

CHÂTEAU DE BÉRU (Béru, Chablis)



With Gaëlle Ribé, the vigneron of Château de Béru in the monopole of Clos de Béru

Among all the vineyards that I have had the pleasure of walking in France, the *Clos de Béru* in Chablis is perhaps the most profound. The Cistercian monks hand-built this walled, 4-hectare vineyard of *Clos de Béru* in the 13th century. You can still see the majestic limestone walls in the photo above. The monks already knew 700 years ago this *lieu-dit* gave compelling Chablis. To this day, the *Clos de Béru* remains *monopole*. This vineyard has been with the *Béru* family for over 400 years. Coming from Canada, where our country's birthday only goes back about 150 years, it is hard to wrap my mind around the origins of *Clos de Béru* and the French wine culture that has kept the *monopole* over the centuries. I knew I was in the presence of wine divinity. I just wanted to sit and weep in the *Clos de Béru*.

Today, young and dynamic Athénaïs de Béru took over the family domain from her parents and converted the family vineyards to organic farming in 2006 and to biodynamic in 2009. All her

Chablis, including the village wines, spend two winters in the icy chalky cellar, just the way it was done in the past. No short-cuts for this domain. It is my pleasure to introduce *Château de Bérù* in Chablis for the first time in our province.



CHABLIS 'TERROIRS de BÉRU' 2015
SPECULATIVE SKU: 224657 750ml 6 bottles/case
\$43.78 Wholesale/ \$ 51.00 Retail per bottle

A blend of various historical *lieux-dits* in *Chablis*. Hand-harvested grapes from each *lieu-dit* see spontaneous fermentation with ambient yeasts, like all of their wines. All the *lieux-dits* are in the village of *Bérù*. Then the separate parcels are blended and aged in neutral vessels for about eighteen month prior to bottling. Often told and seldom experienced *Chablis* characteristics of saline, iodine and mineral are abundant in this cuvée. Classy.

(Note: All Chateau de Beru wines are 6 bottles per case)



CHABLIS 'CÔTE AUX PRÊTRES' 2015
SPECULATIVE SKU: 126199 750ml 6 bottles/case
\$51.50 Wholesale/ \$60.00 Retail per bottle

Inimitable. Beautiful. Refined. This *lieu-dit* sits on the top a very windy hill that is composed of limestones. This vineyard somewhat looks like a lunar landscape because the vineyard has this strange outcropping of limestones pebbles everywhere with hardly any top soil. The taste of melted limestone is self-evident. Astonishing Chablis with bright future. '*Côte Aux Prêtres*' translates to 'Hill of the Priests'. The meanings of this *lieu-dit* refers to the nearby paths followed by pilgrims on their way from *Vézelay* to *Santiago de Compostela*. Can't separate the history from wine in Chablis. One of the most ravishing Chablis that I have ever tasted in my life.



CHABLIS 'VAUCOUPIN' PREMIER CRU 2015
SPECULATIVE SKU: 126196 750ml 6 bottles/case
\$76.70 Wholesale/ \$91.00 Retail per bottle

This Premier Cru is known for delicacy and elegance. This *Vaucoupin* has them in spades. Pure. Energetic. *Vaucoupin* is a geological marvel of a narrow strip of clay and limestone localized on the south/south-east slope of the *Chichée* plateau. It is so steep that a tractor cannot be used. So, a horse is used to till the land. *De Beru* family owns a mere 0.30 hectare. The wine is raise in neutral barrels for about eighteen month prior to bottling. Balanced. A wine of distinction. It will be even better with a few years in a cold cellar.

CHABLIS 'CLOS DE BERU' MONOPOLE 2014
SPECULATIVE SKU: 126191 750ml 6 bottles/case
\$81.58 Wholesale/ \$96.00 Retail per bottle



Harvested grapes, even before fermentation begins, already taste differently than grapes from any other vineyards of *Château de Bérù* – according to Athénaïs. The outcropping of limestone is so close to the surface that Athénaïs decided to use horse to till this vineyard. The wine is raised in 500 litre neutral barrels for about two years prior to bottling. Slowly shedding the time in the barrels and emerging to compelling *cru Chablis*. Composed. Regal. This has a long life ahead.

Curiously, this vineyard was not classified to higher category when the AOC declared the *Chablis* in 1938. Gaëlle Ribé, who is responsible for the vineyards and cellar, explained the *Chablis* total surface declined to about 500 hectares through much of the last century up to 1950's due to phylloxera and the two world wars. The market for Chablis was terrible back then. Today, *Chablis* is planted to over 4,000 hectares. With nearly no market for Chablis back then, the *De Bérù* family did not see the significance of applying for higher classification. Fittingly, the road that leads to *Clos de Beru* was and is named *Grande Rue*.



Clos de Bérú with Château de Bérú in the distance

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