

Cleaving the White and Red Gems of **Meursault's Domaine des Comtes Lafon** 把 Domaine des Comtes Lafon 於 Meursault 的紅及白寶石琢磨出來



Dominique Lafon

It's not unusual that a producer be best known for a particular wine style or even a single wine. Yet, it continues to surprise me that the reds of Domaine des Comtes Lafon have been so precisely cleaved from the status of the domaine's whites in the minds of many wine lovers.

The whites of Dominique Lafon, the estate's winemaker since 1984, are indeed magnificent. Moreover, it's understandable that many would most closely associate a domain based in Meursault with Chardonnay. After all, Meursault is almost exclusively a white wine appellation. Only 7.4% of its vineyards are planted to Pinot Noir, and two of its red Premier Cru appellations aren't even called Meursault. Rather they take the names of the neighboring hamlet of Blagny or the village of Volnay. Then, there's the Les Héritiers du Comtes Lafon label Dominique started in the Mâconnais in 1999 that makes exclusively whites. No doubt, the emphasis on white wines is heavy at Comtes Lafon.

Nonetheless, thanks to Dominique's great-grandmother Marie's inheritance, the domaine's four red wine terroirs have been with it since his great-grandfather, Jules, founded it. (Additional vines were purchased later in two of those appellations.) Yet somehow, Dominique's exquisitely crafted Pinot Noirs – particularly the trinity of Volnay Premier Crus – most often appear as side stones. (The Monthélie Les Duressees Premier Cru Rouge shines brilliantly when faceted by Dominique but does not reach the higher gem grading of the Volnays.)

Any of the Volnay trio could be set as a solitaire, but the Volnay-Santenots du Milieu (which lies in the commune of Meursault) is the most coveted. This Santenots is a benchmark not only for the domaine but also for the appellation, as Comtes Lafon owns half of it. Comparatively, the domaine's holdings in Volnay Champans and Volnay Clos des Chênes are tiny at 0.52 and 0.38 respectively. Additionally, Champans hosts the domaine's oldest vines; over two-thirds were planted in 1922, and the wine's heft and concentration are distinguishing. The Clos des Chênes was entirely replanted in 1974, and it always engages with superb freshness and vivacity.

The tricky bit about wondering aloud about these elusive gems is that collectors eventually will catch on. So, before Dominique's Pinot Noirs become as popular as his Chardonnays, do scoop up those you can find! Given the climatologically rough weather (hail and frost in particular) in the Côte de Beaune in the last seven vintages, you might have to look around a bit for the wines. For example, in 2016 – the vintage now coming onto the market, Dominique made 30 barrels (including Monthélie) rather than 100 of Pinot Noir. But rest assured that whether you're looking for a Wednesday night wine or something to take to the now-famous Burgundian party called the Paulée of Meursault (revived by Jules Lafon in 1923), you certainly won't be disappointed by the Pinot Noirs of the Domaine des Comtes Lafon.

酒莊以某種特定風格，或以單一的葡萄酒而聞名的情況並不少見。但令我驚訝的是，Domaine des Comtes Lafon 的紅酒令到許多葡萄酒愛好者的心目中，它不再僅僅是一個白酒酒莊。

自 1984 年以來，Dominique Lafon 的釀酒師及白酒一直非常出色。很多人從 Meursault 的酒莊聯想起 Chardonnay 是完全合乎情理，畢竟 Meursault 是一個幾乎只生產白葡萄酒的產區，只有 7.4% 的葡萄園種植 Pinot Noir，其兩款紅葡萄酒甚至不稱為 Meursault，而是採用相鄰的小村莊 Blagny 或 Volnay。Les Héritiers du Comtes Lafon 的品牌由 Dominique 於 1999 年在 Mâconnais 建立，只生產白葡萄酒，顯示出 Comtes Lafon 對白葡萄酒極為重視。

儘管如此，Dominique 繼承曾祖母 Marie，從曾祖父 Jules 創立以來有四塊紅葡萄田一直伴隨左右（在其中兩個產區中後來購買了更多葡萄藤）。然而不知何故，Dominique 釀造出精美的 Pinot Noir 葡萄酒，尤其是 3 塊 Volnay Premier Cru，並未受太大注目（Monthélie Les Duressees Premier Cru Rouge 在 Dominique 手中閃閃發亮，但未能得到比 Volnay 更多認同）。

3 塊 Volnay 中的任何一塊都是一顆寶石，但 Volnay-Santenots du Milieu（位於 Meursault 產區）是最令人渴求的。Santenots 不僅是酒莊的典範，亦是地區的標準，因為 Comtes Lafon 擁有其一半。相比之下，Domaine 在 Volnay Champans 和 Volnay Clos des Chênes 的佔地很少，分別為 0.52 和 0.38 公頃。此外，Champans 還擁有酒莊裡最古老的葡萄樹，1922 年種植的樹佔三分之二以上，葡萄酒的濃度和對酒莊的重要性也非常顯著。Clos des Chênes 於 1974 年完全重新種植，散發著超凡的新鮮感和活力。

關於這些難以捉摸的寶石的棘手地方是，收藏家最終會迎頭趕上。在 Dominique 的 Pinot Noir 變得和他的 Chardonnay 一樣受歡迎之前，要把你能找到的酒都迅速撿起！鑑於 Côte de Beaune 在過去七年天氣惡劣（特別是冰雹和霜凍），您不得不更費力尋找它們。例如即將上市的 2016 年葡萄酒，Dominique 僅釀造了 30 桶（包括 Monthélie），而不是 100 桶 Pinot Noir。但請放心，無論您想要一瓶酒，於某個周三晚享用，還是參加現今著名的勃艮第派對 Paulée of Meursault（1923 年由 Jules Lafon 復興），您絕對不會對 Domaine des Comtes Lafon 的 Pinot Noir 失望。



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