



## B \*\*\*\* LE CLOS DU GRAVILLAS

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This is undoubtedly one of the most original, inventive and thoroughly principled pair of winegrowers in the Languedoc. John landed in this remote spot from the US via Spain, Nicole from a wine-trade background in Béziers. They built much of their small nine-hectare vineyard themselves by clearing away several hectares of scrub and boulders, as well as nurturing precious old vines such as carignan, one of their present mainstays. They now also have syrah, grenache in all three colours, muscat, terret gris and noir, cabernet sauvignon, cinsault, mourvèdre, counoise, maccabeu, roussanne, marsanne and viognier. The house style prefers elegance rather than power, and care over the use of oak. Although within the special AOP of St Jean (and they do make lovely muscats (B)), these are but a small part of their production. So where to start? With 'Mademoiselle Lily' perhaps (B), from viognier, roussanne and terret, aromatic and well-balanced, in apéritif style? Or a pure terret (B) from 50-year old vines, light, floral and refreshing? Or 'L'Inattendu' (C) perhaps, a grenache blanc/maccabeu blend, rich and mineral, fermented and raised in barrel on its lees? Or straight to the reds:

'Sur la Lune' (B), half carignan, half syrah and exhaling the garrigue; 'Lo Vielh Carignan', one of the best varieties from this grape to be found in Languedoc (C); its eccentric relative 'From the Dark side of the Moon' (C), sometimes loaded with cassis; or the IGP, 'Sous les Cailloux des Grillons' (B), from a cocktail which includes non-AOP grapes such as cabernet sauvignon and counoise? Otherwise, 'Rendez-vous au Soleil' (B/C) from carignan, cabernet and syrah, sweetish on the tongue, but with a lot of body and longing for partnership with a magret de canard? And do you start or finish the tasting with 'Oxytan' (C), a dry white oxidised wine from grenache blanc, raised under a *voile* like sherry for five years? A visit here is very special.

**MINERVOIS**  
and St Jean de Minervois



John Bojanowski, Le Clos du Gravillas