

DOMAINE THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR

MOULIN À VENT



I did part of my studies in Beaujolais and in particular in Belleville, and I've always been attracted by the beauty of this region, its landscapes, but also by the quality and diversity of the soils.

I have been asked to create a sort of Burgundy model by isolating each terroir inside the same appellation, to understand and try to find the best identity of each one. My curiosity has driven me, given my desire to include other appellations, other grape varieties, and so to build in Moulin à Vent in 2009, what I had built in Nuits Saint Georges in 2001.

The Beaujolais region represents the tip of the Massif Central, mainly composed of old granite. Granite is a hard rock, poor and well suited to the Gamay grape that is generous. It is located a hundred kilometers south of Nuits-Saint-Georges.

We find many similarities with the Burgundian model, both the Cru and Climates, as the modes of vinification and aging. We also find common points with the aromas and structure of Burgundy wines. I would say that the wines of Beaujolais are cousins of Burgundy wines.

To create the Domaine and buy the first vines, I've tried to understand the different types of soil through my inquiries with the winemakers, tasting the wines and especially by walking through the vineyard. What surprised me in the first place was to see so many differences in such a small area, it reminded me the Burgundian terroirs.

However, I haven't often seen producers make a difference between each parcel, if they have vines in Moulin à Vent they will produce a unique cuvée of Moulin à Vent without isolating the different types of soils. Hard to understand when you have a Burgundian approach which isolates each parcel.

I had the idea to try to purchase the best parcels all located on the historic hill where you find the windmill at the top, with the objective to understand and produce wines like their climate and its variety: Gamay. The first plots were purchased in 2008, to produce the first vintage in 2009. We reproduced the same farming methods that the domaine in Nuits Saint Georges by :

- Plowing and removing all herbicide.
- Converting all parcels from the first year to organic and biodynamic farming.

The work we are trying to do in the vineyards is to awaken the soil and its terroir, ask to the roots to go deeper and search to nourish the grapes by revealing the identity of each soil in the bottle.

Concerning the vinification, I try to do the same work that I do in Nuits St Georges without carbonic maceration, because I consider that type of vinification gives some standard wines. It's why all is destemmed with some very long maceration, nearly one month, with some pumping over nearly every day and 1 or 2 pushing down only to move the cap.

Aging is done in barrel, for the "Rouchaux" and "Vieilles Vignes" in 2 or 3 year old barrels without new oak, and 20% new oak for the cuvée "La Roche". We keep the wine for a period of 12 to 15 month before bottling.

3 cuvées:

- **Moulin à Vent "Les Rouchaux":** 1.40 ha

Located on the east slope of the hill, this is an old vineyard between 60 to 70 years old.

This soil is 60cm to 1 meter deep with sandy, silt soil type from the degradation of the granite. This is a plot in one piece which produces some elegant wines that we can drink earlier than the other cuvée.

- **Moulin à Vent "les Vieilles Vignes":**

This cuvée comes from 5 parcels located in the middle of the hill still on the coteau of the Moulin à Vent hill. The vines are aged 60 to 80 years, planted on no deep soils (30-50 cm) of blue and pink granites and sands. It produces some wines with more density and minerality and longer finishing. It's a wine that will keep between 5 and 10 years depending on the vintage to enjoy it to its full maturity.

- **Moulin à Vent "La Roche":** 0.95 ha

I consider this parcel to be the most beautiful parcel of the domaine; it is located at the top of the hill where the pink granite rock outcrops; there is a mixture of quartz, pink sand on a stone bed which gives some wines a big tension and minerality. A wine built for aging that will require between 7 and 15 years to fully appreciate it.

