

March 2023

DOMAINE DE LA PÉPIÈRE
(Nantes, Loire)



With Gwén Croix in the freshly ploughed Cllisson vineyard, where some vines are over 100 years.

One of the most rewarding and comforting events, when one is in the wine business for awhile, is to witness a successful transition from one generation to the next. Marc Ollivier, who started *Domaine de la Pépière* in the 1980's, has transitioned his domain to the next generation of Rémi Branger and Gwén Croix. Rémi was born and raised in the local village; Gwen had been working for another winery nearby, when both agreed to take over Marc's domain.

With the injection of youthful energy of Rémi and Gwén, the domain has taken on a leap of quality. The vineyards were already farmed organically when Marc was working. Now, Rémi and Gwén have introduced biodynamics. "*The vines are even healthier, which give healthier grapes*", Gwen spoke softly as we walked the vineyards. With extra pair of hands, there are more attention to the details in the cellars as well. Their wines have purity and energy that I associate with great *vignerons*. I weep with joy when I drink Gwén and Rémi wines. And I will never forget Marc Ollivier for agreeing to export wines to Ramona and I, who knew nothing about importing wines back in 2010. Monsieur Ollivier, you will live forever in our hearts.

DOMAINE DE LA PÉPIÈRE MUSCADET SÈVRE ET MAINE SUR LIE 2021

SKU: 157990 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$ 22.58 Wholesale/ \$ 29.00 Retail per bottle



Crisp, refreshing, and saline. Pure. This is a second shipment of this vintage. The grapes are hand-harvested, gently pressed, and fermented with natural yeasts, like all of the domain's wines. The fermented juice is then gently fed via gravity to the glass-lined vessels that are buried underground, where the temperature is exceptionally cool and constant. The lees are kept for about six months to add complexity prior to bottling. This *Muscadet* really captures the essence of great *Muscadet*.

(Note: The labels are not current vintages and are shown for illustration purposes only)

'LES GRAS MOUTONS' MUSCADET SÈVRE ET MAINE SUR LIE 2021

SKU: 520346 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$ 25.96 Wholesale/ \$ 34.00 Retail per bottle



Citrusy, crunchy, and minerally. I have a soft spot for this *Muscadet* as this has that compelling unique citrus note. Lovely. *Les Gras Moutons* comes from the vineyard whose subsoil consists of gneiss and foliated rock, which allows a good deep-rooting. The soil is clay-siliceous, and quite deep. The vineyard is planted at the top of a hill on a south-facing slope overlooking the river *Maine*.

This *Muscadet* sees about a year of lees-aging. Elegant and focused, this bottling always needs some time to show its best. *Les Gras Moutons* means fat sheep, which used to roam in the area when every *vigneron* used to have some livestock.

‘CLISSON’ COMMUNE CRU MUSCADET 2020
SKU: 199340 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$ 33.11 Wholesale/ \$ 43.00 Retail per bottle



Fresh. Elegant. Classy. It has been a while since we were sold out of this Muscadet. So, we are happy to received some of this new vintage. *Clisson* is one of the nine *Commune Crus* declared by AOC in 2011, where the minimum requirement of lees-aging is 18 months. *Domaine de la Pépière Clisson* sees about 24 to 30 months of lees aging, depends on a vintage. This extended lees-aging protects the wine, while giving this wine the extraordinary

depth and saline, mineral character. Harmonious and delicious. From the ~100 year old vines grown on clay over granitic subsoil. So pure.

‘CLISSON’ COMMUNE CRU MUSCADET (MAGNUMS) 2020
SKU: 421803 SPECULATIVE 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/case
\$ 72.60 Wholesale/ \$ 94.00 Retail per bottle

Life is short. Party with MAGNUMS!

‘MONNIÈRES-SAINT FIACRE’ COMMUNE CRU MUSCADET 2019
SKU: 040136 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$ 33.11 Wholesale/ \$ 43.00 Retail per bottle



This *Commune Cru Muscadet* sees about 36 to 40 months on its lees, depending on a vintage, which gives this wine complexity that is rare. This is a new vintage. All *commune crus* are aged in the cellar from the originating *commune cru* village. So, when I taste *commune crus* with Gwén at the domain, we are driving to the various cellars in each *commune cru*, which is exceptionally educational for me. The vines come from a tiny

parcel that consists of gneiss covered by a fine top-soil of sandy limestone. This parcel is constantly windy, which may explain the abundance of freshness and salinity, where Atlantic Ocean is just a few kilometers away.

‘MONNIÈRES-SAINT FIACRE’ COMMUNE CRU MUSCADET (MAGNUMS) 2019
SKU: 421798 SPECULATIVE 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/case
\$ 72.60 Wholesale/ \$ 94.00 Retail per bottle

Slow down, right down, and drink some MAGNUMS over a nice long dinner with friends and family, just like the French *vignerons* do.

'GORGES' CRU MUSCADET SÈVRE ET MAINE 2019
SPECULATIVE SKU: 237391 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$ 33.11 Wholesale/ \$ 43.00 Retail per bottle

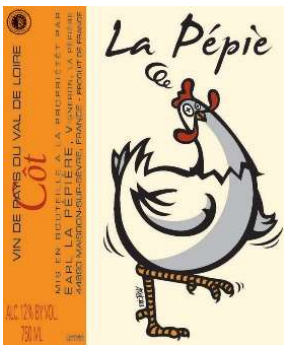


Elegant. Fresh and minerally with a hint of fennel, which is unique to this *Cru*. This is a new vintage. *Gorges Cru* sees about 36 to 42 months of lees-aging. This extended lees-aging gives *Gorges* complex, marrowy taste. The vineyard is located at the top of plateau, consisting of gabbro rocks. The soils are deep, characterized by the presence of weathering quartz clay. From a tiny parcel is about two hectares and the vines are over 70 years old. *Commune Cru Muscadets* are utterly unique in a world that is obsessed with releasing wines early to make money. Open a bottle, pour a glass, and slow down, preferably with a bowl of steaming mussels and crusty baguette.

'GORGES' COMMUNE CRU MUSCADET (MAGNUMS) 2019
SKU: 379342 SPECULATIVE 1.5 Litre 6 bottles/case
\$ 72.60 Wholesale/ \$ 94.00 Retail per bottle

Muscadets are so good value that even the MAGNUM prices are reasonable.

LA PÉPIÈ CÔT 2021
SKU: 839001 SPECULATIVE 750 ml 12 bottles/case
\$21.77 Wholesale / \$28.00 Retail per bottle



A taste that recalls bygone era of Petit Bordeaux, when the appellation used to make fresh, low-alcohol, and minerally reds that were easy-drinking and affordable. Free-ran juice of *Côt* (also known as Malbec) is fermented with ambient yeasts. For this vintage, a dash of Merlot (about 10%) was added, which adds a hint of spices. *Élevage* is in neutral vats. Clocking in at 11.5% alcohol, this wine goes down easy. What value. The *Côt* cuttings are from Laurent Saillard's vineyard that was planted in 1885 and propagated using *selection massale*, which is a lot of work. Not having any luck finding good country reds in the area, Marc Ollivier (now retired) planted some Bordeaux varietals on a steep south-facing slopes for his personal drinking. I feel lucky to receive some as the production is tiny. Drink slightly chilled.





With Rémi and Gwén tasting a new vintage. I love their humble tasting room. It will live forever in my memory.