

Domaine Rousset 2017 Crozes Hermitage Rouge

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| Varietal(s) | Syrah |
| Region | Northern Rhône, France |
| Short Summary | Stéphane Rousset's vineyards are in Crozes-Hermitage's northern communes of Erôme, Gervans and Crozes-Hermitage, including the legendary Les Picaudières. The hill structures and soil types differ significantly throughout the appellation with various exposures on moderate to very steep rock terraces. Rousset's Marsanne grows mostly on loess topsoil and granite bedrock. The Crozes-Hermitage red wine terroirs are largely on granite with some variations of igneous and metamorphic rock. Across the river, in Tournon, two adjacent blocks of St. Joseph grow on extremely steep granite slopes. Whites are whole cluster pressed, fermented in concrete, mostly aged in steel without malolactic with remaining in oak. The reds are partial stem inclusion and are fermented in steel and then racked to barrel or tank where they age for about a year. |
| Terroir | Stephane's entry level Crozes-Hermitage is typically lifted, aromatic, elegantly textured and ready to go upon opening. The parcels that produce this spicy, garrigue-scented charmer are distributed among the communes Crozes-Hermitage, Erôme and Gervans, always on a granite bedrock but with small pockets of loess topsoil while the rest are topsoils derived from the granite bedrock. It's a Northern Rhône Syrah that demonstrates elegance, accessibility and great palate texture, which is partly due to its vinification and aging, but equally its soil composition; the airy, fine-grained loess topsoil brings the lift, and granite bedrock the thrust, with its depth, salty, mineral textures and substantial core. |
| Cellar Notes | Once picked, the grapes are typically destemmed; however, exceptions may be made depending on the vintage, like in 2018 where 80% of the stems were left in the vat to bring more freshness to this atypically warm year. Spontaneous yeast fermentation takes place in stainless steel vats and pumpover extractions are principally made at the beginning but cease once the fermentation begins to slow; this is to avoid too much extraction of harder tannins from the seeds. Time on skins before pressing can be up to a month (but usually less than the Saint-Joseph or Les Picaudières) in order to move past some primary fruit and superficial fermentative aromas. This brings more emphasis to the wine's deeper complexities earlier on in the wine's life. Once pressed, settled and racked into barrel it undergoes malolactic fermentation naturally. |
| Farming | Sustainable—Organic Certified—Biodynamic Certified—Uncertified Naturalist |
| Total SO2 | None Added—Very Low—Low—Medium—High |