



press kit

PETIT CHABLIS • CHABLIS • CHABLIS 1^{ER} CRU • CHABLIS GRAND CRU • CHÂTEAU GRENOUILLES



Who are we?



Chablis, half way between Paris and Beaune, forms the real gateway to Burgundy's treasure-house of wines.

The vineyards, lying on both sides of the River Serein, cover 6,800 hectares (some 17,000 acres) in 20 villages.

Of the 4,700 hectares in production, La Chablisienne alone represents nearly 25% and produces every one of the Chablis appellations (Petit Chablis, Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru, Chablis Grand Cru). Over the years and in every part of the globe, these white wines from the Chardonnay grape have won extraordinary acclaim.

Thus, our winery groups nearly 300 winegrowers to produce the great white wines of Chablis. These wines reflect the utmost care our winegrowers devote to the cultivation of their vineyards and the commitment our winemakers bring to their work. It is this subtle harmony between the grower in the vineyards, the technical advisor and the winemaker which bestows on our wines their much sought-after distinction.

The mineral touch

Since 1923 at Chablis in Burgundy, the meticulous care of the winegrowers working together under the banner of La Chablisienne has given birth to wines whose magnificence is amplified by the passage of time. These wines, coming from a mosaic of "climats", or vineyard plots, provide a pallet of emotions marked with a truly mineral touch.



La Chablisienne, since 1923



The beginning of our story dates back to 1923 when a number of winegrowers, faced with the economic crisis of the times, grouped together under the leadership of the Abbé Balitrand to found a cooperative winery in Burgundy, in the heart of the Chablis vineyards, to sell their wines. Up to the middle of the 1950s, members brought their wines to La Chablisienne which then took charge of the blending and sold most of the production wholesale to the wine trade.

Eventually, with a desire to forge on and create its own style, La Chablisienne decided to take in the harvest directly in the form of musts, ensuring that the winery had full control over vinification. This policy has remained a defining feature of La Chablisienne to this day. The winegrowers and technical staff, working together in ongoing exchange, refine the links between the quality of the musts and the climats, or vineyard plots, establishing guidelines for future vineyards as well as for maturing and ageing the wines.

La Chablisienne, still imbued with that pioneering drive, continues to meet the wide-ranging challenges in the vineyards, in vinification, in human resources and in sales...

Over the years, step by step, we have perfected a unique style of development. Often described as “France’s best cooperative winery”, La Chablisienne really wants to show that referring to us in such terms is just a little glib, side-stepping the underlying values and commitment that constitute the originality of our development.





We see the cooperative as an extension of its member estates, a dynamic and accessible tool at the service of the winegrowers. Yet the strength of this “system” is to keep the men and women who form its core as the focal point of all strategic development: always looking towards the future, proposing projects that generate energy, pulling people together in a cohesive dynamic, sharing responsibilities, respectful of human beings and their attachment to place, helping the younger generation to get a start in their own region, committed to the idea that collective organisation is a key factor in visibility and access to other markets...Such are the values that, day-in day-out, govern our efforts.

So the purchase of Château Grenouilles in 2003, the ‘agri-confidence’ scheme, work on plot selection which has enabled us to obtain an unrivalled range of Chablis and adapt to different markets without a betrayal of our convictions, investment in state-of-the-art facilities and equipment or buying into distribution networks in key countries (U.K., Germany...) are just some examples that highlight our strengths and our ambition: to make La Chablisienne brand a unique, unrivalled reference in the traditional market sector, both in France and abroad.



