

H. BILLIOT

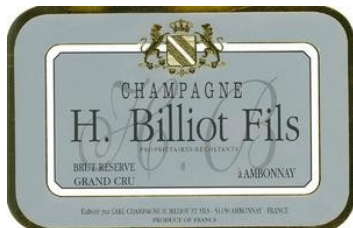
Ambonnay



SERGE BILLIOT



View of Ambonnay



Vintner Select

6215 Hi-Tek Court
Mason, OH 45040
800-597-1491
fax 513-229-3633

www.vintnerselect.com

France

CHAMPAGNE Montagne de Reims

OVERVIEW

Billiot is making some of the most exciting Champagnes available today. Here we find ourselves in Ambonnay. As you drive in you see growers signs everywhere, but only five are fulltime wine estates, living entirely off sales of their own wines in bottle. Among them Billiot. Ambonnay is Pinot land; 350 hectares and only 20 of them Chardonnay. Ambonnay Pinot Noir seems to be the sweetest, most Volnay-like in the Montagne de Reims. (Bouzy, in contrast, is darker but more earthy, while Aÿ is firmer with less overt berried fruit). The Ambonnay signature might be strawberry, forest-floor, sweet-100s. All of which are certainly present in Billiot's wines.

—Terry Theise

Varieties: Chardonnay,
Pinot Noir

Total Acreage:
12 acres (

Average Production:
3,750 cases

VINEYARD/CELLAR PRACTICES

- Does not filter any wines.
- Wines do not under go malo-lactic secondary fermentation.

WINES

Henri Billiot Brut Reserve NV

CORE LIST When this is "on" I am sure you won't find a better N.V. Brut in all of Champagne. The solidity, length and complexity are incomparable, and the wine soars above its category. This cuvée is the same as last year's (though with new corks!), 50% '07 and 50% '06- '05, only *cuvée*, disgorged 1/10, and with, let us say, *sufficient dosage*. It was hard to read when I visited, so soon after disgorgement, but there was a swell of mid-palate length. Best to wait for this best of all beasts.

—TT

Henri Billiot Brut Rose NV

I need to show up some other time, because for the second year in a row I didn't get to taste it; it was disgorged the week before and was being bottled that very day. But this has consistently been one of Champagne's great Rosés (along with Vilmart) and I have no doubt this will maintain the standard.

—TT

Henri Billiot "Cuvée Laetitia" Brut MV-multi vintage-Tete de Cuvée

Wow, this is the best Laetitia I've yet tasted; it extends the silky transparency of the '04 into even more raciness and incisiveness. Really by now and in the last few years this wine swings between outstanding and stellar according to time on the cork, but this disgorgement is stunningly good, with fine measured power and high fluting brilliance. Now contains every Billiot "vintage" between 1983-2005.

—TT

ACCOLADES

Henri Billiot is a small grower based in Ambonnay, a village famous for its Pinot Noir. None of the Billiot wines undergo malolactic fermentation, but that is one of the few details this secretive producer will divulge. No matter, these are some of the finest Champagnes being made today, and I highly encourage readers to check them out. This is a superb set of wines from top to bottom.—Antonio Galloni/*The Wine Advocate*