

The Estate of Jean-Maurice Raffault

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The terraced Clos des Capucins vineyard, in which the sections are accessed by small steps. The vineyard faces due south. Its limestone-clay soil captures and retains heat. The Chateau de Chinon is visible on the left, overlooking the Vienne River.



The entry to the Clos des Capucins, at left. The vineyard was planted by 1790 and is entirely surrounded by a wall. The site originally belonged to the Capuchin friars.



In late October 2004, Juliette Raffault assists in the Chenin Blanc harvest for the white Chinon. The stony, limestone-clay soil imparts structure, minerality, and verve to the wine. It is harvested after the Cabernet Francs.

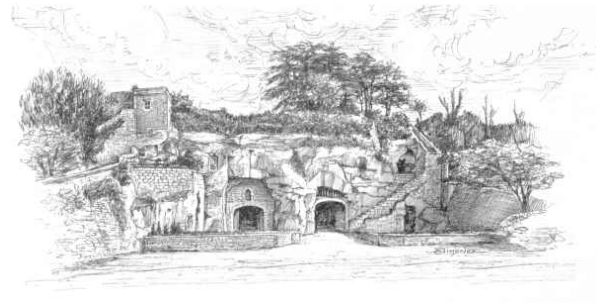
Above, hand-harvesting in the Clos de Capucins in 2004. This is among the steepest sites in Chinon. Grapes in this vineyard regularly attain exceptional levels of maturity.



In the cellars the grapes are 100% destemmed (left) and given a 3-4 week maceration and fermentation period in tank (center). No artificial yeasts are used, and the wines are pumped over once per day. At right, new barrels of Clos de Capucins, which undergo malolactic fermentation in barrel.



Inside the Raffault barrel cellars. The red Chinon wines age on their fine lees in neutral barrels in perfect and unchanging temperature and humidity conditions for 6 to 18 months, depending on the cuvee. The 800+ barrels are racked regularly.



A drawing of J-M Raffault estate's barrel cellars, dug deep into the limestone slopes.