



Established in 2008 to restore châteaux & wine estates as exceptional destinations while retaining and enhancing their essential purpose and character, integrated with and respectful of the local environment – natural, social, cultural & economic.  
domainedemeure.com

**BONFILS**  
VINS & CHÂTEAUX  
1870

Making wine since 1870 our multi-generational expertise, exceptional terroirs and superb wine making facilities allow us to express our passion as one of France's most innovative and most respected winemakers with 17 Chateaux & Estates in the South of France in prestigious appellations that include Corbières, Côtes du Roussillon, La Clape, Languedoc and the Minervois.  
bonfilswines.com

**OLIVIER FILIPPI**

An inspirational figure to landscapers and gardeners worldwide Olivier Filippi is a botanist and horticulturist whose books on Mediterranean landscapes are the reference texts for sustainable gardens in hostile environments. A lifetime researching Mediterranean botany is brought to life at his nursery in Méze where Olivier develops drought and disease resistant plants from specially developed mother plants.  
jardin-sec.com

**JAMES BASSON**

James Basson is a world-renowned designer specialising in Mediterranean landscapes and in particular in dry, sustainable gardens inspired by and integrated into the surrounding environment. His realisations have delivered countless major international awards including the 2018 Victoires du Paysage and four Chelsea gold medals including Best in Show 2017.  
scapedesign.com



CHÂTEAU  
**CAPITOUL**



**VISITOR MAP**

**The Languedoc:** beating heart of the South of France. In a natural park on the edge of the Massif de la Clape. A place of extraordinary natural beauty and heritage.  
**Welcome to the Secret Mediterranean.**

Avenue de Gruissan, 11100 Narbonne | +33 (0)4 48 22 07 24  
reception@chateaucapitoul.com | chateaucapitoul.com

**Preservation**

We are just temporary custodians of Château Capitoul, responsible for ensuring this pristine environment is both preserved and viable for those that will come after us. This obligation guides our approach to the development and the day to day running of the estate : every aspect of the renewal has been carefully considered to preserve and enhance the natural environment and rich architectural and social heritage, while simultaneously breathing new life into the estate.



- 1 19th century Château garden
- 2 The dry gardens
- 3 The test garden
- 4 Herb & vegetable gardens
- 5 The orchard (newly planted)
- 6 Prairie
- 7 Lizard hotel
- 8 Pine forest
- 9 Organic waste water treatment
- 10 Deciduous forest
- 11 The canal
- 12 Manege
- 13 Wetlands
- 14 La garrigue
- 15 Le Massif de la Clape

- Cycle path
- Walk 1 700 m - 10 minutes
- Walk 2 2 km - 20 minutes



Camargue Bull

**VINES**  
Capitoul has been producing wine since Phoenician times around 600BC. Today the estate is certified HVE (Haute Valeur Environnementale) in recognition of our commitment to environmental preservation, in particular the protection of biodiversity, preservation of water and the sustainable stewardship of both vines and soils.



Pipistrellus pipistrellus  
Common Pipistrelle Bat

**BATS**

Capitoul has long been recognised as an important site for bats. Watch out for large colonies of Soprano Pipistrelle and Leisler's Bats coming out of the rocks and eaves to feed over the lagoons in the evenings.

**OCCELATED LIZARD**

Keep an eye out around the estate for Timon lepidus – the Occelated Lizard, a bright green lizard with a jeweled back and a serrated collar. Once prolific to the area the lizard is now endangered but still present at Capitoul. We hope the dry stone walls and specially constructed 'Lizard hotels' around the estate will entice them back in numbers.



Lizard Hotel

Timon lepidus  
Occelated Lizard

**BIRDS**

The area around Capitoul is a paradise for birds with nearly 400 of the 950 species of birds observed in Western Europe present in the Regional Park at least part of the year. Aside from Gruissan's famous flamingoes watch out also for storks and herons who migrate along the coast near Capitoul.

On the estate you will see the colourful European Roller and Bee Eaters as well as shrikes, pipits and lots of others. Many species of birds of prey wheel in the thermals above the estate – if you are really lucky you might see a pair of Bonelli's Eagles known to roost on the craggy cliffs of the Massif.



Grus Grus  
Common Crane



Quercus Pubescens  
Dotted Oak



Ciconia  
Stork



Phoenicopterus Rosus  
Pink Flamingos



Ardea Cinerea  
Gray Heron



Aquila Fasciata  
Bonelli's Eagle

We like to give our guests access to as much of the estate as possible so that you can experience and enjoy it for yourself. However please remember Capitoul is a working agricultural property with some real risks. Please do not enter into any agricultural or non public buildings unless specifically invited to do so.

Children must be supervised at all times: The estate has open water, farming equipment and materials and unprotected drops and steps. Please keep dogs under strict control to avoid disturbing wild animals.

Stone walls are tempting to children – please do not allow your children to move the stones, as they are carefully constructed to facilitate nesting and hibernating fauna.

