

The Burgundy Briefing

news, views and tastings

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**En Primeur
Tasting**

Red 2014

Bourgogne	Assuming it is correctly made with no faults and meets basic expectations, it could range from sound, pleasant to attractive.	12-14
Village	From sound (although this would be disappointing at this level) through to pleasant and attractive to good. Straight village at the top level would be very good. Deuxiemes crus – the best lieux-dits could reach particularly good	12 13-15 16 17
Premier cru	Very good Particularly good (a very sound premier cru) Fine (premium) Very fine (excellent. Top notch premier cru)	16 17 18 19
Grand Cru	Particularly good (this falls below expectations of grand cru quality) Fine (premium wine) Very fine (excellent) Up to outstanding (excellent with x factor)	17 18 18 20

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Maison Champy

I met with Dimitri Bazas who filled me in immediately with the harvest dates. "We started on September 13th and finished on the 25th. The Pernand-Vergelesses was picked towards the end, on the 22nd."

"The analysis show that the evolution was good for the sugar thanks to ripeness, but also to concentration related to the meteorological conditions, which were good towards the end. 2014 was bad in August, but we had a good september."

Analytic profile:

Sugar: Corton Bressandes and Renards 11.8-12.5

Acidities: TA 5.30 to 5.90 pH 3.3 to 3.4

"This profile made me go for winemaking which was completely 100% destemmed," (although not with the Corton.)

"On the 28th we had hail...but because it was early not like 2012 and 2013, but it worried me enough to decide against using whole bunches in general. We used 50% on the Corton grand crus and Clos Vougeot. We put in them vat and they were not crushed at all."

"There was a light 5-6 days of cold maceration."

"So we aimed for extraction of phenolics gently. They came 65% from skins and 35% pips."

"The temperature did not go very high and we did not want much punching down..we saw the extractability was good. We had what we wanted quickly and easily. We wanted to preserve the density, so we kept them at a higher temperature to finish the fermentation. We wanted the extra infusion at this degrees which serves to polymerise the phenolic components and give an extra density in the mouth."

All Laleure-Piot are vinified in Pernand-Vergelesses in thermo regulated tanks at 10-12 degrees for the cold maceration. The rest of the wines are made in the winery on the Rue de Pommard."

"With some we finished the sugar after racking. Our idea with Pernand-Vergelesses and Chorey is not to have too much tannic structure at the end...we know people drink these wines early."

"The MLF was not delayed - not a difficult to year to go through MLF."

"It's not the ripest vintage we will have. I think it is a fresh vintage, but it's not a bad joke. We have fresh fruit and some density. For those who adapted the winemaking we will not have greenish wine. So it's classic - not big degrees, but more refreshing and if you made it in a fruit forward style it will be a success. You could not go delving to find extraction and power...it should be an easy drinking vintage."

"Not like 2009 and 2006, not a big ripe vintage. It's a fresh vintage but better and riper than 2007 and 2011."

Champy has gone back to it's Negoce roots. Much easier for everyone I feel. Of course many of the vineyards are owned by Champy, but they will all go under the negociant label.

Bourgogne Pinot Noir

This is light bodied. A pretty fruity wine. Quite keen and lean and a tad herbal on the finish.

***Bourgogne Pinot Noir, Signature**

Engaging red plum fruit on the nose. Fullish, rounded and lightly plump. Soft, slightly burly tannins. Juicy dark cherry fruit. Lively and fresh with hint of tasty bitterness on the finish. (not green though, just a touch of untamed tannin). It has a bit of oomph

Dimitri will leave this latter in barrel on the lees over the winter to polish the tannins a bit and gain a little mid palate. This is in about 10-15% new oak and the rest a mixture of ages.

The Signature shows better this year.

Savigny-Les-Beaune

This is certified organic. It is domaine, but not labelled as such. Cold terroir. Bottled before harvest.

Zesty red fruit with notes of pomegranate. It is lively and light, but with plenty of energy. Quite a bite. This has light tannins, just enough for structure, but carefully handled. Easy drinking. Score 15. Early drinking.

***Volnay**

1 hectare. From 4 terroir. Amazingly dark colour for a Volnay. Soft and full and plumptous; generous and velvety. Deep and dark fruit. It has a firm underscoring of minerality...strict on the finish. This will take time, but looks jolly good. Score 15.85. From 2018-19

***Pommard**

It has dark fruit and is really quite austere with a tight core. There is good tension and energy. It has a cold bite on the finish. More liquorish notes with a slightly bitter bite to the tannins. Certified organic... Les Cras in part. Mineral and cold terroir. It's not as 'easy' as the Volnay; it has a bit of whiplash. Score 15.75. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin

Le Village. Here the yield is normal. Quite a smokey note on the nose. It has a smokey palate too. Quite elegant tannins, nicely fresh. Smooth fruit, but a little uninspiring. Score 15.5

***Chambolle Musigny**

4 barrels of this purchased in grapes for 2 barrels blended with 2 barrels of wine. Light and uplifted aroma. Silky on the front.. pure and bright. It's a sweet and appealing Chambolle. Lovely and fresh on the finish. Lucid and straight. Crisp and elegant style. Score 16.15 From 2017-18

***Savigny-Les-Beaune, Les Vergelesses**

Elegant, pure and taut. A fine, tight wire of cool chalky minerality through the palate. Very refined...quivers. I do like this style of wine. Score 16.75 From 2017-18

Beaune, premier cru

Aux Cras, Reversees in the 6 barrels of this wine. This is robust; grips the palate. Will it come round? Maybe but there is more than a touch of dryness here. Score 16.25

Gevrey-Chambertin, Cazatieres

Bought in wine. Maybe a touch light and lean. It is elegant with quite refined fruit and structure. but a little thin. I would expect a bit more intensity. Score 17. From 2018/2019

***Vosne-Romanee, Les Beaumonts**

2 barrels.

Rich, warmly red aroma. Full and fruity and inviting on the attack. Elegant, rounded in the mid palate; a good Beaumont just nicely plump and juicy. Soft and satin tannins. Fresh lift on the finish. Jolly nice. Score 18.25. From 2019

Vosne-Romanee, Les Souchots

Slightly wilder aroma. Spicy attack; tight and cold; a touch austere; a little herbaceous.. It powers through, but is a little lean in the mid palate. Muscle, but the flesh is a bit lacking. Score 17.85/18. From 2018/19

***Echezeaux**

Silky, pure and rippling. It has an easy, debonaire charm. It is refined and has a lovely fluidity. Sweeps harmoniously across the palate. So while not outstanding it is a lovely and very well mannered. Score 18.95. From 2021

Clos Vougeots.

A burly monster - square, powerful and compact. The tannins are quite rugged. It has a plenty of grip. The finish is long, but a good deal less refined than the Echezeaux. Score 18.9. From 2021

***Mazis-Chambertin**

2 barrels (every year; bought in from an organic vineyard). Spicy, upright dark and peppery. Immediately captured your attention...quirky and interesting. This is both intense and firm and delicate. It is straight, pure and really rather refined. It love the underlying tension in the palate. Perfumed though the palate to the excellent finish. It is a quite a quiet wine, but very long. All the hallmarks of a proper grand cru. Score 19.65. From 2021

Charmes Chambertin

Alluring floral aromas. This is much more upfront; ample red and luscious fruit, but plenty of tannin too; but the tannins are not the most refined. Nicely fresh on the finish though...a full frontal Charmes with a full throttle finish. Score 18.9. From 2020

UK: Hayes, Hanson and Clark

Website

www.champy.com

Maison Chanson

Jean-Pierre Confuron.

"The most awful year for the climate. 3500 hectares destroyed by hail. We had freezing in April which destroyed flowers and then on the 28th June the hail. This means the domaine lost 8% to 99%...Clos de Mouches..the same in 2013 ...so bad was the effect that we will have no 2014 at all."

"We brought more people to the table for sorting and we adapted the picking in the vineyards with more workers. We said they should pick only berries. After the sorting we de-stemmed the harvest except the Cote de Nuits - Gevey-Chambertin and Marsannay was ok. For me the yields were too high in Gevrey-Chamberin because of the rain in August - the most awful vintage I have seen there - you needed to have de-budded and make sure the yield was low etc. The rain was the worse thing in 2014. We had a bad summer with rain and cold in August we had 250mm in one month. The average for one year should be 700mm. So for me it was unripe where they have too many grapes."

"September was very good. After the 8th we had a sunny and very hot weather in fact. The problem was that it was 8 degrees centigrade more than average - very warm and difficult for the maturation after a lot of rain, it was then too hot for the vine - matured the grapes too quickly and this means the grape with the hail and the drosophile had some VA issues...before the picking. So we had to make a lot of selection - if you use a machine it is really bad so you will find varied quality."

At Chanson they were able to pick the fruit of the growers with their own team. "We picked more than 70 hectares. I can decide on the dates of harvest and so we control the maturation and we can make a selection in the vineyard. This was the key in fact and not the selection afterwards. We found botrytis and with a bad smell of VA...botrytis was in Cote de Nuits - big grapes...and very green."

The price of grapes: Jean-Pierre Confuron at Chanson "We pay for what we get - we pay for the barrels of wine we actually make. This is the reality in Burgundy. Every regular contract in a house in Beaune is like this. People who are paying over the odds are changing the relationships in Burgundy and this is not good. You should never contract for the whole of the harvest. These people with the small negociant on the side... is very small. The producers who have become the negociant are the most ridiculous thing - worse if they buy wine which they already have this is confusing for the customer. The prices of grapes are growing for this reason and how do people distinguish what is domaine and if they are bought in grapes. There is nothing on the label."

"Now we have another sort of negociant - worse still. They can buy bottles and put on their label. There has been a new law made to allow this for. They can buy from different growers. So they bottle a batch of this and the next batch of the same appellation - with the same label and indistinguishable to the consumer - will come from a different grower. Basically Sur Latte (something long practiced in Champagne) is here now. You have to be very careful when you buy a bottle of wine now...you can be very disappointed."

"Chanson who go into the vines and vinify 90% of our production. We had to build a new winery to vinify everything, just to be in control of the quality. The domaine is just 20% of our production. The Macon for example represents is a large quantity for and we vinify it all. We work

harder and harder to control the quality. We practice like a wine grower at Chanson - this sur latte is a negociant of the worse kind."

"The average yield at Chanson is 18hl/ha in 2014. If you are not a regular buyer you will not have any bottles. Even if we put in half bottles we cannot share between everyone. The last four years and this is the biggest problem..and for the next 2 years the problem of the allocation will continue. 2015 is low in yield too."

***Bourgogne Chardonnay**

50% from Cotes de Nuits and Beaune and Chalonnais. The rest from Yvonne - near St Bris."We found some good producers with some mineral wines. We have 20% new oak to develop more Bourgogne style. 500hl. We vinify it all. 100% made by Chanson. This is really important to know. Rounded and juicy and has a nice creamy bit of oak, peachy mid palate and on the end there is the minerality. Spot on.

"This is a lovely wine for all the time - aperitif but also for sushi, better for Pinot Grigio in the UK."

***Viré Clessé**

300 hectares and we vinify it all. It is the largest cuvee we vinify. This is the same wine - anywhere in the world. We bottle at the same time. It is increasingly the case the same cuvee is bottled at different time. Bottled to order. So everything is different.

"We may be higher in price, but that's because we work differently. No oak here. The creaminess is just the lees ageing.

"Lemony, slightly creamy, nice plump middle - ample, then juicy and slightly floral and fresh at the end. There is a touch minerality here too. Score 14.5

Chablis

Jean-Pierre comments we work with great grower who wants some instant cash flow so they get must. Chablis is now 10% of their volume.

"Also fruit from Chichee etc to get a proper overview of the terroir of Chablis - a real Chablis."

This has ripe lemon, it is elegant and restrained. There is energy and purity. A smooth wet stone vein of minerality under the palate and on the finish.

Chablis, Fourchaumes

This has a creamy mid palate. There are peachy notes. It is rounded and juicy the austerity comes though on the finish...clean and tight and darkly mineral. The salinity at the finish is appetising. Score 17.2

***Rully**

Very lemony aroma. Citrus and juicy. Straight and energetic. Very bright...finishes on an energetic and mineral note. An enthusiastic wine. Great typicite. How can you not love this.

Chassagne-Montrachet

Racked and in vats. Notes of honey suckle - really rather floral. It has plenty of zesty lemon fruit on the palate. there are some very appealing mineral notes...high toned at the end...fresh and lifted at the end...and this from low lying parcels - nice job. Score 15.5.

***Savigny-lès-Beaune, Hauts Marconnets**

This is really quite structural. It has energy and a grip. I like the vigour on the palate. It attacks and there is the dark hint of mineral at the end of the palate. Score 17.

Beaune, Bastion

A premier cru without any name - a blend of the premier cru. Full and rich and generous - now in vats with lees after racked from barrels. It is nicely rounded apricot notes, rounded and quite full; After the generosity it's fresh on the finish. Score 17.75

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Caradeaux**

This is much more reserved. It is well edged, savoury and stony and quite strict. A whip lash of cold stone on the finish...very sappy at the end...I do like this. Score 17.35

"Same soil as Corton-Charlemagne, but this colder and more windy and the wine has more sapidity and more energy in comparison with Charlemagne which is heavier. I like the simplicity of wines like this..." says JP.

Corton Vergennes

This is powerful and rich and dense. A full and 'impressive' wine with no lack of cold, tense and sappy minerals. Complex and layered. Score 19. "I respect the origin..it is grand cru and should be grand cru in the bottle..the origin bring more things."

Red

Bourgogne Pinot Noir

"We vinify just 20% of this cuvee as we just do not have the vats for this. So this the exception different for us. But we have long term contracts. 150 hectares and we had 10% ie 1,200 hl/ha less than normal as we didn't find the quality we wanted." It is light and fruit driven and fresh. Pleasant enough.

***Fleurie**

"We have some contracts and we have Morgon also." This is juicy and fresh; Quite a zesty herbal note. Attractive. Raspberry fruit. It is a good vintage in Beaujolais - nice crunchy tannins. most appealing. From 2016

Givry

In the Cote Chalonnais Chanson have more contracts. 2 hectares in Givry and 2 in Mercurey. "We have more control now. We pick with our team."

This is also fresh and fruity. Quite lively...good acidity. Light-bodied, red fruit and violet floral notes...a good energetic lift at the end. From 2012

***Auxey-Duresses**

We develop this terroir. We have more than 75 different appellations. Some appetising dark cherry fruit here. It is soft and light and has a black peppery bite. It is fresh and zesty. Crisp at the end. "you feel the energy in the wines." Chanson have 1.5 hectares.

Marsannay

4.5 hectares in Marsannay. "We pick the grapes too." This is sweet and fresh and juicy. Lively. succulent red fruity. Sweet fruit and grassy at the end. Pleasant.

