

'Jurançon may be well off the beaten track for most wine lovers, but in the intelligent perfectionist Henri Ramonteau, France has one of its greatest winemakers.' Andrew Jefford, *The New France*.



Domaine Cauhapé

Jurançon (south-west France)

www.jurancon-cauhape.com

The appellation Jurançon is well-loved by sommeliers and found in all the best restaurants of France and around the world, yet sadly it remains off the radar for many wine lovers. Not so nearly 500 years ago when the future King of France Henry IV, was baptised in Pau with the traditional garlic and a spoonful of Jurançon wine. That year was 1553 and just five years later in 1558 a small rural property was entered into the register of lands under the name *Caussapé*. And it was on this property in 1980, then his parents' farm, that Henri Ramonteau established Domaine Cauhapé.

Since those beginnings on just one hectare, Henri has built up the estate to today's area of 43ha and become the most renowned producer of Jurançon wines, both dry and sweet. Here, only half an hour west of Pau and 100km from Biarritz, Domaine Cauhapé enjoys a temperate Atlantic climate in the rain shadow of the Pyrenées. With the warm, dry *föhn* wind blowing in from the south and ventilating the vineyard, botrytis is not a factor. The sweet wines are made from late-harvested fruit picked from October onwards, in some years all the way into January, resulting in wines of great complexity and purity.

The estate is planted substantially to the exotic native varieties, Gros Manseng and Petit Manseng, whilst Henri has also set about reviving three other old native varieties: Camaralet de Lasseube, Lauzet and Courbu Blanc. All vine work is done by hand and all the fruit is hand-harvested and hand sorted. The sweet wines are picked in successive *tries*. Vinification is done in a mix of stainless steel and barrel, depending on the cuvee, but it's Henri's famously meticulous nature that underwrites the legendary status of the wines.



Dry White wines

2016 Jurançon Sec *Chante des Vignes*

60% Gros Manseng and 40% Camaralet, crushed and destemmed then macerated on skins for 12 hours before pressing. Cool-fermented in stainless steel and matured on lees for 5 months. 13.5% Alc/Vol.

The nose expresses a fine and intense bouquet, with notes of citrus and exotic fruits coming from the Gros Manseng, along with hints of white pepper, cinnamon and fennel from the Camaralet. This aromatic register is amplified in the mouth, where there is lovely volume and texture, finishing long and refreshing with crisp acidity.

2016 Jurançon Sec *Geyser* (375 + 750ml)

30% Gros Manseng, 30% Petit Manseng, 30% Camaralet, 5% Lauzet and 5% Courbu Blanc, crushed and destemmed then macerated on skins for 12 hours before pressing. Cool-fermented in stainless steel and matured on lees for 5 months. 14% Alc/Vol.

The nose displays beautiful complexity and freshness, evoking citrus and exotic fruit notes, along with hints of pepper and fennel from the old varieties, Camaralet and Lauzet. In the mouth, there is lovely volume and complexity with flavours of yellow-peach and exotic tropical fruits leading to a long, textural finish of excellent persistence and refreshing acidity.

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Domaine Cauhapé Jurançon Ballet d'Octobre

70% Gros Manseng, 30% Petit Manseng, crushed and destemmed then macerated on skins for 12 hours before pressing. Cool-fermented in stainless steel and matured on lees for 8 months. 13% Alc/Vol; 63g/l RS.

A fresh vibrant and exotic nose with citrus fruits complemented by hints of tropical fruit and a spicy gingerbread accent. Beautifully mouth-filling with a lovely silky palate and impeccable sugar/acid balance on the long, succulent and persistent finish.

2015 Domaine Cauhapé Jurançon Symphonie de Novembre 375ml

100% Petit Manseng picked during the first 10 days of November at approximately 28hl/ha. Whole-bunch pressed, then transferred to second - and third-use barriques for fermentation, followed by maturation for 10 months. Transferred to stainless steel tanks for a further 6 months maturation. 14% alc; 74.4g/l RS.

Powerful and complex, the nose evokes both fresh and candied fruits of mango, quince, apricot and ripe pineapple with a hint of vanilla cream and brown spice. Rich and full-bodied in the mouth, all these exotic flavours coalesce into an harmonious whole and the wine finishes with excellent length and impeccable balance.

On November 10, after the harvest of the Symphonie is completed, the bunch stems of the remaining fruit are twisted to block the flow of sap. This allows a natural concentration of sugars and flavours to build in the grapes used to produce the two most famous wines of the estate.

2010 Domaine Cauhapé Jurançon Quintessence du Petit Manseng (December) 375ml

100% Petit Manseng picked during the second half of December in 3 or 4 successive tries, yielding a miniscule 9hl/ha. Very slowly whole-bunch pressed, then transferred to 100% new French oak barriques for fermentation, followed by further maturation for two years or more. 14% Alc/Vol; 122g/l RS.

A very complex nose, reminiscent of Sauternes, shows a multitude of exotic fruits, both fresh and candied, from fresh mango to ripe apricot and candied loquat. There are notes of grilled citrus and praline that add further complexity to a palate of great volume and texture, finishing with outstanding length, persistence and balance.

2010 Domaine Cauhapé Jurançon Quintessence du Petit Manseng 'Folie de Janvier' 375ml

100% Petit Manseng picked in January in several successive tries, yielding a miniscule 6hl/ha. Very slowly whole-bunch pressed, then transferred to 100% new French oak barriques for fermentation, followed by further maturation for two years or more. 14% Alc/Vol; 135g/l RS.

A nose of unique power and complexity, effortlessly combining such disparate elements as honey, marmalade, plum brandy, nougat, baked apple, spices and white pepper. The palate is intensely concentrated and enormously rich yet still showing ethereal balance, finishing with outstanding length and persistence that goes on forever. An exceptional and unique wine experience.