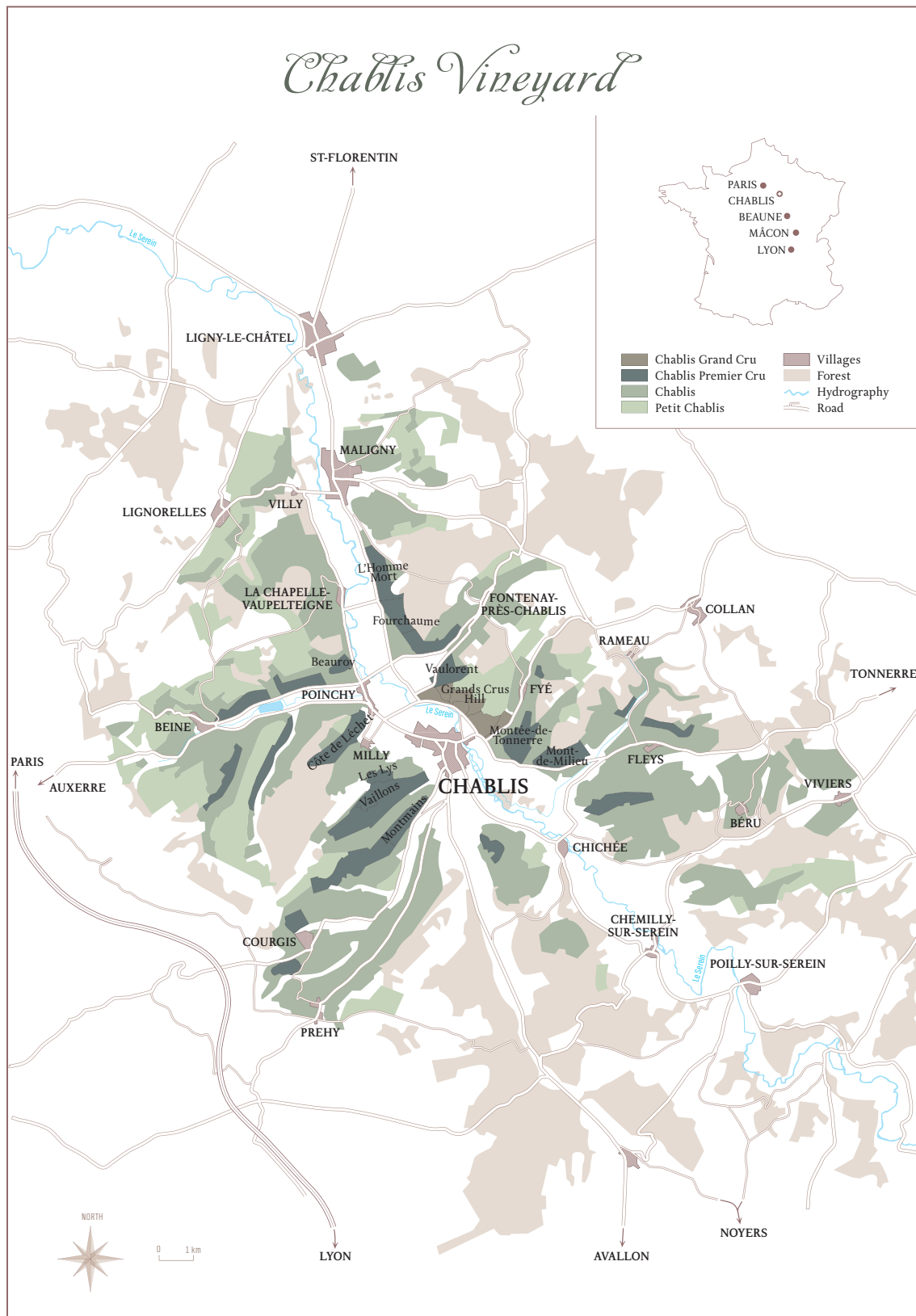
More than thirty special wines and cuvées ...all with that mineral touch



La Chablisienne is present across the whole appellation area. Each year we produce some thirty different special wines and classed crus coming from each vineyard area of the Chablis appellations and all marked with a strong personality: six Grands Crus, eleven Premiers Crus, Chablis and Petit Chablis. Among our Grands Crus we number Château Grenouilles, the most celebrated of them all and the only Château of the Chablis appellations.

A SINGLE VARIETY, CHARDONNAY

The first official reference to the Chardonnay grape dates from the 18th century though the variety is without doubt the offspring of a chance encounter in medieval times between the Pinot Noir and the white Gouais. It is here in Burgundy, its original homeland, that the Chardonnay's character emerged to become a synonym over the centuries for wine in all its great splendour. On the slopes of Chablis along the Serein valley, the Chardonnay has found over the generations an ideal fit with its native terroir. It is a perfect match deriving largely from the inspired insight of Cistercian monks from Cîteaux, who founded Pontigny Abbey in the 12th century, and which continues to underlie the association of Chardonnay with the terroirs of Chablis. The work these monks accomplished is crucial to an understanding of today's wines. The long process, year after year, of identifying the finest terroirs, selecting the best plants to set apart for propagation, perfecting suitable viticulture, experimenting with winemaking methods vintage after vintage – such is the inestimable contribution made by the monastic wine culture of Burgundy. The same outlook and commitment lives on today at La Chablisienne.





