

Les Wineries du Rhône

Maison &
Domaines
Les Alexandrins



PORTRAIT —

NÉGOCIANT/ WINEGROWER

Maison & Domaines Les Alexandrins brings together two great winemaking stories. On the one hand we have Nicolas Jaboulet, representing the 6th generation of a winegrowing family with strong ties to Tain l'Hermitage since 1884. On the other there's Alexandre Caso, a specialist in the terroirs of the northern Rhône, who in 2002 set up vineyard support services company Ceptentrion'al with his friend Guillaume Sorrell. In 2009, the two went on to found Domaine Les Alexandrins. Nicolas, Alexandre and Guillaume ran into each other in 2011, while Alexandre was looking after one of Nicolas' vineyards. Nicolas had joined the Perrin family in 2009 to establish Maison Nicolas Perrin (Revue de Vins de France's Négociant of the Year 2011), and was constantly on the lookout for vineyards to add to their portfolio. They took over Domaine des Alexandrins in 2015, re-naming it Maison & Domaines Les Alexandrins, and retaining Nicolas, Alexandre and Guillaume as the team in charge. "To start with," says Nicolas, "Nicolas Perrin was simply a négociant business, no more, no less. But given my genetic disposition and my family history with Paul Jaboulet Aîné, it was clear that at some point we'd want land to make our own estate wines. It was just a matter of timing and opportunity." Since 2015, business has grown apace, helped along in so small way by Alexandre, whose 20 years of working closely with the Rhône vineyards had introduced him to a large number of winegrowers, both active and close to retirement. "When we joined forces, we had eight hectares of AOC vineyards," he says, "Four and a half in Crozes-Hermitage, the rest in Saint Joseph. Today we have over thirty, plus a reserve of land which we plan to plant up little by little. We're moving forward, slowly and methodically."

Two years ago, Guillaume Sorrel left, returning to oversee his family estate

Horses and winches

From 2023, all the estates' harvests will be certified organic. Converting came as second nature to the two associates, who encourage their suppliers to follow suit. "When asked to design a new vineyard," says Alexandre, "we do everything we can to ensure it can be worked by horse or winch. And that's something we need to continue, to make sure things are done properly. It comes at a cost, but the results speak for themselves." Nicolas and Alexandre agree that overall, the quality of Crozes-Hermitage and Saint-Joseph is improving. Both appellations have a history of making excellent wines, but now they're more ubiquitous. "Over the last 15 years, we've seen a lot of new winegrowers coming in to the business," says Nicolas. "There's been a generational shift. That's good, because it brings an injection of youth and energy, and where there's energy, there's a drive to improve. We're tasting some very good wines - and they're everywhere. I'm just back from Asia, where I saw Saint Joseph on a number of wine lists. 25 years ago, it was still very local."

A new winery in Tain

Soon, the existing winery was no able to accommodate the burgeoning new production and vineyard area requirements. So Alexandre and Nicolas began to search for a new site. They needed extra winemaking capacity to help them make the move from bulk négociant to true négociant house - buying in grapes, then making and maturing their own wine. The latter now accounts for 70% of production volume. "Our plan was to find somewhere in Tain l'Hermitage," says Nicolas. "The area means a lot to us, as this is where we're from. Plus, we wanted somewhere with presence - a place with which people could identify us. Then we found this building, built from old stone, with both soul and history. We've invested a lot in this winery and made quite a leap in terms of quality. We're off to a good start, and we intend to keep it going."

Alexandre Caso
and Nicolas
Jaboulet



Established: 2015
4 employees
2022 turnover: €3.2 million
incl. 60% from export



“ When we
nurture
these
terroirs,
they return
the favour
by producing
great wines”

La vie en rosé

Les Alexandrins recently entered into partnership with Patrick Bruel and his Domaine de Léos in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue to create a new rosé wine, Cuvée Augusta. This is expected to drive growth as the Maison enters the rosé market for the first time. The initial vintage was well-received from the moment of release. "Patrick Bruel is a great wine lover, particularly keen on the wines of the Rhône Valley," says Nicolas. "We were discussing how Hermitage whites get their hallmark intensity and full body at the same time as a supple silkiness. And then we thought how a rosé could be made in the same way, using a high percentage of white grapes such as Bourboulenc and Rolle. We're confident it'll open new doors and new markets for us."



Maison & Domaines Les Alexandrins

14 rue Albert Nicolas, 26600 Tain l'Hermitage

contact@lesalexandrins.com

www.lesalexandrins.com

Contact UMVR:

+33 (0)4 90 27 24 16 / 18

presse@umvr.fr

www.umvr.fr