

VEUVE FOURNY & FILS

MONTS DE VERTUS, BLANC DE BLANCS 2009 EXTRA BRUT

The House of Emmanuel and Charles Fourny is full of virtues, as demonstrated with this special cuvée produced only from old vineyards.

Why is this cuvée currently so important?

Because it is both new and ancient ... It has been produced for more than sixty years, but we have recently changed its name, specifically for this 2009 Vintage. It is in fact a reference to the qualities of our terroir around Vertus which flows in our blood. I believe we are the House which produces the purest Vertus champagnes, as we own 90 % of our vineyards and all our other supplies from this village! We have endeavoured to insist on its origins and claim our faithfulness in the qualities of our village of Vertus.

Tell us about this terroir...

First of all, Vertus is the only village in the Côte des Blancs to enjoy hillsides facing south and south-east. They yield grapes which are more opulent than elsewhere, and more powerful than in Le Mesnil or Cramant, for instance. Then, the plots in the middle of the hillsides, on overlying chalk, specially selected for this cuvée, also produce the most interesting and purest salty notes.

More precisely, what is the origin of these grapes?

They come from our oldest vineyards located on mid-slopes. We have kept our old plots: some were even planted by

our grandfather, massal selections dating back to the fifties. They are carefully looked after, we are fully aware of the qualities of the grapes in our hands, the link between the land and the wines.

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What are your growth and winemaking methods for this champagne?

In the late nineties, we carried out organic and biodynamic tests. Today, we have come to a kind of synthesis: we only treat our plants against mildew, as we are opposed to using copper. We don't use fertilizers and practically no more

weed-killers. We are respectful of our land and remain very watchful. We only use sulphites once at harvest time. In our cellars, the key point is a long period on lees. We leave this wine in its own vats. This is of course the case for this wine, but unlike the other cuvées in our range, this one is always kept in stainless steel vats. It is the only champagne in the House which never comes in contact with wood.

How would you define this 2009 vintage?

It is ripe, rich and generous, a perfect match between opulence and tension. The first notes, apricot and toast, very pastry-like, are followed by citrus, liquorice and spices, indicators of chalk in my opinion.

A last question, what is so specific about this Vertus chardonnay?

What we are looking for is balanced fruit and fullness, an ample and rich attack followed by a neat and salty finale. This is the pattern we strive for in each of our champagnes. This one is no exception. To reach this goal, the vineyards have to be carefully looked after and the date of the harvest precisely selected. Without nice grapes, it is impossible to obtain such a neat and fine opulence.

VÉRONIQUE RAISIN

