

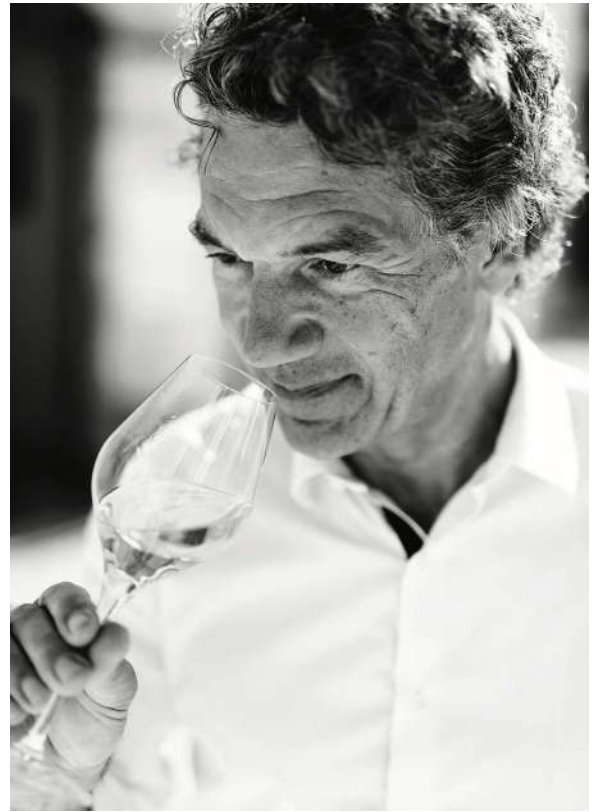
Languedoc,

Land of
great
white
wines



— DOMAINES —
PAUL MAS

LE LUXE RURAL DEPUIS 1892



Jean-Claude Mas,

the Ambassador

Promoting
the white wines
of the Languedoc
across the whole
world



Founded by Jean-Claude Mas in the year 2000 starting with a small family vineyard, today Domaines Paul Mas comprises seventeen wineries and domaines spread across the whole of the Languedoc and Roussillon regions, from Gard to the Pyrenees-Orientales. To these 940 hectares of estate vineyards which form the heart of the business and one third of its total production, are added grapes bought in principally from dozens of partners grapegrowers and vinified by Jean-Claude's team.

From this Domaines Paul Mas produces and distributes some twenty-five million bottles of wine each year in more than eighty countries, with one important distinction - since the beginning, white wines make up half of the total production: **a white wine paradise in the heart of the red Midi.** This singularity is driven by their founder. A visionary, the winemaker-negotiant was convinced from the very start:

“Contrary to received ideas, the region possesses the terroirs to produce fine white wines.”

To prove it, he has not hesitated to take risks and presented, among one of the very first cuvées which carried

his name, a blend of Chardonnay and Viognier. He transforms what seemed an odd pairing, even more so at these latitudes, into an explosive marriage, a mini aromatic bomb which awakens the taste buds.

And his boldness pays off: the success of the wine is immediate and attracts many imitators, in the Languedoc but also outside of France. This success also helps to teach Jean-Claude a lesson. One must follow one's intuition, even where this goes against popular belief. Notably at Domaine Ferrandière, where he twists one of the most common beliefs, by demonstrating that fertile soils can give rise to fine wines.

Armed with a vast diversity of terroirs and of grape varieties at his disposal, he shows the many forms of white wines, either in wines of pleasure or of dreams. Whether unbeatable value-for-money examples or exceptional fine wines, these white wines which carry Jean-Claude Mas' signature tell of their place of origin and describe a style. In combining delicacy and freshness, which today's technology allows us to preserve, they rhyme exuberance and elegance.

Jean-Claude Mas,

the grape grower

Cultivating white
grape varieties under
the Midi sun.

Twenty years of close observation have allowed Jean-Claude Mas to choose the terroirs most suited to producing white wines, and to bring to the vines the best possible treatments to be able to harvest grapes of the highest quality.

