

Le Rocher des Violettes

Montlouis



"Across the river from Vouvray, the tiny appellation of Montlouis has been home to one of the most amazing and exciting wine revivals of modern France, and at least three Montlouis growers--Blot, Chidaine, and Xavier Weisskopf (of Rocher des Violettes)--are challenging the local qualitative pre-eminence of Vouvray."

David Schildknecht, The Wine Advocate #172

"I'd like to introduce you to one of the future stars of French viticulture: Xavier Weisskopf, whose first vintage was 2005. Born in Picardy, in northern France in 1979, Weisskopf studied viticulture and enology in Chablis and Beaune, then worked for Louis Barruol (Chateau St. Cosme) in Gigondas from 2001 to 2004 before creating his own winery in 2005. He wanted to make great white wine, felt the southern Rhone was too warm for the style of wines he wanted to make, realized vineyard land in Burgundy too expensive, and settled for the Loire the freshness of whose wines he admired and he found vines on slopes overlooking the Cher as well as splendid 15th century tuffeau cellars not far from Amboise.

They consisted of 7 hectares of chenin , 2 of red, including 1.5 hectares of cot (some of which were planted in 1891) and 50 ares of sauvignon blanc. Basically abandoned by two elderly vigneron, the vineyards were a jungle of ankle-spraining weeds and needed almost complete restructuring. Weisskopf chose to put his vines back into shape organically. Harvest is by hand, by successive passes through the vineyards; Weisskopf uses indigenous yeasts and ferments 90% of his wines in new or newish barrels, the rest in tank. (At first, he used Burgundy barrels purchased from Marc Colin but, after deciding they made the wines too 'oaky,' he has switched to 500 litre barrels.) Counting his Touraine AOCs and his Vin de Pays, he makes 11 cuvees, depending on the vintage."

Jacqueline Friedrich, www.jacquelinefriedrich.com (October 1, 2009)
author of the book *Guide to the Loire*

2009 Montlouis “Cuvée Borderies” (demi-sec)

“Xavier Weisskopf has essayed from vines planted in 1922 a 2009 Montlouis Cuvée Borderies that mingles rich nuttiness and ripe quince and melons with distinctly alkaline, chalky notes. A faint hint from the barrel is nicely integrated and parallels a Central Loire Chenin-typical hint of snuffed candle wick smokiness. Succulent notes of citrus serve to render the long, subtly bitter finish unusually refreshing for this vintage, and the wine’s hint of sweetness is well-judged though not hidden and consistent with considerable transparency to mineral nuance.”

90 points– David Schildknecht, eRobertParker.com #190 (August 2010)

“Few American consumers will recognize the appellation of Montlouis-sur-Loire, but nobody who tastes this wine will forget it.”

91 points– Michael Franz, winereviewonline.com (November 9, 2010)

2008 Montlouis Sec “Cuvée Touche Mitaine”

“This is just about as crisp and intense a rendering of Chenin Blanc as you’re likely to find. It shows subtle aromatic notes of honey and ripe melon, and delicate flavors that echo these same notes, but then the driving acidity takes over totally, with citrus and tart apple notes eclipsing all of the riper flavors sensations. Loire Chenins are rarely finished dry due to the intensity of their structure, but this is a dry one with amazing definition and cut.”

89 points– Michael Franz, winereviewonline.com (November 9, 2010)

The following has also reviewed this wine:

2007 Montlouis Sec “Cuvée Touche Mitaine”: 91 points– Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer’s International Wine Cellar (May/June 2010)

2007 Montlouis Sec “Cuvée Negrette”

91 points– James Molesworth, The Wine Spectator Insider (June 23, 2010)

2005 Montlouis Sec “Cuvée Negrette”

92 points– David Schildknecht, The Wine Advocate #172

Pétillant Originel

“Oh-so-dry, creamy, chalky, saline, with lemon accents. It made me think of Champagne from the Côtes des Blancs. I couldn’t -- and didn’t -- stop drinking it.”

Jacqueline Friedrich, November 10, 2010