Gevrey-Chambertin

"Four hectares of vineyard that we are controlling. Just one grower between Gevrey and Brochon." This is rich up front, but also elegant. Firmly supportive, but supple tannins. Medium

bodied...nice and fresh on the finish. Spicy. A decent Gevrey-Chambertin... better than J-P's gloomy prognosis of the vintage.

Beaune Clos du Roi

Domaine and a monopole. "We lost 55% in this vintage to hail. The best was the sunny September month, which separated the hail damaged berries and many dropped off. Last year we bought a vibration table which shake out the dried berries. This was the key. Have to get rid of these or harsh tannins. In 2013 we used this too."

Rich intensity on the nose. Deep and juicy and full. The middle is rich and rounded. Plush and ripe tannins. Spice and freshness of the whole bunch at the end. Score 18.25. From 2019

Beaune Clos des Marconnets

Domaine. 60-62% damage. This is more elegant at the front; juicy and sweet; quite tight on the end of the palate - I like the twang at the end...the finish is longer here. Score 18.25. From 2019 Sandy and rock with less clay...and wind..

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Vergelesses**

This premier cru is domaine wine. 66% damaged. This is silky onto the palate. Elegant, but undercut with coolness and minerality. I like the energy and purity. It is channelled and clipped and precise. Spot on. Score 18. From 2019

Chambertin, Clos de Beze

Fresh iron-like note on the nose. It is elegant, quite floral and light-footed. It is precise. An elegant Clos de Beze with perhaps not quite as much density and layering as one might hope for. ("We had rain here, but no hail").

No Clos de Mouches, no Champimonts, no Bressandes...and maybe no Clos de Fevres. Such a shame - South part of the domaine was destroyed... and of course Chanson would not buy anything here to replace it - if it were available. "We are domaine here," says JP staunchly. "We respect that."

Dujac Fils & Pere, Morey-Saint-Denis

I tasted with Jeremy this year. Alec arrived at the end looking quite tired, as well he might. His wife had a baby daughter during harvest.

Comments on the vintage can be found under the domaine entry. Also refer to the market section in the vintage report for more about prices and the current situation in Burgundy.

"We have lost our main supplier of Gevrey-Chambertin. I could not keep up with the price rises and he moved to sell to those who will pay the price. This year we have just 7 barrels. If I passed on the price increase it would make the negocié Gevrey more expensive than our domaine wine."

"In 2012 the prices went up by 50% and we have the cost of a full yield - even when not a full yield...our contract is such that we still have to pay for one. (Now, after three small harvests he has re-negotiated this). If you include our picking costs it works out as E4800 a barrel - ie E16 before we do anything else. We could be selling at a loss."

"My feeling is that our grand cru can sponsor the village wines. These are great wines and we can accept that the price will be high and they will be drunk by the few. On the other hand we want wine that people can drink - in a reasonably relaxed fashion. So if the price of grand cru is high, we can keep the village wines reasonable."

***Gevrey-Chambertin**

Dark colour and very sweet fruit; soft tannins. This is plump and has a fresh and warm acidity. Sweet and fresh. Score 15.6

Morey-Saint-Denis

Inviting ripe fruit; slightly spicy with purple notes of ripe hedgerow fruit; distinctively different to the black fruit of Gevrey-Chambertin. Lively and sweet acidity comes through on the finish. It is light and lifted at the end. Score 15.5. From 2018

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Enticingly perfumed. This is ripe while remaining delicate and dancing and very pure. Very bright, but in the darker red fruit spectrum. Lovely lift here at the end and plenty of energy. 15.65. From 2018

Maison and Domaine Joseph Faiveley, Nuits-Saint-Georges

This year I tasted with the cellar master Jean-Michel Mongin.

I file Faiveley as a Maison, but in reality it is a domaine - in all but a few wines. 90% domaine in value. They buy Bourgogne for example and then a smattering at the top. One barrel Clos de la Roche and Clos St Denis.

They harvest from September 11th in Mercurey and in Nuits-Saint-Georges and finished on 21st.

Good maturity. Natural degrees at 11.4 to 12.3 for Mercurey and in NSG 11.5-12.50.
The pH was 3.15 to 3.4 for reds and for whites 3.20-3.30.
Acidity was on average 3g malic acid. 3.7 Tartaric ..after the alcoholic fermentation.

Because of the drosophile they decided to use more SO₂ 8g/hl..on the village wines in GC and NSG. The premier and grand Cru were not touched.

"The grapes were not so tannic - the skins were thick and the pips were ripe. No whole bunches, we were too worried by the drosophile. Same amount of pigeage - one a day..when we are at the end of the fermentation alcoholic we do less than on a day. Vatted for 20 days which is normal. 20 degrees when we de-vat. We like to have this temperature so that if there is 1 to 2 g sugar it will finish in the barrel. The MFL was difficult as the SO₂ was higher and even now the MLF has not finished for example on Damode.

"Sweet with fine tannins and fruit. The acidity is not very strong. The sweetness characterises the vintage for me..sweet and fruit."

"The balance maybe a little like the 89, the sweet like 2011 but more concentrated of course..the acidity ..ah..2012 maybe.."

"I think it is a vintage which will be more accessible..."

Côte Chalonnaise

Mercurey

9,000 cases of this. This has been racked. Red fruit aroma. Ripe red cherry. Sweet on the attack. Light tannins. Very fresh and bright on the finish. Easy and accessible. Pleasant.

Mercurey, La Framboisière

4000 cases. Deeper cherry fruit, more depth. Slightly perfumed. This is light-bodied; juicy and vibrant. Elegant fruit on the palate. It has a zesty fresh crisp note at the end. I usually really like this wine, but it didn't grab me in quite the same way, as it can be very appealing and intense. It is pleasant.

***Mercurey, Clos Des Myglans**

This has a southerly exposure and a very red soil. The grapes are small and the yields are very low. The average age of the vines is 43 years. This is still in barrels. Darker riper with notes of

marzipan. More density to the texture. Firmer tannins. Quite punchy on the finish. plenty of personality. "We want to keep the sweetness of the fruit, so this will be bottled soon."

***Mercurey, Clos Du Roy**

This is more perfumed; violets; it is straight; floral pure and energetic. the tannins are more refined. It has a very attractive bitter, fennel note to the end of the finish. Much longer finish.

From 2016/17

Côte de Beaune

***Blagny, La Pièce Sous le Bois**

Small but normal production. This is fermage. They do all the work - the vineyard belongs to Matrot. This is light and bright; crisp and lively on the palate. Good energy..crunchy fruit; a real bite to the palate and a long and straight finish. It like the narrow, nervous and vibrant palate. Score 17.65. From 2017

"In Blagny we always have the same characters, it is not very vintage orientated..the terroir is always stronger than the vintage. We have old Blagny in the cellar and it stays very fresh. It's not acidity, it is the balance," remarks Jean-Michel.

Monthélie, Les Champs Fuillot

This is quite peppery, red pepper on the nose, spicy. It pounces on the palate. Not exactly fruity, more savoury notes and touch of tannic bite. A touch herbal in the tannins, but nicely so. This had hail - you do not get the dryness, but not fruity either. the Finish is zesty. Score 15. From 2017

Côte De Beaune, Clos de L'Ecu

This is sweet and juicy upfront. Ripe strawberry aromatics. But also quite a lot of tannins. It is a touch dry on the finish. The mid palate is a little lacking.

Volnay, Frémiets

This has some charming fruit on the nose. Perfumed. It is quite strict; A straight palate. This is well made...very careful with the tannins - just light and supportive, no more. The focus is on the red fruit and a light minerality. It is light-bodied and lively and pure. The fruit is red and fresh on the finish. Score 17.25. From 2018

Volnay, Santenots

"25 hl/ha - not a catastrophe" It is a reasonable yield in the scheme of things.

Full fleshy aroma, ripe summer fruits. It is sweet upfront. Juicy. Not as intensely plump and full and lush in the middle as I would like. The tannins are a tad herbal. However there is a appetising herbal not...not green. the MLF was later and maybe this will gain and fill out after a second winter.

***Pommard, Rugiens**

Wild flowers, high tones. This is pure and straight and mineral and tight. Clipped and tense. This is a big step up on the Santenots. The tannins maybe a tad grippy at the very end, but there is some element of sweetness to it too. I like the cold austerity here. Much more refined. Score 18.5. From 2019

"It is like Fremiets, you have to be careful not to extract too much tannins," says Jean-Michel.

Côte de Nuits

Nuits-Saint-Georges,

The focus here is on sweet fruit. The aromatics are ripe...there is summer fruit on the palate. A touch insubstantial maybe, but an elegant style. Slips easily across the palate. (again with more so2 and a later MLF it will be less forthcoming). Score 15.85-16

The next two are both very good in very different styles despite the close proximity.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Chaignots**

Ah now this is more interesting. Some floral notes, perfume and red fruit. This is sweet and elegant and pure. Ripples onto the palate. The texture is silky. This has the substance to balance the more piquant note of the tannins. The finish is floral. Another winter in the cellar and this will be very nice indeed. Score 18.15 From 2018/19

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Vignes Rondes

The MLF had only just finished. This is dense, meaty and also very fresh. It is juicy and spicy and succulent. Gorgeous fruit. A good balance. This has some juicy ripeness and substance. Score 18.15. From 2018

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Damodes

This has done only 30% of its MLF. There is lots of sweet dark fruit. Sweet soft tannins. Rounded palate. Juicy. Supple - the malic acidity makes nothing harsh, which shows this will be all softness. It is not too rich either, succulent. Score 18. From 2018

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Porêts Saint-Georges**

This is sweet upfront, but it tightens in and becomes much more austere. There is quite a grip here. A sinewy muscle to this wine. Tendon character actually, as it is not burly in any way. It is very trim and has a focus on the finish. It is fresh and dark and tight...spicy end. Good. Score 18.35. From 2018/19

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Saint Georges

This is as it should be, elegant and smooth. It is a little tight on the finish at the moment and needs time...but the graphite note and dark fruit is there; the texture is coming and the finish is long. It need time to grow in the middle and it is closed at the moment. Score 18.4. From 2019

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Fuées**

This is sweet and pure and gorgeous on the front. Lovely balance. Well defined edges. Marked energy and vibrancy. This is a cut above. The minerality defines the finish. Score 18.5. From 2018/19

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Marchais

This is light and pure with red fruit. There is some spicy bite to the tannins and it is fresh on the finish. It's pleasant. What's not to like. Score 15.5

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos des Issarts**

It is straight, high toned and focused. It is light and elegant..it has tension and minerality. Sappy at the end...tight and mineral. I like the light and racy palate...a bit saline... it's rather a tight and high wired. I do like this. Score 18.35

"We have 2 soils; one with stones and below we have more clay..and we have a mix of flavour of yellow and red fruit.."

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Cazetiers

This has ample fruit on the nose; dark cherry and spice. It is sweet and juicy and come hither. the palate is succulent, but there is plenty of cooler grip under this. It is much less nervous than the Clos Issarts, more grounded and has some vigour, substance and bite. Assertive finish. I might prefer Issarts, but I am sure most will prefer this. It is certainly good. Score 18.45

***Gevrey-Chambertin, La Combe Aux Moines**

Focused black fruits. Tight, pure and intense on the nose. On the palate there is also concentration with purity. This is very good indeed. I like the focus, a certain reserve and the tension. The tannins are just ripe enough..maybe a tad on the herbal side, but it works with the sweet fruit and the finish..it is very good tight and precise and energetic. Intriguing wine. Score 18.5. From 2019

"This is one of my preferred wine...because it is a wine which gives not so quickly. Its quality we have to watch ..and to reflect...the monks - the moines are the monks in French...the monks of Citeaux were very austere and this wine is a bit like this..and if you look you find very interesting things..."

Echezeaux

This is smooth and urbane...ripples politely across the palate. Under the fruit there is a good freshness and tension and that just ripe feeling. Texture is right..it has fine tannins. The finish is dark and slightly smokey. Good typicite. Score 19. From 2020

Clos De Vougeot

A big spicy aroma. Touches of mandarine. Very purple aroma. A big and square wine. Huge structure. A burly wine. Lots of tannins...the finish is bullish. Needs time...at the moment the wood showing. the MLF was very late and the wine is quite retarded because of this...to try again

***Latricières-Chambertin**

Well this is an architectural wine; a firmly boned structure...however there is red fruit around this and plenty of freshness...this is finer boned than the Clos de Vougeots...much more precise..I like the energy under the palate and the more vertical character and the finish is very good, saline and pure. Score 19.25. From 2022

***Mazis-Chambertin**

Well this has richness and succulence up front. Seems inviting. Spicy and dark...It is giving at first...some delightful fruit..and then more reserve ...flows across the palate...refined and supple and vigorous and very, very pure...this has lovely complexity and layering. A clear step up. Score 19.75. From 2020/22

***Chambertin, Clos De Bèze**

Aromatic rose petal aromas. Gorgeous fruit..so succulent...not too opulent. It is richly rounded and has a lovely depth and intensity and vigour under the palate. This is really rather good. The

finish is long and laden with fruit and aromatics and under this a precision and purity and intension. Score 19.85. From 2024

Clos de Corton

This is sweet and dense and rich. It is powerful, generous and concentrated. It has plenty of purpose on the finish. Score 18.75

White

Meursault

They have just 400 cases. Negoce. Rounded, rich, but energetic; very fresh, lemony. There is a generosity, but some minerality at the end of the palate. A good blend of grapes and some wine. Score 15

Chassagne Montrachet

Negoce. This is spicy, full and has some exotic flowers. More concentration. There is freshness here too...This is a bit more interesting than the Meursault. The finish is honeyed and fresh. Score 15.5

Puligny-Montrachet, La Garenne

This is more reserved. Straight and pure and zesty. good clipped palate. Nicely edged and energetic. This has the energy the village wines lacked. The finish is salty and focused. Score 17.5

Batard-Montrachet

It is rich, but also compact, dense and battened down. There is layering and a good level of freshness and smooth minerality woven into this big rounded palate. the finish is gravelly mineral..dense and purposeful. Came out of the fridge. It was too cold to taste properly. Score 19.45 but maybe more...

Stockists

UK: Maison Marques & Domaines

USA: Wilson Daniels Ltd.

Maison Alex Gambal, Beaune

I tasted on a damp afternoon at the beginning of October with Alex and his right hand man, Christophe Brault. The wines had not been racked and they had not tasted them since the summer.

"The hail in the 2014 was the defining factor. Without this it would have been a normal harvest. Overall we lost 40%, largely in the Cote de Beaune. For example we made just 1.4 barrels of Meursault instead of 6. We started harvest on the 12th. There was some selection," remarks Alex.

Alex does not usually use whole bunches. "When you buy in grapes, it's difficult to use whole cluster...but this year we used some in the Chambolle, Beaune Greves and Charmes-Chambertin." They have a look as the grapes coming in and think about it. The Chambolle they pick themselves, so they can leave it to the perfect moment. The most they have used is 50%.

