

Gevrey-Chambertin – Winemaking

INHERITANCE IN WINE



Nicolas and Caroline Drouhin continue the work undertaken by their ancestors since 1850.

In the heart of the old village of Gevrey-Chambertin, the imposing Domaine Drouhin-Laroze has stood proudly for six generations. This ability to hand down from one generation to another has just been rightly rewarded.

In the beginning is to be found Jean-Baptiste Laroze, who started a wine business at Gevrey-Chambertin in 1850. At a time when wine was sold in bulk and bore no resemblance to the nectar to be tasted today... Over the years, the domain expanded. In 1919, Suzanne, the granddaughter of Jean Baptiste, married Alexandre Drouhin, a vineyard owner in Chambolle-Musigny. The Domaine changed its name at that moment... and its scale.

Under co-management since 2015

Today, it comprises twelve hectares of vines from Gevrey-Chambertin to Chambolle-Musigny and Philippe Drouhin has been joined by his two children.

Caroline, 34 years old, and Nicolas, 31, therefore represent the sixth generation to have worked for the domain.

"I have always wanted to work here. I went to the wine school in Beaune and joined the domain in 2005. Working for oneself is fascinating and the family aspect is very important", remarks Nicolas.

This vocation was revealed a little later for his sister. "For me it was less obvious. It is more usual to see men picking up the reins in the wine business. So, I did a Science baccalaureate at school and then studied Pharmacy before redirecting myself towards wine", recounts Caroline.

In 2008, she in turn joined her brother and her father. All three became co-managers of the business in 2015. Caroline looks after the more administrative side and the commercialisation of their wines. When she arrived in 2008, she created with her brother the wine merchant business they named Laroze de Drouhin.

Here, around 80% of production is destined for export; mainly Japan, but also Britain, the United States and Northern Europe.

In this way, Caroline and Nicolas always keep an eye on the export policies of the countries they deal with. But if there is one contingency on which they depend, it is the weather, of course. "Since 2010, we have lost 30 to 40% of our production. In 2016, we were hit quite hard by frost in Vougeot and Chambolle-Musigny", remarks Caroline. A loss compensated by their harvests in Gevrey. "The advantage is having a domain of twelve hectares. There has been no splitting-up of parcels, which is a very big plus", confirms Caroline.

Today, the two Drouhin-Laroze inheritors consider they have found their "cruising speed", although each year brings its quota of questions to be answered. "We continue to perfect our wines and we try to invest a little every year in technology", notes Nicolas. "The different and consecutive generations succeeded in maintaining good financial health to ensure safe transmission. Our objective is to be able to pass on in turn a company that will last as long as possible", concludes Caroline.

Inès de la Grange

REMINDER

Trophy for Inter-Generational Agriculture

The first running of the Trophies for Agriculture, organized by the *Bien Public*, in conjunction with the Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Or, took place last Monday at the Zenith centre in Dijon. Every day, through to 11th February, we will present one of the prize winners to you.

Today, we are meeting Philippe, Caroline and Nicolas Drouhin, who have received the Trophy for Inter-Generational Agriculture from the hands of Jean-Louis Boisson, regional chairman for Bourgogne Champagne at the Crédit Mutuel Bank

Key figures for the Domain

The Domaine Drouhin-Laroze includes **13** appellations spread over **4** villages (Gevrey-Chambertin, Morey-Saint-Denis, Chambolle-Musigny and Vougeot). In these appellations are included **3** Villages, **4** Premier Crus and **6** Grand Crus. The domain employs **10** people: **4** full-time and **6** seasonal workers.

LES TROPHÉES
de L'AGRICULTURE
DE CÔTE-D'OR