

# BERGAMOT WINE co

THE LONG AND WINDING RUE

AUGUST 2020 GROWER CHAMPAGNE CLUB

## GROWER CHAMPAGNE NO.1

Larmandier-Bernier "Longitude" Extra Brut Premier Cru

Chardonnay

Côtes des Blancs, Champagne, France NV

## GROWER:

The Larmandier and Bernier families have legacies in Champagne dating way back to the French revolution, but it was the marriage in 1971 of Philippe Larmandier to Elisabeth Bernier that Champagne Larmandier-Bernier, truly a mouthful in every way, was created. The next generation has taken over the tiny operation, and Pierre and Sophie Larmandier, along with their son Arthur, farm just under 45 acres throughout some of the finest sites in the Côte des Blancs: the grand crus Cramant, Chouilly, Oger and Avize, and in the premier cru they call home, Vertus.

Pierre began farming organically in 1992 and converted the entire operation to biodynamic farming pretty early on in the movement in 1999. The L-B plantings are almost entirely Chardonnay, but they have a few acres of Pinot Noir, and even a wee holding of Pinot Gris. The "Longitude" bottling comes from vineyards that are all in somewhat of a straight line longitudinally, very close to the 4th meridian; but it is also a romantic allusion to the length and depth of the wine itself.

Larmandier-Bernier wines are never sweetened above four grams per liter of dosage, putting all of their wines in the category of Extra Brut. The house style is perplexingly full and supple while also maintaining that pure mineral nerve that is the perfectly balanced energetic beauty of the very finest Champagnes. Fair warning, once popped these bottles never seem to last... long.

## TASTING NOTES:

Like a fresh rising dough, this is lively and supple, just a hint yeasty and with all those bubbles it just keeps on growing... As fruity as an all chardonnay champagne could possibly be, the glass starts in with mouthwatering white peaches straight from the tree. That peach fuzz gives a lot to chew on, topping off that fresh baked bread. The bubbles bring on a refreshing splash of salinity as a chaser, somehow leaving the glass empty, yet again!

## FINE DETAILS:

Chardonnay from Vertus Premier Cru as well as Grand Crus: Cramant, Avize and Oger. The vintage base wine is approximately 60% of the blend, 40% reserve wine from a perpetual reserve started in 2004 and kept in stainless steel tanks after the first year in oak. 4 g/L dosage.

## **GROWER CHAMPAGNE NO.2**

Pierre Paillard 'Les Parcelles XIV' Extra-Brut

Pinot Noir + Chardonnay

Bouzy, Champagne, France NV

### **GROWER:**

Another long and winding dynasty stretching well over 200 years, the brothers Quentin and Antoine Paillard are now the 8th generation to grow- and the 4th to vinify- the Champagne Pierre Paillard. Together they tend 27 acres of vineyards in the Grand Cru village of Bouzy, with their acreage divided between Pinot Noir (70%) and Chardonnay (30%). The vineyards are not planted with conventional clones, but rather have been propagated over the decades via "sélection massale," taking cuttings from old vines and continuing the legacy of the oldest vines in new plantings. "Les Parcelles" is a blend of Pinot and Chardonnay coming from 22 sites throughout Bouzy, a grand cru renowned for producing some of the finest Pinot Noir thanks to the south-facing slopes that help to ripen the often-difficult grape.

As Antoine Paillard says, the challenge for them in Bouzy is not achieving ripeness, as is the case in much of the Champagne region, but rather maintaining balance and freshness. For the vinification, each individual parcel is harvested and fermented separately in stainless steel vats, then tasted in the spring, blended with aged wines, bottled sur lie, and effectively buried for three to ten long years in an old cellar carved 53 feet deep into the chalk bedrock. Ashes to ashes, dust to bubs.

### **TASTING NOTES:**

The nose leads in with that unmistakable core of Pinot Noir, all red delicious apple skin and fresh walnuts. The palate is deliciously decadent and fluffy like a toasted challah loaf, topped with a zesty sprinkling of cinnamon and clove, and a wee dab of apricot preserve. There's a perfume of talc powder and even a touch of lanolin, that perfect liquid limestone liqueur that makes this Grand Cru so very very Grand.

### **FINE DETAILS:**

70% Pinot noir and 30% Chardonnay. Vintage wine is blended with 25% reserve wines..

Dosage: 2.7 grams/liter