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SAUVAGEON 2010

Sauvignon Blanc

Vin de Pays d'Oc

Agriculture Raisonnée

50 hl/ha yield

Grapes harvested by machine in the cool of the early morning

Grapes hand-sorted prior to pressing

50% subject to 18 hrs pre-fermentary maceration at 18

Fermented and matured for 7 months in French oak barrels (30% new)

Batonnage twice weekly for seven months

Alcohol: 13%

Taille: Cordon de Royat

PRODUCTION: 6,000 btl

MISE EN BOUTEILLE: May 2011 au domaine

SERVE AT: 12°

This is a new addition to the Rives-Blanches range of still white wines, coming from a young vineyard at 200 m altitude. It is the lowest and most westerly of the Rives-Blanches fields, subject to Atlantic rather than Mediterranean influences. Although SAUVAGEON is a Vin de Pays d'Oc, it has been made with all the care and attention of the vineyard's Appellation Limoux white wines, and shares their same 'gastronomic' food-friendly characteristics.

THE HARVEST: This was one of the coolest millésimes of the decade, memorable for the snow that fell in May. Generally overcast skies prevailed throughout the year, which, combined with the effect of the two previous unusually dry years, resulted in a below-average yield overall, but did not much affect these vines. A sudden heatwave just before the harvest helped concentrate the juices, bringing a wonderful balance between acidity and sweetness to the grapes. The result for Rives-Blanches is a vintage with very well structured wines with excellent aging potential, which can also be drunk immediately. The grapes for this wine were picked on 02 October and 04 October

THE LABEL To illustrate that this wine is far removed from the style of sauvignon blancs presently dominating the market, we consulted France's sauvignon expert, Jean Bisson ("Jean le Sauvignon") of the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, who advised us to return to the origins of the word 'sauvignon' to find a name for this wine: SAUVAGEON "The Wild One":

"There is no doubt that if the Romans, after the Greeks and the Phoenicians, perfected and developed the art of viticulture in Gaul, they did not introduce the vine which, for at least 5000 years at least, lived free and wild in our country, in our forests, along our rivers, and at the feet of our mountains. Known since medieval times as Sauvageon, its name not only reflects its strong aromatic character, but also its very individual personality".

THE VINEYARD SAUVAGEON comes from 2 ha of vines planted in 2006 at a density of 4.400 vines per ha. Ground soils of clay and sand. On the most westerly point of the Languedoc, open to Atlantic influences. Oats grown between alternate rows of vines for biodiversity.

RIVES-BLANQUES 22 hectares under vine: chardonnay, chenin blanc, mauzac, sauvignon blanc.

On a plateau 300+ m over the Aude Valley, ideal for fresh white wines.

All wines bottled on the estate

One of the few independent vineyards specialising in white wines only.

Amongst the first to be certified 'Agriculture Raisonnée' (sustainable viticulture) – a portion currently being converted (back) to organic.