Alex is careful with new oak - 20-25% overall. So 4 to 5 years rotation of the barrels. "The key is whose barrels are we using." He likes to use Rousseau and Chassagne for the reds and whites a mix of Damy, Rousseau and Mercurey.

Winners and losers: A flight to buy grapes:

"When you buy from growers it is a battle - it's a case of who wins and who loses and the growers have had the upper hand in the past 5 years."

Example of prices: So if you take a bottle of Corton-Charlemagne, the negociant is paying E35 per bottle for the grapes now. It has gone up 3 times in 3 years. A barrel is E10,000. A barrel of village Vosne-Romanee is now E5200 and as Alex points out you don't really get 300 bottles, it's more like 290 bottles.

"With the difficulty of getting good grape contracts and maintaining them, about 2 years ago I thought we must find a longer term solution and at the same time we did a merger with Christophe Buisson in Saint Romain. That brought 7 hectares and we bought a hectare from Champy, so now we have 12 hectares."

The impetus came from two things, "With just 4 hectares we were too small. You need 10-12 hectares to have a critical mass to make the grape growing commercial and sub contracting out the working of the vineyards is way too expensive. We wanted to rationalise the grapes growing and have a good steady supply of our own grapes. It was a management and supply issue which we needed to solve. It was a good way to make sure our wines were better; we had reached a certain level for negociant, but to get better we needed to get a hold of the land. The quantity of grapes is just not there any more to be a negociant. We are contending not just with the small yields, but also with all the domaines with micro negociant on the side."

"There are 300-400 new negociant in the last 10 years and if everyone has around 30 barrels a year (some have more, some considerably less) that's 9000 barrels of fruit that's not on the market any more."

"So the best stuff we are all fighting over...and there are more people fighting over it and there is less of it; small harvests; more negociant and of course more growers who now bottle themselves."

"That's not to say there isn't wine to be bought, but not of the best quality...and it is bought in wine not grapes." A lot of comes onto the market as wine which is sold in wine to the more mass market negociants and distributed through French supermarkets."

"20 years ago you could have a reasonable life at 4-6 hectares, now you need 10-12. This is why Christophe Buisson got out. He could not afford to do this at 7 hectares. We could not do it with our vineyards because too much was Bourgogne. With Bourgogne it is impossible. It costs E20,000-30,000 a hectare to farm. It is cheaper to buy the fruit than it is to farm it because people farm it like a premier cru." On that subject he adds: "One of the things we have to do in Burgundy is to get away from the notion that Bourgogne is the most basic wine and the quality of wine corresponds with its appellation status. There can be excellent Bourgogne. We have to get away from the cast system."

Buying village Chambolle and Vosne is particularly difficult. "Both have under 100 hectares of village wine and it's difficult to get your hands on. It is so much better to exchange when you can.." Alexander, who is from Meursault and works closely with Alex, makes exchanges with his friends. As he points out, many in white wine growing villages have customers who would like some red.

"There is more trading now between growers and the top negoce. If you think about this - there are about 50,000 cases of village wine from each of the village of Vosne-Romanee and Chambolle for the world to share. Chambolle in particular is impossible. Puligny is the same. There are a few domaines which bottle their wine and most of the rest is sold to negociants in these villages. Gevrey is huge in comparison."

"So we are on a learning curve. We are converting to domaine, but consider that the vines have been hit by hail. So it has not been an easy start, but we are on track and we know what we have to do. We have the security now."

"In the 2014s we have some of the fruit in the red spectrum that we find in the 2010s - ripe but fresh fruit...high tone with the pretty classic pinot fruit of the 2010s."

Bourgogne Rouge

Grapes from their land below the village Volnay, plus grapes they buy in. There is abundant red fruit. Plenty of tannins, but they are ripe. There is a lot of intense and rich wine here for a Bourgogne, but with yields around 20h/ha it is maybe not surprising.. Top notch Bourgogne.

Chorey-Lès-Beaune, Vieilles Vignes

This is domaine fruit. Really rather zesty with lively red fruit; fair density and plenty of robust tannin. Quite a piquant bite at the end. Plenty of energy. Score 14.75 From 2017

***Savigny-Les-Beaune**

This is elegant with supple tannins and juicy red fruit. Very pretty. Fresh on the finish. An easy charmer. Score 15. From 2017

Beaune, Grèves

Light, pure and juicy. Very lively red fruit. I like the spicy lift at the end of the palate. It's very fresh. A good middle palate too. Elegant...It is really rather refined. Score 17.75. From 2019

This had a good third of whole bunch...from different parcels, which came in at different time.. "one of the hazards of being a negoce," smiles Alex ruefully. They hadn't meant to use so much whole bunch, but the grower brought them more than they expected in the last batch. Actually it works very well here.

***Volnay**

2 barrels from 0.25 hec. 15/hl/ha. Just so much lost this year.

This is rich, juicy and fleshy. It attacks the palate. The mid palate has lots of ripe fruit. It is certainly compact. The tannins are powerful, but they are ripe. This just needs plenty more time. Assertive finish. Score 15.85. From 2019

Vougeots

Plenty of red plump fruit on the nose. Quite generous, rounded but freshly underscored too. Supple tannins; breezy and mineral at the end. 2 barrels. Score 15.65. From 2017/18

***Vosne-Romanee**

3.5 barrels. This is bought grapes. Even, smooth with lovely intensity. Delicious red fruit. A satin textured wine. The finish is pure and mineral and long. This is lovely. A instantly harmonious wine. Score 15.85. From 2017

"The worse situation," remarks Alex is "overpaying for bad grapes. This is why trading works. "We prefer to buy from growers who also bottle some of their won wine as the quality is more reliable, but this grower is an exception."

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Plump fruit, quite open and rounded. Ripe. Plenty of juiciness in the mid palate. Smooth ripe tannins. The acidity cuts through..this is les cras and the rapier minerality comes through on the finish. Needs a second winter. Jolly good. Score 15.85 From 2017

Then two premier cru

***Chambolle-Musigny, Aux Echanges**

Very pretty, supple and floral. Ripples over the palate. There is an underscoring of acidity and bite at the end. Very aromatic palate and this wafts onto the finish in a cloud of scent. Delicious. Score 17.85. From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Charmes

One third whole cluster. The tannins are more pronounced. It is dense and tense and I think the whole cluster doesn't work as well here as on the Beaune Greves....there is plenty of spice here though, but a little herbal twang too. Score 17. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin

An elegant, fresh and silky Gevrey. I like the fresh finish. It is dark and a little spicy. such appealing fluidity. Fresh and pure on the finish. Score 15.95. From 2017/18

Charmes-Chamberin

This has plenty of spicy aromatics. Rounded and floral on the attack. Full, broad and generous mid palate. Quite frothy. The tannins are supple. The finish is aromatic and fresh. Score 18.95. From 2020

Maison Benjamin Leroux, Beaune

Ben Leroux comments:

"Every year we have new experiences. Very similar hail to the last 2 years and this means it happens three week after flowering, so a good reduction of crop but it did not affect the leaf canopy. I have experienced bad hail like 2001 and 2004. in 2014 the worse places were some Pommard and Beaune. No Savigny-Les-Beaune Lavieres in 2013, but we had 2014...the hail of 2013 affected 2014 in crop level. The effect on Savigy-les-Beaune is good - a small crop."

"The flowering was good but not a lot of fruit...yes a decent crop."

"Compared with 2013 it was much warmer and nicer - pretty classic..not that cool - July was wetter in 2011 and 2013."

"There is nothing amazing in the vintage - the most dramatic things was the hail. (Meursault was worse.)"

"The grapes were clean and healthy with moderate sized bunches - ripeness were homogenous - compared with 2015. (2015 people harvested from beginning to end of september. It was a very spread out vintage and no one was wrong).

"Not too much sorting. Very classic - I love them. I like the energy and acidity. They were lovely young - looked too good young...but then you see the 2015..."

"The acidity is softer than 2013, but more than 2015. 2013 has more energy and grip. The 2014 is well balanced...and they are distinctive."

"I prefer to use whole bunch in a warm year like 2015, when there is not much sorting, but we did use some even with village wines and in grand cru for example Clos Vougeots has 80%. We need to see the fruit first and then we decide."

After pressing it is allowed to settle for one week at about 22 degrees in the winery to settle the larger lees before putting in barrel.

"In 2013 we were more careful with extraction. I was more careful with tannins. The 2014s was easier to make. Easy easy easy. ..and relaxed."

"When you have good fruit you do not have to think too much, wine should express itself...if I don't have a problem with the grapes...in 2014 for example its all good so why do anything?"

"Prices of wine is high now, but it is sustainable when the quality is at this level."

His vision is to be half domaine and half negociant (the domaine is in white) and thinks this is the way the structure of Burgundy will go; many more will become a domaine/negociant. As he points out "when you are in Volnay and are hailed on you have to do something...the fact I am between Chassagne and Gevrey - this is my good fortune."

"2014 I like it very much. It is just very nice wine..I can't say much more."

"It is elegant and for me this means not a beauty, but you are caught by the precision."

"For me more a vintage for Chardonnay."

"I like reds. They have good focus. They have everything they need. I have pleasure with them... nothing in excess. The tannins are ripe..each terroir shows well. Sometimes I think the vintage is dominant but I think not in 2014. I like the 2014 for it respects the terroir. 2013 has more character, but is not as elegant as 2014. Not discreet, but not extravagant. It will come forward easily..."

***Bourgogne Rouge**

18,000 bottles. The grapes for this wine come from Santenay, premier cru and some Bourgogne rouge from Pommard and some Fixin. This is red and fruity with some black pepper spice. Zesty energy and a cranberry snap with touch of good bitterness. Lovely. From 2017

"The idea is to achieve a great cuvee of Bourgogne - 2/3 in fruit and the rest in wine - the spiciness is the Fixin." Ben finds that Bourgogne rouge vineyards are more mixed quality, unlike the white, as he remarks "Pinot on deep clay is never great - good in 2015 though - so I bring in many other things. I can make 18,000 bottles or 8,000 depending on what I want to create with the wine."

***Savigny-Lès-Beaune**

Perfumed. Bright attack. It has tension and splashing fruit. Plenty of concentration. soft tannins. I like the energy and spice on the end. It has a luscious crunch. Score 16. From 2017

Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Hautes Jarrons

Dark purple and flowers on the nose. "Naturally a smaller crop - not hit by hail in either year," says Ben. Quite dark bramble fruit, slight sinewy; somewhat burly in the middle, with a bright zest at the end linked to savoury smoky note. It has good energy. Score 17. From 2018

Volnay,

This is actually young vines from Santenots this year as these were less affected by hail. Only 4 barrels. This is sweet and agreeably plump and somewhat fleshy. Juicy fruit, mild acidity and creamy soft tannins. Score 16. From 2018/19

Volnay, Mitans

From the heart of Mitans. Yields were not so bad as 12 or 13 - we are over 20hl/ha. This is dark and spicy; good compact core. Nice density. Dark soft graphite notes. Softly cloaking tannins. It has a certain grip at the end. It is full and punchy on the finish. Not fruity as such, but generous. Score 17.85. From 2019

***Volnay, Pitures**

Uses a 1/3 whole bunches. like the high toned and uplifted aroma. It is straight, clipped and tense. Sparkling red fruit and cold minerals. This shivers across the palate to a tight and salty end. Spot on. Score 18.25. From 2019

***Volnay, Clos de la Caves des Ducs**

Mulberries, ripe and juicy on the nose. Succulent sweetness on the attack. It is rather sumptuous in the mid palate. Lovely richness and concentration here; depth and intensity. The tannins are rich and glossy smooth. The finish is somewhat aromatic. Very come hither and inviting. Just delicious. Score 18.5. From 2019

***Blagny, 1er cru**

Very perfumed and tight toned. High wired wine. Airy and tense..translucent to the terroir. A spirited wine which fizzles with salty mineral on the finish. Score 17.85. From 2018/9

Ben makes just 3 barrels and would like 7. In fact he thinks he will replant the chardonnay with pinot noir - this is a brave move...most have done the reverse for as Meursault premier cru it is worth double the price, but good for him. this is wonderful terroir wine...what Burgundy is all about.

Corton

80% Corton and 20 of Bressandes.

Aromatic and enticing. Suede soft tannins...deep and glossy texture. It glides supple-smooth across the palate...rather opulent depth and richness to the tannins. It is relaxed. It purrs to the finish. A contented wine. Score 19. From 2020

"I ask myself questions about Corton - it is a such a large area. From the 2015 I have what I want. I am just trying to understand it."

Gevrey-Chambertin

From Seuvrees on the MSD side 50%; 25% Justice and then some from near Brouchon - Billiard - "it's as flat as a table." Forneaux too

It is light and pouncing. It has energy. The tannins are light, slightly spicy and there is a dark fruit zest to the end. It is a bright, pure and elegant Gevrey village. Score 15.85. From 2018

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Etefois**

This is in a little depression. It is under Griotte.

So expressive. A full, rich and fruity village wine. Juicy compact energy. Succulent bramble fruit; supple tannins and then so fresh on the finish. A supercharged village wine. Score 16.25. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Champeaux

Finished MLF and at a different stage as not raked. It has plenty of bunched energy. There is spicy dark matter. A dark smooth granite note. Depth and richness. Score 17.75

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Perrieres

Light-footed and elegant; silky tannins; skates lightly on the palate. 1/3 whole cluster. fine grained tannins. Airy on the finish for Gevrey. There is delicacy and refinement. Score 17.75

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Goulots**

Pure distilled and vibrant. Lovely intensité and focus. It is linear and has verve. The fusion of minerality and sweet fruit on the finish is excellent. Score 18.25 From 2019.

***Morey-Saint-Denis**

It is very pretty and mineral..lucid red fruit, shimmering, silky-light tannins and fine salty minerals. Score 16. From 2018

***Morey-Saint-Denis, Mont Luisants**

Lithe with silky, satin tannins...ripples gently. Sweet and limpid fruit and so fresh. Verve and mineral at the end...with a long, saline tapering line. Score 18. From 2019

Vougeot

This is velvet and juicy and ripples; It has some smooth muscle and richness in the mid palate.

Nuits-Saint-George, Les Thoreys

This small premier cru of 5.6 hectares is underneath Clos du Thorey. Very sweet black fruit on the strike.; nicely focused too. Soft tannins and juicy bramble fruit with a touch of dark chocolate. Straight palate. Fresh on the finish. Nicely done. Score 16.25. From 2018

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Les Verailles; old vines. Floral, light and aromatic. It is a balletic wine, pirouetting on the palate. light and finely hewn and high toned. Just a delight. Score 16.25

Mazoyères-Chambertin

At the moment showing its tannin a bit. The fruit is red and bright. The tannins are sappy. Question the substance in the mid palate.

