



CHATEAU MUSAR ROUGE 2003

91 points Robert Parker's Wine Advocate - "...[T]his is a ripe, sexy Musar. It retains its elegant mid-palate as well as lovely fruit and fine balance. There is a slightly sweet tinge to the finish, perhaps a touch of a high-toned demeanor. The lush texture and surprising richness make this a rather luscious wine by Musar standards..." (6/2013)

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan. Organic. The 2003 harvest was a unique experience and two words can aptly summarize it: Alcohol & Acidity: this vintage is rich in both. The harvest started on September 4th and the grapes were very healthy with good maturity and ripeness. The fermentation temperature was controlled between 27 and 30 degrees Celsius with 2 pump-overs per day to increase extraction, with a long maceration: about 3 weeks. Malolactic fermentation followed immediately. By the end of November, all the wines had finished their malolactic fermentation and had been racked. The wines spent 9 months in cement vats and then a year in French Nevers oak barriques. The three varietals, which up until then had been kept separately, were very fragrant, displaying highly contrasting aromas. The final blend rested for another 6 months in vats before being bottled and transferred to the Chateau Musar cellars high in the mountains at Ghazir to begin its journey of maturation and development.

The wines of Chateau Musar are unique expressions from a country with an ancient winemaking culture, as vines have been cultivated from Lebanon's high altitude Bekaa Valley for over 6,000 years. The vineyards of Chateau Musar are located in the Bekaa Valley and in Mount Barouk, around Kefraya and Aana, which is about a two-hour drive from the winery in Ghazir, just north of Beirut. The Bekaa Valley receives an average of 300 days of sunshine annually, and 39–78 inches of rain per year. The Bekaa has a Mediterranean climate and an altitude of more than 3,000 feet above sea level. The soil is predominately gravelly with a limestone base.

Chateau Musar was founded in 1930 by Gaston Hochar. In 1959, after studying oenology at the University of Bordeaux, his son Serge became winemaker. The civil war that tore Lebanon apart from 1975 to 1990 did not defeat Chateau Musar; Serge refused to abandon the wine, and lost only the 1976 and 1984 vintages to the war. Owing to his inspiring determination and grand passion for his wines, Serge received the inaugural "Man of the Year Award" from Decanter magazine in 1984. Recognition from Michael Broadbent, at the 1979 Bristol Wine Fair, threw Musar into the international spotlight and helped create a cult-like following. Chateau Musar is one of the most written-about and discussed wines in the world today. Every wine of Chateau Musar is produced naturally with a 'non-interventionist' wine making philosophy and the winery was the first in Lebanon to implement organically certified viticulture.

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Tasting Note:

CHATEAU MUSAR ROUGE 2003

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault & Carignan.
Ripe and sexy; elegant mid-palate, lovely fruit
& fine balance; lush texture & surprising richness;
slightly sweet tinge on the finish. Organic.

Shelf Talker:

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ROUGE 2003

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