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## Château Minuty: Rosé From The French Riviera



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Food & Drink

*I cover wine at work, with attention to makers and growers.*



Sheep grazing in the vineyards at Château Minuty.

CHÂTEAU MINUTY

[Château Minuty](#) is a family-owned wine estate located in Provence, France overlooking the Saint-Tropez peninsula. Minuty rosés are iconic of the French

Riviera, and the property enjoys the *Cru Classé* status, one of only 23 estates to have been given this designation within the Côtes de Provence appellation.

The property is comprised of buildings that are more than 80 years old, dating back to the original founder, Gabriel Farnet, who acquired Château Minuty in 1936. At the time, Farnet was already the owner of Domaine de Châteauneuf in Vidauban when he discovered the property that is now Minuty, which included a small chapel originally built under Napoleon III. Farnet's work, after the Second World War, established a quality status that Minuty still enjoys today.

Jean-Etienne and François Matton, the third generation, lead the estate these days. The brothers have renovated the property, while maintaining a Provençal style.

“The only sounds that you can hear are songs of birds and tractors when they are working in the vineyard,” says François Matton, of the reception in the vineyard. “Smells are those linked to seasons, full of Mediterranean flavors like cypress, olive trees and bays.”

Matton says this year's vintage is “characterized by strong summer heat,” with hot weather in late June and a very dry summer, which allowed for concentrated fruit. When rain falls on this part of France, it is typically in the winter, but Matton says this vintage's cooler season was relatively dry, followed by a mild and humid spring. Château Minuty's location near the Mediterranean sea offered “escape from situations of dehydration of the vines,” according to Matton.



The Château Minuty vineyards

“The vineyards were very healthy and the harvest was of very high quality,” says Matton. Harvest began on August 22 and ended on September 9. “Like every year, we have summoned 80 pickers for the occasion, half from Andalusia and the other half from Romania,” recalls Matton. “A very intense period but always with a good atmosphere and a lot of involvement from the teams.”

The harvest began with Sauvignon Blanc and Viognier. Next was Grenache, Tibouren and the particular Syrah that is vinified into rosé. Then, back to whites again with harvest of Rolle, Sémillon and Clairette. Finally were the reds that are intended for barrel aging: Syrah and Mourvèdre.

One special variety on the property is Tibouren, which is emblematic of the Saint-Tropez peninsula. Matton says it is a typical, ancient Provençal grape, likely of eastern origin, which was brought to France by the Romans. “Its culture is essentially limited to the Var department and more specifically to the communes of the peninsula of Saint-Tropez, where it was introduced in the 18th century,” says Matton.

It’s “practically unknown” in France, outside of the Var Department, and it’s uncommon elsewhere the world, but Matton says a bit is grown in Bulgaria. It is recognized as permissible in the Côtes de Provence appellation, where about 300 hectares are cultivated. It is mostly found in rosé blends, “adding nice tasting notes of fruit and structure in the mouth with spicy notes,” according to Matton. “Tibouren typically has well-developed leaves and black, medium-sized berries that are relatively generous, making it an ideal grape for rosé vinification.”

**“The 2019 Minuty rosés are characterized by a tangy freshness and powerful aromas of peach and grapefruit.” ~ François Matton, proprietor of Château Minuty**



Prestige rosé, now available in the U.S.

CHÂTEAU MINUTY

In 2020 consumers in the U.S. can for the first time purchase the Prestige release, which Matton calls the historical cuvée of the estate. This year the bottle gets a new look, to complement the vintage.

“The bottle reflects the image of the Prestige wine, a delicate rosé with very intense aromas of citrus, exotic fruits and white flowers with remarkable freshness,” says Matton. “Minuty’s creative team was inspired by the world of perfumery and borrowed its design elements. The hallmarks of the new packaging include: straight lines, noble materials, bold colors and a minimalist design.”

The winery, located in Gassin, is [open daily from June to September](#). The staff looks forward welcoming visitors this summer.