



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

LA GRANGE DE QUATRE SOUS

Country: France

Region: Languedoc

Appellation(s): Vin de Pays d'Oc

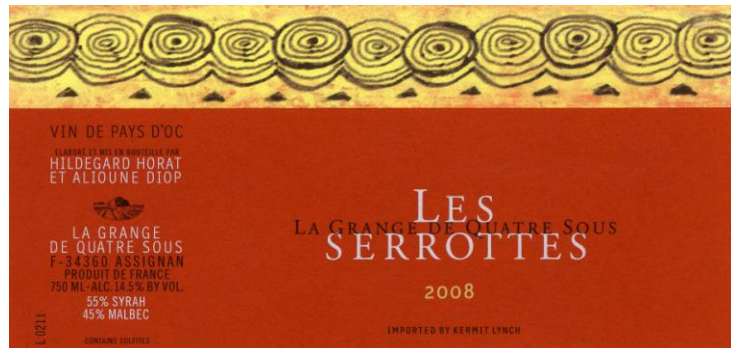
Producer: Hildegard Horat

Founded: 1983

Annual Production: 2,100 cases

Farming: Organic (since 1999)

Website: N/A



Hildegard Horat-Diop's rebellious streak, verve, and innate talent have made her a star of the Languedoc. Though she began making wine at a time when female winemakers in France were rare, she also broke many other social conventions along the way. She had started her career in her native Switzerland, where she was actively working as a restorer to old monuments. It all changed in 1975 when she and her first husband, Ernst Wirz, visited the Languedoc and fell in love with the domaine, La Grange de Quatre Sous. At the time, the property was in complete disrepair. It is a unique piece of land that borders an ancient Roman road, and the buildings are said to have belonged to the medieval order of the Knights of Malta, also known as the Hospitaliers. She and Ernst undertook extensive renovations, including an overhaul and replanting of the vineyards in 1983. Over the years, they slowly gravitated towards organic farming. By the time she received official certification in 1999, she had already been farming sustainably for several years. It was around that same time that she and Ernst split, and she started managing the property entirely on her own. Today, she is now part of a group called Vinifilles, an association of eighteen female winegrowers in Languedoc-Rousillon who assemble to share their research and expertise with each other. She is well-respected by her peers, so much so that Kermit refers to her wine as "*grand cru* quality."

Hildegard has since remarried and continues to direct this eight-hectare farm outside of the very small village of Assignac (145 inhabitants) in the appellation of Saint-Chinian. Though her vineyards sit comfortably within the boundaries of the A.O.C. Saint-Chinian, she prefers to take the lesser designation of Vin de Pays d'Oc, so she can plant the varietals that she wants, and make her wine without the same imposed rules and restrictions. Over the years, she has introduced unlikely grape varietals into her plantings, namely Malbec, and at times has experimented with some eclectic Swiss varietals. Not surprisingly, Hildegard's wines are intense and powerful. Enjoy them with some bottle age or decanting.



LA GRANGE DE QUATRE SOUS (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Vin de Pays d'Oc <i>Blanc</i> "Le Jeu du Mail"	55% Viognier, 45% Marsanne	18 to 20 years	Clay, Limestone	1.3 ha
Vin de Pays d'Oc "Le Rosé"	30% Cinsault 30% Syrah 30% Mourvèdre 10% Grenache	20 to 30 years	Clay, Limestone	1.5 ha
Vin de Pays d'Oc <i>Rouge</i> "Les Serrottes"	55% Syrah, 45% Malbec	18 to 20 years	Clay, Limestone	1.6 ha
Vin de Pays d'Oc <i>Rouge</i> "Lo Molin"	60% Cabernet Sauvignon 40% Cabernet Franc	18 years	Clay, Limestone	1 ha
Vin de Pays d'Oc <i>Rouge</i> "La Grange de Quatre Sous"	40% Syrah, 25% Malbec 20% Cabernet Sauvignon 15% Cabernet Franc	18 to 20 years	Clay, Limestone	1 ha
Vin de Pays d'Oc <i>Rouge</i> "Cuvée Garsinde"	60% Malbec, 30% Syrah 10% Cabernet Franc	18 to 20 years	Clay, Limestone	1 ha

* "ha"=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Vineyards receive more rainfall than most others in the region—helpful in this dry climate
- Soils are worked naturally with composts and herbal infusions to fertilize and manage pests
- All grapes are harvested by hand
- All *cuvées* are bottled unfiltered

White:

- Grapes are pressed with the stems
- Fermentation and aging of the wine takes place in 500-L barrels
- Wine undergoes malolactic fermentation
- Wine is aged for 1 year before bottling

Reds:

- All grapes de-stemmed
- Before fermentation, the grapes are cold-soaked and undergo pump-overs
- During fermentation, grapes undergo punch-downs
- Maceration lasts 25 to 30 days
- Wines are aged in *foudre* and barrel for 2 years
- Wines are bottled unfiltered