

Franck Balthazar



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The estate was created by Casimir Balthazar in the 1930s. Casimir's son, René, took over in the early 1950s and crafted legendary wines in the 1960s to 1980s. Much of the production was sold in bulk to regional restaurants and cafés, and very little was ever bottled.

Franck Balthazar returned to take over from his father in 2002, and was able to start with prime, old-vine parcels in Chaillot, Les Côtes, and Mazards - among others. He has slowly expanded the estate with additional parcels in Chaillots, La Lègre, and Les Prés, as well as with projects outside Cornas in Séguret, Crozes-Hermitage, and St.-Peray.

Franck eliminated the usage of artificial herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers by 2010 and works many parcels with horse to this day. Winemaking remains staunchly traditional, with the usage of up to 100% stems, long macerations, and aging in old *demi-muids*. Fermentations start with indigenous yeast and the wines receive a light fining before bottling. Sulfur usage is kept to a minimum for all cuvées.

Established: 1931

Proprietor/Winemaker: Franck Balthazar

Appellation: Cornas, with Cotes du Rhone, Crozes-Hermitage, St. Peray, & St. Joseph

Soils: Mixes of granite soils in the north, with limestone clay in Séguret

THE WINES	Vineyard & Grapes	Winemaking	Average Production
Cornas “Cuvée Casimir Balthazar”	75%+ from vines planted in La Lègre in the early 2000s, and the balance from vines in Les Mazards planted in 1961.	Up to 100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular manual punchdowns of the cap. Aged for 18+ months in old 600L barrels.	350 cases
Cornas “Cuvée Juliette”	From a parcel in Les Prés that Franck planted in 2015/2016. Soils are quite acidic and the elevation is ~370m.	Up to 100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular manual cap punchdowns. Aged for 18+ months in old 228L and 600L barrels.	150 cases
Cornas “Chaillot”	Primarily from vines planted in 1914 in Chaillot, plus a small amount from old vines planted in Les Mazards.	100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular manual punchdowns of the cap. Aged for 18+ months in old 600L barrels.	800 cases
Cornas Sans Soufre Ajouté	Primarily from vines planted in La Lègre in the early 2000s, plus a small amount from Les Côtes.	100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular manual punchdowns of the cap. Aged for 18+ months in old 600L barrels. No SO ₂ is added at any point.	<200 cases (when made)
Cornas “Cuvée Hommage”	A selection of top, old-vine fruit that is only made in top vintages. Dedicated to Rene and Casimir Balthazar.	100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular manual punchdowns of the cap. Aged for 18+ months in old 228L barrels. Only ~1g of SO ₂ is added at bottling.	100 cases (when made)

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THE WINES	Vineyard & Grapes	Winemaking	Average Production
Crozes-Hermitage rouge	100% Syrah from Mercurol (decomposed granite) and La Roche-de-Glun (large galets).	Up to 100% whole clusters are employed, and macerations last ~3 weeks with regular pumpovers. Aged for 15+ months in old 228L and 600L barrels.	500 cases
Côtes du Rhône Rouge	60%+ Syrah, and the balance Grenache, from Seguret.	The fruit is mostly destemmed, and macerations last ~2 weeks with regular pumpovers. Aged in a mix of concrete, stainless, and old wooden vats.	5,000 cases
St.-Peray	100% Roussanne from 0.3ha planted in 2013/2014 on granite near the Cornas border. Yields vary dramatically due to Roussanne's susceptibility to powdery mildew.	Grapes are pressed immediately and the must ferments in old 225L barrels. Aged 9 months in barrel before bottling.	<180 cs