

MAY 2023 CLUB SELECTION



2022 DOMAINE DU DRAGON *GRANDE CUVÉE ROSÉ* CÔTES DE PROVENCE AOP, FRANCE

High up in the hills of southern France, above the Côte d'Azur and the crowds at Cannes, you'll find the cool, terraced vineyards of Domaine du Dragon. While much of Provence is a patchwork of different terroirs; this corner near the town of Draguignan is unique in that it is almost exclusively limestone—part of the Triassic plateau of the Haut Pays—an unusually mineral terroir for the region, more commonly found in places like Burgundy. Here the cooling winds whip through the forested valleys to moderate the southern sun, so the grapes are not only perfectly ripe but also beautifully balanced. This symbiosis of soil and sun results in uniquely flavorful, elegant wines.

The Château du Dragon takes its name from the legend, recounted by Jean de Nostradamus, of a monster in the forest of Ampus that was slain by Saint Hermentaire. The two original buildings no longer exist, but the partially preserved ramparts and the remains of a watchtower, its walls scarred with ancient arrow holes, look out over the lush Nartuby Valley. According to official and religious documents, the castle has a long and interesting history that dates back to 1340, when it belonged to Aubert Vaquet. The property was uninhabited during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries before being bought by Baltasar de Harnes, Sieur d'Auroules and Châteaouble, the first consul of Draguignan, in 1700. The château was occupied from then until the early twentieth century. Domaine du Dragon, as we now know it, was founded in 1990 by winemaker Aurelien Fournier.

Throughout the 1990s the cellars were modernized and many of Domaine du Dragon's terraced vineyards were replanted to improve clonal selection, vine density and the mix of grape varieties. Today, the vineyards are cared for sustainably and follow organic practices as much as possible.

This Rosé is a blend of 40% Cinsault, 32% Grenache, 13% Syrah, 13% Mourvèdre and 2% Cabernet Sauvignon, from 25-year-old vines. The grapes were hand-harvested and immediately pressed (rosé de pressurage) and fermented on indigenous yeasts in temperature-controlled, stainless-steel tanks, then aged in tank for several additional months before being bottled.

Bright copper hue. Fragrant, with heady, floral aromatics. The palate is very fresh and fruit-forward, with flavors of ripe strawberry, guava and a hint of sweet herbs. Bright and juicy, this charming wine is perfectly suited for sunny, spring afternoon with friends or a quiet summer dinner al fresco.

R O S É C L U B

- RETAIL: \$22.50
WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$19.13
- [SUGGESTED RECIPE: Peach & Burrata Caprese](#)

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2022 GROUNDWORK GRENACHE ROSÉ CENTRAL COAST, CALIFORNIA

Growing up in East Los Angeles, Curt Schalchlin didn't try his first wine until he was in college at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he majored in Business. It was through his part-time job during school at Trader Joe's that he discovered bottles from all over the world and his casual interest in wine tasting on the weekends turned into an eventual fascination and ultimately, his vocation. Later, Curt took the opportunity to help his friend McPrice Myers, who was starting his own winery. It was while working with McPrice and Russell From, of Herman Story and Barrel 27 wineries, that Curt first fell for Rhône varietals*. A trip to the actual Rhône Valley in France and a conversation with Bernard Grippa—a third-generation grower in Saint Joseph—inspired Curt to start his own wine label and call it 'Sans Liege' which means "without allegiance" in French. In his words, Sans Liege is "a relentless search for independence. It is equally aligned with the freedoms of the New World and the heritage of the Rhône Valley, but is careful not to hold too closely to either. Instead, I trust my intuition as to the microcosms of each vineyard site and vine to guide my work through each vintage."

Groundwork is Curt's second label focused on single varietal wines, all of which are sourced from select vineyards on the Central Coast. Groundwork is all about the fundamentals. Putting to use the empirical knowledge he has gained from making wine for Sans Liege, Curt seeks to bring his experience to a new set of wines that embrace the soul and simple living of the Rhône, and other wine-producing areas of Europe.

100% organic Grenache hand harvested from Kopak Vineyard in Templeton, California. The grapes were sent directly to press upon arrival at the winery and were fermented in stainless-steel tanks with native yeast. Aged four months in stainless steel. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Pale rose gold hue. Delicate aromas of citrus and sweet green herbs. Bright and mouthwatering, with layered flavors of tart red cherry, cantaloupe, blood orange and grapefruit, and notes of fresh sage, thyme and cumin spice. A more textural style of rose with a charming savory component and a juicy, lip-smacking finish. 450 cases produced.

** We note with some irony that while Grenache is widely referred to as a "Rhône varietal," it is not originally from France. Depending on who you ask or what text you read, it is originally from Spain (Garnacha), or possibly from Sardinia (Cannonau).*

R O S É C L U B

- RETAIL: \$17.50
WINE CLUB MEMBER: \$14.88
- SUGGESTED RECIPE: Goat Cheese Crostini Summer Party