



LEVIN
WINES

VERTICAL VINTAGE TASTING

TASTING CATALOGUE



TASTING CATALOGUE

FORMAT:

The influence of terroir, rootstocks and organic vineyard and winemaking practices

Watch the Domaine LEVIN Vintage Experience, September 2019 video
(<https://vimeo.com/378440779>) and

Vertical tasting of the cellar release 2006, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2017 and current
vintage 2018 LEVIN Sauvignon Blancs.

LEVIN WINES:

Vallée du Loire sur Cher – Loire Valley
Touraine AOP
40 Chemin de Poliveau, BOURRÉ 41400 France
<http://www.levinwines.com>



STORY:

LEVIN Wines is a family-owned, certified organic winery that has been producing wine in France's Loire Valley since 1986. David Levin MBE (founder of the five-star Capital Hotel, The Levin Hotel, Michelin-starred Greenhouse Restaurant and The Capital Restaurant, dining at Royal Festival Hall, and Visiting Professor at Oxford Brookes) began growing grapes in the Loire Valley to produce private label wines for his restaurants. Inspired by his visits to Australia to use new world technology to capture this old world terroir, David had a winery designed in South Australia and built on the estate in 2001. Today, Lynne Levin (who's international career includes on- and off-trade, supply chain distribution and export market penetration, and in 2016 named Mentor of the Year, Oxford Brookes Masters mentoring programme) manages the domaine and LEVIN Wines' export to 14 countries. Lynne has overseen the expansion of production to 150,000 bottles per year and the conversion to Ecocert organic certification in 2011.



CERTIFIED ORGANIC & SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES:

The Levins are committed to the complicated organic certification (in both winery and vineyards) because their experience is that by excluding artificial interventions and nurturing a healthy ecosystem, their vines are more resilient, grapes are more complex, and the resulting organic wines are more nuanced in both youth and maturity. Their organic and sustainable practices include handpicking, leaf plucking, certified organic and biodynamic vineyard preparations, and green harvesting; complete supply chain traceability and a commitment to soil conservation using companion planting and no-till agriculture. (Certified Organic No 64932 / 12P ECOCERT.)



TERROIR:

There are 20 hectares under vine with 19 organic vineyards situated in Touraine across in the Vallée du Loire-sur-Cher in Bourré, Choussy and Oisly. There are three main soil types. In Bourré, Tuffeau terroir (marine sedimentary limestone formed ~100 million years ago) mixed with loose and flinty clay, mica and sand builds of texture and minerality; and Silex (~65 million years old) flint terroir stores and reflects heat, producing restrained, linear, gunflint-mineral wines with acidity and spice. Choussy and Oisly vineyards are both on sandy topsoil sitting on top of a thick layer of excellent smectite clay adding the varietal flavours and aromas. The wines are grounded in the Loire Valley terroir, using modern, organic winemaking and organic and biodynamic viticulture practices – to pursue a pure expression of Sauvignon Blanc, from its original home, the Loire.

TERROIR

Oisly

Sandy Loam over deep layer smectite clay – clay provides good water retaining properties while sandy loam gives free drainage – resulting in great, varietal flavours, and ripe aromatics.

Bourré – Tuffeaux

100-million-year-old sedimentary limestone mixed with mica sand, flinty clay from the ancient inland sea – gives talc-y texture, body and minerality.

Bourré – Silex

65-million-year-old flint retains heat from sun so continues to keep the grapes developing even after it sets – restrained, linear, mineral, acidity, spice, and saline notes.

Each vintage is a slightly different combination of the terroirs' flavour profile.

Notes:



Bourré limestone Tuffeaux and flinty Silex

ROOTSTOCKS & CLONES

Rootstocks

Rootstock for Touraine = 3309

Rootstock for vigour = S04

Rootstock for Clay = Paulson / Gravesac

Clones

Clones preferred is 108 – from the Bordeaux area, it is the most important clone in France; it produces aromatic and typical wines.

Other clones 297 – 316 – 376

Notes:



New vines ready to plant

VINEYARD

Organic practices

Companion planting / green fertilizer = Feverolles = Avoine = Vesce = Prêle

Increase soil friability – breaks up soil as it grows and is worked back in

Deliver natural trace elements – biodiversity, vine health, water retention, deter weeds

Fix nitrogen in the soil – essential building block plants, photosynthesis

Detoxify the vine

Work every vine 16 times per year – get to know each vine

Healthy, balanced, ecosystem – more diversity, sustainability, better flavours

Low intervention, by hand to nurture healthy, naturally resilient vines

Different terroir adds complexity, different row spacing / different orientation / different ages / rootstock / clones / ripening time

Notes:



Prêle – alternate row green fertilizer herbs – hand ploughing

WINEMAKING

Temperature control

Grapes picked → winery in small buckets within 1-2 hours to prevent oxidation
Parcels crushed, destemmed, cold stabilisation in separate stainless-steel tanks
Complex fermentation process begins at 10°C → 18°C – over 10 days
After tasting, decreased to 8°C – to ‘stress’ the yeasts to maximise the aromatics
Over the course of a month, increased to 18°C → 20°C to finish **aromatic** fermentation
Alcoholic fermentation was then completed over approximately 12 days.

