

General Info

Country: France

Region: Loire

Appellation(s): Sancerre and Coteaux du Giennois

Producer: Domaine Emile Balland

Year Founded: 2000

Annual Production Total: 3,000 cases

Farming: Lutte Raisonnée

Harvest Method: Manual

Total Estate Size: 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.

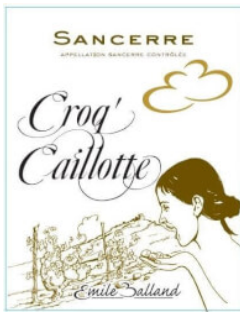
The far sighted approach that Emile takes in the vines manifests itself in meticulous work, and respect for biodiversity and the organic life of the soil. Only natural treatments are used when necessary as Emile believes that healthy soil is crucial in the transference of terroir to the finished wines.

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.

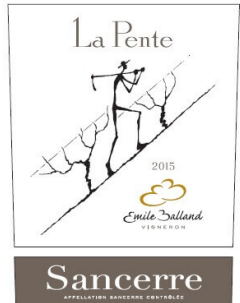
The difficult 2016 vintage led Emile to begin sourcing fruit from friends in the Loire et Cher region. The project was such a success that Emile has continued to make the wines under the new 'Elementerre' label, exclusive to Bonhomie Wine Imports, as well as a delicious Sancerre sourced from two multi-generational, family-owned estates in the region.

The Wines



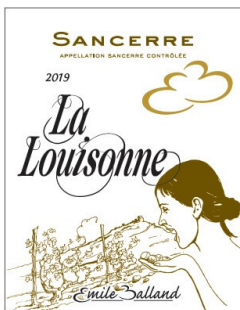
Sancerre 'Croq'Caillote'

100% Sauvignon Blanc from 0.9 ha of south facing, 14 year old vines in claylimestone 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.



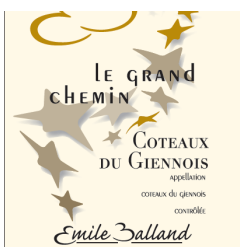
Sancerre Rouge 'La Louisonne'

100% Pinot Noir from 40 year old vines planted to a tiny 0.13 ha parcel, 'La Louisonne' in Bué, in clay, limestone soils. Hand harvested and fully destemmed before a 15-21 day maceration and fermentation. Eight to ten months additional aging in vats after malolactic fermentation. The wine is usually bottled in September.



Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Blanc

100% Sauvignon Blanc from 50-60 year old vines in claylimestone 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 'Le Grand Chemin' Blanc

100% Sauvignon Blanc from 50-60 year old biodynamically farmed vines in flint and clay-limestone soils. Natural yeast fermentation in used oak barrels. Aged on the lees until the following harvest in barrels (max. 25% new). Blended and aged another 6 months in tank



Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Rouge

65% Pinot Noir and 35% 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.



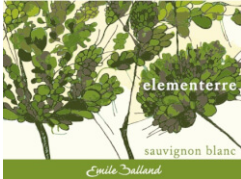
Coteaux de Giennois 'Les Beaux Jours' Rose

80% Pinot noir and 20% Gamay from 15-20 year old vines in clay-limestone soils covered in caillottes. Direct press and blended, fermentation in glass fiber vat.



Sancerre

A careful selection of 100% Sauvignon Blanc from 25 year old vines planted clay, limestone soils. Hand-harvested, fermented in stainless steel with selected ambient yeasts. 280 cases produced of 2023



Sauvignon Blanc VDP Jardin de la France, 'Elementerre'

100% Sauvignon Blanc from 20 year old, sustainably farmed vines planted to clay and sand. Hand-harvested, fermented in temperature-regulated tanks with selected ambient yeasts.