

PATRICK ALLEN SELECTIONS

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Christophe Semaska Côte-Rôtie

The Domaine at-a-glance

Owners / Winemakers: Christophe Semaska
Soil: Granite, Gravel, Limestone **Year Est:** 1988
Size: 24 Ha **Location:** Ampuis, France
Appellations Produced: Côte-Rôtie, St. Joseph, Condrieu



Christophe Semaska

The story of Christophe Semaska's wines is directly linked to the rebirth of Château de Montlys. In 1988 Christophe was able to purchase the rights to grow, and produce, the wines of Château de Montlys. However, there was a catch, they no longer produced wine, nor did they have any vines. The 16th century Château de Montly is the northern most domaine in Côte-Rôtie. Originally the domaine had 8 hectares of vineyards planted in Côte-Rôtie. Over the centuries their vineyards were ravaged by the blight of phylloxera, and later the local population was devastated by war, leaving few people to work in the vineyards. Sadly, by 1918, after World War I, there were no vines remaining at Château de Montlys. So, after 70 years without producing a vintage, Christophe Semaska replanted the first 1.38 hectares at Château de Montlys. Christophe is a dynamic and ambitious winemaker, and to date, he has replanted a total of 4 hectares of vines at the domaine. In addition to Château de Montlys' vines, he has also



Semaska's Côte-Rôtie Vineyards

purchased his own vineyards in Côte-Rôtie, and has contracts with vineyards in the Rhône valley including the appellations of Saint-Joseph and Condrieu. Originally, Christophe produced the wines in the old, vaulted, cellars of the Château. In 2011, he was able to build his own, modern cellar, with better equipment, and more space to work. It has been a long process, but through his hard work and determination, Christophe has resurrected one of the great domaines of France, and is now producing an extraordinary selection of wines.

A side note: Château de Montlys in art. In 1945 the Chinese artist Fu Baoshi painted a scroll entitled "Dreaming of Château de Montlys". Baoshi had never been to the Château, nor ever visited France. However, he became friends with the French linguist and diplomat Hugues-Jean de Dianous de La Perrotine, who was stationed

in China for much of World War II. Monsieur de Dianous told Baoshi stories of his family's home, the Château de Montlys, and his walks along the Rhône River below the Château. Baoshi's imagination was captured by the descriptions, which inspired him to make the painting "Dreaming of Château de Montlys". The painting still exists and was recently sold into a private collection for over two million dollars.

Wine Advocate (91-93)

Christophe Semaska - Côte Rôtie - Lancement 2013

Technical Notes: The grapes for this wine are hand-picked, and de-stemmed, before they undergo a 26 day maceration in stainless steel tanks. The vines grow in granite and silica soil of the Côtes Blonde. The grapes are harvested at very low yields of 25 Hl/Ha. Finally, the wine is aged for 24 months in new oak barrels before bottling.

Tasting Notes: Lancement is a steep hillside vineyard in the Côte Blonde area of Côte-Rôtie. These vineyards, at the top of the appellation, produce wines that combine elegance with power. The "Lancement" is a labor of love for Christophe Semaska. This micro-cuvée of Côte-Rôtie is dark and concentrated with flavors of cocoa, black raspberry, and cassis, complemented by aromas of violets and black pepper.

Only 150 cases produced



100% Syrah