

Val de Mer

Chablis



Val de Mer is the latest project of Chablis' newest star, Patrick Piuze. After more than a decade making wine in Chablis for the likes of Olivier Leflaive, Verget, and Jean-Marc Brocard, Patrick Piuze began his own label in 2008, sourcing top quality fruit by using the many connections he had made in the region over the years. The wines were immediately praised by critics and a new star was born. By the time he released his second vintage, the demand had already surpassed the small supply, but Patrick was not interested in increasing production, preferring to keep the quantities manageable so as to maintain absolute control over the quality. An idea surfaced at this time of doing another small project that could essentially be for the US market to satisfy the growing demand for his wines, but capital was needed in order to get it off the ground and it seemed to be nothing more than an unrealized dream until...

In 2010, Patrick received a phone call from François Moutard of Champagne who had just purchased a winery near the village of Tonnerre along with a few hectares of vineyards in the appellations of Bourgogne, Petit Chablis, and Chablis, and he asked Patrick for help. Out of this partnership, Val de Mer was born. Patrick is overseeing the vineyard management and making the wines from the estate vineyards as well as sourcing from his many contacts in Chablis to make the wines here that include a range of Sparkling, Bourgogne, Petit Chablis, Chablis, Chablis 1er Cru, and even Chablis Grand Cru. All the vineyards whether estate or sourced are farmed as organically as possible in a manner the French refer to as "lutte raisonnée". The production is small but as the US is the only market where the wines are sold, there is more reliable supply and continuity than with the Patrick Piuze label.

The Sparkling wines are made from the estate vineyards located around the winery near the village of Tonnerre and aged entirely in stainless steel. There is no dosage added to either wine and they rest for a minimum of 15 months before being disgorged. For the Bourgogne, Petit Chablis, and Chablis, the wines are fermented and aged in tanks while the premier cru Vaillons is aged in a combination of tank and neutral barrels. The Grand Cru wines, just as they are for the Patrick Piuze label, are aged entirely in neutral barrels.

Patrick is quick to point out that although he is making the wines in the same manner as the wines under his own name, that Val de Mer has its own identity and personality. It is a separate winery located 20 minutes from Chablis and the wines ferment, and age differently here. The winery is in a cool valley and the slight change in ambiance results in wines that are uniquely their own. Often more classically styled in character than the Patrick Piuze wines which are richly textured and layered, the wines of Val de Mer exhibit pronounced minerality and racy acidity that one expects from Chablis.



