

JÉRÔME LAMBERT

Anjou, Loire



Jérôme Lambert tends a couple of hectares of vines near Rablay-sur-Layon in a part of Anjou that is undoubtedly one of the Loire's great terroirs.

Jérôme is a true Angevin. Born in the area but not to a family of vigneron, his love of wine grew naturally. As a teenager he would pick leftover grapes, stomp on them and wait to see what would become of the fermenting juice. For over a decade he farmed less than a hectare, making wine guided by nothing but instinct and occasional advice from locals such as Richard Leroy.

Jérôme now farms four and half hectares spread across small parcels in Thouarcé, Faye d'Anjou, Rablay-sur-Layon and Champ-sur-Layon. He has worked organically from the outset and has been making wine without any additions for several decades.

He is best known for producing achingly pure Chenin Blanc from three parcels of old vines planted over schist. These taut, focused examples of Chenin provide a wonderful expression of Anjou's terroir and possess a great ability to age.

He also farms a little Grolleau planted over sandy loam, which produces an easygoing, joyful expression of the grape that is amongst our favourite bistro wines and in recent years he has proven himself to be a deft hand at pétillants. His pure, vinous sparkling wines manage to capture both the variety and terroir beautifully. Both his Chenin and a vibrant rosé of Gamay are amongst the best of this genre we have tried.

As is the case when spending time with the man himself, there is never a dull moment drinking Jérôme's wines, which combine energy, purity and a little finesse to brilliant effect.

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L'AIR DE RIEN

2022

This wonderful sparkling rosé is made from a direct press of Gamay and Grolleau, aged on the lees for over two years before disgorgement. A glistening cherry red in the glass, its fine bubbles carry delicate notes of minerals, red berries and blood orange, making for an invigorating, moreish sparkling wine that makes just as much sense at the beginning or end of a meal.