

The Awatere Valley
Marlborough New Zealand
Clos Marguerite

Jean Charles Van Hove:

So we are here in the Awatere Valley, and this valley historically is developed quite differently during the classic Marlborough, which everybody knows. The first planting in the Awatere were in 1986 on the north side of the river, which is out there -- we are here on the south side -- and for about ten years, it was very quiet. There was only one major development. And when we bought this place in 1997, there was only about 100 hectares in the whole valley and nothing on this side of the bank. Ten years later -- we are now in 2007 -- it's about 50 times bigger, and it has become the second largest region in New Zealand. So it confirms the potential that was here in the valley when we first came here.

In terms of climate, we've got another set of hills from the west compared to the main valley, the Wairau Valley; so it is dryer because most of the weather comes from the west in this country, and we also get a southerly coming down the valley and that brings us some cold night in autumn.

So the interest of the cold nights in autumn is for fruit ripening; especially for Pinot, it's very important that we've got that diurnal variation. And then in terms of soil, the valley here, it's a much smaller river than the Wairau. So we've got smaller Terraces. You can maybe see how small the terrace is in here; it's a few hundred meters only of width. So we've got much more delineated Terraces, which can be isolated. So for us that is quite important.

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