

Mas Laval

Aniane

Mas Laval is a family owned vineyard for three generations in the town of Aniane, at the heart of the Languedoc in southern France. The small town lies 25 km inland from Montpellier on the Mediterranean coast; its vineyards are renowned for a unique geologic and climatic situation which has led to very favorable reviews of famous area wines such as Grange des Peres and Mas de Daumas-Gassac. An interview with the latter winemaker is featured in the documentary “Mondovino”. The local combination of deep, well-drained glacial limestone soils and cool night breezes from the nearby Larzac plateau favor production of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre grapes in Aniane, which have been the traditional choices for red wine since Roman times.

The Laval family works their 50 acres of these vines as father and sons, bringing grapes to optimal ripeness each year. Their vines are between 25 and 75 years old, producing concentrated and expressive flavors. All vineyard labor and harvesting is manual, and only natural fertilizers are used. A long, natural fermentation of each variety with indigenous yeasts is followed by 18 months in 1-year-old French oak barrels. For the 2003, a final blend of 61% Syrah, 25% Grenache and 14% Mourvedre was made before the wine was bottled without fining or filtration. In 2004 and later vintages Joel added 7-10% Cabernet Franc, reducing slightly the Grenache. This has added even more length and finesse to the finish.

The reputation of Aniane’s famous terroir precedes Mas Laval, but this wine is sure to uphold the high standard set by predecessors. The 2002 had wonderful balance; French and U.S. reviews were very promising, and it quickly sold out. The 2003 and 2004 vintages are now available.

Wine & Spirits, June 2005 – 2002 Vintage

Daumas-Gassac isn’t the only player in the sleepy little town of Aniane, as this wine roundly proves. Chewy, smoky and rich, its smooth licorice-black flavors inspired a taster to describe it as “**the black velvet smoking jacket of wines.**”

La Revue du Vin de France, October 2005

Christine and Joel Laval, newly installed in Aniane, have made a strong impression on us with their last three vintages. The 2003 Mas Laval is splendid; powerful on the palate, with fresh fruit and fine elegant tannins, and a very clean finish. A revelation that demands a strong follow-up.

La Depeche du Midi, Wine of the Day

Mas Laval 2003 is a vin du pays de l’herault from the wonderful terroir of Aniane, which provides several famous crus such as “La Grange des Peres” and “Mas Daumas-Gassac”. This wine will keep up to ten years or drink well today if left to breathe. With a silky texture, it is a wine of great finesse from which the provencal aromas explode. Excellent with beef or other roasted meats.

