



White Wines of the Rhône Valley

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@iwfsblog

Rhône Valley Vineyards



**MORE THAN 2,000 years
of wine production**

**SECOND AOC wine region in
France**



31
APPELLATIONS



34
GRAPE
VARIETALS



**1473 INDEPENDANT
WINERIES**
91 COOPERATIVE
WINERIES

66,402 ha
of which 12 %
are organic
2,6 millions hl



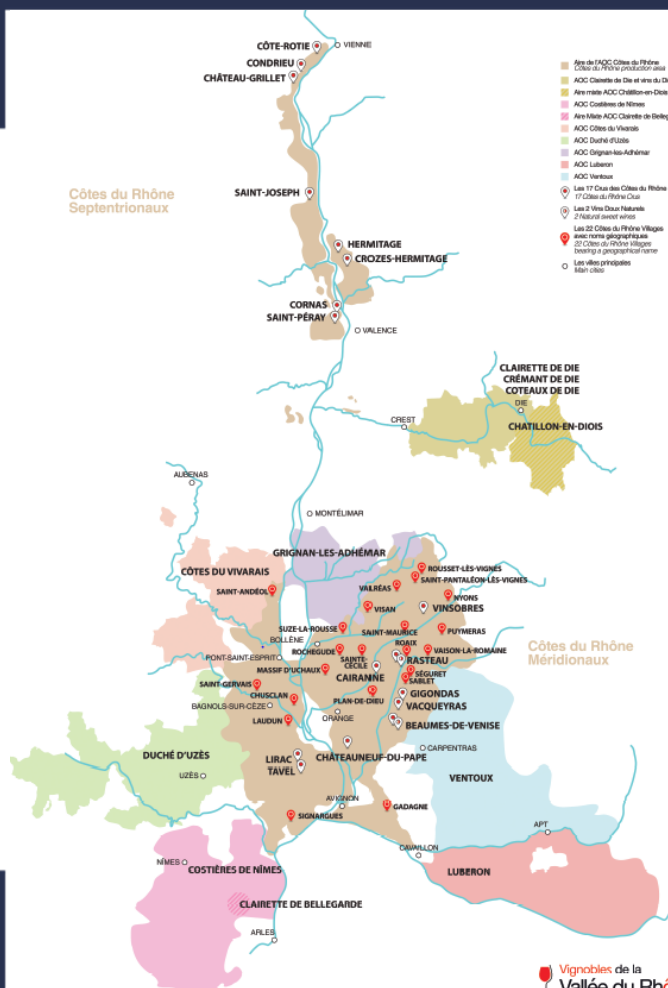
• **76% RED**
• **14% ROSÉ**
• **10 % WHITE**



127 MILLIONS
BOTTLES SOLD IN 2021

SALES





BY APPELLATIONS

LA RÉCOLTE 2021 **PAR AOC**

AUTRES AOC
DES VIGNOBLES DE
LA VALLÉE DU RHÔNE

1%

CRUS MÉRIDIONAUX
DONT VINS DOUX NATURELS
DE LA VALLÉE DU RHÔNE
310 HA - 4 854 HL

9%

LUBERON

5%

COSTIÈRES
DE NÎMES

6%



49%
CÔTES
DU RHÔNE

VENTOUX

8%

CRUS
SEPTENTRIONAUX

6%

GRIGNAN-
LES-ADHÉMAR

2%

CÔTES DU RHÔNE
VILLAGES

11%

CLAIRETTE DE DIE
ET VINS DU DIOIS
DONT VINS EFFERVESCENTS
DE LA VALLÉE DU RHÔNE
1 435 HA - 69 125 HL

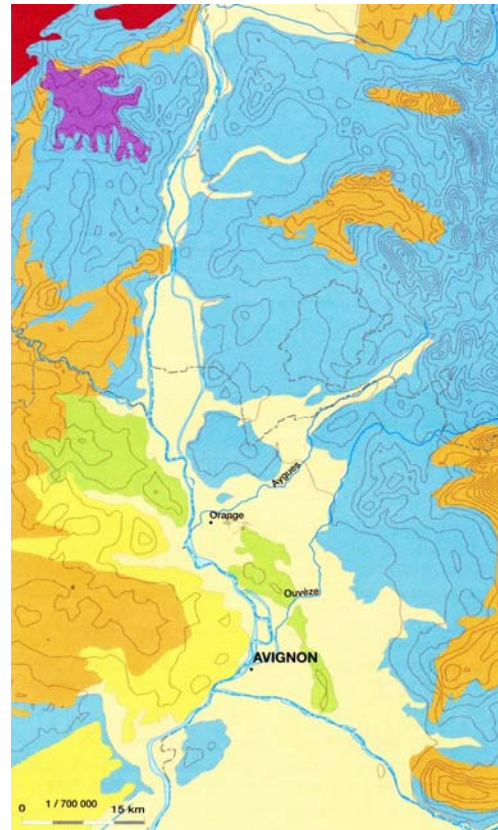
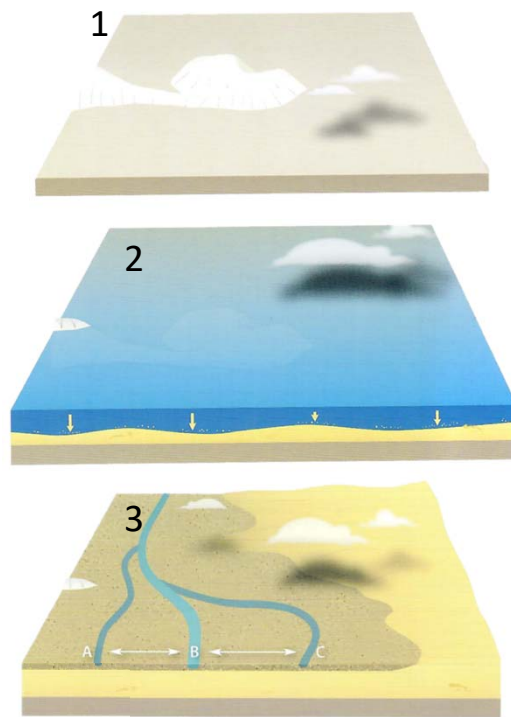
3%



