

PURE
CHABLIS

Press kit





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Chablis at a glance

Mixing rich ancient and modern history, unique terroir and a winemaking community with centuries of expertise, the region of Chablis is rightly talked about as one of the best-loved wine regions in the Old World. Across its AOCs and Climats, Chablis encompasses **5,822 ha (14,386 acres)** of vineyards among **20 villages** and hamlets along the Serein valley, on both sides of the Serein river.



While many Appellations d'Origine Contrôlée (AOCs) in France and the Old World can be tricky to grasp, Chablis is a relatively straightforward region, with its winemakers using only the Chardonnay grape to produce still, dry white wines. Chablis wines are therefore not only exceptional, but also easy to understand: characteristic of their unique terroir; excellent in their value and unrivalled in the world of cool-climate Chardonnay, and has become a reference for Chardonnay producers across the world.

A part of the wider Bourgogne winegrowing area, Chablis is home to four tiers of AOC: Petit Chablis, Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru, whose winemakers produce wines of significant diversity, but always elegant and of excellent quality.



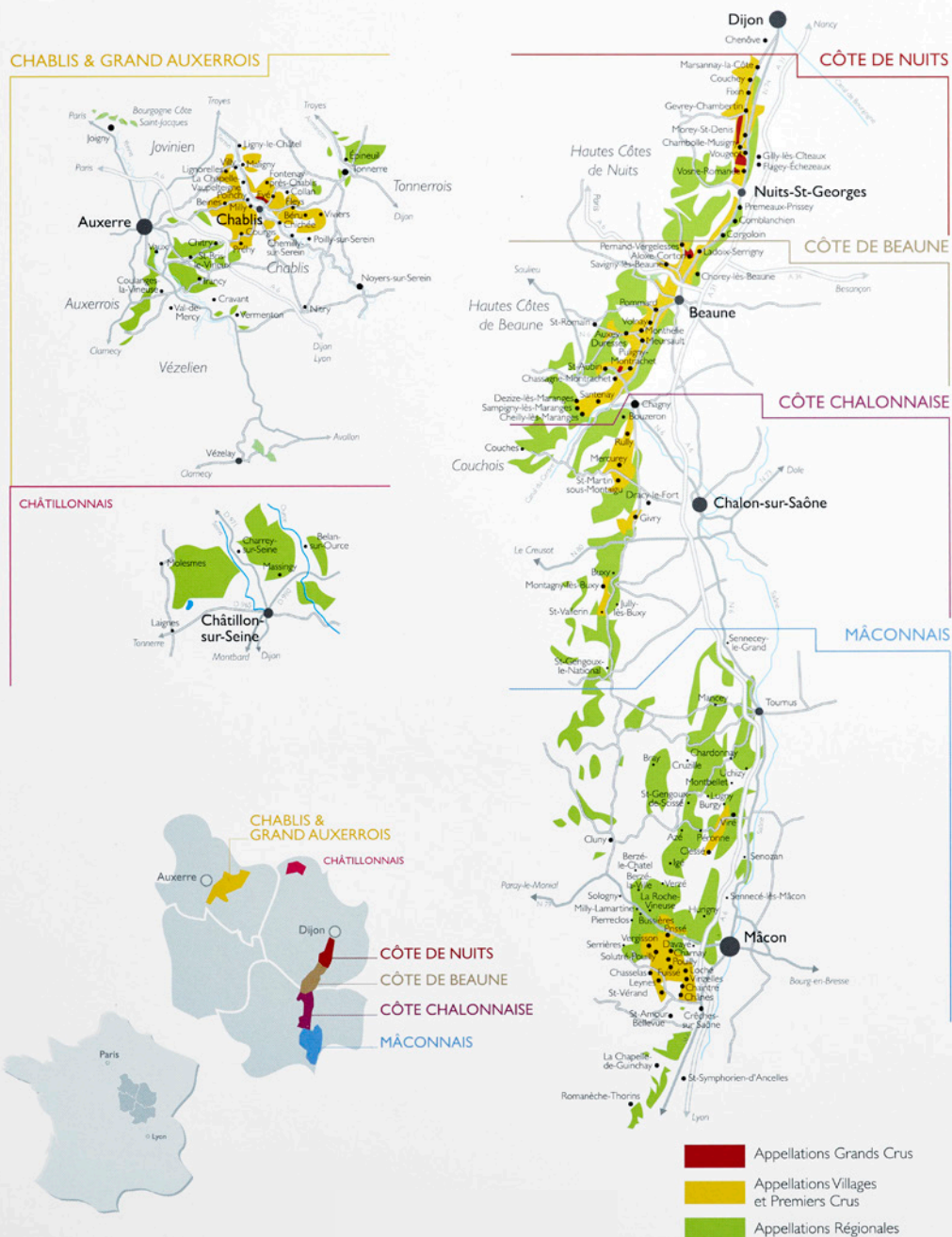


Chablis and Chardonnay

Chardonnay is a grape loved in winemaking regions across the globe. You can find beautiful expressions of this grape everywhere, from its birthplace and spiritual home in Bourgogne and across the Old World to regions in North and South America, Australia, New Zealand and more. The Chardonnay grape is notable for its incredible versatility, and its ability to fully express the terroir of the region that produces it. In warmer climates it will tend towards richer styles with more stone fruit and tropical fruit flavours and the use of oak ageing, whereas in cooler climates like Chablis, it's crisper, with fresher tasting notes and minerality, and very often unoaked.

Unlike many of the regions that specialise in Chardonnay wines, Chablis's AOC rules mean that for a wine to be labelled as Chablis, it must be made with 100% Chardonnay. With its cool climate, unique terroir and generations of expertise with this well-loved grape variety, many claim Chablis to produce one of the purest expressions of Chardonnay in the world.

