

VIRGINIE DE VALANDRAUD



Bordeaux 'Bad Boy' Jean-Luc Thunevin, and his wife Murielle Andraud, bought their first plot of unclassified Bordeaux vines in 1989, in Saint-Emillion. Working against the grain, Thunevin aimed for low yields and in 1991 released his first vintage of Chateau Valandraud, one of the world's first "garage wines".

Using new oak and favoring extraction, Thunevin rocked the industry in France, not caring what anyone was thinking. Each year, Thunevin increased his production, while Robert Parker fed him points.

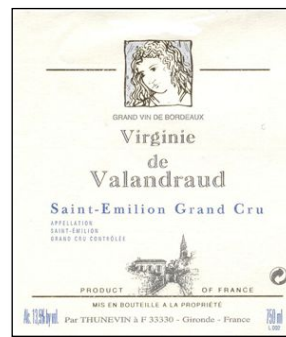
In 1995, Chateau Valandraud wine won a 95 rating from Parker, and soon, its wines were out-pricing established Bordeaux classified growths. Coined a "bad boy" and a "black sheep" by Parker, Thunevin crumbled the clos in Bordeaux, home to a very traditional practice. He began as an innovator from off the map, who modeled an alternative for the aspiring garagiste wine producer. A self-coined "modern winemaker", Jean-Luc now produces six different wines at Chateau Valandraud, but he's also a Bordeaux négociant for Jean-Luc Thunevin Selections.

As the holder of about 20 properties, including Chateau Valandraud, Virginie de Valandraud, Chateau Bel Air Ouy, Chateau Prieuré Lescours and Clos Badon Thunevin, all of which are Grand Cru vineyards in St Emilion, Jean-Luc represents an additional 25 to 30 properties, mostly located in the area of Bordeaux, especially the Right Bank.

Preferring natural wine production, Jean-Luc favors concrete steps over labels, such as using no herbicides or insecticides, and employing cover crops. His entire company policy is based on the environment, including social policies and working conditions for employees.

Created in 1992 as a second wine, Virginie de Valandraud is, since 1997, its own cuvee, produced from vineyards of Château Valandraud (Virginie is the first name of Jean Luc Thunevin's daughter), cultivated and vinified the same way as Château Valandraud, by the same team, with the same means and methods, under the supervision of Murielle Andraud.

SAINT EMILION GRAND CRU



Varietal/Blend: 65% Merlot / 24% Cab Franc / 5% Cabernet Sauvignon / 4% Malbec / 1% Carmenère (Cepage varies by vintage.)

Farming: Lutte Raisonnée

Ave. Year Vines Planted: 1979

Elevation / Exposure: 119m / SW

Soil: clayey limestone

Harvest Method: by hand

Yeast: selected natural yeasts

Fermentation: stainless steel and transferred to new oak

Malolactic: full malolactic fermentation

Aging: 18 to 20 months in 100% new barrels

Alcohol: 14%

Fined: bentonite

Filtered: yes

Production #s: 15,000 cases

WINE ADVOCATE 90-92 "The Virginie de Valandraud 2014 has a very pure bouquet, precise and elegant as usual, with precocious dark cherry and crème de cassis scents merged with violet petals. The oak here is nicely in sync. The palate is medium-bodied with ripe, chalky tannin over-layered with surprisingly minerally dark berry fruit that dovetails into a long spicy finish. There's a lot going on in this deuxième vin and it should be fascinating to re-visit later on during its evolution. It surpasses many a self-aggrandizing "big gun" in Saint Emilion." Neal Martin

Country: France

Region: Bordeaux

Sub Region: Saint Emilion Grand Cru

Vineyard Size: 8.8ha in Saint Emilion Grand Cru