



## ✦ The Truth Should be Poured ✦

While our partners in Saint Emilion and in Chateauneuf are starting the 2021 harvest we, in Lebanon have finished. This is unprecedented, we never had a harvest that starts so abruptly in early August and finishes mid-September, and surprisingly, that is good news!

I am not a climate specialist, so all I can give you are my field explanations. Spring was short and dry for the most part, summer was mild, we were fearfully anticipating the 40 degrees temperatures experienced in 2020, reality was more moderate, hardly extreme temperatures and foremost, the grape yields were lower than average.

When vines bear less fruits the berries ripen earlier, and quality is then enhanced. And this is the bright side of those 2021 harvests. The grapes were well-concentrated with nice acidity, good balance, depth, and complexity. How to explain the low yield and the quality juices of 2021? Probably the stress due to summer's 2020 heatwaves regulated the vines, in other words, it is the Intuitive Intelligence of vines and nature.



The picking was fast and intense but at Massaya we never felt behind, we were surprised by the initial calendar imposed by nature, but the team understood the need to work around the clock. Besides our seasoned team, we hired locally a few students and we flew in Henrique, last year's winemaker at Faqra, and Josie from California.

The couple's professionalism and loving spirit motivated our team and lifted their spirits. We gradually forgot our daily upheaval and tackled our mission. Luckily mother nature was on our side, and we managed to achieve quality objectives set initially with the Bruniers of the Vieux Telegraphe.

At Tanail, we improved our fermentation method of Rosé thru less pump overs and expressed the terroirs with more authenticity in the red wines by adjusting the vats' filling. At Faqra we changed several times the indigenous yeast for more convincing results.

What was also important for us this year was to defeat the depressing news and the challenging daily chores that are drowning our souls in Lebanon. It was important to break the vicious circle and to put aside the shortages, the interruptions, the delays, the farewells, and our rage.





I can't tell you if we will have the best Cap Est label or if Terrasses de Baalbeck 2021 will be better than the 2013 vintage. I can't guarantee that the rose 2021 will be savorer than the 2020 or if reached our optimum knowledge with the oak fermentation at Faqra, but we forgot during the last 6 weeks our politicians, and we produced a vintage to express the essence of the beautiful Lebanon we love.

During the harvest preparations, I often thought of our ancestors under the ottoman occupations who were persecuted over 400 years for producing wines in Mount Lebanon, I was afraid of the "minimum effort harvest", a harvest polluted by negativity. Instead, we found the inspiration to go the extra mile to express more depth, finesse, and terroir.

No matter how long is the tunnel we are in right now, this harvest, mother nature showed us the light, the present dark age can't hide the spirit of a bright generous, and vibrant Lebanon, in vinos veritas!



✦ Harvest Chemistry & Bonding ✦



Since 2018, when they first met, Josie and Henrique crisscrossed together the planet fermenting grapes and meeting locals at wineries in New Zealand, France, Brazil, and Lebanon...

Henrique came to Lebanon for the 2020 vintage to make Massaya's white wines in Faqra. Josie was working in California but, came to visit for three weeks. One year later, they ended up at Massaya once again- with Josie making the white wines and Henrique working with Ramzi in Tanaïl to complete the red vintage. "We have immensely enjoyed getting to know the generous Lebanese people and, have been surprised with the uniquely plentiful and welcoming culture and beauty. As for the wines, the fascinating geo-topography of the vineyards, unique native varieties, and old-world style have captured our interest. After this season, we hope to continue on to South Africa for another winemaking experience to complete our travels together in more than 10 countries."

Coming from southern Brazil, Henrique graduated from UC Davis winemaking school in 2017 while Josie is from the US and from Classical Education. After she graduated, she took an intern at a winery in California to experience something different before Law school.

Coincidentally, Henrique was working at the same winery where Josie did her



first harvest. They spent six months working together and, had the classical "Harvest Love"!

## ✦ Finally a Wine Identity in Sight ✦



With over 80 wineries it is about time we define the personality for the wines of Lebanon and the election of the board of the newly created Wine Institute of Lebanon opens this opportunity.

Lots of candidates are trying to get elected on the board but for us at Massaya we made it clear that A, we are not interested, and B, we will endorse the contenders who advocate at best the identity of the wines of Lebanon. What do we mean by identity? Two elements prevail, the grape varieties that work the best in Lebanon and local wine regions, at the level of towns and villages. Of course, other specifications should be considered as vineyard maintenance, fermentation technics, wine ageing....

To sum it up, our experience of over 25 years taught us that all grapes are welcome in Lebanon but the GSM (Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdres) and its derivatives should be highlighted as very suitable!

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## OCTOBER SCHEDULE

### MASSAYA BOUTIQUES:

Safe home deliveries from Monday till Friday

*Daily winery tours and tastings, 10:00-17:00pm*

### RESTAURANTS - THE GATHERING:

Open Friday, Saturday & Sunday  
for lunch and dinner

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