



## Champagne Fresne-Ducret

Region: Champagne

Village: Villedommange 1er Cru (Montagne de Reims)

Appellation: 6 ha Champagne

Growers: Pierre Fresne Daniella Fresne

Website: <https://www.champagne-fresne-ducret.com/en/>

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The Fresne-Ducret domaine consists of 6 hectares of 1er Cru vineyards divided among 25 parcels, which are, with one exception, all in the village of Villedommange. According to the champagne authority, Richard Juhlin, Villedommange, along with the village of Sacy, has the best vineyards in the northern part of the Montagne de Reims, known as the Petite Montagne. The Fresne family have lived and farmed in Villedommange for 180 years and since 2007 it has been Pierre Fresne and his wife Daniella writing the current chapter. Losing little time, Pierre and Daniella began estate-bottling their champagnes with the 2008 vintage. In 2018, after a decade of working towards organic farming, they officially entered into conversion for organic certification.

Notes from a conversation with Pierre:

“Regarding my philosophy, I think of myself as a farmer who makes wine rather than a winemaker who grows grapes. That’s because of my family history (we were grape growers long before we started to make champagne) and also because it’s impossible to make good wine with bad grapes!

Now, this year has taught me a lesson in humility: at the end of the day it’s the weather that makes the harvest, not the man....

The way I make wine is in constant evolution year after year, and I don’t like to shut doors unless I think I have explored all of the options a particular technique or tool can offer...

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As far as I’m concerned the use of sulphites is a necessary evil, and I try to use as little as possible. I find sulphites are necessary in order to preserve the freshness of the grape must and to prevent oxidation when reserve wine is transferred from one tank to another, but the closer we get to bottling, the less I use them (they would interfere with the prise de mousse), and no more sulphites are added afterwards (i.e. disgorging). I have to confess that I have yet to taste a white wine “sans sulphites” that would make me want to stop using



them altogether. In the few that I have tried, I found “foxy” notes that wouldn’t work for our champagnes.

This choice to use less and less sulfites means that all of our base wines now undergo malolactic fermentation, which was not always the case in the past.

Regarding yeast, my opinion is not so definite. Our move towards organic grape growing has led me to try and vinify without adding selected yeast in the last couple of years. Two months ago, we bottled our very first single plot “wild” yeast fermented Blanc de Blanc, “Le Mont Teigneux”.

But I am a champagne maker! I need selected yeast in order to guarantee the prise de mousse. So, if I am going to use them later in the process, why not use them from the beginning, and avoid potential dangers of wild yeast fermentation stops?”

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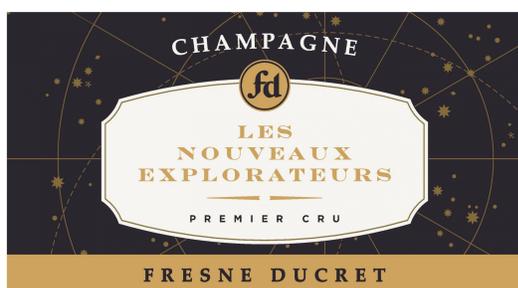
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## Les Nouveaux Explorateurs 1er Cru

The base wine for this cuvée is a blend of three 1er Cru parcels in Villedommange with sandy/clay soils: “Les Braies”, “Les Monts Teigneux”, and “Les Barbaries”. The blend is 45% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier, and 10% Chardonnay. The base wine vintage is blended with 20% of the previous vintage and 20% from a “perpetual reserve” tank begun in 2008. The alcoholic and malo-lactic fermentations are done in tank and the “assemblage” is bottled the following spring. The champagne then rests “sur lattes” a minimum of 30 months before being disgorged. The dosage is 4.5g.



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## Le Chemin du Chemin 1er Cru

The base wine for this cuvée is primarily a blend from four 1er Cru parcels in Villedommange and Jouy-les-Reims with clay/limestone soils: “Les Loges”, “Les Monts Teigneux”, “Les Glaisières”, and “Les Huchis”. The blend is 40% Pinot Noir, 25% Pinot Meunier, and 35% Chardonnay. Only the “cuvée” part of the pressed juice is used. The base wine vintage is blended with 30% reserve wine. The alcoholic and malo-lactic fermentations are done in tank and the “assemblage” is bottled the following spring. The champagne then rests “sur lattes” a minimum of 60 months before being disgorged. The dosage is 4.5g.



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## Arquémie No. 3 1er Cru

Arquémie is an “Old French” word meaning alchemy and captures the spirit of Pierre’s “divine study” of champagne through the production of “small batch” cuvées. The No. 3 is a Blanc de Noir with 75% Pinot Meunier and 25% Pinot Noir. It was produced from three 1er Cru parcels in Villedommange with mostly clay/limestone soils: “Les Mainberts”, “Les Caves”, and “Les Barbaries”. The base wine is vintage 2013 which was blended with 20% reserve wine. The alcoholic and malo-lactic fermentations were done in tank and the “assemblage” was bottled in 2014. For the more than 60 months of aging “sur lattes” the bottles were closed with a cork rather than the typical cap. This expensive and time-consuming practice allows some micro-oxygenation to take place during the long period of maturation. The champagne was disgorged November 2019 with a dosage of 4g. Production is 2037 bottles.



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## La Grande Hermine

The cuvée « La Grande Hermine » is a vintage champagne aged « sur lattes » for a minimum of 8 years. It quintessentially captures the Fresne-Ducret style in its combination of freshness and aromatic complexity. It was produced from 1er Cru parcels in Villedommange with clay/limestone soils, primarily: “Les Loges” and “Les Monts Teigneux.” The alcoholic and malo-lactic (partial) fermentations were done in tank and the wine was aged in tank for 5 months before bottling. The Champagne is disgorged with a dosage of 4g.