What Makes the Rhône Valley Vineyards Special

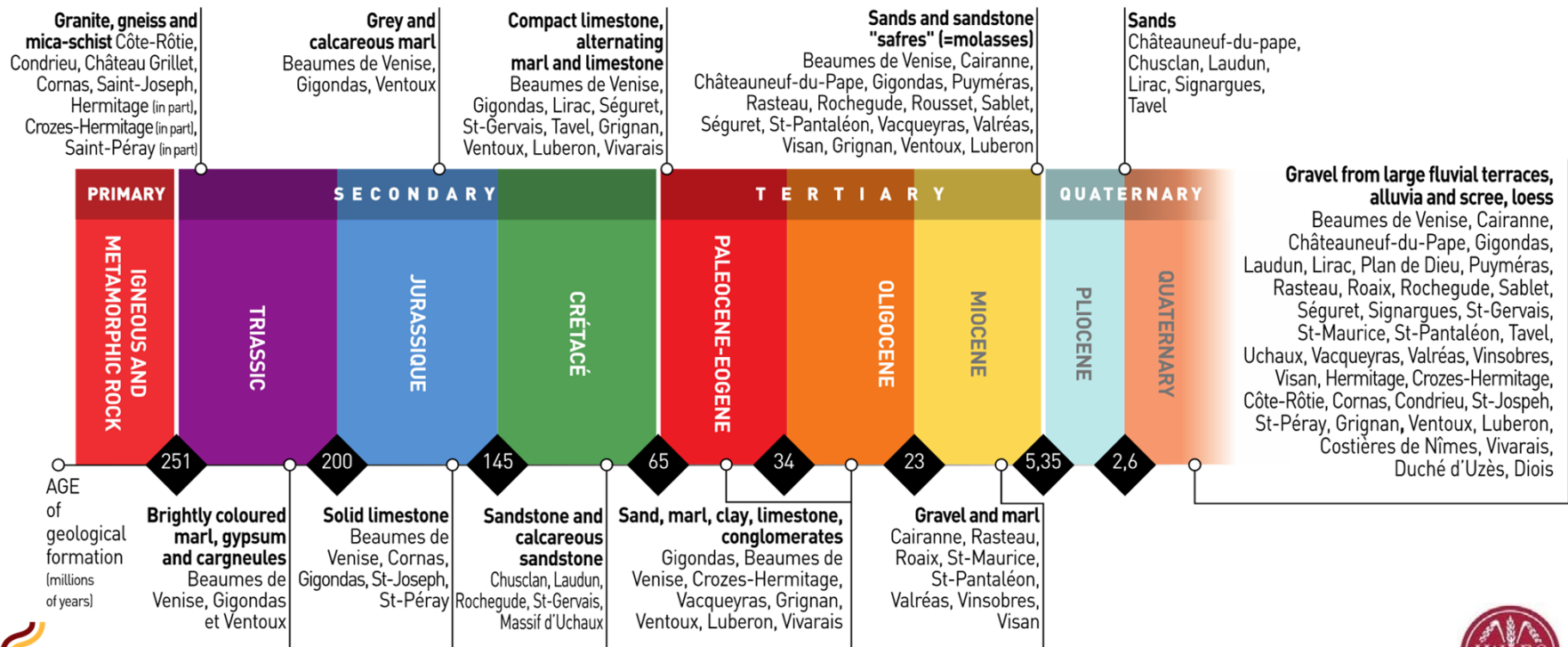
1. Two distinct climatic zones for 2 big families of wines
2. A large diversity of soils and grape varieties
3. Plentiful sunshine which leads to early and always full ripeness
4. A range of wines to satisfy all tastes and occasions
5. A dynamic region which continual wine quality improvement

Lay of the Land: Building Geology



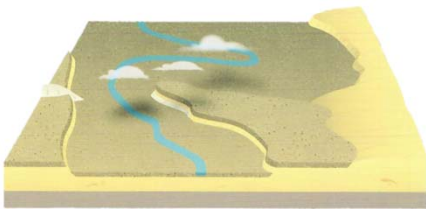
PRIMAIRE	
Granites	
Granites et gneiss	
Gneiss	
Schistes et Grès	
SECONDAIRE	
Calcaires	
Formations Argilo-calcaires	
TERTIAIRE	
Marnes	
Sables et argiles	
QUATERNAIRE	
Formations alluviales	
ROCHES VOLCANIQUES	
Basaltes	

