

LE ROCHER DES VIOLETTES



Xavier Weisskopf

2025

La Revue du Vin de France – Elle à Table – Livre de Beverley Blanning "Wines of the Loire Valley"



EatTENDANCES

TARTE AU CITRON CRÉMEUSE À SOUHAIT (8 pers.)

Préparation : 20 min • Cuisson : 32 min • Repos : 3 h

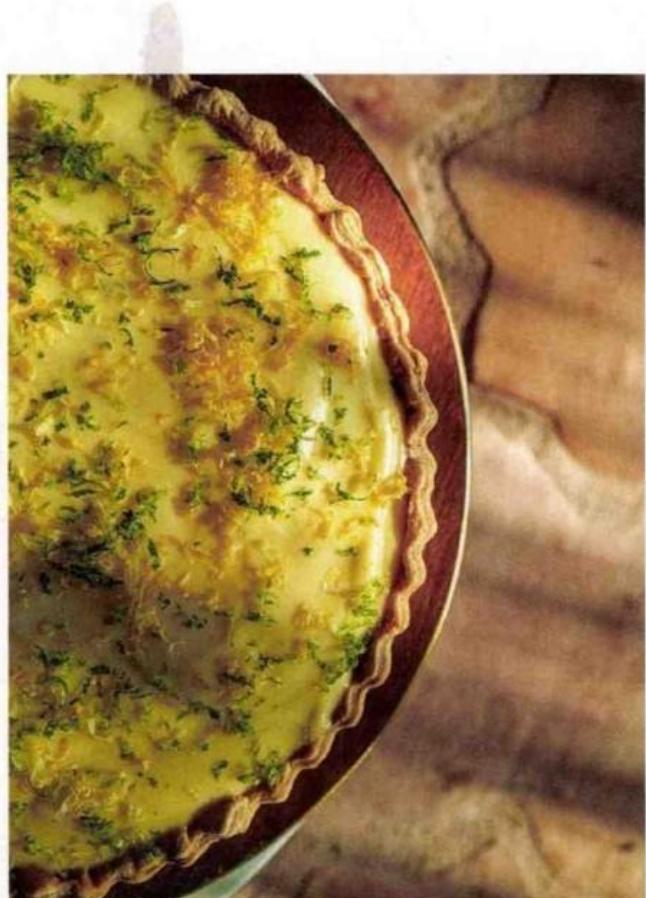
Pour la pâte feuilletée • 1 pâte feuilletée à la crème (voir recette de la tarte Tatin page précédente) • 1 jaune d'œuf Pour le crémeux citron • 300 g de jus de citron frais • 5 citrons bio zestés • 200 g de sucre semoule • 20 g de Maïzena® • 4 œufs (300 g) • 150 g de beurre Pour la touche finale • le zeste de 1 citron jaune bio • le zeste de 1 citron vert bio

1. Préparez la pâte feuilletée : préchauffez le four à 170 °C (th. 5-6). Découpez un disque de pâte feuilletée de 24 cm de diamètre et foncez-le dans un cercle de 20 cm de diamètre et 3 cm de haut. Mettez du papier cuisson au fond et versez du riz dessus pour que la pâte ne gonfle pas à la cuisson. Faites cuire 30 min. Retirez le riz et le papier cuisson, et badigeonnez l'intérieur de la tarte avec le jaune d'oeuf. Remettez au four 2 min. Cette technique permet de garder une pâte croustillante.

2. Préparez le crémeux citron : faites bouillir le jus de citron, les zestes et 100 g de sucre semoule. Versez le reste de sucre, la Maïzena® et les œufs. Faites de nouveau bouillir votre préparation en remuant énergiquement à l'aide d'un fouet. Chinoisez le crémeux citron dans un autre récipient. Mixez et ajoutez petit à petit le beurre bien froid coupé en dés.

3. Versez le crémeux citron dans le fond de tarte. Réservez au minimum 3 heures au frais avant la dégustation. Ajoutez les zestes de citron jaune et de citron vert. Dégustez bien frais!

Loire, montlouis-sur-loire, Le Rocher des Violettes, Les Borderies
2021, blanc demi-sec



DÉGUSTATION

40 flacons pour arroser les **ENTRÉES FROIDES**

Vaste sujet que les entrées froides, cet ensemble un tantinet fourre-tout dans lequel les parfums des recettes s'avèrent aussi différents que les textures, du carpaccio de poisson ou de viande aux salades diverses et variées en passant par les soupes froides, les terrines et les pâtés... Si toutes les régions y passent, il faut garder en mémoire que le vin servi en entrée ne doit jamais abîmer le palais pour le plat principal. On le préfère donc plutôt léger, pointé de salinité, avec des finales aux amers tendres ou acidulés.



