



LA PÈIRA

2020 VINTAGE

“This ranks with the finest Languedoc ever”

JEB DUNNUCK





EXCELSIOR

*'Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath
been already of old time, which was before us.'*

Ecclesiastes

It says something about human restlessness and hubris that here, in France's oldest viticultural region (as Hugh Johnson puts it in his *The History of Wine*), hopeful vine growers still start each new year with new ideas, new variations on the last year's theme, new plans, new methods. Something that has probably happened for over two millennia every year.

Some of these ideas are very simple, while others require grand changes.

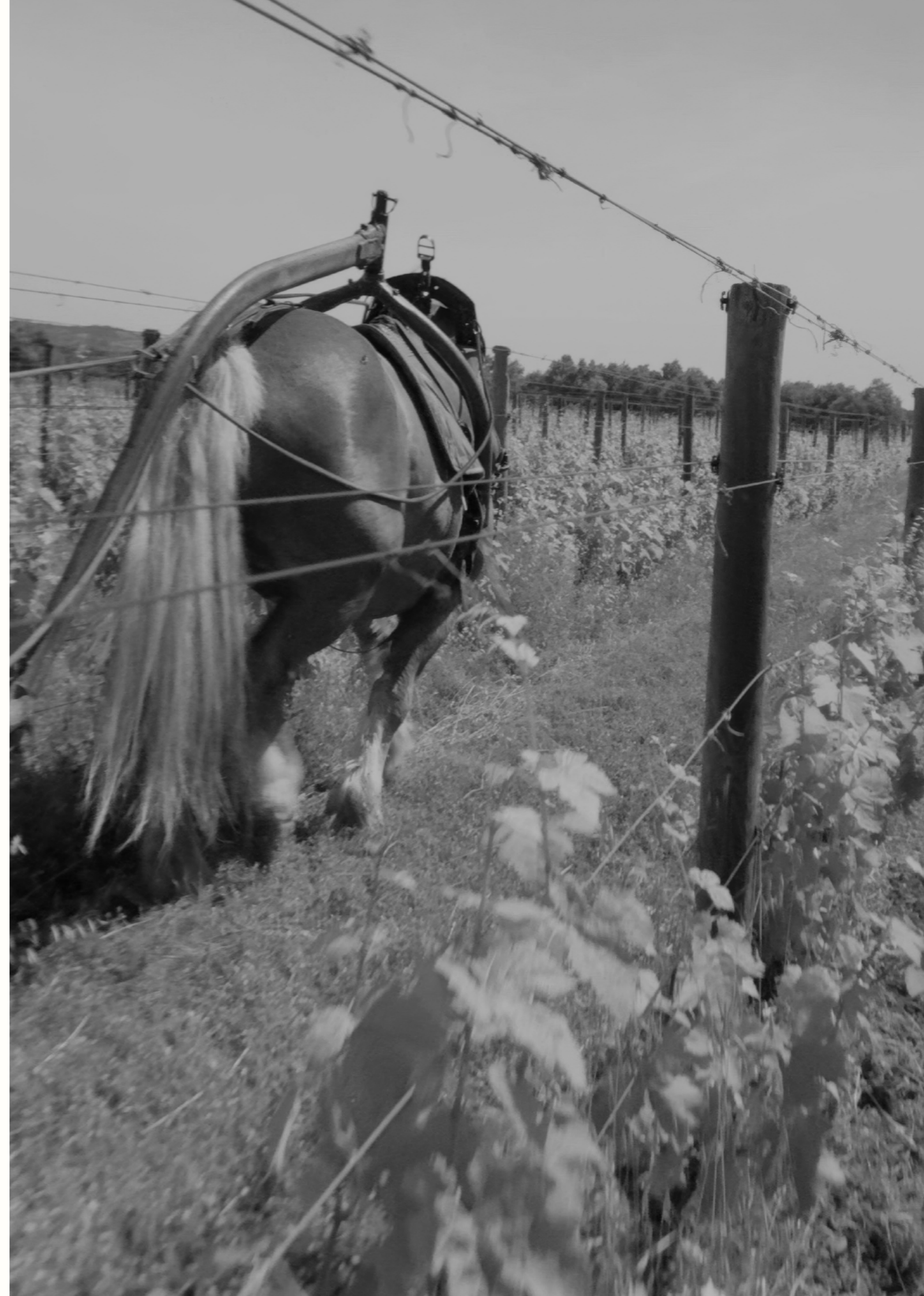
We're not immune to this, but any small changes in recent years have been modest, almost representing a step backward in a way, rather than forward. One such example being the move to organic growing at La Pèira a handful of years ago, although all vineyard work, from winter pruning to the harvest, has been traditionally done by hand since the beginning.

