Wine Traditions Ltd.

Brard-Blanchard

Village: Boutiers-Saint-Trojan
Appellation: 20ha Cognac Pineau des Charentes IGP Charentais
Grower: Sophie Brard-Blanchard
Website: https://brard-blanchard.fr/

A good glass of Cognac unites the head and the heart. It induces reflection and even nostalgia. It therefore seems fitting to conjure up the provincial names of the region that preceded the departmental names, Charente and Charente-Maritime. Records show that as long ago as the 13th century wines from Aunis, Saintonge and Angoumois were recognized for their remarkable qualities. By the 18th century, the region was known for its distilled wine. The Brard Blanchard family has been farming in the Charente for generations and like many other Cognac producers, they have gradually given up polyculture to concentrate on grape growing and wine and spirits production. Presently, Sophie Brard Blanchard is at the helm of the family's 20 hectares of vineyards and 7 hectares of grains. She produces red and white wines, red and white Pineau des Charentes and a range of Cognacs. Sophie's father turned to organic farming in 1972 after having some health issues related to the chemicals he was employing in the vineyard. The domaine is one of a small number in Cognac to be certified organic.

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Pineau des Charentes
Pineau des Charentes is a wine-based liquor referred to in French as a “vin de liqueur”. After the grapes have been manually harvested and pressed, What Sophie calls an Eau-de-Vie de Cognac at a strength of 70% alc. is added to the unfermented juice to block the natural fermentation. In the service of finding balance in her Pineau, Sophie’s methods, which include manual harvest and extended barrel aging, go well beyond the appellation requirements. No SO2 is used throughout the entire process.

Pineau des Charentes Blanc
The Pineau Blanc is a blend of 40% Ugni Blanc, 40% Colombard and 20% Montils. After adding the Eau-de-Vie de Cognac in the proportion ¼ , the resulting “liqueur” is aged in tank throughout the winter for a natural clarification. This is followed by three years of aging in barrels that are at least seven years old. A light filtration is done before bottling.



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Pineau des Charentes Rouge

The Pineau Rouge is a blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc. Occasionally when grapes are particularly ripe, Sophie allows a day or two of spontaneous fermentation to occur before the “mutage”. After adding the Eau-de-Vie de Cognac in the proportion ¼ , the resulting “liqueur” is aged in tank throughout the winter for a natural clarification. This is followed by two years of aging in barrels that are at least seven years old. A light filtration is done before bottling.



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Cognac

Every year during winter, following a manual harvest of Ugni Blanc, Colombard and Folle Blanche grapes, the resulting white wines are twice distilled in a Charentais still at the estate. The resulting Eau de Vie is aged in Limousin oak barrels for several years. Aging takes place in old, dark, and humid cellars where a mysterious and calm atmosphere reigns, with the Cognac first releasing subtle, round, fresh, and fruity aromas in contact with the wood and evolving into rich, smooth, complex, warm notes with further ageing over decades….