Hors-série

LA REVUE DU VIN DE FRANCE

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Pratique Bien servir vos vins à table

Adresses Les meilleures tables de vignerons pour se régaler

340 belles cuvées à associer de l'entrée au dessert

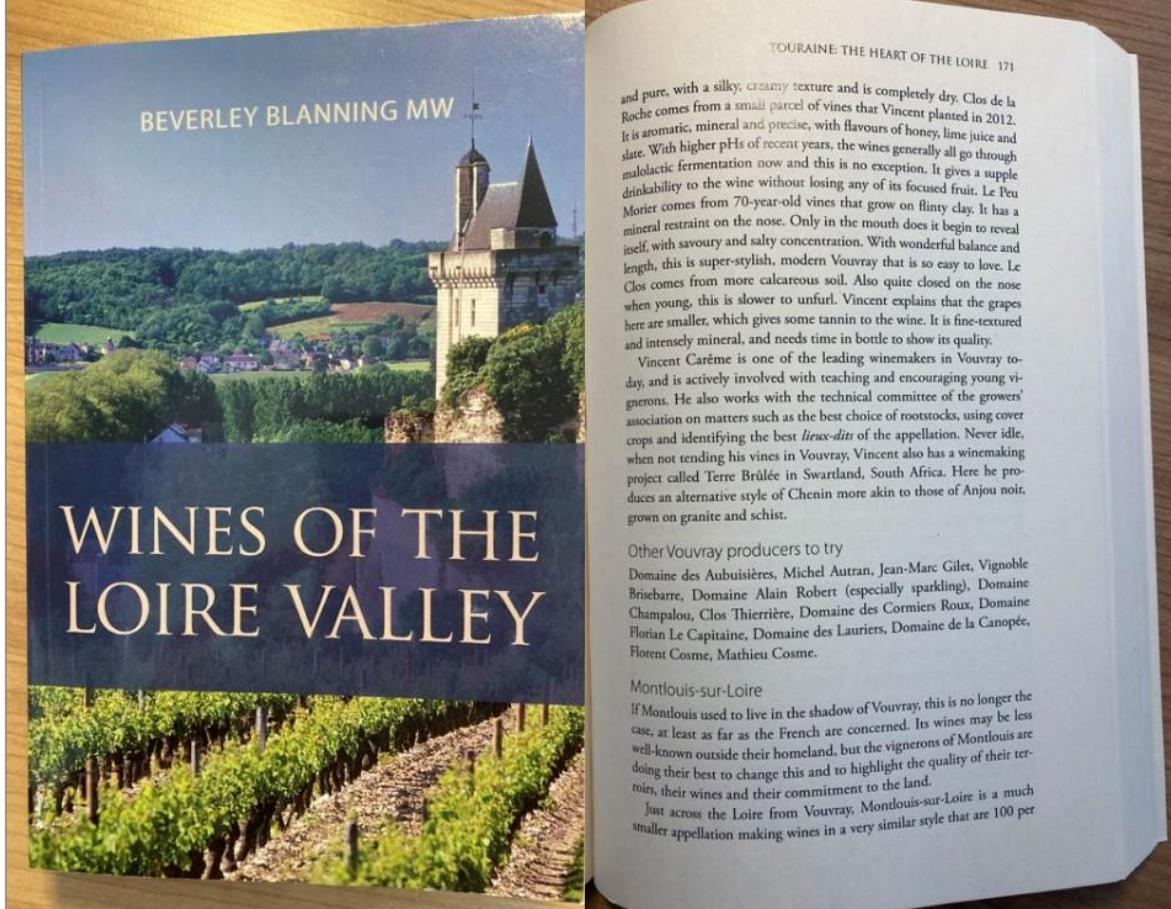
VALLÉE DE LA LOIRE

92/100

LE ROCHER DES VIOLETTES

Montlouis-sur-Loire 2020

Le nez exhale des arômes de fruit gourmand qui rappelle la pomme. Sa bouche, onctueuse et gracieuse, est tout en volume et suavité. Cet effervescent joue plus sur la sève et l'épaisseur du fruit que sur la vivacité. Sa bulle est posée, fine et douce. Il appelle des mets gourmands et généreux. Essayez une tourte. R.P. 21 €



and pure, with a silky, creamy texture and is completely dry. Clos de la Roche comes from a small parcel of vines that Vincent planted in 2012. It is aromatic, mineral and precise, with flavours of honey, lime juice and slate. With higher pHs of recent years, the wines generally all go through malolactic fermentation now and this is no exception. It gives a supple drinkability to the wine without losing any of its focused fruit. Le Peu Morier comes from 70-year-old vines that grow on flinty clay. It has a mineral restraint on the nose. Only in the mouth does it begin to reveal itself, with savoury and salty concentration. With wonderful balance and length, this is super-stylish, modern Vouvray that is so easy to love. Le Clos comes from more calcareous soil. Also quite closed on the nose when young, this is slower to unfurl. Vincent explains that the grapes here are smaller, which gives some tannin to the wine. It is fine-textured and intensely mineral, and needs time in bottle to show its quality.

