

**2009 Domaine de Cebene Ex
Arena**

The Cebene 2009 Ex Arena reveals that the relative delicacy and levity of this cuvee's 2008 and 2010 instantiations was not due to vintage. Chevalier is out to achieve a wine of elegance and finesse, not trying to push too hard to extract the potential of her 25-year-old Grenache vines and at the same time wanting to take best advantage of these deep but highly friable, sedimentary soils. (She also favors an old-fashioned basket press to achieve an inefficient but pure yield of young wine.) Pure strawberry fruit is infused with chalk, alkali, and salt, but there is also more sense of tannin here than in the infant 2010, making for a faintly grainy feel to the finish. I envision this being best over the next several years, but perhaps more depth will emerge as well as unanticipated stamina.

Veteran oenologue Brigitte Chevalier (about a few of whose many projects I have written in the past) established her own Domaine de Cebene in 2006. Her Faugeres grows near Bedarieux at the high, cool, northern edge of that appellation, on a strikingly butte-like, terraced schistic outcropping. The Les Bancelles - named for an expression referring to the shards of schist - is half Syrah and the rest Grenache and Mourvedre; the Felgaria - from an ancient name for Faugeres - minimum half Mourvedre and the balance Syrah and Grenache. Domaine de Cebene also incorporates a second, geologically complex site of deep, sandy and sto...

- David Schildknecht (June, 2011)

**2008 Domaine de Cebene Ex
Arena**

Chevalier's 2008 Faugeres Ex Arena displays a smoky overtone I didn't noticed in its two successors, accompanying lightly-cooked yet tart-edged black raspberry and strawberry. Initially, I detected a very slightly drying spot of tannin in the finish, but a bottle that had been open for several hours had acquired such a mouthwatering salinity and marrow-like carnal richness as to render the slight tannic roughness here no more than a slight annoyance. Notes of black tea and a light shimmer of crystalline minerality add allure to the sustained finish. This ought to prove quite versatile over the next 3-4 years.

Veteran oenologue Brigitte Chevalier (about a few of whose many projects I have written in the past) established her own Domaine de Cebene in 2006. Her Faugeres grows near Bedarieux at the high, cool, northern edge of that appellation, on a strikingly butte-like, terraced schistic outcropping. The Les Bancelles - named for an expression referring to the shards of schist - is half Syrah and the rest Grenache and Mourvedre; the Felgaria - from an ancient name for Faugeres - minimum half Mourvedre and the balance Syrah and Grenache. Domaine de Cebene also incorporates a second, geologically complex site of deep, sandy and sto...

- David Schildknecht (June, 2011)

**2012 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Belle Lurette**

The 2012 Faugeres Belle Lurette is a stunning blend of 70% old-vine Carignan (70+-year-old vines) and the balance Grenache and Mourvedre. Aged 11 months in stainless steel, it offers a floral, perfumed profile with notions of kirsch, raspberry, scrub brush and crushed flowers all emerging from the glass. Medium-bodied and layered on the palate, with a seamless, sexy texture and notable balance, it's a rock star effort to drink over the coming 5-7 years.

I was blown away by these efforts from oenologist Brigitte Chevalier. Creating this domaine in 2006, she has a bevy of old vines located in the cooler, higher elevation and more northern portion of the appellation. She fashions ripe, yet polished and beautifully balanced wines that savvy readers need to seek out! www.cebene.fr

Importer: Calvert Woodley, Washington DC; tel. (202) 966-4400

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2014)

**2011 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Felgaria**

One of the most impressive wines in the appellation, the 2011 Faugeres Felgaria is a blend of equal parts Mourvedre and Syrah that spent 11 months in 500-liter demi-muids. Decadently rich and layered, with thrilling notes of spiced raspberries, licorice and crushed rock-like minerality, this full-bodied, sweetly fruited and voluptuous Faugeres has a rock star texture and a gorgeous finish. Hard to resist now, it should evolve gracefully for upwards of a decade. Don't miss it!

I was blown away by these efforts from oenologist Brigitte Chevalier. Creating this domaine in 2006, she has a bevy of old vines located in the cooler, higher elevation and more northern portion of the appellation. She fashions ripe, yet polished and beautifully balanced wines that savvy readers need to seek out! www.cebene.fr

Importer: Calvert Woodley, Washington DC; tel. (202) 966-4400

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2014)

**2010 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Felgaria**

Chevalier's Felgaria cuvee is based mostly on Mourvèdre, and is the richest, most structured wine in the lineup. It's also aged 10 months in new oak. Surprisingly, I found the 2010 Faugères Felgaria to be more upfront, charming and straightforward than the 2009. It offers lots of sweet black raspberry, cassis, licorice and crushed flower-like notes to go with a medium-bodied, polished and elegant feel on the palate. This might gain a smidge more depth and richness with another year in the cellar, yet I still see no need to delay gratification here.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2010 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres les Bancels**

The 2010 Faugères Les Bancèls is a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre that's aged all in stainless steel. It's a seamless, fruit forward, sexy effort that gives up lots of leafy herbs, licorice, truffle and sweet black currant like fruit. It's drinking nicely today, but should continue to evolve nicely.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2013 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Belle Lurette**

