

# DOMAINE CLAUDE RIFFAULT

## Sancerre Monoparcelle 538

### THE ESTATE

Based in the village of Sury-en-Vaux, the Stéphane Riffault works 33 different parcels in 8 different lieu-dits spread across 4 villages. The 13.5 hectares of vines are plowed and no synthetic material is used and starting in 2017 the property has been certified organic by ECOCERT and biodynamic by BIODYVIN. Unlike most Sancerre producers, the entire harvest is carried out by hand and an extensive sorting takes place before the grapes are crushed. Stéphane's wife, Benedicte, leads the harvest team while Stéphane manages the sorting and press during harvest.



Most of the domaine's holdings are planted on the soft limestone soil called *terres blanches* with some parcels on *calliottes* and *silex*. Small, judicious uses of oak help to add length to the already precise, site-expressive and vertical bottlings. All of the parcels are vinified separately and with the exception of the rosé, all the wines are bottled unfiltered.

Having studied and worked in Burgundy (and closely with Olivier Leflaive), it's easy to see the Burgundian influence in Stéphane's wines. The mastery of minerality standing shoulder-height with the wood is rarely duplicated in Sancerre. Regardless of the exposition of his parcels (many are south-facing), Riffault's wines are always crisp and high-cut with a jeweled sort of delineation that speaks to the precision and attention these wines get. These are not your daddy's (or his daddy, Claude's) Sancerres.



### THE DETAILS

Monoparcelle 538 is the cadastral plot number for a 0.44 hectare plot of 47 year-old, massale selection Sauvignon Blanc planted on a shallow and gravelly soil 30 cm deep in the lieu-dit of Les Desmalets. Les Desmalets is potentially the fullest-bodied terroir Stéphane Riffault farms, so much so that he blends most of it into his village Sancerre and reserving its oldest vines for this profoundly expressive and age-worthy micro cuvée.

#### COUNTRY

France

#### APPELLATION

Sancerre

#### ELEVATION

260 meters

#### VARIETIES

Sauvignon Blanc

#### SOIL

Kimmeridgian limestone  
(Terre Blanches)

#### VINE AGE

47 years old

#### FARMING

Certified organic and biodynamic (ECOCERT & BIODYVIN)

#### FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, natural yeast fermentation in French oak foudres

#### AGING

Aged 18 months in French oak foudres

### FOR THE RECORD

2019 Sancerre Monoparcelle 538 – *Vinous Media* – 95

2019 Sancerre Monoparcelle 538 – *Wine Advocate* – 95-96