



Bin No:

1816

Wine: *Chateau Musar Red 2007 Vt*

Country: *Lebanon*

Region: *Bekka Valley*

Producer: *Chateau Musar*

Vintage: *2007*

Colour: *Red*

Grape Variety: *Cabernet Sauvignon - Carignan - Cinsault*

Status: *Still*

*Organic Certification - Vegetarian – Vegan
contains sulphates*

Allergens

Body Value *E (A is light, E is full-bodied)*

abv: 14% - bottle size: 75cl



Tasting Note

2007 was a good year for the Cinsault which displayed red berry and concentrated cherry fruits, reminiscent of Amarone. As the Cabernet Sauvignon rested in vats, it showed intense coffee bean aromas and ripe fruit, typical of a warmer vintage.

Nearly 7 years on, upon its' release in the spring of 2014, the wine is showing impressive aromas of blueberries, ripe blackberries, cherries and plum fruitcake. The palate is initially soft and round with primary fruits of blackberry, plum, red cherries and pomegranate with some chocolaty spicy notes in the background. It opens up with mouth filling berry fruit and delicious notes of concentrated dark fruits and molasses. It really begins to impress in the mid palate where it holds its' intensity and structure effortlessly all the way to the end. The alcohol is well integrated with elegant but youthful tannins – it is a well-balanced wine with good underpinning acidity and a compelling structure.

Released 7 years later in the spring of 2015, the wine has a beautiful rich scarlet colour with an alluring nose of black and red fruits, cherries, coffee, leather and cloves. A good natural intensity with well integrated tannins and good acidity – this is a rich, warm, concentrated vintage of Chateau Musar showing an abundance of fruit, energy and considerable finesse. Mature and balanced with a long finish.

Winery information:

The Hochar family's philosophy of respect for the environment means that the 180 hectares of Musar vineyards are managed with minimal human interference and all the wines are made as naturally.

Chateau Musar was the first producer in Lebanon to achieve organic certification for its vineyards. Most are located in the Bekaa Valley, cradled between two mountain ranges running parallel to Lebanon's Mediterranean coastline. Vines have been cultivated here for at least 6,000 years: the Phoenicians (seafaring ancestors of the modern Lebanese) were instrumental in bringing vines and wines from Byblos across to all of the areas around the Mediterranean.

This wine is the 'Grands Vins', each with their unique signature and imprint in the world of wine. Since 1930, every aspect of production – grape sourcing, fermentation, oak-ageing and bottle maturation – has been trialed to achieve the ultimate expression of Musar's specific 'terroirs' (site-specific interactions of soil, vine, climate and time).

A guide to the style

In youth, Chateau Musar Reds are dense and richly-textured, with intense 'baked fruit' characters: plums, damsons, cranberries, cherries, figs and dates. Bordeaux grape Cabernet Sauvignon lends black fruit flavours; Rhône grapes Cinsault and Carignan contribute fragrance (violets; pepper) and supple spiciness. Either set of qualities might dominate a particular vintage, but the style is always emphatically Lebanese: enticingly aromatic, with persistent fruit flavours. Over decades the wines acquire tawny hues and mellow notes. We still offer wines from the 1950s: mesmerising artefacts of vintage.

Flanked by snow-covered mountains, and nestled at 1000m (3,000 feet) above sea level, the serenely beautiful Bekaa Valley is blessed with 300 days of sunshine a year, fresh mountain breezes and an average temperature of 25°C (encompassing snowy winters and hot summers). Remote and unspoilt, the Musar vineyards were 'organic' by default before the term was coined.

All the grapes are hand-harvested by local Bedouins between August and October. In the winery, ambient yeasts do the work of fermentation. The bare minimum of sulphur is used and the Chateau Musar wines are neither fined nor filtered.

Vinification:

2007 was a most unusual year and followed unusual patterns.

The winter was quite normal until the 25th January when snow suddenly stopped falling on the high mountains. The temperature continued to increase until mid-March and then another winter arrived with more snow falling until the beginning of April.

Flowering had started in April for some grape varieties and then on the 20th April, we experienced a sudden frost which damaged some young leaves. May in the Bekaa Valley is typically sunny and fresh but this year, it was cloudy and rainy for about 20 days and the flowering season reached a critical stage – 30% of the flowering didn't happen and so unfortunately we began our vine life cycle with a smaller harvest.

A heat wave struck at the beginning of August which lasted for 3 weeks – adding yet a further unpredictable dimension to the harvest this year and the actual harvest of our red grapes ended up as a race!

Generally Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Carignan have different picking times but unusually this year, many vineyards reached maturity at the same time.

The fermentation temperature of the reds was steady and never reached more than 29 degrees. The fermentation ended normally but showed us that this was going to be a very serious year – almost as if the steady, controlled fermentation compensated for all the unusual phenomena that occurred throughout the year!

Grapes and vines

Seven years in the making, Chateau Musar Red is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignan and Cinsault from vineyards near the Bekaa Valley villages of Aana and Kefraya on gravelly soils over limestone. Planted from the 1930s onwards, yields are low from these mature bushvines (average age: 40 years): 35hl per hectare.

Winemaking

The varietal components in Chateau Musar Red undergo lengthy fermentations in cement vats at temperatures below 30°C. 6 months after the harvest they are transferred into French barrels (oak from the forest of Nevers) for one year.

Blending

The varietal components are brought together two years after the harvest; the resulting blend is then placed back in cement tanks before being bottled 12 months later. Each wine is blended to reflect the character of the vintage. After 4 years' bottle maturation in the deep stone cellars of Chateau Musar, the finished wines are released a full seven years after the harvest.

Storage

To keep the wines showing at their best, bottles must be cellared in darkness, lying on their sides and not subjected to unnecessary movement or fluctuations in temperature.

Food Recommendation

Decanting and serving

Bottled unfinned and unfiltered, Chateau Musar Reds are suitable for vegans (fining agents often contain animal proteins); they're also richly-textured and likely to 'throw a crust'. This is a common feature of most fine wines and is especially true of Musar Red vintages over a decade old. Ideally, bottles should be stood up the night before opening to settle any sediment. After careful decanting (and discarding of sediment, usually in the last centimetre of the bottle) the wine should be allowed to breathe for several hours and served at 18°C with roasts, grills (especially lamb), casseroles, game, and mature cheeses