Griotte-Chambertin

Very perfumed; Juicy and sumptuous. Chamois-smooth texture. Really quite exotic..very spicy and rich...notes of lychee, but at the same time not at all heavy; it is rounded and fresh and airy at the same time. Long and exotically spiced lingering finish. Score 19.5. From 2020

Chambertin

It steals onto the palate. Poised and pure and intense. Really quite aromatic too... floral on the finish.

Vosne Romanee

From the Clos Vougeots side. Pinot fin..2 lieux dits. Much easier to get fruit than in Chambolle. Dense and compact with a firm and fruity base note. Lovely sweet, succulent fruit. The tannins are firm. It has substance with elegance. Score 16

Clos Vougeot

Labelled as "Petit Maupertui" which is the part up at the top next to the wall on the Vosne side. 400 bottles. "Always high ripeness next to the wall. 80% whole cluster. This was among the best couple of Clos Vougeot I tasted or it has the density of fruit in the mid palate. It has the matter and layering to fill the broad structure and there is spice and aromatic on the finish. Score 19.25

Clos Saint-Denis

Red, lucid, lifted and pure. A much more vertical structure. It is crisp and vivacious. Mineral and stoney on the finish. Score 19.25. From 2020

Clos de la Roche

"This is the 'original' part," says Ben. This is the lieut dit.

This is swathed in wonderful aromatics. It is full-bodied, but light, not fleshy. In the middle there is a core of tension and intent. I prefer it to the Clos-Saint-Denis this year. It is sensual.

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Amoureuses**

It is tight, bright and light. Very precise floral aromatics. Not keen to show itself..Delicately fine tannins..a shimmering silky texture. all about the texture and the aromatics. Great finesses. Score 19.45.

Bonnes-Mares

Chambolle, but on the edge of Morey side, beside the quarry. Sweet, engaging fruit and so juicy upfront - this is as some hither as the Amoureuses is not. It has debonaire flair and an effortless fluidity; satin-smooth tannins. It has freshness and vitality streamed with the fine fruit. So much energy. An elegant Bonnes-Mares. Score 19.65

Stockists

UK: Berry Brothers

USA: Becky Wasserman

Domaine Jean Fournier, Marsannay

Laurent Fournier: "In 2014 we had a perfect spring and the flowering went with no problem; no mildew or oidium...very good for the growth of the vines. We stopped ploughing at the end of June and we left the grass to grow during in the summer, as we were afraid of botrytis - acid pourriture - and it happened in the second part of August. So we have to eliminate the bad berries quickly. On the 1st August we went through the vines to de-select the bad grapes. We began harvest on the 15th..100 days after the flowering of the vine. After the 15th we had wind and the botrytis stopped. We started with the Pinot Noir in Chapitre. We made a selection in the vines as we did not want to bring the botrytis in the cases - so this is a little unusual."

"Very long harvest with the selection it took time. 15 days. It was a big surprise as during the maturity I found Chardonnay was not so interesting with bitter skins...but we picked and this was good, because in fact it was very ripe. It is good to have both the lab and our sensations."

"We had normal yields, which was a dream after such low yields."

"The important point was the yield. If you had vines with high yield they would have thin skins, but we have old vines and we have deeper and more serious wines."

"Pur Pot is a good image of 2014 - yes 2014 can make wines very light and easy, but with low yields more serious and very precise. We smelt the white pepper in the 2014 at harvest. I love this character for the beautiful pinot noir...not today, but it will come back..."

"If I wanted to buy vines the competition is enormous - incredible for village wines in Marsannay. In 10 to 20 years the Bourgogne land will be the same war. There are may small classified appellation - N/W of Dijon Mallin - just 3 to 4 hectares of vines and the terroir is very interesting and 55 hectares of vines not planted but classified - high quality potential, and these will no doubt be planted. We should help new vigneron; not just bigger structures. There are many interesting places which are not yet planted - so there is good potential in Burgundy still."

"The image of Bourgogne is a vigneron with 10-15 hectares - a vigneron in the vines and this must continue and it is important to have people who have not traditionally been vigneron - to have new blood, new spirit."

The first wines are bottled.

***Bourgogne Aligoté**

"Very old vines - 55 and 85 year old vines and low yielding. This is from Champ Forey. It is the old river bed with sand and stone. Three combes come into the same place so rounded stones and calcaire. Very deep and drains very well. Like Justice in GC."

This is pure and salty -not mineral, but more savoury than fruity. I think this makes for a lovely food wine. Sappy, hint of gun smoke on the finish.

"Not a variety with high personality..it explains the origins of the place...champforey...and this place is not sweet it is a little smokey."

Bourgogne Blanc, S ?!? Cuvee Special

Ah yes this is familiar. It is really rather like a sauvignon. Nettle and fruity and lively. This is a little different as this has MLF for half the cuvee - a good transition for those who love new world wines...to the old world.

***Bourgogne, Origine**

Pinot Blanc 2/3 and 1/3 Pinot Gris - so Marsannay grapes and Hautes-Cotes. A lifted and spicy aroma. Zesty pounce on the palate. Very energetic. Pink flavours, but with a zesty grapefruit note. Bitter too I do like this. Snaffle this for a kitchen supper.

The rest of the whites are in tank and were racked just before the harvest.

Bourgogne Blanc, "ç"

30 year old vines selection massale of Chardonnay and Chardonnay Muscat. Champs Forey. This has the spice on the nose. It is slightly richer, more rounded and has a savoury note. Savoury with gun smoke note at the end. 3"5 hl/ha. High maturity, yet deep soil gets the richness but never heavy" This should be classified as more than a Bourgogne

***Marsannay, "Cuvee Saint Urbain"**

This is named after the dovecote of the C14th monastery. This is a blend of vines from premier cru areas. The regulations specify 85% chardonnay and up to 15% pinot Blanc. It is creamy and full and juicy and rather aromatic...almost coconut? A rounded wine. Full and fruity and at the end really rather fresh. It has a clean snap at the end. This is a good introduction to Marsannay Blanc. "I have the luck to have some very good vines...and we have some 5 year old vines of Longeroies in the blend," remarks Laurent.

Marsannay, Longeroies

This is a blend of several parcels. Young vines planted in 2003 and both clone and massale at density 13,000 and will trial planting 20,000 in 2016. Mixes masasale collection and clone. 45 hl/ha.

Some lovely clementine zesty aromatics. It is vibrant on the attack. Races energetically.. Grips and pounces. There is some depth and intensity as well. A certain charged energy. Here you are rushing forward.

***Marsannay, Clos du Roy**

Rich in calcaire de comblanchien – "tiny stones, almost like sand and I have to use champagne root stock as the chalk too high for Burgundy root stock. It's a hot climate. Here there is never wind unlike Longeroies where you get wind. This is East exposure and Longeroies is more South facing. And while clos du Roy steeper, Longeroies is flat."

This is dense and rich. It is earthy, vertical and restrained. A stricter wine. Vigour and power. - such an interesting wine. This is more reserved despite the warm climate in this place.

Rose

Marsannay Rosé

This is a blend of 5 parcels. It is restricted by law each vintage to 15% whites. It's not a saignee, but a direct press and in this vintage it has been in 50% stainless steel and 50% 600l barrels. Bottled in September. This is delicate and sweet, rose petals; very pure and bright with a zest and mineral on the end. Sweet and savoury. The savoury note cuts the sweetness...but all is delicate. There is nothing rich or heavy here...a light and zesty delight....

Red

***Bourgogne**

Bottled in September. this has no whole bunch. The only cuvee. 10 months in 500-600l barrels and no new oak. Lovely fresh red cherry fruit; quite sappy and fresh. It has a twang a fresh crunchy bite. A lovely Burgundy.

Marsannay, Cuvee Saint Urbain

20-25% whole bunch. Three places...and some younger vines 30 year old from Longeroies and Clos de Roy. This was just racked. Aged in 500-600l barrels with 10-15% new oak. "We will put in tank for 2 to 4 months." Sweet fruit. Dark cherry very spicy. This has lovely ripeness - richness and more density. "I prefer concrete tank for the second part of the ageing. It becomes too reduced in stainless steel...but the sedimentation is much slower in the concrete tank."

Fixin, Petit Crais

Racked yesterday and will go back into barrels. More whole bunch...to round the palate. Slightly smoky on the nose. Plump upfront. Very ripe and a bit plush with soft tannins.

Gevrey-Chambertin

"0.5 hectares. Either side of the R74. Every grower in Marsannay has some vines in Gevrey. Since 2013 I used only larger barrels, but since 2013 I have some 228'l and demi-nuids. I feel after 2012 a vintage which more closed - it is better to have smaller barrels to open the wine. I like demi-nuids for sunny open vintage or a lighter vintage like 2007. So better to have a mix of barrels. I like larger barrels but in a vintage like 2012 and 2008 there is not enough oxygen. The wines are too closed at first and this is no good for the market."

This is rich and full on the nose. Dark purple hedgerow fruit. Sweet and succulent upfront. Juicy and rounded in the middle. Soft tannins. Very accessible. A little black tarry note; touch of liquorish at the end...and fresh at the end. This is a pleasant Gevrey village. Score 15.65

Marsannay, Es Chezots

Name from a C17th map Es Chezot. Means a little house in the vines. Rich in marl. It is a cold place with wind and always a late harvest."

It is rich up front and spicy and then very tight and tense...sadly this was the sulphur which it had yesterday, but the tannins are always quite angular.

***Marsannay, Longeroies**

In barrels, not racked. soft and juicy and supple. Generous palate; glides easily across the palate. Juicy and ripe; summer fruit on a warm day and I do like the freshness which comes up under the palate and onto the finish. Relaxed charm to the wine. Score 16

Marsannay, Longeroies, Version Original

Vinification without sulphites. Laurent has experimented with this for a while. He has stopped and started with this partly as he does not like the fashion for 'natural' wine.. "now I have more potential to produce wines without sulphite in the vinification and ageing and no temperature control." He does use a smidgen for bottling - rather sensibly! It is soft and juicy and generous, plush with supple easy tannins and then the finish has more tension....so the finish is the difference...a bit more focus and tendon. Score 16.25

***Marsannay, Clos-du-Roy**

Richer soil than Le Chapitre. A very late fermentation for some reason..also it did not want finish the MLF. But all is ok no VA.

Jumps onto the palate, taut and vigourous. It has tension and energy. It is compact, has plenty of dark fruit layered with salty minerals. It is quite a vertically layered wine. Punchy on the finish too. A wine of apostrophes. An exclamation. Score 16.25

***Bourgogne, Le Chapitre**

"This is a drier soil and no marl." It is in Chenove hence it is Bourgogne.... "but the time is a friend for a long term project - maybe for my son or my daughter...we would like a better classification for this terroir. But we do not stop the job for this terroir. We would like Marsannay to have premier cru. We would like them to have a place beside the other villages of the Cote d'Or, but we can wait."

This was racked yesterday. It has some lively fruit, notes of red strawberry - warm aromatics - and darker blackcurrant. It is juicy and very fresh...there is a zesty energy. The tannins are firm and fine and supportive and it finishes very well. It has soft acidity, but finishes with a touch of bitterness and the freshness of the whole bunch.

"In June or July in Chapitre nobody wants to go there - it is too hot!"

***Cote-de-Nuits village, Croix Violettes**

"Below the Chateau of Bruchon. 75 year old vines. A plateau, rich in lave - very fine. 15 cm top soil then rock. Hard to plant the new vines here. It would be better if this had the name Fixin."

This has just had 2 rackings to make the blend and then again to put in barrel. They have another cellar in Brochon as the cellar is too small here in Marsannay. Very low yields 25 hl/ha. "It was the vines of the Cistercian monastery and the cross was a violet colour. this is one of the great and beautiful terroir."

This is really rather refined. Ripe, but pure a silky tannins. Streams across the palate. Lovely ribbon of silky tannins. Smooth onto the finish. There is delicacy and subtlety here..

Marsannay, Trois Terres

Old vines in Marsannay in Grasse Tetes and two other parcels. His father gave him these older parcels to work on when the first started out to help him understand the identity of these places.. to make a little laboratory. 15 years ago. Deep and juicy. Plenty of richness here; purple crushed tannins. Slightly baroque in the palate for a Marsannay really and not all tired from the racking. It has a sappy intensity though too. It lifts up on the finish - sappy and spicy with a minty freshness.

***Marsannay, Petit Guimotte**

"Little berry." This is a selection of the millerandage berries - the pickers go out and cut just this. Just 2 barrels. This is pure and sweet and very intense. Distillation of fruit. Focused and lively, the tannins are fine and tight and it is very concentrated in everything...all elements...acidity, fruit tannins. But, it is not heavy in any way. It manages to be light and energetic at the same time. He has to use 228l as the production is so tiny. He would rather use larger barrels, but it is not possible and he picks up a bit too much oak at the moment.

Marsannay, Pur Pot

A sector of Clos du Roy with vines planted in 1945 or 1946. "The owner of Clos du Roy was a prisoner in Germany during the war and many vines died." It seems the women were holding the fort, but with all the men gone and they could not plough as easily and so many vines died and the vines had to be replanted after the war. 2 barrels and one is new - too much oak he would prefer less, but when it goes into older oak it will mellow. Made in 2011 first - for his daughter. This is dense and tense and quite strict. Battened down. Compact wine. This is the most calcareous part of the vineyard. This is deep and generous and velvety. It is rich and really rather massive. Grip on the palate. Powerful and dense. The finish is long.

Both the two final wines are equally good in different styles. I maybe prefer the Petit Guimotte... both are good.

Stockists

UK: Berry Brothers

Domaine Sylvian Pataille, Marsannay

"It was a funny vintage. We were scared in the season. Quite easy in the vines. Quite warm and humid in the vineyards in the summer, so we had botrytis, but it disappeared as the end of the season was dry and hot...good because the acidity was not burnt off by sun and the phenolic maturity was very impressive we could not believe it after fermentation."

"When we see botrytis in July we are very careful. June and July make vines - September makes wines - old vintners say this ...1975 the season was always raining; we had low degrees and pink grapes and then the September was incredible."

So 2014 is a little like this...the last three week were perfect with a north wind. We had strong sunshine also - paradise for Pinot Noir. Chardonnay is not so elastic...but even with low maturity you can make good wines, but with pinot have to be ripe."

"We started on the 18th and finished on 27th...no stopping... "We selected the grapes we did not want 2 weeks before in the vines and then the rest on the sorting table. We have 16 hectares and especially moving from the small parcels take time."

"We had a little sunburn, but easy to select out on the sorting table."

"The acidity was perfect... after the MLF TA 4.5 and pH 3.35. We had 2g malic before MLF - quite low so ripe - 4g tartaric so plenty. (like 2015 low malic - so will be very stable) It is completely the opposite than everyone was being told - they were advised to pick, but why when it was built on tartaric and this is very stable - many picked very early too early maybe. Young vines with big grapes who have more quantity will have more acidity."

