Chablis, a crystal-clear expression of terroir

PURE CHABlis

One grape
One region
One of a kind

Only from France
On the trail of Chablis wines

This presentation is dedicated to the discovery of the wines of Chablis, and is part of the Bourgogne Wine Board’s (BIVB) global strategy to educate as part of their promotion of the wines of Chablis.

It is a unique trip to the very heart of the Chablis winegrowing area.
Chablis in France and in the world

Bourgogne:
- Of total French production: 4.1%
- 1.41 million d’hectoliters
- Spread of Bourgogne wine sales:
  - Export: 48%
  - France-retail: 24%
  - Traditional outlets: 28%
    - Wine stores / hotels & restaurants
    - and direct sales

Chablis:
- 238,334 hectoliters
- 16% of the total volume of wine produced in the Bourgogne region
- Spread of Chablis wine sales:
  - Export: 66%
  - France-retail: 14%
  - Traditional outlets: 20%
    - Major retailers, hard discount and local stores
A winegrowing region in northern France

A northerly region in the north of Bourgogne

1. Chablis & Grand Auxerrois
2. Côte de Nuits
3. Côte de Beaune
4. Côte Chalonnaise
5. Mâconnais
A millennia of history

The Romans

The Cistercian monks contribute to the development of winegrowing

Birth of the Chablis and Chablis Grand Cru AOCs

Tradition and modernity

21st century

I – III

The Romans vines

XII

1938

1956-1959

First solutions against springtime frosts

XVI

Its reputation is established as it is shipped to Paris
A unique soil and subsoil

- Limestone formed during the Kimmeridgian period (around 150 million years ago), when Chablis was under a warm, shallow sea.
- Contains fossils of small oysters called *Exogyra virgula*.
Chablis is Chardonnay, but not every Chardonnay is Chablis

Rosemary George MW

In Chablis winegrowing region the Chardonnay grape finds a unique yet fragile equilibrium at maturity, without over-ripening. Chablis thus offers an exceptional expression of the varietal, with wines that are elegant, mineral, and appreciated for their purity of taste.
A unique climate
Men, women and expertise
THE FOUR APPELLATIONS
Levels of Appellations

The wines of Bourgogne are classified according to four levels of Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée (AOC):

• Régionale
• Village and Village Premier Cru
• Grand Cru

In Chablis you can find:

• 2 Village appellations: Petit Chablis and Chablis
• 1 Village Premier Cru appellation
• 1 Grand Cru appellation

In total, 5,641 hectares in 2018 and 37,9 million bottles produced in average between 2014 and 2018
Vignoble de Chablis

Chablis Grand Cru
Chablis Premier Cru
Chablis
Petit Chablis
Petit Chablis

• On the plateaux on the tops of the hills, on limestone formed during the Portlandian period

• At an elevation of 230m-280m, with various aspects

• A fresh and lively wine to be drunk young

• Serve at 8-10°C
Chablis

- Planted on limestone soil formed during the **Kimmeridgian** period
Chablis Premier Cru

- On limestone slopes formed during the **Kimmeridgian** period
- The very essence of Chardonnay over some very special **terroirs**
- Serve at 10-11°C
40 Climats - 40 Premier Cru styles

- **Climat**: The Burgundian definition of terroir
- **Climat**: The very **DNA** of the Chablis region
  - A precisely defined **plot**
  - Enjoying **specific geological and climatic conditions**
  - Identified and highlighted by man’s work
Chablis Premier Cru

40 *Climats*, including 17 main ones or “flag-bearers”

The most famous: Mont de Milieu, Montée de Tonnerre, Fourchaume, Vaillons, Montmains, Côte de Léchet,

Each Chablis *Premier Cru* has its own style. Some are more zesty, such as Montée de Tonnerre and Côte de Léchet. Others are more delicate and fruity, like Beauroy and Fourchaume.

Each *Climat* brings its own personality, depending on the soil and the aspect.
Right bank example: the *Climat Fourchaume* is surrounded by the *Climats* L’Homme Mort, de Fontenay and Vaulorent.

