



DOMAINE DU VIKING

Vouvray Cuvée Aurelie

In the early part of the 20th century, most of Vouvray (like much of viticultural France) was worked by farmers in polyculture. Cows, sheep, and grain were raised alongside vines. Such was the case for the land belonging to Lionel and Francoise Gauthier, the owners of Domaine du Viking. Francoise's grandparents owned just 2 hectares of vines in the early 1940's along with animals and cereals. Winemaking was something that was done for family and local consumption. All of that changed on August 11, 1944 when Francoise's grandfather, Maurice, was killed by Nazi soldiers after being caught trying to blow up some train tracks. His young son, Francoise's father, was suddenly in charge and in an effort to keep the family afloat, converted all of the land into vineyards. The rest, as they say, is history.

Most of Lionel and Francoise's 13 hectares are not on the famous chalk (tuffeau) soils that make up over 90% of Vouvray but on the hard silex soils of the northern tip of the appellation. This silex produces crisp, mineral, and long-aging Vouvrays that bring to mind great Riesling. The style chez Le Viking (as he refers to himself with only a small degree of irony) is called sec tendre. This "tender dry" style allows for the sugar levels of a demi-sec but with the acidity level of a great Sancerre or Chablis. If you're into Riesling, you're probably going to like this style.

The winery itself isn't so much of a winery as it is a garage. Chestnut is favored for the barrels although more and more wine is being vinified in tank these days. Indigenous yeasts start fermentation and there is little manipulation. These are wines that simply happen. As such, the sugar levels can vary wildly from year to year. Acidity and minerality, however, are always very present. The Cuvée Aurelie is 100% Chenin Blanc from flint soils in the village of Reugny. It is selected by hand in SGN fashion from late harvest grapes. A slow and natural fermentation in tank is followed by aging in chestnut and French oak barrels for at least 24 months before release. Older vintages are always available.

ORIGIN

France

APPELLATION

Vouvray

SOIL

Flint

AGE OF VINES

15-60

ELEVATION

75-125 meters

VARIETIES

Chenin Blanc

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested in several passes, natural yeast fermentation in tank

AGING

24 months in chestnut and French oak barrels

ACCOLADES

91 – 1997 Vouvray Cuvée Aurelie – Wine Advocate

93 – 1995 Vouvray Cuvée Aurelie – Vinous Media

**JON-DAVID
HEADRICK
SELECTIONS**