Lay of the Land: Geologic Timescale



Lay of the Land: Revealing Geology

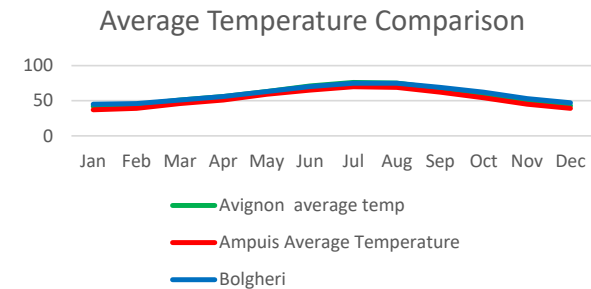
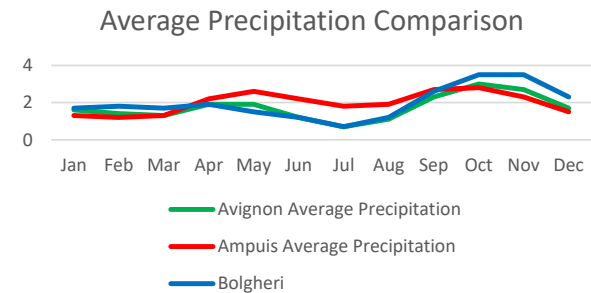
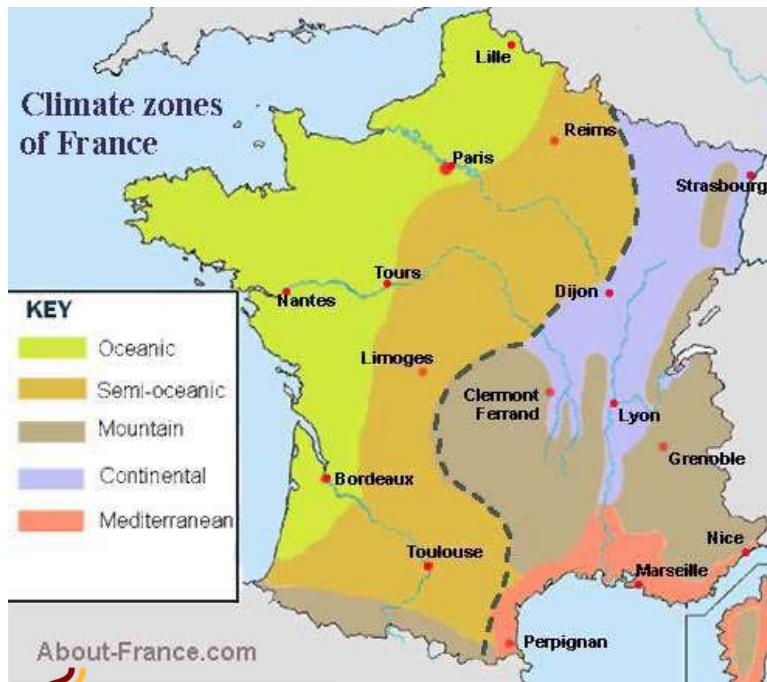
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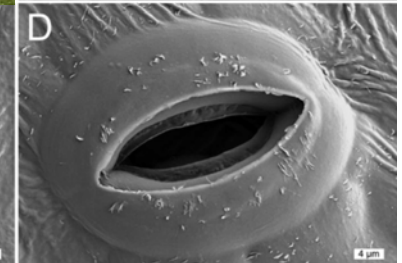
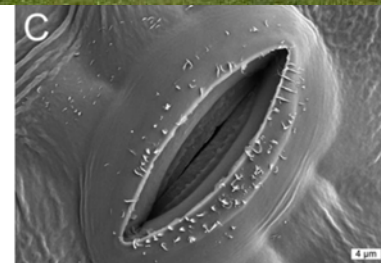
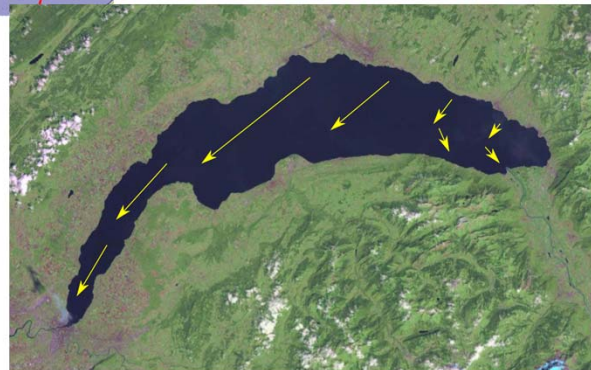
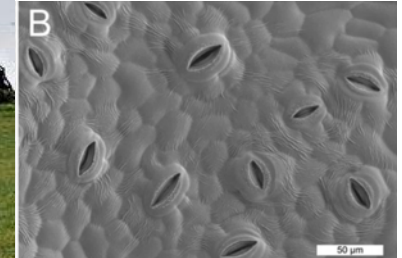
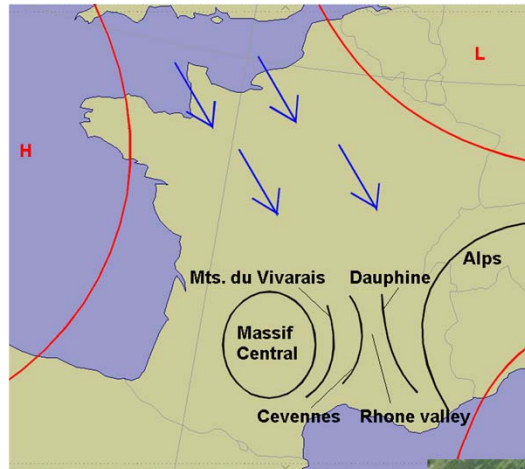
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Climate: Continental and Mediterranean



Climate: Mistral vs La Bise



Côtes du Rhône AOC: In the Bottle

- All dry, still wine
- 3 colors
- Min 11%* alcohol
- **Blanc:** Marsanne, Roussanne, Bourboulenc, Grenache Blanc, Clairette, and Viognier must be the majority of blend
- **Rouge/Rosé*:** Grenache and either Syrah or Mourvèdre must be minimum 60% of the blend

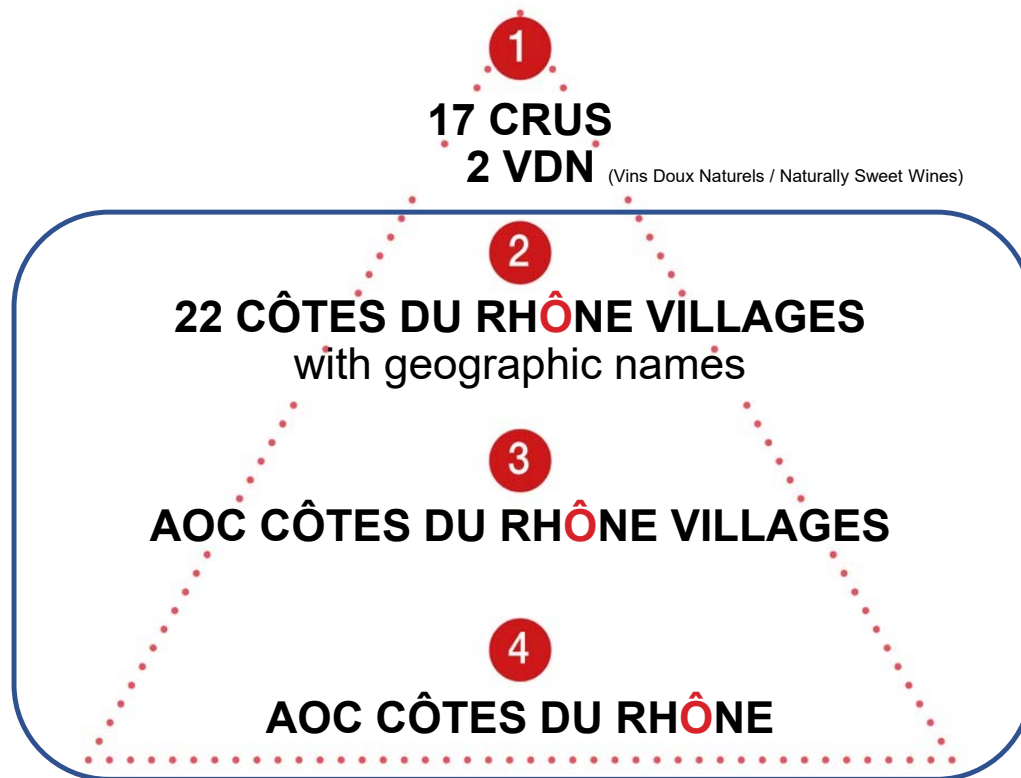


Wine 1: 2024 Signature by la Font du Loup Côtes-du-Rhône Blanc

- 70% Grenache Blanc, 20% Clairette, 10% Viognier
- North facing slope, 120m at the summit above La Crau
- Sandy soils
- Grapes destemmed and pressed
- Fermented in concrete vat and stainless steel



Côtes du Rhône: Historical Development



- 1937:** Côtes du Rhône AOC
- 1953:** Geographical indication addition to Côtes du Rhône
- 1966:** Côtes du Rhône Villages AOC
- 1971:** First geographical names elevated to full AOC
- 1984:** Additional unnamed communes added to Côtes du Rhône Villages



