

# PROVENCE WITH ALTITUDE



SABINE

2017

Bieler Père & Fils

AIX-EN-PROVENCE

COTEAUX D'AIX-EN-PROVENCE



## THE VINTAGE

The string of warm vintages continued in 2017 but the main headline was the extreme drought. There was almost no rain from May through harvest and as a result yields were down about 20% for most (even more for those who had frost or other issues). Grape clusters were loose and berry sizes small. The good news though is that flavors are amazing and quite concentrated though without being heavy. Temperatures were moderate in the fall so acidity was retained allowing unusual balance of flavor and freshness. You're gonna love it.

## THE WINE

The classic Provence rosé profile is what every serious winemaker around the world attempts to mimic and for good reason. Our goal is find the delicate balance between floral, herbal, wild red fruit (not overly ripe), stone fruit and acid. Our hope is to sew these various attributes together in such a way that no one element stands out. The goal is that the wine is in total harmony, and the last few years I think we've achieved that balance quite well. 2017 has added one new element, a creamy concentration from the small yields and concentrated fruit. The wine is in no way heavy or fat on the palate, but rather the palate has tremendous length in addition to the raspberry, cherry, peach, herbal, citrus and mineral core. We have continued to invest in better temperature control in all fermentations to ensure more dynamic aromatics. We are also doing more pre-fermentation solids work to enhance palate weight. To ensure maximum complexity, we did over 30 small fermentations using dozens of different yeasts, creating a symphony of flavor. While all our fruit is contracted, we have been working with these same growers since 2005 and collaborate closely on every aspect, as if we were partners in each other's business.

The blend is the following: **Grenache** 41%, **Syrah** 20%, **Cinsault** 19%, **Cabernet Sauvignon** 15%, **Rolle** 5%. ALC BY VOL 13%, PH 3.3, RS .1%.

## THE REGION

As the oldest wine growing area in France and the world's largest rosé specialty region, Provence is the gold standard in rosé. There are 8 different appellations in Provence but only 3 that you need to know: Cotes de Provence, Aix-en-Provence, and Bandol. Most of the biggest rosé producers are in the Cotes de Provence AOC, where, generally speaking, the warmest growing regions in the flats of Provence produce higher yields and harvests tend to be quite early. For our part, we instead focused on the cooler, more rugged and higher elevation vineyards in the hills around Aix-en-Provence. The cooler nights in the hills around Aix-en-Provence means that we pick on average 2 weeks later than Cotes de Provence, allowing for a more gentle ripening and more natural acidity, two absolutely critical attributes to make the kind of rosé we think is best. The Southern Rhone and Provence are on the front lines of global climate change and these relatively cooler sites in the region have become more important than ever to make wines with balance and energy.

## THE HISTORY:

In 1992, my father, Philippe Bieler, founded Chateau Routas in Coteaux Varois – a small appellation in the middle of Provence. The winery focused on Grenache based red blends and rosé. It is there, starting in 1998, that I learned the wine business and started producing wine. In 2005, there was a great opportunity to sell the winery and estate and my father took it. We founded Bieler Père et Fils that same year and have never looked back. It's truly breathtaking for me to see how far the rosé market in America has developed from those challenging early days.

## CRITICAL ACCLAIM:

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) 89 PTS (2016) Vinous (Antonio Galloni) 90 PTS (2015)

\*Nielsen total U.S. retail, rosé blend wines from Provence \$10-14.99, 750ml, latest 26 wks ending 12/02/17.

