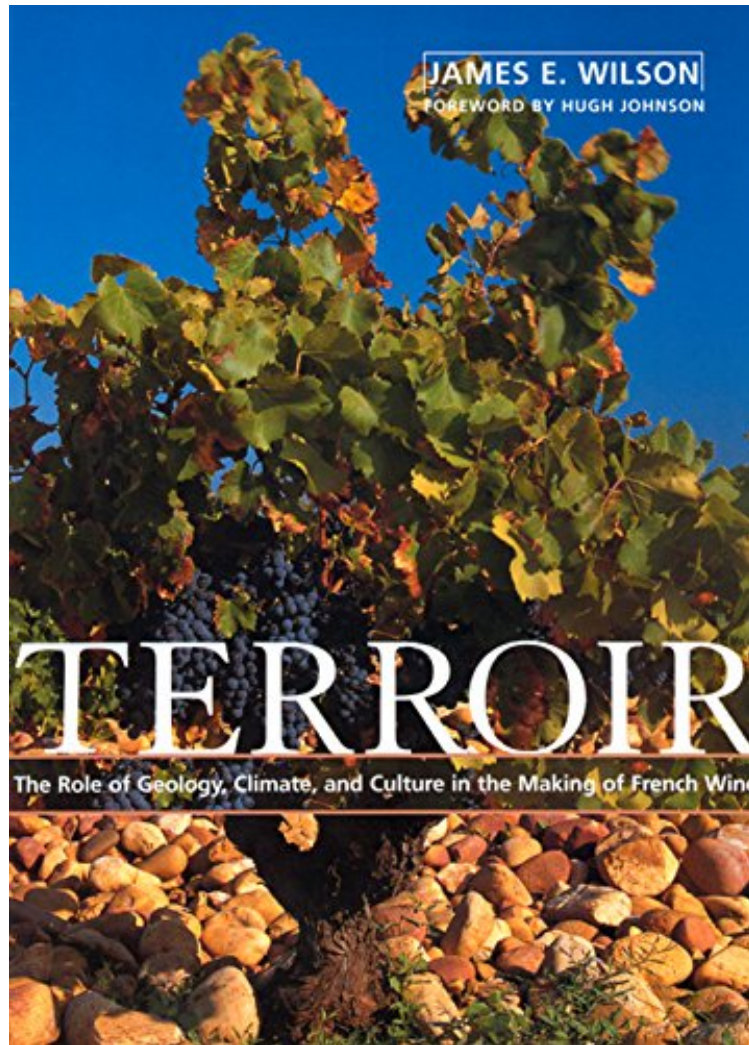


(Mobile pdf) Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate, and Culture in the Making of French Wines

Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate, and Culture in the Making of French Wines

James E. Wilson

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James E. Wilson : Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate, and Culture in the Making of French Wines before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate, and Culture in the Making of French Wines:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Recommended to me by a Geology Professional By Pure and True I have yet to read this (just came today), but a quick flip through the pages has me excited for what I'll learn. I actually asked my geology professor uncle for a recommendation of a book that will teach the geology relevant to viticulture, and he vetted me this text. What more could you want? I believe that after reading this book I will know more about

