



# CHAMPAGNE FRANÇOISE BEDEL

## Comme Autrefois

Champagne Françoise Bedel is trending now. First it was their embrace of biodynamics which in a region so bound by conventional over-farming that the worst thing the CIVC could arrange would be a vineyard tour of blasted, compacted soils flecked with bits of rubbish from Paris. Following in the footsteps of other early adopters, and inspired by a visit with Jean-Pierre Fleury, Françoise Bedel began the conversion to biodynamics in 1996 at a time when there was still a sense of tin-foil haberdashery surrounding the whole topic and long before it became vogue to discuss what you were doing with cow horns. Then there is the recent ascendant popularity of Pinot Meunier, certainly a trend that has a whiff of fad about it, but there is no mistaking that Françoise makes darn good examples of Meunier-based Champagne, as does her son, Vincent Deseubeau now that he runs the estate under his mother's watchful eye.

Now that the whole "Farmer Fizz" revolution is au courant, one's physical and social distance from Reims or Épernay is seen as proof of your credibility. Luckily for Françoise and Vincent, it is pretty much impossible to get further from Reims without moving into Paris! Based in Crouettes-sur-Marne, a sleepy hamlet in the far western edge of the Vallée de la Marne, Vincent farms 8.4 hectares here and in the neighboring villages of Nanteuil-sur-Marne, Charly-sur-Marne and Villiers-St-Denis. The Vallée de la Marne is known for Pinot Meunier and about 78% of the vineyards at Bedel are planted with this variety while Chardonnay (13%) and Pinot Noir (9%) play a minor, supporting role. The cellar work is meticulous with wines resting in bottle many years before release with increasingly lower dosage than in past releases. This are vinous Champagnes that reward decanting.

Comme Autrefois is a blend of Pinot Meunier (55%), Chardonnay (30%), and Pinot Noir (15%) sourced from both silty clay and calcareous clay soils. Fermented entirely in French oak barrels, Comme Autrefois is a non-declared vintage champagne that starts as a selection of the best barrels from a vintage that is then aged 11 years sur latte before disgorgement.

### ORIGIN

France

### APELLATION

Champagne

### SOIL

Clay limestone, silty clay

### AGE OF VINES

25-60

### ELEVATION

150-200 meters

### VARIETIES

Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir

### FARMING

Certified organic & biodynamic (AB & BIODYVIN)

### FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, separation of free run and press wine, natural yeast fermentation in French oak barrels

### AGING

Aged 11 years sur latte, hand riddled and disgorged, 10g/L dosage, 52mg/L SO<sub>2</sub>

### ACCOLADES

95 – 2004 Comme Autrefois – Wine Advocate

**JON-DAVID  
HEADRICK  
SELECTIONS**

