

2017 Clos Saint Jean Chateauneuf Du Pape Deus-Ex Machina

The 2017 Châteauneuf Du Pape Deus-Ex Machina (60/40 Grenache and Mourvèdre) shows more classic Mourvèdre notes, with blackcurrants, Asian spices, crushed violets, cured meats, and graphite all giving way to a power packed, opulent, hedonistic 2017 that does everything right. Incredible depth of fruit, building tannins, no hard edges, and a finish to die for are all part of the package.

I know it will shock long time readers, but yes indeed, Clos Saint Jean has again made some of the wines of the vintage in both 2017 and 2018. Enough can't be said about the quality coming from the team of Vincent and Pascal Maurel, as well as consultant Philippe Cambie, and these wines possess that rare mix of incredible power and richness pared with a sense of weightlessness and elegance. Looking at the 2017, these remind me of the estate's 2009s with their incredibly Provençal, sexy, full-throttle styles. I'm sure alcohols are pushing 16% so these aren't for those looking for lightweight wines, yet they remain pure, balanced, and are simply profound wines. The 2018 showed beautifully as well and while they don't quite have the mid-palate depth of the 2017, they pack plenty of power and stay pure, balanced, and silky. These are majestic, magical wines that could come from nowhere else.

- Jeb Dunnuck (8/16/2019)