

BANYULS: RÉSERVA

DOMAINE DE LA TOUR VIEILLE

Style

Red, Sweet, Full-bodied

Region

Languedoc Roussillon

Wine Maker

Christine Campadiéu and Vincent Cantié

Appellation

Banyuls, near Collioure, south of Perpignan, where the Mediterranean meets the Pyrenees.

Cepage

Grenache Gris and Grenache Noir

Tasting Note

A sweet, red wine (although Banyuls can also be white and rosé), it has a spicy, dried fruit, pluminess, rather like a tawny port.

Serve with

Charcuterie, hard cheeses and also as the perfect accompaniment to chocolate pudding.

Cellarage

Like Port or Madeira, it has good longevity and will keep for 20 years.

Vinification

This most southerly of appellations in France has a climate that is well suited to viticulture, as plenty of sunshine ensures optimum ripening conditions for the grapes whilst the strong Tramontane wind keeps the vines pest free. The vines are planted on precipitous slopes of schist, making machine-harvesting out of the question. Following the harvest, fermentation is arrested by a process of mutage whereby a precise volume of pure alcohol is added to the wine to kill the yeast cells driving fermentation, leaving some unconverted sugar and fortifying the wine. The wine is then blended with older vintages through a solera system which dates back to 1952, hence its non-vintage status. This wine is classified as a Vin Doux Naturel.

History

Christine (from Banyuls) and Vincent (from Collioure) are respectively 4th and 3rd generation winemakers in this region. They met in 1989 and Domaine la Tour Vieille was created in 1982. Since then they have worked to “develop and maintain the domaine and feel really happy”. Domaine la Tour Vieille now comprises 32 acres of vines, meticulously farmed by hand.

