

Les Wineries du Rhône

Maison FCV



PORTRAIT —

BULK WINE, ARTISAN STYLE

Marie and Jérôme Gallier have an underlying philosophy that serves them well - they deal in low volumes, have an in-depth knowledge of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and scrupulously monitor the wines they select for their clients. The story of Maison FCV and the bulk trade spans four generations altogether: Francis Cubells, Marie's father, founded the Châteauneuf business in 2002, then Marie and Jérôme took it over when he retired. Francis had learned his trade from his father-in-law, Pierre Armenier, who had, in his turn, taken it over from his wine broker father, Paul Armenier. A true bulk-wine family saga! With fewer such businesses around than there used to be, bulk négociants such as FCV forge partnerships with winegrowers, often on a long-term basis. They taste, blend, categorise, list, handle logistics, buy, store and resell the wine, but their core business is crafting and blending wine, creating authentic, high-quality products with a clear added value. Wines with authenticity – an experience, made for sharing..

Quality first

Although Marie and Jérôme have two bottled brands, Manon de l'Arnesque, a red Châteauneuf-du-Pape (and its white equivalent Charles l'Arnesque), and Un Dernier Verre, a Vin de France available in red, white and rosé, their core business is still bulk wine. But not just any bulk wine. To ensure they stand out in these difficult times, they have chosen to focus on quality, producing top-of-the-range wines and adhering to a

rigorous monitoring system which has helped them to build both reputation and trust. Châteauneuf-du-Pape is their playground of choice: this prestigious southern Rhône appellation accounts for 80% of their turnover. "Our clients are the négociant/bottlers of the Rhône Valley," says Jérôme. "It's a highly concentrated sector. There are far fewer players than there once were, but those there are, are getting bigger and bigger. To balance things out, property owners are increasingly setting up trading houses - their own Maisons de Négoce - both because of the rise in demand and because it reduces the risks should they be affected by climate. As they sell under their own names, quality needs to be impeccable, and they make the wines they like to make. We've never positioned ourselves on high-volume markets - we've never sold a customer 10,000 hectolitres of Côtes du Rhône."

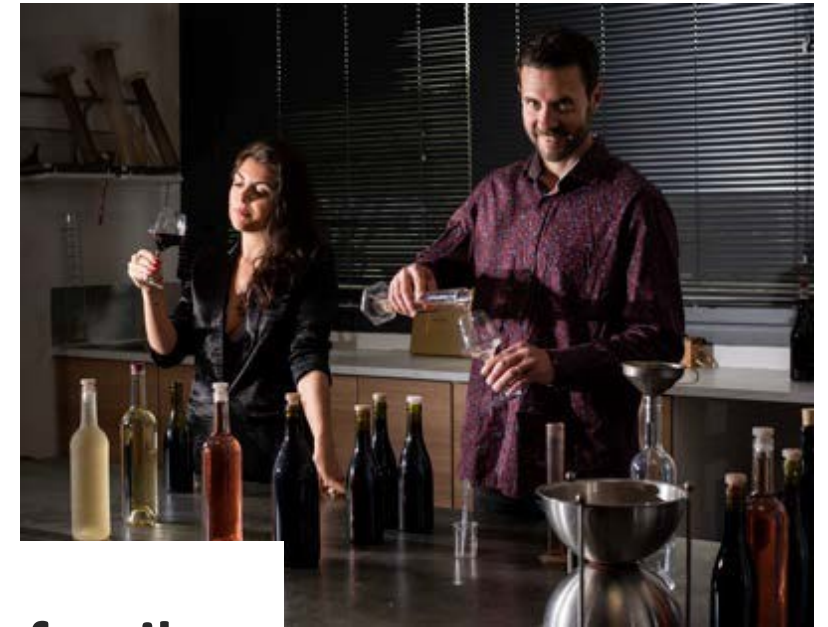
Tasting, tasting, tasting

FCV is an artisanal bulk wine trading house with a proven track record in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, acquired over the years by being out in the field, visiting vineyards and wineries and talking to winemakers, but most of all by spending a considerable amount of time tasting. "We taste an average of thirty wines a day," says Marie. All samples are then analysed for alcohol content, volatility, pH levels, density and intensity of colour, and the data is collated, stored and passed on to customers. The samples are refreshed regularly, and re-tasted to monitor the wine's development. Wines are stored at the properties - twenty or so estates in Châteauneuf - or in Marie and Jérôme's own cellars, depending on requirements.

Marie and
Jérôme Gallier



Established: 2002
2 employees
2022 turnover: €5 million
incl. 1% from export



“We’re a family business, authentic and full of passion, with over 25 years’ experience in the bulk wine sector.”

Back to normal

These last few years haven't been plain sailing. The image of the bulk business has been tarnished, we've had to deal with Covid, consumption has fallen... but luckily, there's light at the end of the tunnel at last. As supply problems and price pressures start to ease, this year looks like it'll be a good one. The FCV adventure is set to continue apace.



FCV

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