

# The making

## Vapours and selection for aroma and strength

### From apple to bottle

The making of truly great calvados is a story of enthusiasm, devotion and the magic of nature. It is a traditional and natural part of the Norman way of farming; practised and refined for generations. Today it is also the story of balancing tradition with modern methods, quality with price, and personality with mass production.

One can say it is not difficult to make first-class calvados; all you need is a father, grandfather and great-grandfather that dedicated themselves to it. The fact that orchards, experience and ageing claim years to result in high-quality calvados is true.

Many different philosophies and opinions on how a calvados is supposed to be made and what it should taste like exists. Still the final judgment is up to you. Remember it is not just a matter of taste and aroma, but also of atmosphere, occasion and expectation.

The principles for producing calvados are practically



Demonstration of the part automated double distillation at Lecompte.

the same as other distilled spirits. In the case of calvados, a cider made of apples and pears is distilled. The French stipulate a certain way of making calvados. In short, the apples and pears are picked, ground and pressed to a juice that is fermented into

a dry cider, aged and distilled to 'eau de vie'. After two years of ageing in oak casks, it can be sold as calvados. Usually the maturation goes on for several years.

### The stages of production

There are differences between the methods employed by the industrial operations and the traditional

farmhouse producers. However, the production can be separated into the following steps:

- Growing apples and pears.
- Harvesting.
- Maturing, crushing, pressing and maceration of the fruit.
- Fermentation and ageing of the cider.
- Distillation.
- Ageing in oak barrels.
- Blending and bottling.

Most producers make cider and pommeau along with the calvados.