

Domaine du Crampilh

Region: Southwest – Madiran AOC

Information: Region/AOC

The Madiran AOC is located in the southwest region of France, nestled in the heart of Armagnac country. Vineyards as a tradition in this area date back to the 1st century BC in Gallo-Roman times. Set against the extraordinary backdrop of this charming countryside, in a region known for their white wine; you find a sanctuary in the red wines of Madiran. Finding solace in the small hills at the foot of the Pyrenees, the wines from this clay-limestone soil reverberate with black fruits and spices.



Marie Oulie, owner-winemaker

History

Over four generations of the Oulie family have kept alive the venerable tradition of winemaking in the heart of the AOC of Madiran. Year by year the grapes are carefully picked by hand, always keeping the traditional sense of well being and conviviality that is the essence of the Southwest of France. Here in the “heart of darkness”, the Oulie family has created a firm, robust red worthy of the centuries old accolade.

Terroir

Only red wines are produced from the calcareous clay that is typified by the presence of gravels and pebbles; which is the terroir of the Madiran. Stretching over 69 acres, Domaine du Crampilh’s vines are planted on side hills that are bathed in the sun’s rays, thanks due in part to a south/southeast orientation. Their wines resonate with the strength imparted to them by the chalky-clay soil and the beneficent maritime climate. This oceanic climate has more extremes than the other areas closer to the Atlantic. Unlike other regions that are closer to the coast, here in Madiran the grapes enjoy warmer summers and colder winters that are typified by sudden stormy changes.

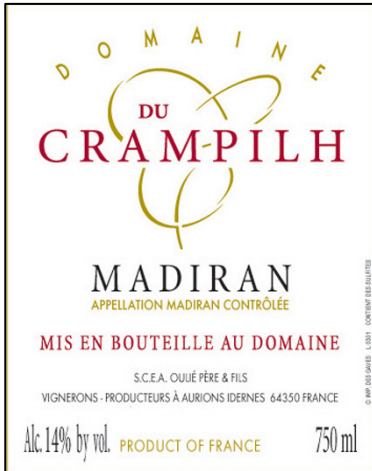
Winemaking

The wines of Madiran are best represented by the variety of grape that is indigenous to the region and thrives in the maritime climate; Tannat. Known for its complex structure and black and red fruit notes, Tannat is an important part of all Madiran wines. Other varieties to be found in the “heart of darkness” are Cabernet Sauvignon, Fer-Servadou (Braucol) and Cabernet Franc. The Oulie family picks all of their harvest by hand in order to gather the premium fruit for the cuvee, thus revealing all the aromas and the full balance of the wines. Then the wine is traditionally vinified in stainless steel vats with micro-oxygenation. After this the wine is aged in French oak barrels for eight and twelve months.

Practices: Sustainable Farming

Winemaker: Marie Oulie

The Wines:



“Domaine du Crampilh Cuvée l’Originel”

This delightful cuvee is 70% Tannat and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon. Aged in stainless steel tank with Micro-oxygenation process for 8 months. Its beautiful purple red color is indicative of the intense and savory nose which expresses a great maturity. The concentrated, rich, palate has an appealing black ripe fruit character that results in delicious aromas and round tannins with evocative spicy notes, of an excellent intensity. Wines from the Southwest of France contain the highest levels of polyphenols in the WORLD and are proven to help fight cancer and bad cholesterol.

88 Points Wine Advocate: 2006 Vintage

Marie Oulie’s 2006 Madiran L’Originel blends 30% Cabernet Sauvignon into its Tannat, and is vinified and aged entirely in stainless steel (with the micro-oxidation that originated in and is common to this appellation and its naturally tannin-rich Tannat grape). Speaking of oxygen, this is also typical of its appellation in thriving on decantation. Cocoa powder, mint, vanilla, oriental tobacco, and lightly cooked cherry in the nose lead to a dense yet by no means obstreperously-tannic palate that preserves an admirable sense of juicy refreshment and even a hint of creaminess of texture. Walnut oil, mint chocolate and bitter-sweet vanilla bean and cherry skin inform a satisfyingly long finish. I have no prior experience with this cuvee, but would imagine it worth following for at least 5-6 years in bottle. Tank-rendered Madiran from the reputedly “bad old” pre-micro-ox days (an exaggerated if not downright misleading characterization) certainly could flourish for a decade or more in bottle.