

Olivier Horiot

Profile

In the southern-most part of the Champagne region, the Côte des Bar in the Aube department, there is the town of Les Riceys, where the slopes are blessed with the portlandian formation of Kimmeridgian chalk, that same great stuff that is the foundation of the finest Chablis and Sancerre. Except here the idea was to plant Pinot Noir on these chalky slopes, do a long maceration, often using whole bunches, and then age it a few years (at least 3) before release -- not exactly your average deck wine.

Olivier Horiot took over the estate of his father Serge in 1999; though it bares his name due to inheritance, his wife Marie is essential to day to day operations and runs the cellar. They immediately started using organic and some biodynamic practices, as well as highlighting specific parcels in the effort of being more terroir-focused. In order to make the *Rosé des Riceys*, the Horiot do a very strict selection of grapes from two separate sites - *en Valingrain* and *en Barmont* - vinifying them separately. The wines start with about 10% of the grapes foot-trodden at the bottom of the cuve, then whole bunches are added. Macerations usually last 5-6 days, with pumping over twice a day. After the wine is raked into older barrels, it remains there for a few years before being bottled without fining or filtration.

The Horiot also produce 4 Champagnes: a Blanc de Noir from the *en Barmont* site named *Sève*, two blends of multiple parcels, *5 Sens* and *Métisse*, as well as a quirky, unexpected Champagne produced with the Arbane grape, aptly named *Arbane*. They all have very low dosages, never above 2 g.