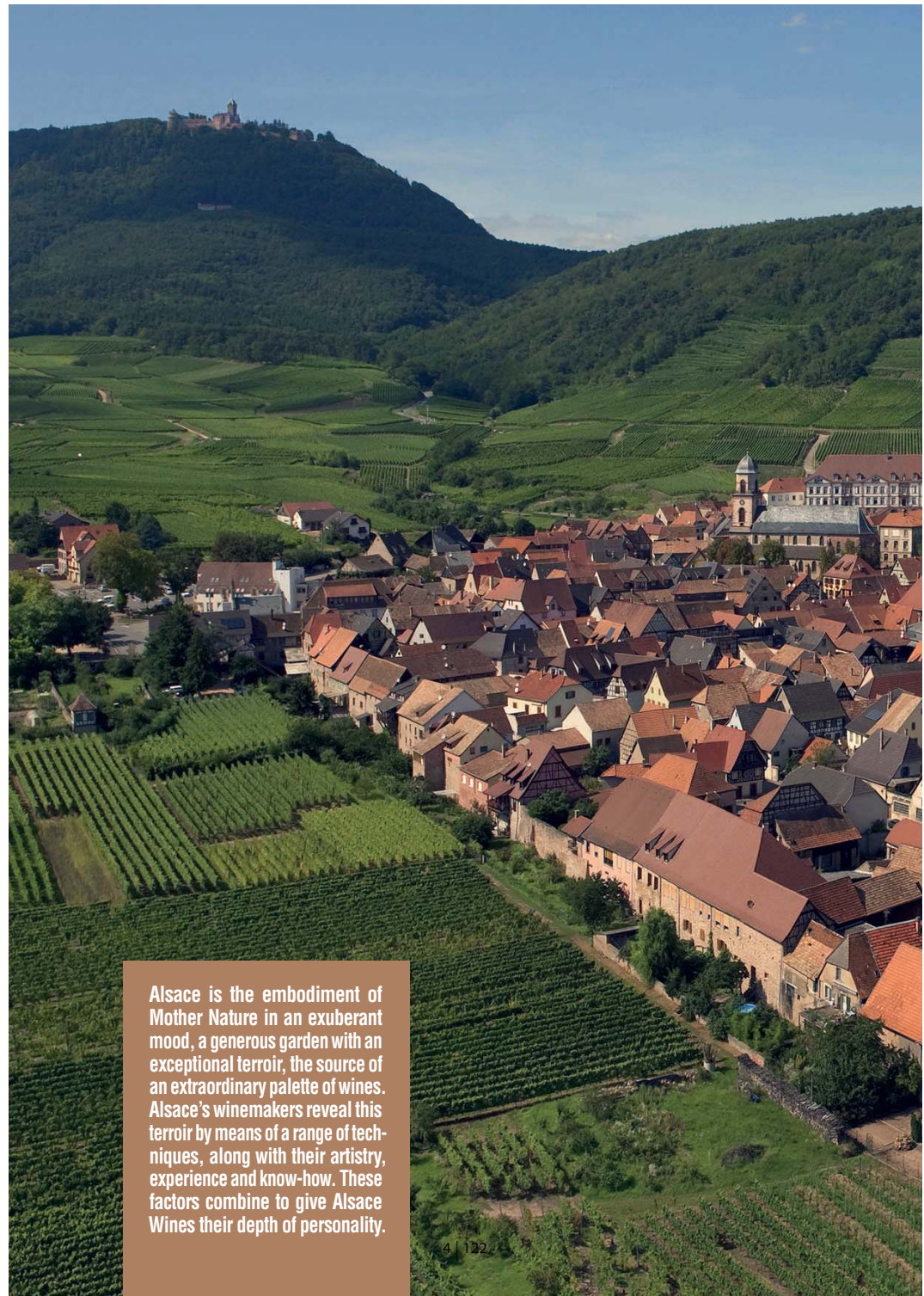
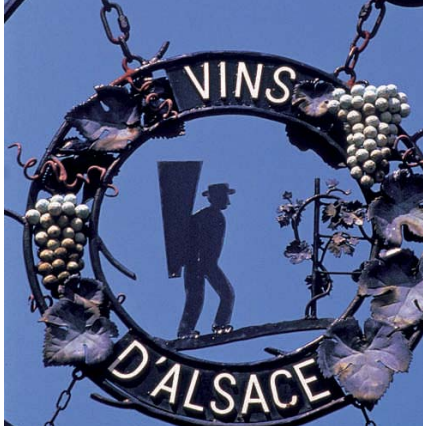




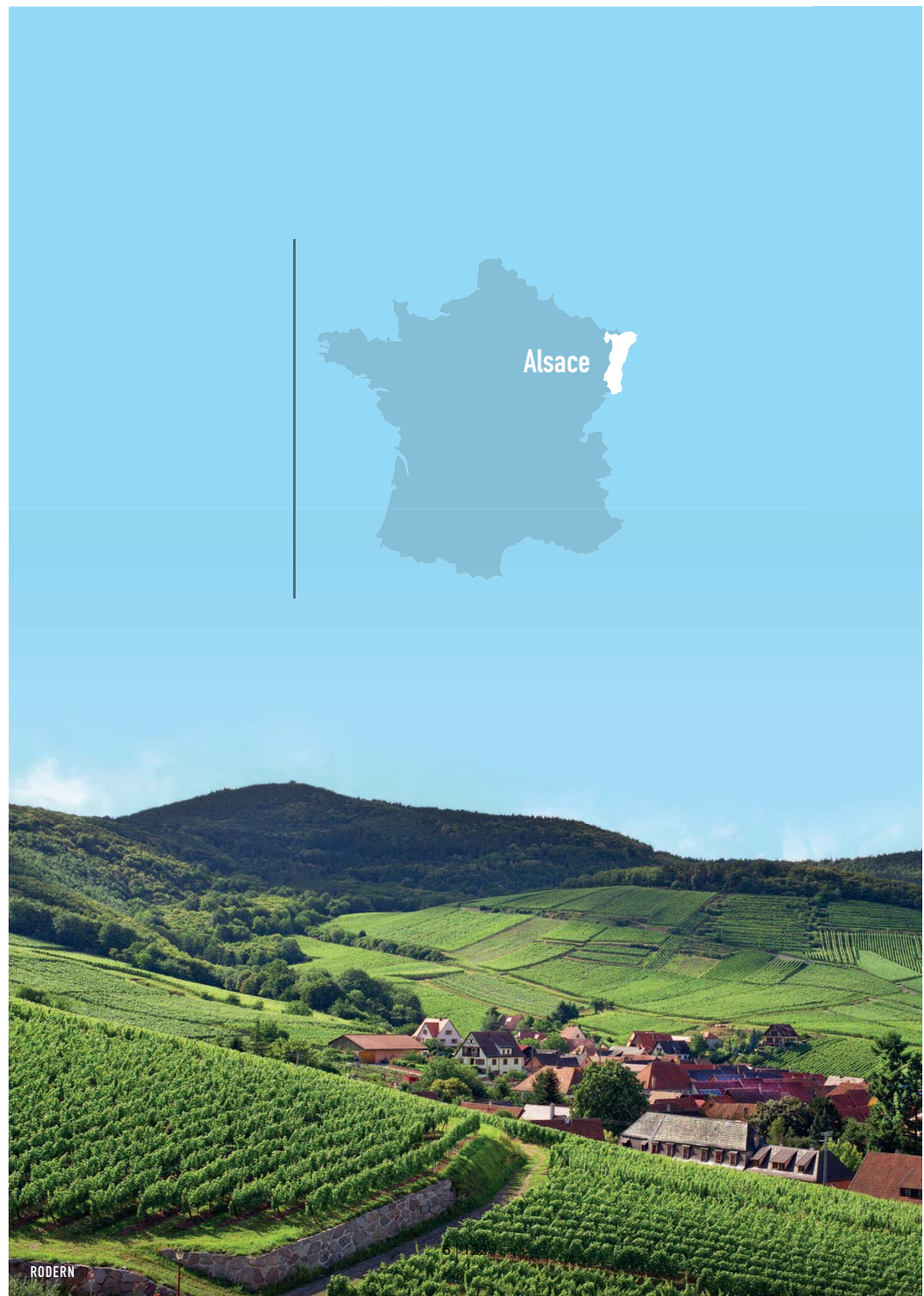
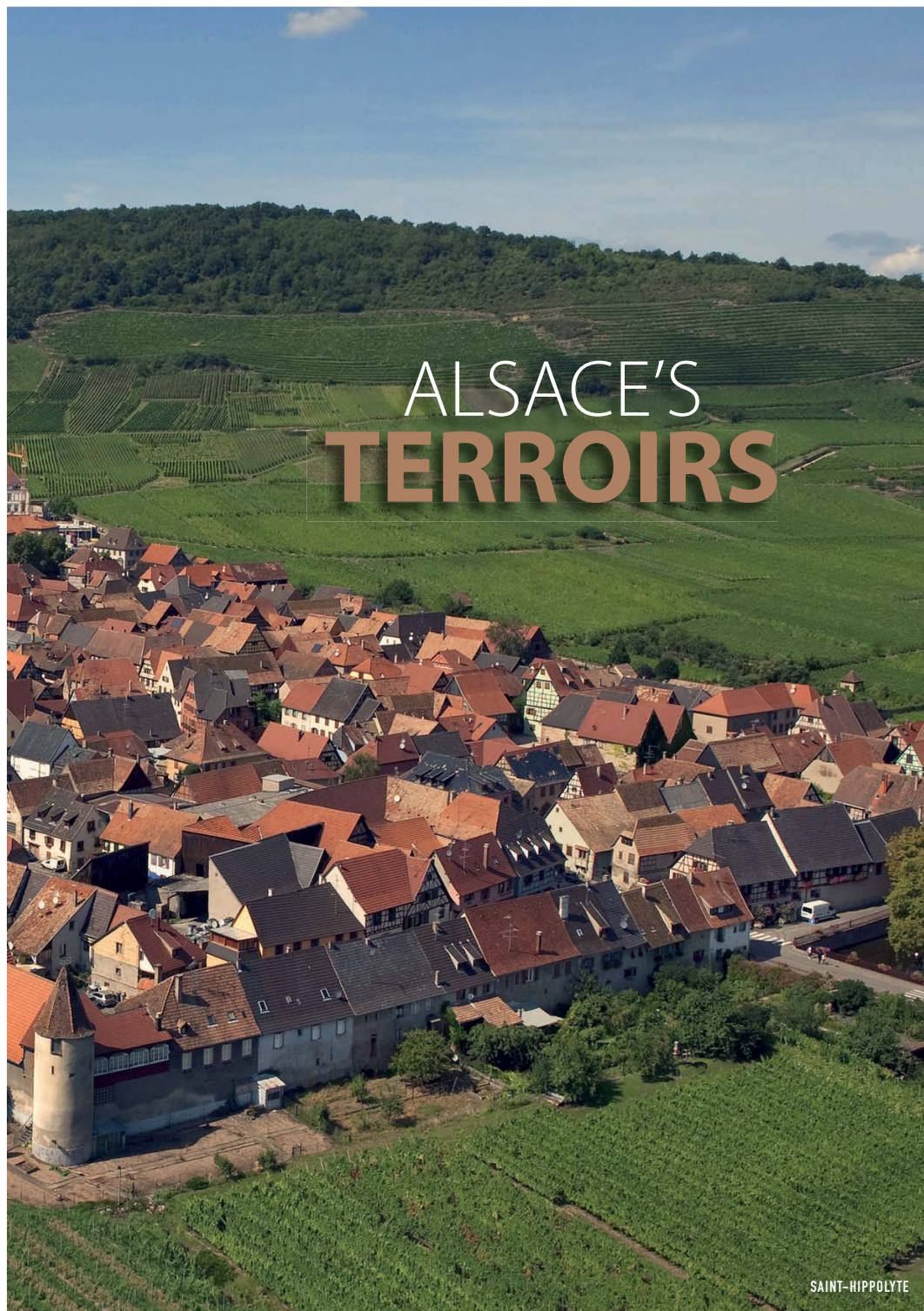
ALSACE

LAND OF TRADITION, LAND OF WINE

Alsace is an extraordinary garden, one in which you'll discover unique landscapes and traditional culture, all co-existing peacefully, side by side. Vineyards are planted in close proximity to timeless villages while, from on high, castles and towers pay testament to the region's colourful history. The countryside is shaped by Alsace's long love affair with wine, a passion that lends colour to its streets and serenity to its wine cellars, creating the ideal ambience for tranquil tasting.



Alsace is the embodiment of Mother Nature in an exuberant mood, a generous garden with an exceptional terroir, the source of an extraordinary palette of wines. Alsace's winemakers reveal this terroir by means of a range of techniques, along with their artistry, experience and know-how. These factors combine to give Alsace Wines their depth of personality.



The Alsace vineyards and their landscapes

Alsace's vineyards are among the most northerly not only in France – indeed, they are among the most northerly in Europe. They stretch across 119 communes belonging to the departments of the Bas-Rhin and the Haut-Rhin. The viticultural zone, which runs roughly parallel to the Rhine River, is 120 kilometres long, but only a few kilometres wide. It stretches from Marlenheim, near Strasbourg, all the way south to the town of Thann, with a small enclave in Alsace's far north, located close to Cleebourg. Taken altogether, Alsace's AOC vineyards extend across an area of 15,500 hectares.

 Map

 See the clip [Jardin d'Alsace](#)



An exceptional climate and exposure

The specific nature of Alsace's terroir is dictated by the characteristics of its climate and exposition, as well as its geological diversity, which is unique not only in terms of France, but probably of the entire world

Alsace's viticultural zone is located on the eastern slopes of the Vosges Mountains, where a succession of foothills switchback across a range of altitudes that vary between 200 and 400 metres above sea level. Most of these slopes face south and south-east, and this – along with the fact that the vines are trained unusually high – offers the maturing bunches the maximum possible exposure to sunlight.

The natural barrier created by the Vosges Mountains shelters the vineyards, and has a dual impact on Alsace's very distinctive climate.



On the one hand, it limits the oceanic influences by reinforcing the continental nature of the local climate (hot summers and cold winters). The summation of effective grape-growing temperatures (those above 10°C during the period of vegetative growth) are thereby reinforced. The result is that, thanks to its local climate, Colmar is in a better position than either Dijon or Reims in terms of its capacity to ripen grapes.

On the other hand, the dominant westerly winds tend to discharge their rain on the western slopes of the Vosges. By the time they reach the slopes on the eastern side – where Alsace's vineyards are located – they are depleted of moisture content. As a result, Colmar is one of the driest areas in France (550mm of annual rainfall), and the majority of the vineyards benefit from annual rainfall in the region of 600 to 650mm.

If this dry climate has proved particularly favourable to grape growing, it's because vines benefit from mild stress: they need little water and fare best on poor, stony, sloping soils... In addition, low levels of rainfall means that fungal disease pressures are relatively low, and this, in turn, means that the vines need little or no treatments in order to thrive.

