

**Wine Spectator**

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Aimé Guibert, Outspoken Champion of Quality Wine in France's Languedoc, Dies at 91



Photo by: Mick Rock/Cephas

*Aimé Guibert in his vineyard at Mas de Daumas Gassac in Southern France's Languedoc.*

Founder of Mas de Daumas Gassac showed that the southern region's hillsides could produce outstanding wine

Aimé Guibert, founder of the iconic Languedoc winery Mas de Daumas Gassac and a vigneron who helped prove that his region in southern France was capable of producing world-class, long-lived wines, passed away May 14. He was 91.

"No one who met Guibert could be left unmoved by his absolute passion, drive and belief in the potential quality of his vineyard terroir," read a statement by the Guibert family.

<http://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/Aim%C3%A9-Guibert%2C-Outspoken-Champion%E2%80%93of-Quality-Wine-in-France%27s-Languedoc%2C-Dies>

The history of Daumas Gassac dates to 1970, when Aimé and his wife, Véronique, stumbled upon the property while searching for a family home in the Hérault department. They had never grown grapes before; born in Millau, Aimé was a successful glove-maker in Paris.

They asked a close friend, geology professor Henri Enjalbert, to visit the property and analyze the soil. To his surprise, Enjalbert discovered ice-age scree, very similar to the best soil in Burgundy's Côte d'Or, and a microclimate similar to the Médoc. The couple began planting Cabernet Sauvignon in 1974. The first vintage of Daumas Gassac was 1978.

The signature of Daumas Gassac is the blend. Starting with a base of Cabernet, the Mas de Daumas Gassac red can contain a diverse mix of other varieties such as Tannat, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Nebbiolo, Dolcetto and Saperavi to name a few. The white wine follows suit, with an unusual blend of Petit Manseng, Viognier, Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay and many more.

For a century, the Languedoc had been France's wine factory, churning out oceans of cheap table wine. By the time Guibert began making his wines, changes in the global wine market had left the region behind. But Guibert showed that the region's hillsides offered potential. In 1994, Wine Spectator tasted 400 wines from the region. Only four rated outstanding, and they were all from Mas de Daumas Gassac. A savvy marketer, Guibert grabbed attention for his wines on trips to the United States.

Guibert retired in 2008, leaving the estate in the hands of four of his children—Samuel, Gael, Roman and Basile Guibert. He is survived by his wife, their five children, and four children from his first marriage.