

SommelierS INTERNATIONAL

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Spotlight Pays d'Oc

THE HOUSE BOISSET ... IN THE LANGUEDOC

THE REVIVAL OF FORTANT DE FRANCE, IN A PREMIUM VERSION

By selling the vineyards of the Languedoc to the Boisset family, Robert Skalli concluded a giants' pact. Jean-Claude Boisset and his son Jean-Charles, newly rooted in the terroir of the Pays d'Oc, realized the importance of this historical territory with a wealth of 2,000 years of existence and of 236,500 hectares, producing 12 million hectolitres a year, world's 2nd biggest vineyard after La Mancha in Spain.

Gone is the time when Jean-Baptiste Doumeng, the "red billionaire", was promoting the wines of his homeland with 18% alcohol or more that he had enriched with some Algerian wine, and that consumers regarded as "plonk"!

Jean-Charles Boisset et Laurent Sauvage.



In the 80s Robert Skalli strived to lead the Pays d'Oc to dare to plant new varieties with a quality approach. In 1987, the wine Fortant de France was born. Ten years later it was very successful on international markets who sold 10 million bottles. In 2011, the Boisset family heads to the South with Skalli. In 2011, the Boisset family is heading south with Skalli. These titans share the same attachment to the land, so the first pledge to continue the work of the second through Fortant de France. They relied on a survey made by the DREAL

(Regional Directorate for Environment, Development and Housing) to define three wine growing regions, identify the geological eras of the subsoil, the climates, but also the terroirs and appropriate varieties to be planted, in order to produce quality wines with the label Fortant, pioneer in made in France varietal wines that they revive in a Premium version!



La gamme Terroir Littoral.

The adventure leads father and son to a new study of the vineyard. In front of the Mediterranean, the huge wine growing area of the Languedoc-Roussillon looks like a natural amphitheatre with three levels facing south. The shore of the Med stretches over 200 km from Aigues-Mortes to Perpignan. It is planted in white with Chardonnay, Sauvignon, and Muscat; in red with Grenache, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon; in rosé with Grenache and Merlot. It provides aromatic wines. The inland Hills, in the scrubland between sea and mountain, see blossom the varieties Chardonnay and Viognier in white, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Shiraz and Pinot Noir in red. They produce ample and spicy wines. At last, on the Great Mounts ranging from 250 up to 400m high, Pinot Noir and Carignan in red, Chardonnay for the white, are source of elegant, sophisticated and complex wines.

That is how the viticulture area au Fortant has been created, covering 1,500 hectares in partnership with more than 120 wine growers and cooperatives. It gave birth to 18 Fortant Premium varietal wines, with freshness and elegance, the fruit of a plot selection work, low yields, rigorous blending and careful crafting. Wines for a budget from €6 to €15!

Jean-Charles Boisset finishes: *"I want the South of France to be recognized for its wines of high quality! In the horizon 2020, when the world population reaches 7 billion people, with the increasing consumption of wines from countries like the United States or China, world will lack wines and the regions who pulled up will plant again."*

The South: a new reality for the wine world?