis of a variety of grasses across 10 hectares of their vineyards, each with its own agronomic quality: one releases nitrogen into the soil and enriches it with organic matter, one aerated the soil with its roots, one promotes better rainfall absorption, one is adaptable to arid conditions and allows for mulching and one fights against weeds; they all increase biodiversity of their vineyards.

The Chateau Beauchene building itself has even deeper historical, having been constructed by the Biliotti family in the 16th century. They were part of the exodus that joined the Pope in his move from Rome to Avignon, although it's believed they were also fleeing the deMedici family. Behind the chateau is an attached building that was a farmhouse, first built in the 13th century. The crest of the Biliotti family appears on each bottle of Chateau Beauchene wine. The word "beauchene" means "beautiful oak" and refers to the forest surrounding the main estate.

VINEYARD

The vineyards are located north of the Châteauneuf-du-Pape appellation between the villages of Courthézon, Orange and Châteauneuf-du-Pape, on alluvial terraces of rolled pebbles and red clay.

VITICULTURE

High environmental value certification: respect and preservation of biodiversity, protection of the vineyard by Bio-control methods.

VINIFICATION

Complete de-stemming of the bunches and maceration for a minimum of 20 days.

AGING

Partial aging in French oak barrels for 6 to 12 months.