OUR TERROIR: A MOSAIC OF TERROIRS!



The wines of La Chablisienne reflect the whole range of terroirs making up the Chablis appellation area. The soils, formed in the main in Kimmeridgian times, are made up of alternating marl and marly limestone with deposits of tiny oysters. They stamp the wines of La Chablisienne with outstanding personality, hallmarked by an unusual mineral edge.

Each terroir, clearly identified and circumscribed, produces unique wines, with different characters and potential for ageing. The Petit Chablis show perfectly from one to three years, the Chablis require from two to five years depending on the particular wine. Chablis Premiers Crus and Chablis Grands Crus, true wines for ageing, need to be kept for five to ten years.

Of vital importance to the expression of a vineyard plot's singular character is its exposure, most of the climats belonging to La Chablisienne benefiting from a south-easterly, southern or south-westerly aspect.

OUR VINEYARD PRACTICES AND WINEMAKING METHODS

La Chablisienne's commitment is to ensuring that its members run their vineyards in accordance with the principles of sustainable viticulture.

Our priorities are working the soil, the quality of the vines and intervention on the plant throughout the growing season. Recourse to treatment products must be balanced – the French say 'reasoned' – to ensure respect for the environment, for the vine itself and for people. All this combined activity converges in the choice of the optimal harvesting date which is determined individually, plot by plot, according to analysis of the crop and the taste of the grapes.

Vinification methods are inspired by the same commitment to getting the utmost from the juice, obtaining the greatest expression from the wealth of potential in Chablis's supreme terroirs.

Our desire is materialised by what are in fact relatively simple winemaking practices:



- musts tasted and analysed systematically prior to rigorous selection,
- avoidance of any hard and fast approach, so that technical decisions can be reasoned and adapted to each wine,
- tasting as the primary tool,
- choices in vinification made in the light of each terroir,
- winemaking and maturing carried out in stainless steel tanks and in barrels (great care taken in choosing both the oak and the barrels),
- extended maturing on the lees, depending on each cru,
- totality of each wine bottled at the same time.

Thanks to the history of its development, La Chablisienne has the advantage of a number of pressing facilities made available by its member winegrowers. Such facilities, located at the heart of the vineyard areas, are perfectly adapted to family wine estates. This special configuration ensures a flexibility and reactivity that keeps the ripening of the grapes to the forefront of everyone's concern. Thus, it is the state of the crop and the elements that determine the pattern of the harvesting and not La Chablisienne, with its own technical and logistical imperatives.

Even so, though vinification obviously plays a crucial role in obtaining successful wines, the heart and soul of wines from La Chablisienne comes in large part from the merits of the maturing process. 'Maturing' must be one of the most beautiful words in the language of wine!

In this matter La Chablisienne has always considered "wood" as a means and not as an end in itself. The use of oak with our wines demands great sensitivity and must serve very clear objectives. The wood should not dominate a wine but nor should it shore the wine up, so to speak. At La Chablisienne, we speak rather of "revealing" or "breaking up". This might seem a nice distinction but it has great importance in our blending. 'Break up' the vital matter, "reveal" the potential in the berry, "reveal" the facets of terroir that stainless steel is inadequate to disclose... As vintage follows vintage, we have come to know how to choose our coopers, the origin of our oak and the degree of charring to ensure we get the match we are after. Behind each blend there is the age of the barrels, their percentages, the time spent in oak which together form a sort of chorus that La Chablisienne has the skills to conduct in harmony.

For while vinification transforms the original material, so to speak, maturing leads to its revelation. In this delicate process, blending and the fine lees are truly vital partners. Thereafter, La Chablisienne has long understood that the passage of time is the most precious of allies in revealing the purity, the crystal-clear, vibrant character of its wines...



