Amoreau family
1610
Winemakers since

The vine leaf

- from the Hill of Wonders -

#26
NOV. 2024

EDITORIAL

AN ETERNAL RECURRENCE

According to Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie in *History of Climate Since the Year 1000*, published by Flammarion in 1967 : in 1132 in Alsace, the springs dried up and the streams ran dry. The Rhine could even be crossed on foot, and in 1152, the heat was so intense that eggs could be cooked in the sand !

In 1276 and 1277 in France, the oat and rye harvest was completely destroyed by the heat. In 1303 and 1304, the Seine, Loire, Rhine, and Danube could be crossed on foot. In 1393 and 1394, a large number of animals died and the harvests were ruined due to the heat.

In 1538, 1539, 1540, and 1541, European rivers were literally dried up. In 1718, there was no rain between April and October. The harvests were scorched, the rivers dried up, and theaters were closed in Paris by order of the Prefect of Police, due to excessive temperatures. In 1835, the Seine was almost dry...

But today, we are witnessing a new phenomenon : for two years, an excess of humidity, combined with excessive heat, gives us the impression of a tropical climate. An abundance of rain is disrupting our countryside and villages. We are witnessing a disruption of the seasons. I am worried, but also confident for future generations. I believe they will have the ability to adapt as our ancestors did.

Jean-Pierre Amoreau

Château le Puy
33570 SAINT-CIBARD
Tél. : 05 57 40 61 82
contact@familleamoreau.com
www.chateau-le-puy.com

A FAMILY OF WINEGROWERS

It was Easter vacation, and we were off to do an Easter egg hunt as a family. One night, my brother woke me up because he heard some strange noises. Convinced that I could handle any situation, I ventured downstairs, my brother clinging to my pajamas. As soon as our bare feet touched the first step, we heard scratching and squeaking. Scared stiff, we froze. A new whimper shattered our courage and we raced back to our room, hiding under the covers. The next morning, under the amused gaze of my older sister who hadn't heard anything and thought our story was ridiculous, I asked Grandma if there was anything special about the cellar. She replied bluntly :

- I hope you didn't go in there, did you ?

And my sister added, snickering :

- Of course not, Grandma, we were scared.

- Well, you were right to be. It's Norbert, the ghost of the Mas family, you know, our neighbors in Pimpine. But don't worry, he won't hurt you.

And as we stared at her, wide-eyed, Grandma continued :

- Let me explain. Norbert, the ghost of the Mas family, no longer has a home. Since their house is being renovated, we decided to let him stay here until the work is done. Just leave him alone.

Needless to say, we spent the rest of our vacation avoiding the cellar. A few months later, we were excited to return to Saint-Cibard. But our joy was short-lived when Dad announced : *" Darn it, the Mas family hasn't finished their roof yet ! "*

Our blood ran cold. No roof meant Norbert... My sister Carole tried to reassure us, saying we just had to avoid the cellar. But we quickly forgot all about it when Grandma served her famous mashed potatoes. After playing in the garden, Grandma called us :

- So, kids, do you want some mashed potatoes for dinner ?

We all shouted yes.

- Well, then you'll have to go get some potatoes from the cellar, they won't jump down on their own !

Usually, we would have raced downstairs, but this time we were frozen.

- What's wrong, kids ?

After a moment, Carol said solemnly, *" Grandma, we know the ghost is still there. "*

- The ghost ? Oh, Norbert ! You kids will believe anything. There's no such thing as ghosts, and certainly no butter on a branch !

- But Grandma, you said...

- I know, I know... But in April, I didn't want you to go to the cellar because a fox had her babies there. And foxes are wild animals. I didn't want you to touch them, so I made up this ghost story. I didn't think it would work so well ! Now go get those potatoes and stop thinking about silly things !

We rushed downstairs, relieved and disappointed not to have seen the fox cubs. As I fell asleep, I thought maybe only the Little Prince could tame a fox. ■

Valerie Amoreau

To be continued...

LET'S TALK ABOUT *wine*

Aging : this is the period following fermentation during which the wine rests before bottling. For our red wines, this process lasts 24 months.

VINEYARD *calendar*

This year, we had the immense joy of welcoming two foals: *Opium*, son of *Unique*, born in March, and *Ojala*, born in June, son of *Dia*.

WEATHER *le Puy*

What a complicated year ! The weather conditions in 2024 were very variable over the first six months, with a lot of rain, especially in May, as well as two hailstorms with no significant impact. The summer was hot but short, followed by a rainy fall.

Wine for thought

« Life is too short to drink bad wine. »

Goethe

A WINE WITH A HISTORY

MARIE-CÉCILE 2023

Organoleptic sheet

. TASTING

Its lightly tinted robe, with golden hues, reflects the delicacy of its texture. The subtlety of its harmonious nose evokes hints of white flowers. On the palate, the 2023 Marie-Cécile surprises with the subtlety of its aromas, reminiscent of springtime notes. With great freshness, its finish also recalls the perfumes of pear or white peach. It will be enjoyed with seafood starters, or more daringly, with blue cheeses.

