

vinous

MONTIRIUS, CONFIDENTIEL 2016 GIGONDAS 93-95

(All concrete) Deep bright-hued ruby. A vibrant, spice-accented nose evokes red berries, garrigue, incense and exotic spices.

Juicy, focused and light on its feet, showing impressive clarity and a delicate touch to the sweet raspberry liqueur, spicecake and lavender pastille flavors.

Silky, even tannins add shape and subtle grip to a wonderfully long, sweet finish that shows outstanding delineation and tension.

MONTIRIUS, TERRE DES AÎNÉS 2016 GIGONDAS 92-94

(Raised entirely in concrete tanks) Vivid ruby-red. A complex, expansive bouquet displays aromas of red fruit preserves, candied flowers and garrigue, and a smoky mineral nuance emerges as the wine opens up.

Fleshy yet energetic and precise, offering sweet, concentrated raspberry, cherry, candied lavender and spicecake flavors that deepen slowly on the back half.

The mineral note adds lift and structure and drives an impressively long, focused finish that features well-knit tannins and resonating florality.

2016 Gigondas - A Slam Dunk

BY JOSH RAYNOLDS | AUGUST 2, 2018

TWO THOUSAND SIXTEEN IN GIGONDAS, AS IN THE REST OF THE SOUTHERN RHÔNE, EXPERIENCED A GROWING SEASON FOR THE RECORD BOOKS, YET AGAIN - PRODUCING EXPRESSIVE, INTENSE, FRUIT-DRIVEN WINES OF OFTEN PROFOUND DEPTH AS WELL AS ENERGY.

Two thousand sixteen is one of the most consistently outstanding vintages for Gigondas that I have ever tasted. I felt the same way about the 2015s when I sampled them at the same stage, and while I'm not quite prepared to predict that the 2016s will surpass the earlier set of wines over the long haul, I'll bet that it will be a close race. Perhaps most importantly to the majority of wine drinkers is that the '16s will likely be enjoyable throughout their lives while the '15s really deserve – if not require – patience.



The Gigondas vineyards that lie just beneath the Dentelles de Montmirail mountains produce deep but energetic and ageworthy wines

Altitude Makes the Difference

Again The best vineyards in Gigondas are located up to 600 meters above sea level, which contributes to the relative freshness and energy of these wines compared to, for example, those of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, which only reaches 120 meters at its highest point.

During the critical summer months of 2016 the days were sunny and warm, often hot, but the nights were consistently cool, which helped to preserve acidity and allowed ripeness to rise steadily without grape sugars spiking. Louis Barruol of Château de Saint Cosme, one of the region's most experienced and talented producers, told me that while 2016 bears comparison to other recent warm years like 2010 and 2009, "the wines have more energy than the '09s and less serious tannins and livelier fruit than the '10s."



Gigondas is home to a wealth of old vines, mostly Grenache

Julien Brechet of Domaine des Bosquets, who has emerged as one of the appellation's true stars, noted that high-altitude sites such as those in the Dentelles de Montmirail have been proving their value in recent hot vintages.

These generally cooler sites enable their grapes to retain acidity and freshness while warmer vineyards at lower altitude often produce fruit that's lower in acidity, deficient in structure and higher in alcohol.