

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 is a young man that has taken over the estate of his father Serge in 1999. He immediately started using organic and some biodynamic practices and reoriented the winemaking to being more terroir-focused. In order to make the *Rosé des Riceys*, Olivier does a very strict selection of grapes from two separate sights - *en Valingrain* and *en Barmont* - vinifying them separately. The wines start with about 10% of the grapes that are 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 racked into older barrels, it remains there for a few years before being bottled without fining or filtration.

Though he prefers making still wines, Olivier also produces 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.