

# DOMAINE DE LA ROCHETTE

## Neuchâtel Les Margiles

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### ORIGIN

*Switzerland*

### APPELLATION

*Neuchâtel*

### SOIL

*Clay limestone*

### AGE OF VINES

*30-70*

### ELEVATION

*470 meters*

### VARIETIES

*Pinot Noir*

### FARMING

*Sustainable*

### FERMENTATION

*Hand harvested, whole cluster, natural yeast fermentation*

### AGING

*22 months in French oak barrels*

Situated between the Alps and the Jura Mountains, Neuchâtel is underpinned by the same band of Jurassic limestone that is present in Burgundy and the Jura. Compressed and folded by the geologic process that built the surrounding mountains, then ground smooth by glaciers that also formed the region's three lakes - Neuchâtel, Biel and Murten - Neuchâtel lacks the dramatic vistas of the Valais or the grandeur of Lavaux. The drama of Neuchâtel is subterranean. The vineyards of the region are located on the southeastern-facing slopes above the three lakes where the top soils are thinner and the limestone is closer to the surface. These are the precise ingredients for making incredibly detailed, precise and ageworthy Pinot Noir.

Outside of Switzerland, few are aware of this hidden terroir and if Jacques Tatasciore has his way this will remain so. After leaving the world of business, he settled in Cressier and began to assemble a selection of top sites in Neuchâtel. There is no tasting room, no sign, and visitors are discouraged. Jacques is frequently awarded top honors in Switzerland for his wines, but he never attends the ceremonies - all his energy goes into his wines. Production is tiny, selection is painfully strict, allocations are jealously guarded and details are scarce. The wines speak for themselves.

Les Margiles is located in Cressier and is planted with Pinot vines that have traditionally been grown in Neuchâtel dating back to the time when it was part of Burgundy. These massale selections are easy to spot in a sea of clones and technical viticulture. They're the poky, little vines with small clusters of tiny berries. They are less vigorous and naturally self-regulate themselves to the terroir in which they are grown. The yields are so meager that they hardly seem suitable for a commercial enterprise, and therefore they are pretty rare. Jacques Tatasciore only works with these types of Pinot vines. We often refer to Domaine de la Rochette at the Vosne-Romanée of Neuchâtel since Jacques' wines have a velvety fluidity over a firm core of compact and structured fruit, making them both filagreeed and plush. Les Margiles stands out as being maybe a little more like Gevrey, so that ruins our analogy. Still, it shows the level of precision that Jacques is trying to achieve with his wines and that given the right type of Pinot and planting it in the right soils, Neuchâtel does remain part of the ancient Kingdom of Burgundy.

### ACCOLADES

94 – 2011 Neuchâtel Les Margiles – Wine Advocate

