

# Domaine du Dragon

Cote de Provence  
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France

Cote de Provence

## OVERVIEW

Some fifteen miles back from the Mediterranean, at a cooling 900-foot elevation lies an estate which is the hobby of a gentleman known in his own trade circles as "the wallpaper King of Belgium". There, a Madagascar-born (and trained!) oenologist is taking a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Cabernet Sauvignon and sometimes, Mourvedre in a deliciously different direction.

Domaine du Dragon's prestige "Cuvée Saint-Michel" was once compared by wine writer Robert Parker to that thickly-rich Bordeaux effusion of sweet fruit and new oak, Henri Dubosq's Haut Marbuzet. Dragon, Parker opined, is "decadent, hedonistically styled ... a knockout." Each year, the aroma of this wine is full of coconut, vanilla, cedar and sweet spices.

But the real knockout comes when you discover that this exotic character isn't from new wood at all. Although the wine is, as the label proclaims, "elevé en fût de chene", almost none of that wood is new. (With such a low bottle price, the estate couldn't afford new wood if they wanted. But they have indulged in some 1 year-old barrels from the Domaine de la Romanée Conti.) No, it is "simply" (mysteriously) the characteristic of Syrah from these vines in this soil to have that character. The bit of Cabernet certainly boosts the wine's Bordeaux personality a bit, too.

## WINES

### Côtes du Provence Rouge Hautes Vignes 2009

Syrah, Mourvèdre, Grenache & Cabernet. Traditional-style vinification, except for the Mourvedre which is done by a modified carbonic maceration, to enhance the fruit of the total blend. 10 months+ in barrel for the prestige cuvées.

### Côtes du Provence Rouge Cuvée St.-Michel 2008

Cabernet Sauvignon 50% -Syrah 40% - Grenache 10% Aged in Burgundian barrels (225 l) for 13 months and bottled after a unique plate filtration. The skillful balance of the tannins enables a serene aging and guarantees a cellar potential up to 10 years. Grape harvest is entirely sorted out and destaked, then poured out by gravity into a maceration vat for a period of 15 to 28 days. To get a better color, substance and tannin extraction, the vats are thermo-regulated at 27°C. After the alcoholic fermentation, the wine undergoes its malo-lactic fermentation in concrete vats. The Cuvée St Michel is transferred, then aged in oak barrels (from new to 5 years old) for 13 months.

## ACCOLADES for Previous vintages—current ones are unrated...

"If you can find it in the marketplace, it is a knock-out wine..."

"This is one of the finest estates in Provence, and their offerings are all fine values."

Both quotes are from **Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate**

### 2007 Domaine du Dragon Cotes de Provence Hautes Vignes 90 Points

"With unusually high percentages of Mourvedre (50%) and Cabernet Sauvignon (40%) and only 5% each of Syrah and Grenache, the 2007 Cotes de Provence Hautes Vignes smells of ripe plums, roasted meats, and herbs. Silky in texture, dripping with ripe plum and beef juices, and loaded with saline, savory, smoky, and faintly bitter herbal notes, it finishes with richness and grip astonishing for its price. Enjoy it over the next 2-3 years."

**Wine Advocate #178 Aug 2008 David Schildknecht**

**Varieties:** : Syrah, Mourvèdre, Grenache & Cabernet.

**Total Acreage:** 60

**Average Production:**

Nearly all of the wine is now estate-bottled, but the prestige cuvées amount to fewer than 1,000 cases