The five viticultural regions of Bourgogne



Bourgogne and Chablis

Bourgogne (known in many English-speaking countries as Burgundy) is one of the best-known wine regions in France, and produces some of the most respected wines in the world. The region comprises world-famous AOCs including Côte de Beaune and Mâconnais, and renowned villages like Gevrey-Chambertin and Meursault, most of which are well known to wine drinkers in the UK, the USA and the rest of the world.

Bourgogne's classification system is unique to the region: it comprises appellations régionales (like Bourgogne Côte d'Or) and appellations villages (like Pouilly-Fuissé), but it also uses a cru system to mark out exceptional wine-producing areas. Around 10% of Bourgogne's production is from Premier Cru vineyards, and just over 1% are from Grand Cru vineyards, which tend to be the best, most expensive and most sought-after wines.

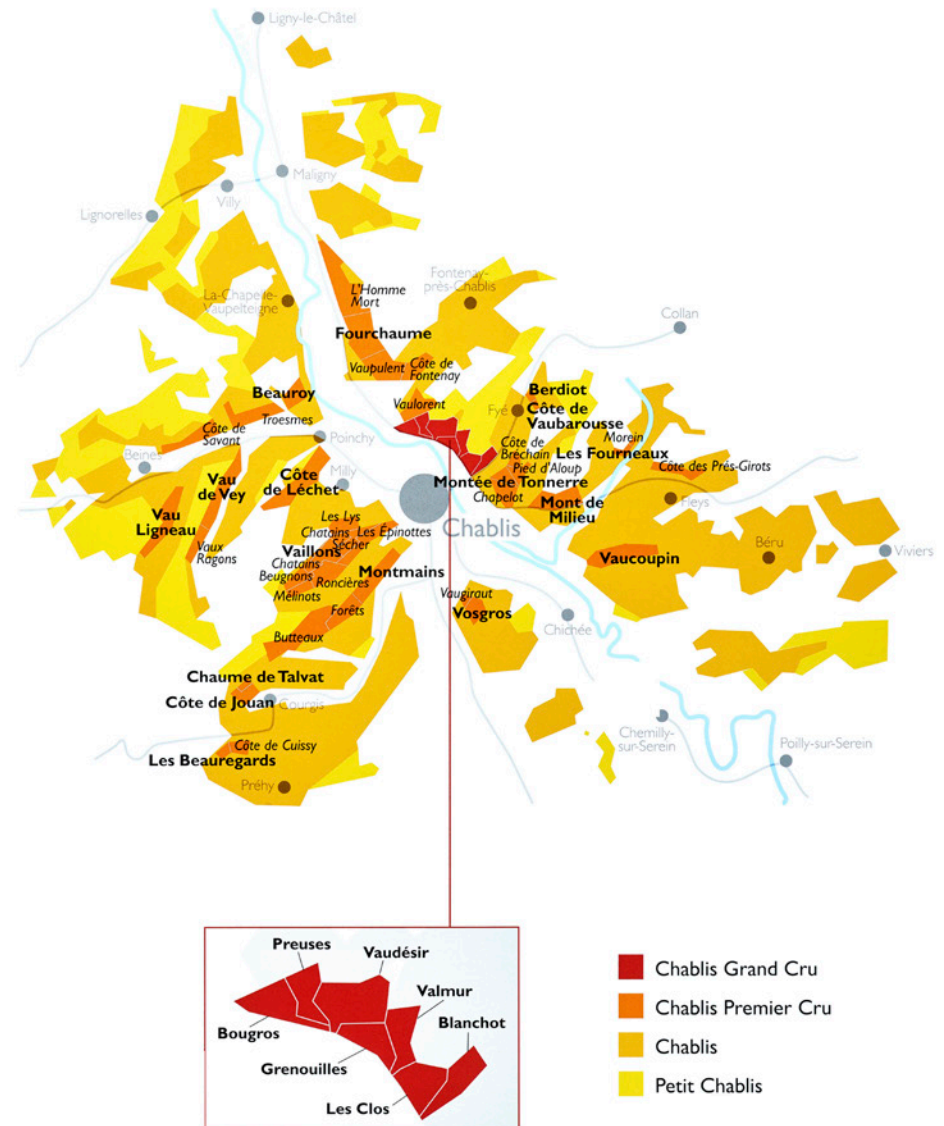
Bourgogne is home to 30,815 hectares (76,145 acres) of vineyards that are classified as Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC), and produced an annual harvest **volume** of around 1.43 million hectolitres (31.4 million gallons). Bourgogne is comprised of five key production regions: Chablis and Grand Auxerrois; Côte de Nuits; Côte de Beaune; Côte Chalonnaise and Mâconnais.

Chablis

Located in the Yonne region, Chablis is, in a geographical sense, located very much within Bourgogne – but it can also be considered separate to it from a winemaking and cultural perspective. It uses a similar cru system to denote the most exceptional wines produced in the region, with Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru AOCs the jewel in the Chablis region's crown when it comes to winemaking. Chablis contains 5,822 ha (14,386 acres) of vineyards and produces around 18% of the wine in Bourgogne.

Chablis

47 Climats



Kimmeridgian, Portlandian and the terroir of Chablis

With no direct translation in English, the concept of terroir generally refers to the specifics of the soil, climate, topography of a particular region, and the effect they have on the flavour profile of the resulting wine.

Chablis's unique terroir owes much to the region's unique soil, as well as its cool climate. In geological terms, much of the soil in the region – in particular Chablis AOC and Chablis Premier Cru – is made up of limestone formed in the Kimmeridgian period, notable for the presence of fossils of small oysters called *Exogyra virgula*. Much of Petit Chablis, meanwhile, is made up of limestone from the more recent Portlandian period, while Chablis Grand Cru vines tend to grow on steep slopes where the Kimmeridgian soil is further towards the surface. All of these characteristics make themselves known in the finished wines of Chablis, heralded for their minerality and freshness.