Producers with vines in the L’Homme Mort can call their Premier Cru L’Homme Mort or Premier Cru Fourchaume, *Climat* L’Homme Mort is a *Climat* Fourchaume.
Chablis Grand Cru

- Steep slopes where in some places the Kimmeridgian limestone shows on the surface
- Mainly facing south/south-west: an aspect which ensures the vines are always bathed in light
- Minimum ageing until March 15th of the year after the harvest
- 1 Chablis Grand Cru appellation, 7 Climats
- Serve at 12-14°C
Food and wine combinations

Chablis wines go well with a wide range of dishes, which accounts for their international popularity.

Their purity and sophistication brings out the best in food, while neither masking nor swamping other flavors.

Chablis wines awaken the senses

There is a wide range of Chablis wines, going from wines for sharing to wines for special occasions.

From Petit Chablis to Chablis Grand Cru, these wines make every occasion extra special
Petit Chablis: Serve chilled and enjoy as an aperitif, or simply on its own. A convivial wine for simple

Chablis: Chablis is the perfect accompaniment to seafood, grilled fish and oysters. But that’s not all. Its depth brings out the very best in Swiss cheeses, aged and mature Cheddar as well as being the perfect meats and roast poultry.
Food and wine combinations

Chablis Premier Cru: Its purity, sophistication and nobility are a perfect match for a wide range of flavors. To be enjoyed with creamy sauces, andouillette, snails, or cooked oysters. It is cheeses and Bourgogne cheeses like Epoisses. But it is also wonderful with warm asparagus, rabbit, crab, scallops and.

Chablis Grand Cru: A wonderful partner to lobster and langoustine, foie gras, poultry and white meats in cream or mushroom sauces, raw fish or fish cooked with cream or butter.
The Chablis wine region, located in a relatively concentrated geographical area, shares a single varietal and draws all its authenticity from the Kimmeridgian soil. It nonetheless offers an extensive pallet of wines and expressions, to delight a wide public.

The vines of Chablis: A single varietal, Chardonnay

- Kimmeridgian soil
- Four levels of *appellation*
- 5,641 hectares of vines
- 35 to 40 million bottles produced annually
- Sold in around 100 countries

And a purity that is inimitable

*Pure Chablis, one grape, one region, one of a kind.*
Thank you for your attention

Find out more about Chablis wines at

To find out more watch the video of
Chablis winegrowing region seen from the sky here!
Slide 3: In the north of France, the Chablis winegrowing area is halfway between Paris and Beaune, and not far from Champagne.

Slide 5: The wines of Chablis have a history that dates back over millennia:

- The vines were introduced by the Romans
- Monks (Benedictine but mainly Cistercian) developed them (Photo of the Abbey of Pontigny on the right).
- River/canal connections to Paris meant that trade was established well before the development of the railways in France (without the Parisian market, there might have been no Chablis). Chablis was seen on the tables of Paris, the precursor to export...

From the 16th century onwards, the wines of Chablis became more and more famous. Brought to Paris via the port of Auxerre, the wine appeared on the table of the King of France, and set off to conquer the world – England, Russia etc.

Prior to the construction of the railways, all the wines were transported on the river Yonne and shipped up the Seine on flat bottomed boats called *coches d’eau*.

The winegrowing area suffered with phylloxera at the end of the 19th century, followed by the First World War.

In 1908, a union was formed to fight against fraud – a lot more Chablis was being sold around the world than was being produced. Chablis had become a symbol of white wine. This union was at the root of the *appellations* recognized by the INAO in 1938 for Chablis and Chablis Grand Cru.

It was only after mechanization in 1956 and the introduction of heating in the vines that the region enjoyed renewed growth. The generous vintage of 1970 brought the wealth back to the Chablis region. The last fifteen years have been marked by the arrival of new generations with an excellent education, and who have travelled all around the world. They are starting to combine tradition and modernity (knowledge that has been kept for centuries, and new technologies).
Slide 6: Around 150 million years ago, Chablis was covered by the sea, during which time the unique Kimmeridgian layer was formed. The upper and middle Kimmeridgian is a complex of between 50-100 meters, alternating limestone clay, marl and calcareous marl. The soil is pale gray in color, sometimes almost white. This is the soil where the Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru appellations flourish.

