

Hervé ROMAT -Enologist

Excerpts of the interview, « 50 portraits of well known Enologists of the last 50 years »

People who have had an influence on your career:

I have worked with many people, and I will talk about them in chronological order to avoid any suggestions that any one person is more important than another, as they have all been very influential.

Guy Guimberteau, whom I admired as a professor and who chose me to do a PhD on clarification and filtration of wine. I worked with him on preparing certain tastings for the DUAD (University proficiency certification in wine-tasting). He then put me in charge of three special issues of the wine industry magazine, *Connaissance de la Vigne et du Vin*: 1) packaging materials, 1987; 2) wine closures, 1988; 3) Viticulture, with Jacques Bouard, 1989. We also worked on various projects in France and abroad. I very much enjoyed wine tasting with him, having discussions on many different topics together and sharing fine meals with him.

Yves Glories, who supervised my research along with Guy Guimberteau. We continued our discussions when I was in charge of research and development at Laffort, particularly on fining, which led to work on a thesis (Laure Amariti). We also liked to talk about Arcachon Bay.

Denis Dubourdiou, who was first a professor of mine, and then was in the adjacent laboratory to mine, where I conducted my research and experiments. We spent many moments discussing winemaking, aging on the lees, clarification and filtration techniques (he had studied filtration using Seitz filter sheets, and on their involvement in the presence of Botrytis). We also discussed more generally white winemaking, sweet wine and red winemaking techniques, but also talked about art and literature. We maintained a close relationship whilst tasting wine, over meals and around discussions on many topics that reflected his erudition.

Jean Jacques Descout, who was behind the research on clarification-filtration that I carried out. We had many talks about clarification and filtration techniques. We then embarked on a business venture together on a new filter concept, which unfortunately has yet to bear fruit.

Michel Serrano, who was in charge of filtration at the University/Institute of Enology. He taught me a great number of technical aspects of filtration, and we also had fun together.

Gérard Seguin, professor of Pedology (soil science), from whom I learned the importance of this discipline, which involves chemical components, the physics of soil, but also the importance of having a broader outlook on water supply and soil. He was always very kind to me.

Bernard Donèche, Jacques Duteau, Gérard Darné, with whom I worked during my studies, and with whom I shared many pleasant evenings.

Emile Peynaud, whom I met as Enologist at Château Bouscaut and Château Haut Bailly, as I worked with these châteaux for Laffort Laboratory (now SARCO). Memories of certain discussions and wine tastings have stayed with me.

Jean Claude Berrouet, who included me in many wine tastings at Château Petrus as well as other châteaux that he was in charge of. We still have very interesting conversations together, and a pleasant friendship.

Alejandro Hernandez, who was a PhD student under Emile Peynaud, who founded Enology in Chile, and who is a former president of the OIV (International Organisation of Wine and the Vine). He is responsible for my input at the University of Talca, and I still work with him on various projects in Chile.

Jacques Blouin, with whom I worked for 10 years in a group that organises wine competitions (CDV). We have shared many moments together tasting wine, and have had many fruitful and pleasant conversations.

Pascal Ribéreau Gayon, Pierre Sudraud, Aline Lonvaud, Serge Chauvet, Jacques Boissonot, Patrick Léon, who have all shared their expertise, experiences and knowledge with me during wine tastings and conversations.

Jean François Moueix and Eric de Rothschild, who shared with me their deep love of wine, their outlook on the world, their passion for contemporary art, their kindness, and many wonderful wines.

All the estate owners, Enologists, technicians, cellar masters and workers, with whom I have worked and still work with, as well as many other Enologists, sommeliers, wine lovers and connoisseurs, whom I have met in different regions and countries, all with whom I have had fruitful and enriching discussions.