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Photos: Larmandier Bernier

# At Home with **Larmandier- Bernier**

It caught me off guard—that moment. Arthur Larmandier disappears into the dim cellar and returns with a dusty bottle marked 1998. Coincidence? Maybe. Or maybe it was meant to be—it happens to be my birth year. Then, without ceremony, he performs an age-old motion. A gentle twist. A soft hiss. And suddenly, I'm watching the degorgement of a Champagne for the first time. Yeast sediment escapes with a breath, and there it is: a raw, beautiful glimpse into a craft honed over generations. We sip, we smile, and then we say our quiet goodbyes—to the bottle, the estate, and to Arthur.



### A LANDSCAPE THAT SPEAKS

For over eight generations, the Larmandiers have tended vines in the heart of the Côte des Blancs—a stretch of land where chalk runs deep and tradition runs deeper. This isn't just a wine region. It's a living, breathing archive of stories, of seasons, of hands in the soil. Their vineyards sit on prized terroirs like Cramant, Avize, and Vertus. Here, Campanian chalk lies close to the surface, infusing the wines with that telltale mineral elegance. It's not a detail; it's the signature.

### NOT REBELS—LISTENERS

Sophie and Pierre Larmandier didn't set out to be different. They simply wanted to do things properly. Honestly. Long before biodynamic became a buzzword, they were quietly walking that path—driven by Pierre's passion for real wine and Sophie's deep respect for nature and balance.

They don't chase attention. They avoid formulas. They believe that great Champagne doesn't need embellishment—it just needs care.



Born from a single Premier Cru parcel, Terre de Vertus expresses the soul of chalk. No dosage. No disguise. Just pure Chardonnay, telling a story of mineral clarity, ripe fruit, and the quiet strength of a place that speaks softly but lasts long.



Arthur's return to the estate was never an obligation—it was a calling. With global insight and local soul, he brings a new voice to an old conversation, helping guide a heritage rooted in trust and quiet excellence.



From the premier cru vineyards of Vertus, the vines speak in mineral tones. Tended biodynamically, each parcel is a reflection of care, rhythm, and resilience—yielding grapes that are not just ripe, but radiant.

### A CONVERSATION IN EVERY BOTTLE

Each cuvée tells its own story. Latitude and Longitude speak in harmonies—blends of terroir and time. Terre de Vertus and Les Chemins d'Avize are more intimate, a single voice from a single place. Vieille Vigne du Levant is the deep baritone, born from old vines and aged wisdom.

Even their rosé, made using the saignée method, feels deliberate—like a love letter scrawled in berry and spice.

### WHERE SILENCE DOES THE WORK

Step into their cellar, and you understand something: this is where the real magic happens. Not in the pressing, not in the pouring—but in the patience. Time is the true winemaker here.

After fermentation, the wines rest—on the lees, in oak, in peace. No one hurries them along. They're allowed to evolve, to deepen, to become themselves.

And when the moment's right, the bottles are riddled and disgorged. By hand. Always.





Every bottle begins as grape and soil, passes through time, silence, and intention—until it is ready to speak. When it's finally opened, it doesn't just sparkle. It remembers everything.



### COMING TO THE MAISON

Arthur Larmandier grew up with grapevines in his periphery. But it wasn't until he studied abroad, explored the world, and returned home that he truly stepped into the family legacy.

Since 2017, he's brought fresh energy, a worldly sensibility—and yet, he's fully in tune with the spirit of the place. Together with his parents, he's not just preserving something meaningful. He's evolving it, gently.

### THE VINEYARD, UNFILTERED

The estate spans 45 acres—certified organic, shaped by decades of thoughtful stewardship. No chemicals. No compromise. Just deep-rooted vines and living soil.

They plough to encourage roots to dig deeper. They pick only when the grapes are truly ready. Nothing here is rushed. Nothing forced. Each plant is watched, known, nurtured.

And that's what you taste in the wine: not just fruit, but focus. Not just freshness, but soul.



### IN THE DETAILS, THE DIFFERENCE

Vinification here is an art of restraint. Gentle pressing. Spontaneous fermentation with native yeasts. No filtering, no fining. The wines age in Stockinger casks chosen specifically for their subtlety. Each barrel, each vat tells a different story. The family listens carefully. Some wines remain single-parcel expressions. Others are blended to create something layered and lasting. Their perpetual reserve, started in 2004, is like a memory bank—holding the past in service of the future.

### PATIENCE AS PHILOSOPHY

The second fermentation—the one that gives the wine its sparkle—happens slowly, in silence, underground. Over years, the wine settles. The bubbles refine. The character builds. Time, here, isn't measured in efficiency. It's measured in depth.

### TRUTH OVER SUGAR

Disgorgement is handled with the same quiet precision as everything else. The lees are expelled, the bottle resealed—but with minimal dosage. Where many producers add 10, 12 grams of sugar per liter, Larmandier-Bernier rarely exceeds 4.

Often, they add nothing at all.

Why? Because when the grapes are grown with this much care, they don't need dressing up. They speak clearly—clearly—just as they are.

### BACK TO THE BEGINNING

There's a kind of intimacy in drinking Larmandier-Bernier Champagne. It's not loud. It doesn't demand. It reveals.

It reveals the story of a family that chose the long road. The harder road. A road paved with conviction, patience, and deep respect for the land.

You don't just taste their wine. You feel it. You feel the stillness of the cellar, the pull of the chalk, the rhythm of hands that guide rather than control.

And as I walked away, the echo of 1998 still dancing on my palate, I understood something I hadn't expected: I hadn't just toured a Champagne house. I had touched something sacred.

And in the end, I wasn't just saying goodbye.

I was saying thank you.



At Larmandier-Bernier, family is not just bloodline—it's philosophy. A collective rhythm of hands, hearts, and generations working together, not for prestige, but for the pure joy of making something honest and enduring.

Visionary but grounded, Sophie and Pierre Larmandier chose nature before it was fashionable. Their path was one of respect—for the land, for the vine, for truth in the glass. Their legacy is in every bottle.