"The Chardonnay are enormous - very energetic and very, very pure."

"The red are lovely not as concentrated as 2012. They are very sincere, by which I mean every terroir is respected - a pinot vintage with not much strength..just elegance drinkable immediately..we can take so much pleasure with wines like this."

" I like whole bunches and no sulphur." Sylvian made an experiment with the grapes which has been taken off the vines - grapes they didn't want - a couple of weeks before harvest. He fermented these in a tank in his garden - so well away from the winery. they were covered in covered in acetic bacteria and drosophie. He had two tanks and added yeast to one and nothing to the other and the yeasts ate up the unwanted bacteria in the fermentation in both tanks and they were better than he might have imagined. This is not part of his production, but an experiment to show that many thing will sort themselves out on their own, that you do not need to be too protective.

Sylvian uses no sulphur - just for bottling. Just when they have contact with oxygen he uses it. then 35ppm at bottling. He finds that this way the wines in the bottle are stronger and more resilient - they have become less sensitive to oxygen - "you can keep a bottle open for one week." However he is keen to point out that SO2 is not a 'poison' - it is very useful but used carefully. "Our ancestors always used just a bit, but never in vinification or ageing, but just at bottling..it doesn't need it before the bottling it is protected."

"I like a little new oak - 10-15% for some wines an then older old - 1 to 7 year old barrels. The older ones are more reduced..they stop the evolution of the wine, so you get something different."

Bourgogne Aligote

Bottled at the beginning of August. Les Chamforeys. Old vines planted after the big freeze in 1956. Replanted in 58 and 59. Low yielding at 45hl/ha. It has both wood ageing and 50% tank ageing...cool light lemon aroma and slightly floral. Medium bodied with cucumber freshness. It has energy and is straight and pure...with a lively finish.

"Gravel soil...limestone alluvial. I tried to separate the parcels in 2002 but the clients were not ready. This year I have decided to do it. I love Aligote. For me it was a shame to take out the old vines - they are a treasure. they are 80 years old. I wanted to give them a different life."

Bourgogne Aligote, Auvonnes

"Vines of my grandfather who was not a vintner but he had these to make his wine for the family. It means oat. 500m from the village. He had an orchard there...and his garden. 2 barrels of this, and just one in 2015 and the vines were planted in 58."

Quite a ripe aroma. Slight note of honey. Rounded and juicy and supple. White peach...richer and rounder. On the finish the freshness comes through.

More marl in the soil here so richer.

"The 2 above are always open and expressive and need bottling early to keep freshness. The next to take time to ferment and take time to become harmonious. The 2013s were bottled after nearly 2 years. This vintage will be bottled next March."

***Bourgogne Aligote, Clos du Roy**

It has been racked. 350 litres but never new oak. "I want to keep the agreeable bitterness. With new oak it is as shame to lose the energy. The wine is finished and then needs time in tank...no more that."

Light spice on the nose and palate. Not as round; very zesty and juicy and has a fennel bite. Compact and quite straight wine...mineral tang at the end.

Top of the slope of Clos du Roy - and always makes a very mineral wine..a mix of medium sized stones; white soil..marls."

***Bourgogne Aligote La Charmes Aux Pretres**

Lots of lively citrus aromas. It is smooth at first but then coiled and slightly smoky, spicy. More sinewy and compact...it has a bitter cold to the finish.

Bourgogne Mechalots

No new oak. This is front of the Charmes aux Pretres. Small slope at the bottom yellow soil - sediments came down from the combe.

Sight note of tangerine. Juicy and rounded. Plump and smooth. Very fruity with satsuma notes; This was bottled a month ago. I do like the freshness and the spice on the finish. It is very inviting. The vines are just 5 years old...with massale selection from Roulots.

Jean-Marc Roulots has made a selection and made it available to everyone to buy (most having made a selection would keep it under wraps). Sylvian is sure that the selection of Chardonnay is different in the Cote de Beaune and this makes sense - there is quite a distance if you were travelling by horse or bicycle..you cannot assume the Cote de Beaune would have the same Chardonnay material.

***Bourgogne Chapitre**

This is a wine with an appellation classification issue. "It should be a premier cru says Sylvian - it was classified along with the best wines in Gevrey-Chambertin in C17th, but it was forgotten. I have separated as it is such a good place. 20% new oak. Higher tones. More piquant. This is compact and dense and has good tension. This has some power and is minerality cold - sappy stoney note at the end of the palate.

"The acidity is always a little low, so I do not keep it too long on the lees, I want to keep the freshness.

Marsannay,

Plenty of different terroirs. This is smooth and generous and has a subtle smooth minerality. There is some lovely white peach fruit; it is travelling at the moment.

Marsannay, Chardonnay Rose

In Blungeys. "This is a lovely grape it shines and is brilliant. It is an old variety which is disappearing...Bruno Claire has it too and separates it and loves it as I do. It is a variety worth saving. Almost like a Blanc de Noir. Much more spicy; fragrant. Full and richer and spicy. It has volume and generosity. A then on the finish there is a cool fresh grip at the end of the palate.

"Superficial top soil of clay."

***Marsannay, La Charme Aux Pretres**

This is compact and pure and well edged. It is a strong structure softened with the filling of white peach in the mid palate. Zesty minerality. Salty finish..very straight and direct...

"This goes in 600l to protect it but with less lees influence and no wood influence."

Marsannay Rosé

Marsannay Rosé, Fleur de Pinot

Such a lovely pale colour. An unusual sight wild aroma. demi nuids. This has a firm structure, quite a lot of tannins, smoky notes; this is quite funky at the moment.

Marsannay Rosé, Fleur de Pinot 2013

Bottled in August. Pure and tight and precise. Savoury minerals; graphite dark mineral nose - not fruity at all. savoury note which I like - cherry kernel.

The bitterness I find in the Aligote and the chardonnay and then this the rose.

Red

***Bourgogne**

This was bottled just before the harvest. Red cherry fruits. It has some grip, bitter cherry and juicy. Very fresh and sappy tannins. Champforey. Very fresh and bright and simple, juicy and crunchy.

Marsannay

Racked last week and in tank. Sweet, ripe red cherry fruit on the nose. This is soft and supple; 30% whole bunches; soft tannins; very juicy red fruit; fresh and yet generosity. Here we have the drinkability. Elegant and pleasant. ...

"A little like 2011 but with less green aroma and sweet and drinkable," remarks Sylvian.

Marsannay, La Montagne

30-40% whole bunches. "Part of the parcel the bunches are too big and I de-stems these. Get the freshness from the combe - a bit like Estournelle."

Very fresh and bright; quite tight tannins; it has ripe cherry fruit coupled with some strictness underneath...the finish is taut and sappy fresh wet stone.

"Terroir must be a picture of the soil and of the parcel. This smells of the forest - it smells green. In winter the snow here is last to go...we harvest late here too it is in the woods so in the summer it is warm enclosed lots of limestone no clay and the soil gets warm

Marsannay, Clemongeots

This is dense and tight and compact.. It is very young. It has a nervous energy.

"Lave sliced in small plates...roots can get between. Very superficial top soil."

Marsannay, Grasses Tetes

Sweet fruit on the nose; juicy and generous up front.. tightens in to a more focused finish. Rather refined light tannins. It is a light-bodied and slightly delicate wine... cool and refreshing note at the end.

50% whole bunches:

Marsannay, Longeroies

100% whole bunches. Sweet fruit at the front. It is juicy and succulent and zesty too. It has a sweet succulence. Red fruit..red cherry. The tannins have a little green sap at the moment. I like the energy here.....a certain zest and minty, nettle note from the whole bunches.

***Marsannay, Clos-du-Roy**

A good deal of deep almost black cherry on the nose and palate. Deep and intense and strict. This is tense and grippy. Very well defines. Mineral...the finish is white and tight and pure. It starts with tannins and finishes with finesse...on the cold white minerals. A contrast between the ripe fruit and the mineral cold and warm.

***Marsannay Chapitre**

Elegantly ripe and very tight. Silky quality and sappy tension. Soft and ripe mid palate. It has fluidity. I was expecting this to be much stricter. It is really salty and mineral at the end.

***Marsannay, Cuvee L'Ancestrale**

3 oldest best old vines. All 100% whole bunches always need about 2 years ageing..just the 2011 was only aged for 13 months. Usually bottled just before the harvest two years later. This is sweet and succulent and juicy. It is rich and has satin soft tannins. Gorgeous depth and velvet to the texture. On the finish is cool and straight pure and shivers with minerality. I like this.

Stockists

UK: The Wine Society; OW Loeb

USA:

Domaine Denis Bachelet, Gevrey-Chambertin

"The flowering was good. The summer was easy much better than 2015 where we had stress because of not enough rain. We started harvest on the 13th."

"The grapes were perfect. The harvest was generous. It was a normal harvest...everywhere. Small berries 3-5mm in the old vines and a little bigger for younger, but not much. They are always like this." Photos showed the tiny bunches - dwarfed by his hands.

They have a cold maceration for 6 to 8 days in the milk vat to be under 15 degrees...for the colour. "There was more juice in the berry in 2014 than in 2015 where the skins are thicker.. We always destem everything."

This year Denis racked the wine later as the new cellar was not finished. "We had to work over a weekend to do this...the vines were growing very quickly - usually we do it in April before the rush in the vineyards." He has built a lovely new barrel cellar, next to the old one, where it will be much easier to work as the one under the house was a little cramped.

"The 2014 is very sweet and will be easy for the customer - a very feminine vintage. It is very accessible."

"In 2015 the conditions were very dry. Corbeaux was alright, as it has water reserves, but Charmes on 20cm top soil and then rock suffered."

"We need this kind of vintage (2014) to put in the restaurant and on the table easily."

"Like 1997 with a bit more to it. It is the same kind of year - elegant and expressive - and the 2007 but this vintage has more complexity than these vintages."

***Bourgogne**

Delicious ripe and expressive aroma with lots of concentration on the nose. Really sweet and vibrant fruit. This is an exceptional Bourgogne. And lovely freshness. So inviting. Top notch.

***Côte de Nuits Villages**

The main bit is Queue de Hareng at the top bit of the hill near Brouillon. In this parcel the drainage is very good. Sweet and dark and lifted. Beautiful fruit aroma. Slight dark violet floral notes on the palate and lovely concentration. Very pure and intense. Marked energy with the succulence. The tannins are very silky. Lovely clarity and purity. Fresh and sweet at the end. Dark fruit finish. Score 16.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieilles Vignes

An aroma of warm perfume and spice and bramble fruit..the palate is full and rich. There is breadth and concentration. Good depth. The fruit is dark and spicy. The tannins are firm and smooth. Very well balanced. Bunched vigour. The finish is assured. An excellent village wine. Score 16.5

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Evocelles

The parcel was purchased in February 2011. There was none made in 2012. In old French the word means quarry. The syndicat has petitioned to raise the status to premier cru. It makes sense..it continues around the hill from Champeaux and the quality is clearly above village level. This will take a long time. Denis thinks maybe 10 to 15 years. Just three barrels. The barrels are new and second fill.

High toned, lifted, floral aroma. Ripe, vivid red fruit; fresh and trim; sweet and juicy; slimmer body. Refined, silky tannins. I do like the finesses to the texture and the smooth mineral on the finish. Score 17. From 2018/19

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Corbeaux**

The terroir is deep with lots of clay.

An expressive fruity aroma with plenty of ripe hedgerow fruits. Immediately rounded and full, thicker velvety tannins, generous. The texture of the tannins are supple and they are thicker, but so very smooth. The finish is long and assured and slightly spicy. Score 18.5 From 2019.

***Charmes-Chambertin**

Tiny bunches in a photograph Denis showed me - small bunches smaller than his hand. The aroma is floral. Red rose scent. Flows so soft and supple onto the palate. Fluid and elegant and very seductive. Gentle but deep and the finish is fresh and really very mineral...after the fullness, the airy volume in the mid palate, the finish is very precise, mineral, long and elegant. It really is a lovely wine. This is one of very best Charmes I taste and once again this year it fulfilled expectations. It seems that if I select a Charmes for my list of favourite wines of the vintage, it is this one. Score 19.75

Stockists

UK: Berry Brothers; Wine Society

USA: Martin Scott NY; Wines Unlimited; Cellar Door LA

Domaine Pierre Damoy, Gevrey Chambertin

I tasted with Pierre and Victoria in their dining room in front of the warming fire. It was mid October and winter had suddenly descended. It was the first fire of the season and I was grateful..the small dog seemed delighted too and sat with his head practically in the embers.

Pierre was still busy in the cellar and had been tearing around to get everything done and take the samples - to take some time out to taste, which was very kind. He was just finishing the pressing. He is very careful with the press - it works automatically for the first 2 hours, but then he goes and tastes as it presses...so he dipped in and out to the winery as we tasted. He remarks "Chappelle is easy as it's not so tannic, but others like Tamisots are more difficult. The press is always a difficult time and after I have to refresh the wines, or we lose aromatics..."

"You cannot press when the moon is the furthest point from the earth...at that time you cannot work in the vineyard or the garden or press..if you press it will not want to settle." For this reason he had not been able to press last Sunday..but there is always work to be done and he was still finishing some of the fermentations.

"2014 was a strange year - quite early at the beginning and not good at all until the middle of August. Then it was good. We did not have much problem with disease. A good harvest and a good quantity. I did not harvest late, as it would have been too late in 2014. In 2015 it was much later, but we could wait. It was mature, not as ripe as I like, but it was enough."

"So just the weather was a problem....we were afraid of mildew so we had to treat the vineyards, but it was fine in the end. It was just bad weather in the summer, when we were doing the work in the vineyards. But the end of the season when we had finished work (!) it was fine. When the days are short and the weather is cool you cannot wait."

"The triage had to be good...we had to be careful..we always make a selection even in a good year. For some reason the millerandage bunches were not so good this year, so we had to take them out."

"It is not a large quantity...as we have older vines; so a bit under the objective, but it was good. Just in La Justice we have low yields. Tamisots was good - we like 30hl/ha and this year we had them. Chappelle was under 27-28 hl/ha which is very good for us."

"Vinification was quite long, but not a problem. It was not difficult to extract, not as easy as 2015 though. We had to regulate the temperature as we had long fermentations - in some ways it seem more concentrated than the very concentrated 2013. A good surprise.

Some have been racked this year all ready - this is rare here. Pierre does not like to rack before harvest, but he felt it was right on a couple of wines. "Strange vintage, some wines were quick and others are taking their time. The wines we racked may not have been the best time with the moon phase. In the winter we have time to take the right moment, but with three wine I felt I had to rack."

"The 2014 has quite quick maturation...we may rack the rest of the wines by the end year, maybe in December to keep the fruit..it is a fruity and fresh vintage and I want to keep this..and to keep it in barrel too long would be a disaster."

"I think the 2014s are wines for drinking. Not a famous year which we need to keep for 15 years. Sometimes you need wines you can drink young. With 2011 and 2013 - it is lucky you can drink them young, while 2012 it is not easy at all...these vintages take time."

"Good terroir expression and it will be pleasure to drink."

Bourgogne Blanc

He buys the grapes from close to the Bourgogne Rouge in Fixin. He has a new plot and nearby there is a small plot of Chardonnay. 0.6 hectare. Racked before harvest to finish the MLF in vat. This is the last year he will buy the grapes. Now he can work the vines. The 74 year old man who owned this has died and his daughters are now renting this to Pierre and some other parcels in Fixin from the 2015 vintage. The white was very slow to start the MLF and had just finished. "Some vintages are very late bottling - 2 years. Just one barrel. We don't sell it. It's just for us." Rich fruit with freshness. It has good intensity. It surprisingly powerful, dense and sappy. Good energy and minerality. Is mineral and straight on finish. Punching way above its lowly status..

Bourgogne Rouge

Some of this is from the Fixin part - which is near their own vineyards. It was racked just before harvest. Red fruit; cherries, lively and zesty. It is quite tight in at the moment. The tannins are quite tense. He was very worried about racking this in the summer, as he never does this, but it was the right things to do this year. It is a little closed, but it will come out of its shell.

"It is great to have something we can drink in 2 years."

Marsannay, Bretigniere

Under the Champs Perdrix and is really Fixin in style. "It is quite strange - it is nearer Fixin than Marsannay," and he argues that this section should really be part of Fixin. "A small slope with good drainage and small stones." Quite dark and punchy; spicy. It is robust and quite grippy..and tang of liquorish; plenty of dark fruit with sooty black bite to the end. It has plenty of personality, but is quite disgruntled at the moment. This needs time to settle down. This is racked and back to barrel. Score 15.

***Gevrey-Chambertin**

Not racked. Deep red fruit. Nicely ripe, amply rounded and generous. Juicy and the tannins are sweet. There is freshness and sappiness on the finish. What's not to like here. A very fruity, approachable and likeable Gevrey village. Score 16. From 2018

Gevrey-Chambertin, La Justice

"It loves the rainy years and when it rains there is sufficient water for it is dry place."

This is quite spicy on the nose; red fruits - ripe cranberries. On the palate is is tight and fresh and sappy. The tannins are peppery. Plenty of of vivid ripe fruit and lots of energy. Good forceful finish. Score 16.2. From 2018/19

***Marsannay, Longeroies**

This is very relaxed on the aroma; easy and gliding on the front palate with sweet red cherry fruit. Silky and relaxed; supple and juicy...crisp and lively on the finish.. It is an elegant wine. This looks very good. Score 16.15

I am glad to hear they will continue with this Marsannay. The friend they were buying from needed to keep his fruit from 2015 onwards for his own bottling. They were really lucky in 2015... they managed to buy from the neighbouring parcel - which matched the row exactly, but immediately south. They caught the vine grower as he was harvesting..he has sold part he has

already harvested, but they bought the rest of the harvest...now this will be a long term relationship.

Chambolle

One part is in premier cru Combottes and a village parcel nearby. So difficult to find grapes. From 2015 there is just one parcel. "It is more difficult with the two plots, one full south..it was 28 degrees at harvest ..and the other more normal...difficult to harvest if you have both." With the new parcel there is no compromise on when to harvest. Some gorgeous red fruits...Sweet fruit, rounded and generous. Juicy and rich and the fruit continues to the finish with some cold minerals on the finish. So you get the flesh and the minerals at the end. Score 16.5

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos de Tamiot**

Wild hedgerow fruits, lifted spice. This has a snap. Dark red cherry fruit on the front and really quite concentrated. It is fresh and the tannins are firm and supportive and ripe. Sweet darker juicy fruit on the finish. There is a certain snappiness and the wine has tension. Score 16.75.

***Chapelle-Chambertin**

This is elegant, pure and uplifted. It is channelled and well defined at the edges. Notable purity and length. Fine and delicate tannins. It is so precise...Chapelle can have a very rigid structure, but not here. A wonderfully long and pure finish. Score 19.5.

"The yields can be too low... but not over concentrated. If too concentrated it is difficult to taste. It is not easy to get a good crop as the vines are very old in Chapelle. When the yields are better (still under 30hl/ha), I prefer the wine. Between 20-30hl/ha is good."

"It is a bit like Tamiots in this way. We have two years in Tamiots 2014 and 2015...where we have a decent yield..and this gives the best wine...not too concentrated. This is even more important here as it's a village wine and people want to drink it soon. They don't want to wait ten years and so it is better if it is not too concentrated..."

***Chambertin Clos de Bèze**

Floral notes. Silky smooth and juicy; satin to the tannins. Deep rose petal aromatics. This has lushness without weight. A Clos de Beze with a more gossamer texture. It is nicely concentrated, but not too rich and so elegantly scented..and fresh. Rose petals linger on the long palate. Score 19.8. From 2020

Chambertin Clos de Bèze, La Reserve

This has an extra level of concentration. It has svelte muscle and rich density; a smooth operator - just a tad opulent. There is intensity. It is super-charged. Here there is contained vigour. It will take time to reveal its aromatics. It has a gorgeous sheen to the fruit. Dense and delicious. Score 19.85

"This is made by me for me. It is not quite the same vinification as the Clos de Beze. It is different...but such a small place and very old vines and the yields are low, but enough."

"My first objective is to have a very good Clos de Beze. I do not make it if I think the main cuvee needs it. I did not make it in 2004 and 1995 and 1996 for example."

It is a place, a small part within the vineyard. It is not a selection of older vines, but a specific place, which makes just 2 barrels. "It cannot be too small. I do not want to vinify in a bucket!" says Pierre. "You cannot regulate the temperature easily and you cannot so pigeage or it is too strong etc...remontage is also difficult when it is small."

He remarks it is difficult with some of the new parcels as they are small. He is used to vinifying larger parcels..so the Chambolle for example is a challenge.

"2008 was the first real reserve for Clos de Beze. There was a changeover from the 2006 and 2007...from old vines to La Reserve as it is now. When it is dry it is very small area....when it is wet it is larger...I do not want to know what is under the soil here really. It is a magic..an alchemy and know doubt we can find out, but I do not want to know. This is perfect."

Stockists

UK: Loeb; Flint Wines

USA: Chateau and Estate Wines

Domaine Claude Dugat, Gevrey-Chambertin

The started harvest on the 13th September.

Everything is de-stemmed. 2 pigeage a day and about 2 weeks vatting. A couple of days for the debourbage.

"I find the 2014 has very sweet fruit and then really fresh on the finish and straight..it is a very nice vintage."

"It has fresh acidity, but so sweet that it has an immediacy. It also has potential to age. It has the freshness of pinot noir and the finesse..not a vintage with big tannins which needs a long ageing before you can drink it."

Bourgogne

Four parcels...and some younger vines. Decent fruit, dark and spicy with firmish tannins...and a twang at the end.

Gevrey-Chambertin

Sweet red plum and dark berry fruit. Juicy. The tannins are sappy, a touch dry maybe - still on lees and maybe needs racking. Fresh and spicy. The wines will not be racked yet, probably not until next spring.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Premier Cru

Craipillots and Perrieres. Assembled before the fermentation. 5 barrels. He likes the blend. Lifted floral notes with black fruit predominant on the nose. Very sweet dark, blackcurrant fruit on the palate. Well ripened and concentrated. A nugget of richness in the mid palate. The tannins are firm and structural, but sweet and the finish is fresh and direct. Score 18.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Lavaux-Saint-Jacques

Fresh and juicy cranberries on the nose. Bright and straight and crunchy tannin. Plenty of energy. Pure red fruit. Breezy on the palate, lively on the finish. It is light-bodied and zesty. Very engaging. Score 18.1 From 2019

Charmes-Chambertin

100% new oak. It is sweet and succulent; violet notes, supple; generous and juicy. Plenty of tannins. The mid palate is rich...but the oak is really dominant...and masks the wine, and the finish while long, is oaky.

***Griotte-Chambertin**

Lively ripe fruit on the nose..Ripe and dark and fleshy. Good density and richness in the middle. There are plenty of ripe and supple tannins; lovely freshness and expression. The finish is pure and keen and comes up under the oak and the fruit and is lively...and it grows on the finish..very aromatic and spicy at the end. This looks good. Score 19.25. From 2020

Chapelle-Chambertin

Upright and reserved. It has a more vertical ridged structure on the palate too. Red fruit, more ripe summer fruit, warm aromatics cloak the notably austere frame. The aromatics define the finish too. So this could be a bit too severe, but it is not. Score 18.95. From 2020

Stockists

UK: contact the agents Howard Ripley

USA: Robert Kacher Selections.

Domaine Fourrier, Gevrey-Chambertin

Jean-Marie Fourrier on the vintage: "It is generous. It was not that complicated. The 2014 has a more moderate yield than the 1999, but like the higher yielding 1999 it is a style that will be gorgeous young and will age. It is a vintage that will give pleasure."

"In 99 we had a generous and great vintage; More fruit and good fruit. Then of course the winemaking was different and people used more new oak then."

My hope is that the hype over 2015 will not put 2014 in the shadow. The 1999 and 2014 are more classic style than 2015. 2015 is going to be a speculative vintage...too much buzz already.

"The flowering was really nice and easy going which explains why there were so many bunches of grapes. Then a rainy summer brought water to the ground for the vines...which explains why the grapes are not too concentrated and the style not so heavy. Large bunches. We got good light and just enough sun...good acidity and good phenolic maturity. The main concern was the fly..drosphile, but more a worry than a problem. Maybe it was the rain and the grass which we had in August which encouraged it. When you use no herbicides you have more life and insects you may not want in the vines. But there was no impact on the grapes."

"As the berries had more juice, there was the threat of rot. We were on the edge - with the berries ready to burst we were vulnerable - but we were OK in the end."

He got no sun burn. He does not leaf pluck until August. "I am very cautious about taking away leaves. The leaves can also protect against hail as they did in 2006 in Griotte. My neighbour lost a great deal more fruit than I did that year and he had leaf plucked,"

Harvest started here on the 14th for 8 days.

"Because the ratio of skin to juice was a little like tomatoes...you did have to try and extract a little more to get the structure. With the ratio of skin to juice I believe that stems were not necessary a good thing. The stems would have absorbed 30% of the colour...but we worked a little more with the pigeage."

"I am always very careful with using stems. I am convinced that many who say they are just using them for marketing purposes. It decreases acidity - the stems release potassium and then during the MLF the decrease the acidity is greater." He tried it in the 1995 and didn't like the result."

"When the first vat started it was so quick - the yeast consumed the sugar in 8 hours what would take 2 or 3 days usually. The yeast - and lactic bacteria - were very healthy. This happened this year again." I saw a video of the fermenting juice bursting through the cap...usually see it when you punch, but this came though on its own. "It shows the natural life in Burgundy is very healthy. I like it to peak at 30 degrees."

"I like to cool the vats before pressing - helps delay MLF..and preserves the aromatics."

"Certainly the rain has not caused dilution but makes the style juicy and accessible..nature has been kind and generous, but this does not mean the growers should increase their prices."

"I love the precision of this vintage...in terms of taste. The 99 aged very well, they never shut down, they were always very giving...no one would imagine they would age so well. so the 2014 might be like this."

"It doesn't have the crispy side of 2010, but like it for it is pure and it has the tension."

"It is a vintage when the terroir are really speaking."

All the wines have lovely purity

Bourgogne Blanc

Jean-Marie has been making this since 2007. Grapes come from below Flagey. 5000 bottles. He oxidised this deliberately at pressing so that all the potentially oxidative elements fall out. He adds no sulphites, just a little at the end of MLF. This is quite broad and slightly exotic. Spicy, rounded and just fresh enough..

***Bourgogne**

Very pure fruit; bright and lively. Light tannins. Red and crunchy. Lovely. Half is from the domaine and from vines of about 70 years and the remainder is bought from a 45 year old vineyard.

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Mombies and les Herbeus. Fresh and pretty aroma. It is lively onto the palate. Zesty bite in the middle. Crunchy red fruit. Touch of cranberry. Light and quite piquant tannins. A mineral sizzle at the end. Score 16. From 2017

Morey-Saint-Denis, Clos Solon

Darker cherry fruit and slightly spicy. Sweet fruit; juicy. More flesh here. It is a little plump. There is a juicy sappy note. The finish has a bright slightly grassy note; grassy in a good way. Score 16. From 2017

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Aux Echezeaux**

Gorgeous ripe red cherry fruit on the nose and lashings of pure fruit on the palate. The tannins are light and slightly piquant. Elegant pure and energetic village wine. Score 16.3. From 2017

"For years I would get frustrated that this was light and pure..more like Chambolle. It was more popular in Asia than America. Now it is more widely appreciated as tastes have changed."

Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieilles Vignes

This is from the north side of Gevrey - below Combe au Moine. This is deep and denser with much darker fruit. It is straight on the palate, well defined and pure. It has a channelled energy. It is more 'typical' and than the Aux Echezeaux. Score 16.5. From 2017/18

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Gruenchers**

Ripe mulberries..a very expressive aroma. It is succulent and juicy. Fine and supportive tannins. Plenty of tension in the core of the wine. It has a very lively finish.. zesty and energetic. Score 18. From 2017/18

***Vougeot, Les Petits Vougeots**

He wishes he could call this Chambolle, Les Petits Vougeots as it is very Chambolle. Aromatic and expressive. This dances onto the palate. Light tannins. It is swirling and energetic. Lovely intensity and a delicious note of almond kernel and fennel - an intriguing light and tasty bitter note which complements the sweetness of the fruit. Very fresh and aromatic on the finish. I do like this. Score 18.25

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Cherbaudes

Rich and satin smooth. Quite seductive up front. Full mid palate. Very relaxed and at ease with itself. Good tension on the finish. It focuses in. It has grip at the end. Score 18.2

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Goulots**

Very sweet fruit; lovely sweet nugget of fruit. Silky tannins and such energy. This pounces on the palate and has a lively stream of minerality through to the finish. Very pure and very straight. Such a charmer. Score 18.35

Jean-Marie's father had to use dynamite to break the soil it is so hard.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Champeaux

An expressive aromatic palate to begin with. Rich fruit upfront and then it battens down and becomes tight. It has quite a lot of grip to the end of the palate. A combination of warm aromatics, ripe fruit and a cool, rather more severe expression.

"More red soil and gives a richness to the wine and the texture and more iron in the soil too."

Gevrey-Chambertin, Combe Aux Moines

It is pure and neatly edges. It is straight and clipped with pure and juicy fruit. Juicy More refined. This has focus and tension on the finish. Score 18.5

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Saint-Jacques**

Perfumed and lifted aroma. Delicious fruit up front; juicy and delightful. This has a gurgling energy. Lovely refined tannins. Expressive and open but with such tension in the core. This has a delicious long finish. Score 19.

