

PIERRE SPARR®

OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Alsace region of France is known throughout the world for its lovely, dry white wines. Vineyards were first planted in this narrow valley during the height of the Roman Empire. In the heart of Alsace's finest district, the Haut-Rhin, Maison Pierre Sparr Successeurs follows a tradition of winemaking that began during the reign of King Louis XIV. Since the winery's founding in 1680, the Sparr family has passed along its passion for Alsatian vineyards and winemaking from one generation to the next. Their drive for perfection can be seen in the family's devotion to the land, their attention to each vine-growing and winemaking detail, and their uncompromising quest for excellence in every bottle bearing the Sparr family crest.

History of the Winery

Jean Sparr, who founded the Sparr winery in 1680, was born in the Alsace village of Sigolsheim. Over the next 300 years, nine successive generations of the Sparr family have worked the land, maintaining and expanding their estate. When Pierre Sparr took over the winery in the early 1900s at the age of 20, his innate business sense made him one of the pioneers in estate bottling in Alsace. His motto was "invest, progress and maintain" — a motto that continues to describe the domaine that is named in his honor, "Maison Pierre Sparr Successeurs."

Pierre Sparr lived through World War II in Alsace and witnessed the destruction of his village of Sigolsheim and its surrounding vineyards. With undaunted determination, he rebuilt the family's domaine, which had always been one of the region's most beautiful. His sons, René and

Charles, enlarged and replanted the estate's vineyards and expanded trade with European markets and abroad. Today Maison Pierre Sparr owns 15 hectares (37 acres) of vineyards in the heart of Alsace, at Sigolsheim; and it sources fruit from another 150 hectares (370 acres) of vineyards owned by growers who share their philosophy and with whom they have long-term contracts.

There are seven major grape varieties produced in Alsace: Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Muscat and Sylvaner. Maison Pierre Sparr has planted vineyards with each of the major varieties, plus Pinot Auxerrois, which is blended with Pinot Blanc in their Crémant d'Alsace Brut Réserve.

Excellence without Compromise

For the Sparr winery, meticulous care of the vineyards is of paramount importance. Their philosophy is that "the quality of a fine wine already exists in the grape." In other words, the quality of a wine is determined in the vineyard — by viticulture and especially by the soil. For many years Maison Pierre Sparr has researched the different factors that contribute to the personality and originality of each parcel of its land. In 1996, a procedure was put in place that assures the precise choice of grapes to produce the finest cuvées. Further steps in the vineyards — avoiding chemical fertilizers and pesticides, limiting yields, harvesting by hand — give full expression to the individual terroir found in each of its wines. "Excellence without compromise" is the winery's motto, and the Sparr quest for excellence is never-ending.

