



The Legend of Domaine de Beudon



Domaine de Beudon

Many of you saw the Instagram post and the photograph of Jacques Granges, winemaker, manager, person-extraordinaire of Domaine de Beudon. That was a few weeks ago. Now, having tasted the two reds we brought in we are ready to file our report and are thrilled to share the wines with you.

First a little background:

Until a month ago we had no knowledge of this winery. It's a bit baffling because of its history, owner, location, and fame. We came across it in the book, "Godforsaken Grapes: A Slightly Tipsy Journey Through The World of Strange, Obscure, and Underappreciated Wine." by Jason Wilson. The first page, "Vines in the Sky" led to our introduction of Domaine de Beudon.



First off we were thrilled to learn that the only way to reach this high-altitude Swiss vineyard is by a creaky wooden aerial cable car which pulls you slowly up the mountain to 3000+ feet and to the vineyards (see the image above taken from the wine label). The second item of note came a few pages later when we learned that Jacques Granges began converting the vineyard to biodynamic farming in the 1970s and was Switzerland's first certified biodynamic winery, and finally, that everyone believed him to be crazy. Who would farm biodynamically in what is some of the harshest terrain for vines, in basically the middle of nowhere, by himself. Jacques would.

We were intrigued so without ever having tasted Jacque's wines we order two cases; both red and from very obscure grapes: Diolinoir and Gamaret.

And so the journey began.

We decided to taste the wines over three days and in this way allow the wines to open and express themselves fully. It's also a way to judge how long the wines may keep in your cellar. If a wine falls apart on day 2 -the fruit is dull, the finish quick- then the wine should be consumed sooner than later. If on day 3 the wine is still bright, expressing more of itself, the finish even longer than on day 1 and 2 then it's a good bet the wine will age a number of years further. Exceptions of course but that's how we went into our 'homework' with Domaine de Beudon.

Tuesday, Day 1:

2014 Domaine de Beudon Diolinoir (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

Unique to Switzerland is Diolinoir, a cross between Rouge de Diolly (a rarely seen varietal in France) and Pinot Noir. If you ask what Diolinoir is like we might say its reminiscent of Mondeuse; as if that helps.

Once poured we found the wine to be light, wild, brambly, spiced, otherworldly, with a blue fruit component and a forest floor edge similar to Burgundy but more Jurassic. As the wine opened violets emerge with more spice, finishing with medium length with hints of perhaps wintergreen; some kind of tingle on the palate that out lasted the fruit.

2016 Domaine de Beudon Gamaret (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

Another rare and unique grape, Gamaret, our second wine from Jacques. It is another hybrid; a crossing of Gamay and Reichensteiner (brief side note: Its breeder, André Jaquinet, also created Diolinoir).

On the first day the wine is earthier than the Diolinoir with red fruit, cinnamon, apricot/nectarine, and has gum-drying tannins. The finish delivered a suggestion of Sichuan peppercorn which mingled beautifully with the fruit.

Wednesday, Day 2:

2014 Domaine de Beudon Diolinoir (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

Beautifully tilled earth scents have emerged with exotic red berry fruit, blood orange, pomegranate, more spice with a slightly fuller finish than day 1 that titillates the senses.

2016 Domaine de Beudon Gamaret (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

24 hours has allowed the wine to fill out with darker fruit now. The tannins are beginning to integrate; a wine today that is exuberant, deep, and wild. The only other tasting note was that we had to have this with lamb tartare.

Thursday, Day 3:

2014 Domaine de Beudon Diolinoir (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

Dark cherry and boysenberry nose. Every component has become one Zen-like dream. The tannins are slightly dustier, the native herbs on the palate are a bit more pronounced, and the finish has filled out perfectly.

2016 Domaine de Beudon Gamaret (Switzerland, Valais, Fully)

The fruit feels riper today, brighter, with red berries, pale wild stawberries, subtle tannins, with again, a lovely lingering spiced finish. This is spacious and more juicy today and bodes well for its cellared future.

This has been one of our favorite "over the course of 3-days" tasting so far this year. We love to explore the unexplored and share our results. These are outstanding examples from a trailblazer in Swiss (but also the world) wines.

Both wines are on sale for \$64 a piece.

Tonight we are pairing them with Julia's Roast Chicken but they would do justice to roast duck, grilled salmon, or these traditional Swiss favorites: Polenta and braised beef, Zurich-style ragout of veal and mushroom (Zurcher geschnezteltes), and Tartiflette.

A side note: both wines, and especially the Gamaret, would have held up for another two days and be thoroughly enjoyable. With the roast chicken on the table tonight we indulged and finished them off.

Call 805.568.1961 or email us to reserve your wines.

We appreciate your support!

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