

AUTHENTIC SOUTHERN RHONE

# DOMAINE LA ROUBINE

CAPTIVATING WINES FROM THE  
(ACTUAL) MAYOR OF GIGONDAS



# FIRE, GRENACHE & TOWN HALL

I have been lucky enough to taste La Roubine's wine from every vintage since their inaugural offering in 2000. Run by the husband and wife team of Eric and Sophie Ughetto. A fireman in his former life, and now Mayor of Gigondas, Eric and Sophie run all aspects of the business. From the beginning they have refused to use and chemicals at all. They were certified organic a few vintages ago.

The vineyards in Sablet, Vacqueyras and Gigondas are all found at altitude on stoney soils. As a result the wines are finer and more concentrated. *One does not extract in the cellar, we extract from the vine*, says Ughetto. Like all of the great wines of the world, La Roubine achieve their class in part via FANATICAL grape selection. Health, purity and ripeness are paramount.



The wines are so authentic. They communicate the terroir of Gigondas through their lack of chemical intervention and their prioritisation of the vineyard over the winery (farming rather than oak).

They are LOADED with fruit and have a palate staining charcter but a freshness and elegance from the aspect of the vineyard and the on point timing of their harvest.

They are old Rhone wines with edges, muscle and depth. Unlike modern examples, they are unpolished by oak and extract and offer a (now reasonably rare) glimpse into the authentic, ancient terroir of Gigondas. A cooler vintage like 2018 augments all of this, these are absolutely captivating and compulsive wines. **STSWine**

# ROUBINE SABLET 2020

**Sablet** is the entry point for Eric and Sophie's wines and one of the very best wines in its class every year. The wines of La Roubine are all rustic and authentic, but immaculately clean. The entry point Sablet probably offers the most power of the three wines, unchecked aggression and unbridled fruit - **IT IS THE SON....**

**THE TECHNICS:** Sablet is a 30 year old vineyard that is about 4 ha in size and produces 140 hl per year. Sandy soil and a NW exposure. The cepage (blend) is 70% Grenache, 25% Syrah and 5% Cinsault. Hand harvested with fanatical focus on the sorting table. Vinified in concrete, natural yeast, no fining, little stirring or pump overs and finished in hogged barrels.



**...IT IS THE SON** in the sense that it is wild and full bodied, it showcases the soul of La Roubine with aplomb and offers a glimpse of what Gigondas wines are about. The Sablet vineyard area is sure to grow in importance over the next few years.

**THE WINE** starts off with piercing, upfront black and red fruits on the nose, but these are immediately joined by the brush and herby terroir as well as a good whack of black pepper. The mouthfeel is big and luxurious but not over the top. This wine has become much more suave and savoury in the last 10 years but it is the ultimate crowd pleaser. The masses will enjoy its character, the wine geeks will enjoy its soul. **STSWine**

# ROUBINE VACQUEYRAS

## 2020

**Vacqueyras** is a lesser known vineyard in the Southern Rhone that sits on the valley floor with slightly shallower soils dominated by limestone. La Roubine make one of the very best wines of the appellation. It is said Gigondas offers more class and sophistication than Chateauneuf-du-pape and there may be a day the same is said of Vacqueyras vis-à-vis Gigondas - **IT IS THE MOTHER...**

**THE TECHNICS:** Vacqueyras is a 40 year old vineyard that is about 5 ha in size and produces 130 hl per year. Limestone & marl soil and a NW exposure. The cepage (blend) is 70% Grenache, 15% Syrah and 15% Mourvèdre. Hand harvested, fanatical focus at sorting table. Vinified in concrete and French oak, natural yeast, no fining, little stirring or pump overs and finished in hogged barrels.



**...IT IS THE MOTHER** as it shows a sure hand, an almost world weary quality next to it's rambunctious son and world beating husband. It is a picture of elegance and restraint, scratch the surface for a galaxy of layers and flavours.

**THE WINE** is gorgeous. Not as gregarious as the Sablet or the Gigondas, but it is a picture of refinement and fine Southern Rhone fruit. Leaning toward a red fruit spectrum, there is a spicy and zesty intensity that is unique to the other wines. It shows great evolution in the glass. I didn't decant and enjoyed the time I had with it, treating it like a Burgundy rather than a Rhone. Swirl, sniff, sip, repeat. This was my favourite of the three this year. All sophisticated class and style. **STSWine**

# ROUBINE GIGONDAS 2020

**Gigondas** has grown hugely in stature this century. Initially touted as a great value alternative to Chateauneuf, it has gradually become Pape's equal and in the minds of many it would be seen as superior due to it's ability to capture the excitement and lushness of Grenache and terroir rather than the *blend and barrel* approach of Chateauneuf. **IT IS VERY MUCH THE FATHER...**

**THE TECHNICS:** Gigondas is a 40 year old vineyard that is about 5 ha in size and produces 130 hl per year. Limestone & marl soil and a NW exposure. The cepage (blend) is 70% Grenache, 15% Syrah and 15% Mourvèdre. Hand harvested, fanatical focus at sorting table. Vinified in concrete and French oak, natural yeast, no fining, little stirring or pump overs and finished in hogged barrels.



**...IT IS THE FATHER** in the sense it is very much the big dog. It brings refinement to the power that the Sablet offers and adds layers of character and flavour. This wine offers richness, structure, depth and balance.

**THE WINE** also builds on the layered Vacqueyras. A thunderstorm of black fruits and buzzy energy from the acidity on entry is underpinned by generous fragrance that offers up primary fruit flavour and somehow some meatiness as well as brush and herbs. If you like your wines heavy on fruit and flavour this is for you, but it is a poised expression. It is highly structured but even more balanced. Decant before consumption and drink it when it is out and proud. This is Gigondas at its inimitable best. **STSWine**