



Julien Thurel

Loury, Loiret, Centre Val de Loire, France

History of the Cidery

Domaine Julien Thurel is located in Loury, on the edge of the Orléans forest in the Loiret department, in the central Loire Valley. Julien is a young woodsman, ornithologist, and cider enthusiast who has 19 hectares of orchards, including 2 hectares of low-stemmed pear orchards, 15 hectares of open-air pear and apple trees, and 2 hectares devoted to hedgerows and meadow strips, intentionally placed to ensure a thriving ecosystem within the orchards. The orchards have been certified organic since 2013. His deep knowledge of trees and birds drove him to carefully research local apple and pear varieties that would be best suited for his land and its soils. He is a perfectionist in all of his endeavors, and this shows in the extremely high quality and complexity of his ciders.

JS & Julien Thurel

We were connected to Julien Thurel through the group Vignerons de Nature, a collective of wineries, cideries, and breweries around France that are all dedicated to low-intervention farming and winemaking.

Viticulture/The Orchards

All harvests are done by hand in several passes by variety. The orchards are planted to 30-60 year-old fruit trees, growing mainly on flinty clay soils, but also containing limestone and silex, and some sandier areas. The domaine is certified organic and practices agroecology: no ploughing of the soil for planting of the orchards, late mowing of the naturally-sown orchard meadows, planting of diversified hedges of different species to encourage biodiversity, providing nesting solutions for birds, bats, and insects to ensure a balanced ecosystem within the orchards.

All the varieties of apples and pears that Julien grows are native to his region. Julien grafted and planted the orchard himself and also continues to forage fruit from sites nearby that he has known and studied for years.



Vinification/Cider Making

The various varieties are sorted into wooden crates after harvest and left to over-ripen for different periods according to variety, from 10 days up to one month. They are then grated and slowly, gently pressed. Fermentation takes place with indigenous yeasts in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks for the majority of the cuvées. Aging takes place in tanks and old barrels. All the ciders are naturally sparkling in the bottle, with no fining, filtration, or SO₂ added to any of them except for those that are disgorged, in which case a small amount of SO₂ is sometimes added at the time of disgorgement and topping up the bottle.

Ciders



Champêtre 2021

From orchards grown in sandy clay soils dating to the Tertiary era, and limestone. Picked by hand in multiple passes to ensure perfectly ripened fruit. $\frac{2}{3}$ of the blend are Sébins and $\frac{1}{3}$ are Avrolle apples, varieties chosen for the marked fruitiness. Pressed via vertical press by variety, fermentation with indigenous yeasts in stainless steel with temperature control, and in old barrels. Aged for at least one year in bottle before disgorgement. Residual sugar 24g (Brut médium) and no SO₂ added. 5.5% ABV.



Nectar 2018

This is a blend of Aigrelettes and Avrolle apples that are 30-60 years old grown in flinty clay soils. The varieties are harvested by hand and sorted carefully by variety. They are then left in crates to over-ripen. The apples macerate and the pomace is gently pressed in a vertical cage press. Fermentation is indigenous and takes place in stainless steel tanks with temperature control. The cider is bottled the summer after harvest, and ages 36 months in bottle before disgorgement without any additional liqueur or sugar. Residual sugar is 24g/L and a small amount of SO₂ is added at disgorgement, 30-40mg/l.