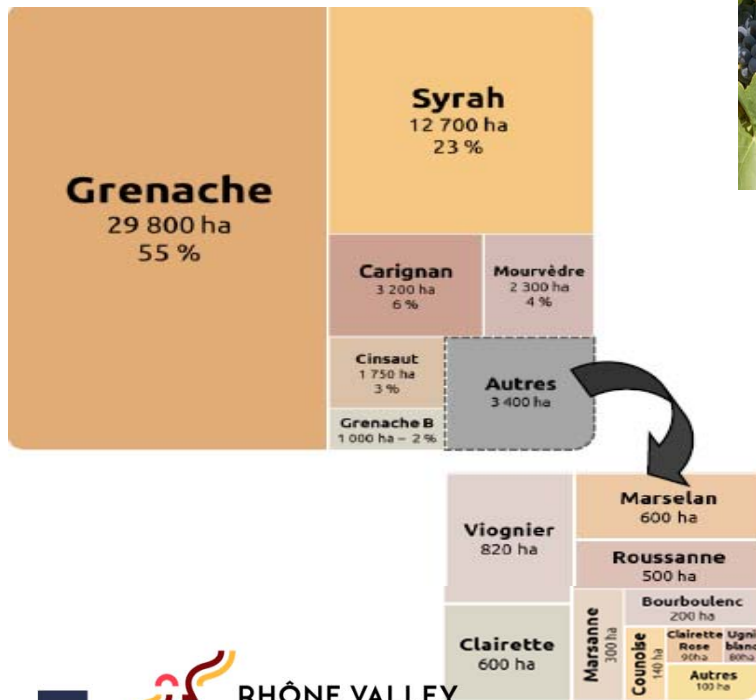
Côtes du Rhône: Declassification



- **Déclassement**
 - Effects wine that does not meet the standards of an official tasting “contrôle produit”
 - Never the choice of producer
 - Removed from AOC system (VdT, VdP)
- **Revendication**
 - Crus can declare after harvest (before 12/15 into CdR/CdR Village)
 - Establishes maximum volume for wine sold under AOC
 - Available to all crus
 - Remedy for poor vintage
- **Repli**
 - Withdrawal after declaring in a more restrictive AOC
 - Wines are marketed under a more general designation
 - Motivated by quality of a specific vintage to control cru
 - Financial motivations to limit use
 - Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Tavel prohibited from usage



Grapes of the Rhone Valley: Pt 1/13



GRENACHE NOIR



MOURVÈDRE



SYRAH



GRENACHE BLANC



CALADOC



COUSTON



MARSELAN

Grenache Blanc

- Mid budding, mid ripening
- Resistant to coulure
- Rich in extract
- Prone to oxidation
- Adapts to many soil types
- Parentage?



Grenache Rosé

- Most planted in Rousillon
- Rarely made into a varietal wine
- Used mainly for VDN



Clairette

- Late ripening
- Vigorous
- Wind resistant
- Oldest white variety of the area
 - First recorded in 1400s
- Wind resistant
- High acid, mineral styles
- Sleeper variety



The Southern Crus

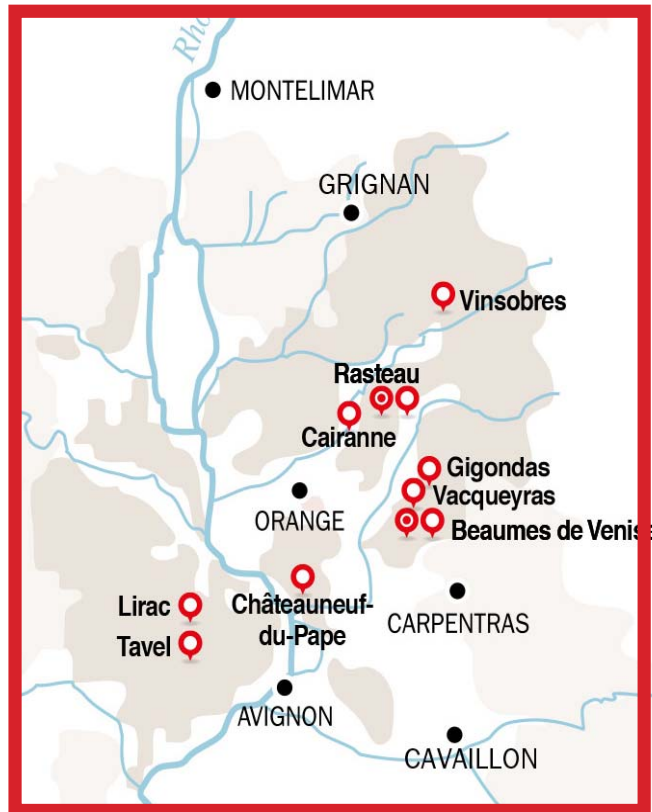


Photo Credits Christophe Grilhe

Culture of the Rhône Valley: History

1309–1376 (1417):

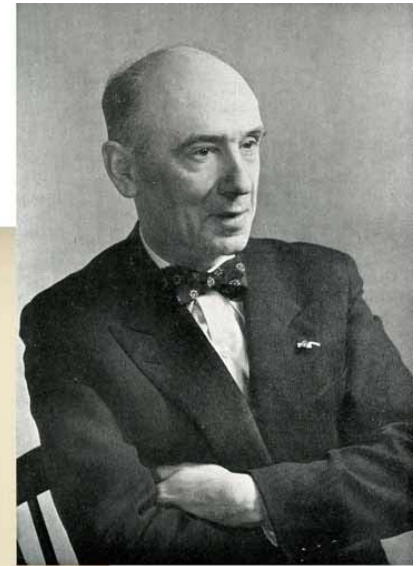
Popes starting with Clement V reign from Avignon

1344:

Oldest-surviving named vineyard planted by Clement VI survives in Bois de la Ville