Reaching a slow and harmonious maturity

In the chosen parcels, a large temperature difference between day and night slows down the ripening of the grapes. A slowness which allows the fruit to give of its best, with no need to go to higher altitudes to find freshness. In the shallows and basins of the Hérault plain, the thermometer shows several degrees lower than on the plateau. The maturation also needs to be as regular as possible. To avoid hydric stress which would block this process, 20 to 40 millimetres of rain are necessary each month. Even there, the plain is not always synonymous with dryness, and the vine sometimes does better there than on the slopes.

When the conditions demand and water is available, irrigation is practiced with moderation. The mastery of the drip irrigation practice allows us to adapt the flow according to the schedule, and to the permeability of the soil. At **Domaine de la Ferrandière**, the water taken from nature, thanks to an ingenious system of canals, is returned to it, cleaner than when it arrived.

• **Domaine de la Ferrandière**

• Between the Montagne Noire and the foothills of the Pyrenees, this vast estate of 120 hectares is situated in an ancient lagoon, which has become a veritable oasis for vines.

• Planted in the dry lakebed of the Marseillette, on rich soils in clay which lie on a bed of salt, the vineyards are flooded several times a year to avoid an excess of saltiness. In the spring, this method of natural irrigation also protects the plant from frost. Its topography also helps create wide temperature variations between day and night.

• Thanks to this original ecosystem, the eighteen grape varieties planted here, all natives of the Midi, produce extraordinary results on this fertile soil, proving that high yields are compatible with producing fine wines.



Domaine de la Ferrandière

Le Grand Vin Blanc

IGP PAYS D'OC

This blend of Chardonnay, Viognier, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Gris develops powerful scents of quince, ripe pear and white flowers. It is ample in the mouth, round and warming, with notes of vanilla and sweet spices. The finish has a saline note which recalls the terroir that it comes from.

Preserving the balance in the vines

Faced with global warming which is hitting all the vineyards of the South of France hard, Domaines Paul Mas has adapted its practices. The choice of plant material is a first response. The rootstocks are chosen for their resistance to drought, with roots that dig deep into the soil. In the hotter areas, indigenous grape varieties are favoured. At **Château Lauriga** for example in the north of Catalonia, Macabeu keeps its juicy fleshiness when grown on its native (poor and arid) soil.



Château Lauriga

• **Château Lauriga**

• Situated in the Aspres region (literally
• ‘arid earth’ in Catalan) on the eastern
• foothills of Mont Canigou, the estate of
• Château Lauriga (comprising 80 Hectares
• of which 68 are planted to vines) is
• swept by the winds.

• These mountain slopes, whose snowy
• peaks reach up to 2,800 metres, have
• deposited alluviums from the gravelly
• alluvial earth. On grassy soils where
• wild mustard grows, the vines produce,
• without irrigations, very aromatic and
• opulent wines, “reds disguised as whites”
• in the words of Jean-Claude Mas.



Cuvée Soleil blanc

AOP CÔTES-DU-ROUSSILLON

Grenache Blanc and Grenache Gris, with Macabeu from the best parcels of the domaine, produce a white replete with notes of ripe yellow fruit, mixed with a hint of wood and coconut. In the mouth the wine is full-bodied and concentrated.

Another solution: planting resistant grape varieties, better adapted to periods of drought and to extreme temperatures. The fruits of more than ten years of experimentation, a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Souvignier Gris, itself a cross between Seyval and Zaehringer, saw the light of day in 2022. The cuvée is AB certified. Equally resistant to both parasites and plant disease – particularly to oidium and mildew, these hybrids allow a considerable reduction in copper sulfites and / or of sulphur treatments recommended in organic vinegrowing, and so therefore also reducing the number of passes by machine and the corresponding carbon footprint. A small revolution, the arrival of these grape varieties constitutes a milestone on the road to immunity for the vines which are dear to Jean-Claude Mas.

More than 40% of the estate vineyards of Domaines Paul Mas are certified organic, the rest being labelled High Environmental Value (HVE) Level 3. Rather than follow to the letter the sometimes-esoteric demands of the certifications, this son and grandson of grape growers prefers to trust his intuition and to experiment. An in-depth reflection on fertilization, favouring organic fertilizers, and prophylactic plant-based foliar treatments (horsetail tisane, nettle manure) strengthen and stimulate the natural defences of the wines, making them more resistant to diseases and to heat spikes. Their foliage is trellised to better protect the bunches from the sun.

