



**MAISON CHAMPY**

LA PLUS ANCIENNE MAISON DE BOURGOGNE

- 1720 -

- Press Release -

## *Pasteur and Wine : Recent tribute from the Oldest House in Bourgogne*

January 2023



*On the occasion of Louis Pasteur's bicentenary, the oldest House in Bourgogne pays tribute to his work on wine, in collaboration with the Pasteur Institute.*

Founded in 1720, Maison Champy is the oldest wine house in Bourgogne. Six generations of the same family succeeded each other at its head before the XX<sup>th</sup> century. Initially specialised in wine trading and barrel making, it became the first « négociant » in the region by purchasing land and vines during the French Revolution. Throughout the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, it experienced significant commercial growth in the region, in France country and internationally.



Winegrowing, the jewel of the French economy remained however a fragile activity. Like the majority of French vineyards Maison Champy had to face numerous issues in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, such as the phylloxera crisis and the poor conservation of wines. In 1863, Emperor Napoleon III, further to a free trade treaty with Queen Victoria, took up the problem of exporting French wines that were turning « bitter ». He called on Louis Pasteur, a renowned scientist of his time, to provide concrete solutions.

As a defender of the terroirs, **Louis Pasteur turned to the winegrowers of the Jura and Burgundy regions, and inspired Maison Champy in Beaune, which was known for its ever growing desire to improve the quality of its wines.** The scientist took an interest in wine diseases, which he studied, before coming to the conclusion that they were due to oxygen and pathogenic agents contained in the air.

After several years of study, Louis Pasteur developed a process for heating wines, called « pasteurisation » in honor of its inventor,

Which allowed a better conservation of wine. Oenology then became a scientific discipline.

**An invention will directly result from Louis Pasteur's research and will bring this method to winegrowers: the pasteuriser.**

Maison Champy was one of the first wine producers in Bourgogne to use this device and set up a laboratory in the heart of the company, which can still be seen today. Champy used many other techniques to improve the quality of its wines.

**Two centuries after the birth of this great scientist, Maison Champy, which was awarded the Entrepriise du Patrimoine Vivant (Living Heritage Company) label in 2021, the only estate to have such a distinction in Bourgogne to date, pays tribute to the inventor, who was also an active supporter of Bourgogne wines.**



« Pasteur in his laboratory . Portrait painted in 1886 by Edelfelt, finish artists », in L'illustration, lithographie, 1922. © Collection Maison Champy

### Recent Highlights

A press kit, in French entitled "*Pasteur Bicentenary*", describing the work of the great scientist has been distributed on December 7th, under the coordination of Maison Champy and the Bâisseurs de Mémoire (based on a network of historians and experts), with the precious proofreading of The Institut Pasteur.

Maison Champy inaugurated as well on December 6th, within its historical site, an *holographic* animation. Who hasn't dreamt of going back in time and meeting Louis Pasteur? He will magically appear during the visit to talk about his work on wine.

Finally, in December, Maison Champy has launched a limited quantity of two cuvees "Hommage à Pasteur", in both red and white Pernand-Vergelesses villages, which will be available in its shop.



© Design realised by the artist Fabrice

### Background :

As a winegrower with 21 hectares of vines on the Côte de Beaune from Volnay to the hill of Corton, **Maison Champy** has retained its craftsman dimension. The management of the vineyard under the leadership of Dimitri Bazas, technical director for more than 20 years, has been balanced between organic farming and HVE certification. The historical site, rue du Grenier à Sel, is the living proof of this renewed heritage, since the wines of the House are vinified, matured and bottled on this site and in the 15<sup>th</sup> century cellars, formerly affiliated to the Jacobine convent of the town. MAISON CHAMPY is the last wine company to have maintained its activity in the old town of Beaune.

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