



October 2008

To all the Friends of Chateau Camplazens

In our travels this year we have met many wonderful people and have greatly enjoyed the company of many of you with whom we have together tasted the Camplazens Wines.

In 2008, Camplazens once again received many awards and attestations as to the quality of our wines. This is most certainly due to improvements which we have made in both the care of our vines and the making of the wines. We give details of this progress in our **Autumn Newsletter** which is attached. We hope you will find it interesting.

As our reputation for quality increases so does the number of clients. As always, for those of you who buy your wines directly from us at the Vineyard, it would be a great help if we were able to anticipate your future requirements in terms of the number of bottles of each wine and the approximate date you wish to collect them from Camplazens. We will treat these as non-binding reservations and we would request reconfirmation by you no less than one month prior to collection.

This year, we have travelled extensively to many countries to give support to our clients in the promotion of the Camplazens Wines and we will continue to do so wherever this is needed. Please let us know your thoughts as to support you may require in 2009

Here on **La Clape**, the sun has been shining every day now for three glorious weeks with nights which are refreshingly cool and filled with heavily scented aromas of rosemary, lavender and pine. Today, 1st October we start the 2008 harvest, but more on this in December at which time we will know what the 2008 Vintage will promise to become.

Susan & Peter Close



Autumn Newsletter

October 2008

Chateau Camplazens - A Vineyard which is Still Maturing

Chateau Camplazens wines are improving in complexity and concentration. When we took over the ownership and management of the Chateau Camplazens Vineyard in 2001 our first harvest was from only 13 HA of vines. Since then we have re-planted many of the remaining parcels from the original ancient Roman vineyard and reclaimed another 10 HA from the garrigue which is south-facing, is in the highest part of the vineyard and overlooks the sea, It has a limestone based soil with high mineral content and is ideally suited to the cultivation of Syrah and Marselan. This year at Chateau Camplazens we will harvest grapes from a total of 40 HA. The vines planted since 2001 are:

Syrah - 14 HA Grenache - 7 HA and Marselan - 7 HA

which give a threefold increase in the area planted with red grapes. In addition we have planted 2.5 HA of **Viognier**, which also triples the production of this our only white wine.

Over this period we have taken out 4.0 HA of less productive and less flavourful fruit and the improvements from this careful planning and preparation of the soil are now evident in the quality of the fruit. Many of these newly planted parcels are just now coming to maturity as evidenced by the flavor, intensity and complexity of the wines which they produce. **70% of current production now comes from vines less than seven years old**

The next AOC vintage will be 2006. Early last year we undertook a detailed review of the quality of our red wines which included, amongst other things a blind tasting of our 2004 Garrigue, Reserve & Premium together with some purchased top quality Syrah based wines currently available on the market. The principal conclusions were that, in general, the Camplazens wines, when compared to the best of the reference wines showed slightly lower concentration and less complexity. In addition, it was evident that improvements in the selection and the use of our oak aged wines in these blends were clearly possible. We also realized that our AOC wines did not require 30 months of cellaring prior to final blending and that reducing this time by one year to just 18 months was not only advantageous from a flavour perspective but would also reduce the risk of deviations in quality between vintages. As a consequence of these findings and by taking advantage of a substantial special label order for AOC 2005 from Standard Charter Bank in China for the Beijing Olympics, we were able to move quickly through the 2005 vintage and go directly to the 2006 for La Garrigue, La Reserve & Le Premium.

The results have been remarkable. All the wines from the 2006 vintage exhibit more weight and length without being overwhelming. Moreover, a more calculated and

informed choice of oak barrel wine in the blends enables the fruit to more fully express itself, while giving a more harmonious structure and improved balance to the tannins.

A Camplazens style is now developing which is rich and concentrated, with spicy minerality and earthy dark fruits full of intense aromatic flavors of the Garrigue which surrounds the vineyard.

2008 AOC Awards confirm the quality of the 2006 Vintage.

Chateau Camplazens received many high quality awards in 2008. We are very selective about the competitions we enter, preferring those which have international recognition and in which the wines are graded by a selection process which exhibits transparency, quality assurance and which are only based on blind tastings. Some of the highlights are:

The International Wine Challenge www.internationalwinechallenge.com awarded a **Gold Medal** for the Premium 2006 which also received the **Southern French Red Trophy**, one of only 20 trophies awarded to all French wines and placing this wine in the top 1% of more than 10,000 wines tasted overall.

MACON www.concours-salons-vins-macon.com This is one of the most prestigious in France again awarded **Gold Medals** to both the **Premium 2006** and the **Reserve 2006**. We were previously awarded a Gold Medal at **MACON** for the **Premium 2003** in 2006.

Guide Hachette 2008: The **Reserve 2006** has **2 Stars** in the **2008 Guide Hachette**

The Varietals Wines are also showing All Round Improvement in Quality

The 2008 Top 100 Vin de Pays Competition gave Gold Medals to three of the Camplazens varietal wines, **Syrah 2007**, **Marselan 2007** and the **Carignan 2006**, the latter being the first vintage of this traditional and often maligned grape stalwart of the Languedoc, which we produced using the Carbonic Maceration fermentation process.

Once again at the Awards Presentation at the International Wine Fair in June, the Chairman **Tim Atkin MW** who chaired an impressive tasting panel of 19 nationally and internationally well known wine experts, commented that several of the panel can now recognise Camplazens wines in blind tastings. Tim wrote subsequently in the Observer:

“One producer that has made the competition its own is Camplazens near Narbonne that is owned by an English couple, Peter and Susan Close. Camplazens had three wines in the Top 100 this year, but it is the winery's Syrah that always stands out. The 2007 that won a trophy this year is the third such triumph in five years”” Appellation snobs would never admit it, but close your eyes and you could be drinking a really good Crozes-Hermitage”

www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2008/may/11/foodanddrink.shopping2

Camplazens Accolades in the US. We were recognized for quality in 2008 also in the United States of America:

Wine&Spirits – The June edition of their magazine featured four Camplazens Wines as:

VALUE BRAND OF THE YEAR.

These were:

88 Points - Château Camplazens 2006 Vin de Pays d'Oc Syrah \$18

87 Points - Château Camplazens 2006 Vin de Pays d'Oc Marselan \$18

87 Points - Ch. Camplazens 2004 Coteaux du Languedoc La Garrigue La Clape \$18

86 Points - Château Camplazens 2006 Vin de Pays d'Oc Grenache \$18

dmerlin@wineandspiritsmagazine.com

Wine Spectator also selected **La Garrigue 2004** as a **Smart Buy** and featured the wine in their February edition.

Château Camplazens Wines are:

Imported into the **United States of America** by **Merlin Wines, Jefferson LA**
www.merlinwines.com

Marketed and sold in Europe, Canada and Asia through **Didier Absil Developpement**
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