



Cape Winemakers Guild Technical Tasting Report

Tasting Title: Discovering the Mysteries of Mourvèdre - “An intellectual curiosity”
Presented by: Sebastian Beaumont
Date: 10 May 2018
Venue: Beaumont Family Wines

Mourvèdre first bottled on its own in SA by Niels Verburg in 1999.

500BC – first recognised as a variety in Spain. One of the most dominant varieties there.

Originally down as Mataro when first bottled in SA.

In SA, biggest challenge now is new vineyards and young vines, but 20 years down the line is where things become more interesting.

Top 10 varieties in SA make up 86% of total plantings. 96 other varieties make up the other 14% - including Mourvèdre.

Mourvèdre 473 ha, Grenache 344 ha, Cabernet Franc 835ha, Cinsault 1,000 +

1 clone (MT11) that makes up 99% of Mourvèdre plantings here. 2 new French clones (MT450 & MT1069) coming in – more balanced and intense.

Very vigorous grape, needs hot areas, low potential soils, heavy limestone (needs moisture so as not to get overstressed).

Bushvine – naturally an upright vine. Uneven growth, and ripening, prone to powdery mildew.

Lots of organic and biodynamic viti/vini by virtue of where it's planted.

In cellar – doesn't absorb new oak well, prone to both oxidation and reduction. Mostly fermented with stems in Bandol, generally destemmed in New World but some SA winemakers using partial or total whole bunch.

Quotes on Mourvèdre

Peter McAtamney from www.winebusinesssolutions.com.au

“The word ‘Mourvèdre’ scares the hell out of most drinkers! The language of wine - Storytelling is key. Wine Australia's whole strategy revolved around this at one point.

A customer who creates more customers is always the most valuable one.

“Mourvèdre is for freaks ☺ It doesn't hide anything.”

“Mourvèdre needs its head in the sun, its feet in cool soil and a view of the sea.”

“It's a love-hate grape. Producers, journalists fall in love with it but others just step away. Some in SA just given up on it – too much work, can't get the charming notes on it.”

“I don't blend it now because I don't really care about making the most perfect wine, I want to understand the grape”.

Domaine Ott 2016 Provence, France 13.5% abv, TA – 4.73, pH 3.38 Price R495

Château Romassan – part of Roederer now, 70/80% Mourvèdre, rest Grenache, Cinsault & Syrah. Ott family still there since late-18th century, 60% of production sold in France, mostly in Provence.

Pale onion skin. Earthy tones, redcurrants, strawberry and strawberry jam and some garrigue notes. Savoury backbone, soft acidity, weighty mid-palate, real chalkiness to the wine and a gravelly, savoury finish.

The 3 Foxes Mourvèdre 2017, South Africa 13.8% abv, TA 4.9, pH 3.84 Price R350

Very young bushvines – 4 YO – from slopes of Kasteelberg. “If this was in Bandol, couldn’t make it – need vines to be 8YO there” Chris Mullineux. Gets reductive v quickly so needs racking (in Bandol, rack every 2 months). 50% whole bunch.

Pale ruby/garnet. Juicy red fruits – some strawberries and cherries, hint of leather, leafy herbaceous notes, Ripe and full-bodied, charry smoky notes, but soft, pliable tannins. Coffee, punchy abv, and good length at the finish with a slight bitter twist.

Paix sur Terre ‘The Other One’ Mourvèdre 2016 Paso Robles, California 14.7% abv, TA 5.8, pH 3.77 Price \$55

Ryan & Nicole Pease started in 2010. Focus on small batches & Mediterranean varieties. This comes from chalky limestone hills which they’ve cut into for their terraces. 100% whole bunch, 19 YO vines, 14 months in neutral French oak.

Deep opaque ruby. Raisins and spice on the nose, leathery black fruits. Chewy tannins, big alcohol, earthy black fruit with some savoury and herbal notes. Abv unbalanced just now but fruit intense and acidity good so may settle in time. A long time....

Hewitson Old Vineyard Garden 2013, Barossa Valley, Australia 14.5% abv, TA 6 pH 3.54 Price \$88 AUD

Oldest Mourvèdre vineyard in the world – 1853. Dry-farmed, own rootstocks “Only 8 rows – but must be moerse long rows!!!” 20% whole bunch, 18 months new French oak barriques.

Smoky, sweet oak notes prominent with black fruit, well-hung meat and some tomato leaf notes. Raisined notes, plushy tannins, ripe but not jammy and well-balanced. Decent acidity, sweet tones remain throughout and a lengthy finish.

Artadi ‘El Seque’ Monastrell 2015, Alicante, Spain 15.04% abv, TA5.32, pH3.48. Price €15

600m altitude, low-yielding 3-4 tonnes/ha. Organically-farmed, 10% Syrah in blend. 4 months in 500 litre French oak.

Perfume, some flowers and charry tarry notes - very primary and very attractive. Sweet fruit with good balance – some ripe red cherries taking edge off gritty tannins. Touch of sherbet, leather and cherry cough drop confection. Good length, attractive and some elegance.

Château Pibarnon 2012 Bandol, France, 14% abv, Price R495

92% Mourvèdre & 8% Grenache - according to Chris M – prob about 80% Mourvèdre and the rest could be whatever – more Grenache for certain than they declare. Extended maceration, 18-20 months in large foudres.

Pure coffee aromas with some smoked meat and hickory chips. Coffee continues on the palate – but blows off nicely and relaxes into red and black-berried fruit, savoury notes, herbs, garrigue, leather, cherry confection again, chewy tannins and good length. Smoky, meaty, leatheriness – needs food.

Domain Castell-Raynoard 2011 Bandol, France 14.46% abv TA 4.58 pH 3.62 Price €38

Biodynamic producer, Julien Reynoard 4th generation winemaker took over in 2009. Small lug boxes, whole bunch, natural yeast.

New leather, meaty and herbal. Touch of iodine, blood and medicinal black fruit, some gamey notes in there, whiff of barnyard. Chewy tannins, good acidity and excellent length – nicely-balanced.

Domain Tempier 'La Tourtine' 2011 Bandol, France 15.22% abv, TA4.88 pH 3.63 Price €48

Hillside site, calcareous clay soils.

Chocolate oak here with intense black fruit, ripe and attractive. Some red fruit –cherries and currants – notes come through mid-palate, coffee lurking in the background, nice balanced tannins, good acid, full-bodied, gritty and excellent length. Quite warm at the finish, but mostly handles abv with aplomb - definitely needs a big piece of meat.

Château de Beaucastel 'Hommage a Jacques Perrin' 2013 Châteauneuf-du-Pâpe, France 15.07% abv TA5.44 pH 3.52 Price R5,000

Less than 300 cases a year, not made every year. 60% Mourvèdre, Syrah, Grenache, Cinsault. "A wine to give me goosebumps" – Jacques Borman

Sweet, meaty nose, brooding dark berried fruits, leather and a touch of sweat. Lavender notes, with some violets, dense black berried fruit, velvety tannins, excellent acidity, handles alcohol well, full-bodied, lovely, multiple layers of fruit/oak, good evolution at finish.