



I requested a mini-vertical during my visit to L'Aventure to get a fuller picture of how these wines age. Winemaker Stephan Asseo, along with his daughter and General Manager, Chloé Asseo-Fabre, shared two six-vintage verticals of the Côte à Côte and Estate Cuvée (now called the Estate Reserve). In both cases, we tasted through the 2008-2013 vintages. I'm happy to say that each vintage's character came through in the wines, which is a priority for Asseo. In a region where ripeness can sometimes overwhelm terroir and vintage, Asseo strives for transparency, which is evident here. I also witnessed a steady decline in total alcohol levels, with the earliest vintages of Côte à Côte in the 16+% range and the Estate Cuvée around 15.9%. Even those wines showed the balance that L'Aventure has mastered. However, the wines are generally better today than they were in the past. Part of this has to do with a less aggressive oak regimen. The Estate Cuvée (Estate Reserve) is down to 85% new oak with the 2023 vintage. The new releases are gorgeous. The 2023 Chloé, which in recent vintages has been leaning toward a fresher style, is still balanced but structured, intense and built for the long haul. The For Her, a co-fermented blend of 58% Syrah, 30% Graciano and 12% Viognier, is the wine of the vintage for L'Aventure. This remains one of the absolute top estates in the region—a well-deserved reputation.

- Eric Guido, June 2025

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### Côte A Côte 2013

RATING 96

The 2013 Côte A Côte is darkly floral and radiant in the glass, wafting up with a refined blend of red currants, rose petals, lavender, pine shavings and dusty earth. It's seamlessly silky with a harmonious inner sweetness as vibrant wild berry fruits cascade across the palate. The tapers off with amazing length, an air of autumnal spice as echoes of lavender slowly fade. The 2013 Côte A Côte is a unique blend, combining 40% Mourvèdre, 30% Grenache, and 30% Syrah. It really shows the quality of the vintage, L'Aventure work toward a fresher style.

### Côte A Côte 2012

RATING 93

The 2012 Côte A Côte mixes vibrant black cherries with mint and a cascade of autumnal spice. This is a juicy, racy effort with bright red and blue fruits energized by a core of vibrant acidity. It leaves the palate stained in concentration, with a pleasantly tart twang of citrus and spice that keeps the mouth watering for more. This is a ripe, early-harvested Côte A Côte that is probably at its peak.

### Côte A Côte 2011

RATING 96

The 2011 Côte A Côte is simply stunning, with a cascade of dried flowers, dusty earth, citrus-laced raspberries, incense and fresh pipe tobacco. It is in beautiful form, with silken, radiant textures and polished red berry fruits encased with a saline-mineral infusion. Hints of citrus pinch at the cheeks as residual tannins linger, while the 2011 finishes with extreme length, classically dry and balanced. This was a cooler vintage and a late harvest, with frost reducing yields the 2011 a blend of 40% Syrah, 38% Mourvèdre, and 22% Grenache.

### Côte A Côte 2010

RATING 93

The 2010 Côte A Côte reveals an oak-inspired bouquet of exotic spices, cedar box, sweet herbs, clove-infused black cherries offset by a whiff of animal musk. It possesses a core of vivid red berry fruits, playing a sweet-and-sour act on the palate, as silken textures soothe and adolescent tannins build toward the close. Lively acidity maintains energy throughout, as the 2010 pinches at the cheeks with residual tension and hints of dark chocolate fade. This is in fine form, but I wonder if the oak will ever integrate.

### Côte A Côte 2009

RATING 95

The 2009 Côte A Côte is dark and dusty in character, with woodland herbs and crushed violets giving way to crushed blackberries and allspice. This is beautifully resolved, silken and sweetly focused, yet with juicy acidity to balance and a vivid core of sour cherry fruit. This leaves the cheeks puckered as a balsamic tinge lingers under an air of lavender pastille. The 2009 is giving in every possible way and is total pleasure to taste.

### Côte A Côte 2008

RATING 92

The 2008 Côte A Côte is impossible to ignore, with balsamic-laced black cherries melding with dark chocolate and sage. This envelops the palate with seductively round textures and ripe red fruits elevated by a tinge of autumnal spice. Vibrant acidity maintains freshness as this tapers off incredibly fresh, long, fully resolved yet lively. This is a large-scale style of Côte A Côte, yet there's no arguing with its balance.