

Vins de Vienne

A collaboration inspired by history, Les Vins de Vienne is a partnership of Yves Cuilleron, Francois Villard and Pierre Gaillard, three superstar, Syrah-specialist vigneron in Rhone.

Beginning at Rhone's northern most point in 1996, this trio purchased and rejuvenated the old terroir of the vineyard of Seyssuel, located on the left bank of the Rhone, just 25km from Lyon, north of Côte-Rôtie. It was Gaillard's readings of historic writers that led him to Seyssuel, home to famed wines during the Roman era, the Middle Ages, and the 19th century. Purchasing his first vineyard in Malleval in 1981, in addition to Les Vins de Vienne, Pierre now manages 77ha of his own vineyards through the estates that he created at Malleval, Madeloc and Cottebrune.



When Cuilleron first visited Seyssuel, he looked up at the rising slopes and noted their exposure to the sun. As the vigneron and proprietor at Cave Yves Cuilleron, which was established by his grandfather in 1920, Yves remains committed to the entire process from vine-planting to bottling, controlling every aspect of his wines. Practicing "viticulture raisonnée", he aims to "produce the best possible grapes" to make "100% homemade wines" both at his own estate and at Les Vins de Vienne.

While Yves was looking up, Francois was gazing down at the Mediterranean-like scrubland, examining the potential of the soil at Seyssuel. Comprised of mostly granite, with schist and slate, the soil sits in the form of terraces that face south and south-west. A former chef who learned winemaking on his own, the acclaimed Villard has his own domaine in Condrieu, along with holdings in St Joseph, St Veray and Côte Rôtie.

"HELUCUM" SYRAH



Varietal/Blend: 100% Syrah

Farming: sustainable

Altitude / Exposure: 200-250m / SSW

Soil: mica and quartz schist

Ave Year Vines Planted: 2001

Vine Training: goblet on poles and cordon de Royat

Yeast: ambient

Fermentation: partial destemming / gravity flow into pneumatic press / 2 to 3 week ferment in barrel / pigeage and pumpovers

Ageing: 16 months in large French oak barrels (25% new)

Alcohol: 13.0%

Fined: no

Filtered: yes

Production #s: 1,500 cases

The vineyard at Seyssuel is located at the narrowest point of the entire Rhône Valley, only 700 meters wide. It is also the northern most vineyard planted in the Rhone and is sloped slightly less than the famed Côte Rôtie on the opposite bank but can be compared to la Côte Blonde. Temperatures here are high in the summer and the dry and forceful Mistral wind is a major influence on the vines as it whistles through this narrow corridor, helping with concentration and lowering disease pressure.

Country: France

Region: Rhône

Sub Region: Northern Rhône

Vineyard: Seyssuel

Vineyard Size: 5 ha / 8,000 to 10,000 vines per ha