



presents

LAURENT CAZOTTES

Eau-de-Vies & Fruit Liqueurs

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LAURENT CAZOTTES ARTISAN DISTILLER

Laurent Cazottes is a truly gifted man. Located in the Tarn departement of France - a 3hr drive south east from Bordeaux and about 70km north east from Toulouse - his tiny distillery produces what might very well be the most magnificent expressions of fruits liquor/sweet-wine and eau-de-vie.

The man farms biodynamically 20 hectares (ha) divided as such:



3 hectares of vine dedicated to growing endemic grape variety:

- 1.8 ha of Mauzac Rose
- 0.5 ha of Prunelart
- 0.7 ha of Folle Noire

2.5 ha of fruit trees:

- 0.7 ha of Greengage
- 1.3 ha of Pear trees
- 0.5 ha of a field blend of fruit trees such as sour cherry trees, quince trees etc...

1.5 ha of truffle grove

(and depending on the year, 5 ha of sunflowers and 4 ha of other cereals.

The rest of the land is made of woods)

The adventure started in 1967 when Laurent's father started his one-man traveling distiller operation: while his dad had been growing some fruit trees for the family's consumption, he made a living going from one village to the other, distilling the fruits small growers and families would have harvested from their garden.

In 1998 Laurent took over the family business and made some radical changes to the operation. He first decided that he would focus on distilling his own fruits to produce his own eau-de-vie and liquors. Then, to completely be in tune with his personal beliefs, Laurent made a radical move, away from what was done by the past generations. Indeed he explains that for a (too) long time major chemical firms had a strong influence on growers such as his father which led to the use of too many chemicals too often. As a result he set his mind to only grow fruits biodynamically.

Laurent uses his father's 11 hl still to make his 4 eaux-de-vies (Prunelart, Mauzac Rose, Pear Williams and Greengage) as well as a custom made 3 chambers still. Some of this grape brandy is used in the making of his liquors (Wild Sour Cherry, Wild Quince etc...).



What makes Laurent's work a true work is two-fold:



1. Laurent waits for all his fruits to be perfectly ripe, from Mauzac to Pear Williams, Greengage etc... and lets them dry for some time on the trees/vines (a technique called "passerillage sur souche" in France) to concentrate sugar and flavors before starting to use them.
2. After the "passerillage" step, he then painstakingly removes the skin, pips/seed/pits and stalk off ALL fruits before crushing them.

If you can imagine the amount of work required to peel, cut in quarters and remove the seeds and stalk of 2 tons of dried Pear Williams before even starting the process of making the eaux-de-vie, you have an idea of how special Laurent Cazottes products are.

	<p>PREMIÈRE OPÉRATION : Le passerillage; durant cette phase, les poires sont amenées en surmaturité.</p>		<p>QUATRIÈME OPÉRATION : Élimination du calice, pour ses notes herbacées.</p>
	<p>DEUXIÈME OPÉRATION : Équeutage; élimination du bois.</p>		<p>CINQUIÈME OPÉRATION : Fouillage et mise en fermentation.</p>
	<p>TROISIÈME OPÉRATION : Épéiner; afin de supprimer les notes hulinées.</p>		<p>Le traitement des fruits surmûris ne peut s'effectuer que manuellement</p> <p>Poire Williams Culture biologique de notre verger</p>



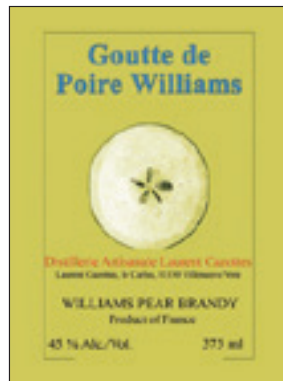
EAU-DE-VIE

Laurent makes four eaux-de-vie:

- two from rare, almost extinct grape varieties: Prunelard and Mauzac Rose
- a Pear Williams
- a Greengage

Each eau-de-vie is made from organic fruits, harvested ripe then dried on mats to concentrate sugars/flavors. The dried fruits are then peeled one by one, cut in half, the pit/seeds/stalk are removed as to keep only the flesh of the ripe fruit. Only then are they crushed into a juice and fermented. On average the wine obtained is about 11% alc./vol. This wine is distilled in a pot still to 66% alc./vol. Laurent bottles each eau-de-vie at 45% alc./vol after reducing the proof slowly by adjunction of demineralized water.

Because of the process of making those products, each year, the US allocation is of 200 half-bottles of each of those eau-de-vies.



Goutte de Poire Williams

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Alcohol: 45% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes



Goutte de Reine-Claude dorée (aka Greengage)

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Alcohol: 45% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes



PRUNEWWHAT...??

