

CHATEAU MUSAR BLANC 2016



Obaideh and Merwah. Yellow-gold color. Wholly unique. Honey, nuts and citrus. Restrained yet persistent minerality and acidity. Dry, rich and creamy. Extremely long finish. Organic.

"The 2016 Ch. Musar White is an extraordinary wine. An oak-fermented blend of two indigenous varieties — Obaideh and Merwah — it's likened by some to a mature dry white Bordeaux and by others to a Manzanilla. I reckon it could pass for old white Rhône and Mike thinks for old white Rioja. The truth is that it's not like anything else at all. Yes, there's that oxidative character, so typical of Musar, but there are also notes of honey, nuts, cream and citrus. It's rich but dry and I'll be frank: you might not like it. But if, like Mike and me, you do, you'll absolutely lap it up." Jonathan Ray, The Spectator Magazine

Musar White is a blend of ancient grape varieties Obaideh and Merwah, indigenous to the mountains of Lebanon. The Obaideh vineyards are in the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon mountains on stony, chalky soils. The Merwah vines are on the seaward side of Mount Lebanon, on calcareous gravels. Yields are very low for these untrained bush vines. The vineyards were planted between 60-90 years ago and are at a high altitude (around 4,000ft) and are still on their own roots. There are very few vineyards in the world of this caliber. Chateau Musar White is fermented in French oak *barriques* (from the forest of Nevers) for 9 months, bottled and blended at the end of its first year, and finally released seven years after the harvest. Vintage release in 2020 — cellared well, this wine will gain complexity for decades. Chateau Musar has been producing white wines from indigenous grapes since the 1930's.

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 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, when he was only 20 years old. 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. 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:

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Obaideh & Merwah. Wholly unique; honey, nuts & citrus; restrained yet persistent minerality & acidity; dry, rich & creamy; extremely long finish. Organic.

Shelf Talker:

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