The climate in Alsace is also notable for the juxtaposition of hot days and cool nights, particularly as the vineyards head towards harvest-time. This allows for a long, slow period of ripening, conditions that lend themselves favourably to the development of complex aromas, vivid acidity and rich fruit. These factors, in turn, help create opulent, full-flavoured, refreshing wines.

Furthermore, when you look at Alsace's terroir on a smaller scale, the variations offered by the exposition of the slopes, their differing levels of steepness, the protection offered by their contours, the range of capacity afforded by the different soils to retain warmth and the climatic influence of the river create a huge range of micro-climates. The nuances these engender are particularly detectable in the Grands Crus.



An outstanding mosaic of soil types

An eventful geological history has created the ideal conditions for the formation of a multitude of magnificent and varied terroirs. All geological eras, from the primary to the quaternary, are represented in Alsace.

One hundred and fifty million years ago, the basin of the Rhine was covered by the sea. Numerous sedimentary rocks, such as sandstone, limestone and clay were deposited on top of granite bedrock.

During the tertiary era, some 50 million years ago, the Rhine basin collapsed, slowly at first, then more vigorously, giving birth to the river plain that exists today. These sequential collapses paved the way for the exposure of successive geological layers.

Marine and alluvial deposits, in addition to the effects of erosion, served to create even more complexity over time.

In the current era, three morpho-structural units can be discerned on the Alsatian side of the Rhine basin: the Vosges Mountains (granite and sandstone, some schist), the foothills of the Vosges, where a huge diversity of soil types can be found, and the alluvial plain of the Rhine (clay and alluvial deposits).

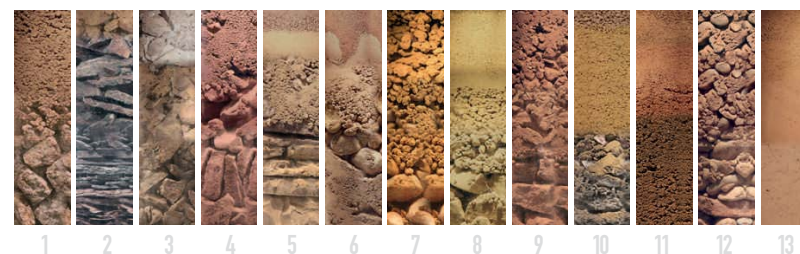
Furthermore, four distinct fracture zones (those of Saverne, Ribeauvillé, Rouffach-Guebwiller and Thann) can be discerned: these contribute even further to the diversity of Alsace's vineyards.

Nowadays, most of the viticultural communes are situated on four or five different rock formations, with a juxtaposition of parcels (some of which are very limited in area), all combining to form a mosaic of soils with an unparalleled richness and diversity. It is this infinity of nuance that helps to create the exceptional variety of Alsace Wines.

👁 The formation of Alsace's soils and sub-soils

👁 The Rhine basin today

👁 The traces of a collapse



Alsace's terroirs

In order to give an overview of Alsace's geological diversity, a consolidation of various soil types has resulted in a classification system comprising 13 geological configurations. These are deployed across Alsace's three structural units: the slopes of the mountains, with very varied, fragmented soil types; the foothills of the Vosges, which feature the most complex range of soil structures; and the plains, which are not included among the Grands Crus, and which are characterised by more recent, less developed soil structures. Each of these 13 configurations influence the type of wines produced from their vineyards.

ON THE SLOPES OF THE MOUNTAINS

- 1 **Granite and gneiss terroirs:** situated on the slopes of the Vosges mountains, these are composed of volcanic rocks which have fractured and decomposed over time to produce a coarse sand known as granitic sand. These sands retain little water, and their fertility depends on their degree of decomposition, as this process results in the liberation of minerals. **Wines produced on these acidic soils are always lightly textured and very expressive in their youth.**
- 2 **Schist terroirs:** schist is a layered rock derived from the compression of clays in the lithosphere. Fairly rare in Alsace (found only in Andlau and Villé), these terroirs are rich in fertilising elements. **The wines produced from these soils are notable for their vivid freshness, and can take time to reveal themselves fully.**
- 3 **Volcanogenic-sedimentary terroirs:** 300 million years ago, volcanoes spewed forth lava and ashes that hardened underwater. These rocks are hard, compact and rarely decompose.

These terroirs feature dark rocks that retain heat well, and lend a certain character that is discernible across all grape varieties. **Wines grown on these soils are recognisable for their smoky aromas, as well as their ample, fleshy charms.**

- 4 **Sandstone terroirs:** these are made up of hardened or cemented quartz sandstones. In geological terms, these sandstones are similar in character to the granite terroirs, with the same sandy, acid nature, but they give a different expression to their wines, **which have a firmer spine of acidity and less aromatic richness. For this reason, they need longer ageing in order to achieve full expression.**

THE FOOTHILLS OF THE VOSGES

- 5 **Limestone terroirs:** Alsace's limestones are derived from the seas of the secondary era. The most widespread are those of Muschelkalk and Dogger. These rocks decompose easily to form very stony soils. Essentially alkali in nature, **these soils create wines with high levels of acidity that tend to be somewhat austere in their youth, developing a lemony character over time.**

6 Marl-limestone terroirs: these are composed of deep deposits of marl interspersed with limestone rocks that, together, form a conglomerate soil whose evolution is long and slow. The marl lends wines power, while the limestone tends to give wines a long, complex acidity. **These wines are generous and long in their youth, and age extremely well, acquiring minerality as they mature. The more limestone there is in the rock, the more the wines tend towards elegance.**

7 Marl-sandstone terroirs: this is the sandstone version of the marl-limestone terroir. These are, once again, tertiary scree, although this time the stones are derived from sandstone rather than limestone. **The marl lends weight to the wines, while the sandstone lends delicacy. More generous than they would be if they were made from grapes grown on pure sandstone soils, wines from these terroirs are also more complex than those from clay terroirs.**

8 Marl-limestone-sandstone terroirs: these terroirs, based on mixed sedimentary rocks, are frequently found in the foothills of the Vosges and are made up of a mixture of marl, limestone and sandstone. This variety of soils creates mineral richness, while their depth gives both high fertility and good water retention. **While the marl predisposes wines to richness, the limestone and sandstone components lend lightness and freshness. It can take time for all these components to balance themselves out in the wines.**

9 Limestone-sandstone terroirs: these terroirs are fairly rare in Alsace, and are based on either limestone with some sandstone content, or sandstone with a minority of limestone – either way, grains of quartz are generally bound in a limestone matrix. These are rocks that don't tend to alter or degrade much over time. The very stony soils have little mineral fertility. **Wines are nervy, with fairly intense floral notes.**

10 Clay-marl terroirs: clay is the key component in these soft, compact rocks, and this creates soils that are heavy and rich. Chemical fertility is high due to the capacity of the clay to retain various mineral elements. **The age-worthy wines based on these soils tend to have a powerful structure. The high clay content may well help to explain why these wines often appear to have tannins, even though they're white.**

ON THE PLAIN

11 Colluvial (rocky scree) terroirs: originating from quaternary era deposits, colluvions are composed of rocky scree and colluvial fans from the Vosges valleys that have accumulated at the foot of the slopes. The accumulated rocky debris can be very diverse in nature, its composition derived from a variety of original sources. It is therefore difficult to pinpoint any particular characteristic associated with wines made from grapes grown on these soils.

12 Alluvial terroirs: situated on the plain, these soils are composed of alluvial deposits derived from water courses (pebbles, gravels, sands and silt) that accumulate in terraced layers and can come to resemble colluvial fans. They can, however, be distinguished on closer inspection by the water-derived erosion of the sands and pebbles. The precise make-up of these soils depends on their origin and the course of their watery journey to their current location.

13 Loess and loam terroirs: loess is a soil derived from the glaciation epoch of the quaternary era and deposited in situ by winds. This silty soil is pale lemon in colour, but over time, and with the impact of repeated exposure to water, is transformed into a brownish clayey loam. The depth of these soils is very variable, ranging from shallow deposits laid over other soils to very thick layers several metres deep. Wines produced on these three soils express high levels of minerality, are notable for their freshness and are best enjoyed in their youth.



From vine to wine

Day after day, grape-growers use their knowledge and experience of the local landscape, combined with a passion for their work, to showcase nature's gifts to the best possible advantage.

A CHOICE OF INTENSELY AROMATIC GRAPE VARIETIES

The incredible diversity of soils, sub-soils and micro-climates in the region has allowed Alsace's winemakers to maintain a large palette of grape varieties. This not only preserves plant biodiversity, it also offers each grape variety the potential for optimal expression. Alsace's viticultural tradition is focused on seven principal grape varieties, and these lend Alsace Wines their names and their characteristic aromatic profiles.

👁 See section on [Alsace Wines](#)

PRACTICES ADAPTED TO THE LOCAL TERROIR

In both vineyards and winery, Alsace's winemakers aim to use their knowledge and experience to preserve both freshness and aromatic expression in their wines. In terms of achieving those aims, it's worth noting the use of high trellising, which helps to limit the damage caused by frosts and assists exposure of the ripening bunches to the sunshine, and the technique of growing grasses and other plants between rows of vines, which helps to retain moisture in the soil and to prevent erosion, particularly in vineyards planted on slopes.

THE PRESERVATION OF TERROIR

As far as grape-growers are concerned, working in harmony with their terroir implies a real collaboration with Mother Nature. Whether you're talking about stimulating the vines' natural defences against disease, helping to ensure that roots can dig deep into the soil or limiting the use of pesticides and herbicides, you'll find that sustainable agricultural practices, organic viticulture or biodynamics lie at the heart of contemporary Alsatian viticulture.

👁 See section on [sustainable development](#)

AN AMBITIOUS REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This know-how, supported by a rigorous regulatory framework, creates an identity for Alsace Wines. The degree of regulation imposed by the AOC varies according to the expected level of authentic expression of terroir, and these constraints help to convey the sense of place expressed in all Alsace Wines.

👁 See section on [Appellations](#)



The expression of Alsace's terroir

Each of our appellations guarantees an authentic expression of Alsace's terroir, albeit to varying degrees.

AOC ALSACE: FRESHNESS AND AROMATIC INTENSITY

The expression of Alsace Wines is derived from the complex interplay of soil, grape variety and viticultural tradition, seen through the lens of a profound respect for nature.

👁 See section on [AOC Alsace](#)

AOC ALSACE COMMUNES & LIEUX-DITS: TERROIRS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

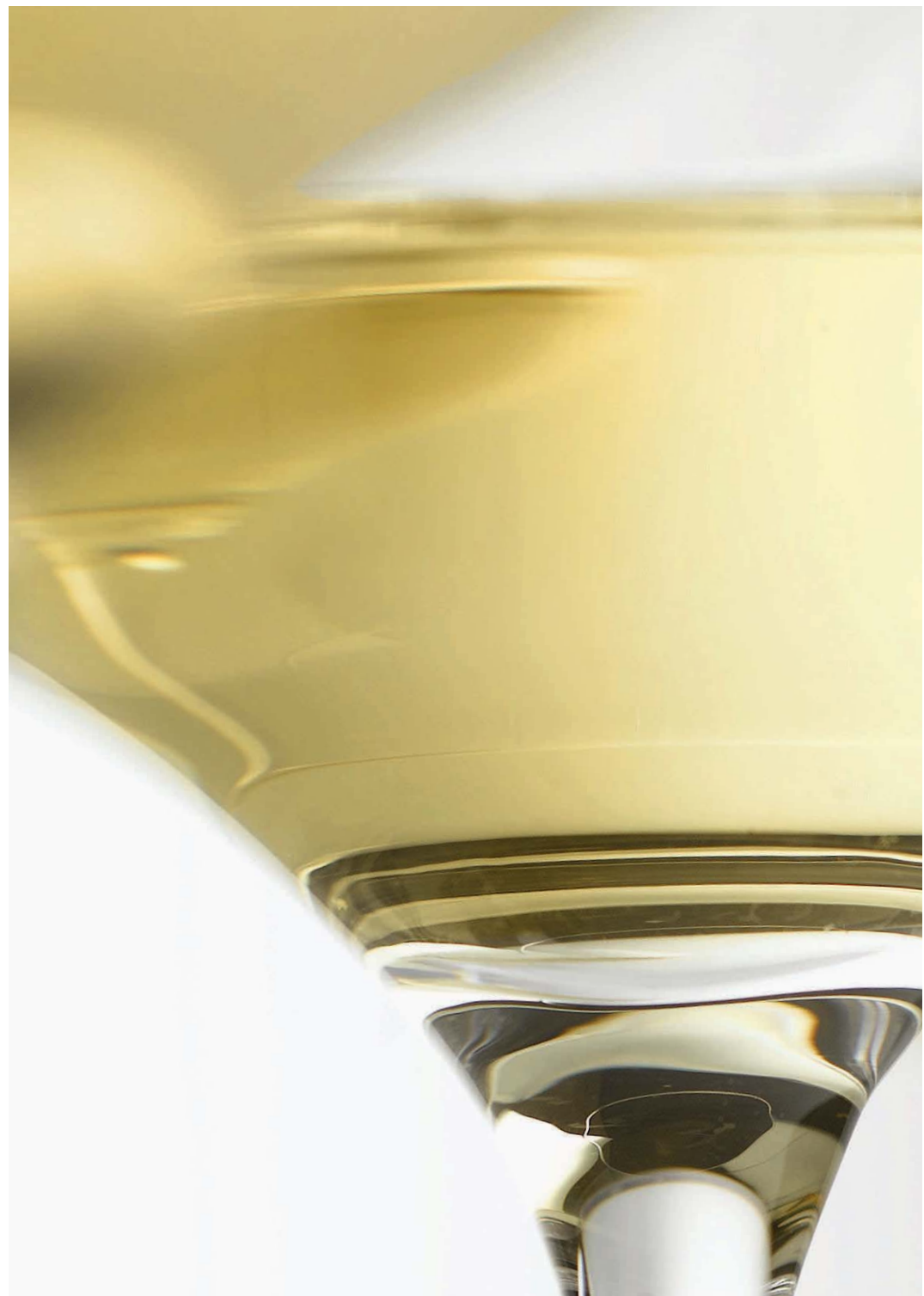
The diversity of soils and climates forms the basis for a system of geographical indications that highlights the characteristics of particular terroirs. Thus, for wines that offer the potential to represent a particular terroir and which are of characteristically high quality, the name of the AOC may be qualified by the addition of the name of a commune or lieu-dit (specific, named sites within the vineyards) to the label.

👁 See section on [AOC Alsace Communes/Lieux-dits](#)

AOC ALSACE GRANDS CRUS: THE QUINTESSENCE OF MICRO-TERROIRS

Very early on in the history of Alsatian winemaking, the region's grape-growers noticed that many lieux-dits (specific, named sites within the vineyards) lent the grapes grown there – and the wines made from these grapes – certain specific qualities. These particular characteristics form the basis of the AOC Alsace Grands Crus system, which defines the best terroirs and ensures the highest possible quality thanks to the enforcement of rigorous rules of production. These AOC Grands Crus aim to produce pure, elegant wines that express their terroir to perfection.