Map of La Chablisienne's wines

PETIT CHABLIS

Pas si Petit



CHABLIS

La Sereine
Les Vénérables
- Vieilles Vignes -
La Source



Eau de vie
de Bourgogne

CHABLIS 1ER CRU

La Singulière
Beauroy
Côte de Léchet
Fourchaume
Les Lys
L'Homme Mort
Mont de Milieu
Montée de Tonnerre
Montmains
Vaillons
Vaulorent



CHABLIS GRAND CRU

Bougros
Blanchot
Les Clos
Les Preuses
Vaudésir



Le Fief de
GRENOUILLES



CHÂTEAU
GRENOUILLES



THE PETITS CHABLIS

The “Petit chablis” appellation forms the base of the Chablis appellation hierarchy. Situated on the plateaux in clay and limestone soil deriving from Portlandian geological times, the Petit Chablis constitute a panoply of wines whose expressions range from the fresh and lively with fruity aromas best enjoyed young, to dry, mineral wines enhanced by two or three years ageing. Whatever their profile, “Petit Chablis” provide the wine lover with a key to the world of Chablis, opening the way to the treasure house of the “Grands”.



Pas si petit

- Made from vines at least 15 years old.
- Aged for several months on fine lees in the vat.
- Mouthwatering and, again, best enjoyed slightly chilled.



THE CHABLIS



The “Chablis” appellation is the most extensive of the whole Chablis area. Growing in the renowned Kimmeridgian soil on slopes along both sides of the River Serein, the “Chablis” vineyards give wines that are the indisputable representatives of the real Chablis style. The terroir here brings freshness, a mineral edge, finesse and complexity. Depending on the vinification, the wine can be drunk young, one to three years old, when it has a refreshing quality; or between three and eight years for wines coming from old vines, when they will possess much more complexity, with a mineral touch and richness of aromas.

La Sereine

- From selected plots
- Rigour in grape selection ensures superb raw material enhanced by more than a year’s ageing on fine lees in the vat and in small barrels
- Offers a wonderful range of ripe fruity aromas and a long finish with a fine mineral edge

Les Vénérables - Vieilles Vignes -

- From venerable Chardonnay vines, on average more than 50 years old
- Enhanced by more than a year’s ageing on fine lees in the vat and small barrels,
- Nose of flowers and citrus fruit. In the mouth, fresh and structured, giving an elegant mineral “edge” with a very long finish. A great Chablis expressive of terroir, an everlasting surprise.

La Source

- Organically grown Chardonnay from two plots on the right bank of the Serein.
- Harvested by hand
- Enhanced by more than a year’s ageing on fine lees in the tank and in large oak vats. A wine with depth, showing great length and mineral edge. A natural!

Certified by ECOCERT sas, 332600 - L’Isle-Jourdain, France.



THE PREMIERS CRUS

Produced from about ten different terroirs, our “Chablis Premier Crus”, situated on both banks of the Serein, provide an understanding of the great Kimmeridgian terroirs in Chablis. The vineyards of the Premiers Crus flourish on superbly exposed south-east and south-west facing slopes, bringing to each wine its own unique personality. Chablis Premier Crus reach their full splendour in six to eight years.

La Singulière

Singular- the name says it all. Something unique, rare... a kind of “magical plus”. This wine comes from Chardonnay growing on different Premiers Crus climats vinified together.



LEFT BANK

Montmains: near to the Vaillons “climat”
deep and reserved,

Vaillons: vineyard located near to Chablis
crisp and mouthwatering,

Les Lys: vineyard located near to Chablis
sensual and harmonious

Côte de Léchet: vineyard located
near to the village of Milly
sunlit and ethereal

Beauroy: on the right hillside of
the small valley joining
the villages of Beine and Poinchy
fleshy and round

RIGHT BANK

L'Homme Mort: right at the end of the
Fourchaume “climat”
masculine and lively

Fourchaume: located to the right of the
famed Grands Crus hillside
feminine and floral

Vaulorent: stands next to the Les Preuses
Grand Cru plot
pure and profound

Montée de Tonnerre: to the right of the famed
Grands Crus hillside, opposite Les Blanchots
elegant and full of breed

