

VINTAGE CHAMPAGNES FROM 1919-2019

VEUVE FOURNY CHAMPAGNE

In Vertus, at the Fourny brothers', we sublimate the boundary of the côte des Blancs vintages through the nature of the plot, the location and bespoke vinification.

It's like orange peel, as well as lemon zest, it's the pale yellow honeysuckle pistil and in the centre it's emerald, then a little after lemon again, then again orange. On the old Geological Mining Research Bureau map of the Vertus terroir, the soils show up in colours ranging from those of Mesnil-sur-Oger to Bergères in the south of the côte des Blancs. Charles and Emmanuel, the Fourny brothers, scrutinized them, dug some soil pits and in 1994 decided that the Veuve Fourny house in Vertus would take a new turn.

Emmanuel : "The common classification of the scale of vintages seemed simplified to us, one could assume that in Vertus there are three villages in one. All the same each tank has a different taste ! The 29 ares of our enclosed vineyard Faubourg Notre Dame served as a starting point for our thoughts on plots". Charles : "Look at the map, the yellow represents the rendzines, a brown chalky limestone soil, and there, this orangy yellow is a chalky, fragmented topsoil, the spring green represents the deep soils, the correlation with the juice in the cellar is obvious. The chalky topsoil brings a salinity and well-balanced body, the deep zone gives the boldness ending with a tanginess."

We are customising the development of the winery to group together, as accurately as possible, the 40 plots into families ; the most accurate tool to separate is the barrel. Written in chalk on the boards you can see the names of the plots, the majority of which are on chalky soil : Les Monts Ferré and Le Mont Ferré, Les Faucherêts, La Justice, Les Barillées, luck would have it that this plain was chosen, and then Pingue-Mouche and Le Mont de Vroye on a chalky slope ; finally in the areas with an average depth, Les Tarrates, Les Gilottes, Les Lyonnais, Les Ferlandes. Charles Fourny : "Before, we used to fill the tanks on 'harvest day', you could read on the side first day Tank, second day ...". Emmanuel Fourny : "Today we follow a fairly static path to maturity, the central zone first, the average depth



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« Three plots which go beyond each other, Les Monts Ferrés, Le Mont Ferré, and Les Barillées, the chalky topsoil on the plateau. The powerful taste of fruit at the start then the sapid and the saline which harmonize in the funnel. Perfect characteristics for a Vertus vintage »

areas next, then the chalky topsoil zones and finally the very high slopes near the forest where you can find chalk."

Within each territorial family, the maturity check determines the grape pickers' route : "We tirelessly taste the grapes, estimating the difference between the maturing of the tissue and the level of sugar. The plant takes eight days to make sugar, the skin and the pulp need this additional time. The aromatic scales are at 11°, sapidity and salinity are reached with the ripe fruit." Charles : "As for the côte des Blancs, our first Vertus vintage is paradoxical ; obviously it has been planted with chardonnay, but also with pinot noir which is rare. Thanks to our thought process regarding plots, for the last ten years or so we have discovered spaces with new freshness, dosing has decreased and gentle bitters are occurring."

Henceforth an overhaul seemed the logical path. Emmanuel : "The great fortune with Champagne is blending. However, you have to take on board the reality of the scales with the premiers crus and even the grands crus. An overhaul as with Burgundy wines would necessitate accuracy with the vinification. A difficult question covering a willingness and the practice of excellence."

Charles : "The sublimation of the terroirs stemming from inspiration, a sixth sense that the winegrower has."

At Veuve Fourny, it goes from writing to thinking like a winegrower, so elevated is the styling of these sensitive wines. Here we sublimate the boundary of the vintages through the nature of the plot, the location. Of course the source of the creation is the Clos Notre Dame, 29 ares that have been in the family since 1931 versus the house in the heart of Vertus, with 70-year-old vines, 29 ares of impetus, beginnings, faint wood, intense saline ripples, light creaminess, delicate yuzu aftertaste with a glowing, mineral undergrowth for 2009 whereas 1999 brings out the sculpted flower of a golden pastry perched on the vast open spaces of primeval oceans. ✨ JEAN-LUC BARDE

Emmanuel and Charles Fourny in their cellar.