



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

MAXIME MAGNON

Country: **France**

Region: **Languedoc**

Appellation(s): **Corbières**

Producer: **Maxime Magnon**

Founded: **2002**

Annual Production: **1,700 cases**

Farming: **Organic**

Website: **N/A**



That Maxime Magnon is part of one of the most revolutionary wine movements in France should give him a justifiable swagger to his step, yet he is nonetheless a reluctant hero. This thirty-something Burgundian was not born with hereditary rights to a domaine, but makes his own wine in the Corbières A.O.C. instead. He was fortunate to have purchased some prime parcels of old vines from abandoned plots and rents his cellar—a *garagiste* if ever there was one. He farms nine parcels over eleven hectares, with steep vineyards that reach high altitudes, and manages it all on his own. Maxime is part of the new wave of passionate *viticulteurs* who cultivate their vines with the utmost respect for nature and the soil. He's certified organic, but also incorporates biodynamic practices into his vineyard management. Like his good friend and mentor, Didier Barral (in Faugères), and Jean Foillard (under whom he studied in Morgon), he is a naturalist at heart, and seeks to create a harmonious ecosystem in his vineyards.

Most of Maxime's vineyard land is comprised of schist and limestone subsoils in the sub-appellation Hautes Corbières, bordering Fitou to the South. This is incredibly tough terrain to farm in, as there is virtually no topsoil, just pure rock and *garrigue*. The Corbières "Rozeta" is a blend of these two district *terroirs*. This blend is particularly unique, from Carignan vineyards that are dispersed with numerous varietals of older vines, namely Grenache Gris, Macabou, and Terret, which are all picked and fermented together—a true field blend of the old school. "La Démarrante" is a blend of Carignan, Grenache, and Syrah. It is terrific young and deliciously quaffable. Maxime's *tête de cuvée*, "Campagnès," is a single vineyard of the hundred-year-old Carignan, and is the most age-worthy in his line-up. All wines are aged in second-hand, Burgundian barrels sourced from a producer in Chassagne. "La Démarrante" ages both in *cuvée* and in *foudre*. His wines offer great expression of fruit with immediate approachability.



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MAXIME MAGNON (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Corbières Blanc “La Bégou”	50% Grenache Gris, 35% Grenache Blanc, 15% Carignan Gris	50-60 yrs	Limestone, Schist	Approximately 11 ha
Corbières Rosé “Métisse”	60% Grenache, 20% Cinsault, 20% Carignan	80 yrs	Limestone, Schist	
Corbières Rouge “La Démarrante”	50% Carignan, 30% Grenache, 20% Syrah	50-60 yrs	Sandy limestone, Schist	
Corbières Rouge “Rozeta”	40% Carignan, 30% Grenache, 30% Cinsault	50-60 yrs	Limestone and Schist with fissured rock	
Corbières Rouge “Campagnès”	Carignan	> 100 yrs	Clay, Limestone	
Corbières Rouge “Cuvée Rose”	90% Grenache, 10% Cinsault	> 100 years	Limestone, schist	1 ha

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

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Sheep graze throughout vineyards to control weeds and provide manure to fertilize vines
- Certified organic, but also incorporates biodynamic practices
- Vines all planted in gobelet style
- Farms area of Hautes Corbières, a sub-appellation within A.O.C. Corbières that borders Fitou, and sits at a higher elevation with very rocky terrain
- Vinifies using whole cluster fermentation
- No sulfur used during vinification

Corbières Blanc “La Bégou” :

- Fermented in *foudre*
- Aged in barrels for 10 months

Corbières Rosé “Métisse”:

- Direct press
- Grenache Noir, Carignan, and Grenache Blanc are vinified together
- Cinsault is vinified separately (different harvest date)
- Whole cluster fermentation lasting 10 to 12 days
- Vinification in cement, raised for 6 months in 6 to 8 year old barrels



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- Wine undergoes malolactic fermentation

MAXIME MAGNON (continued)

Corbières *Rouge* “La Démarrante”:

- Aged in both *cuve* and *foudre*

Corbières *Rouge* “Rozeta”:

- Grapes from field blend are picked and fermented together
- Ages wine in previously used Burgundian barrels from a producer in Chassagne-Montrachet

Corbières *Rouge* “Campagnès”:

- Grapes from field blend are picked and fermented together
- Ages wine in previously used Burgundian barrels from a producer in Chassagne-Montrachet

Corbières *Rouge* “Cuvée Rose”:

- Named for Maxime’s daughter
- Not made each year and released late
- Grapes are co-fermented in wooden tanks for 25 days with regular punchdowns
- Aged in *foudre* for 12 months

MISCELLANEA

As in many regions in France now, Magnon’s vineyards sit above a sea of cave cooperative vineyards in the lower lands which are trained on wires and planted for maximum productivity. He is a young guy reaching back to the history of the appellation for his inspiration, while using new (although natural) winemaking techniques such as carbonic maceration. Buying his wines supports a young generation trying to do the right thing for the land by protecting the old vineyards and terroirs.

Dixon Brooke, KLWM

But the first question to pose here might be, what is a Campagnès? It is the name of a parcel of vines on a slope above the lovely river Berre in the Corbières. It is 100% Carignan¹, gang, 100 years old! Magnon’s style reminds me of Jean Foillard’s in Morgon. Magnon is the southern Foillard. The wine’s fruit is delicious, lovely and deep. It is not inky, alcoholic, or torturously tannic. There is a lot of wine in the wine, and every moment is created to please. You have an impression of little wild berries giving their all, and an incredibly silky texture.

Kermit Lynch