

Overview of Other Key Appellations, Alphabetically



Pic Saint Loup

A very dramatic landscape located in the northeast of Languedoc, the area takes its name from the most massive peak: Pic Saint Loup. The peak is said to take its name from Thieri Loup, a crusader who returned from the Holy Land to find his beloved had died, and then chose to live on the peak as a hermit thereafter. Vineyards are composed primarily of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre and this area has a more continental climate, receiving more rainfall than other places in Languedoc. This AOC is only authorized for the production of red and rosé wines. White wines bear the AOC Languedoc designation.



Saint-Chinian, Saint-Chinian Berlou and Roquebrun

Situated to the northwest of the town of Béziers in the Hérault département, at the foot of the Caroux and Espinouse hills, this appellation spans 20 villages. Its proximity to these hills makes Saint-Chinian's climate more continental than that of neighboring Minervois. It also provides some of the most dramatic and beautiful landscapes in the area. Saint-Chinian Berlou and Roquebrun lie to the north of Saint-Chinian proper. Red, white and rosé wines are authorized for production, though Berlou and Roquebrun only produce red wines. The blends are primarily Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Lladoner Pelut. Carignan also features in the wines of Berlou. Roquebrun and Berlou feature schist soils.



Terrasses du Larzac

The "terraces" of the Larzac plateau is an apt name for this area. These terraces were formed during the last ice age as the large ice cap on the Larzac plateau melted and slide towards the sea, carrying much rock and soil with it. Due to its relative elevation and distance from the sea, as well as a large diurnal range, the wines retain a lovely freshness. This area also has a more continental climate and more rainfall. This AOC is only authorized for red wine production, whites and rosés may be labeled AOC Languedoc.

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Limoux

Situated in the far southwest of Languedoc, Limoux experiences a more Atlantic climate than Mediterranean. This allows it to produce sparkling wines as well as utilize more international grapes. Predominantly white, these wines can be still or sparkling. For either the sparkling or still white wines, the grapes involved are Mauzac, Chenin and Chardonnay. For both Blanquette (primarily Mauzac) and Crémant wines (with a higher percentage of Chenin Blanc and Chardonnay), the second fermentation takes place in the bottle and there is historic evidence that this practice originated in Limoux (in 1531) before it was known in Champagne. Crémant rosé is produced by adding 10% Pinot Noir. Some still red wines are produced, and there is a third category of sparkling wine (Blanquette Méthode Ancestrale).



Minervois and Minervois La Livinière

Red, white, rosé and sweet wines can all be produced in the Minervois appellation. The vineyards are spread across a natural amphitheatre made of “terrasses”, and bordered by the Canal du Midi to the south and the Montagne Noire to the north. The area is home to significant plantings of olive trees and the production of olive oil is notable here. AOC Minervois contains the smaller AOC Minervois la Livinière and AOC Muscat de Saint Jean de Minervois, which is a sweet wine. Minervois la Livinière was the first AOC to be recognized as a Cru du Languedoc. Even more than other areas of Languedoc, Minervois sits in a corridor where winds play an important role.



Muscats

There are four appellations for sweet wines, Vins Doux Naturels, in Languedoc. All of them employ one grape: Muscat à Petit Grains. The must is fortified with neutral grape spirit, leaving the finished wines with a minimum of 11% residual sugar and 15-18% alcohol by volume. The four AOCs are: Muscat de Saint Jean de Minervois, Muscat de Frontignan, Muscat de Mireval and Muscat de Lunel.

Picpoul de Pinet

AOC Picpoul de Pinet is the largest white wine producing appellation in Languedoc. The predominant grape is the white Piquepoul, which produces wines with refreshing acidity. The vineyards are situated at the edge of the Mediterranean in view of the Bassin de Thau and its oyster beds, so it is no surprise that the resulting wines make excellent companions to all types of seafood.

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Corbières And Corbières-Boutenac

Corbières is the largest AOC in Languedoc, and produces red, white and rosé wines. Situated between the Pyrenees mountains and the Aude river, the region has a complex geological history that explains the great variety of soil types (including shale, limestone, sandstone and marl) which contribute to the distinctive character of the wines. The area is also shaped by the strong winds that blow most days of the year. Within AOC Corbières is the Cru of AOC Corbières-Boutenac. The rules for this AOC require Carignan in greater amounts than other areas, especially in Boutenac. Only the best wines receive the Boutenac AOC label.



Faugères

Faugères production is primarily red wines, though whites and rosés are produced as well. The climate is very Mediterranean, dry and mild, and the vineyards are south facing, though elevation and northerly winds combine to give freshness and acidity to the wines. The soils are grey schistes and clays which are not very fertile and give distinctive minerality to the wines. The vineyards are covered in large schist stones which often require them to be worked entirely by hand.



La Clape

La Clape lays claim to an impressively beautiful landscape, but is also one of the harshest environments for grape growing in Languedoc due to the heat and minimal rainfall. La Clape was once an island, but thanks to the changing course of the Aude River La Clape is now part of the mainland and its soils bear evidence of this change; they are extremely diverse and thus are home to a variety of grapes. Red and white wines are produced here in view of the Bay of Narbonne. Red wines are blends of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre, while whites feature the rare Bourboulenc. This AOC is a Cru du Languedoc.