Another lever: the limiting of soil compaction and the reintroduction of plant cover (clover and bean in particular) lead to living and aerated soils, better prepared for drought. The vines draw water and mineral salts from the depths that will impart minerality to the wine.

Mas des Tannes

Situated in the lower Hérault valley, a few kilometres from the sea, Mas des Tannes represents the typical Mediterranean terroir. On the Bessilles hills, the 36 hectares of vines cohabit with olive trees, pines and scrub. Organically certified since the 1990s, the subsoils are teeming with organic life. On these limestone-clay soils, the vines are naturally resistant and vigorous, the grapes concentrated and healthy, the wines well-balanced and majestic.



Mas des Tannes vineyards



Mas des Tannes Réserve Blanc

IGP PAYS D'OC

At first discreet and floral, the nose of this Grenache Blanc and Chardonnay blend opens to notes of citrus and mango. In the mouth, it surprises with its power, with a mouthfeel both unctuous and fluid at the same time. Lightly liquorice notes and a gentle bitterness prolong the pleasure.

Jean-Claude Mas, the master blender

Producing elegant,
generous, or
powerful whites,
with freshness

At Domaines Paul Mas, tension is not appreciated, either in the air or in the glass. These wines have no austerity about them: they evoke generosity and voluptuousness, a reflection of their meridional terroirs and of the 'everyday luxury' promoted by their creator.

What is the common line between different Languedoc whites? Pleasure, and the emotion which they bring. Introduced at a young age to the taste of good things - peaches on the vine in July, picking strawberries at altitude on the red Aveyron soils, the land of his mother, biting into a Roussillon apricot looking out to sea, appreciating a true farm chicken or a "24 hour vegetable" - Jean-Claude Mas has great confidence in his palate. He knows that his wines 'speak' to most people, their international success being testimony to it.



Jean-Claude Mas ©Aurélio Rodriguez

The art of blending

Certain encounters are pivotal: It was at the side of Giorgio Grai, great Italian producer and winemaker, whom he first met in 1993, that Jean-Claude Mas learnt the art of blending. Just as in the production of a perfume, this art requires knowing first what is at one's fingertips and to let oneself be led by the nose. Smell in fact is a precious tool for someone who tastes almost every day, whether in his office or in the winery from the vat or the barrel, in order to put together more than a hundred different cuvées every year.

In the aromatic toolkit of the winemaker, fruit aromas are sacred, especially those with a tropical accent, passion fruit, mango or ripe pineapple. To the purity of fruits and floral notes we add patisserie and toasted hints of crumble and crème brûlée for those wines which are aged in oak barrels. Amongst the fifty different grape varieties at his disposal today, the master blender knows the power and the limits of each one, and plays with multiple combinations which the different sites, microclimates and soils offer him, from the geological melting pot that is the Languedoc, between schist, pudding stones, clay, scree, marl and sandstone.

A great fan of the Viognier grape which he had had a leading role in planting in the region, Jean-Claude discovered its real potential in 2003. In that scorching year, the Sauvignon Blanc grapes lost their aromatic shine.

The Viognier, on the other hand, planted on the plain without hydric stress but enjoying cool nights, developed delicious tropical fruit and boxwood notes. This started an extended period of experimentation to understand the organoleptic profile which each type of terroir produces. Slopes of limestone-clay or marly clay, the villafranchien plateau or the alluvial plain do not produce the same results. Jean-Claude Mas today vinifies the variety in several different cuvees, with a dozen of them as a single-varietal wines. In Montagnac, on the plain or on the hillsides, between reedy ditches and the Hérault river, many white wines from the Pays d'Oc are produced, such as the historic **Vignes de Nicole** and **Viognier Le Pioch**.

Château Paul Mas, Vignes de Nicole, Côté Mas restaurant and Guest house.



Vignes de Nicole Chardonnay-Viognier

IGP PAYS D'OC

This blend of Chardonnay and Viognier was one of the first cuvees signed 'Jean-Claude Mas'. The exuberance of the latter, balanced by the acidity of the former, teases the palate of everyday wine drinkers just as it does restaurateurs. The success of the wine was immediate, and widely imitated, in the Languedoc but also outside France. Partly fermented in oak barriques, the wine on the nose shows a bouquet of flowers and white fruits, and honey with a toasted note. In the mouth, the wine is unctuous, fresh, and persistent.



