



PATRICK ALLEN SELECTIONS

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Château Virgile Costières de Nîmes

The Domaine at-a-glance

Owners: Serge and Thierry Baret
Winemakers: Serge and Thierry Baret
Soil: Clay and Alluvial Deposits
Size: 35 Ha **Location:** Vauvert, Costières de Nîmes
Appellations Produced: Costières de Nîmes

This family-owned domaine is managed by two brothers, Serge and Thierry Baret, who along with their father, cultivate 35 hectares of vineyards. The domaine, which is located 15 km from the Mediterranean Sea, dates back to 1748. The name Château Virgile which now is used in reference to the noted Roman poet Virgil, was the name of the original owner of the domaine. The vineyards are planted right at the edge of a plateau, where there are deep alluvial gravel deposits from the Rhône River — a mixture of granite and limestone pebbles (known locally as *gress*). The vines enjoy the benefits of a Mediterranean climate on the sunny slopes above the *Natural Parc de la Petite Camargue*. The national park is a vast wetland famous for its pink flamingos, indigenous white ponies, and its gourmet salt, *fleur du sel*. The Mediterranean climate in this region provides three characteristics that are beneficial to producing excellent quality grapes: 1) abundant sunshine; 2) rainfall within a limited number of days; and 3) favorable winds that keep the grapes free of moisture and mildew.



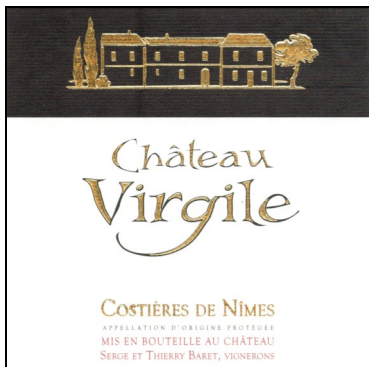
Thierry Baret, Patrick Allen, and Serge Baret



Roman coin showing a crocodile chained to a palm tree

Though Costières de Nîmes is one of the oldest viticultural areas in France, it isn't until recently that it received the recognition it deserves. In 1986 Costières de Nîmes was elevated from a Vin de Pays to A.O.C., and in 2004 the area was re-classified as part of the Côtes du Rhône. The entire Baret family is warm and hospitable. Serge and Thierry are very personable and hardworking winemakers dedicated to utilizing the latest technology to improve the quality of their wines and elevate the appellation of Costières de Nîmes.

The symbol of Nîmes: The seemingly incongruous, and almost surreal symbol of the region, is a crocodile chained to a palm tree. The symbol originally appeared on a roman coin. The coin was produced in Nîmes (Colonia Nemausus) in about AD 10-14. The front shows Augustus, the first Roman emperor (who reigned from 31 BC to AD 14) on the right, with his general, Agrippa on the left. They were the victors of the great Roman civil war against Mark Antony and his lover, Cleopatra the queen of Egypt. The crocodile is used to symbolize Egypt - chained to a palm tree to indicate its defeat and occupation by Rome. To this day the city of Nîmes, and the surrounding region, uses the crocodile chained to a palm tree as their insignia.



**50% Syrah, 30% Grenache
 10% Mourvèdre
 10% Marselan**

Costières de Nîmes, Rouge

Technical Notes: This is the first vintage in more than a decade, that Virgile has changed the blend of their wine, with the addition of Marselan. The vines, situated at the edge of a plateau in very deep gravel, produce dark, concentrated wines. The grapes are destemmed and vinified in tank, where the wine undergoes several “pump-overs” and one or two “delestages” during fermentation. The Château Virgile Rouge does not spend any time in oak, and is lightly fined and filtered before bottling.

Tasting Notes: Château Virgile is a lush and concentrated example of a Costières de Nîmes. The nose is intense with black fruit aromas complimented with hints of garrigue spice. In the mouth the wine is dominated by dense black cherry flavors from the Syrah. The Syrah is complimented by hints of black pepper and red cherry notes from the Grenache. The Mourvèdre helps to provide the ripe tannins that give this wine its structure. Now, for the first time, the addition of Marselan, softens the wine, giving it a lush, juicy character. This wine is ideal for barbeque, grilled meats, or simply burgers on the grill. Enjoy!