

# PROVENCE WITH ALTITUDE

2020

## Bieler Père & Fils

AIX-EN-PROVENCE

COTEAUX D'AIX-EN-PROVENCE



### THE VINTAGE

The 2020 growing season started with mild temperatures and a good amount of rain, which resulted in some mildew problems for many but thankfully not for us. By June the heat kicked up with crushingly hot temperatures at times, particularly in July. The rain never returned but thanks to the early season moisture we were able to maintain a good, healthy crop. Picking started by early September, which is quite typical. Around the fall equinox there's often a rain event, but it didn't materialize, thankfully, and we were able to pick when the grapes were at perfect ripeness. The increasingly dry and hot seasons have had us adding irrigation, which is critical, and we've been seeking higher elevation and north facing sites to slow down ripening. Grenache and Syrah still dominate, but we've planted more Cinsault, Rolle (floral/spicy white grape) and even some Grenache Blanc. The goal is to add new layers of complexity to each vintage.

### 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 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 gentler ripening and more natural acidity, two 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 WINE

The classic Provence Rosé profile is what every serious winemaker around the world attempts to mimic and for good reason. Our goal is to find the delicate balance between floral, herbal, wild red fruit (not overly ripe), stone fruit and acid. Enticing aromatics of peach, white cherry and wild raspberry that are balanced by summer flowers, white tea and Provence herbs. These delicate flavors carry through to a creamy yet lifted palate that's interwoven with rose petal and wet stones. We don't want singular big flavors, we want more nuance, energy, soul and personality. To achieve that we don't have a single approach to each fermentation. Instead, we break up each vineyard into parts using different yeasts, juice solids and lees treatments so each tank is a little different and brings a unique perspective in the final blend. We have been loving the results of circulating juice solids pre-fermentation to build depth and concentration. For a delicate, fresh wine like Rosé, oxygen contact can be crushing, so we have made investments in nitrogen coverage such that from the moment the fruit arrives it's never exposed to oxygen again until it's eventually poured from a bottle in to your glass, resulting in a more vivid and precise expression of our Rosé than ever before. 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. 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** 27%, **Cabernet Sauvignon** 15%, **Cinsault** 12%, **Rolle** 5%. ALC BY VOL 12.5%, PH 3.3, TA 5.9%

### 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. My sister Mira and I got involved in the mid 90's when we developed, through unorthodox winemaking and creative marketing and selling, one of the more dynamic rosé brands in America at the time. In 2005 there was a great opportunity to sell the winery and estate and we took it. The same year we sold Routas, we founded Bieler Père et Fils with a single-minded focus on making rosé. We have been making wine in Provence since 1992.

### CRITICAL ACCLAIM:

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| <b>90 pts</b> Vinous (2019)  | <b>100 Top Values of 2018</b> Wine Spectator (2017) |
| <b>88 pts</b> Wine & Spirits, Best Buy, Best of Provence List (2018) | <b>89 pts</b> Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (2017)       |
| <b>88 pts</b> Wine Enthusiast (2019)                                 | <b>88 pts</b> Wine Enthusiast, Best Buy (2017)      |
| <b>88 pts</b> Wine Enthusiast (2018)                                 | <b>89 pts</b> Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (2016)       |
| <b>89 pts</b> Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (2018)                        | <b>90 pts</b> Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (2015)       |

