



THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR QUALITY



Frédéric Berne • Beaujolais

Every person flirts with the saying “The grass is always greener” at one or more moments in his or her life. Especially for those who live in small towns and wonder about big city lights, big deals and corner offices. Raised on a farm in Beaujolais, Berne’s parents hoped he would choose a career far away from a farm. On the first day of his internship with IBM, Frédéric Berne realized his destiny was not a suit and tie. During his childhood, there were two peaks of work at the farm: one was the grape harvest, the other was the hay harvest. During those hectic and threshold moments, farmers relied on their neighbors and friends to get the task done. That feeling, the immediate rush of community and conviviality was a cornerstone of who Frédéric Berne was and who, he realized, he wanted to be.

After learning conventional winemaking for nine years with Robert Perroud in Brouilly, his outlook expanded when he worked with the Bret brothers at their biodynamic estate, Domaine de Soufrandière in Mâcon. “I discovered a completely different side of winemaking,” he says. Berne's time with the Bret brothers greatly inspired him, and he wanted to apply these natural strategies on his home turf. With a decade of internship and practice in his pocket, Berne could begin to see his yellow brick road, and it would lead to the town of Lantignié. In any healthy relationship, there is the element of reciprocation, and this resonates in the important relationship between Frédéric Berne and Château des Vergers. Longtime family friends of the Berne family, Château des Vergers is a 17th century mansion with ancient cellars, dating back to 1604. It is located within the dot of a village Lantignié, a kernel of terroir within the greater Régnié cru with soils of granite, quartz, fluorite and barite (Berne, also owns land here, and believes that Lantignié will, someday, be the eleventh cru of Beaujolais). It is here, in the ancient cellars of Vergers, where Berne makes wines of extraordinary purity which erase the boxes of traditional or modern.

In 2016, the French wine organization AdVini awarded Berne the title “Wine grower of the future.” With 50 candidates and seven finalists, the award is given to the vigneron who represents “an ambitious project that enhances his/her wine region and whose wines are selected by the finest restaurants in France and abroad.” This honor, lost in translation from New York to San Francisco, is a big shot accomplishment in France. How many times have you heard the words “up and coming producer” or “rising star?” Too many. That’s why we won’t attach these names to Frédéric Berne. He is a winemaker of now, of the moment, walking forward on his yellow brick road.

The Wines of Frédéric Berne

Chiroubles "Les Terrasses"

Morgon "Corcelette"



Berne's piece of Corcelette in Morgon



Berne (left) and his buddy Mathieu Paquet in Latignié