



DOMAINE LAFAGE



Tessellae Carignan

While Jean-Marc comes from a long lineage of vigneron—his family has been rooted in the Roussillon since 1791—his success is no inheritance. Rather, it's the result of vision, perseverance, and a profound understanding of both place and purpose. Where previous generations contributed to the region's legacy of fortified wines, Jean-Marc saw the potential for something new: a revitalized, terroir-driven Roussillon rooted in dry wines of complexity and authenticity. He took the reins of a patchwork of family vineyards and set out to create something wholly original—an estate dedicated to capturing the essence of the Mediterranean, while committing fully to environmental stewardship.

Today, Domaine Lafage spans over 160 hectares of vines, many of them older than half a century. But more than the scale or age of the vines, what sets Lafage apart is its deep commitment to regenerative agriculture. Rather than simply sustaining the land, Jean-Marc and his team are actively healing it—reviving soil vitality, increasing biodiversity, sequestering carbon, and restoring natural cycles that industrial agriculture too often disrupts.

The estate encompasses six distinct zones—from the steep, schist-laced terraces of the Rocky Coast to the Mediterranean Plain's sun-drenched gravels, from the granite-based heights of Fenouillet to the wind-lashed slopes of the Upper Agly. Each micro-region offers a unique palette of soils, exposures, and climatic conditions, allowing for an astonishing range of expressions. The results are wines of purity, depth, and place—whether it's a bright, saline rosé from the Mediterranean Plain or a brooding, age-worthy red from the schist slopes of Maury. His wines are rooted in the belief that viticulture can restore as much as it extracts, and that farming for the future begins in the soil beneath our feet.

Carignan has had a rather tumultuous history in the south of France. Once seen as a necessary grape to spur the region's recovery after the plague of phylloxera in the late 19th century, primarily for its ability to produce high yields, it has been largely replaced with “nobler” varieties such as Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre. This is unfortunate – for as challenging as the variety is to love when the vines are young – they are superb with half a century under their belt. Jean-Marc Lafage luckily resisted the call to uproot and replace this variety, and he owns a Carignan vineyard of seventy-year-old vines on the hills between the villages of Maury and Tautavel.

LOCATION

France, Côtes Catalanes

SOIL

Black slate

ELEVATION

200 meters

FARMING

Sustainable

VARIETIES

Carignan

AGE OF VINES

60 years-old

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, destemmed, cold pre-fermentation maceration, fermented in concrete, 30 day maceration

AGING

4 months in concrete vats

ACCOLADES

91 – 2022, *James Suckling*

90 – 2019, *Decanter*

90-92 – 2019, *Jeb Dunnuck*