We will not be responsible for injury that the visitor could reasonably have avoided by following the advice which appears on our maps, website and estate signage.

We are only responsible to loss or damage to property if such damage is caused by us during your visit. Please do not leave valuables in your vehicle.

# Our Vision

We wanted Capitoul to be a distilled expression of the surrounding environment of garrigue and vines, a testament to thousands of years of coexistence between people and nature and living proof that humanity & the environment can and must go hand in hand.



Having restored the gardens at Châteaux Les Carrasses and St Pierre de Serjac, ANITA wanted to take our environmentally friendly landscaping to the next level. So she contacted world renowned botanist Olivier Filippi...



OLIVIER saw an opportunity to show how beautiful gardens can be created in even the most challenging environments without pesticides, herbicides, fertiliser or even water. He agreed to provide the plants and botanical know how and introduced us to James Basson...



JAMES took up the challenge to restore and develop the landscape in his trademark naturalistic style, combining extensive planting and the restoration of the existing gardens to realise the vision of beautiful dramatic gardens integrating seamlessly into the surrounding landscape.

TOGETHER THE TEAM CAME UP WITH

# = The Plan =

FOR THE ESTATE BASED ON FOUR SUSTAINABLE PILLARS

Renovate · Create · Produce · Educate

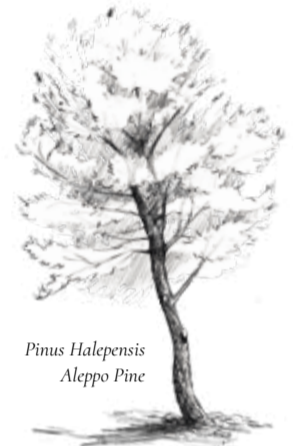
## Renovate

### THE PINES

A symbol of the Châteaux of the Languedoc know colloquially as Châteaux Pinardiers (Pine Châteaux) the pines at Capitoul had been neglected for many years, and required extensive thinning and surgery to nurse them back to health, capable of both supporting wildlife and fulfilling their original purpose of protection and shade.

### THE CHÂTEAU GARDEN

Below the Château was a tangled undergrowth neglected for generations. As we pared back the spiky jungle we identified the vestiges of a late 19th Century garden planted with the combination of local and exotic species emblematic of Art Nouveau planting. Restoration is now underway as existing plants are nursed back to life, supplemented with new seedlings in keeping with the original scheme.



Pinus Halepensis  
Aleppo Pine

Restoration of the late 19th Century garden



- MAIN CAR PARK  
Non-residents and Château guests
- HAMEAU CAR PARK  
Hameau residents
- RECEPTION | INFORMATION
- ASADO RESTAURANT & BAR
- MEDITERRANEO RESTAURANT
- WC
- SPA
- WINE CELLAR

## Educate

### GUIDED VISITS

We offer regular guided tours of the estate – scheduled and informal – covering everything from dry planting techniques to permaculture and foraging. Contact reception for details, being sure to let the team know what interests you most. For deeper insight Olivier's books are available in reception. James & Olivier's regular appearances at conferences etc can easily be found via podcasts or on You Tube.



Malus Domestica  
Apple tree



Asparagus officinalis  
Asparagus

## Produce

### THE KITCHEN GARDEN

In the kitchen gardens we produce vegetables, fruit, herbs & aromatics for use in our restaurants (and bars!). Exclusively organic, we use heritage seeds and permaculture influenced growing techniques to ensure the very best tasting produce.

### FORAGING

Many edible plants and flowers are to be found on the estate. Rosemary and thyme in abundance, but also sage, fennel and peppery wild asparagus as well as many other little known species foraged by head gardener Caroline and found in the dishes prepared by our chefs.

## Create - Garden

### THE PLANTS

The Capitoul gardens represent the rich botanical heritage of the Massif de la Clape, an environment simultaneously dry and hostile but extremely rich in botanical life.

### SPECIES

Over 65,000 plants including some 300 trees from more than one hundred Mediterranean species have been planted across the estate: holm oak and Aleppo pine under planted with field maple and judas with alternating drifts of sculptural Mediterranean forms of euphorbia, lavender, rosemary and soft grasses delivering sensual waves of seasonal change emblematic of the landscape of the Massif de la Clape.

Using seeds collected from La Clape and plants from his nursery Olivier propagated the young plants using specially developed organic techniques to ensure they were adapted to the rocky landscape capable of prospering without artificial watering, fertilisers or herbicides.



### THE TECHNIQUE

These plants are planted very young in the stony soil devoid of organic content with deep 'cuvettes' to channel the limited amount of rain that does fall. For one year we reproduce the optimal growing conditions for plants on La Clape – infrequent but significant downpours

of 'rain'. These conditions enable these hardiest of plants not only to survive but to thrive as the most beautiful expressions of their species... And then....nothing.... the plants will thrive without any human input, other than occasional grooming and hand weeding.

