

Domaine Olga Raffault

Profile

Since Olga's death a few years ago, Domaine Olga Raffault is currently run by her granddaughter Sylvie and her husband Eric de la Vigerie.

The estate has terrific plots of land in the Savigny-en-Véron district hard by the Vienne riverbanks. The 'les Picasses' vineyard stands out from the rest: old vines of 50-ish years on a fairly steep slope from the riverbank that is alluvial clay with a chalk limestone base. The fruit is particularly expressive of dark fruits of cassis and dark cherries with a terrific mineral content and good acidity for structure.

The winemaking is most traditional. The grapes are, of course, handpicked and fermented in stainless-steel. The wines are then aged in larger, neutral oak and sometimes chestnut - a traditional barrel wood in the region. The 'Picasses' spends two to three years in oak, to reduce the wine and soften the tannins, and is usually released about 4 years after the vintage.

Raffault's 'les Picasses' often has a light garnet color belying the depth of fruit flavor and complexity. Its style is rustic, quite earthy, with hints of orange zest and deep, dark cherry flavor. The tannins are soft, but present, and the mineral complexity in the finish is superb.

The estate makes two more cuvées of red, les Barnabés and les Peuilles, and a limited-quantity white wine from the Chenin grape, Chinon Blanc le Champ-Chenin.