

LE ROCHER DES VIOLETTES

Côt Vieilles Vignes

THE ESTATE

Just what are the differences between Vouvray and Montlouis? The consensus is that the soils in Montlouis are sandier, which is generally the case. Still, if you were to compare the top sites on the Première Côte of Vouvray to the top sites in Montlouis, they are strikingly similar. Tasted blind, many of the best bottles of Vouvray and Montlouis cannot be distinguished based solely on the appellation of origin, only on their quality. So if the top growers in Montlouis are not on your radar, then you're missing some of the most precise, pure, and expressive renditions of Chenin made at comparatively bargain prices. Enter Xavier Weisskopf and Le Rocher des Violettes.



Xavier was born in Picardy in northern France. An early interest in wine led him to Chablis, which only confirmed his desire to become a winemaker, so he moved to Beaune for formal studies. After graduation, he took a position with Saint-Cosme in Gigondas to learn his trade with Louis Barruol. After 4 years there, an opportunity arose in 2005 that he could not pass up in the form of a 15th-century tuffeau cave outside St-Martin le Beau along with 7ha. of old vine Chenin and Côt. Today his estate is 17ha. in size. Many of his cuvées are from a single terroir, and the younger vines are all propagated using selection massale. Farming is certified organic by Ecocert, and everything is harvested by hand. Fermentations are spontaneous in stainless-steel tanks or mainly neutral French oak barrels. While admittedly, we share Xavier's love of pure and riveting Chenin Blanc in its many guises, which he has certainly mastered in Montlouis, we have to admit that his red wines from the Touraine are some of the most satisfying we've ever tasted as well.

THE DETAILS

The oldest vines Xavier tends are Côt, many of which are now around 130 years old. Not only do they provide a depth of concentration and complexity of flavor, but they also serve as a source for his new plantings. Employing 2/3 whole cluster fruit during fermentation and maceration lasting 3 weeks, it is aged in 500L French oak barrels and foudres for one year before release.

COUNTRY

France

APPELLATION

Touraine

ELEVATION

75-100 meters

VARIETIES

Côt (Malbec)

SOIL

Sandy clay, clay limestone, gravel

VINE AGE

5-130 years old

FARMING

Certified organic (ECOCERT)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, 2/3 whole cluster, natural yeast fermentation in tank, 3 week maceration

AGING

12 months in 500L French oak barrels and foudres

FOR THE RECORD

Dark, intriguing aromas of cigar smoke, coffee and earth. On the palate, juicy and gulpable, displaying fresh berry and darker forest notes, grippy tannins and a long, peppery, graphite-tinged finish. Super cool wine.

– 2016 Côt Vieilles Vignes – Jason Wilson, vinous.com – 91 points

EUROPEANCELLARS.COM



**JON-DAVID
HEADRICK
SELECTIONS**