

Domaine François Jobard Meursault

'Let nature do the work; co-operate with nature, don't try to fight it,' this is François Jobard's guiding principle. He is a winemaker with a great understanding of the subtle intricacies of the vineyard. A late picker, he harvests after walking through the vineyards, deciding the right time 'by feel,' he says. His instincts pay-off, resulting in long living, elegant, refined white Burgundy wines.

Carefully Farmed Vines

The family business began in the 1860's by François' great grandfather. Today he runs the estate virtually single-handed, with the help of an occasional laborer and of his wife. The 5 hectares of vineyards are divided between 5 premier crus, Meursault Village, aligoté, and some Bourgogne rouge and blanc. François does as much as possible naturally, using near organic methods. The vines are trained to restrict yields and maximize fruit quality. The Guyot Simple trellising method as well as the lesser-known Cordon de Royat is used. The latter is well suited for the feeble, less productive vines and tends to produce smaller, more concentrated berries, two things François strives for.

A Slow, Gentle *Élevage*

Vinification is traditional, with a reliance on instinct and experience. A long, slow press begins the process and then the juice is transferred to cask. No cultured

yeasts are used; François relies on those yeasts naturally present on the grape skins and in the cellar. Unlike some modern wineries, the temperature of the juice is not mechanically controlled. The domain's cold cellar allows for a slow fermentation. The wines are kept on their lees in Vosges oak barrels for about 2 years. During this time there is no racking or stirring of the lees. The long time in barrel (only about 15% of

which are new) allows the lees to gently settle.

Long Living And Rich

Unlike many other *vignerons* in the region, François does not perform an extensive batonnage, or stirring of the lees. He believes those wines that are

vigorously stirred throughout their ageing do not age well in the long run. Stirring makes for 'a faster evolution in the bottle,' he says. Indeed his theory may be correct. Domaine François Jobard's wines are extremely long living, retaining their bold aromas and rich, powerful flavors for years after bottling.

A Straightforward Approach

His formula is simple: 'I harvest ripe grapes. And if the yields are reasonable, then the wine should be balanced.' A modest, serious wine maker, François' wines are highly regarded by the press and eagerly sought after by the wine connoisseur.