Vincent Carême is one of the leading winemakers in Vouvray today, and is actively involved with teaching and encouraging young vigneron. He also works with the technical committee of the growers' association on matters such as the best choice of rootstocks, using cover crops and identifying the best *lieux-dit* of the appellation. Never idle, when not tending his vines in Vouvray, Vincent also has a winemaking project called Terre Brûlée in Swartland, South Africa. Here he produces an alternative style of Chenin more akin to those of Anjou noir, grown on granite and schist.

Other Vouvray producers to try

Domaine des Aubuisières, Michel Autran, Jean-Marc Gilet, Vignoble Brisebarre, Domaine Alain Robert (especially sparkling), Domaine Champalou, Clos Thiérière, Domaine des Cormiers Roux, Domaine Florian Le Capitaine, Domaine des Lauriers, Domaine de la Canopée, Florent Cosme, Mathieu Cosme.

Montlouis-sur-Loire

If Montlouis used to live in the shadow of Vouvray, this is no longer the case, at least as far as the French are concerned. Its wines may be less well-known outside their homeland, but the vignerons of Montlouis are doing their best to change this and to highlight the quality of their terroirs, their wines and their commitment to the land.

Just across the Loire from Vouvray, Montlouis-sur-Loire is a much smaller appellation making wines in a very similar style that are 100 per

Le Rocher des Violettes

Dierre
www.lerocherdesviolettes.com

Le Rocher des Violettes is a family affair. Xavier Weisskopf runs the winery; his wife Clémence runs the office, their young daughters run

the office décor (paintings everywhere) and their little dog – Sulphite – runs about like a mad thing (I later learn she is in serious training to become a truffle dog). Life could have been quite different for Xavier: he started out studying agrochemicals and crop protection, but had a change of heart and decided that winemaking should be his *métier*. And while he was at it, he ditched the agrochemicals altogether.

After studying in Beaune Xavier, young and keen, but with only a little experience under his belt, managed to acquire 7 hectares of Chenin Blanc in Montlouis along with a parcel of centenarian Côt vines. This was in 2005. By 2008 the domaine was certified organic and today has grown to 17 hectares, which includes 14 hectares of Chenin as well as some Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc and Pinot Noir.

The Rocher des Violettes winery is in Dierre, 3 kilometres to the east of Saint-Martin-Le-Beau, where the vines are located. This is the far east of the Montlouis appellation. It's more frost-prone, and therefore cheaper to buy land here, says Xavier, adding, 'I didn't know that when I bought it.' The vines grow close to the Cher river on varying types of sandy, silty clay and the locally named '*perruchet*' soils which are a mixture of sandy clay and flint, all over limestone. The vine's growth starts early here, so Xavier is ready every year with candles and piles of wood to mitigate the effects of possible frost damage to the young shoots. There is also a frost fan looming overhead to protect a part of the vineyard. Another strategy employed to protect the young shoots is double pruning (a lighter pruning before potential frost and a final pruning when frost risk has passed), which is effective, but costs, he says, 25 per cent more to implement. Further up the slope, away from the river, the soils are more alkaline. 'It's perfect for truffles,' he says. Sulphite had better take her training seriously.

In the vineyard, Xavier has been experimenting with different types of vine training in an attempt to reduce the susceptibility of younger vines to the trunk disease, esca. But he has his own theory as to why some vines are more vulnerable than others, and it's all down to how the vine is pruned, or more specifically who is pruning it: 'I have a theory it's due to the excessive change in personnel pruning the vine,' he says, noting that he has seen a 40 per cent increase in susceptibility to the malady in plots where there has been a change in the people doing the pruning.