Here in 2024, spring has brought good replenishment of the water table, with dark rain clouds

persisting as the spring flowers emerge at the feet of the dramatic mountains that ascend inland to the Massif Central. This renewed water supply is a welcome boon for our vineyards.

Spring also saw the ploughing of the *Bois de Pauliau* accomplished by a team of draft horses rather than the ubiquitous tractor. This decision was perhaps inspired by the low yields and meagre volumes of the 2021 vintage, which were so scarce that we decided to bottle in the pre-industrial fashion. This is achieved by hand with an old device: the *Chèvre à Deux Becs*.

It may be that we will succeed in this small ambition to work this vineyard in a pre-industrial fashion; it may be that the gulfs (or late summer rains) will wash us down. But as the adage goes: mans' reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for? Or as the poet once put it: Excelsior!





“There has been more ballyhoo about this domaine than any other since Daumas Gassac”

PAUL STRANG THE WINES AND THE WINEMAKERS



THE 2020 VINTAGE

In many ways, and this is a useful shorthand, the 2019 and 2020 La Pèira vintages in the Hérault mirror the differences and characteristics found in the 2019 and 2020 vintages in Bordeaux. If 2019 shows more exuberance, 2020 displays more restraint. A cursory glance at Andrew Jefford's vintage chart online shows it with the maximum rating of 5 stars, the first since 2010 (though 2019 is only a hair away).

This leads to our second comparison: for us, they echo two great La Pèira past vintages: the 2009 and 2010. At the time, the view was that the 2010 showed a structured, cooler, Bordeaux-like elegance and austerity, and the 2009 was a pure expression of southern France with a more exuberant, ebullient, voluptuous side.

2020 Vintage Overview

- Generous Autumn Rains / mild December.
- Warmest February since 2001 in the Hérault resulted in an early budburst.
- Early risk of frost, yet no significant damage, unlike 2021
- Warm conditions in April and May allowed successful flowering.
 - Heavy rains in May caused some downy mildew, though less severe than 2018.
- Cool and stormy weather in early June then hot,

dry summer, yet without extreme heatwaves that often stress the vines.

- Mid-June onwards, weather dry and hot, allowing the grapes to mature perfectly.
- The early harvest brought in an average-to-good volume of grapes.

The Result?

- Round, expansive mouthfeel, ripe, seamless tannins
 - Wonderfully balanced vintage
 - Lovely purity of fruit: both cassis and black raspberry fruits
 - Classic Syrah notes: spice, ground pepper, game, bacon fat
 - Deep, profound, dense wines with long finishes
- Simon Field, Master of Wine, once wrote of the ethereal elegance that seemed to be the calling card of the La Pèira wines, even in years of inherent richness. The 2020 reds are no exception.

“The 2020 La Peira is absolutely brilliant and one of the finest wines in this report”

JEB DUNNUCK





TASTING NOTES

LA PÈIRA 2020

“The 2020 La Peira is absolutely brilliant and one of the finest wines in this report. Based on 60% Syrah, 30% Grenache, and the rest Mourvèdre, aged two years in 10% new oak, it has an incredible bouquet of ripe blue fruits, lavender, smoked meats, and pepper that opens beautifully with time in the glass. Full-bodied, rich, and opulent on the palate, it has a round, expansive mouthfeel, ripe, seamless tannins, flawless balance, and a heavenly finish. This ranks with the finest Languedoc ever and will evolve for 15-20 years if stored properly. Bravo.” (in bottle)

JEB DUNNUCK 97/100

“Looking at the flagship release, which is primarily Syrah, the 2020 Les Terrasses Du Larzac La Peira has another level of purity as well as incredible notes of both cassis and black raspberry fruits as well as Northern Rhône-like notes of ground pepper, game, bacon fat, and spice. Ripe, full-bodied, and opulent on the palate, it brings lots of ripeness without ever going over the top. It’s a brilliant wine in the making” (in barrel).