👁 See section on [AOC Alsace Grands Crus](#)





ALSACE WINES

Great white wines that
are fresh, fruity and pure.
Wines that promise an
intense sensorial journey.
Generous wines that are
made for sharing.





The Alsace bottle

Alsace Wines begin to tell their story via their bottles. An Alsace bottle can be identified at a glance thanks to its tall, slender form, and this shape is obligatory for all the region's still wines. Furthermore, since 1972, it has been illegal to bottle wines made in Alsace outside the region, reinforcing the link between wines and terroir.



Alsace Sylvaner

See the clip
Sylvaner

Refreshing,
light-bodied wines
with delicate fruit.

Visual


Pale, with green tints,
which underlines this variety's
characteristic freshness.

Nose

Aromas are delicate and
appealing. The bouquet
is subtly fruity and floral:
citrus, white flowers, freshly
cut green grass, etc.

Palate

The palate is approachable
and delicate, framed
around vivid acidity.

 *This dry, delicate and refreshing
wine brings an element of
vivaciousness to its food pairings.*

 Food and wine matches



Alsace Pinot Blanc

▶ See the clip
Pinot Blanc

Pinot Blanc is frequently blended with the Auxerrois grape, whose round, ample charms provide a judicious counterpoint to its delicacy. These blends are labelled either Pinot Blanc or Pinot. In contrast, when Auxerrois is vinified alone, the wine is labelled as such.

This light-bodied wine, with its sunny aromas, is without comparison in terms of the way it unites delicacy and suppleness.

Visual

A pale yellow hue; limpid and bright.

Nose

The nose is fresh and clean, with subtle fruit and notes of peach and apple, with floral nuances. While not exuberant, it is a vivid expression of the grape's character.

Palate

Pinot Blanc is a wine that readily opens up on the palate, and its aromatic delicacy and lightness of body is enhanced by brisk, balancing acidity.

Well balanced and easy to drink, this is a wine that makes a great partner for everyday dishes.

Food and wine matches



Alsace Riesling

Considered to be one of the finest white wines in the world, Alsace Riesling is one of the great success stories of the region's vineyards.



See the clip
Riesling

Alsace Riesling is an age-worthy wine that can mature and improve in bottle for decades. The diversity of Alsace's terroirs is perfect for this grape as it is a transparent veil, a medium through which terroir can be expressed to its fullest.

Visual


A pale yellow hue, with bright green tints, is indicative of the variety's characteristic freshness.

Nose

The aromas are elegant and bright, with subtle fruity (lemon, lemongrass, grapefruit, peach, pear, etc) and floral notes (white flowers, lime blossom, nettle flowers, etc), or even spices such as aniseed, cumin, liquorice and fennel seed. Riesling is unique in that the type of soil in which it's grown defines the mineral aromas it takes on as it ages (flint, smoke, 'kerosene', etc). These distinctive aromas can be found in 'terroir' wines (for instance, those that come from Grand Cru sites and lieux-dits).

Palate

These dry wines are very linear. The framework of a Riesling is provided by its lively acidity, which is noticeable from the very first moment the wine hits your tongue, right until the tail end of its finish, while the mid-palate is notable for its richness and weight.

 This structure, at once nervy and delicately aromatic, makes these wines ideal partners for refined dishes and haute cuisine.

 Food and wine matches



Alsace Muscat

See the clip
Muscat

These wines are notable for their vivacious fruit, their intense aromas and their dryness (a distinct difference from Muscats produced further south).

Visual


The wines are pale lemon in colour.

Nose

This is a perfect example of a wine dominated by primary aromas. This is the only grape whose wines always smell clearly and distinctly of grapes. These intensely fruity aromas are sometimes complemented by subtle floral notes.

Palate

When made in this dry style, this wine shows a limpid freshness that highlights the bright, crisp fruit. Vivid and perfumed.

 The refreshing hint of bitterness on the finish allows this wine to accompany foods that are often difficult to match with other wines.

 Food and wine matches



| Edelzwicker

Edelzwicker is a blend of the white grape varieties allowed in the Alsace AOC, but the proportions of each grape are not specified by regulations.

The individual varieties can be vinified separately or as a blend. A vintage on the label is optional.

These are light, fresh, mouth-watering, easy-drinking wines.

| Gentil

Gentil is a collective brand, defined by CIVA (Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins d'Alsace) regulations and made under its supervision. The name is used to designate a blend made up from a minimum of 50% Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris and/or Gewurztraminer, while the rest of the blend is composed of Sylvaner, Pinot Blanc and/or Chasselas. Each variety must be vinified separately, before blending. Gentil wines must have information about the vintage on the label, and can only be sold after the finished wines are tasted blind by an expert panel.



Gentil wines can accompany a wide variety of dishes with ease.



Alsace Pinot Gris



See the clip
Pinot Gris

This noble grape creates wines that are full enough in body to stand in for red wines, should the occasion so demand.

Visual

Pinot Gris tends to be a rich yellow-gold in colour.

Nose

Not all that intense, generally speaking, but rich in aromatic complexity. Pinot Gris can show typically smoky notes, as well as delicious aromas of dried fruit, apricot, honey, beeswax and gingerbread. Restrained by nature, Alsace Pinot Gris benefits from aeration in the glass in order to reveal some of its aromatic complexity.

Palate

Ample, fleshy wines underpinned by a delightful tension that gives the wine a full-bodied structure. The finish is long and well balanced.

If Pinot Gris makes great wines it is because of its precision, and its luminous acidity that lends balance to its power and weight

Food and wine matches



Alsace Gewurztraminer

See the clip
Gewurztraminer

Probably the most famous of Alsace's wines, it is instantly recognisable thanks to its exceptionally aromatic personality.

Visual

Intense yellow in colour, tinged with gold highlights. The pink skin of the grapes is detectable in the wines.

Nose

Gewurztraminer displays a rich, exuberant aromatic palette. A powerful, complex bouquet that explodes with tropical fruit (lychee, passion fruit, pineapple, mango, etc), flowers (most notably, roses), citrus and spices.

Palate

A full-bodied, smooth wine that reveals an exuberant, complex personality. Its density and richness is sustained by an acidity that is, perhaps, less noticeable than in other Alsace Wines. The palate, like the nose, reveals a ravishingly exuberant fruit salad of flavours.

Complex by nature, exuberant in expression, this is a wine that reveals its versatility when paired with food.

 Food and wine matches



All the incredible richness and aromatic intensity of these great wines couldn't be fully appreciated without the racy elegance lent by their acidity, which provides not only a counterpoint for the luscious sweetness, but also a framework around which these sweet wines can drape their opulent fruit.

Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives)

Visual

These wines have an intense gold hue.

Nose


The nose is dominated by extremely ripe, concentrated fruit. Aromas of quince, caramel, tropical fruit jam and honeyed notes are blended into a heady bouquet.

Palate

The attack is unctuous and smooth, giving way to an overall impression of precise balance between richness and elegance. The finish is long and voluptuously intense.

Sélection de Grains Nobles

The harvesting of individual grapes, each infected by noble rot, lends its name to these wines. Here the individual grape variety takes a back seat to an overall impression of intense concentration. Aromatic intensity; a powerful, full body; a heady sweetness and a long finish are the hallmarks of these vinous works of art.

 These world-class sweet wines are, many argue, sufficient in and of themselves. However, they can also make astonishingly good matches with carefully chosen dishes.

 Food and wine matches



Alsace Pinot Noir

See the clip
Pinot Noir

Amid the symphony of great white grapes from Alsace, one red grape stands alone. Whether used to make rosé or red wines, Pinot Noir is a grape whose hallmark is finesse.

Rosé (or light red)

Dry, with delicate fruit, this is a wine that is notable for its aromas of cherry, raspberry and blackberry, underpinned by supple tannins.

Red

Longer maceration periods and time spent maturing in oak barrels lends these wines body and balance, as well as vivid colour and aromas of ripe fruit and leather.

Food and wine matches





The sparkling nature of Crémant d'Alsace makes it one of the jewels in the region's winemaking crown, and a style loved by Alsace's winemakers. After Champagne, this is the sparkling wine consumed most frequently in France – it deserves to be better known elsewhere.

Crémants d'Alsace

White, Rosé or Blanc de Noirs, brut or dry, Crémant d'Alsace is notable for the elegant, sophisticated characters that it shares with the world's best sparkling wines: a fine mousse, delicate acidity and refined aromas.

Visual

Fine bubbles rise in regular columns to create a fine bead around the rim of the flute.

Nose

As the bubbles rise to the surface, they release aromas of orchard fruits (apple and pear), peach and apricot. Dried fruit and brioche notes can often be detected as well.

Palate

The palate reveals the fruity freshness found on the nose, reinforcing the impression with delicate bubbles and a subtle richness and weight.



The astonishingly high quality of Crémant d'Alsace allows these wines to create a subtle counterpoint to a wide variety of dishes.



Food and wine matches





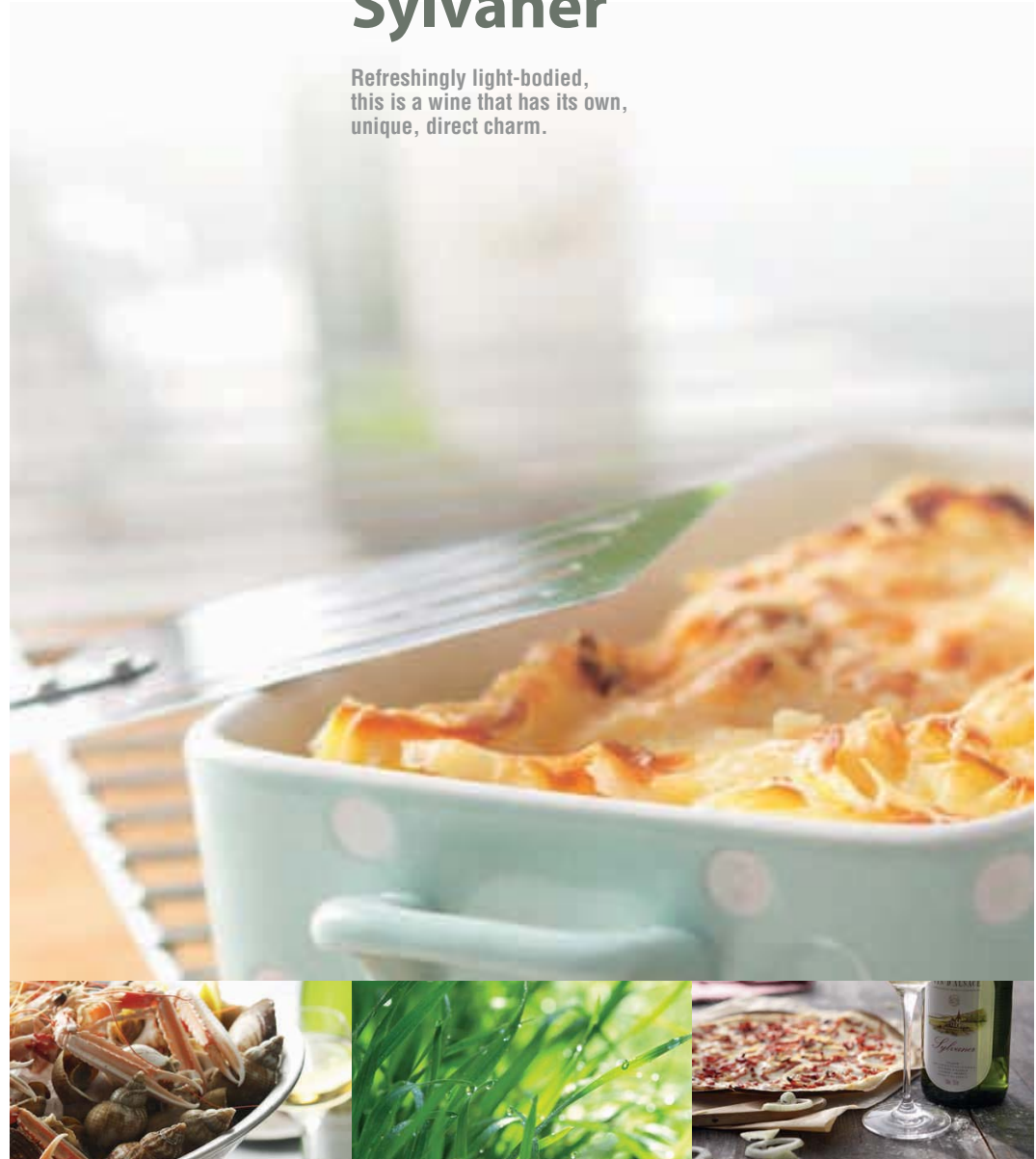
CHEERS!

FOOD AND WINE MATCHES

Wines can be chosen to match dishes with elegance and finesse or with power and weight: either way, Alsace Wines can refresh the palate or envelope it in a 1,000 different aromas, match a dish to perfection or create a refreshing contrast to its flavours. They can be used to create exemplary matches, from the straightforward to the unexpected.

Alsace Sylvaner

Refreshingly light-bodied, this is a wine that has its own, unique, direct charm.






Frank and direct by nature, Sylvaner is, above all, a thirst-quencher, a straightforward quaffer that is made to be enjoyed for its simplicity. This is the wine to open when you're about to tuck into a **charcuterie platter**, a fuss-free **quiche**, an **onion tart**, or even **cheese on toast**. Sylvaner's verve and easy-going charms have no equal when you need a partner for **simple supper dishes**.

