

CHATEAU MUSAR ROUGE 2015

An equal blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan. Deep ruby color and an aroma of fresh hedgerow berries - bramble, blackcurrant and cherry, also more complexity coming through later with leather and delicate, peppery-spice notes. The flavors are similar, with some soft vanilla, warming spice and a cocoa note. Fresh acidity and supple tannins make the wine a perfect accompaniment to richer, fattier meats like duck or a ribeye steak. Organic.

"It's a beauty of course, a blend as of yore of Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignan and Cinsault. It was fiendishly tricky vintage with a frost in April and a heat wave in September, threatening local disaster. Indeed some 65% of Cab. Sauv. was lost. What little wine that was made though, is glorious" – Jonathan Ray, The Spectator, July 2021

2015 - One of the most challenging vintages in a generation. A good start with plenty of rain and snow, then temperatures rising toward the end of March, however 10-18th April, night-time temperatures fell to between -8 and -12°C which destroyed buds that had started to open. By early May, there were hectares of blackened vines and the situation looked catastrophic. Gradually, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, green shoots emerged from the stems of the vines. Rising temperatures throughout August and a heatwave into September resulted in further losses to the harvest. Cabernet Sauvignon with 65% losses to the crop; Cinsault with losses of 70% in Aana and 40% in Kefraya; Carignan was 50% down.

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 2015

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault & Carignan.
Aromas of bramble, blackcurrant & cherry,
leather & delicate, peppery-spice notes;
similar flavors, with some soft vanilla,
warming spice & a cocoa note; fresh
acidity & supple tannins. Organic.

Shelf Talker:

CHATEAU MUSAR ROUGE 2015

Equal parts Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault & Carignan. Deep ruby color & an aroma of fresh hedgerow berries - bramble, blackcurrant & cherry, also more complexity coming through later with leather & delicate, peppery-spice notes. The flavors are similar, with some soft vanilla, warming spice & a cocoa note. Fresh acidity & supple tannins make the wine a perfect accompaniment to richer, fattier meats like duck or a ribeye steak. Organic.



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