

Domaine Lecointre

Anjou



The oldest archive pointing to the Lecointre family being vigneron in Anjou—a journal entry listing sales of wine in barrel—dates from 1779, but Lecointres have been farming grapes and making wine deep in France’s heartland since at least the 16th century. Their 74 acres grow in the middle of Côteaux du Layon, scattered among the neighboring villages of Champ-sur-Layon, Faye d’Anjou, and Rablay-sur-Layon. These are divided into 18 parcels, with Chenin, Cabernet Franc, Grolleau Gris and Grolleau Noir dominating, followed by Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pineau d’Aunis, and Gamay.

Cyrille Lecointre is the current head of the domaine. The biggest change he’s made so far has been to move the domaine into organic farming, which happened soon after he returned home from enology school in 2013. Representing the 9th generation, Cyrille took the reins from his father in 2016, and a year later the certifying agency granted full organic status. He also renovated the cellar.

Cyrille’s father remains active in the cellar, and his American wife Kimberly handles the exports. She’s a Francophile from New York by way of the University of Texas at Austin, with a special interest in international trade and sustainable farming. She’s also their ad hoc artistic director, having overseen the rebranding of the domaine’s labels, moving away from the Lecointre forefathers’ Château La Tomaze label (named for the house Cyrille’s great-grandfather built in the 1890s) to simply Lecointre, with an IX embedded to signify his generation.

The three communes where they have vines are distinct terroirs, each with different soil types, but all united by their bedrock of Anjou Noir schist.

On the right bank (north side) of the Layon river in Faye d’Anjou they have parcels of Chenin, growing on rolling hills in relatively high elevation with sparse topsoil, all south facing. This is exceptional terroir for Chenin, be it for *sec* wines or late harvest cuvées.

On the left bank in Champ-sur-Layon they farm most of their red varieties, because here the terrain is flatter and the soil is deeper with better water retention, allowing for a large crop of fruit if the vines aren’t pruned carefully.

Next to Champ-sur-Layon is Rablay-sur-Layon, where gravels and sand predominate, making for well drained parcels that can cause hydric stress, all of which favors Chenin with concentrated flavors.

<http://www.tomaze.com/domaine-pierre-blanche-roche-maillet.php>