Of course there are other opportunities for matching Sylvaner to food, particularly those wines with really bright acidity: these make perfect partners for **seafood**. The fact that they are not headily perfumed means that they are particularly suited as accompaniments for the sea brine flavours of **oysters** and other **shellfish**, cleansing and refresh-

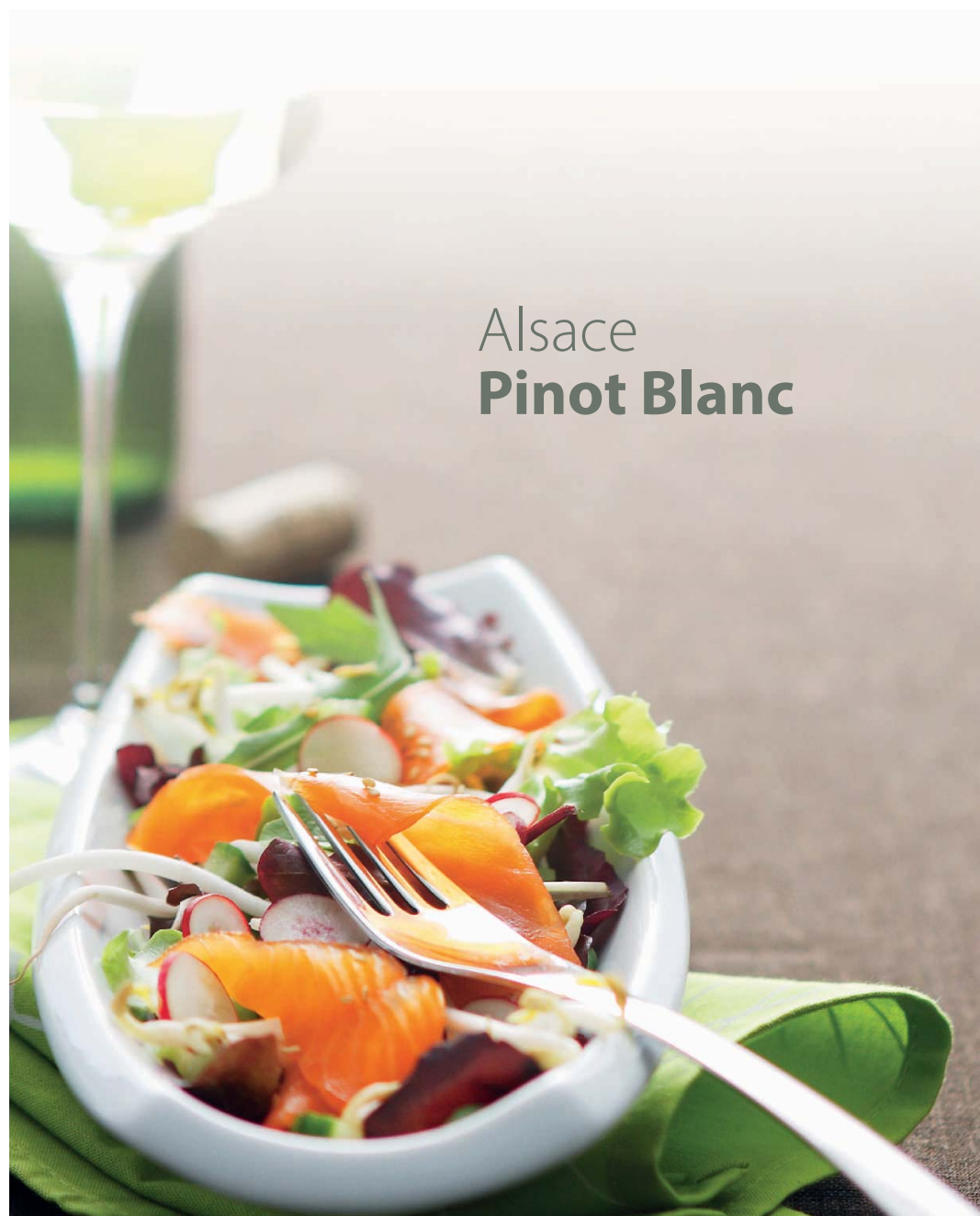
ing the palate between each mouthful. Moules marinières, spaghetti alla vongole and grilled fish also benefit from being paired with these mouth-wateringly subtle wines. And, if you think wine and vinaigrette don't mix, you should try a glass of Sylvaner with **leafy salads**: its gently vegetal notes and bright acidity help to keep the focus tight.

When grown on the best terroirs, Sylvaner can be magnificently aristocratic in expression, showing either astonishing opulence or an elegant tension that is reminiscent of the very best Rieslings, even if Sylvaner is lighter and less structured in style. The best Sylvaners are the wines of choice for elaborate **shellfish** or **fish dishes** – in such cases they play the kind of role usually reserved for fine wines.

 Presentation of Alsace Sylvaner



Alsace Pinot Blanc






Light and bright as a spring day, this is a wine that has its own subtle, restrained charm.

With its perfect balance between restrained fruit and measured acidity, Pinot Blanc can adapt itself to a **wide range of everyday dishes**.

With its capacity to take on pretty much anything you throw its way, this is the ideal wine for **ad-hoc picnics, last-minute meals**, delicate **white meats**, lightly **grilled fish** or simple, thrown-together **salads**.

It's also worth trying Pinot Blanc with **eggs**, whether fried, poached, served as an omelette or a quiche.

Its delicate nuances make it the ideal partner for **young, milky cheese** like ricotta, saint-nectaire or chaource.

 Presentation of Alsace Pinot Blanc

Alsace Riesling

When it comes to being matched with food, this inimitable wine benefits from a rare portfolio of resources: its exceptional poise, its remarkable zestiness and its exquisite elegance.





Riesling is the perfect ambassador for Alsace Wines. It can be paired as easily with Alsace's hearty traditional recipes as it can with the finest and most elegant of dishes. Part of the reason for its versatility is that its acidity permits it to cut through richness while its restrained fruit and high-toned minerality allows it to show delicate flavours to the best advantage. This is a dry wine whose skeleton of firm acidity and purity of fruit lend it its characteristic freshness and tension.

Linear and endowed with the most subtle palette of aromas, Riesling makes a wonderful partner for delicate **white fish**, which need an elegant wine to offset their elegance of flavour and texture. Riesling's fine-boned acidity, often accompanied by a hint of lemon zest, brings out the subtle flavours of **shellfish** while enhancing their salty maritime quality. When seafood is cooked **with a sauce or cream**, Riesling brings a lightness that refreshes the palate, preparing it for the next mouthful.


Like no other grape, Riesling focuses the minerality from the soils on which it grows, creating incredible intensity of flavour when paired with the tangy iodine notes of oysters.

And while it might sound arrogant, it's certainly true that Riesling is one of the rare white wines that can be paired with **caviar** without leaving a lasting impression of metallic fishiness in the mouth. You need Riesling's strength of personality to allow the wine to enhance each mouthful while not being overwhelmed by the caviar's distinctive taste.

Alternatively, try pairing Riesling with the tangy flavours of **Thai seafood salads and stir-fries**. You'll often pick up hints of lemongrass and lime in the wines themselves, which makes them a natural partner for these dishes.

Leaving the fishy world behind, Riesling is equally at ease with **white meats** and **rich pasta dishes** – neither of which cope well with aggressive tannins. It's an ideal partner for pasta with **creamy sauces or coq...** au Riesling (rather than the more traditional red wine).

When it comes to the cheeseboard, **goat** and **sheep's milk cheeses** are delightful matches for these vivid, expressive wines. Riesling's long, racy acidity echoes the sharp tang of lactic acid found in these cheeses.

 Presentation of Alsace Riesling

Alsace Muscat






No Alsace Wine captures the energy and vivacity of springtime in quite the same way as Muscat, a wine whose freshness and fruitiness makes you feel like you're biting into a bunch of fresh grapes.

Thanks to its dryness, Alsace Muscat makes a brilliantly mouth-watering **apéritif**. Its delicate, perfumed aromas and its natural vivacity cleanse the palate, leaving it ready for the first course.

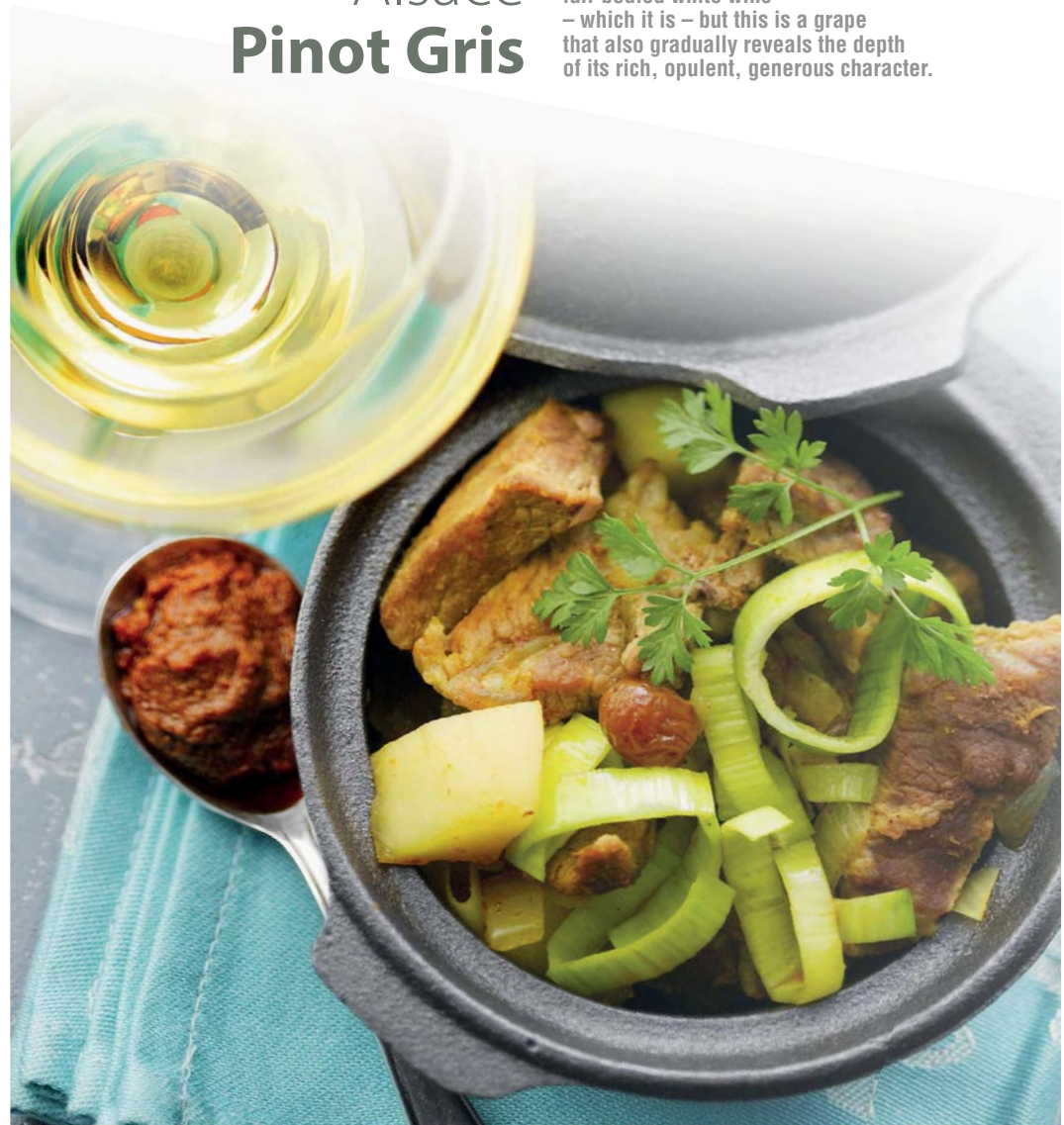
These wines make subtle, zesty partners for grilled fish, as well as light **dishes based on cooked or raw vegetables**, steamed dishes and vegetarian meals.

This is also the ideal wine to match with that tricky spring favourite, **asparagus**. It works so well because asparagus has a hint of bitterness on the finish that challenges most wines. Muscat takes this in its stride thanks to its own gentle suggestion of bitterness, which is usually hidden by its exquisite, zesty fruit.

 Presentation of Alsace Muscat

Alsace Pinot Gris

The first sip suggests a velvety, full-bodied white wine – which it is – but this is a grape that also gradually reveals the depth of its rich, opulent, generous character.



Alsace Pinot Gris is a richly textured wine, with weight, roundness and a long finish. But although such richness might suggest a certain flat-footedness, this is a wine with a superb acidic structure that serves to balance its weight, creating an overall impression of quality and class. It's this richness that makes it such a good match for foods with strong personalities, as Pinot Gris can meet these dishes, weight for weight, without tiring your tastebuds.

With its richness of expression, Pinot Gris can be matched to dishes normally reserved for red wines. It makes the perfect partner for **white and red meats** such as roast pork or veal, duck, game or even **offal**.

Its aromatic complexity and unctuous texture allow it to partner **exotic flavours** and **sweet-savoury dishes** like veal in a vanilla cream sauce or a tagine with prunes or apricots. These kinds of dishes play to Pinot Gris' strengths;

its capacity to match sweet flavours, such as honey or fruits, and enough structural acidity to provide a foil for the texture of the meats featured in these recipes. Pinot Gris reaches new heights when partnered with Indian curries, its richness and intensity providing the ideal counterpoint for the heady aromas of the spices.

Alsace Pinot Gris also has a hint of earthy, slightly smoky undergrowth, which makes it an admirable match for **pan-fried wild mushrooms** or **truffled mashed potatoes**.

Nutty hard cheeses such as **comté**, **beaufort**, **gruyere** or **coolea** need a wine that can match their opulence and depth of flavour, particularly if they're made from the rich pasture milk of summer and have been aged for several months or more. The vinosity of Pinot Gris, as well as its power and length of finish, allow it to perform the honours with ease.

👁 Presentation of Alsace Pinot Gris

Alsace Gewurztraminer

Naturally seductive, Alsace Gewurztraminer unfolds its exotic bouquet of a thousand roses, lychees and spice in waves of heady perfume.



The richness, power and full body of Gewurztraminer are voluptuously expressed on the palate: all the fruits, flowers and spices in the world seem to congregate in your mouth. This ravishing wine was made to give pleasure. A wonderful **apéritif wine**, Gewurztraminer is a wake-up call for your taste-buds.

Its rich, enveloping personality is an invitation to the enjoyment of a world of intense sensorial experiences. What could be more natural than to match this explosion of flavours with a **world of dishes**? Gewurztraminer highlights and enhances the spicy flavours found in south-east Asian dishes, not to mention the characteristic tastes of India, Mexico and Morocco. The reasons for this aptitude are various: firstly, many Asian dishes have a **touch of sweetness in their sauces** (just think of sweet and sour pork or caramelised

Vietnamese stir-fries). The sweetness of these dishes cries out for a silky, generous wine that can match them weight for weight and aroma for aroma. Furthermore, many of these exotic dishes are liberally endowed with **aromatic herbs and spices**, many of which can rightfully be considered to be the hallmarks of Thai (lemongrass, galangal), Indian (coriander, cumin, garam masala), Indonesian (coconut milk, ginger, pepper) and Moroccan (cinnamon, clove) cuisines. Here, Gewurztraminer comes into its own thanks to its power, its weight and its extraordinary finish. Far from fearing these intense flavours, it dances with them, matching their perfume and richness with its own.

On a completely different level, Gewurztraminer shines with a **strongly flavoured cheeseboard**. Bring on your pont-l'èveque, your stinking bishop or your livarot – Gewurztraminer can match their aromatic strength with its intense fruit and its weighty palate.

All of that Gewurztraminer fruit and weight could equally lend itself to being paired with a simple supper of gammon (or cold ham), particularly if you have a dollop of fruity chutney on the side of the plate. The touch of sweetness in the wine would complement the saltiness of the ham, while a rich, spicy chutney would find its match in the power and richness of the wine.

