

The constant Ambition to do better and the unfailing Requirement to produce quality....

Maison Lenoble has never chosen the easy path or played on the latest market trends. Faithful to the Champagne traditions, Lenoble wines are made using methods that are all too often forgotten today in the rush for profitability. Refusing to sacrifice quality for quantity, we intentionally limit production **so as to offer only the best and thus build on the House's reputation for finesse, elegance and richness, all natural features of the Chouilly Chardonnays.**

The many changes that have been implemented over the last 15 years have **always been made with the aim of ensuring the highest possible quality**, involving the enforcement of exacting, uncompromising standards on a daily basis and making Maison Lenoble one of the very rare independent, family-run champagne houses to produce pure Chardonnay Grand Cru wines. With strong roots in the past yet with their sights set firmly on the future, Anne and Antoine Malassagne **make their champagnes according to best practice.**



**These quality requirements which have been complied with scrupulously for generations are now formalised in the House Quality Charter.**



“Inspired by the principles of our ancestors and applied to the techniques of today, these rules dictate each action performed throughout the champagne-making process. They are the unshakeable guardians of irreproachable quality” indicate Anne and Antoine Malassagne.



Since the very beginning, the quest for perfection can be witnessed in each stage of the process for Lenoble champagnes:

- **The origin of the grapes and the varieties used;**
- **The pressing and selection of the musts;**
- **The selection of the blends;**
- **The ageing of the wine on the lees;**
- **The disgorgement**



That is the **Lenoble Style.**

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### 1. The origin of the grapes and the varieties used

A.R. Lenoble's own vineyard covers an area of 18 hectares and supplies the House with 60% of its grape requirements. By controlling a high percentage of its supplies, Lenoble ensures continuity of style in its wines.

The vineyard is situated among the best Champagne growths and enjoys particularly favourable exposure. The vines, whose average age is 18 years, produce quality grapes every year, the only variations being caused by the vagaries of the weather. The white Chardonnay grapes are harvested at Chouilly, Grand Cru of the Côte des Blancs, where some of the plots lie in the best locations - "Les Montaignus", "La Cité" and "Les Aventures".

The black grapes of the Pinot Noir variety are harvested at Bisseuil, Premier Cru of the Montagne de Reims. The Pinot Meunier comes from the Damery vineyard, in the heart of the Marne Valley. The vines are grown on hillsides with complete southern exposure. This grape variety is only used in the elaboration of the Intense, Brut Nature – Dosage Zéro and Riche Demi-Sec cuvées.

This is also the village where the House buys from the wine-growers the additional grapes it needs to make up its production requirement.

As far as viticulture is concerned, Lenoble has chosen to use the most natural methods possible: herbicides have been eliminated, the use of organic manure means that no chemical supplements are needed, and while products for treating vine diseases cannot be entirely eliminated, their use has been minimized. This procedure is formalised in the Environmental Charter.

### 2. The pressing and selection of the musts

As soon as they have been picked, the grapes are poured into one of the three vertical wooden presses that are very much part of the Champagne tradition and have been approved by the C.I.V.C. (Interprofessional Committee for the Wines of Champagne). They ensure that the grapes are pressed gently, without bruising.

A.R. Lenoble Champagne are made exclusively from the "cuvée" - the juice of the first pressing.

### 3. The selection of the blends

The various cuvées are kept separate, depending on the grape variety and also on the origin of the grapes.

The first alcoholic fermentation takes place partly in vats and partly in small oak barrels (220 litres).

A collective tasting is held, attended by the House's oenologist, to decide how the various cuvées and reserve wines are to be blended so as to guarantee consistency of quality and the Lenoble style.

### 4. The ageing of the wine on the lees

Our cellars, excavated in chalk during the eighteenth century, ensure that the wines are aged under ideal conditions as regards both temperature - which remains constant all the year round - and humidity levels.

The Lenoble motto is "Let time take its time". So the wines are kept in the cellars for as long as it takes for the aromas to develop fully. The "Brut Réserve" is aged on the lees for between two and three years, the "Grand Cru - Blanc de Blancs" needs four to five years in the cellars to reach maturity, and the vintage wines require a minimum of six years to develop fully. In the case of the 1973 vintage it will have taken over twenty years for the Chardonnay grape to reveal all its subtle qualities.

Lenoble believes that this long wait is a fair price to pay, allowing time to do its work and providing wines with rich and complex aromas.

### 5. The disgorgement

The cellar master, a loyal servant of Lenoble for thirty years, will decide when the bottled Champagne is mature enough to be marketed. The deposit produced as the wine begins to sparkle will be removed by disgorging after the bottles have first been riddled to settle the deposit on the cork.

Again in the interests of quality, special bottles and vintage wines are turned manually on a riddling rack.

The bottle is then disgorged - opened, in other words. The pressure ejects the deposit and a small amount of wine. The "dosage" then takes place - the addition of a liquor containing between 0.5% and 1.25% of sugar. With the aim of expressing all the natural distinctive features of the *terroirs* and grape varieties, we let the wines age long enough for only the strict minimum of dosage to be required - less than half of what is commonly used, and none at all for the Cuvée Brut Nature – Zéro Dosage.

The resulting champagnes are fresher, cleaner, purer and more delicate.

The bottle will then be kept for another three or four months for the wine to recover the right balance for drinking after the shock of disgorgement.