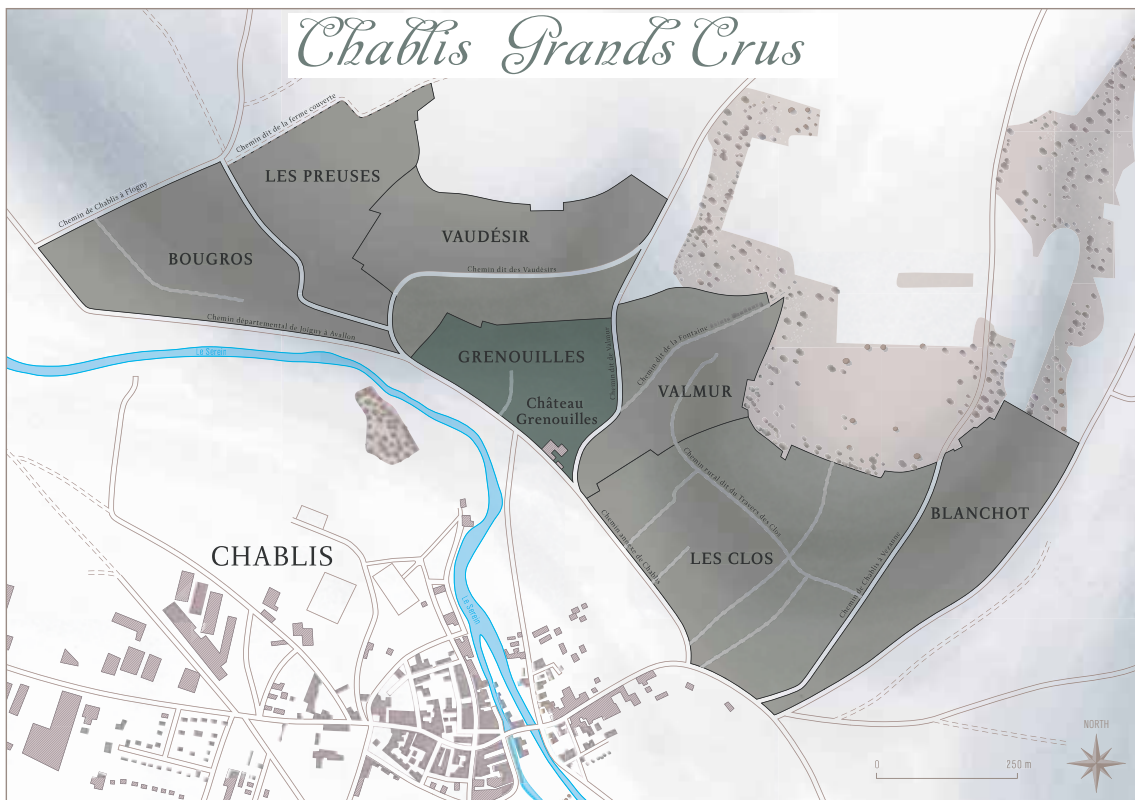
Mont de Milieu: superbly exposed full
south just on from the Montée de Tonnerre
august and mature



THE GRANDS CRUS



Renowned worldwide, the “Chablis Grands Crus” are known by winelovers everywhere as the kings of the appellation. Coming exclusively from the right bank of the Serein at Chablis itself, the vineyards make up a complete ensemble of 100 hectares (240 acres) most of which have a south-west aspect. Chablis Grands Crus are well formed and complete with an affirmed character that is enhanced with time. Before really opening out they need five to eight years of ageing and can keep remarkably well. La Chablisienne harvests and vinifies six of the seven Chablis Grands Crus, revealing the different character of each one: Bougros, Les Preuses, Vaudésir, Les Clos, Blanchot, and Grenouilles, of course...





CHÂTEAU GRENOUILLES, A WINE OF LEGEND

The Château Grenouilles estate is an exceptional property unique in Chablis. Situated at the heart of the Grands Crus vineyards at the foot of the Grenouilles hillside, its 7.2 hectares (some 18 acres) form one superbly exposed single plot facing south-west towards the village and produce the rarest of Chablis Grands Crus: Les Grenouilles.



This Château Grenouilles is made from selected sections carrying the oldest vines in the vineyard and the wine allies a nose with great definition to an aromatic purity in the mouth, a harmony of power and finesse and a very long finish. Blessed with enormous potential for keeping, it is a statement of what a great Chablis vin de terroir is.

