



ERIC CHEVALIER VAL DE LOIRE CHARDONNAY 2019/\$20.99



DESCRIPTION

The family estate ERIC CHEVALIER is a 70 acres vineyard, west of the Loire Valley in the Muscadet Côtes de Grand Lieu appellation (AOP) area. In 2006, Eric Chevalier settled back in his family vineyard after a 10 years experience in wine trading. His sister, Gaëlle, joined him in 2008, leaving a computing job to come back to vines.

Thanks to their diversified white wine varieties, in particular the Melon et Fié Gris, they are regarded as dry white wine specialists. In order to protect the soil they decided to convert to organic farming on the whole of the estate.

Éric Chevalier is a rising star in the Nantais of the Loire Valley. For ten years, he sourced fruit for a large négociant in the Touraine. In 2005, he decided to return to his hometown of Saint-Philbert de Grandlieu, just southwest of Nantes, and ended up taking over the family domaine, Domaine de l'Aujardière, the next year. His father, a talented vigneron who did not bottle much of his wines and was well-known as a high-quality source of bulk wine, had stopped working the vineyards and the vines were either going to have to be pulled up and replanted, or sold. Éric was anything but enthusiastic. Little by little his passion grew, and today he is proud to be the fourth generation to farm the domaine. He is also proud to be bottling more and more of the family's production himself. Éric sustainably farms twenty-five hectares of vines, producing wines of great character and finesse. He found his future in his family's past.

Praised for its stately Renaissance-era chateaux, the picturesque Loire valley produces pleasant wines of just about every style. Just south of Paris, the appellation lies along the

river of the same name and stretches from the Atlantic coast to the center of France.

The Loire can be divided into three main growing areas, from west to east: the Lower Loire, Middle Loire, and Upper/Central Loire. The Pays Nantais region of the Lower Loire—farthest west and closest to the Atlantic—has a maritime climate and focuses on the Melon de Bourgogne variety, which makes refreshing, crisp, aromatic whites.

The Middle Loire contains Anjou, Saumur and Touraine. In Anjou, Chenin Blanc produces some of, if not the most, outstanding dry and sweet wines with a sleek, mineral edge and characteristics of crisp apple, pear and honeysuckle. Cabernet Franc dominates red and rosé production here, supported often by Grolleau and Cabernet Sauvignon. Sparkling Crémant de Loire is a specialty of Saumur. Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc are common in Touraine as well, along with Sauvignon Blanc, Gamay and Malbec (known locally as Côt).

The Upper Loire, with a warm, continental climate, is Sauvignon Blanc country, home to the world-renowned appellations of Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé. Pinot Noir and Gamay produce bright, easy-drinking red wines here.

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In this land of châteaux and sea breezes, Chardonnay soaks in the complex minerals of this region's soils. Though you might be hard-pressed to point out the specific flavor of Serpentine in a wine, this bottling has a distinct mineral aroma, like fresh rain on the rocky shores of a mountain river. But perhaps the most distinct characteristic of Éric's Chardonnay is intrinsic to the grape itself. Good Chardonnay has texture and grain and that's what you have here—it sinks into the palate and lasts and lasts.

In the western reaches of the Loire Valley, along the Atlantic Ocean, Éric Chevalier specializes in Muscadet. But due to this Pays Nantais rock star's training in Chablis, he's also well versed in growing and vinifying Chardonnay. Éric's Chardonnay vines do not have the benefit of growing in Kimmeridgian limestone, but what his soils lack in ancient marine fossils, his terroir makes up for in its exposure to the salty breezes blowing in from the Atlantic. Thanks to the coastal climate and vinification without oak, this Chardonnay is one of the ziest, most refreshing to be imported.

Tasting Notes

Nose:

Aromas of pear, granny smith apple, and lemon zest with notes of salinity.

Palate:

Bright citrus fruit, crunchy minerality and an incredible balance of texture make for an unmistakable Loire Valley Chardonnay. Thanks to the coastal climate and vinification without oak,

this Chardonnay is zesty and refreshing. Crisp and unadorned, with the slightest hint of salinity, it offers one of the best ways to start a night.

Pairing:

Asian Foods and Lemon Chicken

Winery Website: [Eric Chevalier Winemaker \(chevaliervigneron.com\)](http://chevaliervigneron.com)

Loire Valley I.G.P., France

