Wine:	**Chateau Musar Red 2014Vt**
Country:	Lebanon
Region:	Bekka Valley
Producer:	Chateau Musar
Vintage:	2014

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

A deep red colour, with aromas of sweet cherry, plum and dried fruit together with a subtle spice element and hint of tobacco. The wine has a soft, rounded mouthfeel with lots of flavour and fruit concentration – caramel, mocha, ripe red fruits which are supported with soft, velvety tannins and a spicy 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:

A year for the history books, where the mountains of Lebanon failed to turn white with snow. Very low rainfall during October and November 2013, where precipitation did not exceed 18mm. This trend continued into the New Year – no rain, snow or cold weather and only two stormy days affecting no more than 20% of the country! February and March were the driest and it seems as if this winter was an extension of summer 2013. April, May, June and July, where buds open and flowering occurs was perfect for the vines, but with one very important element missing for summer survival - water. By early August, the vines were starting to suffer badly. Sugar content in Cabernet Sauvignon rose drastically while acidity was stable. The varietal lost 40% of its weight due to lack of moisture and the hard work started on the first day of the red grape harvest - four teams harvesting simultaneously for the first time in Chateau Musar history. Carignan was also affected but not to the same degree, while the survivor of them all was, as usual, the Cinsault. 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
Each varietal was fermented with natural yeasts in concrete vats. Due to the high sugar content, Cabernet Sauvignon was very slow to start, and fermentation was controlled at a lower temperature than usual to ensure its completion. Carignan was also very slow, however Cinsault survived the crisis and fermented normally with elegance and style. The wines were aged for 12 months in French oak barrels before blending in January 2017 and then bottled without fining or filtration in July and August 2017. The bottles are aged in the Chateau Musar cellars before their release in 2021.
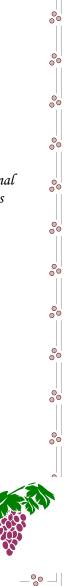
Blending
After 4 years' bottle maturation in the deep stone cellars of Chateau Musar, the finished wines are released a full seven years after the harvest.

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.

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.