

Domaine Christophe et fils 2022 Chablis, 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre

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| Varietal(s) | Chardonnay |
| Region | Burgundy, France |
| Short Summary | In 1999, Sébastien Christophe began to vinify a half hectare of Petit Chablis planted by his grandfather. Since then, he has methodically acquired a multitude of parcels he both owns and rents. He began organic conversion in 2021 but for many years prior, he had already used only organic certified vineyard treatments. All of his vines are located on the Serein River's right bank (the grand cru side), and all grapes are hand-harvested, spontaneously fermented, go through malolactic fermentation, and are principally aged in steel with less than 10% in oak barrels (new, 1-, 2- and 3-year-old) for the crus and fined and filtered before bottling. The style is classically spare and mineral-driven, resulting in precise and vertical Chablis closer in style to Loire Valley whites than the Côte d'Or. |
| Terroir | This is the flagship wine of Sebastian's range, not because it is the best but rather the most famous premier cru in Chablis—and for good reason. It's a show dog and demonstrates class and balance in every dimension from the acidity, fruit, mineral and pleasure. Sebastien's parcel is entirely located within the well-protected—from wind and hail—lieu-dit, Côte de Bréchains, within the Fyé Valley. Its western aspect and deep marne (calcium rich clay topsoil) mixed with portlandian scree and kimmeridgian marlstones contribute to its broad range of complexity and appeal. The narrow Fyé Valley, just outside of downtown Chablis, separates Montée de Tonnerre from the grand cru slope. If it weren't for some weakness in the soil structure that led to this erosional valley, it would likely have been a member of grand cru family. It shares nearly the same south/southwest aspect as most of the Grand Crus and largely the same soil structure of Les Clos; however, it's not as deep but still deeper in most parts than the closest premier cru, Mont de Milieu; keep in mind we speak of centimeters difference, not meters. |
| Cellar Notes | The grapes are picked by hand, pressed, settled in tank overnight, then racked off the heavy sediments after one day before beginning its low temperature fermentation. The spontaneous wild yeast fermentation lasts between 1-2 months and takes place in stainless steel (80%) and the remainder in 228-liter oak barrels (new, 1, 2 and 3 year-old, the total new wood is approximately 7%). Battonage (stirring) is sometimes made, but only in the steel tanks and the frequency depends on the vintage—warm years nothing and in colder ones no more than two times. The first SO2 addition is made after the press before fermentation and the second (and sometimes the last) after both fermentations have finished. |
| Farming | Sustainable—Organic Certified—Biodynamic Certified—Uncertified Naturalist |
| Alcohol % | 12.5 - 13.50 |
| Total SO2 | None Added—Very Low—Low—Medium—High |