



Tradition with innovation

The champagne house of Louis de Sacy has been making much lauded bubbly since the 1960s, though their ancestors have grown vines on their land since the 17th century.

TEXT: MARTIN PILKINGTON | PHOTOS: COURTESY OF CHAMPAGNE LOUIS DE SACY, MICHAËL BOUDOT

In 1962 winemaker André Sacy decided the time was right to use the grapes grown on the family's land to make champagne. It was not exactly a hasty decision: "My family have been vigneron on this land for 13 generations," explains granddaughter Yaël Sacy. In 2012 she and her brother Jonathan joined the family firm, headed since 1998, by their father Alain.

Their holding is centred on Verzy, one of Champagne's Grand Cru villages at the very heart of the appellation. As is usual for the region it is not in one spot, instead it is dotted over 23 different parcels of vines amounting to 18 hectares, and they purchase grapes from five further hectares owned by a few select neighbours.

Louis de Sacy champagnes (named for an ancestor, an illustrious man of letters) are made with just three grape varieties, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier. Yet each tiny corner brings its special characteristics to the house styles, as they produce nine different versions in all. "The best introductions to our wines are the Cuvée

Brut Originel and the Cuvée Brut Grand Cru," advises Yaël. "They both display our typical red fruit and vinous qualities, and toasty note, with the Grand Cru the ultimate expression of our terroir."

The Louis de Sacy house manages the neat trick of being both traditional and innovative: "We've made kosher champagne, just a few thousand bottles a year, for 20 years now," she says. Their willingness to challenge accepted norms is seen too in their Cuvée Inédite Blanc de Blancs, made from 100 per cent Chardonnay grapes from Verzy, where a sea of Pinot Noir surrounds them.

"We work with contacts developed by the family over the last 50 years," she adds: "Half of our wine is exported, including to the Benelux countries, and the other half stays in France. We avoid major distribution networks, we guard our reputation very carefully."

champagnelouisdesacy.com

Champagne Louis de Sacy is holding a traditional 'dégorgement à la volée' Monday 15 June from 12 noon to 2pm at their Vinexpo stand, Hall 1, D219

