

DOMAINE LAROCHE VINEYARDS



The vineyards of Domaine Laroche are spread out across the entire region of Chablis, located in the northernmost section of Burgundy, 150 kilometers (93 miles) south of Paris, between Champagne and the Côte d’Or.

Chardonnay is a vigorous variety that therefore requires careful fruit-quantity control. The Domaine Laroche philosophy relies on one-man plots, meaning that one person is wholly responsible for the care of a single vineyard parcel, from the pruning, soil conditioning and control of yields to the sorting of the harvest.



Springtime frost, less frequent now with climate change, remains a constant risk that conditions the viticulture. Thus, pruning takes place twice, in order to prevent early budburst that would expose the plants to an April or May frost, as well as to shape the vines and control yields. Domaine Laroche implements a systematic debudding in order to space the branches, ventilate the grapes and control yields. This work is completed by a green harvest if the quantity of grapes is excessive.

Leaf removal allows for maximum sun exposure, enabling better and more even ripening of the grapes. The soil is plowed in order to allow the roots to develop under optimal conditions. Crops are also planted for aeration of the soil, and controlled grass-seeding is used to regulate drainage and protect the soil wildlife. Vineyard irrigation is not permitted in Chablis.



The area’s unique Kimmeridgian soil contains just the right amount of limestone to impart the mineral characteristics that have become so coveted in Chablis wines. This soil is also composed of the correct levels of gravel necessary for good drainage and a substratum of clay to preserve enough water for the health of the vines. Good orientation towards the sun, in a region that seldom suffers from excessive heat, also contributes to the excellent balance of these wines.

Vine diversity is preserved through Domaine Laroche’s massal selection. Massal selection is the visual selection and propagation of robust vines which are believed to have a diverse genetic base. Domaine Laroche benefits from exceptional plant diversity, as the viticultural team systematically selects and keeps the best vines to produce younger plants.



The aromatic diversity coming from older vines explains the wide range of aromas displayed in Domaine Laroche wines. In order to achieve this complexity, grapes are tasted before harvesting to control the level of “aromatic ripeness” that appears after the physiological ripeness is measured in the laboratory.

Domaine Laroche’s vineyards are currently undergoing conversion to organic agriculture. In Burgundy, only 6 percent of the producers employ this environmentally conscious approach.

L A R O C H E

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Domaine Laroche owns a total of nearly 100 hectares (247.11 acres) in the Chablis appellation, including 6 hectares (14.83 acres) of grands crus, 29.66 hectares (73.29 acres) of premiers crus, 63.02 hectares (155.72 acres) of Chablis, plus 2.25 hectares (5.56 acres) of Petit Chablis.

GRANDS CRUS

One of the largest owners of grand cru vineyards in Chablis, Domaine Laroche's holdings consist of 6 hectares (14.83 acres) and three terroirs on different "climats," or "specific vineyard sites," dedicated to grands crus. The vineyards are: Les Blanchots, Les Bouguerots and Les Clos. La Réserve de l'Obédience, the domaine's most acclaimed wine, is a special blend from separate plots of Les Blanchots, for which Domaine Laroche's grand cru wines are best known.



PREMIERS CRUS

29.66 hectares (73.29 acres) with 40 different terrains in the most famous premiers crus: Vaudevey, Vaillons, Beauroy, Montmains, Fourneau, Fourchaumes and Côte de Léchet.

CHABLIS

With 63.02 hectares (155.72 acres), Chablis represents two-thirds of Domaine Laroche's total production. In most cases, these vineyards are planted on slopes with excellent exposure. Chablis Saint Martin, the flagship of Domaine Laroche, is a blend from the best vineyards.



PETIT CHABLIS

With just 2.25 hectares (5.56 acres), an additional supply of Petit Chablis grapes is sourced from the best local growers, with whom Laroche has long-term contracts. The vineyards are located on flatlands on the hilltops situated on Portlandian soil, which is clay- and limestone-based and similar in structure to the grand cru and premier cru Kimmeridgian layers, although geologically younger.

