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SKIING, FONDUE, AND...WINE?

by Tom Wolf

The slice of France just south of Geneva may be best known for its world-class ski villages and fondue—a winter paradise for snow-sports and melted-cheese enthusiasts. But the Savoie region is also home to a long and respected winemaking tradition as well as a sprawling list of domaines bearing the name “Quenard.”

Perhaps the Quenard domaine most integral to the reputation of the wines produced here is André & Michel Quenard, a small family operation that planted its winemaking roots in the commune of Chignin in the 1930s, when André’s father bought vines and sold most of the wine in bulk. In 1960, André began bottling under the family label, and in 1976, his son Michel joined the domaine after cutting his teeth in Beaune. Today, Michel’s son Guillaume runs the domaine, working mostly with local grape varieties like Jacquère, Altesse, Mondeuse, and Bergeron, as well as Pinot Noir and Gamay.

Even though you may not have heard of some of these grapes before, they can reach astounding heights, particularly if their terroir is as good as that of the Quenards’ parcels. Here, in the rocky and steep foothills of the Alps, Guillaume cultivates south-facing vines that experience that ideal combination of warm days and cool nights. While the grapes fully ripen and, in some of the bottlings, produce luscious *blancs*, they also retain a mouthwatering acidity that refreshes your palate. At their best, they deliver a crisp purity that can even make you feel as though you’re drinking from a bottle infused with nearby mountain stream water.

The bottles in this collection are filled with such class, character, and versatility that their prices make them some of the best values in our entire portfolio. After tasting them, you will never again be able to think about Savoie without thinking about the wonderful wines produced there, just a stone’s throw from those majestic peaks.