

Domaine de l'Hortus,
Bergerie de L'Hortus Rouge 2023
Pic Saint-Loup, Languedoc, France



PRODUCER

Located in the heart of the Pic Saint-Loup appellation in the Languedoc, Domaine de l'Hortus was established by Jean Orliac in the late seventies. A keen rock climber and recent agricultural college graduate, Jean recognised the potential of Mount Hortus' abandoned and steep, limestone slopes for growing both red and white grapes successfully. Fortunately, the land was unwanted, and therefore cheap, so Jean managed to purchase 50 hectares. He then spent the next 15 years understanding the complex soil structures and carefully selecting the right parcels for each grape variety, before releasing their first vintage in 1990. Over the years, this unique location has persuaded his four children to return home and take over different parts of the business. Now over forty years later, Domaine de l'Hortus is a flag-bearer for the appellation and with 80 hectares to their name, Francois, Yves, Marie and Martin Orliac continue to drive it forwards.

VINEYARDS

Domaine de l'Hortus' vineyards stretch across a deep valley between two mountains: The Pic Saint Loup and the Hortus. The Bergerie Rouge is sourced from vines planted in the foothills of these mountains, where they are less exposed to the elements than the higher terraces. As a result, the grapes mature later, resulting in an excellent balance between acidity and aromatic complexity. Founder Jean Orliac's children have introduced higher density plantings and sustainable practices to the vineyards to improve the soil and quality of the grapes.

VINTAGE

The 2023 vintage was defined by an ideal growing season. After a dry, cold winter and a reasonably late spring, the sufficiently abundant rains in May and June sustained the vines through a dry and surprisingly cool summer. The last week of August came with a late heatwave, forcing the harvest to begin earlier than usual. All vines' grapes ripened completely and homogeneously, resulting in a beautiful harvest both in quantity and quality.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were de-stemmed and crushed before undergoing fermentation for 25-30 days in temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats. A small percentage of the Syrah was aged in two-year-old barrels to add weight to the blend while the Mourvèdre and Grenache were kept in stainless steel before blending and bottling.

TASTING NOTES

The wine opens with an expressive nose of ripe damson layered with hints of liquorice and dried rosemary. The palate is medium-bodied and fruit-forward, with soft tannins and a vibrant acidity that lifts the smooth, spicy finish.

Grape Varieties	65% Syrah 20% Mourvèdre 15% Grenache
Winemaker	Martin Orliac
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	14%
Residual Sugar	0.8g/L
Acidity	4.6g/L
Wine pH	3.91
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan