

DOMAINE DE LA FERME SAINT-MARTIN

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-old Thomas Jullien (pictured below left with his father Guy) symbolises the new generation in Beaumes-de-Venise. After studying viticulture, oenology and commerce at Montpellier, Thomas joined his parents at the family domaine in 2006, upholding the organic philosophy and working to take forward the Beaumes-de-Venise red.

The vineyard was established by Thomas's grandfather, Aimé Jullien, who planted parcels of

Grenache and Syrah on the terraced slopes of the Dentelles near the commune of Suzette in 1957. The grapes were initially taken to the coop, but in 1964 Julien built a cellar on the remains of a 12th century monastery and chapel, Saint-Martin.

The 25ha vineyard was officially certified organic in 2002. The soils are ploughed, natural products such as manure added as and when needed, weedkiller avoided and the grapes harvested by hand as decreed by the appellation. In the cellars only natural yeasts are used and sulphur levels are kept to a minimum.

An eight-month odyssey around the major French winemaking regions in a camper van, visiting organic and biodynamic producers, inspired Thomas to adopt this approach back home in



Beaumes-de-Venise. As a result of the trip, biodynamic principles are now being trialled on half the domaine's plantings.

Three cuvées of red Beaumes-de-Venise are produced at La Ferme St-Martin. Les Terres Jaunes comes from grapes grown on the region's clay-limestone Triassic soils; Saint-Martin from old vines; and Costanci from vines grown at 500m altitude, on the calcareous upper slopes of the Dentelles de Montmirail.

