

Richard Kelley

The definitive guide to the wines of the Loire

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Guide to the Loire regions

Val du Loir

Producer Profiles – Coteaux du Vendômois

Patrice Colin (1735)

Established at least since 1735, there have been eight generations of Colins who have worked the vines in Thoré-la-Rochette. The latest, Patrice, has been fortunate to have inherited plantings made by his grandfather and great-grandfather. The oldest, a parcel of Pineau d'Aunis dates back to the 1890s.

Wine Overview :



Pente de Coutis

There are 22 hectares under vine at the domaine, 70% of which have been replanted since Patrice joined his father at the start of the 1980s. Ten years ago saw him replanting the *Pente des Coutis*, a slope in the northern suburbs of Vendôme. This distinguished site is likely to have been home to the original plantings by the Marmoutier in the 11th Century. Here, Colin has established a vineyard of Chenin Blanc and begun marketing a separate label. The wines are all raised in the reconstructed cellar in the centre of Thoré and, depending on the wine in question, both barriques and stainless steel tanks are employed for fermentation and *élevage*. Within the total range, there are three separate red wines, three dry whites, two different *gris*, plus an occasional release of *passillage* and two bottlings of a *Méthode Traditionnelle*, under the name *Les Perles d'Anne Sophie*. The sparkling wine is a blend of Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay (for which Colin has one hectare dedicated for its production) and Pineau d'Aunis. Both a *sec* and *demi-sec* version is produced. There is never any chaptalisation and only indigenous yeasts are employed, ensuring winemaking is as natural as possible.



Maison des Vignes de Patrice Colin

The Wines :

Without question, Pascal Colin is one of the references within the appellation. The benefit of having the access to older vines gives him an advantage, but this is not to understate his talent for raising the wines in the cellar. These are not easy wines, but then Pineau d'Aunis and Chenin are not facile varieties, and their obvious charms are probably not best illustrated by only tasting current vintages. These are all wines that deserve to be kept a few years in bottle.

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Blanc 'Pierre à Feu'

From 15 to 20 year old Chenin vines planted on soils of clay and silex. Clean but restrained nose. Typically quiet Chenin. Dry (4 g/l) and lean on the palate, but mineral and still needing time to express itself. Chalky textured. Very young, but good potential. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Blanc 'Pente des Coutis'

From ten year old vines on the south facing steep slope overlooking the town of Vendôme . The soil here is primarily silex flecked topsoil over a bedrock of tufa. The wine is raised in stainless steel tanks. Good focus and structure on the nose. Quite closed at present with some gunflint-reductive elements; a true expression of Chenin. Tight and lean on entry, it has good grip with the character of a dry Vouvray (7 g/l residual sugar). Very good weight and focus, but really needs time. (12/08)

2006 Coteaux du Vendômois Blanc 'Pente des Coutis'

Ripe and open nose. Shows the more rustic elements of Chenin. The nose is still tight but shows density behind. The main aromas are of cloves. The palate is equally rustic and there is noticeable residual sugar (14g/l), but the wine is still defined by the firm acidity. Good grip with a chalky texture. A bit old fashioned, but distinctive. It needs more time to evolve. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Blanc 'Vieilles Vignes'

From vines in Thoré that age between 50 and 80 years old. The wine is fermented and raised in barriques. Mid-full yellow-gold appearance. Distinctly high toned, oxidative nose with evidence of the *élevage* in barrique. Rich and concentrated on the palate. Very good structure and length. Mineral, dry and austere, but equally generous and approachable now. This is distinctly volatile and shows a degree of nervosity, but is a fine wine that would also benefit with further ageing. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Gris

Vines are around 15 years old for this cuvée and are grown on soils of silex over tufa. The wine is raised in stainless steel. Very attractive nose. Pure and an excellent expression of Pineau d'Aunis with lots of white pepper. Dry, austere and mineral on entry. Very good focus and shows the character of the silex soil, with plenty of flint like flavours. Excellent grip. Tight, but approachable now although would benefit with a little more time in bottle. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Gris 'Bodin'

From 80 year old vines planted by Patrice's grandfather, George Colin. This is vinified and raised in oak vats. Primary, closed and completely unevolved nose. Taut, bone dry and mineral - in need of time. Chalky textured to finish. In the region these wines are consumed on release, which seems a great shame considering how much more, potentially, this has to give. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Rouge 'Les Vignes d'Emilien Colin'

Produced from 100% Pineau d'Aunis, planted by Patrice's great-grandfather, Emilien Colin in 1890. These old vines yield around 35hl/ha. The wine is raised in five year old oak *fût*. Mid depth appearance. A touch confit on the nose. Taut and concentrated, well structured and a very good expression of the variety. The tannins are currently very firm, with the flavour profile a little baked. It really needs time to settle and harmonise. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Rouge 'Pierre François'

A three way blend between Pineau d'Aunis, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc. Produced from vines that are between three and twenty years old. This is raised in tank. Deep appearance. A touch hot and baked on both the nose and palate. Otherwise, the wine is soft and should age for a while. Chalky texture and slightly high toned to the finish, although this adds to the overall complexity. There is a real bitter cherry grip to the finish, with juicy acidity and supple tannins. Approachable, but will age further. Very good. (12/08)

2006 Coteaux du Vendômois Rouge 'Vieilles Vignes'

The vine age here ranges from 35 to 100 years old and is a blend of 80% Pineau d'Aunis augmented with Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc and raised in older oak barriques. Rich and a concentrated deep red with a youthful rim. Good spice on the nose; the Pineau d'Aunis character shines through. Broad and concentrated on the palate with excellent focus and generosity. Silky texture with supple tannins and a real purity. Flavours of spice and bitter cherries with a smoky edge. This is lovely and open now, but should be expected to develop further. Almost like a Ripasso Valpolicella in texture and flavour. Excellent. (12/08)

2007 Coteaux du Vendômois Rouge 'Vieilles Vignes'

60% Pineau d'Aunis, 30% Cabernet Franc and 10% Pinot Noir. Very deep appearance. Solid, purple to the rim. Polished. Broad nose. Open and attractive. Good density and texture. Very good concentration and balance. Serious. Still very young with noticeable tannins and in need of time. Should be excellent. (02/09)

2005 Coteaux du Vendômois Blanc 'Passillage'

This cuvée was first established in 1989. The grapes are hand harvested and as late as possible – in this particular vintage, on the 21st November. Yields are tiny at around 5 – 10 hl/ha and the residual sugar is around 100 g/l. Polished appearance with a nose not unlike a *vin de paille*. Complex nose of hot red fruit jam, quince and honey. It shows great delicacy. Lovely on entry, even if the flavour profile is a little rustic. Very firm, crunchy acidity. Persistent on the palate. This will age and develop over a long period of time. At this stage it has barely evolved. (12/08)

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