



DOMAINE DE LA NOBLAIE

Chinon Les Chiens-Chiens

Domaine de Noblaie is home base for four generations (grand-mère usually holds court in the living room while holding her new iPad.) It is Jerome Billard, the son of Francois and Madeleine Billard, who leads the property now. Jerome was fortunate to earn an internship at Chateau Petrus in Bordeaux while still in school and then to earn a spot at Dominus in California. I met Jerome in Chinon just days after his return to Chinon from California in 2003 and saw enormous potential. He has certainly lived up to that and more.

Noblaie sits at one of the highest points of the Chinon appellation and is essentially two long, sloping hillsides covering 24 hectares. The soil is mostly limestone (some of it quite deep) covered with clay and limestone shards. The property is certified organic by Ecocert and has been working this way since about 2005. All harvests are carried out by hand (rare in Chinon) and in multiple passes through the vines. Unlike many other properties that hand harvest, Noblaie has the same team year after year and the vineyard and winery triage is quite severe. The point is not to produce green or vegetal Cabernet Franc but to find that perfect razor's edge maturity that privileges the earthiness and spiciness of the varietal while showing off the fruit and elegance at the same time.

As opaquely named *lieux-dits* go, Chiens-Chiens ranks near the top of the list. This site has borne this puzzling name for as long as anyone can remember, and what, "Dogs-Dogs" could have originally meant is pure conjecture. What it means today however, is an elegant Chinon from sandy tuffeau soils sporting dark-fruit flavors and a silky texture –hardly what we'd call a dog.

ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Chinon

SOIL

Sandy clay tuffeau

AGE OF VINES

30

ELEVATION

50–65 meters

VARIETIES

Cabernet Franc

FARMING

Certified organic (ECOCERT)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested and natural yeast fermentation in tank, 20–25 day maceration

AGING

12 months in 400L neutral French oak barrels then 8 months in tank

ACCOLADES

90+ – 2011 Chinon Les Chiens-Chiens – Wine Advocate

91 – 2009 Chinon Les Chiens-Chiens – Wine Advocate



JON-DAVID HEADRICK
SELECTIONS