

Domaines Auriol

Organic Vision for Occitania

Claude Vialade with her twin sons
Ugo and Jordi Salvagnac



Domaines Auriol is uniquely innovative and has a working vision for sustainable wine production for an entire region.

Founded in 2000 by Claude Vialade, Domaines Auriol is a forward-thinking négociant – producer of wines from purchased material, producer of wines from its own estate vineyards and leased vineyards, and a wine merchant. It is actively involved in the ecological transition of all its winegrowing partners and aims to establish Occitania as Europe's leading organic wine region.

As a young girl, Claude loved to accompany her father, Jean Vialade, in the vineyards and cellar. He cultivated his own vineyards at Montmija organically and as the president of the cooperative in Ribaute, he transformed it into Europe's first

entirely organic winery cooperative. Jean Vialade was fiercely Occitan and one of the leaders of the movement to preserve and promote the Occitan language and culture. Jean inevitably instilled his deep respect and appreciation for the land and the region in his daughter, Claude.

After completing her business studies, Claude embarked on a career in wine distribution where she forged valuable international relationships. She later became director of the AOC Corbières syndicate. A desire to combine her deep connection to the land and her economic prowess inspired her to establish a négociant specializing in the wines of southern France.

Four family brands & wine estates

The four family wine estates – Corbières-Montmija, Saint Auriol La Chatelaine, Maison Vialade and Château Cicéron – comprise the soul of Domaines Auriol. Corbières-Montmija was patiently built up by Claude Vialade's grandparents and parents. The vineyard now covers 27 hectares of vines in Ribaute and has been farmed organically since 1973. Montmija is the flagship of the Domaines Auriol organic wine collection.

When Claude took charge of Château Saint-Auriol in her early 20s, it was in state of neglect and disrepair. After years of reconstruction, restoration, planting and replanting, it is now the exemplary 43-hectare Saint Auriol La Chatelaine that stretches across elevated terraces of the Orbieu Valley from Lagrasse to Lézignan-Corbières. While the Saint Auriol wines are modern and bottled with screw cap, the wines of Maison Vialade are more traditional and bottled under cork.

“After witnessing the effects of global warming and the constant rise in alcohol content in our wines, we realized we must develop a viticultural



Regional leader in water conservation



model based on saving water,” states Claude Vialade. 10 hectares of vines surrounding Château de Cicéron have been set aside for a life-size experiment to cope with climate change. Ten different trade representatives, the Ministry of Agriculture and the INRA are collaborating in this research project.

When Claude Vialade’s son Jordi joined Domaines Auriol in 2016, he created two beautiful Corbières blends and named them Le Lion de Cicéron in honour of his grandfather. Château de Cicéron is also a superb tourism centre offering tours, tastings, an atmospheric event venue and beautiful accommodations.

Ecological transition

“As a négociant, we are dedicated to the ecological transition and success of our partner winegrowers. The landscape of the Languedoc has undergone major changes, both economically and in winegrowing. On the one hand, we face new challenges that result from reduced acreage, climate change and water management and on the other hand, we have increasing quality demands and rapidly evolving sensory profiles.

Through our many years of tireless practical work, tastings and discussions, we have developed ways to assist our winegrowers in meeting demands precisely,” explains Claude Vialade.

Domaines Auriol’s contracts with winegrowers span five vintages. Their comprehensive program includes administrative, viticultural and winemaking support, assistance with successful sensory profiles and help with legal aspects and wine marketing. A unique feature of the contract is that it provides guaranteed remuneration starting with the second year of conversion to organic viticulture. Domaines Auriol have initiated the conversion to organic cultivation of over 650 hectares of vineyards.

Innovation, nature’s way

Central to Domaines Auriol’s product development is its ability to analyse the market and adapt wines style to it. Positioning Languedoc-Roussillon firmly as the largest producer of organic wines in France was the original driver behind innovations at Domaines Auriol. Using the same philosophy of meeting consumer expectations,

Domaines Auriol has launched two new series of wines. The Belles du Sud by Cicéron and L’Instant Colibri ranges are low alcohol wines conceived to meet the needs of consumers who aspire to healthier and balanced lifestyles. “Our sensitivity to the changing world of wine has also prompted us to innovate with a range of vegan and natural wines with no added sulphur,” states Claude Vialade.

Domaines Auriol is a family enterprise that puts wine at the centre of its business and people at the centre of the world. Claude Vialade expounds, “More important than the 50+ medals we receive for our wines each year, are the appreciation of our customers and friends and the motivation of our employees and partner winemakers. I am fortunate to be able to coach one of my twin sons, Jordi Salvagnac, to take over from me. The mission is as freighted with significance as it is sensitive. The story continues.”



Photo: David Maugeudre

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