. ANALYSIS

Alcoholic strength	14.36 % vol
Sugars	0.3g/l
Total acidity	4.07 g/l
Volatile acidity	0.82 g/l
PH	3.32
Free sulphur	ND*
Total sulphur	ND*

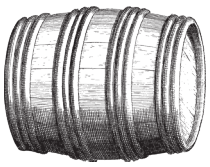
**Non-detectable*

A rare gem from le Puy

It may seem surprising to find white wine in the terroir of le Puy, a region now renowned for its red varietals. Yet, before the phylloxera crisis, this area was indeed famous for its white wines, often enjoyed sweet.

In the late 1990s, the Amoreau family sought to revive this tradition, focusing on producing a gastronomic dry white wine. Their dream became a reality in 1997 with the purchase of a small two-hectare plot of Sémillon, which remains their oldest parcel today, with vines averaging over 70 years old.

The first sulfur-free vintage of Marie-Cécile was produced in 2000. ■



What is dynamisation ?

For those who come to visit us at the estate, there's a particularly special moment during the property tour. When we pass through the wine cellar, we explain the principle of 'dynamization'. This process takes place during the aging of our sulfur-free wines (red, white, and rosé). Depending on the lunar calendar and the choices made by the Amoreau family winemakers, the experimented barrels are dynamized at regular intervals. This involves plunging a wooden stick through the bunghole and then vigorously stirring the wine in one direction for several seconds, creating a vortex of energy. Then, it is stirred in the opposite direction to 'break' the dynamic and spread this energy throughout the barrel. This method, based on observations and empirical experiences conducted by the family, highlights its protective virtues against oxidation for our sulfur-free wines. It also brings a silkier 'mouthfeel', marking a real difference compared to undynamized wines. ■

A unique winegrowing ecosystem

Since 1610, le Puy has cultivated its vines in perfect harmony with nature. Our organic farming practices, passed down through generations, have transformed our estate into a true sanctuary of biodiversity. Here, the vines are not isolated but integrated into a complex network of symbioses comprising meadows, ponds, and a diverse fauna.

A vine at the heart of nature

Our vines are not merely surrounded by farmland ; they are an integral part of it. Meadows, for instance, harbor a multitude of pollinating insects essential to the health of crops. Bees, in particular, play a crucial role in pollinating our vegetable garden and wild flowers, thus promoting biodiversity and soil health.

Wildlife : indispensable partners

The animals on our estate are not mere ornaments. Cows and sheeps maintain our meadows, fertilize the soil, and contribute to a natural balance. Horses, used for vineyard work, preserve the soil structure. Insects such as ladybugs and lacewings naturally regulate pest populations.

A vegetable garden and truffle grove : diversity at work

Our vegetable garden, carefully tended and pollinated by bees, provides fresh produce and contributes to the estate's biodiversity. The truffle grove, meanwhile, is a symbol of the harmony between man and nature. Truffle oaks coexist with the vines, creating a rich and complex ecosystem.

A symbiosis serving sustainability

At le Puy, every element, from bees to horses, meadows to ponds, is a vital piece of a complex puzzle. This holistic approach allows us to produce exceptional wines while preserving the environment. The health of the vineyard is intrinsically linked to the health of the overall ecosystem. By cultivating our vines at the heart of a rich and diverse environment, Le Puy perpetuates a centuries-old tradition while looking to the future with a deep respect for nature. Here, nature is not merely a backdrop; it is the beating heart of everything we do.

In summary, le Puy is much more than just a vineyard. It is a true open-air laboratory where man and nature coexist in perfect harmony. This approach, based on respect for the environment and biodiversity, guarantees the production of unique and emotional wines and ensures the sustainability of the estate for future generations.

Adrien Amoreau

AGENDA

November 25, 2024 : we will be exhibiting at the essential 'Le Vin de Mes amis' wine fair in Paris.

January 26-27, 2025 : we will be participating in the 'Le Vin de Mes Amis' fair in Montpellier this time.

February 1-2, 2025 : we will be heading to the Madavin fair for the 'Grenier Saint Jean' meeting in Angers.

THE LE PUY FIGURE

30

It has now been 30 years since the birth of Barthélemy, our gastronomic wine made without added sulfites and manually dynamised.