Spring frost in Chablis

While Chablis's cool climate – which features cold winters and hot summers – is intrinsic to its fresh style and terroir, a particular hurdle for winemakers in the region to overcome is the spring frost that has become a characteristic of the region. To overcome this challenge and protect each year's harvest, winegrowers in the region find ways to heat their vineyards in the spring to ward away the frost – a practice that started in 1960, and which allowed the region to increase the quality and consistency of its harvests, and therefore of its wine. Today, environmentally friendly heating cables, candles and spraying are the most common way to protect vineyards from the potential damage caused by spring frost.



CLIMATS DU
VIGNOBLE DE
BOURGOGNE
WORLD HERITAGE

Climats and lieux-dits

The concept of Climats is an intrinsic part of Bourgogne's - and Chablis's - identity. Climats are best described as plots of land with precisely defined limits, with their own unique geology and microclimates. Climats exist within Bourgogne's and Chablis's AOCs and are distinct from single vineyards and lieux-dits. The recognition of Climats has been around for centuries, with the term first coined in the 1500s, and was made official in 1935 by the INAO (Institut National des Appellations d'Origine). There are thousands of Climats in Bourgogne, each with their own characteristics, topography and microclimates, and therefore each with their own unique terroir. In Chablis, they exist only within Chablis Premier Cru, which has 40 Climats, and Chablis Grand Cru, which has 7.

A lieu-dit (translated roughly as "named place"), refers to a winegrowing plot in Bourgogne that's known for a particular set of topographical characteristics, usually with a traditional name. While wines grown in and named after particular lieux-dits could be compared to single-vineyard wines made elsewhere in the world, lieux-dits are not necessarily single vineyards. For a long time, the terms «Climat» and «lieu-dit» have been confused by people referring to wine-making in Bourgogne. It is important to note that there is crossover: you may find several lieux-dits within the same Climat, or have a Climat covering only part of a lieu-dit.

UNESCO

The Climats (winegrowing areas) of Bourgogne are recognised by the UNESCO World Heritage List. Bourgogne's presence on the list is not just down to the quality of its wines, this recognised its unique terroir, its unique model and archotyping of the different "terroirs", its excellent winegrowing pedigree.

Chablis tasting notes

With a climate closer to its neighbour Champagne's than to the villages of southern Bourgogne, Chablis is known for producing exceptional cool-climate wines. Informed by the region's unique terroir, winemaking in Chablis results in an expression of Chardonnay that's characterised by freshness, crispness and vibrant acidity, with zesty notes of lemon and grapefruit, occasionally white peach, and often gun-flint and other mineral notes. Generally speaking, wines develop more complexity in the Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru regions, with floral and honey flavours appearing, occasionally some savoury notes, and longer ageing potential. Across the board, Chablis wines are rarely overripe; rather, they show a delicate balance between richness, sugar and acidity.



