

Louis Latour releases alternative to expensive Pinot Noir from the Cote d'Or

Burgundy's Louis Latour has increased UK allocations for its novel Pinot Noir wine from Beaujolais.

The Les Pierres Dorées wine, which is priced £15 per bottle, would provide an alternative to increasingly expensive Pinot Noir from the Cote d'Or, Louis-Fabrice Latour, owner of the Beaune-based producer and negotiant, told Harpers at the London Wine Fair (LWF).

A total of 600 cases had been allocated for the UK market, he said, adding Louis Latour had not been put off by the prospect of Brexit and its impact on the UK wine trade.

“So far, so good,” he said, adding **“Of course, we are watching to see if the UK will go more with Commonwealth wine than EU wine from a duty standpoint.”**

Latour said Pinot Noir production in Beaujolais highlighted the company's commitment to Burgundy – revealing that he had ruled out following rival Burgundy producers who have invested in Pinot Noir in Oregon.

The Les Pierres Dorées Pinot Noir is my Oregon, he said, adding **people failed to realise that vineyards only take up 1% of Burgundy – there are still many possibilities.”**

He said the company's planting of Pinot Noir in Beaujolais showed that Louis Latour did not want to be defined or limited by the boundaries of Burgundy.

Louis Latour also acknowledged the potential of Syrah in the region, but added that any Syrah plantings would have to come under Vin de France.

“We now have 20 hectares of Pinot Noir in Beaujolais, and if successful this could lead to an entire new category for Pinot Noir,” he said.

Louis Latour said the 2016 vintage was the first major vintage for the Les Pierres Dorées in terms of volume and quality, referring to the previous vintages of 14 and 15 as largely experimental.

Louis-Fabrice Latour broke new ground in 2012, by planting Pinot Noir in a stronghold of Gamay in the south of Beaujolais, just 20 kilometres from Lyon.

In the past, the company has previously said that on average, land prices in Beaujolais were 10 times cheaper than the Côte d'Or.

“Planting Pinot Noir in Beaujolais has been politically controversial, but it is worth taking the risk,” he told Harpers, adding that his terroir-driven wine made from grapes grown on limestone and clay was showing **“good acidity and ripeness and some power”**.

While not buying or selling land at the moment, Latour had not ruled out further plantings of Pinot Noir in Burgundy, said Latour.