

Mas d'Amile

Terrasses du Larzac



The Wines

- *Le Petitou*: Originally, this was to be a rosé, but Amélie didn't like the result, so she decided to make a lighter, more elegant and refreshing red. The Grenache and Syrah come from her highest hillside parcels, which are windswept sites of very dense limestone with very little clay, giving the wine intense aromatics. The Carignan comes from a lower site and gives color as well as acidity. The wine sings of its Mediterranean heritage, rich with licorice and tapenade in a long, lean, tension-filled profile. And check out its refreshingly low alcohol!

The grapes are de-stemmed and raised entirely in tank. The SO₂ additions are minimal and done following devatting, then again during élevage, and a third time after blending. Typically the total amounts to 25 mg/l, which is less than Demeter's threshold for natural wines (Demeter's thresholds are 100 mg/l for organic wines; 70 mg/l for biodynamic wines; and 30 mg/l for natural wines).

The label was designed by her daughter Gabrielle and son Paul (then six and four respectively) with help from friends. That, plus the fact that the cuvée is the most recent in the domaine's range, accounts for the name Petitou--in spirit, the little one. Production averages 7,500 bottles.

- *Vieux Carignan*: A traditional variety of Languedoc, Carignan fell out of favor during the wine revival late in the last century as authorities focused on "ameliorating" grapes such as Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. But as it has over the centuries, Carignan persisted--because it tolerates arid conditions, maintaining dark color and good acidity despite heat and drought; and because experienced growers understood that well-sited, old vine Carignan is something to treasure. The key is age above all.

This wine can come from two plots totalling less than four acres planted in the 1930s in the commune of Montpeyrroux (although normally for this cuvée, the source is confined to the larger plot of just over two acres). Fermentation is spontaneous and traditional (not carbonic), and the élevage goes for 18 months in neutral Burgundian barrels. Production averages 400/6-pack cases.

- *Montpeyrroux*: The grapes are de-stemmed and the élevage is half in *foudre* and half in neutral barrels for roughly 18 months. The SO₂ additions are typically the same as for the Petitou above. An elegant, long and savory wine that is best decanted. Production averages 3,500-4,000 bottles.