



Champagne José Michel

Region: Champagne

Village: Moussy (Côtes D'Epernay)

Appellation: 7 ha Champagne

Grower: Antonin Michel

Website: <https://www.champagne-jose-michel.com/>

José Michel made his first vintage in 1955 and thanks in part to his cellar of very old bottles of Pinot Meunier, he developed a cult following for his Champagnes. José passed away in 2019 and this “Maison de Tradition” which began in 1847 is now, seven generations later, run by José and Nicole’s grandson, Antonin. Antonin is brilliantly refining the work that José accomplished over six decades and developing his own ideas. As he says, “José and I agreed on practically everything”.

The Champagne house is located in Moussy, a small village just south of Epernay. The 7 hectares of vineyards are spread throughout a number of villages, both in the Cotes D'Epernay and in the Vallée de la Marne. The vineyard sights with a richer clay soil are planted to Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. The slopes which have a calcareous soil are planted to Chardonnay. José Michel was the first in his family to plant Chardonnay which he did beginning in 1958. Fermentations are carried out in old oak casks or enameled steel vats and the wines go through a malolactic fermentation. José Michel is certified “Level 3” the top level of certification in Haute Valeur Environnementale. The Michels are a founding member of the group, “Tresors de Champagne” known as the “Special Club”.

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"Tradition" Brut NV

The non-vintage Brut is a blend in which the 70% Pinot Meunier forms the base, and 30% Chardonnay adds complexity and finesse. In addition to the base vintage (typically 2 years old), the NV Brut benefits from being blended with 30% reserve wines that are often 4 or 5 years old including a 20+ year old "perpetual reserve". The champagne is typically 2+ years "sur lattes" and carries a dosage of 7 grams.



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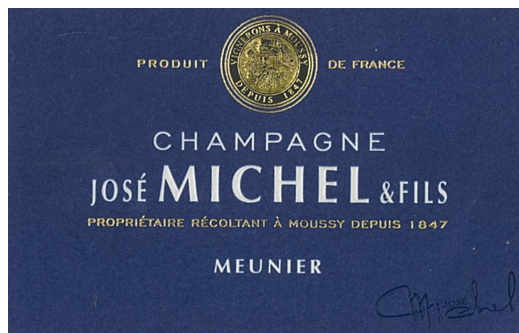
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"Pinot Meunier" Brut NV

Although historically Jose Michel made many “mono-cépage” bottlings of Pinot Meunier, he never advertised the fact on the label and when some west coast customers visited him around 2007 and suggested that he do just that, his response was to ask if anyone would buy it. The small cadre of west coast enthusiasts all said that they would and the rest is history. The Pinot Meunier is produced from a single vintage but does not state the vintage on the label because the Champagne does not necessarily spend the requisite minimum of three years “sur lattes”. The style highlights the unique aromatics and fruit flavors of Champagne’s indigenous grape. The level of dosage is 7 grams.



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Blanc de Blancs "Clos Saint Jean" Brut Vintage

The Blanc de Blancs is produced in the best vintages. It is made from a small plot of Chardonnay grown in the village of Saint Agnan on the left bank of the Marne. The wine is fermented in stainless steel and then matured both in tank "sur lie" and in "demi-muids". After the secondary fermentation it rests "sur lattes" for at least 5 years allowing the Chardonnay qualities to broaden and mature. Dosage is 5 grams. It is a wine of impeccable character, showing both nobility and restraint. It is worthy of cellaring for at least two years after disgorgement.



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"Special Club" Brut Vintage

The Club de Viticulteurs is a group of independent Champagne producers who have come together in order to promote the high quality of their work. The José Michel Special Club was chosen by this group as an ambassador of quality and given the right to use the Special Club label and antique bottle. The Special Club is a blend of 40% Pinot Meunier and 60% Chardonnay. The vines are all at least 35+ years old. The champagne is disgorged according to demand and currently has six years on the lees "sur lattes" with dosage carrying just 5 grams.



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"Cuvée de Père Houdart" Brut NV

The cuvée de Père Houdart is an homage to José's grandfather and has been produced only a few times. The current cuvée is a blend of 40% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier and 20% Chardonnay. Some of the wines were vinified in stainless steel and some in old foudres. 50% of the blend comes from the vintages 1971, 1975, 1976, 1982 and 1984 and 50% of the blend is from the vintage 2012. Bottles of the old vintages are opened and an assemblage is made with the new wine (2012) to produce a new Champagne. The Père Houdart matured "sur lies" 4 years before being disgorged and finished with a dosage of 4g/L.

