

2016 Clos Saint Jean Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina

More cured meats, spice, loamy soil notes, and an incredible core of kirsch and currant fruits emerge from the 2016 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina. Deep, incredibly concentrated, multi-dimensional and long, it reminds me of the 2007 at this same point in time. This cuvée is always a 60/40 split of Grenache and Mourvèdre, brought up in tank and new demi-muids, and in top vintages, needs 2-5 years of bottle age to really shine, yet I always also find a certain accessibility given its balance and purity. It's capable of lasting for two decades.

The Maurel brothers, along with rock star consultant Philippe Cambie, continue to knock it out of the park in just about every vintage, and since taking over control of the estate in 2002, they've yet to put a foot wrong. Even in the more difficult vintages, they're able to produce charming, balanced, delicious wine, and in top vintages, they produce some of the greatest wines on earth. As I've written in the past, Clos Saint Jean is at the top of their game and producing some of the most singular, hedonistic and brilliant wines in the world. Also, I was able to taste a retrospective of the white Châteauneuf-du-Pape and came away thinking that current vintages might be some of the most under-the-radar, great whites of the appellation.

- Jeb Dunnuck (8/28/2018)