

Winemaker : Jean-Bernard Métais

Region: Loire

Location: Courdemanche



Silex

Chenin Blanc Sec

DOMAINE METAIS NAGATA



Appellation: Vin de France

Varietals: 100% Chenin Blanc

Farming: Organic

Age of the vines: Majority of domaine vines planted in 1903. Vine age varies by parcel; plantings date to 1903, 1933, 1947, and 1984.

Vineyard/Terroir: Gentle, south-facing slope of soils scattered with pebbles of microcrystalline quartz. The soil is pure Jasnières — clay, limestone, and flint over chalky tuffeau.

Vinification: Only produced 5-6 times per decade, this cuvée is hand-harvested with two sortings: one in the vineyard and one in the cellar. Grapes with no botrytis are selected. Matured on fine lees for 12-14 months in 400L oak barrels.

About the winemaker:

Jean-Bernard Métais is an unusual figure in French wine. Known internationally as a sculptor whose monumental works are exhibited from Le Mans to Seoul, he is also the 20th generation of his family to tend vineyards in Jasnières. In 1976, upon finishing his studies at Beaux-Arts de Paris, Jean-Bernard returned to Courdemanche and began vinifying the family vines — a lineage that dates back to the 16th century.

Jean-Bernard works alongside his wife, Keiko Nagata, and their children Akito and Sola Métais-Nagata, who have recently joined as the twenty-first generation. Together, the family runs the domaine in rare harmony, each bringing their own sensitivity to the wines. The Métais family story is remarkable even in a region steeped in history: in 1740, a royal decree from Louis XV granted them the right to export their wines.

The cellar itself reflects the history of winemaking in France during modern times. For example, some chambers were used to hide wine from occupying forces during the First and Second World Wars. Walking through the cellar, one sees the vineyard from the inside-out. The walls and ceiling are gorging with crystals of mineral clay and silica with fossils embedded on every surface. Bottles from 1834, 1870, 1921, and 1949 still rest here in perfect condition.