



PROVINS

L'Alpage Fendant

Our relationship with Provins began because we were looking for a home to make a custom cuvée of Chasselas in the Valais. After approaching a few of the larger estates we just couldn't get the economics to work right. The main impediment to introducing people to the wines of Switzerland in the US is cost. While there are vineyards everywhere in Switzerland, the land is expensive, jealously guarded, and broken up into small parcels that have to be farmed by hand. This is the unfortunate reality of Swiss wines, but we were not deterred. Despite our early setbacks, one name kept popping up, however... Provins.

Provins is a large cooperative in the Valais whose members control 800 hectares of vines and produce 20% of the wine in the Valais and accounting for 10% of the total Swiss wine production. While these numbers seem daunting, what struck us when visiting is that the winemaking team led by Luc Sermier, didn't just make wines for everyday drinking but they were intent on preserving the traditional varieties of the Valais and protecting their most esteemed terroirs. We tasted a lot of Chasselas including blends from different terroirs, elevations, and soils but we kept coming back to a particular wine from south- and southeast-facing slopes of clay-limestone and schist between 500-700 meters in elevation. This wine tasted like the Fendant we were looking for.

Why Fendant and not Chasselas? Well, Fendant is in fact the local name for Chasselas in the Valais, but more than that it captures the exact style of Chasselas we were in search of. To us Fendant is the quintessential white wine to slake one's thirst after a day of skiing or mountaineering, the perfect wine to have with raclette or cave-aged Gruyère, the very calling cards of Switzerland. We were so transported by this wine that we couldn't think of a more suitable label than something that evokes the Art-Deco Swiss travel posters of the 1930s. The name L'Alpage refers to the mountain meadows where the famed Swiss dairy cows graze in summer. If you need a mental image, they're a lot like to beginning of the Sound of Music!

ORIGIN

Switzerland

APPELLATION

Valais

SOIL

Clay limestone, schist, alluvial

AGE OF VINES

25 years old

ELEVATION

500-750 meters

VARIETIES

Chasselas

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, gentle pressing, fermentation in stainless steel tanks

AGING

6 months on the lees in stainless steel tanks, no bâtonnage