👁 Presentation of Alsace Gewurztraminer



Alsace Pinot Noir

Rare exceptions in a world dedicated to the production of white wines, Alsace's Pinot Noirs are astoundingly light and fruity. They can develop more weight and complexity over time if matured in oak barrels, all the while retaining their precision and elegance

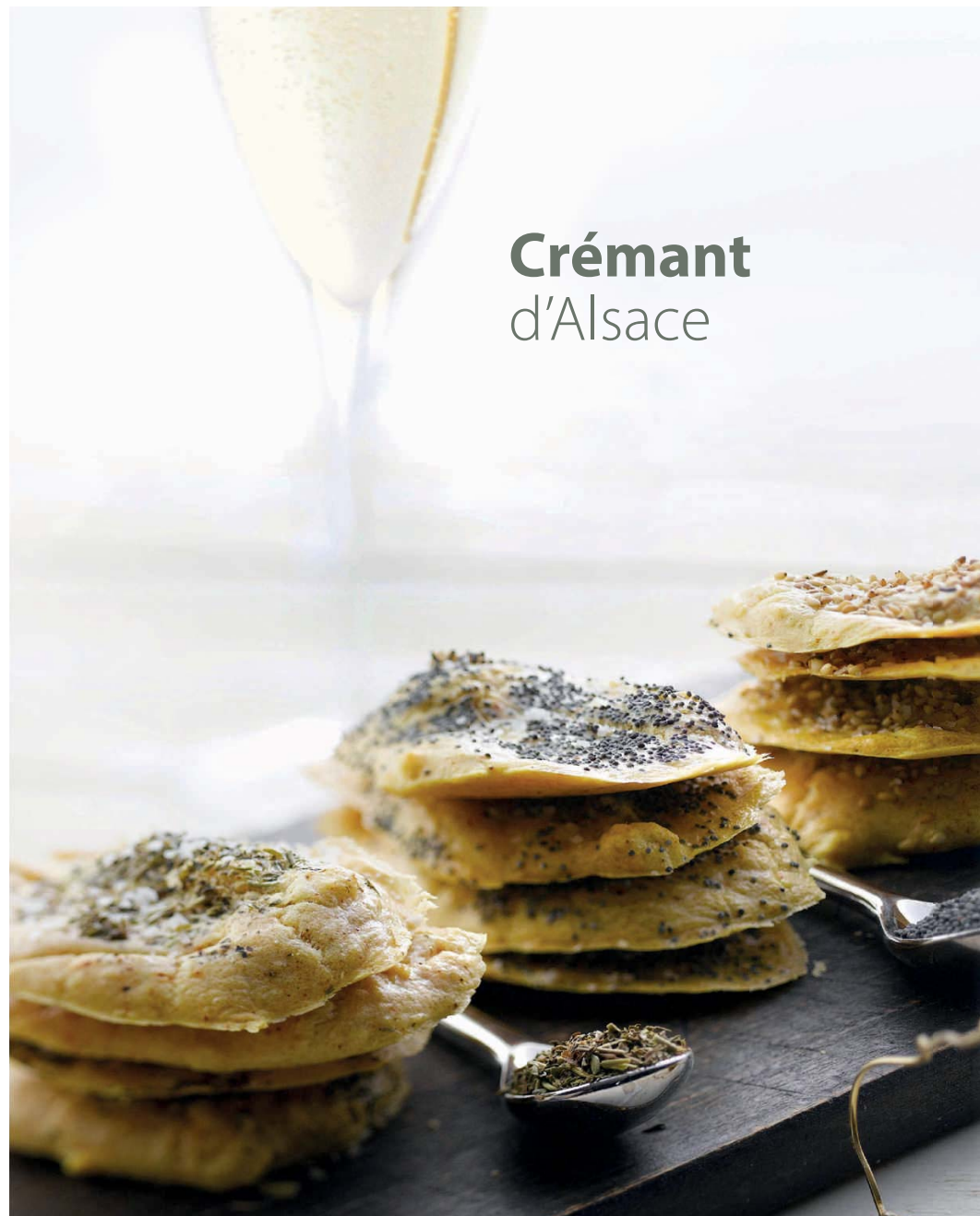
On a sunny summer's day, what could be more pleasant than to enjoy a glass of **Pinot Noir rosé** in the garden while you grill some **lamb chops over the barbecue**? Try it – it's a great match, as is the partnership between this crisp, bright rosé and a skewer of barbecued meats or smoky griddled tuna.

Light **red Pinot Noir** is best served lightly chilled, especially when you're sitting down to an outdoor meal of **cold cuts** and **charcuterie**.

Richer, more full-bodied and tannic **Pinot Noirs** fare better when paired with **red meat** or **game**. Try some with venison or steak, or even duck breast with a fruity sauce.

👁 Presentation of Alsace Pinot Noir

Crémant d'Alsace



**A subtle, luminous wine
with an ever-shifting palette
of flavours and delicate,
star-bright fine bubbles.**

On the palate, Crémant d'Alsace is all about energy, freshness, an effervescent radiance. It's these astonishing qualities that are the true hallmark of this sparkling wine's quality. Crémant d'Alsace doesn't browbeat your palate into submission, it reveals the flavours in dishes with which it is paired through its subtlety.

This is a wine that breaks all the rules about food and wine matching. Its elegance allows it to be paired with all the dishes you might conceivably dream up. Savoury **pastries** or **canapés**? **Shellfish**? **Fish**? **White meats**? **Cheeses**? Crémant d'Alsace can take all these in its stride thanks to its gentle mousse and fine-boned acidity, which lends each mouthful a touch of class. No doubt that's why it's the perfect wine for all festive occasions!

 Presentation of Crémant d'Alsace

Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) & Sélection de Grains Nobles

With their combination of opulence and elegance, Late Harvest wines offer luxurious texture and precise balance of sugar and acidity. And, when it comes to Sélection de Grains Nobles wines, the lusciousness of their texture is on a par with their richness and depth of fruit.

In order to balance the richness of these wines, you should pair them with equally weighty, strongly flavoured foods. Rich patés are a good place to start, particularly when they're served with a quince cheese, balsamic vinegar or a spiced mango chutney.

You can also make an astoundingly delicious match by matching these wines with herbed cheeses (such as a Boursin), or blue cheeses such as roquefort or stilton. Or take it one step further by pairing a glass with a piece of toasted sourdough spread with gorgonzola and pear slices.

It goes without saying that these sweet wines go well with desserts, particularly those based on stone fruits or tropical fruits. Late Harvest Riesling, past master of the precise balance between sweetness and acidity, reveals its poise when matched to desserts – just perfect with a lemon tart or a summer pudding.

👁 Presentation of Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) & Sélection de Grains Nobles



Serving and keeping Alsace wines

Alsace Wines – the white ones, at least – should be served at a temperature between 8° and 10°C. Any colder than that and their aromas will be muted, any warmer and the wines will appear soupy and heavy. The best glasses to serve them in are those made of clear glass, with a long stem (which avoids having the bowl warm up from the heat of your hand) and with a bowl that slopes gently inwards so as to concentrate the aromas and funnel them towards your nose. Crémant d'Alsace should be served in Champagne flutes (far better than wide coupes) at temperatures between 5° and 7°C.

A cool cellar kept at a constant temperature of 10° to 15°C, in which the air is neither too dry nor too humid, and where bottles are laid on their sides, creates the ideal conditions in which to keep and mature Alsace Wines. Although Alsace Wines can be drunk when young – between six months and five years after harvest – some wines can benefit from extensive ageing. These include great vintages (1983, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1997 and, more recently, 2007 and 2009), Grands Crus wines, and Late Harvest and Sélection de Grains Nobles sweeties.

👁 Vintage chart





THE TERM **AOC** IS A GUARANTEE OF **AUTHENTIC** TERROIR

In order to protect the true nature of Alsace Wines, and to highlight the richness and diversity of their terroirs, the creation of a well-defined regulatory system was necessary. This work lies at the very heart of the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée system, which is under continuous review in order to ensure the production of high-quality wines of great authenticity. Thus, all Alsace Wines come under the umbrella of one of the following Appellations d'Origine Contrôlées (AOCs):

- AOC Alsace (71% of total production).
- AOC Crémant d'Alsace (25% of total production).
- AOC Alsace Grands Crus (4% of total production).

Two further specifications can be added to the terms AOC Alsace and Alsace Grands Crus:

- Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives),
- Sélection de Grains Nobles.



| AOC Alsace

First created in 1962, the Alsace AOC now accounts for 72% of the region's total production, of which 90% is white wine. The appellation was born as the result of intensive national debate.

The first French AOCs were created by decree in 1935. However, negotiations with the certifying body, the INAO, were interrupted by Germany's annexation of Alsace during the Second World War.

At the end of the war, the ruling of 1945, prepared by the Alsace Viticultural Association, defined the Alsace appellation. Nevertheless, it wasn't until 1962 that Alsace's AOC finally obtained full legal recognition.

The Alsace AOC is based on the region's viticultural history, and covers wines made from precisely defined vineyard parcels.

AOC Alsace Wines can be made from single grape varieties. If this is the case, the name of the grape can be mentioned on the label. Alternatively, these wines can be made from a blend of grape varieties, in which case they are often labelled as 'Edelzwicker' wines.

AOC Alsace Wines are always sold in the fluted bottles known as Alsace flutes these are exclusively reserved for the region's wines by law. Since 1972, appellation law dictates that the wines must be bottled in the region of production.

AOC Alsace Wines are submitted to continuous controls (both organoleptic and in terms of method of production in both vineyard and cellar) by an independent body monitored by the INAO.

Growers must observe a series of protocols in terms of vineyard management, permitted grape varieties, yields, harvest, etc...

👁 Protocols

👁 Table of maximum yields permitted by the AOC



Since October 2011, when it comes to wines which exhibit a high degree of typicity, and which are of a particularly high quality, the term AOC can be complemented by:

A commune-based denomination

This kind of denomination is based on more stringent regulations than the regional appellation, relating to: grape variety, planting density, pruning, trellising, ripeness levels, yields.

13 communes or inter-communal entities have been strictly defined and can be mentioned on the label, alongside the words 'AOC Alsace': Bergheim, Blienschwiller, Côtes de Barr, Côte de Rouffach, Côteaux du Haut-Koenigsbourg, Klevener de Heiligenstein, Ottrott, Rodern, Saint-Hippolyte, Scherwiller, Vallée Noble, Val Saint-Grégoire, Wolxheim.

The name of a lieu-dit

In this instance, the aim is to identify wines of a high quality with particular characteristics associated with certain terroirs and to apply even stricter production regulations than those associated with communal wines. Wines from these lieux-dits express a number of nuances: primary fruit characters of individual grape varieties are blended with terroir-derived minerality.

AOC ALSACE AUTHORISED GRAPE VARIETIES

	SYLVANER	PINOT BLANC	CHASSÉLAS	AUXERROIS	RIESLING	MUSCAT	PINOT GRIS	SAVAGNIN ROSE	GEWURZTRAMINER	PINOT NOIR
AOC ALSACE	★	★	★	★	★	★	★		★	★
AOC ALSACE « LIEU-DIT »	★	★	★	★	★	★	★		★	★
AOC ALSACE « COMMUNALE »	BLIENSCHWILLER, CÔTES DE BARR	★								
	BERGHEIM							★		
	CÔTEAUX DU HAUT-KOENIGSBOURG				★			★		
	CÔTE DE ROUFFACH				★		★		★	★
	KLEVENER DE HEILIGENSTEIN							★		
	SAINT-HIPPOLYTE, OTTROT, RODERN									★
	VALLÉE NOBLE				★		★		★	
	VAL ST GRÉGOIRE		★	★			★			
	SCHERWILLER, WOLXHEIM				★					



The 51 AOC Alsace Grands Crus

The concept of a Grand Cru made its first appearance in Alsace during the 9th century. The process of pinpointing the best terroirs stems from the know-how and experience of the region's growers, men and women who brought to light the most remarkable soils, located on slopes (some of which are pretty steep), and which benefit from unique micro-climates. Today, 51 individual terroirs – which, together, make up the mosaic of the Alsace Grands Crus – have been defined according to strict geological and climatic criteria. The wines from these vineyard sites make up 4% of Alsace's total production.

DELIMITED ZONES

These exceptional lieux-dits, based on historical production sites, have been carved up into strictly delimited planting zones by the INAO (Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité Note – this is the first time INAO has been defined in full, despite having been mentioned several times – perhaps it should be defined in full elsewhere) after many hours of intensive discussion in committee.

Between 1975 and 2007, 51 lieux-dits were successively defined in this manner. The area of each planting zone ranges from 3 to 80 hectares.

👁 Table of Grands Crus

51 AOC ALSACE GRANDS CRUS

In order to protect them by law, the names of these 51 lieux-dits were registered in October 2011. Each benefits from the quality assurance of AOP status (the European equivalent of AOC), and Alsace now boasts 51 AOC Alsace Grands Crus.

The new set of protocols for the AOC includes a complete description of these 51 geographic zones, itemising the natural and human factors that contribute to the link between terroir and appellation, as well as information on the characteristics and quality of the wines produced there.

👁 Protocols

See the clip
Grands Crus
d'Alsace

KEY DATES

1975 The INAO issues a decree defining the Grand Cru AOC and announces the first lieu-dit, Schlossberg. By 1983 there are 26 lieux-dits, then 50 by 1992. Only four grape varieties are permitted under Grand Cru AOC law: Muscat, Riesling, Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer.

2007 Kaefferkopf becomes the 51st lieu-dit to be awarded AOC Alsace Grand Cru status. Its protocols permit single-variety wines, but blends based on a majority of Gewurztraminer are also permitted.

2011 The umbrella Alsace Grand Cru AOC is divided into 51 individual AOC Alsace Grands Crus appellations, which affords each lieu-dit AOP-level guarantees of quality.

THE REGION'S STRICTEST VITICULTURAL REGULATIONS

The protocols dictated by the ordinance of 2011 concerned constraints on the managements of vineyards, vinification, yields and harvesting.

Even before that date, back in 2001 the decree of 24 January aimed to increase the involvement of viticultural syndicates in the management of their own lieux-dits. This local management scheme permitted producers of Grand Cru wines to work together in order to increase the quality and typicity of the wines produced from their terroirs. The leeway afforded by such a set up allows today's producers to make ambitious viticultural decisions.

The new protocols describe further constraints set for the lieux-dits of Zotzenberg, Altenberg de Bergheim and Kaefferkopf.

Protocols

YIELDS

The maximum yield permitted for all Grands Crus grapes is 55hl/ha.

GRAPE VARIETIES

Four grape varieties are generally permitted in the Grands Crus vineyards: Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer.

There are three exceptions to this rule: blends are permitted in the Altenberg de Bergheim and Kaefferkopf, while Sylvaner can be grown in Zotzenberg.

ON THE LABEL...

