

2017 Clos Saint Jean Chateauneuf Du Pape Vieilles Vignes

As always, the 2017 Châteauneuf Du Pape Vieilles Vignes has a touch more dark fruits, more concentration, and more structure, which makes it less approachable but more age-worthy. Blackcurrants, ground pepper, bouquet garni, crushed rocks, and garrigue notes all emerge from this structured, focused, yet ripe and beautifully textured Châteauneuf Du Pape that's going to benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age.

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)