Special Cuvee of Clos Saint-Jacques

The first passage of the pickers - only the oldest vines..the best pickers know the right vines harvest this. 110 year old vines. It makes two barrels. It is sumptuous, very intense - a distillation. Wonderful acidity and minerality threaded into the fruit. This is 2 barrels...should he really be taking it out? This has 50% new oak.

Jean Marie like to use Cadus (Jadot's cooperage as they are careful to let it dry for 30 months)

***Griotte-Chambertin**

A sweet cherry bomb. Glorious fruit. Very intense. It has plenty of energy. It is super concentrated. Very pure. Satin-soft tannins. Sumptuous texture. refined tannins. Real depth to the wine. Velvety. Lovely long juicy and aromatic finish. Score 19.45

Stockists

UK: Armit Wines; Gauntley's of Nottingham; Goedhuis & Co.; Raeburn Fines Wines; Howard Ripley; Seckford Wines; Stone, Vine & Sun; A & B Vintners

USA: Rosenthal Wine Merchant.

Domaine Humbert Frères, Gevrey-Chambertin

I spoke with Emmanuel: "The beginning of the harvest was the 17th - not too late - in October the weather is not beautiful and a harvest at the end of August has less acidity. The weather was generous and we have the best volume since 2009. There was not a lot of work on the selection table and the grapes were really black with good phenolic maturity. Good harvest conditions with no rain and not too hot or cold."

"We have a real quantity. It was very easy to vinify. We did not have to punch over a lot..once a day pump over and one or two pigeage maximum...at the domaine we do less pigeage as I think we have sufficient tannins and I do not like wine too hard. And the wine takes what more tannins it need from the new barrels."

"I am using just a little whole bunch 10 to 20 maximum. I press after 14 or 16 days while the vat is warm at 22 degrees - it it were later it would be cold. I don't want it too cold because I think we will get more rustic tannins and lose freshness."

After this they have 3 days settlings before putting in barrel, of which there is less new oak than in the past. "The MLF finished in July - a good period. I do not like it if it is early as we have to use more sulphites."

"All the wines have the same work and the same barrels and the same days for the harvest really. It is only the terroir which makes a difference."

He speaks about the Combe de Lavaux; "In the combe at 5pm it gets cold, yet in the midday it is very warm...so the fruit gets ripe. In the last month before harvest, it is cold in the morning and warm in the afternoon. It is different being in the combe to elsewhere..if you are in Craipillots, for example, you are near, but the conditions are very different.

The wines style has evolved at this domaine over the past few years. In the past they were quite extracted and had a robust tannic structure with more new oak as well. The tannins are a good deal more subtle now; the fruit is more forward and the terroir more expressive. Emmanuel is aiming for a style somewhere between Mortet and Rousseau he says. He would like to achieve the elegance of Rousseau, but with bigger volume on the palate.

He remarks "I want feminine wines and more freshness with volume as well... and to have less smoky wood - 5 years before we had more smoky wood."

"It is very well balanced not too tannic or acidic; a fruity vintage and easy to drink. It will be difficult for people to keep this, as it will be all too easy to drink early."

"It is like 2011 with more volume and more freshness. Perhaps better than 2009. 2014 is very, very good."

*Bourgogne

This is in vat in large volume than to keep it in older oak. It is fresh and berry-ish - ripe wild brambly fruit. Nice and fresh and lifted. Good concentration and soft tannins...fruit forward. A very likeable Bourgogne.

He does not want to extract too much. He wants it to be easy to drink. "3 parcels in the village - which is unusual as not much Bourgogne actually in the village...so this is special...different...from a Bourgogne from another village. We do not punch down. It has to be easy to drink. To be drunk soon...over the first two years. It's great with charcuterie for example."

***Fixin, Vieilles Vignes**

30% new oak now - he has drawn back and 50 year old vines. Sweet and juicy spicy fruit. Succulent and dense with chunky black fruit and smooth burly tannins. Slight liquorish note to the dark tannins. It has plenty of personality...fresh bite on the finish. Score 15.5. From 2018

Only pump over twice a day every day. "I think it is tannic enough for Fixin."

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieilles Vignes**

As every year now just half is in new oak. "Half of the vineyards are from the Combe de Lavaux near the premier cru part and as you are there, the wines have more minerality and maybe it's better to keep and not to drink too young"

Vibrant on the aroma, plenty of overt red fruit. This is really rather elegant with the ripeness of the fruit, rounded and very juicy with lively freshness; smooth light tannins. You sense that coolness of the Combe here and on the finish there is a light mineral bite. Score 16. From 2018

Gevrey-Chambertin, Craipillots

"This is the oldest vines and the most féminine of our the premier cru." Having tasted it, by this he really means it is more accessible..as it is full and fruity.

This is firm at the front; denser and more concentrated on the palate than the village wine; dark and spicy with some energy. Smooth tannins, plenty of them, but smooth. Quite a broad full palate with a little bit of grip. The finish has spice and dark fruit and a liquorish bite. Score 17.75. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Petite Chapelle

Two barrels. This is rich and smooth; thick and dark tannins, but supple too. Under the richness - the lovely ripe fruit - there is tension and graphite minerality...touch of grip and gun-smoke note at the end. This is more intriguing. Score 18.1 From 2019/20

"It has 20cm soil then hard rock - usually the more cherry fruits here..more cherry stone..."

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Poissenots**

The flagship of the domaine as we half half the vineyard as we have 1 hectare - it is just 2 hectares...5 growers here. 15 barrels.

It is lifted, floral and pure. A straight and vibrant palate; nicely edged and very fruity too...red cherry. It is quite strict with cold mineral sappiness at the end. I like the swift pace and cool minerals. Score 18.2 From 2019

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Estournelles Saint-Jacques**

3 barrels This has some grip on the front palate...a pouncing vitality. Dark concentrated fruits, cool too - a savoury granite minerality. There are dark spices and it has a fresh, zesty bite to the finish. The tannins are tenser and slightly more savoury - a slight good bitter note at the end. Score 18.15 From 2020

"You really need to keep this wine in bottle for 8 to 10 years...we have very small grapes as the vines are 65 years old and you have less juice than in Poissenots...it is more concentrated...it always gives less berries and less juice..but not pleasure now..you must keep this wine."

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Lavaux-Saint-Jacques**

"It is under Poissenots - so much more top soil - more like 40 cm so you will not find minerality here. Just one barrel."

Really rather vibrant red fruit aroma - ripe raspberry and white pepper. Very silky onto the palate..sweeps elegantly and fluidly with sweet red cherry notes. Silky tannins. It is rippling and refined, subtle and pure on the finish. Score 18.2. From 2019/20

Charmes-Chambertin

Three barrels. Seductive aromas and sweetness on the front palate. It is rounded and full-bodied. Ample ripe fruit with good concentration and soft, but structural tannins. It absorbs the new oak. There is layering and density and plenty of ripe aromatics. Actually it is a very appealing and generous Charmes. Score 19.

Stockists

UK: Laytons; Lay and Wheeler; Majestic
US: Frederick Wildman, NY

Domaine Denis Mortet, Gevrey-Chambertin

40 hl/ha in 2014 and 2015.

"We needed a lot of work. It was very important to reduce the yield so we made a very big green harvest in July and then again in end August to remove all the grapes which are pink or green...if you want the maturity you must do this. No problem with oidium and mildew."

"Not much rot - with a good selection not a problem, neither was drosophile." He had very little but saw some vineyards had some - and thinks "maybe it occurred where the bunches are touching..but where the bunches are well aerated - but we remove bunches and want the air to circulate."

He started harvesting on the 12th..for 9 days "we have a small team to have a good job - 16-18 people." The vineyards are very spread out so it is good to have a small team to move between the parcel. Others may have 30 people..but it is difficult to manage 30 people to get the quality of work you want."

"Not big grapes...we have a lot of millerandage..the old vines always seem to have it every year. Not so much on the young vines, but the grapes were not big. Very nice maturity...the skin is ripe. Every year we have good maturity..."

The sugar needed tweaking to get an increase of 0.7 to 1 degree.
pH at 3.2 for nearly all the vines at harvest ..and at the end pH 3.5. I never had high pH maybe the work in the soil - we have never seen herbicides in 30 years, so every year we have good pH."

"For the premier cru I used less new oak - this year 2014 it is 40%. I think I have found a good balance now. I don't want too much, but I need some. Only grand cru are happy in 100% new oak."

"The character of the vintage is fruity and freshness."

"The 2014 is elegant and it is ripe ...very sweet and the fruit is very fresh. I like the fruit in 2014. It has fruit, sweetness and freshness and with more intensity than 2013; I think it is better than 2013. It has more intensity."

Excellent and elegant wines and all show their terroir beautifully. And now the addition of a Mazis-Chambertin and a Bonnes-Mares.

***Marsannay, Les Longerois**

20% new oak. "I will not rack this until December" Lovely red and pure nose..juicy raspberry aroma. Silky onto the palate. Smooth and so fresh. Splashing, vivid red fruit with breezy cool freshness. Very good Marsannay. Top notch

Fixin

This is from two places - the North, big masculine wine from this parcel and the other part near Brouillon more elegant as it has rock in the soil and old vines." 20% new oak.

Dark colour. Slight liquorice and ripe, dark fruitiness on the nose. Smooth and full with richness and depth. The tannins are plentiful, thick, but very supple. Again this dark pastille fruit and full

mid palate and then fresh and lifted on the finish. Quite mineral at the end. Really good concentration. Top notch.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Mes Cinq Terroirs

The young vines are now 40 years old. He likes to put all the vines together. He re-introduced this in 2013. 30% new oak in this wine. Twenty parcels altogether..En Songe is several parcels. 30,000 bottles. In 2014 blended just before bottling, but in 2015 he blended before barreling. Deep, dark red cherry aroma...some lifted floral pretty notes too. The palate is structured, fine firm tannins; sweet fruit, good freshness. Actually a straight and pure and structured Gevrey. The finish is direct and long for village. A sophisticated Gevrey. Score 16.7

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Beaux Bruns

This was made in a new oak vat; "we get enough toast with the new oak with the tank..so this year I have not put any in new oak barrels. 4 to 5 barrel tank - 20hl tank. I never used a new tank like this is is crazy!"...

Ripe summer fruits, subtle oak..quite a rich aroma. Th tannins are very soft. It is full, yes there is quite a lot of oak, but the fruit is also rich and juicy and succulent. The finish is fresh..you have some of the oak there too, but actually the plump and full-bodied Chambolle laps it up.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Premier Cru

A blend of parcels from Petite Chapelle, (which Arnaud says gives rounded tannins and finesses) Cherbaudes; Bel Air (strong and richer) 40% new oak. 5 barrels.

Aroma of dark red fruit, morello cherry and spicy. Full on the front palate; quite dense and rich, but then the energy and freshness comes in under the palate. A full and quite smoothly muscular wine..Rounded and slightly compact on the finish..needs quite a bit more time.. Score 18.

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Champonnets**

This represented 50% of the premier cru cuvee when it was put together, so he decided to make it separately this year. Not many make this - one other domaine.

This is more floral on the nose. Very sweet and ripe and juicy. Red fruits, bright, lively and energetic. I do like this. Fine tannins. It is is lucid, fresh and mineral at the end. Lovely...Score 18.5 I do like this.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Champeaux

65 year old vines - some are 100 years.

Really quite spicy and lifted. This is vigorous - quite compact. there is tension. Lovely depth of red fruits. It is really quite layered. It feels colder and has some grip on the palate...colder stony grip at the end. This is a refined Champeaux...very nicely defined, but with grip too. Score 18.5

Gevrey-Chambertin, Lavaux-Saint-Jacques

50% new oak. Red fruits, ripe and inviting with some oak notes present on nose and palate...the oak shows more..but with another winter... The fruit is really aromatically ripe and sweet, juicy and fresh. It has lively energy (different from bunched the vigour of the Champeaux) and a silkiness. Juicy. Races on the palate....some really quite exotic notes on the finish...very ripe notes...just at the end a bitter almond and cherry kernel notes. It is good, but needs time to integrate the oak though. Score 18.65

Clos de Vougeot

It is an elegant Clos de Vougeot; Yes it is a big wine, but gorgeous succulence of fruit; really delicious fruit around the big frame. It is rounded out - made more pleasing and approachable with this fruit; velvety tannins; a crushed red velvet depth to the texture and the finish is rather more refined. Score 19.25.

Mazis-Chambertin

20 ares; just next to Clos de Beze - Hauts part. Metayage. "The yield is very low..we must work here to improve the yields. It has been worked with biodynamics." 3 barrels in 2014, but could make 4 in a good vintage."

Lovely intensity; distillation of fresh and sweet fruits; essence of fruit. It has a slight wildness a lifted and tenser mid palate, the tannins are finely grained, not silky though, and there are floral notes here and on the finish too...it is straight, fine and has very good intensity and precision at the end...stoney cold mineral on the finish.... Score 19.5

***Bonnes-Mares**

35 ares of Bonnes-Mares. Metayage..for 25 years. "4 barrels. We should be able to make 7, but the yields are so small. We replant nearly 600 vines. And we keep just half. In the middle on the white part...at the bottom a little red. Sweet fruit on the front palate. Smooth and supple tannins. Juicy and fresh and tense; it is focused and pure. A firm core with beautiful red fruit wrapped around this. Lively energy and purity. A more refined and precise Bonnes Mares.Score 19.65

"And this is my style - I make very little extraction - the fermentation is fast - all is in the terroir in the grand cru, you must not work much in the winery."

Le Chambertin

This is beautiful. Pure and tight and quiet and very very long...precise wine. Incredibly intense. A very very long...yes this is a level up.....Score 20. Perfect....

Stockists

UK: Richards Walford; Anthony Sarjeant

USA: Martine's Wines Inc.

Domaine Rossignol-Trapet, Gevrey-Chambertin

David and Nicolas run this domaine following a biodynamic approach. I tasted with Nicolas and David joined us.

"It was normal in the spring. Not too warm. From the middle of July to mid August it was wet and cold. Not a good summer...but then came sunshine after the middle of August to September. We harvested from the 22nd."

"We had hail in the Beaune vineyard for the third time, but less than in 2013 in which we lost 80%. we lost 20% in 2014."

"The weather was quite hot and dry in September and the weather was good to finish the ripening. August we were worried."

"The grapes had more juice in them. In the old vines we had grapes which were nice - no millerandage so the quantity was good, but we had to sort as the weather was hot and we had botrytis starting - so sorting was important. We had compact grapes, as there was no millerandage, so it is easy for botrytis to start...and spread in the warm weather."

"The maturity was good. We used less whole bunches this year - it is usually 1/3 to 1/2, but this year Beaune we used nothing and the most was one quarter to a third for the grand cru."