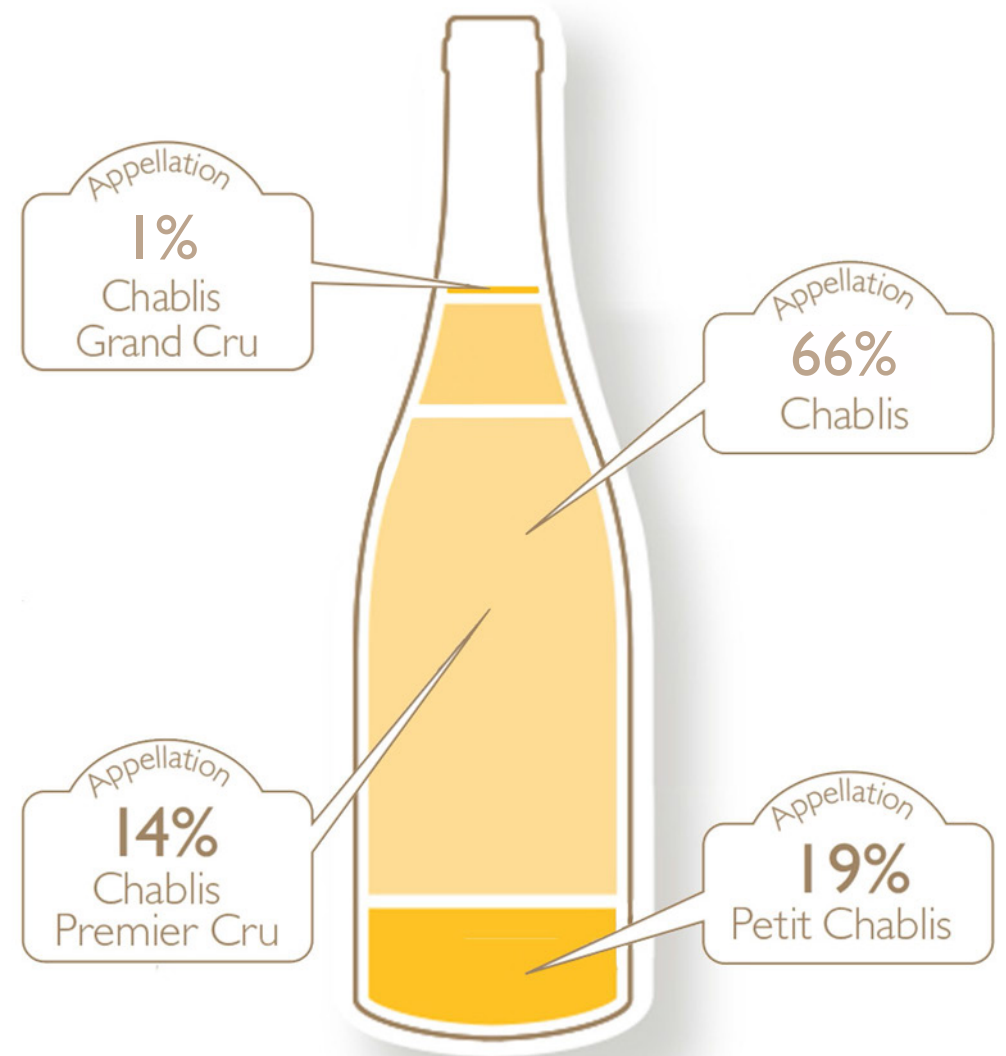


Minerality

While the concept of minerality can be a difficult one to define, and even referred to as a mystery, it is crucial in understanding the flavour profile of Chablis wines. Generally speaking, this property refers to aroma and flavour that isn't fruity, spicy or herbaceous – it refers rather to characteristics of the ground or the sea, and is common in wines grown in stony or volcanic soils. Minerality in wine could present itself in chalky or flinty notes, flavours of river stones or oyster shells, or more generally in a saline quality. Chablis's limestone-heavy soils and climate which place it among the most mineral of Chardonnay wines.

The AOCs of Chablis

Like most Appellations d'Origine Contrôlée, the AOCs of Chablis are subject to requirements on their production areas, along with the conditions of their production. The maximum yield varies by appellation, as does the minimum amount of sugar required to be able to harvest the grapes. Generally speaking, the higher up the hierarchy from Petit Chablis to Chablis Grand Cru, the more stringent the requirements are, and the higher the quality and price of the wines.



Petit Chablis AOC

Petit Chablis is a great entry point to Chablis wines, offering great value and wines that, while perhaps not as complex or finely balanced as the other AOCs, are still excellent in their own right. The terroir is a mixture of brown soil and hard limestone, and grapes are mainly grown on plateaus at the top of the slopes. Petit Chablis wines are generally consumed young, ideally after two years, and make a superb aperitif wine.

Percentage of overall production: 19%

Growing area: 1,230 ha (3,039 acres)