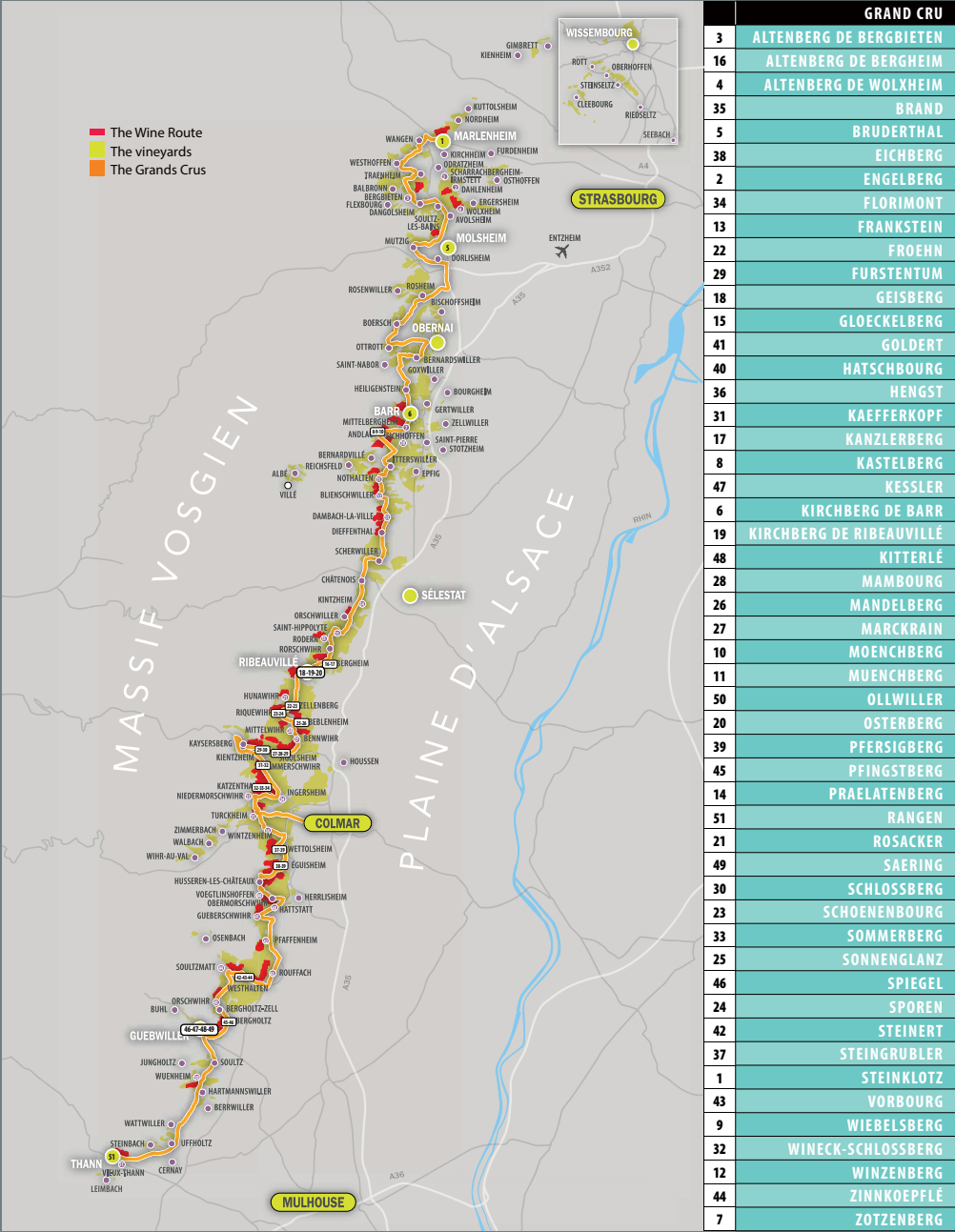
Labels must mention one of the 51 appellations, and so must bear the name of a given lieu-dit as well as the vintage. Generally speaking, the label also mentions the grape variety, unless the wine is a blend.

Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) & Sélection de Grains Nobles

One or other of these two prestigious terms can be used on the labels of wines from the Alsace Grands Crus appellations.

THE LINK TO TERROIR

The constant evolution of the regulatory framework by means of increasingly restrictive regulation is directed towards an ultimate goal: the creation of ever-stronger links between a vineyard's terroir and the expression of that terroir in the resulting wines. You might say that it is a delivery mechanism for the sense of place expressed by each lieu-dit.



TYPE OF SOIL	LOCALITIES	AREA	ALTITUDE	EXPOSITION	DATE
Marno-calcaro-gypsum	67 BERGBIETEN	29,07 ha	210 to 265 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	68 BERGHEIM	35,06 ha	220 to 320 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	67 WOLXHEIM	31,20 ha	200 to 250 m	south/south-west	17.12.1992
Granite	68 TURCKHEIM	57,95 ha	250 to 380 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	67 MOLSHEIM	18,40 ha	225 to 300 m	south-east	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone	68 EGUISHHEIM	57,62 ha	220 to 340 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	67 DAHLENHEIM ET SCHARRACHBERGHEIM	14,80 ha	250 to 300 m	south	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone	68 INGERSHEIM ET KATZENTHAL	21 ha	250 to 280 m	east	17.12.1992
Granite	67 DAMBACH-LA-VILLE	56,20 ha	220 to 230 m	east/south-east	17.12.1992
Clay-marl	68 ZELLENBERG	14,60 ha	270 to 300 m	south/south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone	68 KIENTZHEIM ET SIGOLSHEIM	30,50 ha	300 to 400 m	south/south-west	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 RIBEAUVILLÉ	8,53 ha	250 to 320 m	south	23.11.1983
Granite clay	68 RODERN ET SAINT-HIPPOLYTE	23,40 ha	250 to 360 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	68 GUEBERSCHWIHR	45,35 ha	230 to 330 m	east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone and loess	68 HATTSTAT ET VOGTLINSHOFFEN	47,36 ha	210 to 330 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 WINTZENHEIM	53,02 ha	270 to 360 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Granite-limestone and sandstone	68 AMMERSCHWIHR	71,65 ha	240 to 350 m	south/west	14.01.2007
Clay-marl-gypsum	67 ANDLAU	3,23 ha	250 m	south/south-west	23.11.1983
Schist	67 ANDLAU	5,82 ha	240 to 300 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Sandy-clay	68 GUEBWILLER	28,53 ha	300 to 390 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	67 BARR	40,63 ha	210 to 330 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 RIBEAUVILLÉ	11,40 ha	270 to 350 m	south/south-west	23.11.1983
Sandstone-volcanic	68 GUEBWILLER	25,79 ha	270 to 360 m	south/south-east/south-west	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	68 SIGOLSHEIM	61,85 ha	210 to 360 m	south	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone	68 MITTELWIHR ET BEBLENHEIM	22 ha	210 to 250 m	south/south-west	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone	68 BENNWIHR ET SIGOLSHEIM	53,35 ha	200 to 300 m	east/south-east	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone and colluvial deposits	67 ANDLAU ET EICHOFFEN	11,83 ha	230 to 260 m	south	23.11.1983
Sandstone-volcanic-pebbles	67 NOTHALTEN	17,70 ha	250 to 310 m	south	17.12.1992
Sandy-clay	67 WUENHEIM	35,86 ha	260 to 330 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl	68 RIBEAUVILLÉ	24,60 ha	250 to 320 m	east-south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone-sandstone	68 EGUISHHEIM ET WETTOLSHEIM	74,55 ha	220 to 330 m	east/south-east	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 ORSCHWIHR	28,15 ha	270 to 370 m	south-east	17.12.1992
Granite-gneiss	67 KINTZHEIM	18,70 ha	250 to 350 m	east-south-east	17.12.1992
Volcanic	68 THANN ET VIEUX-THANN	22,13 ha	320 to 450 m	south	23.11.1983
Dolomitic limestone	68 HUNAWIHR	26,18 ha	260 to 330 m	east-south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 GUEBWILLER	26,75 ha	260 to 300 m	east/south-east	23.11.1983
Granitic	68 SCHLOSSBERG	80,28 ha	230 to 350 m	south	20.11.1975
Marl-sand-gypsum	68 RIQUEWIHR ET ZELLENBERG	53,40 ha	265 to 380 m	south/south-east	17.12.1992
Granitic	68 NIEDERMORSCHWIHR ET KATZENTHAL	28,36 ha	260 to 400 m	south	23.11.1983
Marl-limestone	68 BEBLENHEIM	32,80 ha	220 to 270 m	south-east	23.11.1983
Marl-sandstone	68 BERGHOLTZ ET GUEBWILLER	18,26 ha	260 to 315 m	east	23.11.1983
Clay-marl-pebbles	68 RIQUEWIHR	23,70 ha	265 to 310 m	south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone	68 PFAFFENHEIM ET WESTHALTEN	38,90 ha	250 to 350 m	east	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone-sandstone	68 WETTOLSHEIM	22,95 ha	280 to 350 m	south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone	67 MARLENHEIM	40,60 ha	200 to 300 m	south-south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone-sandstone	68 ROUFFACH ET WESTHALTEN	73,61 ha	210 to 300 m	south/south-east	17.12.1992
Sand-sandstone	67 ANDLAU	12,52 ha	200 to 300 m	south/south-east	23.11.1983
Granitic	68 KATZENTHAL ET AMMERSCHWIHR	27,40 ha	280 to 400 m	south/south-east	17.12.1992
Granitic	67 BLIENSCHWILLER	19,20 ha	240 to 320 m	south-south-east	17.12.1992
Limestone-sandstone	67 SOULTZMATT ET WESTHALTEN	71,03 ha	250 to 420 m	south/south-east	17.12.1992
Marl-limestone	67 MITTELBERGHEIM	36,45 ha	215 to 320 m	east/south	17.12.1992



AOC Crémant d'Alsace

Defined in 1976, the AOC for Crémant d'Alsace accounts for 24% of the region's wine production.

SPARKLING WINES MADE BY THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

The very individual personality – not to mention the high quality – of Alsace's crémants has brought them considerable commercial success, not only in Alsace itself, but also across France and the rest of Europe. In terms of home consumption, Crémant d'Alsace is second only to Champagne when it comes to sales of AOC sparkling wines in France.

Since the end of the 19th century, a number of Alsace's wine producers have made sparkling wines by the traditional method. This custom, which became a little less popular in the first half of the 20th century, nevertheless survived up until the end of the 20th century, right up to the point where the AOC Crémant d'Alsace was recognised by decree on 24 August 1976.

This decree gave Alsace Wine producers the necessary framework for the creation of high-quality sparkling wines, maintaining quality parameters similar to those used by producers of Champagne. Today more than 500 producers are members of the Syndicate of Crémant d'Alsace Producers.



The hallmark of terroir

If Crémant d'Alsace Wines are sparkling by nature as well as by name, it's because they're born in the ideal conditions: a dry, sunny climate, hillsides whose slopes face the rising sun and soils with the ideal geological profile.

Each of these factors is reflected in these unique, complex wines in the same way that Alsace's grape varieties are influenced by their terroir. Some crémants are blends, while others are based on single grape varieties; in the latter case the name of the grape will be mentioned on the label.

As far as the blends are concerned, they are harmonious marriages of several grape varieties, each of which makes its own contribution to the subtle balance of the wines.

- Pinot Blanc is the main variety used to make white Crémant d'Alsace. The grape lends the wines freshness and a delicate quality.
- Riesling is expressed in crémants via vivid, fruity aromas and an elegant, poised character.
- Pinot Gris brings richness and body to a blend.
- Chardonnay is expressed by its lightness of touch.
- Pinot Noir is the only grape that can be used to make rosé Crémant d'Alsace. This grape is also the base for charming, expressive Blancs de Noirs (while Pinot Noir has dark skin, its flesh is pale).
- Vintage crémants, often aged for longer than non-vintage wines, develop vinosity as they age, acquiring buttery, brioche-like aromas.

HARVEST TIME

In their quest to produce racy, fruity sparkling wines, Alsace's grape-growers tend to pick their grapes relatively early, thereby maintaining the requisite levels of crisp acidity. The bunches must be healthy when picked, and are not de-stemmed before pressing.

THE ART OF VINIFICATION

After the first fermentation, the 'prise de mousse', a second fermentation, takes place in the bottle.

After a period of maturation known as 'sur lattes' (on the lees), which cannot last any less than nine months – but is often longer – the bottles are gradually turned and upended so that the deposit (which is composed mainly of dead lees) drops into the neck of the bottle, ready for disgorgement. The liquid lost during disgorgement is compensated for by the addition of a liqueur that contains the required 'dosage' (sugar level), which can be brut, extra-brut or demi-sec.

👁 Production regulations

👁 Protocols



Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) and Sélection de Grains Nobles

One or other of these two terms can be used on labels, alongside the AOC Alsace or Alsace Grands Crus denomination.

They are reserved for exceptional wines produced according to criteria that are among the most stringent of all French AOC regulations.

The semi-continental climate of the Alsace vineyards, characterised by very low rainfall and remarkably high levels of sunshine during autumn, is particularly favourable to the production of raisined grapes and the development of noble rot, particularly in good vintages. These conditions permit a late harvest – much later than normal – of Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer, at a time when these grapes are expressing the highest possible degree of opulence.

Grapes destined for Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) and Sélection de Grains Nobles wines must have a very high degree of sugar ripeness at the time of harvest, and the wines can only be marketed after at least 18 months of maturation.

The considerable efforts made by grape-growers were rewarded by official recognition of Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) and Sélection de Grains Nobles wines in a ministerial decree dated 1 March 1984.

LATE HARVEST (VENDANGES TARDIVES) WINES

When grapes develop *Botrytis cinerea* (noble rot) it marks the start of a process of evaporation that concentrates sugars and aromatic compounds, resulting in wines with great sweetness and richness.

SÉLECTION DE GRAINS NOBLES WINES

These are made from the harvest of grapes most affected by noble rot: only the most desiccated grapes are picked. The resulting concentration of flavours creates wines in which varietal character takes second place to an overall impression of power, complexity and length.

👁 Table of minimum sugar levels in grapes destined to become Late Harvest (Vendanges Tardives) and Sélection de Grains Nobles wines

👁 Strict production criteria



A HISTORIC REGION

FOR THE PRODUCTION
OF GREAT WINES

Much like the region that lends them their name, the Alsace vineyards have been enriched by a variety of factors over the course of their long history.



THE FIRST ALSACE VINEYARDS

Vines were growing in the area that was to become the Rhine valley long before humans put in an appearance, although the species growing then were but distant relatives of the grapes we know today.

But even if one recognises that the fruits of the vine have been enjoyed in the region since time immemorial, the transition from picking to deliberate cultivation only took place after the Roman conquest. Archaeological finds pay testament to the increasing importance of viticulture: piles of pips, remains of wooden barrels and, little by little, growing evidence of grape-themed motifs being used to adorn pottery or decorative friezes. There is also evidence that, from the 2nd century AD onwards, wine was being shipped along the Mosel and the Rhine, proving that production had speedily moved onto a commercial footing.

THE VINEYARDS RESIST INVASION

The invasion of the Germanic tribes in the 5th century AD brought with it a temporary decline in viticulture, but written documents reveal that the vineyards bounced back, becoming increasingly important, under the reign of the Merovingian and Carolingian kings. This was largely due to the growing influence of the bishoprics, abbeys and convents founded during this era. Bit by bit, vines took over the Alsace countryside.

THE GOLDEN AGE

(FROM THE LATE MIDDLE AGES TO THE RENAISSANCE)

At the start of the 13th century AD, there were around 100 grape-growing villages, but by the 14th century AD that number had reached 170. This expansion continued uninterrupted up until the 16th century AD, when Alsace viticulture reached its zenith.

The Renaissance-era houses, many of which can still be found in numerous grape-growing villages, pay testament to the prosperity of an era when Alsace Wines were exported across Europe, mainly thanks to the shipping lanes that existed along the Ill and Rhine rivers. Wine taxes were imposed, and these brought in a good deal of revenue for town councils, monasteries and the local aristocracy.

