

RHÔNE VALLEY  
Châteauneuf-du-PapeCLOS DES  
BRUSQUIÈRES  
(COURTIL-THIBAUT)

Châteauneuf-du-Pape



Claude Courtil



## OVERVIEW

This miniscule, ultra-traditional estate produces tiny quantities of just one wine: no luxury cuvee, no specialty blend, just a stunningly pure and complex Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Owner Claude Courtil is the godson of none other than Henri Bonneau, one of the most legendary and revered producers in the region, and he learned everything he knows about winemaking from his godfather. Henri and Claude share a deeply held commitment to natural winemaking: manual vineyard work, traditional aging in large foudres, and bottling without intrusive fining and filtration. A reserved, introspective man, Courtil spends most of his time quietly in the fields or at the winery, gradually improving the quality of his small production. In fact, Courtil sold his entire production to *négociants* until he was happy with his wine, beginning with the 1996 vintage. Most of his eight and a half hectares are to the north of the village on stony soil, and he has been producing steadily more impressive and complete wine ever since—though the '96 is an extremely gorgeous Chateauneuf in its own right! This is truly a special domaine, and one that is extremely deserving of your attention.

**Varieties:** Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsault

**Total Acreage:** about 21 acres

**Average Production:** 2,000 cases

## VINEYARD/CELLAR PRACTICES

- All vineyard work is done by hand: yields are kept very low, and fruit is harvested as late as possible
- Extended whole-cluster maceration and fermentation in glass-lined cement tanks, usually (though not always) followed by aging in older foudres
- The blend generally roughly 60% Grenache, 30% Syrah and 10% Mourvèdre.

## WINES

## Clos des Brusquières Châteauneuf-du-Pape

A sensuous, suede-textured pliant *cuvée* with a bit of a reactionary character (no doubt the influence of Henri Bonneau): it is always the product of each vintage, not a preferred stylistic outcome, so it is somewhat subject to change, but it never fails to be a densely broad-fruited, sleek (but not shiny) wine with a rounded structure.

## ACCOLADES

## 2009 Clos des Brusquières Châteauneuf-du-Pape

A rather polished, modern style, with rounded mouthfeel to the rich layers of cassis, plum sauce and blackberry preserves, all followed by lush fruitcake and Christmas pudding notes on the finish. Stays rounded throughout, but has ample length and density, and should show more range with cellaring. More modern in style than typical for this domaine. Drink now through 2020. **91 points**

**James Molesworth, *Wine Spectator*, 10/2011**

Vivid ruby. Aromas of raspberry compote, smoke and potpourri, enlivened by a strong suggestion of cannabis. Densely packed but penetrating, with a firm spine of acidity adding lift and clarity to its sweet red fruit and floral pastille flavors. Seamless and pliant, accented by lovely lingering spiciness and sneaky tannins. I really like this style. **91-93 points**

**Josh Reynolds, *International Wine Cellar*, #155**

Made from a slightly different blend (67% Grenache, 32% Syrah and 1% Mourvedre; 95% aged in concrete), the **2009 Chateauneuf-du-Pape** possesses a dark ruby color as well as sweet black currant and raspberry fruit intertwined with dusty, loamy soil undertones, and hints of licorice as well as spring flowers. Medium to full-bodied with good density for a 2009, along with a beguiling, up-front fruitiness, it should be drunk over the next 7-8 years. **88-90+ points**

**Robert Parker, *The Wine Advocate*, #191**



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