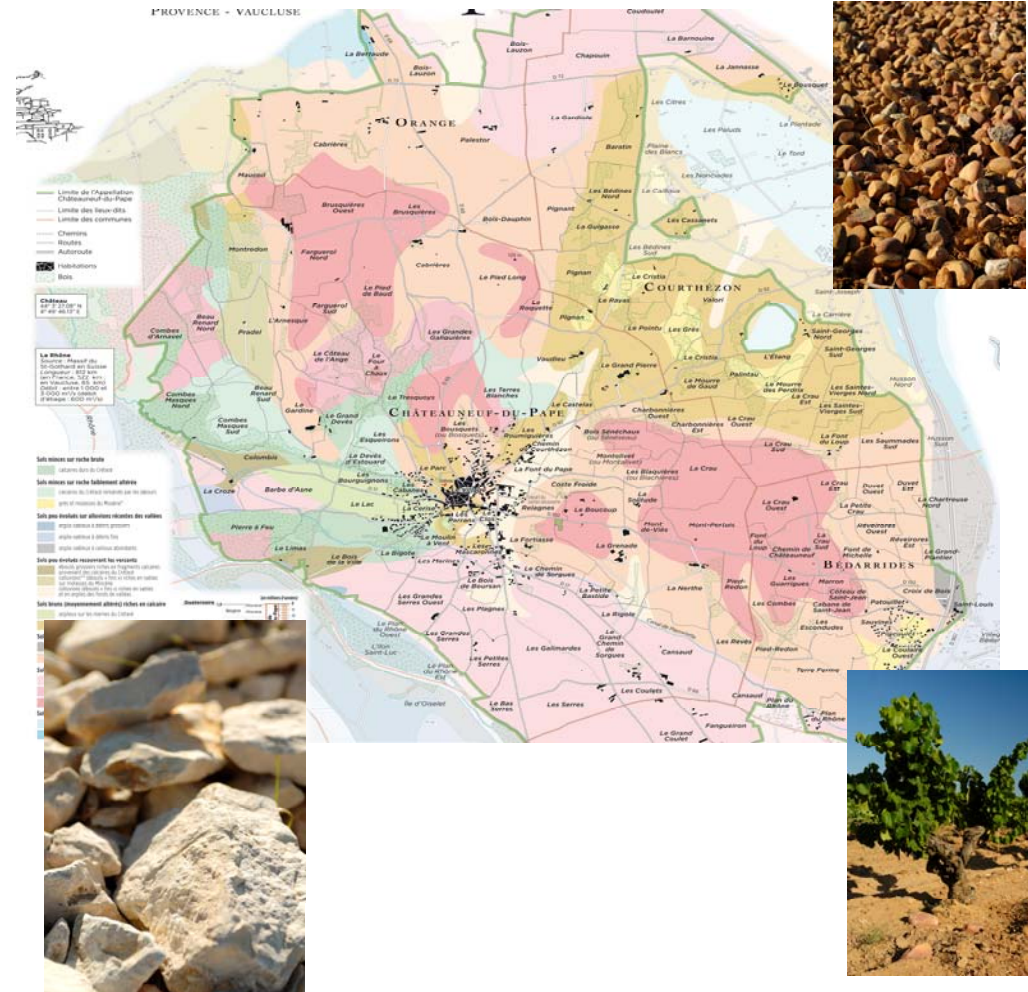
1923:

Baron le Roy de Boiseaumarié codifies Châteauneuf-du-Pape, inspiring the INAO



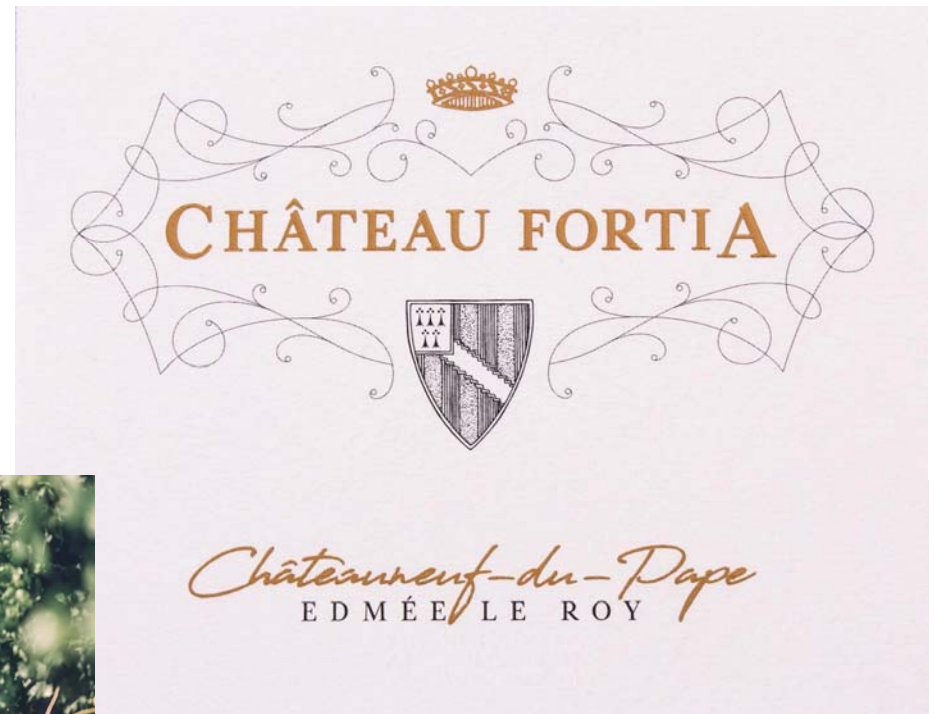
Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOP

- Dry still red (94%) and white (6%)
 - Grenache (Noir, Gris and Blanc), Mourvèdre, Syrah, Cinsault, Counoise, Bourboulenc, Roussanne, Brun Argenté (Vaccarèse), Clairette, Clairette Rosé, Muscardin, Picardan, Piquepoul (Noir, Gris and Blanc), Terret Noir
- 3,173 ha
- Chaptalization prohibited
- 2% mandatory discard of grapes (la râpé)
- 3-4 soil types, sand, clay, limestone, marl (molasse)
 - galets roulés topsoil found in the north and NW



Wine 2: 2021 Chateau Fortia Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc “Edmée Le Roy”

- 60% Roussanne, 30% Clairette, 10% Grenache Blanc
- 2 ha of “La Fortiasse” vineyard south of the village
- South facing, covered with Galets Roules
- Fermented and aged in stainless steel for 6 months



