



2012 Clos Saint-Jean Chateauneuf du Pape Deus Ex Machina

A Proprietary Blend Dry Red Table wine from France, Chateauneuf du Pape, Southern Rhone, Rhone, France

Review by Jeb Dunnuck
eRobertParker.com # 215 (Oct 2014)
Rating: 98
Drink 2018 - 2032
Cost: \$160-\$199

The 2012 Châteauneuf du Pape Deus Ex Machina is a blend of 60% Grenache aged in foudre (from close to 100-year-old vines) and 40% Mourvedre aged in demi-muids. Its deep ruby/purple color is followed by incredible notes of cassis, roasted meats, licorice, toasted spice and a liquid rock-like minerality. Full-bodied, massive and concentrated, yet also seamless, elegant and incredibly polished, it flows onto the palate with building tannin, no hard edges and perfect balance. I wouldn't be surprised to see this merit a perfect rating in the future, and it should hit prime-time drinking around age 10, and have 20-25 years of overall longevity. It's one of the few wines to hit this level of quality in the vintage. This 120 acres estate, under the leadership of the Maurel brothers and oenologist Philippe Cambie, continues to fashion some of the most profound wines on the planet. Their 2012s, which is a vintage compared to a mix of 2009 and 2010 by Vincent, fall just short of what was accomplished here in 2010 and 2007, but are incredible wines that certainly rank at the top of the vintage. Readers should also check out the retrospective from this estate in Issue 214 to get an idea how these wines evolve. Importer(s): Eric Solomon. European Cellars, 2129 E Seventh St., Charlotte, NC 28204, (704) 358-1565, www.europeancellars.com

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The largest-scaled and structured of the lineup, the 2012 Chateauneuf du Pape Dues-Ex Machina is a blend of 60% tank-aged Grenache and 40% barrel-aged (demi-muid) Mourvedre. Deep, concentrated

and dense, with a massive core of dark berry and currant fruit, graphite, ground pepper, pan drippings and dusty earth aromas and flavors, this blockbuster effort is incredibly full-bodied in the vintage, yet never puts a foot wrong. My guess is that it will require a handful of years in the cellar and then age gracefully for two decades. Drink 2016-2032. Always one of the highlight visits during my time spent working in the Southern Rhone, Clos Saint-Jean, which includes over 100 acres of prime terroir in Chateauneuf du Pape (mostly in the south), is run by brothers Pascal and Vincent Maurel, with consulting help from the incredibly talented Philippe Cambie. Releasing 5 Chateauneufs in top vintages, they also pair up with Manfred Krankl, of Sine Qua Non in California's Santa Barbara County, and release another high-end cuvee call Chimere. While the winemaking here is often labeled as modern, it is actually relatively traditional, with the Grenache almost always aged in tank and only the Mourvedre and Syrah seeing time in larger, 500-600 liter oak barrels, or demi-muids. In addition, the cuvees may also include small amounts of whole-cluster fermentation. Regardless of how you classify it, the results speak for themselves and there are few wines in the world I'd rather drink. Importers: Eric Solomon, European Cellars, Charlotte, NC; tel. (704) 358-1565 and Paul M. Young, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (323) 222-2003 Importer(s): Eric Solomon. European Cellars, 2129 E Seventh St., Charlotte, NC 28204, (704) 358-1565 , www.europeancellars.com