Slide 7: The only varietal authorized in the Chablis region is Chardonnay. Although this grape – which has become the international reference in terms of white wine – is recognized around the world, its expression through the soil, the climate and winemakers’ expertise in Chablis is unique and unrivalled. Chardonnay, from Bourgogne, is an early budding variety. Chardonnay offers a perfect interpretation of the Chablis terroir.

Slide 8: Technical progress
The Chablis winegrowing region is located in the northern part of the Bourgogne. The climate is often described as semi-continental, with a long, hard winter and a hot summer, but it is, in fact, quite tricky to classify. In general terms, the climate of the Yonne department enjoys an oceanic influence, but it has some major disparities, nonetheless. This modified oceanic climate is one of the five main types of climate in France. It covers the Paris basin and extends towards the south of the country. The oceanic influence is clear to begin with, but is much less intense than in coastal areas. Moreover, it is also subject to continental influences from Eastern Europe. As a result, there is less rainfall and the winters are harsher and summer hotter than with an oceanic climate. (Source: blog.univ-angers.fr). This translates to annual rainfall of between 650-700 millimeters. Spring frosts are characteristic of this region. Over time, and having suffered major losses some years, winegrowers have learned to manage these climate events.
In 1959, heaters for use in the vines were first adopted. Today, to help protect their crops against the frost, a range of methods are used, including heated cables and anti-frost fabrics, along with spraying of certain plots of Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru vines. The spraying technique, as the name suggests, involves spraying the vines with water, which freezes around the buds, forming a protective cocoon that maintains the temperature at 0°C. One might call this an igloo approach.
Slide 9: Portraits (left to right)

- Véronique Boss Drouhin from Maison Joseph Drouhin
- Jean-Luc et Marie-Jo Fourrey from Domaine Fourrey & Fils
- Nathalie & Gilles Fevre from Domaine Nathalie & Gilles Fevre
- Lucie Depuydt from Maison J. Moreau
- Erwan Faiveley from Domaine Faiveley
- Romuald Hugot from Pisse-Loup
- Michel et Didier Lamblin from Lamblin & Fils
- Guillaume Michel from Louis Michel & Fils
- Baudouin Millet from Domaine Millet
- Alain Geoffroy from Domaine Alain Geoffroy
- Pierre-Louis Bersan from Domaine Jean-François et Pierre-Louis Bersan
- Alberic Bichot from Maison Albert Bichot
- Cyril Testut from Domaine Testut
- Julien Brocard from Jean-Marc Brocard
- Sébastien Christophe from Domaine Christophe
- Athénaïs de Béru from Château de Béru
- Benoit Droin from Domaine Jean-Paul et Benoit Droin
- Marie-Ange Robin from Domaine Guy Robin
- François Servin from Domaine Servin
- Stéphanie Mosnier from Domaine Sylvain Mosnier
- Vincent Laroche from la Meulière
- Olivier Tricon from Domaine de Vauroux
- Laurent et Marie-Noëlle Ternynck from Domaine de Mauperthuis and Domaine des Marronniers
- Louis Moreau from Domaine Louis Moreau
- Didier Séguier from William Fèvre
- Guillaume Vrignaud from Domaine Vrignaud
- Bruno Verret from Domaine Verret
- Camille Besson from Domaine Besson
- Gilles Collet from Domaine Collet Jean & Fils
- Didier Defaix from Domaine Bernard Defaix
- Pierre-Henry Gagey from Maison Louis Jadot
- Jean-Philippe Archambaud
- Laurent Pinson from Domaine Pinson
- Daniel-Etienne Defaix from Domaine Daniel-Etienne Defaix
- Clotilde Davenne from Domaine Les Temps Perdus
- Stéphanie Michelet et Jean-Claude Courtault from Domaine Jean-Claude Courtault
- Damien Leclerc from La Chablisienne
- Romain Bouchard from Domaine de l’Enclos
- Thomas Pico from Domaine de Pattes Loup
- Jean-François Bordet from Domaine Séguinot Bordet
Slide 9: The portraits show generations of knowledge and know how that has been passed on from generation to generation, through the ages – some of today’s producers are the thirteenth or fourteenth generations. The new generations take over the family business, have a thorough education, travel, and are starting to combine tradition and modernity.