Culture of the Rhône Valley: Food

Cheese

- Picodon AOP
- Rigotte de Condrieu AOP
- Banon AOP

Meat

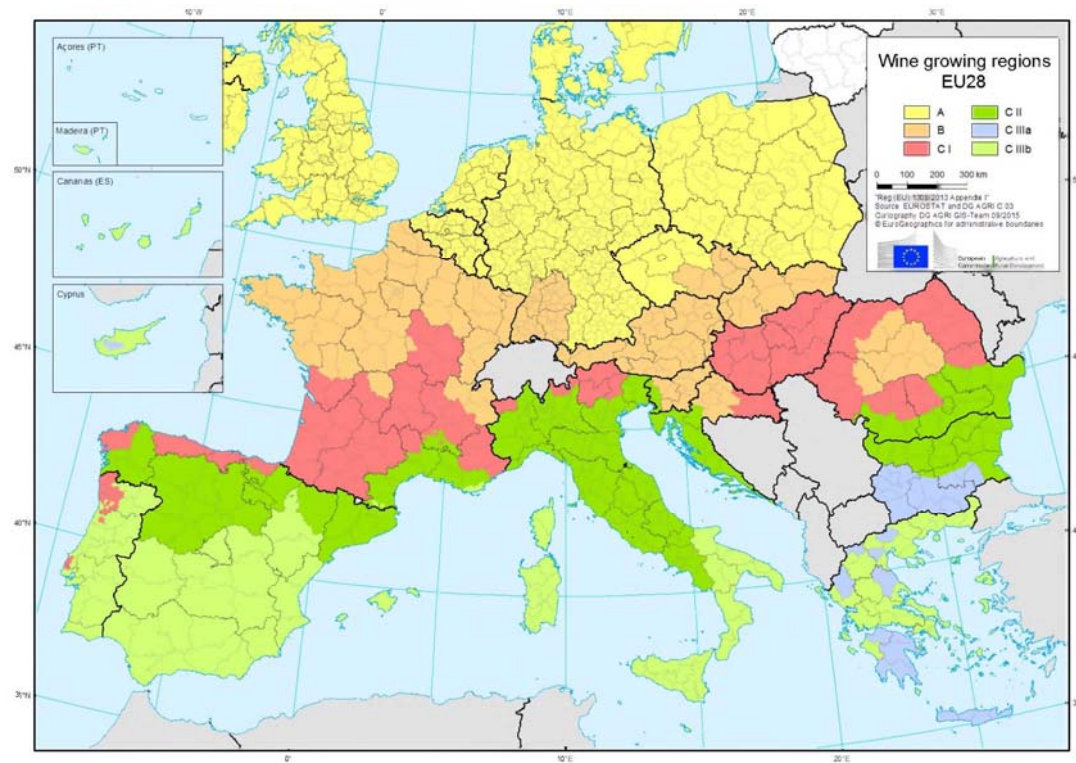
- Saucisson de l'Ardèche IGP
- Jambon de l'Ardèche IGP
- Volailles de la Drôme IGP
- Agneau de Sisteron IGP

Produce

- Ail de la Drôme IGP
- Fraise de Nîmes IGP
- Châtaigne d'Ardèche AOC
- Huile d'Olive de Nyons AOC



Winemaking: Acidification



The Northern Crus



Photo Credit Christophe Grilhe



Photo Credit Bernard Favre

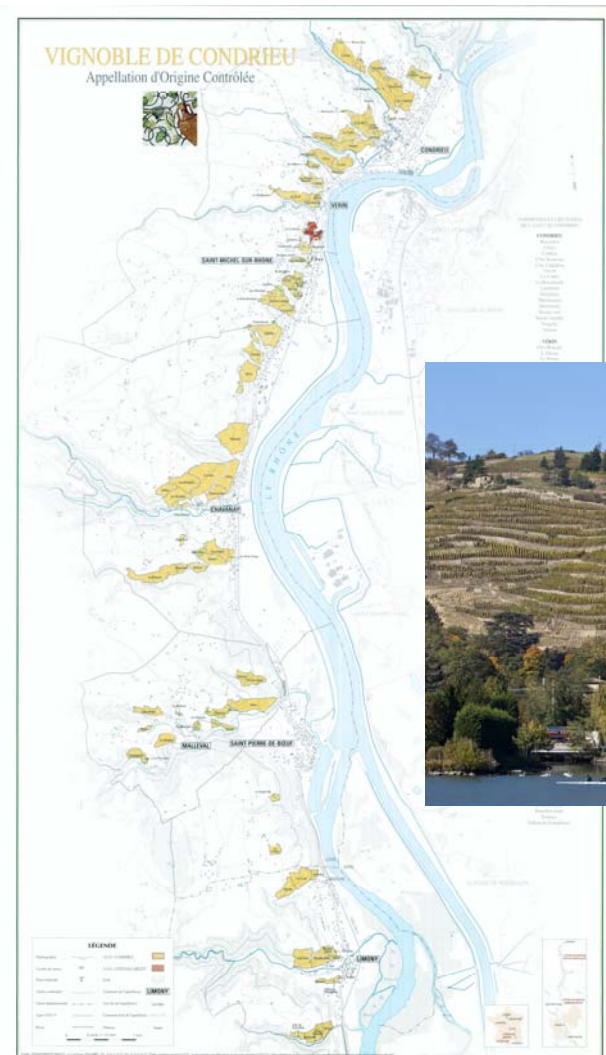
Viognier

- Mid ripening, short window
- Thick skins
- Tight clusters
- Close ties with Mondeuse Blanche and Freisa
- Indigenous to Condrieu and Ampuis
- Early budding, mid ripening
- Diminished acidity, high sugar
- Violets!



Condrieu AOP

- Styles:
 - Blanc: 100% Viognier
- Maximum Yield: 41 hl/ha-23 hl/ha average
- Principal Soils: Decomposed granite
- Production Area: 230 ha
- Production Volume: 4,647 hl
- International Export: 32%
- Arzelle soil
- Cool slow fermentation is key for aromatics
 - 60 °F (16 °C) for up to a month
 - Stainless steel or oak fermentation

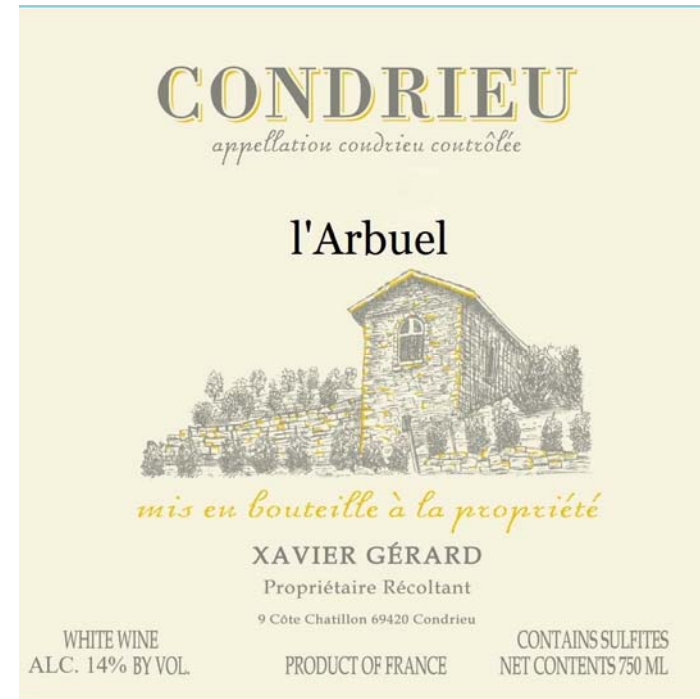


Condrieu AOP



Wine 3:2021 Xavier Gerard Condrieu “L’Arbuel”

