

CHATEAU MUSAR ROUGE 2012

"An equal blend of Cinsault, Carignan and Cabernet Sauvignon, from a bakingly hot vintage, it has all the Musar hallmarks of rich, ripe, savoury fruit backed by an underlying sweetness and softness" Jonny Ray – The Spectator Magazine March 2019

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan. A dark burgundy color. Aromas of matured stone fruits, plums and figs with licorice and spicy notes. It has big developed ripe fruit on the nose and a bold taste profile of juicy, black fruits plus mocha and leather and a beautiful lingering finish. Intensely smoky and spicy. Cellared well it will keep for decades. Organic.



2012 was an interesting year of contrasts as January and February were extremely cold and snowy, April proved fresh and rainy giving a boost for the opening of the buds. In early May, all the vineyards were astonishingly green with many small buds. June was very hot indeed but the vines withstood this and flowering occurred with such success that they were expecting a big harvest. A very hot July followed with 10 days of heat wave with temperatures of 102-104 degrees – this caused the vines to tire and green leaves turned pale, even yellow in some places, almost as if October was early and causing the harvest to be much smaller than they had initially hoped.

The vineyards are situated toward the southern end of the Bekaa Valley, north of Lake Qaroun, in the villages of Aana and Kefraya. 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. The vines were planted from the 1930s onwards (average age: 40 years). The grapes are hand-picked in the cool of the morning. Lengthy fermentations with natural yeasts in separate cement vats, racked at 6 months after the harvest. Then aged in French barrels (oak from the forest of Nevers) for one year. The resulting wines are blended to reflect the strengths and individual characteristics of the year and bottled without filtration at the end of the 3rd year following harvest. The final blend is aged for a further 3-4 years in bottle before being released in its 7th year.

In 1930, at just 20 years old, Gaston Hochar founded Chateau Musar, inspired by Lebanon's 6,000-year winemaking tradition and his travels in Bordeaux. In 1959, after studying oenology at the University of Bordeaux, Serge, Gaston's eldest son, with great passion became winemaker, his father having graciously given way. Serge then spent 18 years perfecting the formula for Chateau Musar's Red. The civil war that tore Lebanon apart from 1975-1990 did not defeat them; 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. Today, Chateau Musar is one of the most written-about and discussed wines in the world. 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 2012

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault & Carignan. Aromas of stone fruit, plums & figs with licorice & spice; big ripe fruit aromas & a bold taste profile of juicy, black fruits plus mocha & leather; intensely smoky & spicy with a beautiful lingering finish. Organic.

Shelf Talker:

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