



FLYING SOLO



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Domaine Gayda is proud to present our new wines based on the Grenache grape.



THE GRAPE We have chosen the Grenache grape to represent the Languedoc in these wines because as a ‘cépage,’ it is the oldest, most important grape and would have been planted in abundance even when Antoine de Saint-Exupéry was winging his way over the Languedoc to deliver his precious cargo.

THE NAME ‘FLYING SOLO’ We are very proud to be associated with the famous ‘Aéropostale,’ the first ever air postal service that actually used the ‘Arbre de Moscou’ – (a massive pine tree that stood on the hill behind the winery at Domaine Gayda) – as a way point on flights from Toulouse to Barcelona.

THE HISTORY Aéropostale founder Pierre-Georges Latécoère envisioned an air route connecting France to the French colonies in Africa and South America. The company’s activities were to specialize in airborne postal services.

On December 25th 1918 the company began serving its first route between Toulouse and Barcelona in Spain. In February 1919 the line was extended to Casablanca. By 1925 it extended to Dakar where the mail was shipped by steamer to South America. In November 1927 regular flights between Rio de Janeiro and Natal started.

Expansion then continued to Paraguay and in July 1929 a regularly scheduled route across the Andes to Santiago, Chile was started, later extending down to Tierra del Fuego on the southern part of Chile. Finally, on May 12th 1930 the trip across the South Atlantic by air finally took place : a Latécoère 28 mail plane fitted with floats and a 650 horsepower (480 kW) Hispano-Suiza engine made the first nonstop flight. Aéropostale pilot Jean Mermoz flew 3,058 kilometres from Dakar to Natal in 19 hours, 35 minutes, with his plane holding 122 kilograms of mail. All this amazing history and adventure started right next door in Toulouse, and Domaine Gayda feels a real part of this pioneering story.

Developed in the aftermath of World War I, air mail services owe much to the bravery of their earliest pilots. During the 1920s every flight was a dangerous adventure and could be fatal. The period was eloquently described by the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry – himself an Aéropostale pilot – in his novel Vol de Nuit (translated as ‘Night Flight’), in which he describes a postal flight through the skies of South America.

THE PILOTS The Aéropostale roster of pilots included such aviation legends as: Jean Mermoz, Antoine de Saint Exupéry, Henry Guillaumet, Marcel Reine and Pierre Deley.

THE AIRCRAFT Among aircraft operated by the company were one hundred BREGET 14S, FARMAN F70, LATECOERE 26 and LATECOERE 28. 90 years ago we would have seen these intrepid pilots flying overhead the Domaine risking all to deliver.

We dedicate these wines to the brave men of the Aéropostale