Organic practices

Certified organic in the **winery** as well as the vineyard
Natural yeasts indigenous to the vineyard ferment the grapes
Stabilisation by temperature – to minimised wine tartrates (diamonds)
Only certified organic, vegan fining used – bentonite clay (not egg or fish products)
Minimal sulphur used (less concentration than dried apricots) – mostly preserved by natural grape tannins and alcohol.

Notes:




Handpicking – hand sort, destem, and crush grapes – temp controlled fermentation tanks

VERTICAL VINTAGE TASTING



2011

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (IGP VL)

Cellar Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship
World Sauvignon Competition 2013 – SILVER

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

This vintage is a family favourite – it was a wine of two vintages, that started off as a dry growing season, creating small intensely flavoured grapes. Hand picking was interrupted halfway by a deluge of rain for 7 days, and so the balance of grapes picked were of a very different character and the final blend took some time to come together, but in maturity is superb.

Tasting notes

Redolent with citrus blossom, soft tones of artichoke and wild mint aromas, exotic fruit notes and refreshing citrus are underpinned by prominent flinty minerality.

Notes:



2012

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (IGP VL)

Cellar Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship
World Sauvignon Competition 2013 – GOLD
Sommelier Wine Awards 2016 – GOLD

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

A challenging year of very cold winter, frosts and rain before a dry, sunny summer meant yields were low – but it was one of our most successful vintages ever winning a gold medal for this wine at the World Sauvignon Competition.

Tasting notes


An exceptionally pure expression of Sauvignon Blanc, intense and aromatic with focused citrus notes, hints of exotic fruit and notes of hedgerow and wild mint. The palate is long with crisp acidity, textured minerality and hints of green tea.

Notes:



2015

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (IGP VL)

Cellar Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

Warm and dry weather conditions during the spring and summer months regionally allowed most grapes to reach full maturity with minimal risk of disease. Our vineyard expression felt like a leaner year, that resulted in zippy, citrus dominant notes.

Tasting notes


A lifted and crisp sauvignon showing citrus and pink grapefruit notes with white stone fruit and hints of lotus, wild mint, and artichoke. The palate shows textured flinty minerality and length, finished with crisp, refreshing acidity – a sauvignon blanc with great structure.

Notes:



2016

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (IGP VL)

Cellar Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

Once again, frost caused reduced fruit initially, but with ideal conditions towards the end of vintage the vines put their energies into the remaining grapes, and so citrus and tropical aromatics, fruit quality and concentration, and even a greater yield than predicted all ended harvest on a high note.

Tasting notes

Exotic aromatics of lotus and citrus blossom with pink grapefruit and elderflower, a wine of excellent acidity and length and texture that will become a classic wine from a challenging vintage.

Notes:



2017

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (AOP Touraine)

Current Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

A year of frost during flowering that reduced the yield of fruit, but the balance of the growing season delivered grapes of intense aromatics, wonderful length, and freshness on the palate – we were delighted with this vintage. The Silex vineyards in Bourré were particularly expressive of flinty minerality and a saline back note.

Tasting notes

Racy and crisp sauvignon showing layered citrus, notes mango and lotus with green tea, hedgerow and wild mint and artichoke. The palate shows textured flinty minerality and length, finished with crisp, refreshing acidity and lovely saline notes.

Notes:



2018

LEVIN Sauvignon Blanc (AOP Touraine)

Current Release – Certification Agriculture Biologique  Vegan – Flagship

Variety 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Appellation VDP du Val de Loire, France – Touraine–Chenonceaux

Vineyards Bourré, Choussy and Oisly

Vintage conditions

An excellent year for both quality and yield, a great fruit set in spring and heavy rains in winter gave way to a warm summer growing season, which created wines of exceptional flavour and ripeness.

Tasting notes

Exotic notes of elderflower and lotus are followed with delicate white peach, citrus blossom and pink grapefruit, opening to sweet green characters of clover and wild mint, with an almost saline, chalky-mineral texture.

Notes:
