



Champagne Joël Falmet

Unique Grower Champagne from the Kimmeridgian Soil of the Cotes des Bar.

Joël Falmet's vineyards are located in the Aube (Bar-Sur- Aube) within the Côtes des Bar region of Champagne. The domaine consists of a small family vineyard of only 6.5 hectares (approx. 15.5 acres) with a total annual production around 2000 cases. The domaine has been passed down through the family for several generations. Joël took over the family domaine in the early 1990s. Joël, along with the help of his brother Yves (now a producer in Saint-Chinian), was the first in the family to produce an estate bottled wine.

About the Côtes des Bar

The Côtes des Bar has always been one of the more controversial regions of Champagne. The Côtes des Bar is more than 70 miles southeast from the center of Champagne, the Marne, which surrounds the towns of Reims and Epernay. The Aube river is responsible for creating the hillsides where Champagne vineyards now grow. Over the millennia the river cut its way through a thick layer of limestone exposing large channels of Kimmeridgian soil which now forms the hillsides of the Côtes des Bar. Originally considered part of Champagne, the vineyards were removed from the commercial classification of champagne in 1911. After riots broke out, a concession was made in mid 1911 to classify the vineyards of the Côtes des Bar as a "Champagne 2ème Zone". Essentially, this reclassification called the wines a second class Champagne.

The soil in the Côtes des Bar is very different from that of the Marne. In the Côtes des Bar the soil is primarily Upper Kimmeridgian, *the same soil that is found in Chablis*, while the soil in the Marne is light "Champanian" chalk. In fact, the Côtes des Bar is geographically and geologically much closer to Chablis than it is to the Marne. The Côtes des Bar generally produces richer, fuller-bodied wines than the Marne, partially because it is further south and therefore slightly warmer. In addition, the Kimmeridgian soil of the Côtes des Bar tends to produce richer wines than the light, fine chalk soil, found around Epernay.