dirt and vines than I ever anticipated possible. 12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A geologist's opinion
By A Customer I guess I was already a believer when I ordered the book, but reading it has confirmed my suspicions that terroir is a very real contributor to what makes a good vineyard capable of producing a great wine. Wilson idolizes the vigneron, and in many ways the human touch is a part of terroir, as much as the soil profile, the microclimate etc. The graphics and sidebars in this book are superb. As a practising geologist I appreciate the details but feel confident that a layman will find the book just as interesting and informative. Wilson has a sense of purpose, a sense of humor and a sense of history which all in all provide for a good read. He has inspired me to make a study of the terroirs of Texas viticulture but I doubt if the results would ever be published in such a fine form as this book.
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A must-have for serious students of the geology of France's winegrowing regions...with a few reservations.
By David B. Erickson This is a very useful text for understanding the geology of France's winemaking regions. Useful though it is, it can also be an exercise in forbearance. Wilson is a veteran oil geologist from Texas, and a Bible-totin' one, to boot. He has a lot of great information to share, but he is also going to tell you about how "Christianity in Gaul got its big impetus in 496, when Clovis agreed to take his wife's religion..." and later on about how in 732 Charles Martel "saved western Europe from the mortifying hand of Islam." He's at his best when he sticks to geological history: "Tidal action in the Gironde estuary created mud flats or "palus" along the shoreline...draining of these marshy palus by Dutch engineers lowered the water table for the adjacent gravel terraces...[which] became home for the world-famous wines of Mdoc, Graves, Sauternes, and Pomerol." He includes a glossary of terms, which is quite helpful when he's telling you about Montrachet: "Lateral and downslope migration of soil water in the slope-wash nappes will be different in the relatively shallow pebbly layer under Le Cailleret and Le Montrachet than under Les Pucelles where the nappes are thicker, the soil more clayey with permeability more restricted. What is more, the mineral nutrients are probably more concentrated in the shallow soils, but leached to some extent in the deeper soils of Les Pucelles." Something else to bear in mind: He is interested in wine culture, but he is not of it. Take this passage about Chateauneuf du Pape for example, which I believe shows both his strengths and his shortcomings: "The secret of Chateauneuf is not the stones, but the subsoil of red clay and ferruginous sands of the underlying molasse. Moreover, good Chateauneuf is produced where there are not stones, but vineyards without stones do not get a second look by tourists. Another popular notion that Chateauneuf wines are made from 13 grapes is only half true--most of the 500 growers use only half a dozen of the permitted grape varieties. I cannot imagine what a wine blended of 13 grapes would be like!" He was doing great until the last sentence--I guess he's unfamiliar with Chateau de Beaucastel, probably the most famous producer, where the Perrin brothers make a point of using all 13 grapes. I wish he'd had a stronger editor, who'd take out the goofy stuff. Even so, for anyone serious about learning about the geology of France's winegrowing regions, this book is a must-have.

The French word terroir is used to describe all the ecological factors that make a particular type of wine special to the region of its origin. James E. Wilson uses his training as a geologist and his years of research in the wine regions of France to fully examine the concept of terroir. The result combines natural history, social history, and scientific study, making this a unique book that all wine connoisseurs and professionals will want close at hand. In Part One Wilson introduces the full range of environmental factors that together form terroir. He explains France's geological foundation; its soil, considered the "soul" of a vineyard; the various climates and microclimates; the vines, their history and how each type has evolved; and the role that humans from ancient monks to modern enologists have played in viticulture. Part Two examines the history and habitat of each of France's major wine regions. Wilson explores the question of why one site yields great wines while an adjacent site yields wines of lesser quality. He also looks at cultural influences such as migration and trade and at the adaptations made by centuries of vignerons to produce distinctive wine styles. Wilson skillfully presents both technical information and personal anecdotes, and the book's photographs, maps, and geologic renderings are extremely helpful. The appendices contain a glossary and information on the labeling of French wines. With a wealth of information explained in clear English, Wilson's book enables wine readers to understand and appreciate the mystique of terroir.

"An exceptionally informative book." -- *Adventures in Dining* "An...important reference work." -- *Food Wine* magazine "Fascinating. Taken in sips, like a fine, dense Bordeaux, it's a book worthy of long contemplation." -- *Wine Spirits* magazine "The first English-language book on the topic, TERROIR offers a detailed look at the physical endowments of France's wine-producing regions." -- *New York Times*
About the Author James E. Wilson is a former Vice President for Exploration and Production at Shell Oil. In his second career he has devoted himself to the study of the natural history and underlying geology of French wines. He lives in Colorado. Hugh Johnson writes the annual best-seller, *Pocket Wine Book* and is also author of *World Atlas of Wine*, now in its fourth edition.