

Julien Pineau

Profile

Originally from Tours, Julien Pineau 's college years saw him studying sociology and law, two fields that would have bored him to tears had he pursued them professionally. As a young post-collegiate, Julien worked for the l'Alliance Française in Seattle and later Sicily for a few years. Upon returning to France, he payed the rent through a variety of random jobs, including picking fruit, a stint at an antique store and studying soil compositions for a geology center.

During a harvest at Lise and Bertrand Jousset's in Montlouis, Julien had his eureka moment with wine. Though Bertrand encouraged him to study viticulture in Ambroise, Julien's original plan was to open a wine bar. His father being a professional cook, a restaurant was also a possibility. Yet over the course of helping out in the vines (with the Jousset, [Noella Morantin](#) and Les Terres Promises in Provence), Julien began drawing his attention more and more to the plant, the soil, the flowers and even the insects that inhabited the land.

When Julien found out that Catherine Roussel of [Clos Roche Blanche](#) wanted to sell her land, he quickly jumped on the opportunity to invest in the legendary site with partner Laurent Saillard. The two have split the 12 hectares 50/50: Julien now works with 6 hectares of Sauvignon Blanc, Côt, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and, appropriately, Pineau D'Aunis.

Stylistically, Julien takes a more laissez-faire approach than Didier's meticulous, hyper precise vinifications during the Clos Roche Blanche years. The reds are slightly less extracted and in 2015, the white saw no added sulfur. Still, the terroir shines through, and anyone familiar with the magical Clos will surely recognize it.

It would be misleading calling Julien's wines the "New Clos Roche Blanche"; rather we welcome him to the canon of Clos Roche Blanche offshoots. Along with [Les Maisons Brûlées](#), [Noella Morantin](#) and Laurent Saillard, he's in good company.