Year of institution: 1944

Serving temperature: 8-10°C

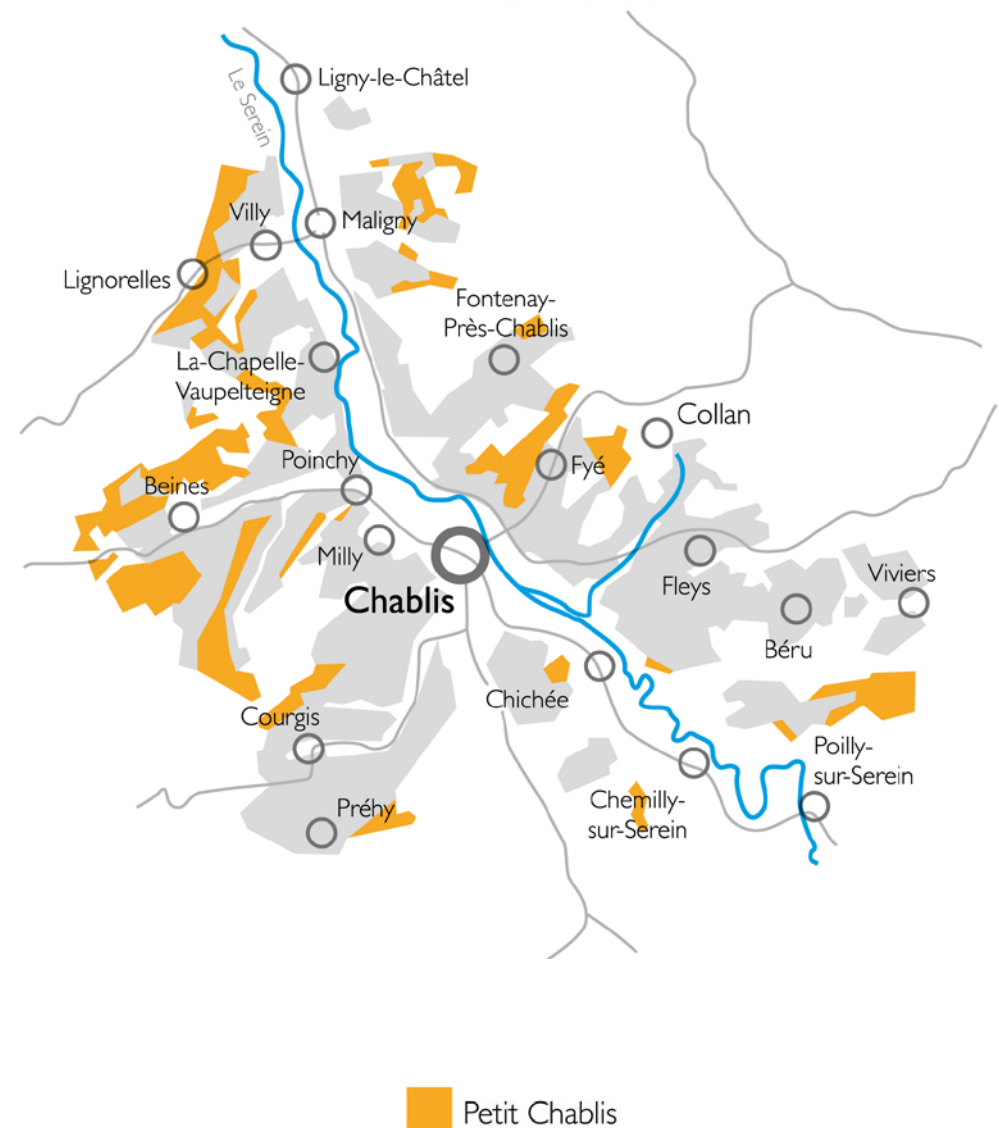
Maximum yield: 60 hl/ha

Colour: Brilliant pale gold

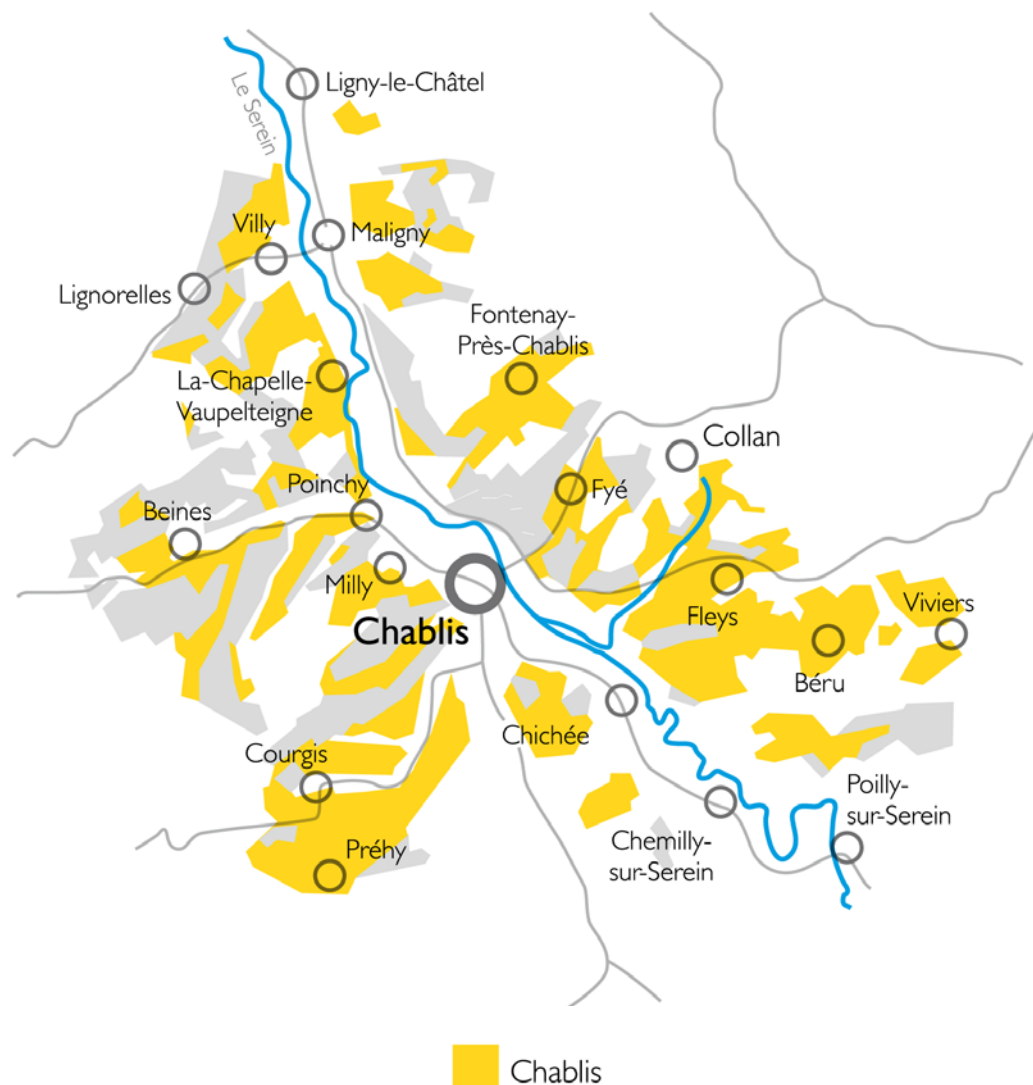
Nose: White flowers (may, acacia) mixed with citrus notes (lemon, grapefruit) over a mineral base (gun-flint). Notes of peach and other white-fleshed fruits

Palate: Light, lively with a well-balanced acidity

The Vineyards of Chablis



The Vineyards of Chablis



Chablis AOC

By far the largest appellation in Chablis, Chablis AOC produced the bulk of the region's wines with grapes grown on multiple exposition levels including north, east but also west facing slopes including the plateaus. That's not to say it's a typical mass-market wine, though: rather, wines from Chablis AOC are diverse, taking part of their character from the specifics of the winemaking process and of the vintage. More generally, Chablis AOC wines are known for good structure, persistent flavour and volume on the palate, while also being better suited than Petit Chablis wines to age, which deepens their colour and adds a note of spice to the bouquet.

Percentage of overall production: 66%

Growing area: 3,712 ha (9,172 acres)

Year of institution: 1938

Serving temperature: 10-11°C

Maximum yield: 60hl/ha

Colour: Light pale gold, sometimes green-tinged

Nose: Very fresh, lively and mineral with flint, green apple, lemon, underbrush and sometimes field mushroom. Notes of lime-flower, mint, and acacia occur frequently, as do aromas of liquorice and fresh-cut hay

Palate: Fresh, perky and juicy. Good length leads to a smooth finish

Chablis Premier Cru AOC

Known by many as an incredibly pure expression of the grape, Chablis Premier Cru combines exceptional terroir with producers of significant expertise to create wines that are rich and complex, while still being emblematic of the region. Grapes here tend to be grown on south-west, south and south-east facing slopes, and while plenty show characteristic flintiness and crispness, many are also smoother and more fruit-forward. Chablis Premier Cru wines can also be suitable for ageing from 5-10 years in the bottle. Chablis Premier Cru wines are usually labeled after the particular Climat the grapes are grown in.

Percentage of overall production: 14%

Year of institution: 1967

Growing area: 778 ha (1,922 acres)

Serving temperature: 10-11%

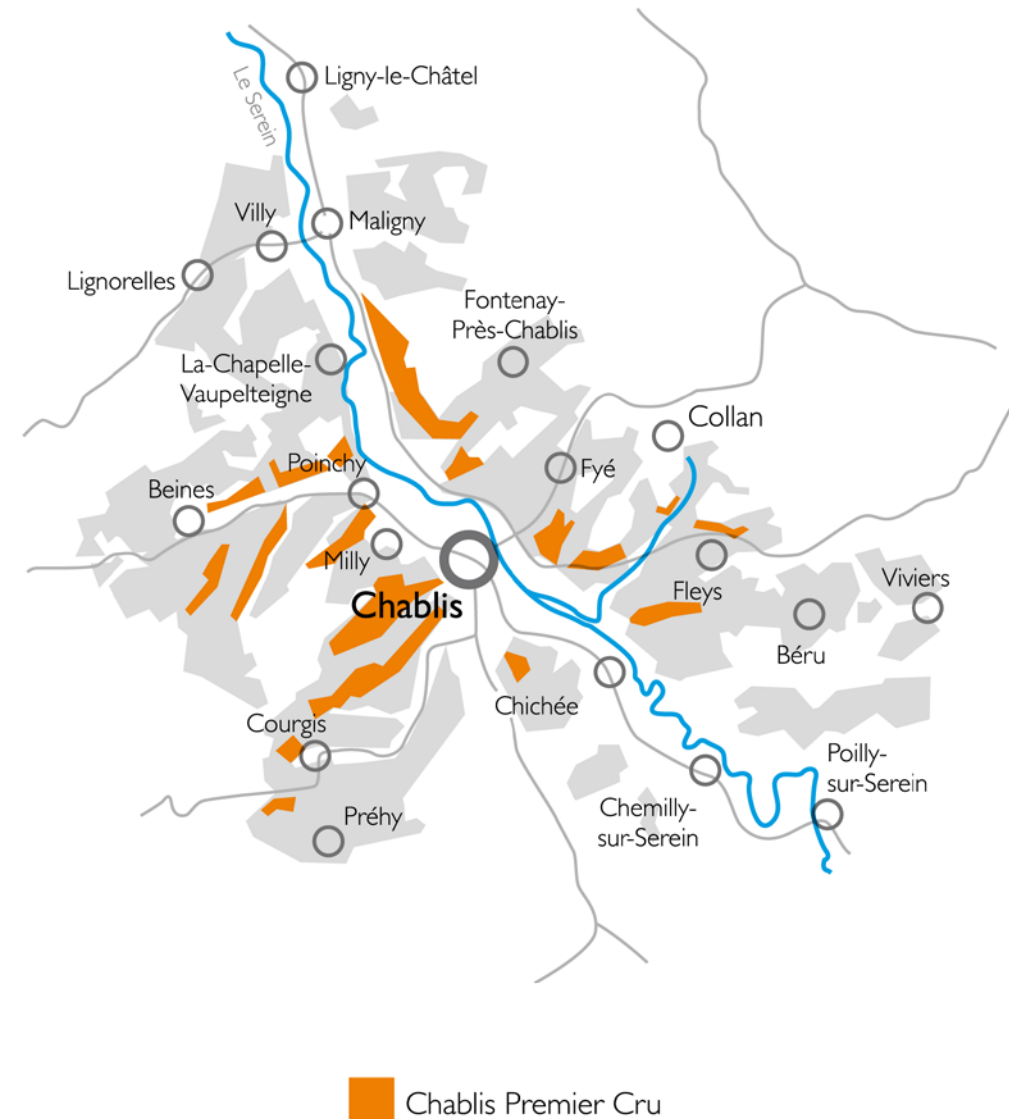
Maximum yield: 58hl/ha

Colour: Pale gold

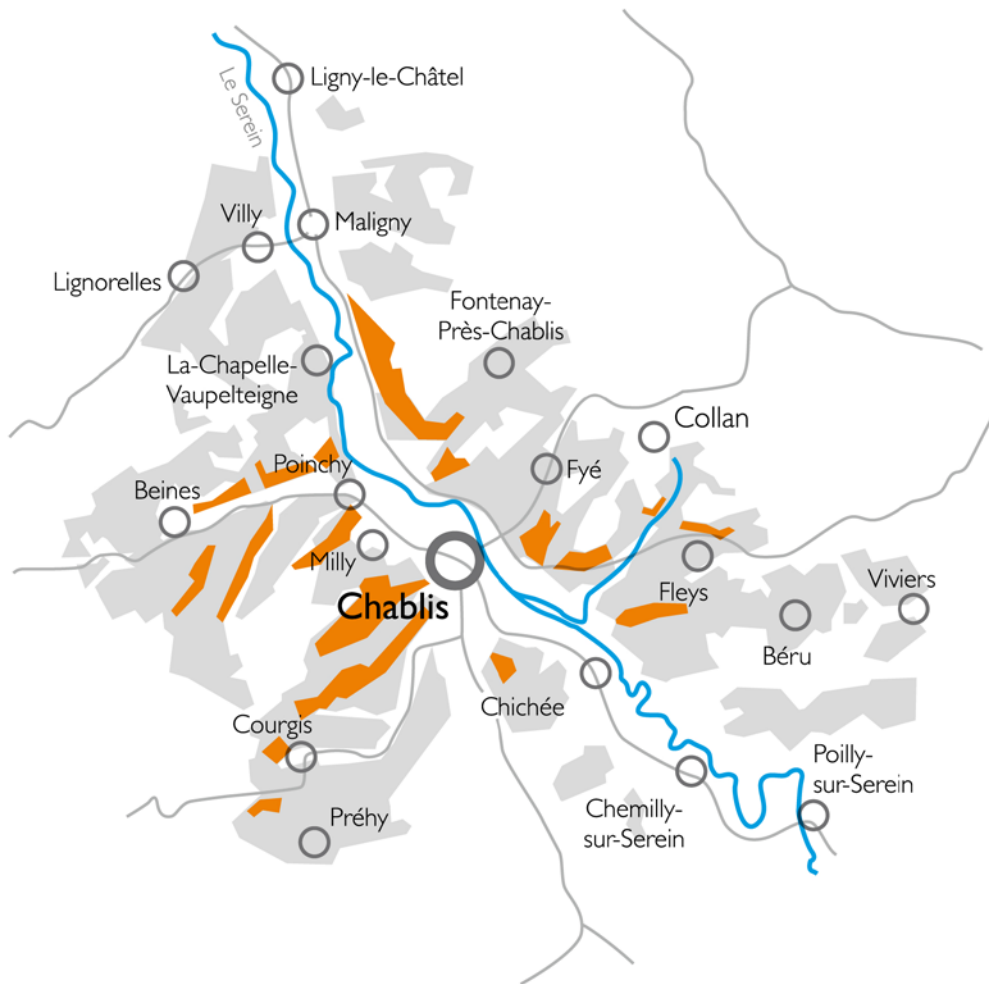
Nose: Showing many of the qualities of Chablis AOC, but with more complexity, and often needing some airing to develop