## Create - Hameau

### THE HAMEAU

Central to Capitoul's renaissance was the development of a hamlet of beautiful rental properties on the hillside bordering the vines.

Inspired by the architecture of the villages around the lagoon the hameau has been built to exceed the energy performance of the most exacting French standards with most of the properties built into the rockface to ensure a very high level of thermal inertia, efficient equipment throughout and low consumption swimming pools.

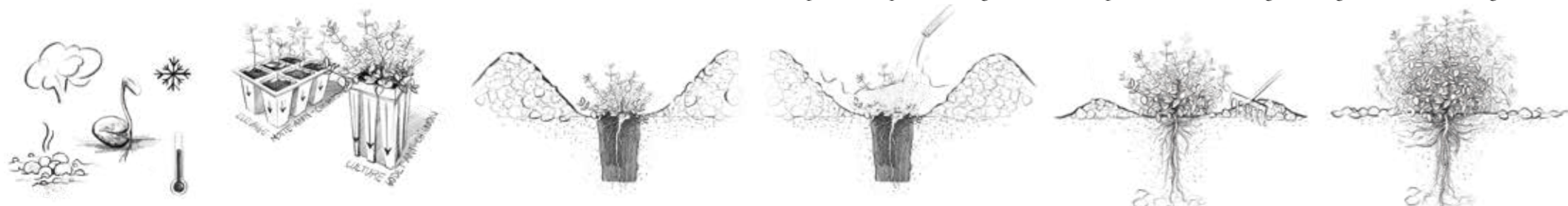
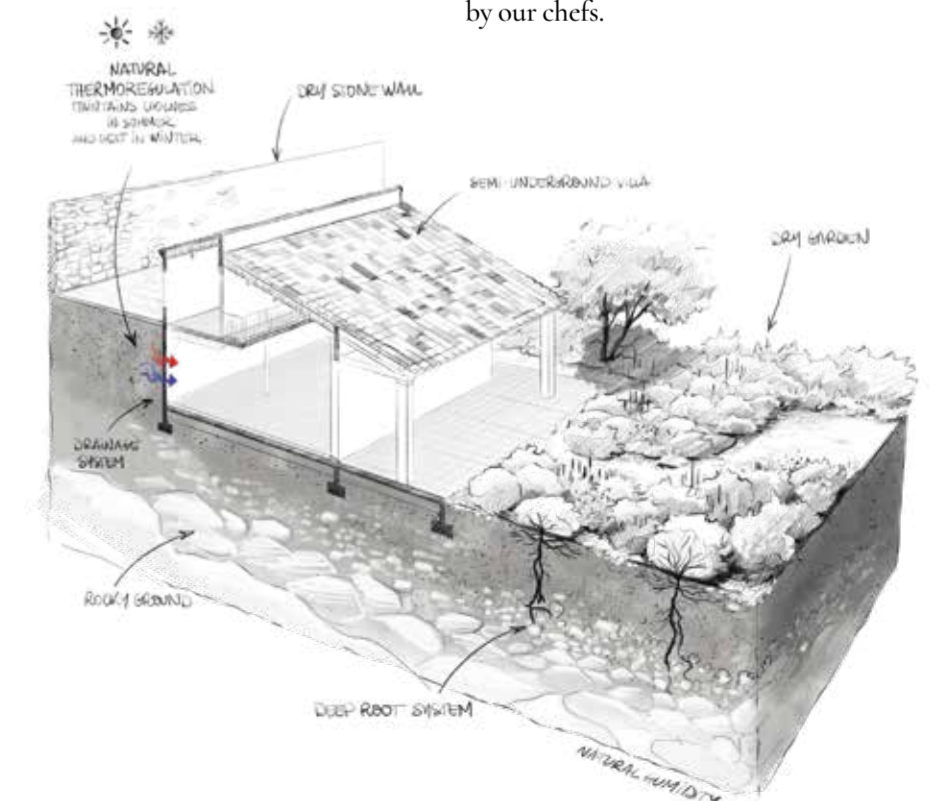
Natural, traditional and reclaimed materials are to the fore: reclaimed terracotta roof tiles, limestone renderings and traditional wooden shutters with wooden beams and huge bay windows framing the extraordinary views.

### DRY STONE WALLS

Created and renovated from stone from the site, the 2km of dry and semi-dry stone walls throughout the estate are a very rich ecosystem for both flora and fauna – lichens and mosses, reptiles, bird species, insects and small mammals.

### WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Waste water on the estate is treated via a chemical free treatment plant where a horizontal and vertical flow reed system allows bacteria, fungi and algae to digest organic matter to deliver clean water ready for reintroduction into the environment.



- 1 - Careful germination of highest quality seedlings in extreme conditions
- 2 - Cultivation to favour deep and aggressive root system
- 3 - Planting in large 'cuvettes' to maximise water retention
- 4 - Sporadic but abundant watering reproducing optimal conditions
- 5 - Root system drives down to find water sources
- 6 - When roots established plant flourishes with no need for watering, fertilisers or herbicides.