



PHILIPPONNAT

CHAMPAGNE

Decanter

PHILIPPONNAT CHAMPAGNE: FOR THOSE IN-THE-KNOW

Michael Edwards

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Read about the history of the Philipponnat Champagne house, including its coveted Clos des Goisses vineyard, and find out which wines our expert, Michael Edwards, rated most highly in a recent tasting hosted by the merchant Justerini & Brooks in London.

Philipponnats have lived around Mareuil-sur-Äy for 500 years. The bijou house dating from 1910 is revered for its 5.5 hectare walled vineyard, **Clos des Goisses**.

This pre-eminent single vineyard in **Champagne** produces mainly great **Pinot Noir**, and a vintage wine from its fruit has been made almost every year for nearly a century.

Goisse in old French means ‘toil’ – apt, as the slopes are very steep at an incline of up to 45%, making them onerous to till in springtime.

Yet this is a dream vineyard overlooking the protective Marne canal, and in the distance the Côte des Blancs.

Facing due-south, its grapes catch the rays of the sun from dawn to dusk, gaining an extra degree of sugar maturity unmatched in the Marne Valley.

The Clos’ wines once overshadowed the other cuvées of the house, but Charles Philipponnat is now making some arresting wines at all price points.

The approach is quite Burgundian, artisanal with a deep feeling for Mareuil’s sturdy terroir.

But the winemaking is very Champenois, displaying the deft art of assemblage. Oak is used judiciously, never obscuring the wines, and partial non-malolactic fermentation ensures freshness.

There’s no formula, each wine made according to the demands of the harvest.

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Read more at <http://www.decanter.com/wine-reviews-tastings/philipponnat-champagne-tasted-371250/#V02pLPAtJCyhtd1M.99>