JEB DUNNUCK 96-98/100

“La Pèira 2020 (in barrel): “Tasted as a blend from selected barrels, the 2020 Terrasses du Larzac la Peira looks to be the best of the three vintages tasted. Massively endowed with fruit, it positively needs more time in barrel to become approachable. Full-bodied, ebullient, effusive and potent but supple, it finishes long, with lingering notes of licorice.” (in barrel)

WINE ADVOCATE 95-97/100

“Mouthfilling, lavish but still this side of the line, and not in any sense toppling into caricature or over-ripeness. Herbal finish sees the whole palate shaking down at the end. Oak spot on; restraint. Another great Languedoc red” (in barrel)

ANDREW JEFFORD 93-94/100





TASTING NOTES

LAS FLORS DE LA PÈIRA 2020

“ I loved the 2020 Terrasses Du Larzac Las Flors, a slightly bigger, richer wine than the 2019. A more Syrah-dominated release checking in as 60% Syrah, 30% Grenache, and the rest Cinsault and Carignan, it has ample darker, almost blue fruits (the 2019 is more red fruit-driven) as well as complex notes of lavender, ground pepper, garrigue, and baking spices. A fleshy, full-bodied, broad, expansive beauty, it has lots of up-front appeal yet will still evolve for over a decade. The 2019 is more finesse-driven and longer, while this is bigger, softer, and broader. Both are brilliant wines..” (in bottle)

JEB DUNNUCK 94/100

“The Grenache-dominated 2020 Terrasses Du Larzac Las Flors is a rock star in the making and is loaded with notions of black raspberry and kirsch-like fruits as well as notes of roasted herbs, licorice, and some spicy, meaty nuanced. This medium to full-bodied, rich, balanced, elegant red shines on all accounts. It will undoubtedly be an outstanding wine.” (in barrel).

JEB DUNNUCK 93-95/100

“Very deep crimson. Rich nose and beautifully worked tannins. Very flattering to taste. With no individual element predominating. But a really satisfying, clever blend with herbal top notes and lots of depth and intrigue. If this is the 2ème (second wine), I look forward very much to tasting La Pèira itself! Full-throated Languedoc red from a great terroir with an interestingly layered finish. Well done” (in barrel)

JANCIS ROBINSON 17/20

“Some of the greatest vineyard land in the south
of France”

ANDREW JEFFORD





THE WHITES

LA PÈIRA BLANC 2022

Tasting note Light pale gold. Aromas of white flowers and lemon zest. Presents volume and a rich, medium to full-bodied texture ('vin gras'). A balancing freshness, reminiscent of biting into fresh fruit, complemented by a subtle sweetness and creamy mouthfeel. For the 2021 vintage, La Pèira Blanc was not bottled, and the 2022 follows the excellent 2020.

DEUSYLS DE LA PÈIRA 2021

Tasting note Straw, honey, light gold colour. On the nose a beautiful freshness upfront with citrus notes, followed by ripe exotic tropical fruits and a hint of smoky toasted brioche. The palate confirms the nose, round and long with almost a honeycomb texture. Some sweetness balanced with bite, a good balance of freshness and richness. In 2021, devastating April frosts and low yields necessitated early co-fermentation and blending of many plots and cepages. For that reason alone, only Deusyls, the second white, was produced with the La Pèira 2021, in effect, declassified.





“These are the first extensive vineyards in France we can be certain about”

HUGH JOHNSON



Towards Les Pointes





“Southern France’s First Growth”

ANDREW MCMURRY - ZACKYS





LA PEIRA
EN
DAMAISELA