

DOMAINE DES BAUMARD

The estate in Rochefort-Sur-Loire has been in the family since 1634, playing a key role in the history and development of Loire Valley wines.



Savennières 2017

Loire Valley, France

ESTATE

Located in the town of Rochefort-Sur-Loire in the Anjou, Domaine des Baumard owns 110 acres of the best vineyards in the Anjou, producing some of the finest examples of Chenin Blanc in the world. Jean Baumard and now his son, Florent, are universally regarded as the finest winemakers in the appellation. From their bone-dry and mineral chiseled Savennières to their gloriously sweet Quarts de Chaume, theirs are among the most unique, rewarding, and long-lived white wines in the world.

WINE

Domaine des Baumard's Savennières are among the finest examples of dry Chenin in the world. They offer piercing minerality offset by a deep ripeness, framing distinct flavors of stone fruits, spice and honey. They offer exquisite pleasure when drunk young, but most vintages will age effortlessly, transforming into a rich and complex maturity. These are special wines, appreciated at the most basic level, and revered by the most knowledgeable.

VINEYARD

Soils: Sourced predominantly from their 15-acre Clos Sainte Yves vineyard between the Clos du Papillon and Roche aux Moines, the South/Southeast facing vineyards are planted on schistous volcanic debris mixed with sandstone and granite, imparting a strong, intensely original minerality.

Farming: Average yields are kept well below the permitted levels of any dry French white wines; the resulting wines have stunning concentration and perfume. In an average year yields can range from the absurdly low 30 hl/ha to the merely very low 50 hl/ha. The combination of this concentration with the naturally high acidity of the Chenin Blanc grape results in wines capable of lasting and improving for decades.

WINEMAKING

Variety: 100% Chenin Blanc

Fermentation: In stainless steel tanks at low temperatures on their lees

Aging: months, entirely in stainless steel, allowing for a purer expression of site

Alcohol: 13.5%

VINTAGE

2017 should have been a perfect vintage, with abundant summer sunshine and a mild, dry autumn but, as in 2016, April frosts decimated the young crop, reducing the potential yield in Savennières by about 80%. Baumard's Clos des Papillon vineyard produced no fruit in 2017. Fortunately, the tiny crop in the estate's Clos St.-Yves vineyard produced was of terrific quality, resulting in a lithe, supple wine of great transparency and expression. Unlike many vintages here, the 2017 Savennières is delightful and open now, but will repay careful cellaring over the medium term.

JEB DUNNUCK

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The 2017 Savennières from Baumard is outstanding, offering pretty notes of golden apples, pears, hazelnuts, wet stones, and a touch of brioche. Nicely textured, medium-bodied, and beautifully balanced on the palate, it has a remarkable sense of purity and precision and is a joy to drink. Despite the upfront appeal, I suspect it will evolve for a solid decade in cold cellars. -J.D., 11/2020