Viognier Le Pioch

IGP PAYS D'OC

Le Pioch, historically the first Viognier to be made as a single varietal wine, is made up of a blend of terroirs and different ripenesses to obtain the perfect expression of the grape according to Jean-Claude Mas: Its colour of varied hues, pure fruit and flower aromas (acacias, apples, pears), rich in the mouth (aromas of mango and citrus), enveloping, but balanced by a freshness that needs to stay 'palate pleasing'.

Combining freshness and sweetness

Rich in minerals and in dry extract, the Domaines Paul Mas whites have something exuberant, baroque, the opposite of stripped down about them.

A rare practice in the vineyards of the Midi, malolactic fermentation is carried out on a portion of the blends of Chardonnay (40%), of Viognier (25%) and even of Sauvignon Blanc (10%). The lactic acid, which brings to cheese and yoghurt their sour taste, confers mouthfeel and complexity to the precious nectar. Where the wines which are rich in malic and citric acids produce a steely and pointed attack, the musts with higher pH give a more enveloping sensations, with more palate weight and a saline finish.

When the only cheese you have eaten up until the age of eighteen has been Roquefort, it is logical to appreciate umami, the fifth sense which one finds in fermented and matured products. In wine, it is mainly the lees which give rise to this caressing sensation. A product of the autolysis (breakdown) of yeasts at the end of the fermentation process, the lees enrich wine in amino acids, in proteins and in volatile compounds which give roundness, fatness and enhanced aromas to the wine. Practiced on the branded wines, ageing on the fine lees of the last vintage one month before bottling works as a real 'lift', a *'cream two in one, day and night'* jokes Jean-Claude Mas.

This native of the Languedoc, where the culture of the vine goes back to ancient times, made his entry into the world of wine at a time where the New World producers had demonstrated that harvesting at night and by controlling the temperature in the winery it was possible to produce, even in hot climates, white wines of quality, which were neither flabby or oxidised. Feasting on tradition does not stop one from being open to innovation. Brand new methods and equipment were thus brought into use on a project which was both cultural and oenological, even for the branded wines. Jean-Claude Mas is in this also the heir of the Bordelais winemakers, with Denis Boubourdieu at their head, who established protocols to preserve the varietal aromas of white grapes (quality and temperature of the harvest, length of skin contact, cold settling, and cold fermentation, etc.)



**Côté Mas
Sauvignon
Vermentino**
IGP PAYS D'OC

On the label, a postcard view of the South: a country house surrounded by pines, vines and olive trees, the great blue a canvas in the background. On the first floor, a couple enjoys a lunch on the grass in the enveloping heat, their appetites whetted by the perfumes of the garrigue. From their glasses come the pure notes of peach and pear. From the first mouthful the richness of the wine is balanced by a welcome vivacity. Nature, like this wine, is accessible to all, but the pleasure and emotions they bring are priceless.



Martinolles vineyards

The enthusiasm of the great white wines

Alongside the domaines where they produce very friendly wines, with exceptional value for money, over the years Domaines Paul Mas has acquired terroirs from which come wines of distinction to cellar, concentrated, complex and opulent.

Château Paul Mas

It is here that it all began, starting from a paternal gift of 30-odd hectares of vines.

Between Pézenas and Montpellier, this vast estate (250 hectares) is nowadays spread over several plots of vines, surrounded by olive trees and orchards. Around Château Paul Mas, several islands produce emblematic cuvées, such as Belluguette.



Belluguette AOP LANGUEDOC

The nose of this blend of Grenache Blanc, Roussanne, Vermentino and Viognier is rich in white fruits and citrus notes. The ageing of 30% of the blend in new oak barriques has given it traces of vanilla, brioche, and a hint of coconut. In the mouth, aromas of honey and white flowers are carried by unctuousness, substance, and a saline finish.

Château Martinolles brought Jean-Claude Mas to the realisation of a long-held dream: to produce sparkling wines of the style and richness he had discovered in Italy, where he was once more guided by his mentor Giorgio Grai. Entranced by the elegance of these wines of celebration, Jean-Claude wished to add this string to his bow, and the hills of Martinolles gave him the opportunity in 2011.

