

Les Clos Perdus 2008s

12 May 2009 by Jancis Robinson

From £7.75

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This outfit seems to be getting better and better. I first picked out their 2004 reds as my [wine of the week](#) three years ago. I recently tasted a range of their 2007s and 2008s and was even more impressed. You can read in my initial article how Hugo Stewart and Paul Olds (pictured) got started, identifying a few favoured patches of old vines in the hills of Corbières and in the wilds of the then- much- less- fashionable Roussillon. You can also read about their story at www.lesclosperdus.com - and the good news is that they have just started to export to the US too - to the admirable K&L of San Francisco, no less.

The easiest way to buy the red and white versions of **Les Clos Perdus 2008 Vins de Pays des Côtes Catalanes** is online from their website with delivery in the UK from their base in Wiltshire (including the flexibility to order mixed cases) but you can also buy them by the single bottle from Green and Blue in Greenwich, London.

The great news for us consumers is that they have recently added these Le Rouge and Le Blanc to their range, designed to sell at £7.75 a bottle each, from a new and obviously very promising vineyard they recently took over near Maury in the increasingly famous [Aglv Valley](#). As Hugo Stewart puts it, 'our prices are very low compared with what they would be if they went through an importer and retailer'.

I must say that I feel the names of these two wines are misleading. They taste so very much more exciting and alive than 'The Red' and 'The White'. Instead they really do taste as though they have extra life, concentration and vivacity in the bottle - in a good way. Here are Paul Old's winemaker notes on these two new additions:

Le Blanc

90% Grenache Gris
7% Grenache Blanc
3% Muscat à Petits Grains
1.5 hectares, 60 year old vines

Steep, east- facing slope on schist near the village of Maury. The vines were treated organically during the growing season with some bud and leaf removal. The grapes were picked 22-25 Aug with yields of 18 hl/ ha [nothing! - JR].

At the cave they were destemmed, crushed and pressed by basket press.

Cooled to 3 degrees Celsius (cold settled) for 48 hours. Moved to stainless steel for all but one new 225- litre barrel.

Spontaneous ferment [ambient yeast] started two days later. Top temperature reached during the ferment was 24 degrees Celsius.

At the end of ferment, the barrel and stainless steel vat were racked together with small dose of SO2 to avoid malolactic fermentation.

No fining, bottled with 0.7 micron filter. Bottled late Mar 2009

3,500 bottles

Le Rouge

80% Grenache Noir
10% Carignan
10% Mourvèdre
0.8 hectares, eight- year- old Grenache Noir vines, 60- year- old Carignan, 35- year- old Mourvèdre.

Steep east- facing slope on schist near the village of Maury. The grapes were treated organically during the growing season. The grapes were picked during the mornings of 19 and 20 Sep.

Yields 40 hl/ ha.

Destemmed and lightly crushed, the grapes were placed in stainless steel vats.

Spontaneous ferment started after three days. Top temperature reached during ferment was 28 degrees Celsius. After 15 days on the skins, the must was gently pressed by vertical basket press. The wine was then placed in stainless steel and one 500- litre 2- year- old French oak cask where it went through malolactic fermentation. The final wine was blended in January. No fining was performed. At bottling a 1.4 micron filter was used. Bottled late March 2009

5,000 bottles.

Here, in advance of a big survey of Languedoc- Roussillon wines that we are currently assembling, are my tasting notes on their three 'basic' wines:

Les Clos Perdus, Le Blanc 2008 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes Blanc 16.5 Drink 2009-11

Not much nose but very substantial and interesting on the palate. Serious wine and well balanced. Some herbs and a minerally undertow. Hint of quinine on the finish, the way some Châteauneufs have. Very interesting indeed for under £8 a bottle. Real wine! 13%

Les Clos Perdus, Le Rouge 2008 Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes Rouge 17 Drink 2009-12

Bright crimson. This seems to have some Carignan on the nose to me but it's so good on the palate I'll allow a moratorium. Nicely made with real integrity. Lots of minerals and wonderful character. Very fine tannins and real energy here. Well done! Not hot or sweet or alcoholic. Still a little chewy, Some real potential to age. 14%

And their 2007 pink, made at their winery in Peyriac- de- Mer, has really come on. Very much a food wine.

Les Clos Perdus, Le Rosé 2007 Languedoc 16 Drink 2008-09

Light red really - *clarete* colour. Not much nose. I wonder whether it is losing the bloom of youth? But the balance is awfully nice on the palate. I think you could still enjoy this with an outdoor lunch over the next few months. Quite substantial but not alcoholic. Well made. 13.5%

They also make some more complex and extremely good wines which will be included in our forthcoming Languedoc- Roussillon report. These hand- crafted wines are truly great value.

[Find these wines](#)