

# GOSSET-BRABANT

Aÿ



Christian & Michel Gosset, who now run the estate, flanking grandfather Gabriel



France

## CHAMPAGNE Grande Vallée de la Marne

### OVERVIEW

What used to be a fringe opinion has become a much more widely understood axiom—that the best values in Champagne are found with the growers. Find a great one under \$50? That's another thing entirely, so you take a trip, searching all over Champagne brings little relief...but then, as you stumble out of Bollinger, there—hiding in plain sight, directly across the way in beautiful downtown Aÿ (pop. 4,248)—is the great grower estate Gosset-Brabant. Of course you're astonished to find that they've been around since the 1930s, when Gabriel Gosset decided to strike out on his own spurious venture of estate-bottled Champagne from the excellent and duly famous *négociant* house Gosset (which is only 2 blocks away). To avoid confusion, he appended his wife's maiden name (one Andrée Brabant) to the enterprise, and using his portion of the family's vines, he proceeded to exploit the unique flavors that grapes—particularly Pinot Noir—pull from the soils of Aÿ. Most of their wine is sold to private customers and great restaurants in Europe, leaving only 1,000 cases for the trade in France and around the world. The pit-fruity, flowery, meaty flavors that course so richly through these wines are all the more extraordinary considering their modest prices, making them that much more fun to explore.

**Varieties:** Chardonnay, Meunier, Pinot Noir

**Total Acreage:** 23.6 acres (10 in Grand Cru Aÿ, 1 in Grand Cru Chouilly, 8.6 in the 1<sup>er</sup> Crus of Avenay Val d'Or, Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, and Dizy)

**Average Production:** about 4,000

### VINEYARD/CELLAR PRACTICES

- Cover crops planted (where possible) among organically farmed vines, which are pruned shorter than is usual to promote deeper flavor concentration
- Old-style vertical press, wines are fermented (primary & malolactic) entirely in tank to promote clarity of *terroir*.
- Top Pinot Noir plots vinified separately; Chardonnay & Meunier are usually co-fermented (to amplify uniqueness of growing site and allow the greatest freedom in creating a harmonious final blend).

### WINES

#### Brut Tradition 1<sup>er</sup> Cru

A blend of fruit from the 1<sup>ers</sup> Crus of Dizy & Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, as well as Grand Cru Aÿ. Gosset uses the *Tradition* itself as the reserve wine, so generally about 30% of this *cuvée* is the previous year's release.

#### Brut Réserve Grand Cru

A fine-boned and supple wine characterized by (usually) plums, peaches and spices. It has a persistent minerality that pokes through what is otherwise a rather plush wine.

#### Brut Noirs d'Aÿ Grand Cru

A sensational 100% Pinot Noir *cuvée* with incredible richness and marvelous aromas of raspberries and dark chocolate. It gets a rather small dosage (usually under 6 grams, which makes it Extra Brut) so it has resonant dimension and grace.

#### Brut Rosé 1<sup>er</sup> Cru

Made in the image of the *Tradition*, only it has 6% red wine from Aÿ added for color. It has broad aromatic sweep, with mouth-watering elements of pomegranate and cherry.

#### Cuvée Gabriel Brut Millésime Grand Cru

This is the vintage wine. Gossets used to belong to the Club des Trésors, but they left in 2006, so it will no longer come in the "Special Club" bottle. A mineral clarity that provides a serious underpinning for bold, luminous flavors.



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