For you wine geeks who are reading this and happened to have invested a large amount of your salary in Jancis Robinson's latest book, here is what she says about the grape: "Prunelard: Old, rare, recently rescued south-west French variety, parent of Cot (Malbec). Origin & Parentage: Prunelard is an old variety from the Haute-Garonne and the Tarn that was mentioned for the first time by Hardy (1842) and dozen year later by Victor Rendu (1854) in his Ampelographie Francaise "Les principaux cepages du vignole de Gaillac sont le Duras, le Taloché, le Muscat et le Prunelard associe au Mauzac".

The name Prunelard comes from Prunel, the Languedoc word for 'plum', because of the shape and color of the berries (Rezeau 1997).

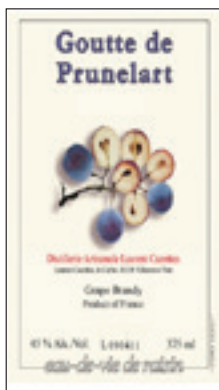
Prunelard should not be confused with Prunelat, a synonym of Cinsault and/or Cot in the Gironde, that was mentioned as far back as the sixteenth century (Rezeau 1997), even though they all belong to the Cot ampelographie group (see pxxvii; Bisson 2009). Recent DNA parentage analysis has shown that Cot is a Magdeleine Noire des Charentes x Prunelard cross (see CABERNET SAUVIGNON for the complete pedigree) and that Prunelard has a parent-offspring relationship with Merille (Boursiquot et al. 2009).

Viticultural Characteristics

Mid ripening. Quite vigorous but not particularly productive. Very susceptible to mites in the spring but little susceptibility to botrytis bunch rot. Small, compact bunches.

Where it's grown and what its wine tastes like:

Prunelard was once widely planted from Lavilledieu to Gaillac in south-west France and has been recently rediscovered and nursed back to life thanks to Robert and Bernard Plageoles and a few other local backers of the region's historic indigenous varieties. Although Prunelard is recommended only in the Tarn and is not permitted in any appellation wine, the total vineyard area has increased from just over 2ha (5 acres) in 1998 to 13ha (32 acres) in 2008. Producers of varietal wines include Domaine Plageoles and Domaine Carcenac; Domaine de la Ramaie produces a blend of 75% Prunelard with 25% Braucol (Fer). Wine are deeply colored, full bodied yet balanced and well suited to aging, often with robust alcohol and flavors of ripe plum and spice."



Goutte de Prunelart

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Alcohol: 45% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes



MAUZAC ROSE

“Mauzac Rose - See Mauzac Blanc.” Well that was easy. Wait, you don’t know what Mauzac Blanc is? Mauzac Blanc - Characterful, apple-skin-flavoured Gaillac and Limoux variety used in dry, sweet and sparkling wines. Principal Synonyms: Blanc Laffite (Entre-deux-Mers), Gaillac or Plant de Gaillac (gers) Gamay Blanc (Aveyron), Mausat (Languedoc). Varieties commonly mistaken for Mauzac Blanc: Torbato (Sardegna in Italy).

Origin and Parentage

Mauzac Blanc is a variety specific to the Gaillac area of south-west France. The earliest mention is said to have appeared in the Livre de raison by Antiquamareta (Lavignac 2001) in 1525 and later in 1564 (in an archive document cited by Cayla in Rezeau 1997): ‘vigne muscade et mausague’. However the true identity and the berry colour of this mausague is unknown and the first reliable mention of Mauzac dates back to 1736 under the name Mausat (rezeau 1997): “En Languedoc Mausat: il y en a de blanc et de noir, il produit un grain rondet croquant”. The name Mausat (Mausac in Occitan) could derive from two distinct villages: Mauzac, south west of Toulouse (Haute Garonne) or Meauzac to the north of Toulouse near Moissac (Tarn-et-Garonne). According to the IFV (Institut Francais de la Vigne et du Vin) website, Mauzac Blanc has possible parent-offspring relationship with Negret Castrais, a local variety that is no longer cultivated. Mauzac Blanc is not a white mutation of Mauzac Noir but Mauzac Rose is a mutation of Mauzac Blanc.

Viticultural Characteristics

Compact bunches, late ripening and best pruned short. Well suited to limestone and clay-limestone soils. Susceptible to mites, grapes moths, phomopsis and eutypia dieback but not to powdery and downy mildews.