- 100% Viognier
- Two plots in Corbery and Marmouzin
- Harvested in two passes
- 40 yr old vines
- 18 months in older barrel and a small amount of stainless steel
- Fermented and aged in cement tank
- Galets roulés terroir



Marsanne

- Late budding, mid ripening
- Parent of Roussanne
- Small berries—very phenolic
- Main white grape of the Northern Rhône
- Not permitted in CdP
- Rich texture and structure
- Almond paste, hazelnut, fresh quine, viscosity, oily



Roussane

- Mid ripening
- Poor wind resistance!
- Difficult to grow, low yielding
- Takes its name from *roux*, the russet color of the ripe grapes
- Provides acid and aromatics to Marsanne
- Popular in Australia
- Honeysuckle, peach, narcissus



Saint-Joseph AOP

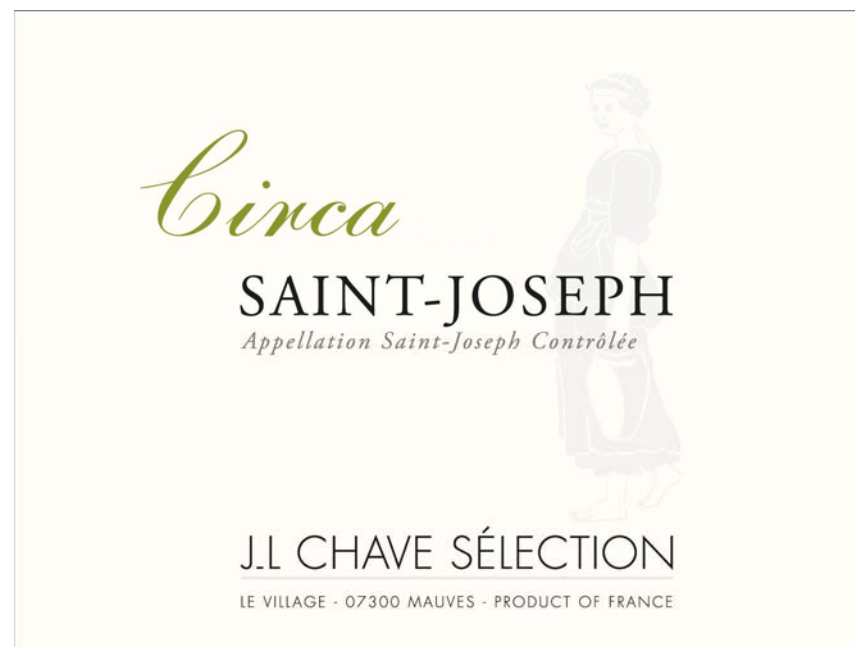
- Still red and white wine
 - White(14%)
 - Marsanne and Roussane
 - Red(86%)
 - Min 90% Syrah and Marsanne/Roussane co-fermented
- 37 miles north to south, overlapping Condrieu in the north to Cornas in the south
- Primarily granite soils with limestone in the south
- Semi-continental climate with mediterranean influences, but variable
- Original appellation included 6 communes, expanded to 26 communes, followed by a contraction of vineyard areas



Photo Credit Christophe Gilhe

Wine 4: 2022 J.L. Chave Sélection Saint-Joseph Blanc “Circa”

- 60% Roussanne, 40% Marsanne
- Mauves on granitic slopes
- Fermented in barrel
- Aged in barrique 14 months



Crozes-Hermitage AOP

- Still red and white wines
- White (10%): Marsanne and Roussanne
- Red (90%): Min. 85% Syrah, plus Marsanne and Roussanne
- Maximum Yield: 45 hl/ha- 43hl/ha average
- Principal Soils: Schist and gneiss on granite bedrock
- Production Area: 1,869 ha (11 communes)
- Production Volume: 72,263 hl/8,096 hl
- International Export: 27%
- Named after commune Crozes, but expanded in 1952 to 11 communes
- Two major areas of production northern terraces and southern plains
- Varied soil, climate, vintage responses, and wine

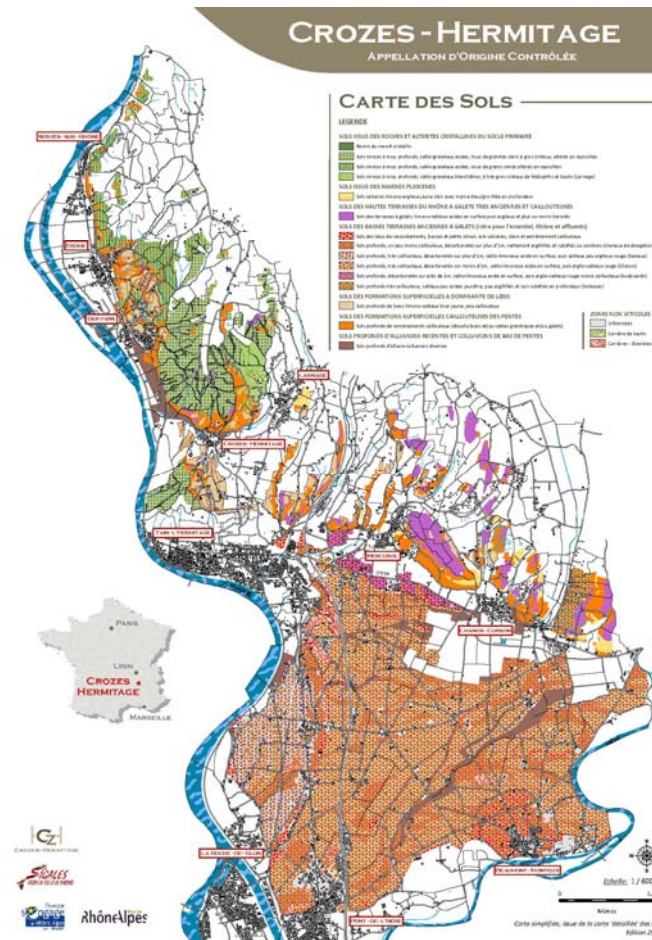
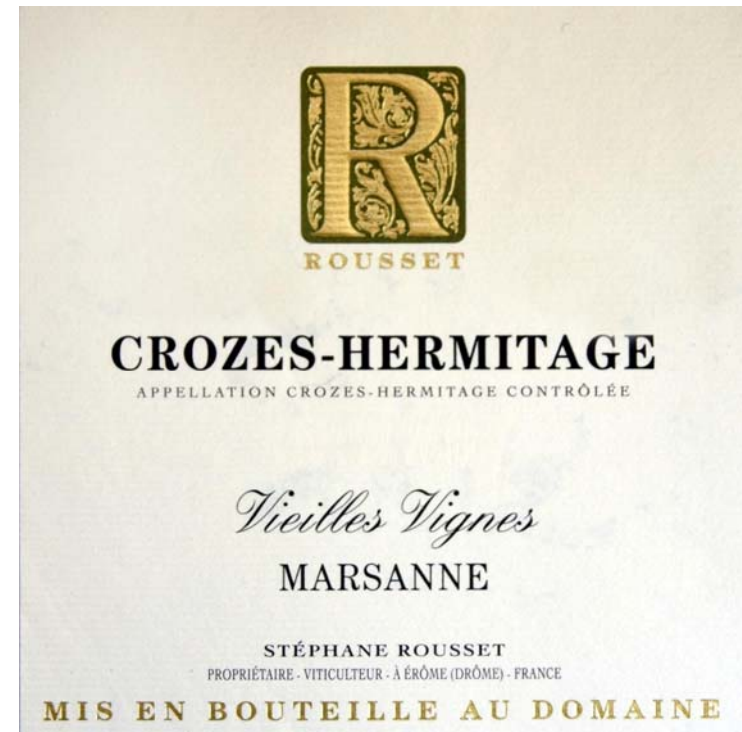