It was during this period that the first viticultural regulations, particularly those governing permitted grape varieties – Traminer, Muscat and Riesling were mentioned at the time – were put in place, as were rules concerning viticulture and vinification. These regulations – which were fairly restrictive for the era – bear witness to a desire to link the identity of the region's wines to top-quality viticultural practices.

FROM THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR TO THE ARRIVAL OF PHYLLOXERA

The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) devastated local economies: pillaging, famine and disease all had catastrophic consequences for viticulture, much as they did for other economic activities in the region. Villages were ruined and vineyards vandalised.

River commerce was brought to an abrupt halt, as was trading with other Nordic countries (the Netherlands, Scandinavia, northern Germany and England).

But as soon as the fighting stopped, and despite the loss of their key markets, the viticultural villages sheltered beneath the Vosges began rebuilding themselves along the lines of Ammerschwihr. Throughout the 17th century AD, Strasbourg remained at the centre of the export trade with Germany and Lorraine, while Colmar and the surrounding region focused on the Swiss market, Swabia, Bavaria, part of Lorraine and the valleys of the Vosges Mountains. The white wines of Alsace, 'from the slopes', were recognised as being of excellent quality.

Given the success of Alsace Wines, some producers began pushing the region's traditional viticultural boundaries. The vineyards spilled down over the slopes and onto the plain, where mediocre grape varieties, destined for bulk wine production, created a market – and an image – that was in sharp contrast to that of the hillside vineyards, which continued to produce wines of high quality.

In 1731, a royal edict aimed to put an end to this unsatisfactory situation, but was unsuccessful. In fact, the tendency towards bulk production accelerated after the Revolution. The fact was that the nationalisation of lands that once belonged to the nobility and the church had important consequences for the shape of the region's vineyards: these properties were divided into small parcels, which were bought by peasants who began to produce their own wine.

With the advent of the Napoleonic era, growers focused largely on making wines that met the demands of the army, and this, in turn, resulted in the planting of yet more vineyards. The total area under vine grew from 23,000 hectares in 1808 to 30,000 hectares in 1828.

This led to an era of overproduction, which was fatal for many of the hillside vineyards, many of which were either uprooted or abandoned – a process exacerbated by the disappearance of all export markets and a growing demand for beer rather than wine.

In 1870, volume production was maintained under German occupation. The brokers bought sharp, high-acidity wines made from high-yielding grapes at low prices. These wines, which lacked both body or fruit, were tailor-made for the creation of artificial German-style wines which were diluted with water and boosted by the addition of sugar and aromatic compounds. Alsace Wines lost their identity due to the flooding of the market with these inferior wines, which also resulted in a steep drop in value.

Poor weather and vine diseases, such as downy mildew and phylloxera, added to the region's miseries.



RENEWAL COMES AFTER THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In 1918, Alsace went from being the largest grape-growing region in Germany to being the smallest grape-growing region in France.

In order to fight back against the diseases that threatened the vineyards, growers began to use hybrids. Around the same time, the two production streams began to square off with each other: on the one hand were those fighting for the production of high-quality wines made from traditional grape varieties, on the other were those convinced that the future lay in the production of large volumes of cheap wines based on high-yielding hybrids.

These hybrids resulted in the production of such large volumes that it sparked a viticultural crisis in the region. Confidence and vineyard area both shrank. As a result, the shrinking of the viticultural zone, a trend that began in 1902, continued up until 1948, when the total planted area had fallen to 9,500 hectares, of which 7,500 hectares lay within the Alsace appellation zone.

It's as a result of these trials that Alsace's winemakers got together and decided to organise their profession through the creation of the Association des Viticulteurs d'Alsace (AVA). They focused all their tenacity and skills on improving the quality of their wines and renewing links with the historical traditions of great Alsace winemaking.

Sadly, the timing was wrong, and historical events blocked the planned improvements. The restructuring of the region's vineyards had to await the end of the Second World War.



THE MODERN ERA: AOC RECOGNITION

General de Gaulle signed a new law on 2 November 1945. It defined the appellations of Alsace and established the initial regulatory framework. The zone of production was defined, shifting emphasis onto the hillsides and away from the plains. The old, high-yielding grape varieties were abandoned in favour of more elegant ones. The evolution of Alsace's vineyards towards the production of high-quality wines was recognised by the creation of AOC Alsace in 1962.

There was an acknowledgement of the need to look after the interests of the region's many viticultural families, particularly in terms of fixing a set price for grapes. This resulted in the creation, by legal decree, of the Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins d'Alsace (the generic body that looks after the region's viticultural interests) on 22 April 1963. This body has four fundamental aims:

- To foster and encourage all studies on the production and marketing of Alsace Wines, and to centralise the collection of statistical data and all relevant technical, economic and practical information.
- To provide all producers, cooperatives, brokers, commercial intermediaries and agents with technical and practical assistance relating to the improvement of the vineyards and the quality of Alsace Wines.
- To facilitate the relationships between producers and grape buyers, particularly in terms of studying the elements that affect harvest prices each year, as well as the means of payment for transactions.
- To inform and educate consumers, particularly in foreign markets, about the quality of Alsace Wines, and to develop export markets for these wines.

The creation of AOC Alsace Grand Cru and AOC Crémant d'Alsace followed in 1975 and 1976 respectively. The regulatory framework of these AOCs has evolved constantly since their creation, with increasingly tight definition of ever-more ambitious production criteria.

In five centuries of history, there can be no vineyard region that has endured as many trials and tribulations as Alsace. Nevertheless, Alsace has become not only one of the most beautiful production regions in France, but also one of the biggest.

As a result of ceaseless efforts made by all involved over the course of recent decades, the high quality of Alsace Wines is universally recognised. Thanks to their close links to their terroir and their ambition to succeed, Alsace's producers make authentic, fresh, aromatic wines of which they are justifiably proud. Working together with CIVA (Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins d'Alsace) and AVA (Association des Viticulteurs d'Alsace), producers and brokers contribute to the widespread distribution of Alsace Wines around the world.



TOURISM

Although plenty of visitors are attracted to Strasbourg and Colmar, Alsace's wine villages are also a big draw. The attraction lies in its enchanting Wine Route, whose ever-changing charms reflect the ebb and flow of the seasons. Picture-postcard villages, Medieval ruins and hand-tended vineyards never fail to enchant visitors from around the world.



Alsace's wine route

The most famous Wine Route in France offers visitors an amazing journey that takes in picturesque countryside, unique architecture, a thriving culture and world-famous gastronomy. Every valley, every hill, every parcel of vines – each of which has its own individual geology and micro-climate – has been explored, loved and cultivated like a garden by generation after generation of growers.

Renowned for its exceptional itinerary and the ease of the journey, Alsace's Wine Route is an invitation to discover the region and its wineries. It unfolds for more than 170 kilometres along the foothills of the Vosges, passing valleys and slopes as it threads its way through all of the vineyard communes, from Marlenheim to Thann, passing the front doors of some 1,000 wineries along the way. The route also includes an isolated sector situated near Wissembourg in the far north of Alsace.

The route has five different 'Vignoble et découverte' (exploring the vineyards) sectors. 'Vignoble et découverte' is a new term created to promote wine tourism in France. Two of the sectors have been awarded full 'Vignoble et découverte' status, while this status is pending for the remaining three:

- **The Heart of Alsace**, lies between Strasbourg and Colmar, between Mont Sainte-Odile the castle of Haut-Koenigsbourg,
- **The Land and Wines of Colmar country**, around Colmar,
- **Wissembourg country** (Cleebourg),
- **The Strasbourg vineyards**, from Marlenheim to Molsheim,
- **The south Alsace Wine Route**, around Thann and Guebwiller.

 www.route-des-vins-alsace.com

Each of these five sectors offers the visitor a panoply of picture postcard-perfect views. Vines aligned in regimented rows, villages encircled by ancient ramparts, half-timbered houses, Romanesque and Gothic churches and Renaissance wells, ruins of proud Medieval castles, cute winstubs and cool, welcoming tasting rooms: these are some of the delights that await visitors to Alsace. The superb sites, by turn majestic, serene and lively, add further dimensions to visitors' understanding of Alsace's wines – and the men and women that make them.



Travelling through the vineyards

In order to really understand the heart and soul of the Alsace Wine Route, you don't drive through it, you take the time to explore it by other means.

BY BIKE

The cycle trail through the vineyards, created to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Alsace Wine route, links Marlenheim to Thann and is signposted with its own logo. You can use the trail for a family day out, but also as a sports route. Either way, cycle tourism is a unique way of discovering the spectacular countryside of the Wine Route, and gives you all the time in the world to stop off and explore the region's history, culture and food.

Even if you don't take this dedicated cycle trail into account, there are over 2,000 kilometres of cycle paths that thread their way through Alsace's vineyards and the surrounding areas.

ON FOOT

Leaving the attractions of the Wine Route to one side for a moment, visitors can wander through the heart of the vineyards via the many vineyard paths and discovery routes available to them. As these paths snake their way through the vineyards and villages, they open you up to the joy of serendipitous discovery of both the region's history and its wine culture. Each path is lined with information panels, providing the means to learn more about the work of the region's grape-growers, the craft involved in the creation of Alsace Wines and the characteristics of each of the grape varieties.

RUNNING

Every year, a number of races and organised hikes take place in the vineyards. Most notably, the Molsheim Vineyard Marathon leads runners on a route that winds its way through 17 of the villages that line the Wine Route. Stalls offering snacks, wine tasting and Alsace specialities offer refreshment to runners and spectators alike as they enjoy this wonderful cultural, sporting event, which is certified by the French Athletic Federation.

ON HORSEBACK

You can follow specially signposted riding trails on horseback, as well as the signposted walking paths and cycle routes.



Tasting Alsace wines

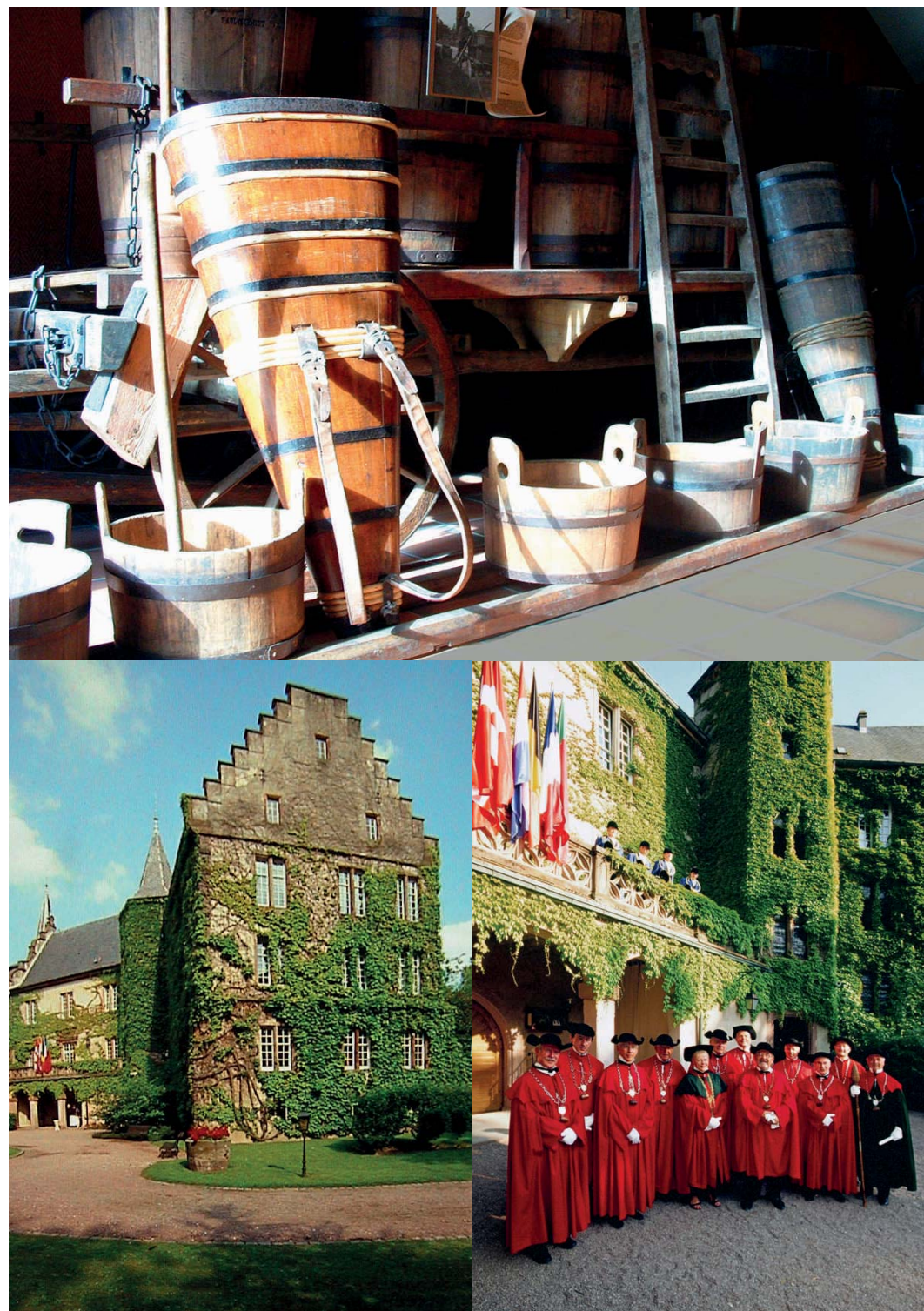
The Alsace Wine route is also a road that leads to the region's cellar doors and tasting rooms, most of which are open year-round.

Alsace's wine producers, whether independent wineries, wine brokers or cooperatives, take great joy in welcoming visitors and introducing them to all the charms and delights of their wines.

The online directory of the Alsace Wine-growing region offers a complete list of all businesses open to individual visitors and groups, and provides practical information for anyone planning a visit to one of the region's wineries. This includes information about the kinds of tastings available, whether or not children are welcome, handicap access, languages spoken, etc. You will find this directory at:

👁 www.AlsaceWines.com

👁 www.route-des-vins-alsace.com



Discovering Alsace wines

MUSEUMS

The many facets of the life and work of Alsace's winemakers over the course of the centuries can be explored at the regional Musée du Vignoble et des Vins d'Alsace (Museum of Alsace's wine-growing region and wines) in Kientzheim and at the Alsace Ecomuseum (l'Écomusée d'Alsace) in Ungersheim, as well as at the Alsace Museum (Musée Alsacien) in Strasbourg and at the Unterlinden Museum in Colmar.

As well as these museums, there are a growing number of businesses with exhibits and displays that allow members of the public to gain a better understanding of Alsace Wines.

THE VITICULTURAL GUILDS

The viticultural guilds are guarantors of quality, and also have a role to play in celebrating the delights of Alsace Wines in France and overseas. They organise meetings and events on a regular basis.

The Brotherhood of Saint-Etienne in Kientzheim, one of the oldest in France, organises events throughout the year and also awards its own quality label (the Sigil).