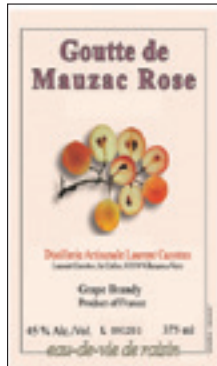
Where it’s Grown and What its’ Wine Tastes Like

Mauzac Blanc (often referred to simply as Mauzac) is used to produce dry, sweet and sparkling wines exclusively in Limoux and Gaillac in the western Languedoc and south-west France respectively. Its distinctive dried-apple-skin flavor is lost if the fruit is picked early to retain freshness as is so often the case today. Mauzac blanc is sometimes rather rustic but all the more tasty for that. In still Gaillac, Mauzac Blanc (including the color mutation Mauzac Rose) is one of the three principal varieties along with Len de l’El and Muscadelle whereas the unusual cloudy medium-sweet lightly sparkling wines entitled to the term Methode Ancestrale bottled before the end of the first fermentation must be 100% Mauzac (Blanc or Rose). The similar Limoux Methode Ancestrale must be 100% Mauzac while the more common Blanquette de Limoux has to be a least 90% Mauzac. In Limoux still wines and Cremant de Limoux, however, Chardonnay is gaining ground and Mauzac plays a less significant role.

Despite efforts in the late 1980s of champions of the variety such as Robert Plageoles and an increase in vineyard area in the late 1980s and early 1990s, total French plantings have slowly declined over the last fifty years from 8,511ha (21,031 acres) in 1958 to 1,991 ha (4,920 acres) in 2009 (although Mauzac is still more widely planted than either Marsanne or Roussanne). Top of the list of recommended producers come Domaine Robert and Bernard Plageoles but there are many others including Domaine de Causse Marines and Chateau Rives-Blancs. As well as being a permitted variety in still Gaillac, Mauzac Rose is an authorized part of the blend for Armagnac. Sparkling-wine producer Schramsberg of the Napa Valley have planted a little in California.



MAUZAC ROSE



Goutte de Mauzac Rose

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Alcohol: 45% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes

The Liquors (or Sweet Wines)

Note: those are produced, labeled and sold in Europe by the maker as “Liqueurs”. But the TTB - whose job is to make sure alcohol is labelled “correctly”, and by “correctly” they really mean labelled as approved by the TTB’s guidelines - decided that based on the proof and the method of production those liquors were in fact “Sweet Wines”. Therefore those are registered and labelled as Sweet Wines and can be sold by on-premise accounts having only a wine license.

Method of production

The fruits are harvested after having been left to dry on the tree (passerillage sur souche), cleaned (brushed), peeled. Pit and pips are removed. Part of the fruits are crushed and their juice is fermented. Part of this juice is then distilled. The fruit that have not been crushed are left to macerate for at least 6 month in grape eau-de-vie to which has been added the fruit brandy. Months later, the fruits are removed and the liquor/sweet wine bottled.



Wild Sour Cherry

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Varietal: 100% Organic Wild Sour Cherry

Characteristics: Harvested by hand, zero additives

Alcohol: 18% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes



Wild Quince

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Varietal: 100% Organic Wild Quince

Characteristics: Harvested by hand, zero additives

Alcohol: 18% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes



Folle Noire

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Varietal: 100% Organic Folle Noire grappe variety

Characteristics: Harvested by hand, zero additives

Alcohol: 18% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes

Note: first vintage was 2005. The vines are 50 years old. Laurent's idea was to make an unaged muted/"Pineau style" wine expressing aromas of fruit and christmas cake



Cedrat

Definition:

Botanical: Citrus Limonum (RISSO) - Family: N.O. Rutaceae

There are several varieties of Citrus medica, only differing in the character of their fruits. The principal ones are the lemon, citron or cedrat, and lime.

Cedrat is also known as Etrog.

AOC: none

Origine: Villeneuve-sur-Vere, Tarn, France

Varietal: 100% Organic Cedrat

Characteristics: Harvested by hand, zero additives

Alcohol: 18% abv

Master distiller: Laurent Cazottes

Note: first vintage was 2010 after an idea from top French chef Michel Bras who runs his three Michelin star restaurant in Aveyron. He obtained his three stars in 1999 and has kept them ever since. Bras' restaurant is ranked 72nd in the Elite Traveler World's Top Restaurants Guide 2012. Michel Bras approached Laurent Cazottes 3 year ago asking him to make a Cedrat liqueur specifically for his restaurant. Cedrat liquors are typical from south France, and can be found in places such as Corsica. Laurent worked with organic Cedrats from grower Michel Baches, one of the trusted purveyors of Michel Bras' restaurant. The Cedrat liqueur ended up being such a success that a few more cases were made to be sold outside Bras' restaurant.