

LAROQUE CHARDONNAY 2018

IGP de La Cité de Carcassonne

~ Background ~

Laroque is made from historical vineyards in the ancient region of Carcassonne that produce an extraordinary and unique wine made from 100% Chardonnay.

Laroque (from the latin *roqua*) derives its name from the Menhirs (a single standing stone that dates back to the middle of the Bronze Age like Stonehenge) which are found around Carcassonne. During the Middle Ages, the vineyards belonged to the Bishop of Carcassonne, who was renowned for making the best wines in the region. Local legend has it that the devil, upset with the Bishop of Carcassonne for stealing his "clients," tried to stone the Bishop with giant rocks. Following the attack, the Bishop constructed the fortress of Caillhac with these Menhirs and marked the event by placing a cross on the last remaining Menhir. After this, processions were undertaken around this oratory and all the parcels of vines that surrounded it, including those of Laroque, in order to ward off the devil.



View from vineyards of the Medieval City of Carcas-

The soil on which the vines are planted date back to the pre-historic Jurassic Period. Recent excavations have uncovered brontosaurus dinosaur bones and fossilized dinosaur eggs. The vineyards are producing exceptional Chardonnay that rivals Chablis and other wines from Burgundy region in crispness, structure & minerality. The Laroque vineyards are located nearby the city of Carcassonne, famous all over the world for its medieval city and the Canal du Midi, both classed as World Heritage sites by UNESCO.

Situated between the Pyrenees to the south and the Black Mountains to the north, Carcassonne enjoys a privileged climatic position where the excesses of the Mediterranean climate are tempered by the softness of the Atlantic. This results in sunny, hot, dry days, but very cool nights. This extraordinary harmony in nature gives the Laroque wines a unique signature: "the aromatic elegance of the 'grand crus' of Burgundy with the price point and strength of Mediterranean wines."

~ Viticulture ~

- 100% Chardonnay
- Clay and limestone soils
- Terroir of Carcassonne is characterized by hillside vineyards with double climatic influences and two alternating winds:

-Winds from the Mediterranean bringing warm and humid softened by the "cers" winds coming from north-west of Narbonne.

-Dry and temperate winds from the Atlantic.

- Average age of vines is 25 years.
- Density of 4500 to 5000 vines/hectare.
- Environmentally friendly viticulture.
- Guyot vine training
- High canopies for better quality grapes and yield management.
- Mechanical working of the soils with debudding to limit production.
- Night harvest between September 5 and 7 to preserve freshness and avoid oxidation of the must.



Stainless steel tanks



~ Winemaking ~

- After harvest, grapes are destemmed and then pressed gently in a pneumatic press.
- Cold *débourbage* (allowing the wines to settle before racking and fermentation).
- Fermentation in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks between 15 and 18°C for 21 days.
- Fermentation with fresh oak to enhance aromas and to give structure to the wine.
- Sur lies aging for 5 months.
- Wines are fined and filtered prior to bottling.
- Only 3,000 cases produced of the 2017 vintage.

~ Tasting Notes ~

Aromatic nose of white peaches, white flowers, melons, ginger and toasted brioche bun. Fresh and lively in the mouth with a bright, acidic backbone. Generous length with delicate texture, flinty mineral thread and creamy notes of vanilla, brioche and hazelnut. Served chilled with seafood, poultry, veal and pastas, or sip it as an aperitif.



Dominique de Beauregard, Aquitaine Wine

JAMES SUCKLING.COM

89 points (2018). Fresh apricots, nectarines and a touch of some five spice. Medium-bodied and quite oily, but lacking in some acidity and definition.