The Château's second wine, "Le Fief de Grenouilles", illustrates to perfection the style of Grenouilles's terroir. The harvest from vines more than thirty five years old gives a wine that is a perfect expression of

generosity, harmony between structure and elegance and the mineral edge of a Chablis Grand Cru.

Le Fief de Grenouilles

- Terroir with clay and limestone soil deriving from Kimmeridgian geological times. Old vines located on the right bank of the River Serein, on the lower part of the Grands Crus hillside next to the celebrated Château
- Enhanced by more than a year's careful ageing on fine lees in the vat and in small barrels

Château Grenouilles

- Harvested from a rigorous selection of old Chardonnay vines in the Grenouilles climat
- Intense, complex nose revealing fresh fruit, delicate floral scents and a hint of spice. On the palate it comes through as remarkably pure, fine and elegant, with an extremely long mineral finish. The stuff of legend...



ANNEXE

Key figures

Turnover exclusive of taxes as of 31/12/06 (euros)	41.5 millions
Harvest 2006 (hectolitres)	71,827
No. of bottles sold in 2006 (equivalent 75 cl)	7,190,374

Coopérative members	254, of whom 190 active winegrowers
Associated non-members	54

1255 hectares (some 3.180 acres) of which

11 ha. (27 acres) Chablis Grand Cru (6 climats)
107 ha. (264 acres) Chablis Premier Cru (18 climats)
771 ha. (1,905 acres) Chablis
244 ha. (603 acres) Petit Chablis
122 ha. (301 acres) of régional appellations

La Chablisienne represents 25% of the total Chablis vineyard area
(16% of Chablis Grand Cru, 18% Chablis Premier Cru, 28% Chablis and 38% Petit Chablis).

Chablis Grand Cru, 6 climats, the vines 33 years old on average

Blanchot	1.13 hectares (2.80 acres)
Bougros	0.44 hectare (1.09 acres)
Les Clos	0.51 hectare (1.26 acres)
Les Preuses	1.76 hectares (4.40 acres)
Vaudésir	0.30 hectare (0.74 acre)
Grenouilles	4.69 hectares (11.6 acres)
Château Grenouilles	2.50 hectares (6.2 acres)



ANNEXE

2003 vintage

Sunshine, drought, the year of the heat wave...2003 was a blast of hot air. And while La Chablisienne is careful to use the term "typical" sparingly, there can be no other word than atypical to describe 2003.

The vineyards had already been badly hit by terrible spring frosts when along came another blow in the form a dry, breathtakingly hot summer (the record temperatures in France during the heat wave were in the Auxerre area). Such extreme conditions led to an exceptionally early harvest: picking began more than a month before normal.

As early as August 25 ripeness values for some plots showed they required immediate harvesting if any lively freshness was to be maintained. Indeed, the quest for freshness was the touchstone of 2003 (for the wines as well!). Night harvesting, fine-tuned use of cooperage and good lees, favourable early blending and briefer maturing periods were our main weaponry...

The 2003s, often introduced in the early stages as rich, massive wines redolent of dry, and even jammy fruit, are today boasting complexity and personality of a much more ambitious order.

There is no question that their golden hue, powerful nose and lush mellowness inevitably conjure up sunshine and warmth. Yet Chablis's hallmark stamp is gradually asserting itself as the mineral touch that was lacking just a few months ago has now come to the fore in certain wines which are bound to hold in store other decidedly surprising and delicious effects.

2004 vintage

2004 brought us a full measure of worry and concern. Everybody was stressed out to the limit by the end of August as the bad weather all spring and summer led to fears that the grapes would not ripen as they should. What is more, the vines were carrying a big crop.



But lo! September exceeded all expectations, its gorgeous weather banishing all memories of earlier rain. Indeed, at Chablis more than elsewhere, no doubt, September is often decisive, its conditions largely determining the success of the year -and 2004 was no exception. Yet, whereas in 2001 September had ruined so much of our hopes, this year it almost single-handedly ensured we got the right balance of sugar and acidity along with a healthy crop.

