

LOUIS DE GRENELLE

Crémant de Loire Louis

THE ESTATE

Deep under the cobbled streets of Saumur, miles and miles of caves wind their way through the soft limestone bedrock. Carved out over the last millennium, these caverns and passages were dug by prisoners serving sentences for smuggling, most having been caught violating *la gabelle* – the punitive pre-revolutionary salt tax. Depending on your point of view, the l’Ancien Regime was either so lawless, or so unjust, that today there are far more “streets” underground than above in this picaresque town. From the banks of the Loire along the Quai Mayaud, up through its narrow and winding streets past L’Église Saint-Pierre, and higher still to the ramparts of the imposing Château de Saumur, centuries-worth of quarried limestone is everywhere you look.



One of the last remaining family-owned sparkling wine houses in Saumur, Louis de Grenelle, owns about 2 kilometers of these caves. All of the sparkling wine produced by the property is stored in these cool caverns, many of which were used during World War II by the French resistance. If you are lucky, you will one day get to sit in the king’s chair in the secret cave at the end of one of these caverns. Only if you’re lucky.

The grapes used to produce the sparkling Saumur and Crémant at Grenelle are grown on the hillsides surrounding Saumur and in the small hamlets nearby. They are pressed and flow by gravity into underground tanks at the winery. All of the wines are made in the Champagne method and are bottled with little dosage to preserve the freshness of the Cabernet Franc, Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay and Grolleau grown in the clay limestone vineyards typical of the region.



THE DETAILS

As appellations go, Crémant de Loire is usually a dumping ground for carelessly grown fruit that is beaten into some sort of vinous form, and bottled with a healthy dose of sugar and/or sulfur to hide all the flaws. Made from 100% estate grown fruit that is certified organic (AB), Louis is a blend of Chenin and Chardonnay grown on chalky clay soils, and aged sur latte for 26 months before disgorgement. Not your average Crémant!

COUNTRY

France

APPELLATION

Crémant de Loire

ELEVATION

60 meters (average)

VARIETIES

Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay

SOIL

Clay limestone, chalk

VINE AGE

20–60 years old

FARMING

Certified organic (AB)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, fermented in tank, secondary fermentation in bottle

AGING

26 months on the lees before disgorgement, minimal dosage of 3g/L

FOR THE RECORD

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