

MICHEL DELHOMMEAU

Harmonie



ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Muscadet-Sèvre et Maine

SOIL

Sand, gabbro

AGE OF VINES

25-40

ELEVATION

30 meters

VARIETIES

Melon de Bourgogne

FARMING

Certified organic (ECOCERT)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, natural yeast fermentation in tank

AGING

5 months in tank on the lees

Brittany, parts of Normandy, and the western part of the Loire valley are essentially built on a foundation of cooled lava and magma. Over millions of years this lava has metamorphosed into many kinds of geological structures. The most common in the Loire is granite, and in Muscadet, it's everywhere. Vineyards are carved out of its hard surface and the hallmark minerality that it helps to produce makes Muscadet one of the great white wines of the world. In one village in the Muscadet region, Monnières, this cooled lava didn't change into granite. Instead, it stayed in relatively unchanged fashion and today is called gabbro. It is one of the purest forms of molten magma as it is formed underground, and without an escape route, turns crystalline.

Michel and Nathalie Delhommeau, a young couple making some of the most crystalline Muscadets you can find, own 27 hectares of vines planted on this gabbro. Some of their holdings are old vines planted before World War II. The property, which is in conversion to organic certification, is one of the few in the region to vinify by parcel and use indigenous yeast. The wines here are simply made but not simple. There is no wood aging. There is very little lees stirring. There are no fancy techniques. The grapes are harvested, they are gently crushed, they ferment naturally, and then they take a long winter's nap until March. It is, above all, the gabbro that is the loudest voice in this conversation. Recently Michel and Nathalie have started buying small amounts of vines on other soils types like the gneiss of Monnières Saint Fiacre and hard granite of Clisson which they will separate out into new cuvées. These, along with the higher-end current wines, will spend a longer time in tank to help develop the structure before bottling.

Harmonie is produced from a single parcel of 25-40 year old vines planted on gabbro soils – the main terroir Michel Delhommeau farms. Gabbro is chemically indistinguishable from Basalt, being its coarse grained cousin and makes for round and supple version of Muscadet with tremendous minerality and capacity for aging.

ACCOLADES

90 – 2015 Harmonie – Wine Advocate



JON-DAVID HEADRICK
SELECTIONS