

Francis Darroze

Bas Armagnac



The Eaux de Vie

- *Les Grands Assemblages:*

Until recently, Darroze made only one blended Armagnac: *Réserve Spéciale*. Today's Grand Assemblage replaces that (the 12-year is the corresponding blend) with seven blends, ranging from 8-year to 60-year.

Four additions are permitted in Armagnac: coloring agents such as caramel; wood tannin; sugar; and water. Darroze uses only one of these—water—and only that to dilute the Armagnac in the younger blends to its required 43% ABV. After a certain age, natural evaporation or the "angels' share" naturally reduces the level of alcohol, meaning that the 50 and 60-year-old Armagnacs are so old that dilution is not necessary. For the 30 and 40-year-olds blends, it's a case by case basis; for the younger blends, it's a given.

Speaking of the 8-year and 12-year, these are 100% Ugni Blanc. The 20-year is a blend of Ugni Blanc and Baco. As the blends get older from here, there is more Baco at each step. Ugni Blanc does not require long aging, whereas Baco's rough edges do, and with long aging Baco gains superb complexity."

With all of these blends in this range, the age on the bottle is the minimum age of the youngest spirit of the overall blend.

- *La Collection Unique:*

This was the original basis for the business: single vintage, cask-strength, single domaine Armagnacs bottled to order. No additives are used for the Collection series, and none of these Armagnacs are ever blended. Each is marked with the month and year of bottling so that the buyer knows exactly how long the spirit rested in barrel (once bottled, the ageing process stops).

