

2017 Clos Saint Jean Chateauneuf Du Pape La Combe Des Fous

The 2017 Châteauneuf Du Pape La Combe Des Fous checks in as a normal blend of 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah, and the rest Vaccarèse and Cinsault, raised in tank and demi-muids. Kirsch liqueur, white flowers, graphite, ground pepper, and obvious minerality all emerge from this ethereal yet powerful, concentrated 2017. It's very much in the more Provençal, elegant style of this vintage, yet has classic Clos Saint Jean purity, style, and power. It's a gorgeous wine.

I know it will shock long time readers, but yes indeed, Clos Saint Jean has again made some of the wines of the vintage in both 2017 and 2018. Enough can't be said about the quality coming from the team of Vincent and Pascal Maurel, as well as consultant Philippe Cambie, and these wines possess that rare mix of incredible power and richness pared with a sense of weightlessness and elegance. Looking at the 2017, these remind me of the estate's 2009s with their incredibly Provençal, sexy, full-throttle styles. I'm sure alcohols are pushing 16% so these aren't for those looking for lightweight wines, yet they remain pure, balanced, and are simply profound wines. The 2018 showed beautifully as well and while they don't quite have the mid-palate depth of the 2017, they pack plenty of power and stay pure, balanced, and silky. These are majestic, magical wines that could come from nowhere else.

- Jeb Dunnuck (8/16/2019)