Photo Credit Christophe Grilhe

Wine 5: 2022 Stéphane Rousset Crozes-Hermitage Blanc Vieilles Vignes

- 100% Marsanne
- Alpine foothills-cool climate
- Loess topsoil and granit bedrock
- Whole cluster pressed
- Fermented in 50% steel and 50% old barrels

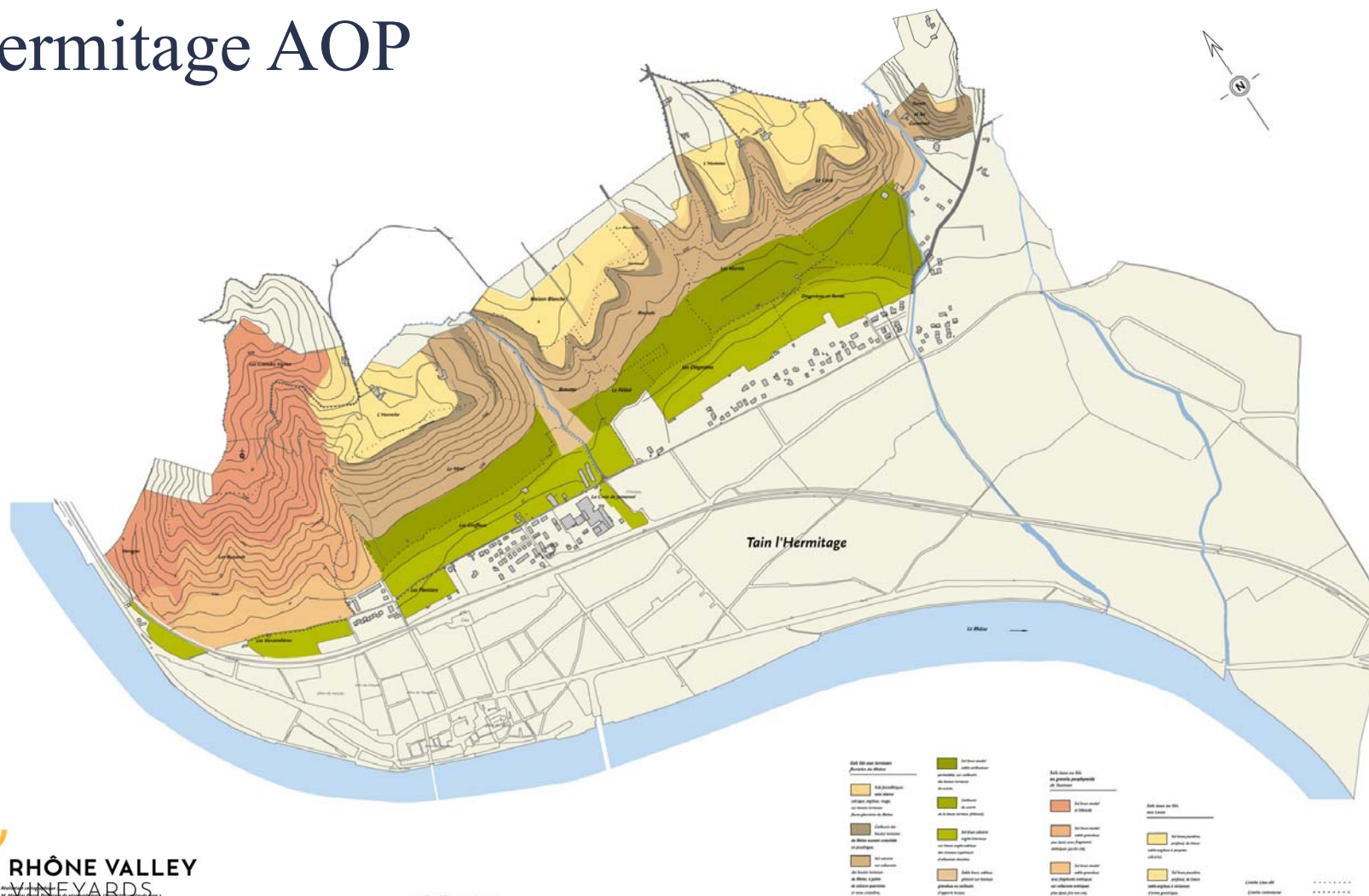


Hermitage AOP

- Red and white dry still wine
 - Red (65%)-Syrah with max 15% Marsanne and Roussanne
 - White (35%)-Marsanne and Roussanne
- 134 ha
- Formed by changes in the course of the Rhône river



Hermitage AOP



Echelle 1/5000



Wine 6: 2021 J. L. Chave Sélection Hermitage Blanc “Blanche”

- 80% Marsanne, 20% Roussanne
- Mostly from Lieu Dit Maison Blanche
- Iron rich clay and Loess soils
- Fermented in barrique, ages for 18-24 months



The Rhône Valley in Summary

NORTHERN WINES

- Majority of single varietal wines
- Mainly granite terroir
- Semi-continental climate

SOUTHERN WINES

- Blended wines made from large number of varietals
- Diverse terroirs (Limestone, Clay, Sand...)
- Mediterranean climate

Thank You!

Any Questions?



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