



MAS CHAMPART

Country: **France**

Region: **Languedoc**

Appellation(s): **Vin de Pays d'Oc, Saint-Chinian**

Producer: **Isabelle & Matthieu Champart**

Founded: **1976**

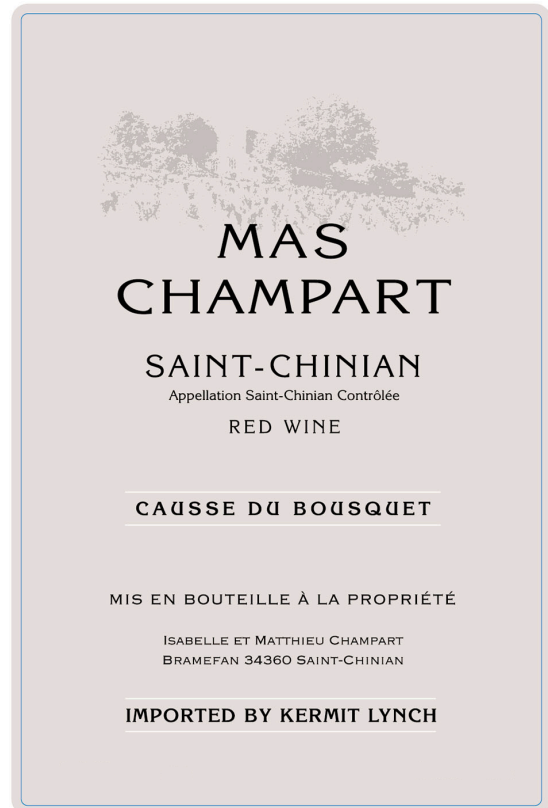
Annual Production: **3,300-3,700 cases**

Farming: **Lutte raisonnée**

Website: **N/A**

Isabelle and Matthieu Champart were relatively new to winegrowing when they first took over Domaine Bramefan (as her family's farm is also known), in Saint-Chinian, in 1976. Isabelle was a Parisian with a degree in Geography, while Matthieu came from a family of farmers in Champagne. For nearly twelve years they sold their grapes to the local cooperative. Though they waited until 1988 to bottle under their own label, they won almost instant acclaim, and have become the standard against which other producers in the appellation have been measured ever since. Matthieu tends to the vines, and Isabelle makes the wines—that their home is surrounded by their vineyards makes their division of labor all the more poetic. The Champarts have made significant changes to their business over the years. While the domaine started from just a simple, humble, stone farmhouse, they later added a winery and have expanded the holdings from eight to twenty-five hectares (sixteen of which are consecrated to vineyards, the remaining nine to arable crops and orchards). The *terroir* here is a patchwork of soils: steep slopes of clay and limestone (Mourvèdre), brightly colored marl (Carignan & Syrah), limestone (Syrah & Grenache) and lower slopes of clay and sandstone (Cabernet Franc). They live among their old vines on a gentle slope and have slowly started integrating more organic practices into their farming. Though the wines are easy to appreciate now for their inky complexity, they age extremely well and shine after some decanting.

Kermit wants to add that Isabelle is also one of his favorite cooks. He always tries to land an eleven a.m. appointment on the off chance they will invite him to stay for lunch.





KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

MAS CHAMPART (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Saint-Chinian Blanc	25% Marsanne, 25% Roussanne, 20% Grenache Blanc, 15% Bourboulenc, 10% Viognier, 5% Clairette	20 years	Marl, limestone	16 ha total
Vin de Pays d'Oc Blanc	70% Terret 30% Grenache Gris	Planted in 1900	Limestone	1 ha
Saint-Chinian Rosé	70% Mourvèdre 30% Cinsault	Cinsault: 50 years, Mourvèdre: 25 years	Marl, limestone	16 ha total
Vin de Pays d'Oc Rouge	70% Cabernet Franc 30% Syrah	Syrah: 20 years, Cabernet Franc: 25 years, Carignan: 60-110 years	Marl, clay, limestone, Trias sandstone	
Saint-Chinian Rouge "Causse du Bousquet"	74% Syrah 6% Grenache 4% Cinsault 6% Mourvèdre 10% Carignan	Syrah: 15/25 years, Grenache: 25 years, Mourvèdre: 15/25 years, Carignan: 60-110 years	Marl, clay, limestone	
Saint-Chinian Rouge "Clos de la Simonette"	65% Mourvèdre 20% Grenache 15% Carignan	Grenache: 25 years, Mourvèdre: 15/25 years, Carignan: 60-110 years	Marl, clay, limestone	

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

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Sustainably farmed grapes (80% of the vineyard is farmed with organic practices)
- Harvested by hand
- Natural yeasts used during fermentation

Saint-Chinian Blanc :

- 50% of wine is fermented in 1 to 2 year old, 350L oak barrels, 50% fermented in stainless steel and ceramic tanks
- Aged in barrel and tank, on fine lees, with light stirring, for 11 months
- Wine goes through malolactic fermentation



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MAS CHAMPART (continued)

Vin de Pays d'Oc Blanc :

- Grapes are vinified separately
- Fermentation lasts 4-6 weeks in 500-L Sotckinger barrels
- Completes malolactic fermentation
- Aged 8 months in barrel, then 2-3 months in tank before bottlings
- No new oak

Saint-Chinian Rosé:

- Grapes for rosé are picked earlier to retain aromatic freshness and lower alcohol content
- Juice obtained by direct press
- Wine goes through malolactic fermentation

Saint-Chinian Rouge “Causse du Bousquet” :

- Most of the fruit is sourced from a *lieu-dit* called *Le Bosquet*
- 100% of grapes are de-stemmed
- Grapes undergo a cold maceration, followed by 3-6 weeks in *cuves*
- The syrah is aged in barrels, the others grapes are aged in *demi-muids* for at least 12 months, and then blended and aged in *cuves* for 8 months
- Bottled unfinned and unfiltered

Saint-Chinian Rouge “Clos de la Simonette” :

- Aged for 18 months in *demi-muids* after a long maceration
- Bottled unfinned and unfiltered

MISCELLANEA

Isabelle Champart has been crafting some of the cleanest yet most soulful wines in the Languedoc for more than a decade.

David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*

Isabelle and Matthieu Champart represent much of what is right and good in the wine business. They're talented, industrious, modest, and totally devoted to what they do. When asked by a visitor if they had children, Isabelle swept her hand across the outside of their winery and answered immediately, "Look around. This is my child."

Bruce Neyers, KLWM