

Les 5 du Vin

Banyols-Budd-Franjus-Lalau-Vanhellemont (et Smith)

Fifteen Côtes-de-Gascogne dry white wines on the test bench

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If you are loyal to this website, you already know that Les 5 du Vin have been enjoying these Gascon white wines for several years now – sweet as well as dry. But it was time to set the record straight, to update our software, in short, to taste the latest vintage.

This was done between mid-March and mid-April.

Quick flashback

So, below you will find our new selection, with, in the foreword, a quick flashback to what I wrote, right here, 7 years ago, on this IGP – well not everything, just a little something as an introduction. The numbers may no longer be entirely accurate, but the trend is.

"The Indication Géographique de Provenance Côtes-de-Gascogne (that's its name), represents 13,000 ha centered on the Gers département, with some extensions in the Landes and the Lot-et-Garonne; 1,100 producers, including 900 cooperative members, bringing their grapes to 6 cooperative cellars, and 200 private cellars, plus a dozen wine-merchants.

In terms of production, it means about 90 million bottles, 85% of which are white, 7% red and 8% rosé. In terms of marketing, it is 70% of export sales, and 30% in France (and only a third of it to French large retailers).

In summary, it is the greatest commercial success of French wine in the last 20 years. A success all the more spectacular because no one expected it; because it was built on little-known grape varieties – Colombard and Ugni, initially; because the struggle is fierce on third markets with the white wines of the 'New World' (Sauvignon from New Zealand or South Africa, Chardonnay from Chile...); and because at the same time, high-profile AOCs, such as Muscadet, have suffered a lot on the export market.

But what explains this success?

Boldness. And necessity.

Over the course of the 1970s, Gascony winegrowers saw sales of their flagship product, Armagnac, erode. Some then decided to turn to wine. The grape varieties they distilled were not all suitable for it; the Folle Blanche variety was therefore discarded, leaving the Colombard, which presents a beautiful aromatic palette, and the Ugni Blanc, certainly more neutral but which gives a certain structure to the blend. It was on this original blend that some precursors bet, to which were added the Manseng, especially for a little touch of tenderness ..."

History has proved them right. And the 7 years since I wrote this text have only confirmed the good opinion I have of these wines. Thank you to my accomplices Marc Vanhellemont, Johan De Groef and Daniel Marcil for their help in this operation

Tariquet Amplitude 2021

Rose, peach and sage rather than citrus, we are not in the Côtes-de-Thyol. The acidity has been somewhat divisive among our tasters, some finding it a little too strong – not me, because I rather perceived it as having to fit well with a fatty fish, for example. And then, I loved the very refined side of this cuvée, which does not however deny the notion of amplitude praised on the label and which develops upon aeration. Let this wine come to you and sit with you at the table, it will make conversation.



DOMAINE
TARIQUET

Amplitude
CÔTES DE GASCOGNE

MIS EN BOUTEILLE AU DOMAINE
Famille Grana
PROPRIÉTAIRE - RÉCOLTANT
PRODUIT DE FRANCE