

Clot de L'Oum Cotes du Roussillon Villages

An evening little grain of gold, an evening of the full moon and lots of wind

Producer Information: Rising-star winemaking couple **Eric & Lèia Monné**, both natives of Perpignan, began purchasing vineyard property in the Roussillon in 1995 and produced fruit that for several years which was then sold off to the local co-op. Building on his experience at regional superstar, Clos des Fées, and driven by a passionate belief in organic and sustainable stewardship of their vineyards, their conversion to organic production in the vineyard, certainly ran counter to the generally accepted practices at that time.

Beginning in 2001, and working from 15 hectares of vines split up among 33 different parcels in the communes of Maury and Belesta, northwest of Perpignan, they produced their first wines bottled under their own label, **Clot de L'Oum** (Valley of the Elms). Their conversion to organic production in addition to meticulous vineyard practices which reduce yields (15-20 hl/ha ave.), promote maximum maturation and health of their fruit, greatly reduce the need for sulfite treatments. The practical effect of their painstaking vineyard work has resulted in delivering pristine fruit to their cellar door and with the 2005 vintage, witnessed the ripening of their fruit weeks ahead of fruit on adjacent parcels. Furthermore, the effect of the relatively high altitude vineyards (600 meters for their highest parcel of Syrah, while the majority of their parcels stand close to 400 meters) has served only to enhance the intensity, freshness and health of the fruit, while at the same time retaining acidity, vital in a growing region, so close to the Spanish border, which routinely witnesses an extremely hot, dry growing season.

The wines they are crafting are modern-styled in that there's an uncanny concentration of ripe supple fruit, but they are not being drowned in a chorus of new oak either. Fruit and terroir is what one will find in these well-crafted wines. What are Eric & Lèia looking for in their wines? Minerality, freshness and fruit. Eric likes to remind tasters that many of his parcels have a foundation of granite beneath the top soils. "Granite is unusual in France", continues Eric. But there's another famous vineyard area with granite, apart from Eric's in Belesta, and that of course is Hermitage!

Saint Bart ~ Vieilles Vignes 2005

Named after a small chapel near the parcel of 100 year old Carignan.

Terroir: Syrah from Schist soils, Grenache (Lladoner Pelut) from the best parcels of granite and 100 year old Carignan from high altitude gneiss.

Grape Varieties: Equal parts Carignan, Grenache and Syrah. **Yield:** Yields of 15-20hl/ha.

Characteristics of the Vintage: Owing to the cumulative effect of organic work in the vineyards, maturation of fruit was achieved weeks ahead of neighboring parcels and harvest began on September 7, 2005. The growing season also witnessed cooler conditions that seen in previous vintages and as a result one finds a lovely freshness of fruit and elegance in this vintage in addition to lower alcohol which makes the 2005 wines very "digestable" and food friendly.

Vinification: After transport to the winery in refrigerated trucks, and complete de-stemming, the fruit goes into small fermentation tanks. Parcels are all fermented separately and temperatures never rise above 22-25 degrees celsius. Fermentations lasts approximately 14-18 days and take place with only naturally occurring yeasts for the greatest expression of *terroir*. Sulphur is used to a minimum.

Elevage: Matured for approximately 15 months in oak barrels of 2-3 years in age. Bottled without filtration.

Production: 6960 bottles

