

LE ROCHER DES VIOLETTES

Pétillant Originel

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

Pétillant Originel comes from Le Moulin, a parcel of 10-year-old Chenin Blanc planted on clay-limestone soils. After pressing, it is fermented in stainless steel tanks at a low temperature for 2 months, then bottled. Hence, fermentation finishes in the bottle, providing bubbles without using cultured yeasts for secondary fermentation. It is aged sur latte for 28 months before being disgorged – making for a dry, single parcel, 100% indigenous yeast sparkling wine.

COUNTRY

France

APPELLATION

Montlouis

ELEVATION

75 meters

VARIETIES

Chenin Blanc

SOIL

Clay limestone

VINE AGE

10 years old

FARMING

Certified organic (ECOCERT)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, natural yeast fermentation in tank, bottled after 2 month to finish fermentation in bottle

AGING

28 months sur latte before disgorgement, no dosage, vegan friendly

FOR THE RECORD

Golden yellow, with a persistent creamy mousse. Beautiful nose of orange, apricot, spice and a hint of talc. On the palate, energetic and vibrant, offering juicy peach and mango and a stony, crisp finish.

– 2015 Pétillant Originel – Jason Wilson, vinous.com – 92 points

EUROPEANCELLARS.COM



**JON-DAVID
HEADRICK
SELECTIONS**