So, in 2004 picking began on 29 September, though more than 60% of the harvest was gathered in five days, from the Saturday to the following Thursday, October 2 to 7. All the yeast fermentations went without a hitch and soon gave us fruity wines with profiles ranging from citrus to pear and apple aromas.

The malolactic fermentation then came on-line, enabling us to get a balance with fresh acidity that has blessed the vintage with a clearly defined Chablis character and identity.

As a longstanding believer in extensive maturing of its wines on fine lees, La Chablisienne has succeeded with this vintage in revealing a classic nobility.

2005 vintage

Though it is always very difficult to fix one's first impressions about a year and be certain from the outset about its real nature, straight away 2005 was widely hailed as a great vintage. In fact, it is now shaping up to fulfil that early promise.

With the first taste of the grapes and the musts, it was clear that a wonderfully ripe year was in store, especially since some plots showed irregularly small berry size.

It thus came as no surprise that the first tastings after fermentation revealed a spectrum of very ripe aromas. Ripe Chardonnay was to the fore, showing sweet aromas of flowers, apricot and vine blossom. The curves for the yeast fermentations showed a relatively slow dynamic but there was no blockage at any time, nor any dubious smells due to a languid process. In fact, quite the opposite: the yeast appeared to take everything in its stride, seemingly happy to follow a leisurely pace which, in certain cases, has made for even greater finesse and innate complexity.

These profiles have been maintained as they should be in the wines but thanks to maturing and then bottle ageing, their complex, subtle character has been enhanced. On the palate they display an even, mouthwatering acidity throughout the tasting



but it is free of the puckering edge found in some vintages, as in 2004. They have a delicate, mineral, slightly spicy finish that is the hallmark of Chablis's unmistakable breed.

Comparing one vintage with another is always a risky business –a wine lover's life goes on the line! Even so, though the 2005s are showing more variation than the 2002 vintage, which overall displays a consistent profile, some of the 2005 wines should reach the same heights at least as in 2002, which remains the outstanding year.



ANNEXE

THE ORIGINS OF CHABLIS AND ITS WINES

The origins of the village of Chablis and its wines date back to Roman times. The name itself derives from Celtic words meaning the “rope over a ford”.

In 510, the Christian King Sigismond founded a small monastery dedicated to Saint Loup and throughout the Middle Ages the village gradually grew up around it. In the 9th century, Benedictine monks from Saint Martin’s Abbey at Tours, fleeing from the Viking invasion that pushed up the Loire Valley, settled in Chablis. The founding of the Cistercian abbey at Pontigny, not far from Chablis, at the beginning of the 12th century was also to prove of major importance for the expansion and reputation of the vineyards here. Over the years, both of these orders became large landholders, with vineyards featuring in the bequests left to them.

Within a few decades, the renown of Chablis wines spread beyond Auxerre and the Yonne area. The monks worked hard at the meticulous task of matching the Chardonnay grape to the Chablis terroirs. They were also the driving force in organising the sale of the wines which were exported, notably to England. At the same period Chablis featured on the tables of the French kings. From the medieval period down to the Renaissance, the arts of the table became ever more refined and wines from Chablis accompanied the finest delicacies. The 17th and 18th centuries were also to prove prosperous for the Chablis winegrowers as improvements in transport led to greater international trade across Europe.

A brutal end came to this expansion at the end of the 19th century when the phylloxera beetle and mildew epidemics destroyed the vineyards. Everything had to be started up again from scratch. Reclaiming suitable land, replanting the vines: the winegrowers found a solution thanks to grafting Chardonnay onto resistant rootstock. Chablis wines once again experienced boom years as they acquired an international reputation that made of them the standard-bearers for the whole of Burgundy. In England, America, in Northern Europe and Russia Chablis became the hallmark for great dry white wines. The strong export market enabled the growers to extend the vineyards which now benefit from modern viticultural techniques and enhanced methods of protection against spring frosts.



SITUATION

Situated in Northern Burgundy at about twenty kilometres from Auxerre, Chablis is a village of some 2,500 inhabitants.

Genuine Chablis is produced around Chablis and the other 19 villages and hamlets that together make up the Chablis appellation vineyards. As with all the great Burgundy whites, the single grape variety is Chardonnay. The vines grow on hillsides whose underlying subsoil is formed of alternating levels of marl and marly limestone, the celebrated Kimmeridgian geological strata. The vineyards spread out on both sides of the Serein River which cuts through the landscape.

