

FAMILLE LIEUBEAU

La Fruitière Les Vignes Blanches

THE ESTATE

Granite rock was used for centuries to build the massive fortresses that dot the landscape of Muscadet. Its density and structure were rarely breached by arrow, cannonball, or the good 'ole medieval siege. Because of its density and the fact that it is everywhere in Muscadet, it's unclear why anyone would think that this was the place to plant hectares and hectares of vines. The Romans might have gotten a few things wrong in France, but they did get something right: they planted vines on this lunar rock of a landscape. Today, this area is called Muscadet and is home to over 8,000 hectares of Melon de Bourgogne.



Famille Lieubeau farms over 40 hectares of vines and produces both Muscadet Sèvre et Maine and Vin de Pays from grapes such as Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. Regardless of the varietal, the vines are planted on rock, and in most cases, sheer cliffs of rock through which the roots have to bury for meters for any hydric source. The vines, and the wines, are fed by water that is awash in wet rock. It's not a big shock that the wines smell and taste more like rock and minerals than fruit or flowers. Combine this with the cold Atlantic breezes and you've got an amazing cool climate, high cut, precise bottle of white wine.

The Lieubeau family takes great care to vinify the wines according to exposition, density of granite, and harvest date. Farming for their Folle Blanche, Chardonnay and Sauvignon is certified by Terra Vitis and all of their Melon is now certified organic by *Agriculture Biologique*. They keep yields as low as possible to produce wines that express the varietal character and terroir – not just acid. These are delicious, vibrant wines that are easily among the best values in the portfolio.

THE DETAILS

While it might seem tempting to think of this as covering all your bases, Les Vignes Blanches is far from a muddle. Each variety contributes something to the final blend that somehow becomes greater than the parts. All come from the granitic soils of Château Thébaud, are fermented separately and blended after a few months of aging on the lees. The blend combines the richness and slight nuttiness of the Chardonnay, the zesty aromatics of the Sauvignon, and the mineral depth of the Melon.

COUNTRY

France

APPELLATION

Val de Loire

ELEVATION

40 meters

VARIETIES

Melon de Bourgogne, Chardonnay,
Sauvignon Blanc

SOIL

Sand, granite, gneiss

VINE AGE

20 years old

FARMING

Certified sustainable (TERRA VITIS)

FERMENTATION

Gentle pressing, each variety is fermented separately in tank

AGING

Aged 4 months in tank on the fine lees

FOR THE RECORD

Medium weight with excellent fruit intensity on the palate. The Sauvignon may just be winning the race for my attention at the moment. Interesting wine with good structure. I wouldn't be afraid to hang on to this for a little while. – JANCIS ROBINSON 6/11/21

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**JON-DAVID
HEADRICK
SELECTIONS**