



Bin No:

1821

*Wine:* **Chateau Musar Red 2011Vt**

*Country:* *Lebanon*

*Region:* *Bekka Valley*

*Producer:* *Chateau Musar*

*Vintage:* *2011*

*Colour:* *Red*

*Grape Variety:* *Cabernet Sauvignon - Carignan - Cinsault*

*Status:* *Still*

*Organic Certification - Vegetarian - Vegan*

*Allergens:* *contains sulphites*

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

*abv: 14.0% - bottle size: 75cl*



### *Tasting Note*

*Released in the spring of 2018, the Chateau Musar Red 2011 is a dark blood red colour with a rich, fragrant fruit nose; mulberries, black cherries, plums with a hint of mocha. The palate is very intense and concentrated, it's full of volume and characterised by forest and black fruits with elegant spice.*

*The tannins are soft and juicy and it has a lengthy 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:*

*The harvest of 2011 posed one of the most challenging experiences in wine-making at Chateau Musar over the last 20 years, as it was one of the most untypical years in Lebanese history.*

*The year began with a cold January but with insufficient rain. February proved similar with March being sunnier but April and May produced the really big surprise with a level of rainfall to match January, February and March combined! The main result of the rain was very late maturation, with flowering occurring 25 days later than usual and this delay continued over the maturation period and up to the harvesting day.*

*The first Carignan was harvested on the 22nd September and then on the 23rd it rained for three days from the 23rd until the 25<sup>th</sup> September with the Carignan and the Cinsault not yet harvested.*

*The Carignan resisted the rain but the Cinsault was more affected. The harvest was finally completed on the 13th October, which with the exception of the 1983 vintage, was the latest in the company's history.*

### *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 2011 vintage is the traditional blend of approximately one third each of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan.*

*The bottling took place 3 years later in 2014, after the wines spent a year in French Nevers oak barrels.*

*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*

*Chateau Musar Red 2011 is a vibrantly powerful vintage and cellared well it will keep for decades.*

### *Decanting and serving*

*Bottled unfined 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. A great match for red meats, especially game, seasonal casseroles and mature cheeses.*