Palate: Excellent structure and a long finish, showing minerality and tightness when drunk young, but developing delicate and subtle notes with age

The Vineyards of Chablis



The Vineyards of Chablis



 Chablis Premier Cru

Climats of Chablis Premier Cru AOC

Chablis Premier Cru AOC is home to 40 distinct Climats, including 17 main areas called *Climat porte-drapeau* and 23 Climats grouped within them.

Climat porte-drapeau	Climat	
■ Beauregards (Les)	■ Les Beauregards	■ Côte de Cuissy
■ Beauroy	■ Beauroy	■ Troësmes
■ Berdiot	■ Berdiot	
■ Chaume de Talvat	■ Chaume de Talvat	
■ Côte de Jouan	■ Côte de Jouan	
■ Côte de Léchet	■ Côte de Léchet	
■ Côte de Vaubarousse	■ Côte de Vaubarousse	
	■ Côte de Fontenay	■ Vaulorent
■ Fourchaume	■ L'Homme Mort	■ Vaupulent
	■ Fourchaume	
■ Fourneaux (Les)	■ Les Fourneaux	
	■ Morein	
	■ Côte des Prés Girots	
■ Mont de Milieu	■ Mont de Milieu	
■ Montée de Tonnerre	■ Montée de Tonnerre	■ Chapelot
	■ Côte de Bréchain	■ Pied d'Aloup
■ Montmains	■ Butteaux	■ Forêts
	■ Montmains	
■ Vaillons	■ Vaillons	■ Les Lys
	■ Beugnons	■ Mélinots
	■ Chatains	■ Roncières
	■ Les Epinottes	■ Sécher
■ Vaucoupin	■ Vaucoupin	
■ Vau de Vey	■ Vau de Vey	■ Vaux Ragons
■ Vau de Ligneau	■ Vau de Ligneau	
■ Vosgros	■ Vosgros	■ Vaugiraut

Chablis Grand Cru AOC

Made with grapes grown in just 101 hectares of limestone soils across the village of Chablis, Fyé and the hills of the river Serein's right bank, Chablis Grand Cru wines could be said to be crème de la crème of Chablis's wine-producing areas.

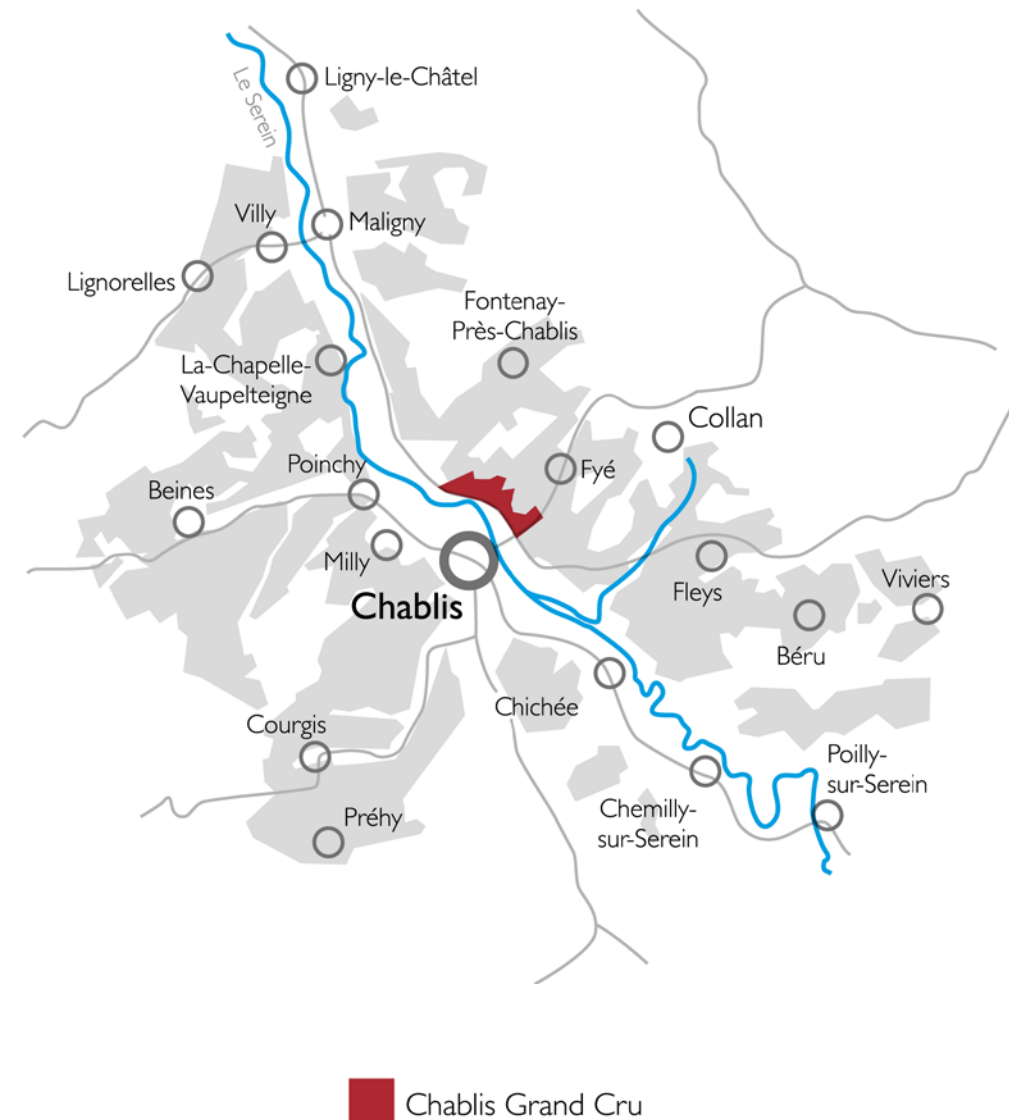
Percentage of overall production: 1%
Growing area: 101 ha (249 acres)
Year of institution: 1938
Serving temperature: 10-11%
Maximum yield: 54hl/ha

