

# DENIS CHAPUT

**I**T is difficult to say how long there have been vines in the village of Arrentières in the Côte des Bar, but certainly they were being grown in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the mid twelfth century, a Templar base was established in Arrentières. In 1312, under pressure from King Philip IV, Pope Clement V dissolved the Order of the Knights Templar, and inventoried their properties. The Templars owned vines in Arrentières, which “produce 35 muids in a good year” (a muid is a large barrel). Since that time wine has always been produced...subject of course to the conflicts and turmoil that inevitably occur in the course of history!

Passionate about the history of Arrentières, the Chaput brothers Nicolas and Xavier, along with their father Denis and mother Jacqueline, have preserved the Templar legacy by renovating the last vestiges of a Templar commandery established there between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. To experience their Champagnes in their tasting cellar and tower is truly to walk through history.

The first winegrower to bear the name Chaput moved to Arrentières in Bar-sur-Arbois in 1862. By 1878 he had his own wine press. The first Chaput Champagne, “Cuvée des Rochottes, was produced in the early 1930s by Armand Chaput, great Grandfather to Xavier and Nicolas. It is a tradition they continue to uphold. Rochottes is still one of the best terroir, used in the cuvée Blanc de Blancs “Promesse de l’Aube”, in and in the cuvée Mésogée.

Xavier studied viticulture and oenology and then trained in a Grand Chateau in Bordeaux, before taking over the family estate in 2002. He tends the vineyards, and 2018 was his 16<sup>th</sup> harvest. Nicholas, along with his wife Joséphine, make and sell the wines. Nicholas has worked 9 harvests, after returning to the family business after several years as an engineer for international companies in Germany and France. He earned a master’s degree in international wine business from Dijon. “The wine is in our blood! When we were young, we were helping our father in the cellar. When our parents were tying up the vine during the summer, we were playing in the rows. We cannot explain it, but we like this land, its tradition, its history, its people!”

The winery is named for Denis, who created the current range of wines and modernized the winemaking processes. Denis still participates in the vineyards and winery, but passed operations to Nicolas and Xavier.

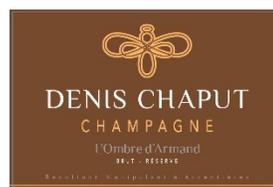
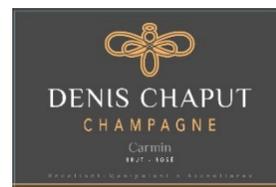
The complex soil structure of the Côte des Bar resembles a mille-feuille pastry where the layers are limestone and clay. The clay is the cream and limestone is the puff pastry. 150 million years ago there was a warm sea underfoot, teeming with oysters, mussels, and sea snails. Or, for purists, nanogyra vigula, pholadomies, and ammonites. Why talk about shellfish? Not only for pairing the Champagnes of Denis Chaput with food, but rather because this is the soil found today, and it is this past life that nourishes their vines. Theirs is the classic Kimmeridgian subsoil.

Twelve hectares of grapes in 26 plots are planted next door to the winery, on hillsides facing South-East to West, in four villages: Arrentières, Engente, Voigny and Colombé la Fosse. The Cote des Bar’s southerly warmth and ancient soils are reminiscent of Chablis. The slopes range between 5 – 20%, and the topsoils vary in their proportion of pebbles, depth, and richness of the clay. Each plot has its own character and produces a different wine – which the Chaput family strives to maintain in the expression of their wines. Each plot is vinified and aged separately.

Xavier and Nicolas grow their vines with special attention given to the natural balance of the soil, the plant and its ecosystem. The overall objective: to harvest healthy, well-ripened grapes. Grasses are grown between the rows; pruning ensures good ventilation of the bunches and a curbing of the vines’ natural vigour. They practice Cordon de Royat and Chablis style pruning for a better distribution of sap in the buds. The removal of non-fruiting buds reduces superfluous vegetation. Careful trellising and early thinning of the leaves around the bunches enables the grapes to breathe. A constant presence among their vines and patient observation of their progress allows them to minimize the use of treatments against pests and diseases.

“Our work in the vineyard is simply guided by our desire to reveal our terroir. We are convinced that great grapes will give great wines!” Their philosophy is to allow time for their wines to open up. They think that everything is already in the grapes and they are just here to guide the grapes along the vinification process. A plot by plot vinification gives the possibility for each wine to express its own personality and also its own terroir through sensations such as minerality and salinity. Finally, the winemakers’ temperament is found in the way they blend this wide range of different wines to create well-balanced and very pleasant champagnes!

Their respect for the integrity of the soils, the natural ecosystems, and natural expression of the vines led Nicolas and Xavier to pursue TERRA VITUS certification. TERRA VITUS is the level 2 environmental certification in France that specifies the methods to protect the natural balance of the land, sustainable farming, and corporate social responsibility to all who work in viticulture and winemaking. Each stage of production from planting to bottling is verified by an independent, accredited organization. This dedication and care is evident in every bottle of Champagne Denis Chaput.



**W**INES

Carmin Brut Rosé  
 L'Ombre d'Armand Reserve Brut  
 Mésogée Tradition Brut  
 Noir de Jade Blanc de Noirs Extra Brut  
 Promesse de L'Aube Blanc de Blancs Brut