The domaines:
- Over 300 domaines that sell over 10 000 bottles, including a cave coopérative which alone accounts for 24% of the market.
- A hundred wine-mERCHANTS: the top 15 represent ¾ of purchases, and the top 40, 95%.

Slide 11: Figures 2018:
- Petit Chablis: 1108 hectares in 2018 – 53 402 hL on average 2014-2018
- Chablis: 3 656 hectares in 2018 – 187 237 hL on average 2014-2018
- Chablis Premier Cru: 777 hectares in 2018 – 39 527 hL on average 2014-2018
- Chablis Grand Cru: 100 hectares in 2018 – 5 419 hL on average 2014-2018

Total production of Chablis wines on average 2014-2018: 284 320 hL

Slide 16: What is a Climat?
- The Bourgogne definition of terroir
- Plots of land with precisely defined limits, benefiting from specific geological and climatic conditions which, when combined with human action and "translated" through a great grape variety, brought about an exceptional mosaic of hierarchically organized and world-renowned wines. There are thus thousands of Climats in Bourgogne.
- They are what make every Climat of Chablis Premier Cru unique.
- A long story through the ages: going back to as early as the 7th century, famous “crus” were recognized and quoted. For several centuries, the reputation of Bourgogne wines spread. Some wines, designated by the name of the original Climat, acquired a reputation which transcended borders. One of the earliest reference to the word Climat in the Bourgogne region dates back to 1537 on a document from Chablis.
- In 1935, the INAO (Institut National des Appellations d'Origine) officialized the use of the term Climat and used it in its regulatory texts for all Bourgogne appellations, whatever their hierarchical level.
Slide 17: There are 40 Climats, including 17 main Climats.
These Climats can be found on both sides of the river Serein, which runs through Chablis. As such, there are Chablis Premier Cru right bank wines, surrounding the Chablis Grand Cru appellation, and Chablis Premier Cru left bank wines. The volumes represented by the eleven biggest Climats of Chablis Premier Cru is equivalent to 80% of the volume of the Chablis Premier Cru appellation. These eleven Climats of Chablis Premier Cru, Vaillons, Fourchaume, Montmains, Beauroy, Côte de Léchet, Vaucoupin, Vau de Vey, Montée de Tonnerre, Mont de Milieu, Les Fourneaux, Vau Ligneau.

Slide 21: The seven Climats of the appellation Chablis Grand Cru are all situated on a the same hill, on the right bank of the Serein river, benefitting form a south/south-west exposure that is beneficial to the evolution of Chardonnay. For the appellation Chablis Grand Cru, the wines are aged at least until the 15th of March of the year following the grape harvest.
Slide 22: Food and wine pairing

- **Petit Chablis**
  - When should one drink Petit Chablis?
    - As a pre-dinner drink: Petit Chablis is an ideal wine to drink before dinner. Its freshness and simplicity waken your taste buds.
    - It can be served on different occasions such as a drink with friends.
  - It is a wine accessible to all, in every sense of the word (drinking occasions, price...)
  - Ideal serving temperature: 8°C to 10°C.

- **Chablis**
  - Chablis combines itself with a multitude of dishes: it sublimes them without masking them.
  - Thus, it would be a shame to limit Chablis and food pairings to conventional associations: Chablis/fish or Chablis/oysters. These wines produce superb sensations when paired with goat cheese, white meats, poultry, and vegetable tarts...
  - Ideal serving temperature: 10°C to 12°C.
  - Other possible food combinations: terrine, bass or salmon marinated in herbs, cod with vanilla, sushi, shellfish and other seafood products, tandoori chicken, and *Blanquette de veau*.

Slide 24: Underline the diversity of the *Climats* of Chablis Premier Cru, the wide selection of wines and therefore the wide selection of possible food and wine combinations. Purity, elegance, and sophistication.

Chablis Grand Cru – power and purity – go with even more things because of their strength.