



Christian Venier

Winemaker: Christian Venier

Location: Cheverny, Loire

Size of Domaine: 5 ha

Terroir: Clay, Limestone, Flint & Silex

Winemaking: Minimal Intervention (Organic Certified)

Christian Venier, deeply rooted in Loire's natural winemaking history, has crafted Cheverny AOC wines without chemical additives since his first vintage in 1995. Eager to introduce his wines to the UK for the first time, we began with many failed attempts to contact him, culminating in a visit to his modest cellar, where we discovered that he had recently cut his phone line to dodge cold calls. Christian's charm shone through as he proudly displayed his business card: "No chemical additives, pesticides, weedkiller, website, email, or Facebook." He joked about adding "no telephone" next.

Christian's interest in natural winemaking began at a young age; in his youth, he and his cousin Thierry Puzelat would spend time harvesting in Champagne. Due to Christians's size and visible strength, he was scouted to shear sheep and spent 15 years travelling the world, doing exactly that. He returned to Cheverny in the early 90s and re-entered vineyards for seasonal work. In 1995, whilst producing his first vintage, he and his cousin Thierry decided to enrol in agricultural school, where they shared a class with René and Agnès Mosse and were taught by the late Christian Chaussard. At a time when surrounding farmers were unaware of the harm of pesticides, this small group of classmates and their teacher began to employ radical and innovative organic cultivation techniques.

Today, Christian works with seven varieties on seven hectares in and around Cheverny without using chemicals or modern technology, except for some ancient straddle tractors, of which he is an avid collector. Sulphur use is limited to 10mg/litre, which is rarely used but available to him should he feel it is necessary.