Colour: pure green-gold, evolving to a light yellow with age.
Nose: intense mineral scents, lime flowers, dried fruits, almond and subtle honey notes, and occasionally field mushroom-like savoury flavours.
Palate: A perfect balance between richness and acidity, characteristic dry qualities but vibrant flavour.

The Climats of Chablis Grand Cru

- Blanchot
- Bougros
- Les Clos
- Grenouilles
- Preuses
- Valmur
- Vaudésir

The Vineyards of Chablis





Harvesting and vinification

Chablis's renowned flavour is not only down to its terroir – it's also the result of a heritage of high-quality and conscientious production processes in the region that date back centuries, prioritising respectful environmental stewardship and a healthy respect for the region's vines.



The harvest

Like most of France, harvesting in Chablis takes place between September and October, when the grape reaches the perfect level of maturity. Both machine harvesting and picking by hand are used across the region: manual harvesting is common in Premier Cru and Grand Cru vineyards, but Chardonnay reacts well to the use of high-clearance tractors, which allows for rapid harvesting in mild weather and therefore grapes are picked at the perfect maturity. Harvest season is prime time for tourism in the region: each year, visitors travel from across the globe to experience the harvest for themselves.



Vinification

Vinification refers to the specific mechanical, microbiological and biochemical processes used to make a wine from harvested grapes. Although the quality of a wine is inexorably linked to its terroir, it also depends on the quality of the harvest, the rules set by its AOC for its production, and the vinification techniques used.

Upon their arrival in the winery, harvested grapes are taken to the wine press. After pressing, the resulting juice is then placed occasionally into oak barrels, but more commonly into stainless steel vats. From this point, the alcoholic fermentation can begin, which lasts from two to three weeks and which is done at a low temperature (between 15°C and 18°C, or 59°F and 64°F). During this fermentation, the yeast converts the sugar of the grape juice into alcohol, and once this fermentation is complete, it undergoes a further malolactic fermentation: lactic bacteria transform the malic acid present in the wine into lactic acid, reducing the acidity and stabilising the wine.

Once these fermentation processes are over, the maturation process begins: this is often done in stainless steel vats, but sometimes in oak barrels (especially in Chablis Premier Cru and Chablis Grand Cru) and rarely in new ones. Depending on the type of wine produced, the resulting wines can be blended. Due partly to their crisp flavour profile and partly to showcase the terroir, ageing in oak is rare in Petit Chablis and Chablis, and tends to depend on the producer for Grand Cru. Equally, ageing on fine lees happens as much as possible in order to add complexity to the wine.

Sustainability

Like almost all of those industries that rely on the environment and the climate to support it, winemaking in France and across the world is adjusting to a world that's increasingly concerned with protecting its future with careful stewardship of the environment.

Chablis is no different, and this way of thinking from the current generation of winemakers has resulted in a dynamic system of new production techniques and accreditation systems. Winemakers across Chablis and Bourgogne are well represented in grassroots and accreditation initiatives that give accreditation based on sustainable practices across the farming and production processes. These include HVE (Haute Valeur Environnementale) certification, which is in use across the food and farming industries in France and which takes into account biodiversity conservation, plant protection strategy, management of fertiliser use and management of water in vineyards and wineries. HVE is rising in popularity with the number of certified HVE producers having been multiplied by 4 in 2020 from the previous year. 17% of the region's vineyards are now certified or being certified organic.



Bourgogne Wine Board

Created in 1989, the Bourgogne Wine Board (BIVB) exists to be the voice of Bourgogne's wine producers and merchants, bringing together all of the winemakers, cooperative members and traders of the region with the aim of promoting Bourgogne wines in France and abroad, and enhancing what makes Bourgogne so unique: its terroir and its winemakers.

The organisation is managed by elected representatives, and covers all of the Appellations d'Origine Contrôlée of Bourgogne. The headquarters of the BIVB are located in Beaune, with two other offices in Mâcon and Chablis.

Chablis wines website

For in-depth information, including tasting notes, pairing ideas, travel information, events, news and further information on the history, Climats and lieux-dits of Chablis, go to www.chablis-wines.com.

Contacts and social media information

For imagery, samples, interviews or other media enquiries, please contact Françoise Roure, Marketing & Communication Manager, BIVB, on francoise.roure@bivb.com, Or call +33 (0)3 86 42 42 22

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