Philosophy

IT FEELS BETTER WHEN YOU SAY IT OUT LOUD

Wine has always been a source of inspiration in human culture throughout the centuries. Many famous authors have been interested in it. And it is difficult to choose, as these authors have managed to philosophize seriously or humorously on this subject. This year, I have chosen a small anthology of quotes about wine that I hope will give you pleasure to read and perhaps even a few smiles:

Wine is the milk of old men - **Plato**
Pour them good wine, they will make you good laws - **Michel de Montaigne**
Good food and good wine, that is paradise on earth - **Henri IV**
Wine is proof that God loves us and loves to see us happy - **Benjamin Franklin**
God made only water, but man made wine - **Victor Hugo**
To drink wine is to drink genius - **Charles Baudelaire**
There is more philosophy in a bottle of wine than in all books - **Louis Pasteur**
To know the origin and quality of a wine, it is not necessary to drink the entire barrel - **Oscar Wilde**
When it comes to wine, one must know how to put pleasure before prestige - **Paul Claudel**
When the wine is drawn, it must be drunk, especially if it is good - **Marcel Pagnol**
He who knows how to taste no longer drinks wine, but tastes its sweet secrets - **Salvador Dali**
A glass of wine is like a light dress, a spring flower, it is the ray of sunshine that comes to brighten life - **Christian Dior**
I have never drunk wine to excess, besides, I don't even know where it is - **Pierre Desproges**

Of course, wine also inspires the winemakers of le Puy. It is at the heart of our lives, it accompanies us every day. It brings us happiness, a happiness that we try to share with you.■

Pascal Amoreau

Method

ALTIUS, FORTIUS

No one can reasonably deny climate change anymore. Winemakers are witnessing its negative effects every year: increased alcohol levels, decreased acidity, changes in aromas, vulnerability to spring frosts, etc. In order to constantly innovate and seek sustainable solutions for future generations, we have chosen to conduct an experimental plot in two ways: the planting of « forgotten » grape varieties and the cultivation of vines on pergolas.

Pergola techniques have been used since antiquity. The principle is to train the vine on a high structure, which allows it to be cultivated at a height. The Romans grew vines on trellises, arbors, or even trees, which served as support for the development of the vine. Italy still uses this method extensively, although metal or concrete structures have replaced wood. We have made several trips to Italy to visit the best « producers » to study this process before adapting it to our specific needs. Thus, since 2021, the Pistre plot has been worked for a development at a height of two meters. In this way, the fruit is found under a canopy of foliage that limits excessive sunshine. This experiment will allow us to evaluate resistance to diseases, the homogeneity of ripening, and the adaptability of certain grape varieties to this method.■

Steven Hewison

WHERE SHALL WE DINE IN AMSTERDAM ?

Hotel de Goudfazant, Aambeeldstraat 10 H
www.hoteldegoudfazant.nl
Café Modern, Meidoornweg 2
www. modernamsterdam.nl
Bar Centraal, Ten Katestraat 6
www. barcentraal.nl
Café-Restaurant Amsterdam, Watertorenplein 6
www. cradam.nl
Flore (Hotel de l'Europe)
www. restaurantflore.nl
Nazka, Van Woustraat
www. nazka.nu
De Willem, Haarlemmerplein 58
www.de-willem.nl
Portfolio, Prinsestraat 36 Den Haag (La Haye)
www.portfolio-restaurant.nl
Gitane, Jan Pieter Heijestraat 146
www.restaurantgitane.nl
GlouGlou, 2e Van der Helstraat 3
www.glouglou.nl

RECIPE

Poached Eggs in Wine Sauce

4 extra-fresh eggs, 50 cl Emilien wine
150g smoked bacon lardons
1 onion, 1 shallot, 1 clove garlic
1 small carrot, 1 celery stalk
A handful of button mushrooms
2 slices of white bread
80g butter, 1 tablespoon flour
2 tablespoons vinegar, salt and pepper

Bring the eggs and butter to room temperature at least an hour before starting. Finely chop the onion, shallot, carrot, and celery. Sauté the diced mushrooms in butter until tender. Remove from heat and set aside. Cook the bacon lardons in the same pan until crispy. Set aside. Reduce the wine: In a saucepan, bring the wine to a boil to evaporate the alcohol. Reduce heat and add the chopped vegetables. Simmer until the liquid has reduced by half. In a bowl, whisk together the flour and 50g of butter. Add the butter-flour mixture to the reduced wine and whisk until smooth. Cook for a few more minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the mushrooms and bacon. Keep warm. Cut the bread into cubes and toast in the remaining butter until golden brown. Keep warm. Bring a saucepan of water to a simmer with the vinegar. Crack an egg into a small bowl and gently slide it into the simmering water. Cook for 3 minutes, then remove with a slotted spoon and place on a paper towel-lined plate. Repeat with the remaining eggs. Trim any excess white to create a neat shape. Divide the wine sauce among warmed plates. Place a poached egg in the center of each plate. Top with toasted bread cubes, season with salt and pepper, and serve immediately.

Valérie Amoreau

Like, share and comment your le Puy moments ***@chateaulepuy***