

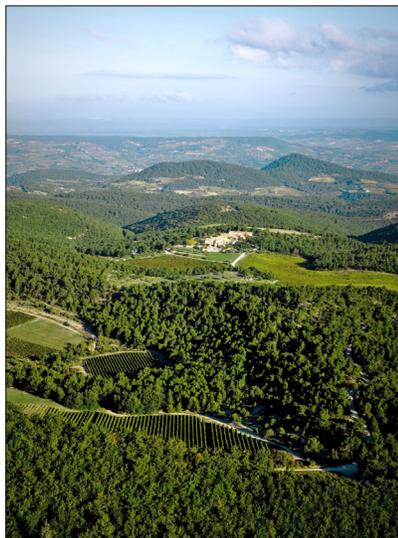


CHÊNE BLEU

TERROIR

Blessed with a confluence of natural factors, Chêne Bleu benefits from the high altitude, isolated and protected location, minerally complex soils, unique geology of the region, southern Rhône climate and northern Rhône-style soils. These factors together create a unique terroir and microclimate.

like lacework (“dentelle” meaning “lace”). Alluvial deposits of sand, silt, limestone and mineral-rich schist (shale that has been compressed, with concentrated mineral content that weathers to excellent soil) form complex layers beneath the vineyards.



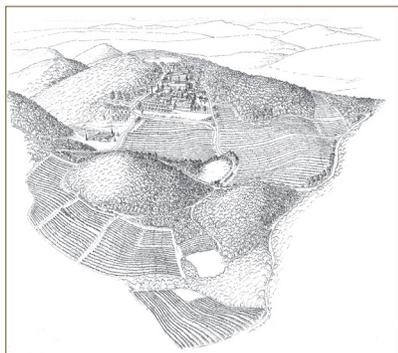
1. Altitude: At an average of 550 to 630 meters (1800 to 2000 feet) the extreme temperature differential between day and night allows the grapes to ripen more slowly with better flavor development and higher acidity. This is particularly helpful for the whites and rosés. These may be the highest vineyards in the region, bringing refined northern Rhône freshness to concentrated southern Rhône fruit. Due to the elevation, harvest is often a month later at Chêne Bleu than in the valleys.

4. Poor Topsoil: The topsoil in the vineyard is thin clay and chalk mixed with sharp-edged stones, forcing the vines, their survival at stake, to burrow deep into the rock to reach the subterranean water tables that are sometimes as much as 91 meters (300 feet) below ground. The roots absorb complex minerals from these deep layers that contribute to the distinctive flavors which develop in the wines.



2. Isolation: The surrounding wilderness and isolation of Chêne Bleu protects the land from pollution and agricultural run-off, chemical and pesticide contamination, even from auto exhaust and fumes. With the 81,000-hectare UNESCO-designated Mont Ventoux Biosphere Reserve as a wildlife preserve to the south, Chêne Bleu has a permanent buffer zone of more than 200,000 acres. The isolation of the entire estate from other agriculture and industry safeguards the vineyards from harmful synthetic materials and pollution, which would compromise the biodynamic viticulture being established at the estate.

5. Soil Microorganisms: Renowned soil scientists, microbiologists and viticultural gurus Claude and Lydia Bourguignon (founders of LAMS: Laboratoire d'Analyse Microbiologique des Sols) conducted a very thorough analysis of the soils and praised the rich potential of the soil composition and its remarkably healthy, untainted microbial life. They were very excited to find many species of microorganisms now rare or extinct in areas using synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.



3. Geology: The geological history of the region is key to understanding the terroir. During the Jurassic era, 150 million years ago, shallow seas covered what is today southern France. At the bottom of these seas, extensive deposits of tiny shells and sea creatures accumulated as layers of limestone. Millions of years later, tectonic activity created Mont Ventoux and the foothills, including a diverse cross-section of geological strata. The Dentelles de Montmirail, in the northern foothills, were formed by a vertical slab of Jurassic limestone thrust upward, that has weathered into a mesh-

6. Climate: The climate benefits from both the elevation, which creates a temperature differential between day and night that preserves the fruit's acidity, and the intensity of the southern Rhône sun, that assures complete phenolic ripening of the fruit. Chêne Bleu is on the same latitude as Gigondas, one of the premier wine regions of the southern Rhône, renowned for its rich red wines.

7. Air: Many winds, including the famed Mistral, come from every direction, helping to cool and concentrate the grapes and keep them dry. This helps to prevent mildew and botrytis within the grape clusters, while intensifying their flavor concentration. Fortunately, the vineyards' location on the slopes of the Dentelles offers some protection from the full, devastating force of the Mistral and the infamous local mini-tornadoes.

