

PATRICK ALLEN SELECTIONS

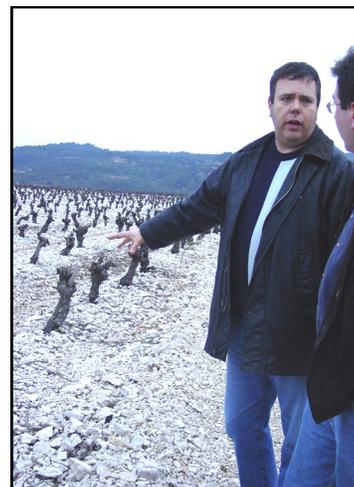
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Domaine de Barroubio Saint-Jean de Minervois & Minervois

The Domaine at-a-glance

Owner / Winemaker: Raymond Miquel
Soil: Limestone, Clay, Sand **Year Est:** 1400ish
Size: 34Ha **Location:** Barroubio, Languedoc-Roussillon
Appellations Produced: Saint-Jean de Minervois, Minervois



Raymond Miquel

The vineyards surrounding the Domaine de Barroubio look like a lunar landscape. Covered with broken-up, white, chalky rocks on the spinal crest of a hill, the vineyards line a road that seems to lead to nowhere. The domaine and the tiny hamlet of Barroubio have been in the Miquel family since the 15th century. The current generation, Raymond Miquel, has recently taken over the operation of the domaine from his mother. Today they own 25 hectares in the very small A.O.C Muscat de St Jean de Minervois. They also have 9 hectares of Minervois (Red), which has some plantings of vines that are over 110 years old.

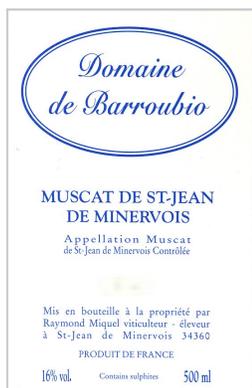


Minervois, which owes its name to Minerva the Roman goddess of wisdom, has been known for producing fine wine since the time when the Romans first settled here. AOC Saint-Jean de Minervois is located at the far northeastern corner of Minervois. It is one of the few appellations where one can see exactly where the appellation begins and ends with the naked eye. The appellation consists of a very defined strip of bright white limestone where the Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains is the only grape variety permitted. Within the space of a few feet one can see the

soil change dramatically from white to red, which denotes the boundary of the appellation. The sandy, clay-rich red soil is where the red grapes that produce AOC Minervois Rouge grow. In Saint-Jean de Minervois, the extremely chalky soil and high altitude (Barroubio's vineyards are at 300 meters above sea level) produce an exceedingly complex and structured Muscat. Maximum yields for the Muscat are 28 hectoliters per hectare, although Domaine de Barroubio's miniscule yields are often half of that. There are only six producers that estate-bottle in this tiny appellation. The one cooperative still produces 75% of the wine in Saint-Jean de Minervois.



To the left: white limestone soil for Muscat vineyards
To the right: iron-rich soil for red grape varieties



**100% Muscat Blanc
à Petits Grains**

“Cuvée Bleue” - Muscat de Saint Jean de Minervois

Technical Notes: Called France's rarest, and possibly most delicate, *vin doux naturel*, this dessert wine is made exclusively from Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains grapes. The wine is harvested by hand very late in the season. The grapes are lightly pressed and then the must is rapidly clarified by refrigeration. Extra alcohol (brandy) is added to stop the fermentation and preserve the natural sugars present in these intense grapes. The wine is then allowed to rest on its lees in stainless steel tanks before bottling. There is no oak ageing.

Tasting Notes: Considered by many to be the greatest terroir for Muscat grapes, Saint Jean de Minervois, produces some of the best Muscat wines in the world. Wines from this terroir have a delicate nose with hints of orange blossom, peach, and apricot. While the wine is sweet and unctuous in the mouth, it also has bracing minerality. This bright minerality helps to balance the wine, making it appear less sweet than it is in reality. So, even with 142 grams of sugar per liter, this wine has a lively, bright, finish which leaves the palate refreshed and ready for the next sip.