



# DOMAINE VACHERON

## Sancerre Rouge Belle Dame

Domaine Vacheron is one of Sancerre's elite properties, producing both white, pink, and red Sancerre of amazing purity and definition. The domaine has been completely converted to biodynamic farming (certified by Biodyvin in 2005) with two young cousins, Jean-Laurent and Jean-Dominique Vacheron, at the helm. No synthetic material is used in the vineyard, harvests are carried out exclusively by hand, and the only fertilizer used is produced from the compost pile. Yields are kept extremely low. Having inherited some of the most coveted parcels in the appellation (and being smart about current land purchases), the cousins are trying a Burgundian approach to Sancerre winemaking, with parcels being vinified by terroir and blends varying from year to year. Pinot Noir is not an afterthought chez Vacheron, but a focus, and on soils just a couple of hours west of Burgundy, the cousins are making grand, expressive bottlings from the variety.

### ORIGIN

*France*

### APPELLATION

*Sancerre*

### SOIL

*Flint*

### AGE OF VINES

*50*

### ELEVATION

*300 meters*

### VARIETIES

*Pinot Noir*

### FARMING

*Certified biodynamic (DEMETER)*

### FERMENTATION

*Hand harvested, natural yeast fermentation in French oak vats, pigeage, 30 day maceration*

### AGING

*12 months in French oak barrels then 12 months in 25hl oak casks*

Vacheron is mainly a "silex" producer. Silex (flint) is found primarily in the eastern part of the appellation (and also across the river in Pouilly Fumé) and almost all of Vacheron's holdings are on this hard, mineral soil type. Flint produces vertical, long-aging Sancerre bottlings and the Vacheron boys' biggest aim is to let this shine.

Most people, when tasting the Belle Dame, a cuvée of 50 year-old vines of Pinot Noir grown on pure flint soils, compare it to Burgundy. It is understandable and unfortunate at the same time as this is a terror quite distinct from anything in Burgundy - further north and on hard flinty soils. Before phylloxera, Sancerre was renowned as Pinot Noir country, and justly so. Sadly, there are few producers, like Vacheron, who care enough to prove just how amazing Pinot Noir can be from this part of the Loire. It is a singular wine, and the benchmark Sancerre Rouge.

### ACCOLADES

94+ – 2012 Sancerre Rouge Belle Dame – Wine Advocate



JON-DAVID HEADRICK  
SELECTIONS