


298 views | May 7, 2020, 11:39am EDT

Pablo Chevrot, Of Les Aligoteurs, On Burgundy's Other White Wine



Jill Barth Contributor 

Food & Drink

I cover wine at work, with attention to makers and growers.



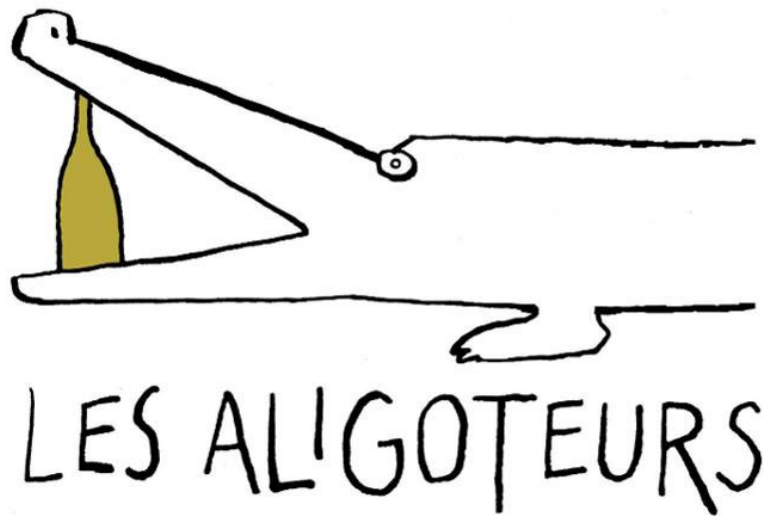
Pablo Chevrot pours his 2018 Bourgogne Aligoté in his family cellar at Domaine Chevrot. **JILL BARTH**

Like everyone else making wine in [Bourgogne \(Burgundy\)](#) Chevrot and his brother Vincent of Domaine Chevrot grow Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. These varieties represent over 90% of plantings in Bourgogne and are the region's claim to international fame. But Chevrot and a number of other growers recognize and promote the important legacy of a lesser-known, lesser-grown Bourgogne grape:

Aligoté.

Les Aligoteurs

Chevrot is the vice president of [Les Aligoteurs](#), an association of Burgundian fans and growers of Aligoté. The group was founded by chef Philippe Delacourcelle and winegrowers [Sylvain Pataille](#), [Laurent Fournier](#), [Anne Morey](#), [Nicolas Faure](#) and [Pablo Chevrot](#).



Les Aligoteurs members support and promote Aligoté. COURTESY: LES ALIGOTEURS

Today In: Food & Drink ^

Will The Saget Family's New Tourism Options Draw More Visitors To Sancerre?

Tandem Roasters Combines Film And Coffee With Double Exposure Club

In A Quieter Sonoma, Wildlife Enjoys Wine Country

The idea of an association was stirred up during a meal at Delacourcelle's [Boisrouge](#) restaurant in Flagey-Echézeaux. On the wine list was a range of Aligoté and around the table, conversation centered on how to elevate and promote these wines, many of them from old plots scattered in the fabric of Bourgogne.

The group has organized tasting events and encourages producers to plant—not pull out—Aligoté. Now [encompassing dozens of members](#), Les Aligoteurs even has international appeal. [Young Inglewood Vineyards](#)—organization member and home of a small Aligoté plot in St. Helena, California—participated in the 2018 Les Aligoteurs tasting held in Bourgogne.



Bourgogne Aligoté Tilleul 2017 JILL BARTH

Aligoté in Bourgogne

Aligoté has its own appellation—Bourgogne Aligoté, granted in 1937—swallowing a broad production zone which spans the Yonne, Côte-d’Or and Saône-et-Loire departments. Aligoté is known to show faith in reflection of *terroir*.

While Aligoté represents a slight 6% of plantings, the grape has a philosophical and historical connection to the region. Many of these growers feel that previous generations have a hand on their shoulder,

reminding them of the cultural value of Aligoté.

Grown in Bourgogne since the 17th century, Aligoté makes a white wine, one that is pale and balanced, with range of fruity aromas and vibrant, mineral energy on the tongue. “We look for good aromatics and a clean, precise finish,” says Chevrot of his Aligoté, presenting a tempting side of this wine. “There are some sweet sensations, but no sugar. It’s great with seafood, crab, oysters and veg.”

“Lots of old vines are disappearing because the image of Aligoté wasn’t good,” says Chevrot. “But we really trust in it, and believe it *is good*.” The variety was planted widely in Bourgogne, until phylloxera hit and vineyards were decimated.

When the region was replanted on disease-resistant rootstock, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were considered the most financially viable, and Aligoté’s foothold began to slip. Critics pronounced it thin, or called out an imbalance in acidity. It was marginalized as nothing more than a base for kir, a drink of crème de cassis on white wine. The success of Chardonnay from Bourgogne is legendary—a heavyweight competitor against the light presence of Aligoté.

Aligoté in Action: Domaine Chevrot

Chevrot organically farms 18 hectares of family land from Maranges to Santenay, at the southern tip of Côte de Beaune. Chevrot vines are on average 30 years old, with the oldest vines planted by his grandfather 75 years ago. A portion of these vineyards are plowed by horse (much of the Premier Cru), and no synthetic inputs are used. Indigenous yeasts are in charge of fermentation.





Pablo Chevrot at Domaine Chevrot. JILL BARTH

Chevrot says that nearly all Aligoté from around the world is found in Bourgogne and that it likes the local Triassic sandstone-marl plots sprinkled through his property. These are perfect-for-Aligoté vineyards and, when cared for meticulously, issue the wine in it's most elevated fashion: a clean and delicious snapshot of the land's character.

There are two strains of Aligoté. *Vert*, for which growers must balance vigor to maintain quality, and *doré* which has built a reputation for quality in nearby [Bouzeron](#), a village on the Côte Chalonnaise. Chevrot has both.

Domaine Chevrot produces two wines of 100% Aligoté: Bourgogne Aligoté *Cuvée des Quatre Terroirs* from a "great growing hillside" of sandstone soils, and Bourgogne Aligoté *Tilleul*, which comes from 60 year old vines and is aged one year in neutral oak barrels.

Chevrot says that some of the oldest Aligoté vines are still productive and that promotion and conversation launched by Les Aligoteurs will help "conserve the good places" that support this special piece of Bourgogne winemaking.

Follow me on [Twitter](#). Check out my [website](#).



Jill Barth

Follow

I'm focused on wine and food creators—with culture, community, ecology, and travel pivotal to the stories. I am a Provence Wine Master through the Wine Scholar Guild and... **Read More**

[Site Feedback](#)

[Tips](#)

[Corrections](#)

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

[Terms](#)

[Privacy](#)

© 2020 Forbes Media LLC. All Rights Reserved.

[AdChoices](#)

ADVERTISEMENT
