



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

## CHÂTEAU D'ÉPIRÉ

Country: France

Region: Loire

Appellation(s): Anjou, Savennières

Producer: Luc Bizard

Founded: 1850

Annual Production: 4,000 cases

Farming: Lutte Raisonnée

Website: [www.chateau-epire.com](http://www.chateau-epire.com)



One of the oldest and most celebrated domaines in Savennières, Château d'Épiré is rich in history, not only for its fabulous architectural rendition of the Petit Trianon of Versailles, but most especially for its exquisite wines. Savennières is situated just southwest of Angers, on the north bank of the Loire River. Vines have been cultivated there since the time of the Romans. The Plantagenet dynasty allowed for the first exports of the wine to be sent to Great Britain in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The domaine itself has been in the Bizard family continuously since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The most recent owners and caretakers of the land are Monsieur and Madame Luc Bizard. They own eleven hectares, nine of which are entirely dedicated to the cultivation of Pineau de la Loire, known today as Chenin Blanc. The château is exquisite, but the *pièce de résistance* is their winery, formerly a Romanesque chapel, which is from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Truly a blessed wine!

Despite the beauty and timelessness of the building structures, it is the vineyard for which the domaine is best known. The Savennières from Épiré is regarded as *Grand Cru*. The domaine works primarily three parcels: *La Croix Picot*, *Le Parc*, and *Le Hu-Boyan*. It is the latter that sits just above another famous vineyard, *La Coulée de Serrant*. The soils here are rich, and the microclimate is ideal. Southern and south-eastern sun exposure brings ripeness to the grapes, while the proximity to the Loire River keeps the temperatures moderate. The subsoils are comprised of sandstone and schist, and the top soil is a beautiful blue slatey schist that covers the vineyard floors, lending nerve and firmness. We import two cuvées of Savennières from Château d'Épiré. Their Cuvée Spéciale is blended by Kermit from their best parcel and creates a dry wine, austere within its first two or three years, that develops substantially with age. This cuvée is aged in traditional but largely abandoned chestnut barrels. The other cuvée is also dry, but more accessible young, with notes of exotic fruits. Both are delicious and spectacularly complex, and show a value disproportionate to their pedigree.

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Berkeley Retail: 510.524.1524 | California Wholesale: 510.903.0440 | National Wholesale: 707.963.8293



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## CHÂTEAU D'ÉPIRÉ (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
Savennières	Chenin Blanc	N/A	Schist	8.5 ha
Savennières “Cuvée Spéciale”	Chenin Blanc	Planted in 1989	Schist	1.5 ha
Anjou Rouge <i>Clos de la Cerisaie</i>	Cabernet Franc	N/A	Schist	1.5 ha

\* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

## VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- The Bizard’s vineyard land sits at the highest point in the Savennières appellation
- Vines are pruned in gobelet
- Cover crop is planted in between every other vineyard row
- Hand harvested
- Grapes are pressed gently by pneumatic press
- Juice rests for 24 hours before being racked into stainless steel *cuves* or barrel for fermentation to begin

### Savennières “Cuvée Spéciale”:

- Bottled especially for Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant
- Wine ferments for 6 weeks in small, stainless steel *cuves*
- Ages for about 6 months *sur lie* in very old chestnut *demi-muids*
- Bottled unfiltered

## MISCELLANEA

*The Château d’Épiré filters all of its wines except those sold to Kermit Lynch. Why? Sadly, the majority of European consumers and sommeliers are willing to forsake body and taste for perfect stability and sediment-free wines.... Based on my tastings of each over three different vintages, there is a two-point difference between the normal cuvées and the Cuvée Spéciale and another two-point difference between it and Lynch’s unfiltered cuvée.*

Pierre Rovani, *The Wine Advocate*

*It is difficult to imagine another wine from France likely to provide the sheer intellectual marvel we seem to enjoy with every bottle of d’Épiré’s Savennières.*

Bruce Neyers, KLWM

*The Cuvée Spéciale is what it usually is, their best parcel, old vines next to the Coulée de Serrant, fermented and raised in demi-muids, and bottled unfiltered. All for us! It is intense with a strong goût de terroir to go with the fruit. It is powerful, coiled like a spring, needs some time, and can age well into the next century.*

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