

# ROTEM AND MOUNIR SAOUMA

(Above) One of the eight vineyards across five villages of the appellation that Mounir has been able to acquire, allowing for 100% estate fruit.



## Châteauneuf-du-Pape Arioso 2019

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France

### ESTATE

Burgundy meets the Rhône. An utter respect for tradition, in some ways a total break. We have watched as Mounir and Rotem Saouma, of Burgundy producer Lucien Le Moine, slowly developed their estates and wines in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and the results today are too extraordinary and distinct to ignore. The wines are stunning: precise, intense, complex, expressive visions of Châteauneuf. They somehow speak to the past, but also to the present (and we would guess, the future), all in their own voice.

### WINE

Mounir Saouma's story in the Châteauneuf-du-Pape started with a state sale of a small plot in Pignan, one of the most famous vineyard areas of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Within this first vineyard acquisition, Mounir has one plot of 100% Grenache planted in the 1930s which yields naturally at a miniscule 1 ton per acre. From these vines he produces Arioso. On the label is aptly explained: "Arioso is a style of opera somewhere between an aria and a recital. We chose this name for our wine because it is evocative of both the ethereal and profound".

### VINEYARD

*Soils:* Unique rocky alluvial vineyards (the famous "galets") and sandy soils of the area.  
*Yields:* Average of 1 tons per acre, average age of the vines is 90 years.

### WINEMAKING

*Grape Varieties:* 100% Grenache  
*Fermentation:* Whole cluster vinification after an 11 day cold maceration.  
*Aging:* 3 years in 229 and 500 liter barrels, never racked or sulfured.  
*Alcohol:* 16%

### VINTAGE

2019 was another warm and dry vintage in the southern Rhône, marked by insistent drought and repeated heat waves during the season. With little disease pressure or frost, the crop was close to normal size, but bunch and berry-size was reduced during the growing season by the lack of water. The grapes were thus concentrated and rich in sugar and acidity, although potential alcohol levels were often quite high. Vineyards at higher elevations – Châteauneuf du Pape and Gigondas in particular – handled the heat better, and the wines from those AOPs are rich yet also remarkably fresh and energetic. Despite the initial concerns about the growing season, 2019 looks to be a watershed vintage in the Southern Rhône, producing rich wines with exceptional concentration and aging potential.

## Wine Spectator

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"Smoldering incense and salty iron share the stage with ripe red fruit and a lacquer of toasty cedar in this polished, expertly crafted red, which is texturally stunning, with extremely fine tannins effortlessly carrying the weight." - K.B 11/23