

# LAROQUE PINOT NOIR 2018

IGP de La Cité de Carcassonne

## ~ Background ~

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

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 Cazilhac 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.

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. 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 which produce Laroque make an exceptional Pinot Noir that rivals the wines from Burgundy region in aromas, structure and minerality.

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 Pinot Noir its unique signature: "the aromatic elegance of the 'grand crus' of Burgundy with the price point and strength of Mediterranean wines."



Dominique de Beauregard, Aquitaine Wine



View from vineyards of the Medieval City of



## ~ Viticulture ~

- **100% Pinot Noir**
- 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 20 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 4 to preserve freshness and avoid oxidation of the must.
- Harvest took place between September 12 and 14.

## ~ Winemaking ~

- After harvest, grapes are destemmed and then pressed gently in a pneumatic press.
- Fermentation in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks between 22-25°C for 14 days.
- Fermentation with fresh oak to enhance aromas and to give structure to the wine.
- Remontage (pumping over) 3 times daily until delestage (racking of the wines during fermentation) to soften the tannins. Then 2 pumping- overs daily towards the end of the maceration period.
- Natural malolactic fermentation in epoxy lined concrete tanks.
- Fining and filtering before bottling.

## ~ Tasting Notes ~

Earth and fruit aromas with a fruity sweetness and dried spices on the nose. The mouth is charming, juicy and straightforward. Medium tannins linger on the finish alongside a hint of roasted cocoa nib. An excellent option for those who enjoy a more gentle and approachable style.

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91 PTS.

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**91 Points (2018).** Really good freshness and drive to this pinot, which shows tart cherries, cranberries and some violets. The palate is quite full-bodied and fruit-forward, but there's just the right combination of acidity and firm tannin to keep it in check.



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