

# Le Rocher des Violettes (Montlouis – Loire Valley)

*“I’d like to introduce you to one of the future stars of French viticulture: Xavier Weisskopf”*  
– Jacqueline Freidrich (author of the seminal book on the Loire – Guide to the Loire)

*“Across the river from Vouvray, the tiny appellation of Montlouis has been home to one of the most amazing and exciting wine revivals of modern France, and at least three Montlouis growers—B..., C....., and Xavier Weisskopf (of Rocher des Violettes) - are challenging the local qualitative pre-eminence of Vouvray”* – David Schilknecht (The Wine Advocate #172)



Xavier Weisskopf is one of the new generation of young producers buying into appellations in the Loire that are less developed and explored enabling his purchase in 2005 of well established old vineyards at Montlouis in Touraine.

Having studied viticulture and oenology at Beaune he worked as cellar-master at Chateau St Cosme in the southern Rhone before buying his first parcel of 6.8 hectares. He has gradually increasing his holdings to the current 13 ha of vines with 9 ha of vines in Montlouis (this appellation just south of the Loire from Vouvray being 100% chenin blanc on soils that are more sandy than Vouvray) and 4 ha of vines in Touraine AOC which produce some white chenin blanc as well as Grolleau for rose and very old vines of Côt (known more widely as Malbec) and Cabernet franc. Although these Touraine wines come from a very large and humble appellation these wines of his deserve discovery offering a rare sense of freshness minerality and intensity and detail not often found in this appellation meaning these offer great value for savvy buyers.

The entire estate is farmed organically without the use of any chemicals or artificial fertilisers. With most of his vineyards being planted pre-1940 the yields are naturally low and all harvesting is done by hand. Xavier prefers wines that are fresh mineral and long rather than fat so these are wines made with a light touch showing wonderfully pure and lifted aromatics with freshness and detail on the palate to a level rarely seen from these appellations and varieties. The wines are vinified with little or no SO<sub>2</sub> and bottled with minimal but safe amounts of SO<sub>2</sub>.

## 2012 Montlouis ‘Touche Mitaine’

100% Chenin blanc from 4 hectares of his youngest vines averaging 35 years old. Produced from very low yields and aged in barrels for 8 months.

*“Pale yellow with greenish highlights. Smoky bouquet of ripe apple, tobacco and hazelnut. Tightly woven, piquant and sharply focused, with tropical fruit and subtle herbal spices combining nicely on the palate. Lingers with brisk acidity and elegant lift on the pure finish. 90”* Antonio Galloni Dec 2014

## 2012 Montlouis ‘La Negrette’

100% Chenin blanc from a very old vineyard around 90 years old. Made from very low yields and aged in 225 litre barrels for 18-20 months before bottling with minimal SO<sub>2</sub>. *“Bright yellow. Finely woven aromas and flavors of quince, mandarin orange, lime zest and acacia blossom. A subtle bitterness, a kiss of oak, a leesy texture and salty extract provide the wine with a most unusual charm. Delicately elegant on the decidedly dry finish. From a vineyard planted in 1922, this chenin blanc should be a long-distance runner. 91+”* Antonio Galloni Dec 2014

## 2012 Touraine Cabernet Franc

100% Cabernet franc from 3 plots of vines totaling just 1 hectare of vines averaging around 40 years old. The grapes for this wine are de-stemmed before crushing and then vinified like Burgundy with daily pump-overs and gentle punching down. Ageing is done in barrels of one to 3 years old for 20 months and the resulting wine is remarkably perfumed fresh and bright giving a violet perfume so typical of the very best Cabernet franc with fine silky tannins and bright fresh brambly fruit. Totally delicious and will show how great Cabernet franc can be in the right hands.

## 2013 Touraine Côt vieilles vignes - very limited

100% Malbec from seven different parcels of vines ranging in age from 50-122 years old. The grapes are whole-bunch pressed. Deeply coloured, smoky mulberry scented fruit with real depth of fruit balanced by fine fresh crunchy acidity.