Made from 70-100 year-old Carignan vines (also incorporates some Grenache and Mourvèdre) and aged in stainless steel, the 2013 Faugères Belle Lurette sport an inky purple color to go with textbook Carignan plum, new leather, distilled herbs and licorice aromatics. Medium to full-bodied, with terrific purity, integrated acidity and ultra-fine tannin, it's a great Faugères to enjoy over the coming 4-6 years.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2012 Domaine de Cebene Ex
Arena**

The Ex Arena cuvee is largely based off of Grenache, yet also incorporates a small part of Mourvèdre. It's aged 9 months in stainless steel prior to bottling. The 2012 Ex Arena is an impeccably made, high quality wine from this estate. Giving up lots of baking spices, raspberry, licorice and toasted spices, it's medium-bodied, pure and elegant on the palate. The normal blend of 85% Grenache and 15% Mourvèdre, drink it anytime over the coming 4-5 years.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2010 Domaine de Cebene Ex
Arena**

The Ex Arena cuvee is largely based off of Grenache, yet also incorporates a small part of Mourvèdre. It's aged 9 months in stainless steel prior to bottling. The 2010 Ex Arena has impressive density and depth in its medium-bodied, rounded and textured personality. Offering up notions of peppery herbs, licorice and mostly darker fruits, it's drinking nicely today and should continue to do so for another 4-5 years easily.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2012 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Felgaria**

Chevalier's Felgaria cuvee is based mostly on Mourvèdre, and is the richest, most structured wine in the lineup. It's also aged 10 months in new oak. While I rated the 2011 94 points last year, the 2012 Faugères Felgaria isn't far behind and is a smoking 2012. Big, rounded, supple and mouth filling, with lots of minerality in its black and blue fruits, wild herbs, licorice and underbrush aromas and flavors, it covers the palate in fruit, has medium to full-bodied richness and tons of character. It should have no problems continuing to knock your socks off through 2022.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2012 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres les Bancels**

The 2012 Faugères Les Bancèls is similar in style to the 2010, with a rounded, supple and sexy style that stays fresh and highly drinkable. Made from Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre (with a splash of Carignan), with each variety vinified separately in stainless steel tanks, it's medium to full-bodied, has a full, rich mid-palate and lots of sweet fruit on both the nose and palate. As with the 2010, there's an upfront feel here, yet I suspect it will evolve nicely on it balance for at least 4-5 years.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2013 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres les Bancels**

The latest release, the 2013 Faugères les Bancèls has a cooler climate feel in its peppery herbs, underbrush, crushed rock and crunchy blackberry-like fruits. Medium-bodied, pure, elegant and with both freshness and moderate structure, it's a classy wine to drink over the coming 4-5 years.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancèls, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2011 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres les Bancel**

Also impressive, the 2011 Faugeres Les Bancel checks in as a blend of Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre and Carignan that spent 11 months in stainless steel. Named after the schist soils of the appellation, it possesses a sweetly fruity, polished feel, with black raspberry, cassis, toast, spring flowers and creamy licorice giving way to a medium-bodied, hedonistic and impressively made profile on the palate. It should shine for 5-7 years.

I was blown away by these efforts from oenologist Brigitte Chevalier. Creating this domaine in 2006, she has a bevy of old vines located in the cooler, higher elevation and more northern portion of the appellation. She fashions ripe, yet polished and beautifully balanced wines that savvy readers need to seek out! www.cebene.fr

Importer: Calvert Woodley, Washington DC; tel. (202) 966-4400

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2014)

**2009 Domaine de Cebene
Faugeres Felgaria**

Chevalier's Felgaria cuvee is based mostly on Mourvèdre, and is the richest, most structured wine in the lineup. It's also aged 10 months in new oak. The 2009 Faugères Felgaria offers lots of black fruits, spring flowers, truffle and assorted meatiness to go with a medium to full-bodied, ripe, textured style on the palate. This is a beauty wine that does everything right, and while it doesn't pull any punches on the ripeness scale, it's always fresh, lively and balanced. It will have over a decade of longevity.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancel, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)

**2013 Domaine de Cebene Ex
Arena**

The Ex Arena cuvee is largely based off of Grenache, yet also incorporates a small part of Mourvèdre. It's aged 9 months in stainless steel prior to bottling. The 2013 Ex Arena (85% Grenache) has beautiful, extremely floral bouquet of sweet berry and plum fruits, lilac, peony and spice. This all flows to a medium-bodied wine that has integrated acidity, a pretty, balanced and elegant feel and enough depth and richness to keep it going for 4-5 years or so.

One of my favorite producers in Faugères, Domaine de Cébène is run by the passionate and talented Brigitte Chevalier. She's just finished work on a new winery, and her wines are always beautifully textured and shine for their balance and elegance. She makes four cuvees: the Les Bancel, named after the schist soils of the region and a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre; The Belle Lurette based largely on Carignan; The Ex Arena the Grenache heavy blend aged all in stainless steel; and the Felgaria, which is mostly Mourvedre driven. These are beautiful wines worthy your hard earned money.

- Jeb Dunnuck (April, 2015)