IPO WINES

2016 Albert Boxler Pinot Gris Grand Cru Sommerberg "Wiptal"

IMPORTED BY Kermit Lynch

COUNTRY
France

REGION
Alsace

APPELLATION
Alsace

SOIL TYPE
Granite

VARIETAL(S)
100% Pinot Gris

FARMING
Organic

WINEMAKER
Jean Boxler



ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Jean Boxler, many generations removed from his ancestor of the same name that moved here from Switzerland in 1673, currently rules the roost at this humble yet incredibly exciting domaine. Intense and serious about his land, his craft, and his wine, Jean is the genius behind what are certainly some of the finest white wines in Alsace (and the world).

World War II brought Jean's grandfather Albert back to Niedermorschwihr from Montana, where he was busy enjoying the natural gifts of big sky country. After the war Albert returned to the family domaine in time to harvest the 1946 crop. He became the first generation to bottle the family's production himself and commercialize it under a family label. The wine still wears a label drawn by his cousin in 1946. Albert's son Jean-Marc continued the tradition for several decades until passing the baton to his son Jean in 1996.

The family's holdings are centered around the ancient village of Niedermorschwihr in the Haut-Rhin, dominated by the imposing granite hillside grand cru, Sommerberg. Jean vinifies microparcels within this cru separately, declassifying some into his Réserve wines and producing multiple bottlings of Sommerberg from the different lieux-dits depending on the vintage. Sommerberg gives racy, intensely structured, very long-lived wines. Riesling, Pinot Gris, and Pinot Blanc are the specialties of the domaine, Jean also produces one of Alsace's best Crémants (and Edelzwickers), an incredible Gewurztraminer grown in limestone, and some of the most hauntingly pure Vendanges Tardives and SGNs in all of Alsace. If that weren't enough, the Boxlers also own land in the powerful grand cru Brand, the ultimate counterpart to their holdings in Sommerberg.

The Sommerberg hillside terminates in Jean's driveway, making it easy to basically live in the vineyards, ensuring exceptionally healthy fruit year after year. After harvest, the wines are vinified and aged in old foudres in a small cellar underneath the family home until bottling. Not much has changed over the centuries; not much has needed to. Tasting through the entire range of Boxler's wines is ample proof of the fact that Alsace, along with Burgundy, is the source of the world's most complex, exciting white wines, and will probably always be.

Photos from vineyard taken by Anthony Lynch provided by Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant

WINE NOTES

Age of Vines: 14-25 years. No fining. After pressing, cold settling before fermentation begins, all fermentation is natural, vinified in foudre.

Pinot Gris is a white-wine grape originally from the vineyards of Burgundy, but now found in wine regions all over the world. When produced in the pale, light style popularized in late 20th-Century Italy, the variety and its wines are typically referred to by the Italian name Pinot Grigio.

"Wiptal is the highest-altitude portion of the Sommerberg vineyard in Niedermorschwihr, a perfect amphitheater that clings to the very top of the vineyard’s steep granite slope. When Jean Boxler looks out his kitchen window in the morning, he sees the sun glinting off its trellises. The brilliance of this site is its ability to produce sumptuously rich and perfumed Pinot Gris that maintains a vibrant acidity and stony backbone. It is as grand as Pinot Gris gets." - Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant