



"Terroir"

- **Vineyards:** these spread over approximately fifty kilometres of the right bank of the Rhône, from Chavanay in the North to Guilherand in the South, and include 26 communes, 23 of which are in the Ardèche, and 3 in the Loire.
- **Soil types:** light soils of schist and gneiss on a granitic bedrock. South/South-east exposure.
- **Climate:** moderate continental, hot dry summers with regular rainfall during the other seasons.
- **Background:** delicate and delicious, this wine was sold as early as the 16th century, and was enjoyed at the tables of the French Kings. It was given its present name in the 17th Century by the Jesuits of Tournon. In the years between 1956 and 1969, all the vineyards of this part of the Côtes du Rhône were grouped together and were consecrated Local AC Saint-Joseph.

Production

- **Area under cultivation*:** 1095 hectares, annual production: 41094 hl; basic yield: 40 hl/hectare.
- **Grape variety mix:** Syrah for the reds (with up to 10% Roussanne or Marsanne), Roussanne and Marsanne for the whites. Minimum density of grape variety mix: 4500 vines per hectare.
- **Pruning:** Syrah: goblet or fan pruning with a maximum of 6 spurs and 2 or 3 eyes, with a total of 15 eyes per vine (or Guyot pruning). Roussanne and Marsanne, goblet or fan pruning with a maximum of 6 spurs and 2 productive eyes.
- **Wine making:** for the reds, minimum natural alcohol content by volume 10%; traditional long fermentation, maturing between 10 months to 2 years or oak casks with regular racking. For the whites, same natural alcoholic content, fermentation in open vats for 15 days, then matured for several months.

Tasting and drinking

- **Appearance:** the reds have a deep colour. The whites are a limpid and glossy yellow-green.
- **Nose:** the reds, with their subtle perfume of blackcurrant and raspberry, take on the nuance of leather and liquorice with age. The whites have a bouquet of wild flowers, acacia and honey.
- **Palate:** the reds show finesse, with a harmonious and supple body, without being too corpulent. The whites show a wealth of freshness and generosity, and are long in the mouth.
- **At the table:** both reds and whites make a congenial partner for modern, low fat cooking. The white should be served chilled, while the red is best at 14° to 17°.
- **Laying down:** reds can be laid down for long periods though they develop quite quickly and are at their best after 4 or 5 years. The whites, excellent when young (after 2 years), will also improve with age. Famous vintages: 1986, 1989.
- **Famous patrons:** Victor Hugo and Jean Valjean.



The words to express it

"In good company, Saint-Joseph wines are sufficiently distinctive to merit comment, yet simple enough to grace any table."

* Source: harvest statement 2006

