

SYLVIE ESMONIN
GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN



BURGUNDY
CÔTE DE NUITS

OVERVIEW | Until just a few years ago, this estate was known as Domaine Michel Esmonin et Fille. After studying in Dijon, Sylvie Esmonin worked in various capacities as a consulting oenologist. She says that she needed several years of independent work to weigh her decision and commitment to come back to Gevrey-Chambertin and succeed her father at the family estate. She came back to vinify the 1990 vintage, and from then on the whole production became estate-bottled. Otherwise, all decisions were made by father and daughter together, until progressively Sylvie assumed all responsibilities (with the possible exception of plowing, Michel Esmonin's favorite vineyard chore).

VINEYARD AREA: 7.1 hectares

ANNUAL PRODUCTION: 2000 cases

TOP SITES: Clos St. Jacques

SOIL TYPES: red alluvia and limestone

GRAPE VARIETIES: pinot noir

The estate comprises 7.1 hectares in Gevrey-Chambertin, with a sizeable plot of the Premier Cru Clos St-Jacques as the family house "back yard," and newly added plots in Volnay Santenots and Côte-de-Nuits-Village. The average age of the vines is high, most were planted by Sylvie's grandfather, and some by her father. The winery is a large facility, with a beautiful stone cellar underneath.

VINEYARD/CELLAR PRACTICES | All grapes are destemmed, crushed and fermented in open wood vats, then put in barrels for the secondary fermentation and ageing. The barrels are of various ages to accommodate the different cuvées, with only Clos St-Jacques using a high proportion of new wood, usually 75%.

WINES | **Bourgogne Rouge Cuvée Sylvie** - from vineyards outside Gevrey-Chambertin; it is light, fruity and lively.

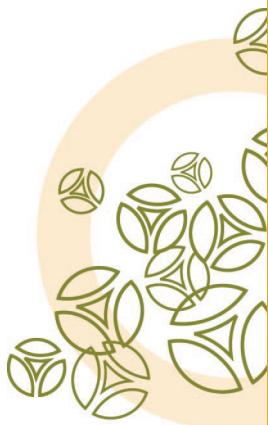
Côte-de-Nuits-Village - comes from vineyards in Brochon, a small village between Gevrey and Fixin, from the lieux-dits La Croix Viollette and Les Vignois; it is smoky and peppery, with ripe tannins and sweet fruit.

Gevrey-Chambertin - The Gevrey-Chambertin comes from 30-year-old vines in the lieu-dit Les Crais; it is quite rich and structured, with good ripeness and dark fruit aromas.

Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes - The largest cuvée, Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes, comes from various plots of 60-year-old vines; it ages in 50% new wood and has toasty oak notes, is very ripe, round and chewy, with intense berry fruit.

Gevrey-Chambertin Clos St. Jacques 1er Cru - The Clos St-Jacques, as a young wine, often tastes drier and lighter than the VV cuvée; with some bottle age, though, it shows great finesse and complexity. It is a wine of elegance more than obvious power, and it gracefully integrates subtle fruit and pleasant oaky notes.

PRESS | "I had a most interesting visit with Sylvie Esmonin, who runs this 7.1 ha domaine and explained that she is now fully committed to changing her vinification philosophy, explaining that a few years ago she tasted a 1911 Clos de Vougeot. It was incredible. Yes, it was mature but it was more than just alive, it was vibrant and still full of life with no sign of fatigue in sight. That wine made quite an impression and I kept asking myself how was it that it was so incredible at more than 90 years of age. I decided that this was the kind of wine that I wanted to make and I began looking into how our ancestors made that kind of wine. Then I the chance to taste at the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti and I tasted some great wines but also some extremely good wines from a few so-called off vintages. And then it hit me, stems. Stems were the extra component, the additional dimension that that old Clos de Vougeot had and it's what the DRC wines have that few others have. It's not that I believe that stems are a magic bullet for greatness but it's something that many of the greatest wines ever made in Burgundy have in common. When you get to a certain age in life, you're less willing to make compromises just for the sake of commercial reasons. And I've reached that point where I want to make something profound if I can and while I still have to sell my wine, I'm going to go in a different direction and hope my existing clients will follow. I have cautiously been using a small proportion of stems for the last few years but in 2003 and 2004, the proportions went up significantly, varying between 30 and 70% with the exception of the Bourgogne, which I use zero. This hasn't been an easy decision and even my father doesn't completely agree that it's a good idea but I'm blessed to have someone like him who is willing to set aside his prejudices and give another approach a try." - Burghound, January, 2007



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