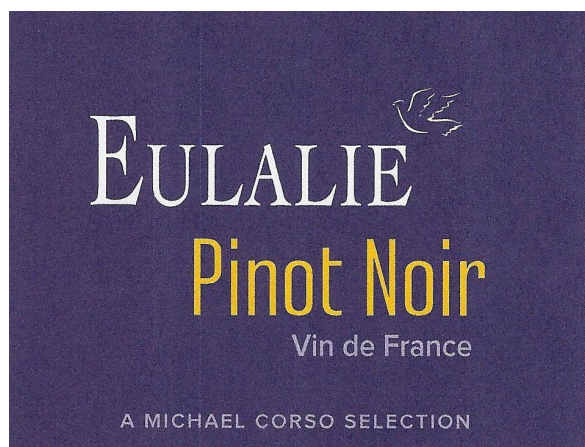


EULALIE PINOT NOIR

VIN DE FRANCE



The quest for high quality, affordable Pinot Noir can lead one down many paths, most of them disappointing in the end. While discussing this very subject over dinner with Laurent Coustal, owner and winemaker of Chateau Ste. Eulalie in Minervois, Laurent leapt up from the table, his face beaming. “Let me show you something,” he exclaimed, as he bounded out of the room.

Tasting the unlabeled mystery wine that Laurent brought back from the chais, we were soon beaming, too. Distinctly Pinot Noir. Such bright fruit. No hard edges. “This is from a neighbor’s

vines. We make the wine together and I bottle it for him. The vineyard is on a remote hillside that the locals call ‘L’Enfer, (French for ‘Hell’), because the terrain is so rugged,” Laurent explained. It seemed that only by the grace of Ste. Eulalie herself, could a wine so fine and elegant have come from such an unforgiving place. We bought the entire production on the spot.

Region: Languedoc-Roussillon
Appellation: Vin de France
Owner: Cru Communal / Made by Laurent and Isabelle Coustal & their neighbors
Farming Practices: Sustainable
Soil: Stones, limestone and clay
Vineyard: 1.5 ha
Grape Varieties: 100% Pinot Noir
Avg Age of Vines: 5-20 years
Yield/Hectare: 35-40 hl/ha

Vinification and Élevage: Grapes are harvested, then go through a 2-day cold soak. Primary fermentation takes place in neutral vat over two weeks, after which the wine stays in contact with its fine lees for five months. The young wine then rests for 6 months in stainless steel tanks before bottling.

About L’Enfer: Dubbed “Hell” due to the difficulty of farming on the rugged terrain, L’Enfer is located on a steeply-graded hillside abutting the Montagne Noire. This marks the end of the Massif Central and its continental climate, as the terrain begins its descent to the Mediterranean. The “Eulalie” parcel consists of 1.5 ha of Pinot Noir and 2 ha of Chardonnay. The cool microclimate of the hillside location allows for the gradual ripening of the delicate Pinot Noir grapes, unlike the many Pays d’Oc wines produced on the torrid plains.

Tasting Notes: Rich cherry fruit, with a fine underpinning of Pinot earthiness and notes of garrigue. Luscious and fruity, but made with restraint, this is a lovely expression of cool-climate Pinot Noir with a distinct Mediterranean character.

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