The still wines are site-specific cuvées, all harvested by hand. The juicy Touche-Mitaine grows on grey clay soils and spends a year in old oak. Xavier is not a fan of new oak for Chenin: 'It can't take it; Chenin is very

easily marked by oak,' he says. La Rochère, very close to the Cher, is a south-facing slope of silty clay over limestone originating from lake sediment from the Ice Age. These are white soils that give a lot of mineral tension. The wine is fermented in a concrete egg and shows a rounded core of aromatic fruit balanced by electrifying acidity. Xavier recommends waiting two years before approaching it, when the acidity will soften, but anyone who enjoys the thrill of firm, stony acidity like this will love it from the start. Le Grand Clos comes from deep, stony, red clay soils, and is a late-ripening site. The wine is fermented and aged for a year on its lees in 500-litre barrels, where it is stirred periodically. This gives a wine that has body but remains firm, with delicious texture and a floral character. Les Borderies is a *demi-sec* style with around 15 grams per litre of residual sugar. Grown on sandy soils, it recalls a Mosel-style Riesling, with its light, floral, effortless elegance and juicy deliciousness. Another sweet style, a *moelleux*, is Le Grand Poirier. Made with slightly dried (*passerille*) grapes that grow on soils that comprise red clay, wind-blown sand and silt, it has a gentle character and light, honeyed sweetness.

Xavier also makes one of the best Montlouis Pétillant Originel wines, with elegant, fine bubbles and clear fruit. The domaine's red wines come from the same sites as the whites, from vines planted as long ago as 1891. The tiny 0.1-hectare of Côt, which includes the ancient vines, produces an aromatic, black-fruited, lightly structured and fresh wine, while the Cabernet Franc needs more work to soften the tannins, and has at least two years' ageing. Less exciting than the whites, perhaps, they nevertheless show the characteristic elegance of the house style. Xavier also makes an orange wine from Chenin, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, and a Côt rosé.

Les Pierres Ecrites

Saint-Martin-Le-Beau

Anthony and Coralie Rassin are relative newcomers to Montlouis and this is the first winery they have owned, but they are no strangers to winemaking. Both had a decade's experience working in the Rhône for Jaboulet Ainé (Coralie) and Cave de Clairmont (Anthony) before deciding, in Anthony's words, 'to write our own story'. They would have stayed in the Rhône, he admits, 'but there was the problem of zeros'. Loire vineyards were more attractively priced. The pair took over the domaine Flammant-Delatang with 8 hectares of vines in the eastern part of the appellation in 2015, changing the name to Les Pierres Ecrites.

Grands blancs de Loire 130 chenins irrésistibles

Celui que l'on nomme aussi le pineau de Loire n'est pas un cépage docile. Mais pour qui sait le dompter, il livre des blancs de terroir exceptionnels. De la Touraine à la Vendée, du tuffeau au schiste armoricain, nous avons sélectionné les plus beaux d'entre eux.

Une grande dégustation de Pascaline Lepeltier et Alexis Goujard. Photos de Jean-Yves Bardin



91/100 LE ROCHER DES VIOLETTES

Le Grand Clos 2022

Les Weisskopf insufflent beaucoup de délicatesse dans leurs vins, à l'image de ce Grand Clos patiné par l'élevage, élancé, sertie d'une fine amertume tonique si typique de Montlouis. 13,80 €

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JEAN-GEORGES

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ARGENTINA TASTING REPORT

HOLIDAY PUNCH
RECIPES

RISING STARS
OF THE LOIRE



Le Rocher des Violettes' Xavier Weisskopf is bringing new attention to Montlouis, where he's turning out stellar versions of Chenin from the area's limestone soils.

XAVIER WEISSKOPF, MONTLOUIS

What explains the fascination with the increasingly dynamic Montlouis appellation? The answer is simple: young, ambitious winemakers such as Xavier Weisskopf at Le Rocher des Violettes. Lured by relatively affordable plots of old Chenin Blanc vines in limestone soils, Weisskopf is among the new generation flocking here to make some of the Loire's finest wines. He acquired 22 acres of pre-World War II vines in Montlouis in 2005, following his winemaking stints in Chablis and Beaune, as well as four vintages with the uncompromising Louis Barruol in Gigondas.

Weisskopf quickly became both a Chenin evangelist and a passionate voice for Montlouis. "The *terroirs* of Montlouis produce chiseled wines with mineral precision characteristic of its limestone soils," he says. "Here we can find perfect maturity, combining power, minerality, finesse and balance—regardless of the vintage."

Weisskopf's Burgundy chops show in his approach to single-plot cuvées and his mastery of aging in old barrels (rather than stainless steel). He credits his time at Château de St.-Cosme with his deep understanding of *terroir*. "You can't make great wines without beautiful grapes. I learned at St. Cosme that wine is made in the vineyard through meticulous work."

Made from a plot of Chenin vines that are 90-plus years old, Weisskopf's Le Grand Clos cuvée is a case in point, offering a rich, salty and expansive profile. As with all of the wines from Le Rocher des Violettes, Le Grand Clos also delivers excellent quality for the price. It's a wine to stock up on by the case, as is his delicious sparkler, the mineral-rich, ripe apple-flavored Pétillant Naturel.