

"Terroir"

- **Vineyards:**
located around the slopes of Beaumes-de-Venise, on the south facing slopes of the Dentelles de Montmirail.
- **Soil types:**
sandy loam to the south, and argilo-calcareous to the north.
- **Climate:**
Mediterranean, hot and dry with the Mistral winds moderated by the Dentelles de Montmirail hills.
- **Background:**
in the 1st century A.D., Pline l'Ancien mentioned the existence of Muscat in his natural history, this lively and fruity wine, long cultivated at Balme. It was nicknamed "The Bees' Vine". Nearer to our own times, in the fourteenth century the Pope Clement V, a fine connoisseur, had a 70 hectares muscat vineyard planted on the slopes of the Beaumes-de-Venise. It was in 1945 that the decree dedicating the title of AC, with effect backdated to 1943, was awarded to Beaumes-de-Venise Vin Doux Naturel Muscat (Muscat fortified wine).

Tasting and drinking

It is the only Rhône Valley AC Muscat.

- **Appearance:** deep golden with a hint of pink.
- **Nose:** it is a aromatic wine with floral notes, citrus fruits and exotic undertones, especially litchi.
- **Palate:** good length in mouth and sweet.
- **At the table:** appreciated as an appetiser, it is also excellent with melon. Muscat teams up exceptionally well with smoked salmon puffs, lightly seared foie gras, some blue cheeses and fruity desserts (lemon, peach, apricot, etc.).
- **Laying down:** it should be drunk young and chilled to really make the most of the freshness, but is also worth cellaring.
- **Famous patron :** Frédéric Mistral.

The words to express it

In 1760, Fornery, Comtat Venaissin's historian wrote of Beaumes-de-Venise: "They make a good muscat wine there, the grapes mature earlier than elsewhere and are excellent"

* Source: harvest statement 2006.

Production

- **Area under cultivation*:**
511 hectares, annual production: 12324 hl; basic yield: 30 hl/hectare.
- **Grape variety:**
small berried Muscat, also known as "Muscat de Frontignan". The grapes must have a sugar content of more than 252 g/l. Mutage during fermentation with pure alcohol of a minimum 95 degrees proof. The wines must contain 110g/l of sugar and have a minimum alcohol titration of 15%.



"Terroir"

- **Vineyards:**
they straddle the communes of Rasteau (mainly), Cairanne and Sablet having just twenty land parcels.
- **Soil types:**
similar to those of the Côtes du Rhône Rasteau Appellation, brown calcareous soils, poor marly soils and red earthed clay based terrain. The main exposures are southern, offering a high level of grape maturity to the vines.
- **Climate:**
typically Mediterranean, characterised by heat and sun, which explains how harvests often promise high alcohol production and lend themselves easily to the creation of fortified wines.
- **Background:**
in 1934, the wine makers made an audacious experiment in the creation of fortified wine. The result was satisfactory. At this time, the commune was divided between vines, fruit trees and olives. Production of fortified wines expanded. The AC Rasteau Vin Doux Naturel was recognised by the decree of the 5th January 1944 (effectiveness backdated to 1943) which was to later be superseded and replaced by the decree of the 18th May 1972.

Tasting and drinking

- **Appearance:** the reds have a deep colour, the rancios and the whites (golden) have a colour palate that ranges from copper to apricot.
- **Nose:** the reds are redolent of forest fruits, spices and liquorice. The rancios and golden whites have a characteristic overtone of jellied fruits (apricot or orange), of quince jam and vanilla.
- **Palate:** the reds have foursquare tannins, the rancios and the golden whites have a toasty underlayer, with caramelised fruits.
- **At the table:** served as an appetiser or at the end of the meal with blue cheeses (Roquefort, Gorgonzola) and with an orange or melon "sweet" or apricot sorbet.
- **Laying down:** has a very high cellaring potential, more than 20 years for the great vintages.

The words to express it

Totally seductive... Inhale, gaze and savour. The great Rasteau wines tantalizes you. Let yourself go. Resistance is in vain, Their soul resides in the sun and the land.

* Source: harvest statement 2006.

Production

- **Area under cultivation*:**
47 hectares, annual production: 1344 hl; basic yield: 30 hl/hectare.
- **Grape variety:**
the grape variety mix is simple: black Grenache must represent at least 90% to the exclusion of other fortified wine grape varieties (malvoisie, maccabéo and muscats). The remaining 10% is made up with grape varieties accepted with in the AC Côtes du Rhône. In practice, the fortified wines are most often produced using 100% Grenache.
- **Minimum alcoholic strength:**
the production rules comply with the legislation for other fortified wines. Mutage must be carried out with neutral alcohol having an alcohol titration of at least 95% proof, in a proportion of 5% minimum to 10% maximum. The minimum proof (acquired alcohol and fermentation alcohol) must be 21.5% in volume with a minimum of 15% acquired alcohol. The minimum sugar content in the must is set at 252 gr/l.

