Champagne Benoît Munier

CÔTE DES BLANCS · CHAMPAGNE · FRANCE

REGION	Côte des Blancs, Champagne
PRODUCER	Benoît Munier
VINEYARD	1.6 ha
GRAPES	Chardonnay
ANNUAL PRODUCTION	About 7,000 bottles a year

ABOUT THE WINERY

Benoît Munier farms 1.6 hectares of Chardonnay in 33 parcels across five Grand Cru villages: Cramant, Avize, Chouilly, Oger and Bouzy. The vines came down through his mother's family, the Gendrons, who bought their first plot in Bouzy in the 1930s. His father is from Cramant. Benoît took over at about twenty, and his wife Séverine has worked beside him since 2011.

He left conventional farming in 2014. No herbicides, no insecticides; the soil is worked by hand and with under-row tools, and the treatments are copper, sulfur and plant preparations. In 2019, when sulfur could not hold the powdery mildew, he sprayed garlic and milk. He holds no certification and says that is a choice.

Since 2015 each parcel has been made on its own, at the Avize cooperative where he has vinified since the late 1990s. Fermentation and malolactic happen in old barrels.

WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

Benoît wants to accompany the wine rather than steer it: no dosage, little SO2, no chaptalization, no enzymes, no filtration, no cold treatment. He says it starts in the vineyard, with healthy, ripe grapes you would want to eat.

VINEYARD & TERROIR

Chalk (Campanian, with belemnites in Avize). 33 parcels in five Grand Cru villages: Cramant, Avize, Chouilly, Oger, Bouzy. Lieux-dits include Les Avats du Levant (Avize), Les Marvillannes du Midi, Les Bas Bourrons, La Crayère (Cramant), Les Marais (Chouilly), Pierres Aiguës (Bouzy).

PRODUCTION

Vinified parcel by parcel since 2015 at Les Viticulteurs d’Avize. Fermentation and malolactic in used barrels. No chaptalization, enzymes, fining, filtration or cold stabilization. Zero dosage; no added SO2 at disgorgement. Labels by Lucie Massart.