



**A FAMILY IN CHAMPAGNE SINCE  
1604**

*Formerly occupied by the Cistercian monks of Clairvaux, the seat of the house includes some marvellous vaulted cellars from the 12th century.*

*Moving to the more recent past, the Drappier family tree nevertheless has its roots in the 17th century, when Remy Drappier was born and became, like Nicolas Ruinart, a merchant draper in Reims. His grandson Nicolas (1669-1724) was a supplier to Louis XIV: One must wait until 1808 before one of the ancestors of the Drappier house, Louis, settled in Urville and began to exploit the vineyards which today extend to over 40 hectares, without counting a dozen contracted parcels of vines in the Montagne de Reims and the Cote des Blancs.*

*In Urville, at the beginning of the 1830's, the vineyard suddenly gave rise to heated discussions. The heir at that time, Georges Collot, maternal grandfather of Michel, the present director of the house, was the first to decide to plant Pinot Noir in the area... His decision makes people smile and he is given the nick name "Pere Pinot" ("Father Pinot"). In the meantime this grape comprises 70% of the Drappier vineyard and nearly three quarters of grape production in the local community... History has proved the mockers wrong.*

*From "Champagne, le plaisir partage" Eric Glatre, Editions Hoebeke, 2001.*



*In 1870, immense cellars were hollowed out of the Reims limestone. Today they house the great vintages of Champagne Drappier.*

*Here at the start of the 21st century, Andre and his son Michel preside over the destiny of the house and after them, three small Drappier children allow them to hope that there will be more history to come.*

# Champagne Drappier

## Aube; Champagne France

Established in Urville in the Cote des Bars region since 1908, the Drappier family today grow a 75 hectare (99-acre) estate. Charles de Gaulle, an epicurian neighbour in Colombey les Deux Eglises, came to adorn his cellar with Drappier's most famous cuvees.

Planted by the Gallo Romans circa 1 AD, the vineyard was one of the first to be improved by the Cistercians of the Clairvaux Abbey. Saint Bernard participated in the building of Drappier's 12th Century cellars. The strong-flavoured cuvees that are currently aging here are shipped to the best tables on the five continents.

### The Vineyard

The Drappier vineyard represents the essential prerequisite for the typical character and the regularity of the cuvees. Drappier's ancestors took care to choose particularly well exposed and powerfully calcareous parcels of land producing expressive wines.

In more than 40 hectares in and around Urville the Pinot Noir is king (70%), while Chardonnay (15%) and Pinot Meunier (15%) ensure the balance of the assemblages. As for the contracted parcels, the Cramant vines provide most of the Chardonnay, whereas the Pinot Noir comes principally from the Montagne de Reims, Bouzy and Ambonnay.

There are thus more than 75 hectares, distinctive for their geology and their climate, constituting the quintessential basis of our production. Cultivated with special care, the family vineyard receives the same natural additives as in previous centuries.

The methods used are simple, not to say elementary, so that nature can express itself freely. The musts emanating from these parcels will thus produce wines which are rich and distinguished in character.

### Winemaking

Through fastidious timing of the harvesting for each parcel and through the repatriate Vinification of all the different growths and grape varieties, the identity of the base wines is preserved.

For the assemblage, we do not seek homogeneity, which is a synonym of neutrality, rather the maximum expressiveness of each cuvee as it is born.

Fiercely opposed to the excessive use of sulphur, we apply the smallest quantities in our profession. The Champagnes acquired thus have more natural colours with rich, sometimes coppery golds and more developed aromas.

As well as respect for the consumer, this specific character allows a particularly slow prise de mousse (fermentation), at a low temperature, generating a fine and subtle effervescence.

While the vintages mature in the cool darkness of the Reims cellars, hollowed out of the limestone in 1870, the large bottles are prudently lined up in the 12th century cellar constructed in Urville, by the Cistercian monks of the Clairvaux Abbey.

Another unique feature of the house: the liqueurs d'expedition (sugared liqueurs) are aged in oak casks, then in demijohns for more than 10 years to increase their concentration. Thanks to a reduced dosage, the Champagnes acquired are drier and at the same time fruitier.

