

2016 Clos Saint Jean Châteauneuf-du-Pape Sanctus Sanctorum

One of the greatest young wines I've ever tasted is the 2016 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Sanctus Sanctorum which is 100% old vine Grenache sourced from a single parcel in the La Crau lieu-dit. Lighter in color than both the Combes des Fous and Ex Machina, it offers a heavenly perfume of kirsch liqueur, crushed rocks, exotic spices, and graphite. This beauty hits the palate with an incredible display of opulent, decent fruit paired with an elegance and seamlessness that needs to be tasted to be believed. With building richness, no weight, ultra-fine tannins, and a finish that won't quit, it's released only in magnum, so it will take upward of a decade to hit maturity and will keep for 20+ years. Hats off to the Maurel family and their consultant Philippe Cambie!

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)