

TUTTO



THIERRY HESNAULT

Jasnières, Loire

On a particularly drab January night we met Thierry Hesnault, one of the Loire's most discreet vigneron, at the little church in the village of Chahaignes and followed him through a number of lanes into the woods, arriving at the entrance to a small cave. Candles were lit and we stepped out of the rain and into the tuffeau, spending the next few hours tasting his subtle, moving wines, which verged on the sublime.

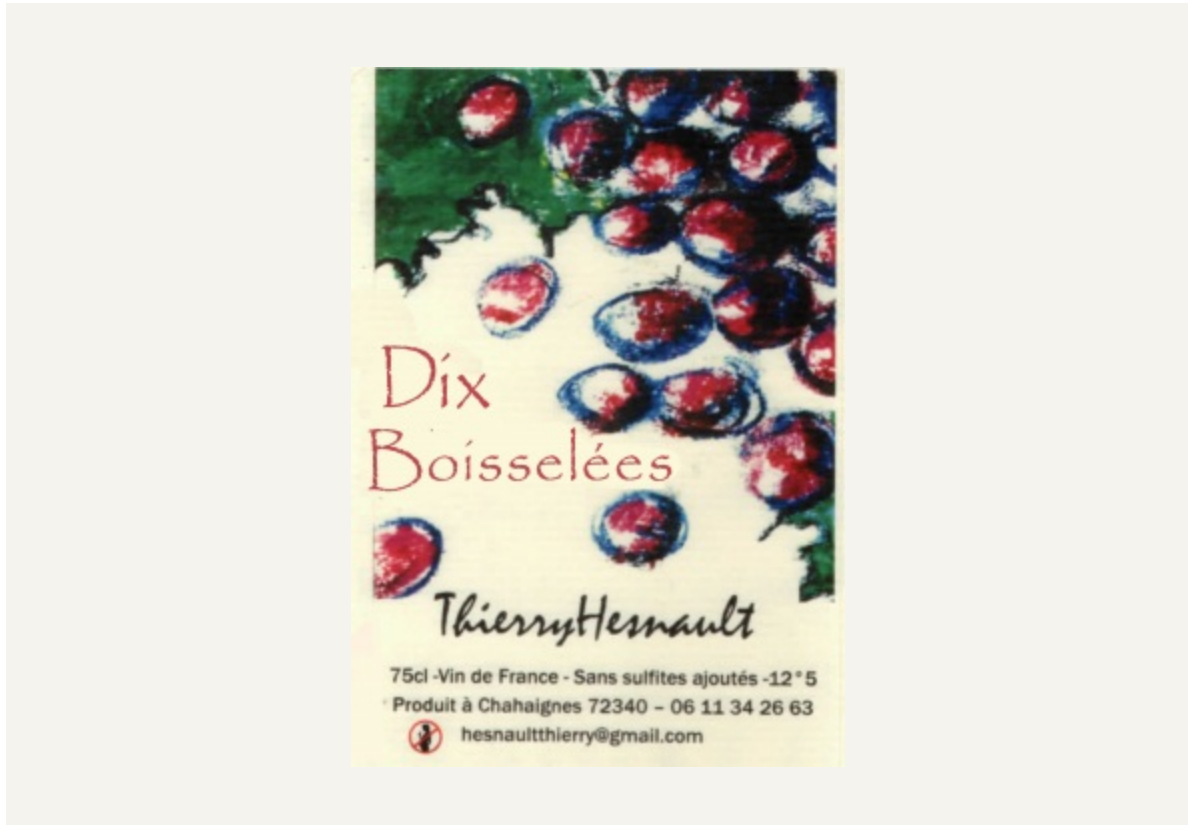
A native of Touraine, Thierry comes from a family of vigneron and travelled the world working in vineyards before returning to the Loire and working alongside the likes of Eric Nicolas and Jean-Pierre Robinot, whilst teaching at the Lycée Viticole in Amboise. He spent several years acquiring tiny parcels of the oldest vines he could find and in 2009 began making his own wine.

He now farms two and half hectares of old vines spread out in tiny parcels across the Sarthe, planted over a complex melange of clay, iron and silex. Having grown up amongst the vines, he farms with a real respect for nature, with treatments kept to an absolute minimum and a focus on channelling the energy of these remarkable old plants.

In the cave, Thierry makes wine as they did in yesteryear, without electricity or running water, relying on a deft hand, great patience and the perfect conditions for élevage the tuffeau provides to produce achingly pure wines that possess a remarkable capacity to age.

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DIX BOISSELÉES

2020

From a tiny, tenth of a hectare parcel of Pinot Noir that is over a hundred years of age, this is quite unlike any expression of the grape we have tasted from the Loire. The grapes fermented as whole bunches for a month, before eighteen months of *élevage* in a single old *barrique*. The result is a gorgeous take on the variety that wows with *sous bois* complexity, soft, supple tannins and an impeccable finish.