

Château de la Ragotière

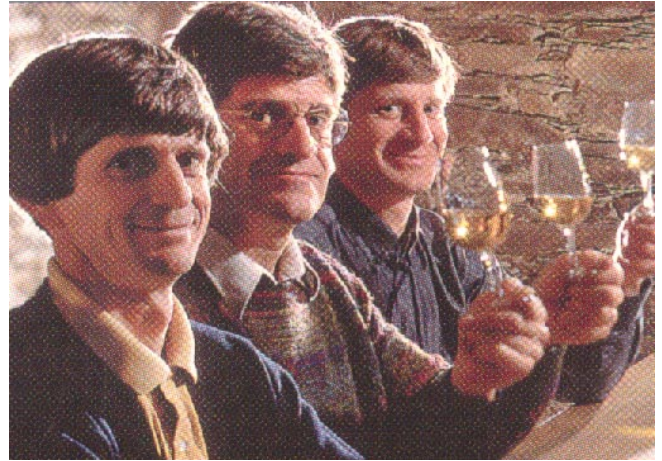
Built by the noble Loré de la Ragotière family in the fourteenth century, Château de la Ragotière was purchased in 1979 by the Couillaud brothers. After acquiring the property, Bernard, François and Michel discovered an old cellar in the chapel housing vintages dating back to 1947. The Couillaud brothers strive to carry on the tradition of making high quality, long-lasting Muscadets.

In addition to their Muscadet, the Couillaud brothers produce estate bottled Chardonnay under the Domaine de Bernier and Les Frères Couillaud labels. The wines are from 15 year old vines and 8% of the Bernier Chardonnay is barrel-fermented in French oak. The remainder, like their Muscadet, is aged “sur lie” in tanks, creating Chardonnays with lively acidity.

The Sèvre and Maine rivers converge and flow into the Loire river just before it meets the sea at the border of Brittany, creating the richest vineyard land in Muscadet. Ragotière’s holdings consist of 55 hectares including 25 hectares of the finest Muscadet vineyards in the *Appellation Muscadet de Sevre et Maine*, with the vines averaging over 25 years of age.

Whereas most Muscadets are left on the lees only a short time, all of the Ragotière wines are bottled “sur lie.” The

wines are not racked after fermentation, but are drawn directly off the lees and bottled immediately, leaving in the wine some of the carbon dioxide created by the fermentation. Ragotière bottles no earlier than April allowing time for the lees to nourish the wine and define its character.



Château de la Ragotière makes three levels of Muscadet with their “Etiquette Noire,” or Black Label Muscadet de Sevre et Maine, starring as their top level wine. The Ragotière Muscadets have consistently taken top honors in France beginning in 1980 by winning the prestigious “Pipette d’Argent” awarded by Muscadet’s proprietors and negociants to the best wine produced in Muscadet that year. Over the years the wines have won many gold medals at the Foire Agricole de Paris and Foire Nationale des Vins de France.

Today these Muscadets receive acclaim from wine writers in the United States:

“This offering is light-bodied, dry, stony, and comes alive in the glass...it represents a terrific value for a wine of such class.”
The Wine Advocate

“Green-tinged pale color. Fresh mineral lime and spearmint nose. Stony and subtle in the mouth, with citric hints of orange and lemon, and sneaky flavor intensity. Still tightly wrapped, but has excellent focus and cut. Classic Muscadet.”

Stephen Tanzer, International Wine Cellar