To get the best view of the vineyards that are cultivated as carefully as any garden plot, one should climb up the slopes surrounding the village, on the renowned Grand Crus Hill. From the small wood on the plot of Les Clos there is a panoramic view out over the vineyards. On the hillside in the foreground are the vineyards producing the seven Grand Crus, the finest of Chablis's great wines. From here numerous footpaths lead out into the vines which it is a pleasure to explore before an encounter with the wines.

THE VINEYARDS

The Chablis vineyards cover 4,700 hectares currently in production. This terroir has been carefully mapped by France's INAO –the National Institute for Appellation Wines- which has identified four different appellations:

- Petit Chablis, occupying 713 hectares (some 1,750 acres), harvested mainly on the upper plateaux.
- Chablis, occupying 3,126 hectares (some 7,800 acres) on hillsides.
- Chablis Premier Cru, occupying 762 hectares (some 1,830 acres) on slopes with a mainly south-east or south-west exposure.
- Chablis Grand Cru, , occupying 101 hectares (some 250 acres), harvested on the right bank of the River Serein at Chablis itself from slopes with a mainly south-west exposure.

Chablis's unique character derives from the subsoil. Its geological history begins with the formation of the great Parisian Basin when deposits of a marine sediment filled up a slight depression during the Primary era. A succession of seas laid down progressively more deposits and the depression expanded into a vast sedimentary basin. The special feature of this geological ensemble is its structure, described as a "pile of plates" due to the different levels of strata superimposed the one on the other. The geological periods involved are the:

- Kimmeridgian (146-141 million years ago), displaying alternating levels of marl and marly limestone. This is the terroir of the Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru and



Chablis Grand Cru wines,

- Portlandian, (141-135 million years ago), forming the terroir of the Petit Chablis. The wines reflect this terroir with an outstanding mineral edge, remarkably fine aromas and unrivalled clarity.

The climate at Chablis is continental, the four seasons clearly distinguished: severe winters, frosty springs, hot summers and autumns that provide optimal conditions for the ripening of the grapes.



ANNEXE

First impressions of the 2006 vintage

2006 will go down as the year of extremes, as the weather oscillated between severe lack and then excess.

In particular, the hot, dry spells in June and July made the vines suffer, resulting in poor fruit set and irregular bunches. For quite some time the ever-present spectre of 2003 hung about the Chablis vineyards. But then a cold wet August brought an about-turn that first of all benefited the vines until the heavy rains gave rise to yet further worries. But come September and glorious sun happily put paid to a lousy August.

This exceptional weather pattern resulted in an early harvest date, mid-September. In a rare, possibly unique, occurrence, picking began in the Chablis area one week before the Côte d'Or.

Indeed, 2006 will go down as the vintage of extremes. But old wisdom has it, and this we should not lose from sight, that great wines come in years of balanced conditions, when a benevolent nature oversees the whole growing season, tending the grapes, as it were, until they gradually attain optimal ripeness.

So is the 2006 vintage to be the exception that proves the rule? Despite the prevailing extremes, the sugar/acids balance is really there. Tastings have revealed a crisp fruitiness. 2006 is soft and enticing, particularly in the regional appellations and the Petit Chablis wines. A lightly spiced hint of pear rounds out the more complex pallet of aromas in the Premiers and Grands Crus, with some wines already mouthwateringly developed. Such impressions of maturity don't mask the surprising acidity which comes as a reassurance after the harvest forecasts and lab analyses.

But let us not forget that balance has the innate potential to vary; so La Chablisienne maintains a rigorously planned programme of tastings to monitor the hazards of malolactic fermentation.

Successful fermentations have laid the foundations of the 2006 vintage. The maturing



stages will be equally fundamental, with the guideline being to reveal and maintain the tautness and vivacity in the wines so that the softness of these 2006s does not come across as something flabby.

And here again La Chablisienne will be able to count on one of its great strengths: the blending. Thanks to the member winegrowers whose estates cover all the Chablis terroirs, our capacity for blending is unique and widely envied. Will it enable us to make of a good year a great vintage? See this page in a few months time...



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