



# Domaine Emile Balland

<u>Country</u>	France
<u>Region</u>	Loire
<u>Appellation (s)</u>	Sancerre and Coteaux du Giennois
<u>Producer</u>	Domaine Emile Balland
<u>Year Founded</u>	2000
<u>Annual Production Total</u>	3,000 cases
<u>Farming</u>	Lutte raisonnée
<u>Harvest Method</u>	Manual
<u>Total Estate Size</u>	9 ha



## Domaine Emile Balland; A View from the Top

Emile Balland is a tall man. Perhaps it's seeing the world from such a physically elevated position that allows him to take the long view when it comes to his vineyards and wine making. Standing at the top of his steep 0.8 hectare vineyard in Sancerre, looking out onto the rest of the appellation, you get a feeling of exhilaration from the beauty of the view. Or maybe it's just being out of breath. While Emile ran up this slope in steady, long strides, the rest of us trudged up behind him huffing and puffing. Cecille, Emile's wife, just shook her head and laughed at the good-natured show off she married.

The far sighted approach that Emile takes in the vines manifests itself in meticulous work, and respect for biodiversity and the organic life of the soil. Only natural treatments are used when necessary as Emile believes that healthy soil is crucial in the transference of terroir to the finished wines.

The estate is comprised of just 9 total hectares; 1 in Sancerre and 8 in the Coteaux du Giennois. Emile's holdings in the Giennois lie within the villages of Bonny-sur-Loire and Beaulieu-sur-Loire where the vineyards rise gently from the banks of the Loire. From these calcareous soils, with sub-strata of silex and clay, come the wines Emile calls "Les Beaux Jours." The red is a juicy blend of pinot noir and gamay, and the white is entirely sauvignon. Seasonally, Emile produces rosé from the same blend as the rouge.

Having grown up in Bué, the son of wine growers, Emile naturally makes his own Sancerre from a single hectare of vines, 10% of which are in his home town, which he is very proud of. He calls his Sancerre "Croq Caillotte" in recognition of the flavor imparted by the white stones covering the vineyards, and which are the hallmark of Sancerre's terroir.

2016 was very difficult for the Ballands, having lost the larger part of their yields to frost. Plans for expanded holdings and a new cellar have had to be put on hold for the time being. But Emile continues to work hard and keeps taking the long view. With some luck and a few normal vintages they will be proceeding with their plan to build a house and chai adjacent to their vines in the Giennois. Weather is always uncertain, but we are sure that as good as Emile's wines are now, they are going to get better and better.

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil</u>	<u>Vineyard Area</u>
Sancerre 'Croq Caillote'	100% Sauvignon Blanc	14 years	clay, limestone, large stones	0.9 ha
Sancerre 'La Pente'	100% Sauvignon Blanc	14 years	clay, limestone, large stones	0.4 ha
Coteaux de Giennois Blanc	100% Sauvignon Blanc	50 years	Calcareous sub-soil, silex, clay	4 ha
Coteaux de Giennois Rouge	70% Pinot Noir 30% Gamay	50 years	Calcareous sub-soil, silex, clay	4 ha
Coteaux de Giennois Rosé	80% Gamay 20% Pinot Noir	50 years	Calcareous sub-soil, silex, clay	4 ha

**Sancerre 'Croq'Caillote'** - 100% Sauvignon Blanc from 0.9 ha of south facing, 14 year old vines in clay-limestone soils covered in caillottes. Natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel and rests on lees for up to 5 months with light filtration before bottling.

**Sancerre 'La Pente'** - 100% Sauvignon from 0.4 ha of south east facing, 14 year old vines in clay-limestone soil covered in Caillottes, planted in the 'Beauregard' terroir. 1/3 of the wine is fermented and aged in used oak, the other 2/3 in tanks. Aging for six months.

**Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Blanc-** 100% Sauvignon Blanc from 50-60 year old vines in clay-limestone soils covered in caillottes. Natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel after 6 hours of temperature controlled maceration and rests on lees for up to 5 months with light filtration before bottling.

**Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Rouge** - 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Gamay from 50-60 year old vines in clay-limestone soils covered in caillottes. 5 days maceration with natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel. Light filtration before bottling.

**Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Rose** - 60% Pinot Noir and 40% Gamay from 50-60 year old vines in clay-limestone soils covered in caillottes. Saignee method with separate fermentation and blended after malolactic fermentation in stainless steel.