**Domaine Poulet et Fils**

**Die, Rhone Valley**

In wine terms, the Die area is included in the Rhône Valley region (though it doesn't fit into either north or south categories); the town of Die is 50km (30 miles) southeast of Valence and the vineyards follow the Drôme River, a tributary of the Rhône. The vineyards are some of the highest in France (higher than most in Savoie for example), lying between 400 and 700 metres with a climate that is a cross between semi-continental and semi-Mediterranean.

There are different versions of how the semi-sweet, delicate sparkling Clairette de Die got its name. Strangely it is not named after the Clairette grape even though it's grown there. Sparkling wine had been made in this area for centuries, even in the days of Pliny, when Muscat was mentioned as grown here; however, it was most widely enjoyed in the late 19th century. At the turn of the 20th century, in the closest large towns of Lyon and Grenoble, the fizzy wine from Die was still sold in bars directly from a barrel - a little like Vin Bourru, the part fermented wine which is sold just after harvest all over France. Needless to say, it was cloudy with the yeast in suspension, but gradually it would clear leaving the deposit behind - so the name derived from this phenomenon of 'clearing' or 'clairette'.

The main grape grown is Muscat à Petit Grains (shown left) which for AOC Clairette de Die must be at least 75% of the blend, with the balance being Clairette, better known further south in the Rhône. Some of the best Clairette de Die is made with 100% Muscat. Clairette is an acidic grape used in particular here for the dry sparkling wines, previously Clairette de Die Brut but now, with stricter production controls, Crémant de Die, in which recent changes to the law state that small quantities of both Muscat and Aligoté must also be included.

Clairette de Die is a deliciously fresher alternative to Asti with low alcohol of around 7.5% and a floral, grapey character. It can be drunk as a pick-you-up at any time of day. It works well with walnuts, another Diois speciality and provides a light sweet alternative to dessert wines for the end of a long dinner party.

**Clairette de Die Tradition**  
  
- Méthode Dioise Ancestrale  
- Assemblage de 75% de muscat et 25% de Clairette  
- Fermentation sous température régulée.  
- Prise de mousse en bouteille à partir du sucre résiduel du raisin.   
Vin naturellement demi-sec, sans adjonction de liqueur d'expédition.  
- Degré acquis : 7 à 8° suivant les millésimes.  
  
*Vin très aromatique, parfumé, avec des pointes de miel et de fruits. A consommer de préférence jeune, à l'apéritif ou au dessert.*