There are other guilds dedicated to celebrating Alsace Wines. These include: the Brotherhood of Haut-Koenigsbourg in Orschwiller, the Brotherhood of the Four Banns in Cleebourg, the Andlau Hospitallers, the Happy Company of Frankstein in Dambach-la-Ville, the Brotherhood of Saint-Urbain in Kintzheim, the Friends of Kaefferkopf in Ammerschwihr, the Oenophilic Order of Marlenheim and the Brotherhood of the Horn in Ottrot.

WINE AND FOOD SCHOOLS

Some companies run wine schools or organise tutored tastings, food- and wine-matching sessions or even themed meals, often with a theme that explores local gastronomic traditions.

 www.route-des-vins-alsace.com



| Let's celebrate wine!

Throughout the year, the wine-growing villages organise events that celebrate Alsace Wines

THE INDEPENDENT GROWERS' GOURMET APÉRITIF

MAY

Alsace's Independent Growers hold an open door festival for all those who wish to discover – or rediscover – Alsace Wines. This is an evening dedicated to the exchange of ideas and the tasting of a wide diversity of food and wine matches. It's the ideal opportunity to find out more about the lives and work of the region's independent producers in a convivial, friendly environment.

 www.alsace-du-vin.com

THE INDEPENDENT GROWERS' PICNIC

WHIT MONDAY

This annual celebration, which began in 1995, is an opportunity to highlight the conviviality of the region's growers. They – and their families – use the occasion to invite friends and guests to share a picnic with them, to taste new vintages and cuvées of their own wines and discover wines made by new producers. The Independent Growers' Picnic is a day for feasting, sharing and making new friends, and has gained a reputation for being one of France's most unique wine celebrations. Participants are invited to bring their own picnic to the growers' courtyards, gardens, cellars or vineyards. The growers supply the tables, benches, shelters and entertainment – not to mention the wines! This is a day for new friendships, a day when the growers delight in sharing their culture and heritage with all comers.

 www.alsace-du-vin.com



THE ALSACE WINE ROUTE'S CULTURE FESTIVAL – TAKES PLACE ACROSS ALSACE FROM JUNE TO AUGUST

The recently formed diVines d'Alsace (a group of women working in the Alsace wine industry) is in charge of organising a programme of innovative, eclectic cultural events. The one thing these events all have in common is their use of a wide variety of artistic and cultural means to transmit information about all things vinous. The programme features sculpture, poetry, painting and photography – as well as the staging of events aimed at bringing lovers of art and wine into closer contact with members of this group of female winemakers.

 www.divinesdalsace.com

PROCESSION AND HIGH MASS AT STRASBOURG CATHEDRAL WITH MEMBERS OF ALSACE'S WINE GUILDS IN JULY

Members of Alsace's ten wine guilds celebrate high mass at 11 o'clock at Strasbourg's Notre-Dame Cathedral in the presence of the Alsace Wine Queen and her crown princesses. The group, dressed in traditional costume, then processes to Place Broglie.

 www.convial.fr

THE ALSACE WINE FAIR IN COLMAR AUGUST

The Alsace Wine Fair in Colmar has been creating a bit of a summer buzz since 1948. This incredibly popular event is not only a general fair, it's also an enjoyable music festival, an opportunity for wine professionals to meet the public and an exceptional shop window for Alsace and its wines.

 www.foire-colmar.com

WINE AND HARVEST FESTIVALS

Our glorious summers, with their long evenings, are the perfect time to pay homage to the glories of Alsace Wines. Wine festivals and other enjoyable viticultural events take place throughout summer, and visitors are more than welcome to join in the fun and discover the region at its festive best. Wineries open their doors to all comers, convivial tastings are held, and festive processions conjure up historical customs and costumes. During the harvest season (which begins at the start of September and ends in late October), many of the region's communes celebrate nature's bounty and the new vintage.

 www.AlsaceWines.com



| Christmas in Alsace

Christmas in Alsace is observed through thriving popular traditions whose roots lie deep in antiquity: advent crowns are crafted, families bake bredeles (Christmas biscuits) and the Christ child (Christkindl) is celebrated, while the arrival of Hans Trapp (a legendary figure who accompanies Father Christmas in order to punish naughty children) is feared and that of Saint-Nicolas, patron of scholars and dispenser of presents, is eagerly anticipated.

The region's Christmas fairs, which feature little chalets, strung with fairy lights, that sell richly aromatic gingerbread and mulled wine, draw visitors from around the world.

Many wine producers open the doors of their magnificently decorated cellars at this time of year, offering a programme of events that often includes wine tastings and other Christmas treats.

 www.route-des-vins-alsace.com



NOTHALTEN

PRESERVING THE TERROIR

SUSTAINABLE VITICULTURE IN ALSACE

« We don't inherit
the earth from our ancestors,
we borrow it from our children »

(American Indian proverb)

The growing importance of this idea, as well as issues related to consumer health and the preservation of the environment, is very much on the mind of today's winemakers. For many years now, Alsace has been particularly concerned about such issues, and this has resulted in many of the region's grape-growers working organically. This way of working is born of a desire to become even closer to their terroir and their grapes, in search of greater complexity and authenticity. You could well say that the grape-growers are collaborating with nature.



Organic and biodynamic Viticulture

ORGANIC VITICULTURE

Organic viticulture is a specific method of production that employs a number of practices that are determined by their relationship to ecological harmony and balance. Within Europe it has a regulatory framework that defines the principles of production, preparation and importation, as well as various checks and controls, certification, administrative sanctions and labelling. Regulatory checks are performed by an independent certifying body.

Organic viticulture is a means of managing the interactions between soil, water, plants, air, flora and fauna. It is a way of working that doesn't seek to 'fight' the 'enemies' of the vines, but to create a balance, to re-energise the soil, to reinforce plants' resistance to disease and to sustain natural cycles.

Organic methods of production observe a precisely defined set of protocols that involve:

- Certification by a body recognised by the government for its competence, independence and impartiality.
- Strict and systematic controls on work performed in the vineyard and in the cellar.
- Samples and analyses, should the need arise.

Organic wine status invokes adherence to the following regulations:

- The exclusive use of grapes produced according to organic methods.
- Bans on certain vinification practices.
- Strict limits imposed on the use of permitted chemical substances.
- Limited use of sulphites (which in all instances must remain at levels well below those permitted in conventional viticulture).

Organic viticulture involves the use of regulations and practices that maintain respect for the true nature of the product while protecting the diversity and quality of the wines.

From 1 August 2012, the entire winemaking process, from grape to wine, has been defined by European law. From this date on, wines produced by these methods can be labelled as 'Organic Wine'.



ORGANIC VITICULTURE IN ALSACE

Alsace is among the top three regions for organic production in terms of the surface area of vineyards managed according to organic practices: some 13.5% of the region's total production.

Biologique AB

(France's national label for organic products)

Number of certified producers	281 wineries
Certified area	2 230 ha
Proportion of Alsace's vineyards	14,2 %

Sources: ORAB Opaba, Demeter

The growth of organic viticulture in Alsace is remarkable and is, in large part, due to the activity of a group of pioneers who began their work in the 1960s. Ever since, the area managed organically and the number of producers working organically has grown steadily.



The growth in area of vineyards managed organically (in ha)



The growth in the number of organic growers





VINABIO ALSACE: A RIGOROUS CHARTER FOR VINIFICATION

“From the vine to the wine, we respect our grapes.”

Alsace's organic winemakers decided to take things a step further than the basic European regulations, and have created an Organic Wine Charter for Alsace. This sets a more rigorous regulatory framework in place and offers even greater traceability.

The Vinabio Alsace hallmark came into being as the result of several years of collective work by organic winemakers. It creates the notion of a communal approach to growing grapes and making wine based on the minimal use of chemical products.

As far as the consumer is concerned, it guarantees:

- Work in the vineyard, which is based on certified organic grapes, focuses on respect for the soil in order to reveal the characteristics of the terroir to the fullest, and the use of viticultural techniques that are in harmony with natural resources.
- Hand-harvesting in order to preserve the quality of the grapes and the soils.
- That, from harvest onwards, all winemaking processes are conducted using wine that has been certified as organic by official bodies. Parameters include the full traceability of all processes, no use of oenological products or chemicals (with the exception of sulphur in low doses and clay), and a commitment to avoid using techniques that might obscure the wine's true nature.
- The wine in the glass will be precise, a true reflection of the balance present in the grapes at the time of harvest. Wines will have a strong personality that expresses their terroir without recourse to technological artifice, and which offers a wide diversity of aromas and tastes that are not standardised by the use of corrective techniques.

“From the land to the bottle, this certificate is a guarantee of respect for the environment at each stage of production, with one goal in mind – to replicate the personality of the grape's origin in the wine in your glass.”

Romain ILTIS, Best Sommelier in France 2012 and Master of Port 2008.

 www.opaba.org/bioenalsace/



BIODYNAMIC VITICULTURE

Biodynamic viticulture is derived from the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian agronomist who worked and wrote during the first half of the 20th century. Biodynamic viticulture works along similar principles as organic viticulture, although it has an additional aim; that of restoring the earth to its natural balance with the universe. It is based on the use of a number of practices that are in harmony with cosmic cycles, particularly the rhythms of the lunar calendar.

Alsace is the cradle of biodynamic agriculture in France: the first domaine began farming biodynamically in 1925, and the French Association of Biodynamic Farming was founded in Strasbourg in 1958.

Before obtaining biodynamic certification, a property must be certified as organic. Afterwards, a strict protocol, whose precise nature is determined by one of the following certifying bodies, must be followed:

- Either the Biodynamic Agriculture Movement (Mouvement de l'Agriculture Biodynamique), which works with the Demeter organisation and offers official international certification.
- Or the Independent Syndicate of Biodynamic Grape-growers (Syndicat Indépendant des Vignerons en Culture Biodynamique), which offers the Biodyvin label (managed by Ecocert France).

👁 <http://www.bio-dynamie.org/>

👁 <http://www.demeter.fr/>

👁 <http://www.biodyvin.com/>



Other sustainable forms of agriculture

SUSTAINABLE VITICULTURE

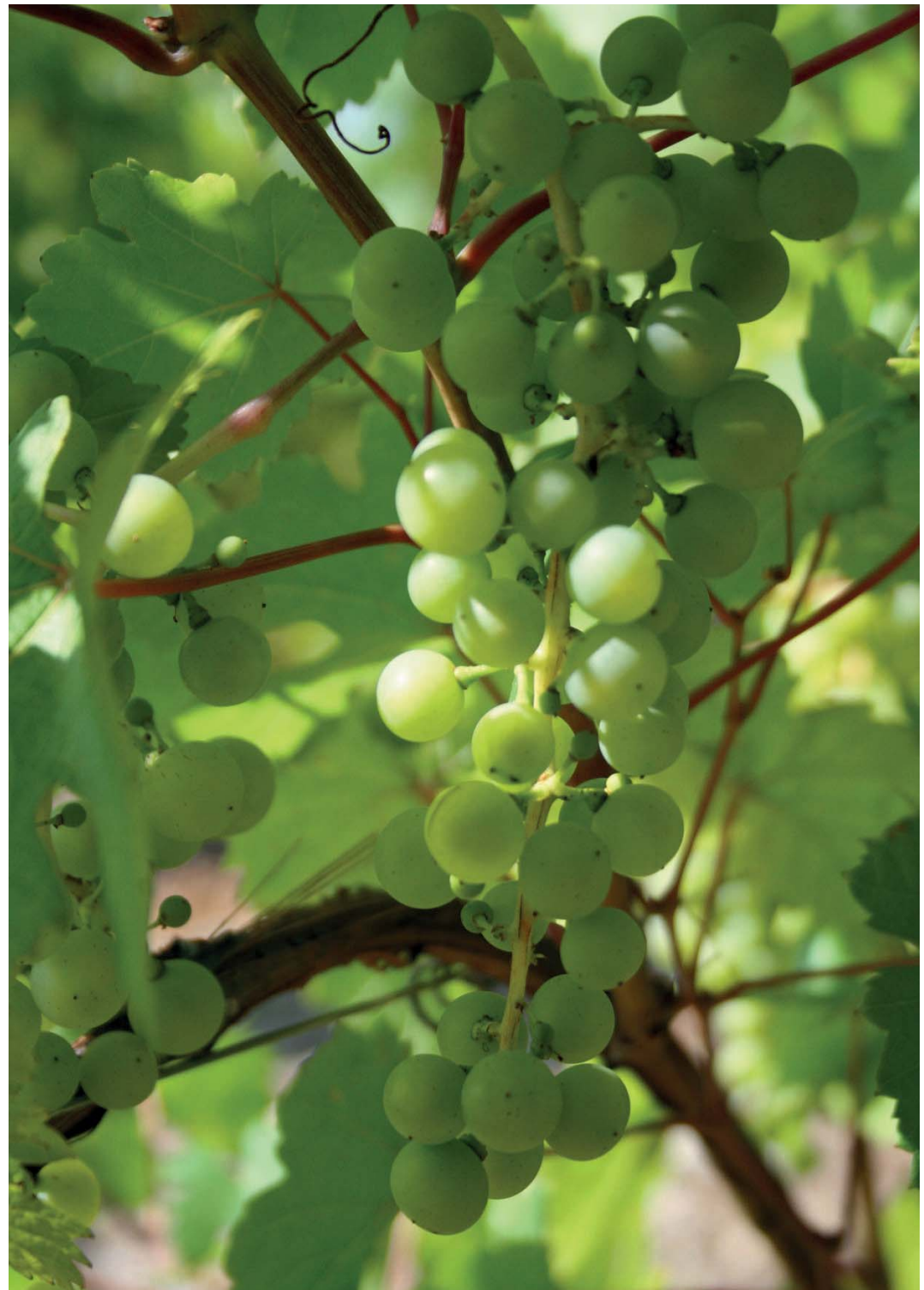
Sustainable viticulture is aimed at minimising the use of pesticides, with treatments only being used when there is a very real risk of the vines developing diseases or other forms of damage. Those adhering to this approach undertake to ask themselves whether or not the widespread use of pesticides or fertilisers, as employed in conventional viticulture, is really necessary.

The main difference between the practices of sustainable viticulture versus organic viticulture is that the former entails:

- The possible use of chemical pesticides and some chemical fertilisers.
- The possibility of using the techniques of intensive agriculture.

INTEGRATED VITICULTURE

Integrated viticulture consists of the production of high-quality grapes while maintaining economic viability. It prioritises working methods that are ecologically healthy, minimising any impact that is either unintentional or undesirable, as well as the use of phyto-pharmaceuticals. The aim is to preserve both the environment and human health (definition from the International Organisation for Biological Control).



The production of **healthier, more expressive wines**

These different approaches to wine production all aim to maintain the balance and symbiosis between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the earth and its inhabitants remain healthy.

This close relationship with nature also paves the way for the fullest possible expression of Alsace's terroirs and its many micro-terroirs through the intermediary of wines that are healthy, expressive and vibrant.



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Wines
of Alsace
PURE EXPRESSION