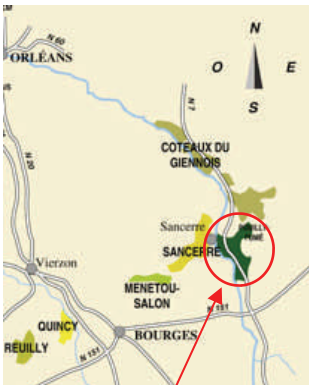


Francis BLANCHET

Pouilly-Fumé



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Pouilly-Fumé

France

LOIRE VALLEY
Sancerre

OVERVIEW

Amid the sea of Pouilly-Fumé, there are more than a few producers whose business is to trade on the name of the famous region, rather than to produce wine of distinction and even value. Francis Blanchet—whose family has been growing Sauvignon Blanc in Pouilly-Fumé since at least 1684 (they still have the original deed for the purchase of the vineyards!)—is the architect of several wines that are among the great ambassadors of the region. From his modest 7.2-hectare domaine, Blanchet harnesses the minerality bestowed by the Kimmeridgian and Tithonian (formerly known as Portlandian) soils, the famous (among wine people at least, as the Kimmeridgian is especially revered for its influence on the character of Chablis) relics of the Jurassic period.

Varieties: Sauvignon Blanc

Total Acreage: 15.84 acres

Average Production: 1,300 cases

CELLAR PRACTICES

Blanchet's wines are fermented with natural yeasts in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks, aged also in tank. The wines are occasionally lightly fined and bottled unfiltered.

WINES

Pouilly-Fumé Calcite

This is a new cuvée (the 2007 was the first release) that might just as easily be called *Jeunes Vignes*, as it is produced from Blanchet's young vines. The wine has, so far, had a character reminiscent of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc with a light passion-fruit-tinged aroma, but its flavors are pure Pouilly—a citrus and marine expression with a zingingly crisp finish.

Pouilly-Fumé Cuvée Silice

The product of *Les Loges*, the hamlet in Pouilly where soils are brimming with nodules of flint (or as the French call it, *silice*), the *Cuvée Silice* is exuberantly aromatic, usually possessing complex aromas derived from fresh black currants and mint. It is also endowed with bold floral and herbal flavors that are—initially—more open and charismatic than Blanchet's other wines.

Pouilly-Fumé Vieilles Vignes

The *Vieilles Vignes* is produced from three 40- to 50-year-old vineyard parcels of Kimmeridgian chalk soils. Typically this wine has an otherworldly aura shaded by notes of mint and lime. It gets richer for a year or two after release, often betraying hints of almond oil. Atypically (for Pouilly-Fumé), this wine can age quite gracefully for an additional 5 years.

ABOUT THE REGION

Pouilly-Fumé is on the eastern side of the Loire, across the river from Sancerre in the upper portion of the Loire Valley also named Sancerre. Wines of Pouilly-Fumé are typically flintier and more perfumed than is common to wines of Sancerre, and usually have a smoky, minerally cut.

ACCOLADES

"The under-appreciated Francis Blanchet has proven his ability to render consistent quality even under challenging circumstances."

David Schildknecht, *The Wine Advocate*, #178



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