

## Domaine Gilles Morat

- Vergisson village
- Vineyard work and harvesting
- Variety of soil types and microclimates
- Barrel cellar

Welcome to Domaine  
Gilles Morat, formerly  
Chataigneraie-Laborier.



Joelle and Gilles Morat at the start of the 2004 harvest. At right, the village of Vergisson, surrounded by an amphitheater of vineyards. The Belemnites *cuvée* comes from these slopes.



The rock cliff of Vergisson (not to be confused with the similar rock outcropping at nearby Solutre), protects the vineyards, creating a superb micro-climate for ripening. The La Roche vineyard is perfectly located on the slopes just beneath the rock.



The stone marker in the foreground, called a "*menhir*," denoting the beginning of a Morat vineyard parcel.



Picking the fruit for the Belemnites cuvee. Here the soil is a mixture of limestone and red clay.



Gilles Morat ploughs the steepest slopes by hand, because they are too steep for a tractor. Plowing is done in winter and spring, and through the summer to control weeds and nourish the soil. No herbicides or chemical fertilizers are used. Here Gilles is working a parcel of 60 year old vines on deep clay soil.



Ripe and healthy Chardonnay grapes, about to be picked.



At left, just harvested grapes being transported down a steep slope with limestone soil to the winery for pressing. There is a dramatic difference in quality between fruit grown on hillsides and on flat ground. At right, harvesters put the hand-picked and selected fruit for the Belemnites cuvee in baskets called *hottes*.



Gilles Morat filling new barrels with must, directly from the presses, called *entonnage*. The wine undergoes its alcoholic fermentation in barrels.



Three generations of Morats in their wine cellar. Gilles uses barrels made of fine textured Tronçay oak, from the forest of Allier in the center of France, with medium toast. This *elevage* enhances his wines' finesse.