The man of challenges readily took up the one which this history-laden terroir gave him: to take ancestral know-how and put his stamp upon it.



Grande Réserve

AOP CRÉMANT DE LIMOUX

Produced from carefully chosen parcels of vines, the base wine is a blend of Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Mauzac. It shows brioche and toast. Part-fermented in oak barrels, one portion (20%) is also aged in barrel for six months before bottling for the second fermentation. The bottles slumber for 48 months on their sides, and the 'liqueur d'expédition' added after disgorgement is very low in sugar, a signature style of Jean-Claude Mas.

The result? A powerful and elegant Crémant from which we discern patisserie and toasted notes. In the mouth it is full, with fine bubbles and a long, lasting finish.

Château Martinolles

- Château Martinolles covers 130 hectares of woods of fields, olive groves, orchards, and vines within the Limoux appellation (90 hectares in total), grown in the commune of Saint-Hilaire.
- This little village in the Aude valley takes pride in being the birthplace of sparkling wine in France.

- Over more than ten years, the efforts have paid off. The quality has increased, and the wines are widely admired, by wine drinkers and wine professionals, especially in international markets.

- Château Martinolles is also a key player in the revival of still wines in the region, producing in AOP Limoux a white wine style which is complex and mouthfilling and the equal of many a more famous cru found elsewhere.



Chardonnay Vieilles Vignes

AOP LIMOUX

This Chardonnay keeps the character of its region, but with a truly Limoux signature. The nose offers aromas of white flowers, linden, hawthorn, enriched by a touch of butter. The palate, with citrus and quince aromas, is balanced by a remarkable freshness. A true food wine and one to cellar.



Astelia

Created *'out of nothing'* in 2018, **Clos Astelia** represents nothing less than excellence. Overlooking the Etang de Thau lake and the Mediterranean, the domaine is tucked away at the heart of a hunting reserve. The thirteen hectares assembled here bring together the best parcels on diverse types of soil, all managed according to biodynamic principles and worked by horses. Just alongside the family house, in the cool of a hillside flank, the winery designed by Jean-Claude Mas marries beauty and functionality to produce *'dream wines'*.

The vessel needing to match the heights of its contents, a unique bottle, made to measure, holds these exceptional cuvées. In 2016, its production was entrusted to O-I Glass, based on a crystal model created by Jean-Claude Mas with the celebrated Nantes glassmakers Daum. In 2023, the French glassmaker Saverglass conceived the second version of Astelia AAA bottle, whose shoulders are lined with multiple fragments of glass, symbolic of the mosaic of terroirs in the Languedoc-Roussillon. A final touch and a last tribute to the richness and diversity of a great viticultural region.



Astelia Le Grand Blanc IGP TERRES DU MIDI

50-year-old Grenache Blanc vines, Piquepoul and Viognier are hand harvested and pressed in whole bunches. The end of the alcoholic fermentation and five months' ageing take place in oak casks. The nose is subtle, full of notes of white (sour green apple) and yellow fruits. Full bodied in attack, the palate is enveloping and then with a tangy saline finish. A wine to savour until the last drop.



After completing its quality revolution and placing ageworthy red wines on Michelin-starred tables, the Languedoc is now playing in the big league of great white wines. An evolution that reminds us that human knowledge is an essential component of terroir. Wine is not just a product of the earth: it is «elaborated» (or brought into being), the fruit of hard work both physical and mental. It took intuition, daring and perseverance to plant white varietals under the southern sun.

Both heir and pioneer, Jean-Claude Mas announced his intention from the very start of his winegrowing adventure just over twenty years ago: the region has terroirs suited to white grapes. To win this daring gamble, he has used all the cards in his winemaker's deck: meticulous observation and respect for nature to choose the coolest plots, the best suited grape varieties, and respect for the plant's balance on one hand; technological progress, cutting-edge methods and equipment in the vineyards and cellars to preserve the wines' freshness and fruity, floral aromas, on the other.

In his quest to produce terroir-driven wines with power in harness, Mas follows a singular path, off the beaten track. But he is also following in his own footsteps. In this vast region where vines and wine have been cultivated for thousands of years, now threatened by global warming...

...reinventing oneself becomes as much a habit as a necessity.



— DOMAINES —
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