



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

DOMAINE HIPPOLYTE REVERDY

Country: France

Region: Loire

Appellation(s): Sancerre

Producer: Michel Reverdy

Founded: 1600

Annual Production: 8,500 cases

Farming: Lutte raisonnée

Website: N/A



Hippolyte Reverdy’s family has been making wine in the charming village of Verdigny, a commune of Sancerre in the eastern Loire, for many generations—perhaps as far back as 1600. Traditional in nature, the farm was planted to multiple crops, and the Reverdys raised goats and made small quantities of wine from their own vines for local consumption. It was not until the end of World War II that Hippolyte began increasing his Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir production, selling it to accommodate increasing demands from Paris. Hippolyte and his three sons began bottling small quantities under their own label, although the lion’s share of the grapes was still being sold off to the local *cave coopérative*. Michel joined his father and brothers in 1971, shortly after finishing high school. Kermit began working with the domaine for the first time in 1983. Shortly after, the passing of Michel’s father and the untimely deaths of his two brothers brought a climate of sadness to the domaine. Michel was left with his mother to bear the burden of loss and to assume the responsibility of running the farm alone. Slowly but surely, Michel has found his own rhythm. After tasting a Sancerre *rouge* from the domaine, Kermit asked Michel to craft one for him in the traditional *demi-muids*, and specified that he would like it unfiltered. Once convinced of the quality, Michel expanded the winery to accommodate these new reds. Since then, his *rouge* is the talk of Sancerre, one of a kind.

Today, Michel farms fourteen hectares of vineyards on his own. Chris Santini, our man in France, writes of Michel, “His dedication is total. He’s one of the few remaining *vignerons* in France who truly live like a *paysan* [peasant]. No vacation, no travel, ever. He’s happy just to stay on the farm, working seven days a week, and wanting nothing more and nothing less...[Michel] plans to keep working the land until he physically can’t get himself out to the vines any longer.” In earlier days, Kermit considered the Sancerre *blanc* very good, with great typicity, although since Michel has taken the reins, Kermit says that Reverdy has since “become the benchmark domaine of our day.”



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DOMAINE HIPPOLYTE REVERDY (continued)

| <u>Wine</u> | <u>Blend</u> | <u>Vine Age</u> | <u>Soil Type</u> | <u>Vineyard Area*</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sancerre Blanc | Sauvignon Blanc | 30 years average | Clay, Kimmeridgian Limestone | 11 ha |
| Sancerre Blanc “Cuvée Ortus” | Sauvignon Blanc | | Clay, Kimmeridgian Limestone | |
| Sancerre Rosé | Pinot Noir | | Siliceous Clay, Gravelly limestone | 3 ha |
| Sancerre Rouge | Pinot Noir | | Siliceous Clay, Gravelly limestone | |

* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Vines trained in Guyot
- Michel Reverdy farms 20 different vineyard parcels over 14 hectares of land
- Sustainably farmed with minimal use of treatments
- Harvest usually takes place between September 15th and October 5th

Sancerre Blanc:

- Grapes are gently pressed by pneumatic press
- The must settles for 36 hours
- Clear juice is racked and fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel *cuvés*
- The wine rests on its lees for 2-3 months, stirred 3 or 4 times to keep lees suspended throughout the liquid
- Bottled in the Spring around Easter

Sancerre Blanc “Cuvée Ortus”:

- Cuvée Ortus is only bottled in exceptional vintages
- Selected juice is initially fermented as regular Sancerre *Blanc*, undergoes malolactic fermentation, but wine is aged in 400-L oak barrels, and the lees are stirred daily for a year. The wine is then racked into neutral cask where it ages and settles for an additional year.
- Bottled unfiltered then aged for *another* year in bottle before release
- Only made in select vintages; only the 2003 and the 2005 have been released so far

Sancerre Rosé:

- Juice is obtained by direct pressing
- Rosé is vinified like the whites, but at slightly cooler temperatures

Sancerre Rouge:

- Grapes are entirely de-stemmed
- Fermentation lasts for 2-3 weeks



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DOMAINE HIPPOLYTE REVERDY (continued)

- Must undergoes pump-overs twice a day for ideal tannin and color extraction
- Wine is racked into 400-L barrels for the year, interrupted only by a natural malolactic fermentation in the Spring
- Wine is then racked almost a year after the harvest for the final blending
- Bottled unfiltered

MISCELLANEA

Very pure Sancerre aroma, generous, fresh, without grassy edges. The palate is expansive, then the nervosity makes its appearance and the finish is dry and lipsmackingly good. One of the things I love about it is that it leaves on the lips, not the palate, not the throat, but on your lips, a fresh little lemony whisper which makes it a fabulous complement to simple fish dishes.

Kermit Lynch