

LE CLAUX DELORME

Valençay Blanc

THE ESTATE

Valençay is the rare example of a French appellation that applies to both cheese (1998) and wine (2004) – and the first region in France to be officially recognized for both products. Situated on the southern bank of the Cher, Valençay can be seen as a south and eastern continuation of the vineyards of the Touraine. Like the Touraine, there are a wide variety of grapes permitted in the region including Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Arbois for the whites, and Gamay, Cabernet Franc, Cot, and Pinot Noir for the reds. These are country wines – crystalline whites ubiquitously paired with the local goat cheeses and pleasurable, vibrant reds that match beautifully with every cured, stewed or roasted part of a pig imaginable.



Nestled in Selles-sur-Cher, a small village on the banks of the Cher with its gracefully crumbling château, Le Claux Delorme is a 15 hectare estate that Bertrand Minchin purchased in 2003. The soils here are quite different from those in Menetou-Salon – primarily chalky sand with flint gravel. While traditionally the wines of Valençay are blends, Bertrand prefers the racy, forthwith and aromatic qualities of pure Sauvignon Blanc when grown on these soils. For his reds he makes a traditional blend of: Gamay for the fruit, Cot for the color, structure and aromas, Cabernet Franc harvested very ripe to add aromatic complexity, and Pinot Noir for its fine tannins. Bertrand farms Le Claux Delorme sustainably with certification from the French Ministry of Agriculture. Fermentations are in tank or oak vats followed by aging in stainless steel tanks, foudres and French oak barrels. Naturally when sharing a meal with Bertrand his Valençay Blanc shows up early in the meal and the rouge makes an appearance with the roasted pig knuckle.

THE DETAILS

It was Sauvignon Blanc that lured Bertrand to Valençay as the soils here are chalky and sandy clays flecked with flint making for a varietal expression that is explosive and aromatic with green notes and plenty of citrus. The fact that this is the epicenter of French goat cheese production is only happy coincidence. While he is permitted to add Chardonnay, Bertrand feels that it only detracts from the quality of his Sauvignon Blanc.

COUNTRY

France

APPELLATION

Valençay

ELEVATION

90 meters

VARIETIES

Sauvignon Blanc

SOIL

Chalky sand, flint, clay

VINE AGE

30 years old

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel tank

AGING

4 month on the lees in stainless steel tanks

FOR THE RECORD