"It was not so easy to extract....so we did some pigeage. We had two or three situations with drosophile so we had to sort this. So we had to sort in the vineyard as well as on the table."

"Before the harvest we thought we had more damage from drosophile, but in fact we did not only where we were close to houses and trees."

"With analysis less acidity than we taste. Not the acidity of 2008. Much more malic acidity in fact."

"We are not fans of long maceration, not much pre-fermentation maceration. We like it at about 10 degrees..to have some colour...about 6 days pre-fermentation, so from two to three weeks overall. We taste after the fermentation and do not keep it long after..when the density is 1000 we taste every day and then we press...about 3 days afterwards. The fermentation phase is just 3 to 4 days."

"A vintage with nice freshness and sapidity and every wine is expressing its own terroir - look at the grand cru all in their place...but the village too. I think they will be nice and approachable early. They have an ability to be kept because of the freshness of the wine. It is more elegant than muscular wine."

"Maybe it is a little like 2011..and an older vintage - a little like 2002 a vintage with a nice freshness. It has much less acidity than 2008...more comparison with the 2011 which has good freshness and charm and they are still nice, so it is approaching 2011..."

Bourgogne Rouge

Grands Champs. Plenty of clay in this parcel. They put in drainage here...a long time ago. We have 0.75 hectare. This was bottled before harvest. Ripe strawberry fruit aromas. Sweet and pleasing on the palate. Very pinot-ish. Light-bodied. Warm and ripe, but fresh on the finish. Light on concentration, but very charming and rounded. Very accessible.

"Normally our Bourgogne is more masculine, but not this year."

Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Les Bas-Liard

There is quite a lot of clay in this flat place which is planted north/south.. The 2013 was wiped out..so production was smaller than usual in 2014, despite the fact there was no hail. Nice sweet fruit - deep red cherry. This is slightly rustic, wholesome in the tannins. The fruit is generous. It is juicy with darker fruit on the palate. There is plenty of spice and a bit of grip on the finish. Score 15.5. From 2018

***Gevrey-Chambertin**

Vines from 40 to 80 years old.

Three different parcels: in the triangle below the village (this is light and very well drained and can suffer from stress when it's too dry and tends to be picked first. In mid village, under the chateau, where there is more clay and then a further part to the south, above the road with particles larger than sandy but not rock. It drains quite well. The three situations are harvested and vinified differently and blended after pressing. the vines are from 40-80 years old. They used about 20% whole bunch more from the le Village area.

Dark cherry, deep aroma. It is soft, supple and juicy. Much smoother texture than the Savigny. There is plenty of freshness and a hint of minerality on the finish and some spicy lift from the whole bunch. Engaging. Score 15.75. From 2018

"We are not big fans of new oak. 10% of village and 25% premier cru and 40% for grand cru
Score 16. From 2016

Beaune, Les Teurons

1.2 hectares. Their parcel is below aux Cras, so at the top of the climat where there is a break in the land and it become steep above into Aux Cras.

Warm aromatics...quite florally scented and certainly expressive. It is full and rounded, quite light-bodied, modest concentration, but very pretty and the tannins are lightly done. The finish is aromatic too. It is pleasant.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Prieur

Similar to Cherbaudes terroir and a little stony, not too much clay; quite deep 80cm and then rock....30 years old vines the as vines destroyed by frost in '85. All the plots above the road were destroyed as the frost could not flow down past the road, which acted like a barrier. the name goes back to the prior of the abbey of Cluny - not Citeaux.

Appealing dark aroma; ripe fruit, very aromatic. The texture is silky and the tannins finely grained. It is quite straight; just lightly rounded in the middle and then straight onto the finish. There is freshness and purity. Score 17.5. From 2019

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Petite Chapelle**

Deep soil and more clay. "No pigeage and none in 2014 either...the tannins come very easily...we do remontage...and one third whole bunch. We do not crush the berries. So we are very careful. We want it to be more elegant."

Dark fruit, ripe and expressive and slightly spicy. This is full and rich. Certainly rounded and juicy. There is some tension under the palate; a bit of grip and crushed sappy freshness. This lifts the wine. It is appetising and savoury on the finish. Very nicely balanced. Score 17.95. From 2018/19

***Latricières-Chambertin**

“We finish the harvest here usually, but with Beaune this year, It is a a cool place with the cool air coming down the combe - not that different to Chambertin soils, but it is less protected.”
It has a light and floral elegant aroma. Notes of strawberries on a warm summer’s day. It is full and rounded, but airy. Certainly some volume and generosity, but not rich at all..more airy. Fine tannins. There is a delicacy to it. The finish is fine and mineral and long - focused and very pure. Not so powerful, but it has presence in its aromatics and length. Score 19.25 From 2020

Chapelle-Chambertin

It starts with ripe aromatics. This is richer and more concentrated than the airy Latricieres. It has a more vertical structure; there is a purity and sweetness to the fruit fleshing out the rigid structure. The tannins are smooth. The freshness give an energy. There is sweetness and cool minerality on the finish. It is not as focused on the finish maybe as the Latricieres; the finish is richer here. I marginally prefer the elegant Latricieres. Score 19.

“It is sun and on the rock, so it ripens, but the depth of the soil is just 10cm...the rocks are not so compact, so the roots can go through...so in 2015 when it was dry it did not suffer.”

***Chambertin**

This is intense and focused on the nose. Channelled, pure and focused on the palate. Wonderfully long and very intense. A lovely fusion of fine fruit and minerality. Satin fine texture. It is the most complete. A level up. Score 19.65

They have a vertical strip from top to bottom and another 100 m away. So a plot 1 hectare and one of 0.6. 26 barrels.

Stockists

UK: Private Cellars; Corney and Barrow; Charles Taylor

Domaine Armand Rousseau, Gevrey-Chambertin

I tasted with Eric and Cyrielle his charming and very articulate 27 year old daughter. She has spent plenty of time abroad to widen her experience after her studies in geology and then in oenology. She has spent time in New Zealand at Belle Hill - 30 minutes north of Christ Church. Before this a year in Australia and on to a huge winery in Oregon. "We were getting 1000 tonnes of grapes a day. My dad could not believe this. I wanted to see the difference."

About the vintage "It was quite warm - no rain from March to June and then rained in July. The climate was quite nice - every year it rains in August, but all was well, but don't take your holidays in August in Burgundy! We started on the 12th and it was sunny - it was great to have this harvest after 2013."

"For the last years we have had smaller grapes, but it is a healthy harvest. Everyone has the drosophile - flies in the vineyards, but the flies stayed in the vineyards. We sorted out anything there, not bringing it into the winery."

"It was an early harvest - not much juice, but I did not think the skins were thick."

"In 2010, 2011 and 2012 less quantity. 2014 is a reasonable quantity."

The style? "I am still not sure ..it is early...it is still an embryo...maybe I do not have the wisdom yet...and I have not tasted for a few months. Open and easy and nice vintage...just because the harvest was nice to do...when the harvest is difficult you have a grudge almost against the harvest - like 2013!"

"I see all the different terroir as having a personality - each a child with a particular character. It just changes a little each year depending on the vintage. You have sunny vintage in which it's difficult to recognise the terroir - like the 2003. Sometimes a vintage is not like a clean teenager but like a goth.."

Gevrey-Chambertin

They pick into 3 cuvees...from the earliest ripening etc It is then blended before ageing. Since 2012 this comes from 7 vineyards, used to be 9, but still have the 2 premier cru - Estournelle and Clos Prieur.

Red cherry fruit. Fluid and elegant. Fine tannins. Sweet and pure with excellent intensity. It is very stylish...the fresh lift at the end. A very high quality village wine. Score 17

Gevrey-Chambertin, Chateau de Gevrey

Eric and Cyrielle also make Chateau de Gevrey. The first vintage was in 2012, but it needs lots of work in the vineyard. Cyrille comments, "We are not ready yet...we did not have time to do anything to the soil in 2012, so 2013 is our proper work...we still do not know really..the pruning was bad, the soil was not looked after...it is limon with a big quantity of top soil. It is quite a humid place too...we got rid of a small part of the vines and another part we ripped out as the slope was very steep and with slope the top soil at the top was too poor." So they redistributed the top soil...but without changing the soil overall. "Since last year we are starting a biodynamic test. ..we want to make the soil work more for the vines. My work is more during winter - when the soil is awake - while the vines sleep. This is when I want to play. I do not want to influence the vines when they are growing." Cyrielle is doing trails with mariathun "a biodynamic product as if you were using it on your potager - cow dung and egg shells.." and on another part she is using 500P. "This is cow dung with biodynamic plants."

This is quite perfumed. It is straight and elegant and has a thread of freshness. It is quite light..lacking a bit in the mid palate at the moment, but the vineyard is work in progress.

"We want to redirect the energy from the leaves into the fruit. We see this in the vineyard it is more focused on the leaves at the moment. So we are using biodynamics to help this."

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Lavaux-Saint-Jacques**

Fine, bright splashing cranberry fruit. It is fresh and pure and energetic. A very lively, crunchy palate. Lovely and vivacious. It is so engaging. Score 18.5. From 2019

"In the combe which makes the maturation very slow..but this gives complexity in the simplicity," says Cyrielle.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Cazetiers

Somewhat darker deep cherry fruit. A hint of black pepper. It is assertive onto the palate. Broader and quite dense. There is a vigour and grip. More muscular and bunched. Youthful vigour... Score 18.75

"These two premier cru are like 2 teenagers.." remarks Cyrielle.

"The same mother rock as Clos Saint Jaques but a fault lies between them which makes the mother rock different. You change this one thing and everything changes in the wine. With the Chambertin and the Clos de Beze it is the slope - the direction is different and this makes the difference."

Charmes-Chambertin

Soft and perfumed and gentle..rounded and plump with a supple-silk texture..very floral on the finish..satin tannins and a seductive long finish. It wafts elegant across the palate...so charming. Score 19.5

"A beautiful woman..a very romantic wine..they love this wine in the states..."

***Mazis-Chambertin**

Quite spicy on the nose. It makes you pay attention. It has marked vigour. A little more wild. Very spicy. It has grip and intention and straightens to a long and pure, threaded with quartzly minerality. It is a vital wine, both powerful and elegant. Score 19.85. From 2022

"Robust and strong and rustic..soft and elegant at the end."

Clos De La Roche

Succulent aroma. It smells fleshy like the rich petals of a red rose. Rich, thick and soft texture. It is supple and opulent, threaded with sweet acidity. Deep and velvety textural. It has strength - a rich muscularity. It finishes straight and fresh and very mineral...It is quite showy and then serious on the finish..Score 19.8. From 2020/22

"Strong man like the machos...very robust.. a bad boy for me.."

***Ruchottes-Chambertin**

Very high toned..It is has a distilled sweetness to the fruit; singing lifted..spiral upwards. Keenly mineral - shivering cold minerals, which are cloaked in sweet fruit. It is spare, pure and has a fine and long finish. Warm and cold, such an intriguing juxtaposition. I do like this. Score 19.85

"This one I can never see - like a ghost going through me...and I like it and want it to pass through me again," muses Cyrielle.

"The Clos de Ruchottes is different ..you can see the mother rock...with a very thin soil, just 10-15cm of soil..the others are on Calcaire de Premeaux...not the same...I studied geology, before oenology..I wanted to start at the beginning. I just studied oenology to know that you do not need it to make wine..."

"It is like a little flower from the rock..very sweet fruit...very cute.."

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Saint-Jacques**

Delicious fruit with superb intensity and texture. It has silky smooth tannins. Rose petals, summer fruit and so very expressive. It is a straight and pure palate; very precise and smooth at the edges and then channelled to the excellent finish. Lovely balance. Poised. Score 19.75

"What my dad did not say is that we did not apply for the vineyard to be upgraded 2 years ago when all the villages on all the cote could propose to upgrade terroir.. The 5 owners of Clos St Jacques decided against it. We think it is better to be a top quality premier cru...and of course as a Grand Cru the value of the land would be higher, which makes it all the more difficult for us."

"We just want to work with the vineyards...to work in the domaine that my great grandfather started. The family have put their soul into it and we just want to pass it on and now so very expensive...When it is my turn I I will have to sell vineyards to pay to pass it on.."

Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos De Bèze

Expressive, warmly floral aromatics. Rich deep and somewhat opulent. Juicy and full-bodied and scented...very scented. There is power here; toned muscle and cold minerals...very direct and vigorous at the end. There is a direct and mineral vigour to the finish. Wonderful wine. Score 19.85

***Chambertin**

The aroma is reserved. It is strong, defined and quiet; very pure and straight. A wine with purpose, but so very discreet. It is a wonderfully long and focused wine. Score 20. From 2022

"I see them as the queen and the King of Gevrey,..but last few years Clos de Beze has the power. Beze is a steeper slope and has more sun and more black fruit and is riper and with more tannins. It is woman who takes the power...at least at the moment in the early stages," remarks Cyrielle.

Stockists

UK: Berry Bros; Lay and Wheeler; Goedhuis; O.W. Loeb & Co; The Wine Society; Goedhuis
USA: Frederick Wildman & Sons.

Website/Email

www.domaine-rousseau.com
contact@domaine-rousseau.com

Domaine Jean & Jean-Louis Trapet, Gevrey-Chambertin

Jean-Louis says "2014 was much easier than 2013 as we had much more chaotic weather in 2013, but 2014 it was calmer and quieter for all the work in the vineyard. It was in fact good with very nice berries. Given the path we have decided to follow - the biodynamics - when you respect the grapes, we always have healthy grapes with thick skins. We decided to have more whole bunch than 2013..as it was very healthy."

"They layer the whole bunches with the destemmed berries... "if we have very small bunches with thick skins they go in the vat...some cuvees in 2015 had 100% whole bunch."

"At the end June and beginning of July we had some high temperature and a touch of sunburn in places- It was not hard to sort it out, but we lost some production and a little to some small amount of botrytis with the rain later. Fortunately with the north wind, the botrytis did not spread. With the vibrating table you must sort the grapes first before the table."

"With an early blooming we had a longer season - we decided to harvest quite late on the 19th of September...we like to preserve the freshness, but to have smooth tannins too. It is longer than the 100 days..but this is very common now. We have a good spring, but then we often have cooler and fresh weather and this is good for Pinot Noir - if we have a long growing season we can develop the complexity - pinot does not need much warmth..but it likes time to develop slowly."

We spoke about the experiment Jean-Louis did last years selecting the best stalks on the main Gevrey cuvee last year..rather than using whole bunch...they did both and I preferred the wine which has not had the stalks selected separately. Jean-Louis says it was a useful experiment, but he too preferred the whole cluster to the stem selection. "When you want to control everything you lose the part of the human idea of the wine...it is our desire to follow the grapes..but too closely and we lose the feeling - my grandfather would say you need maybe 10% of slightly underripe fruit and 20% a touch over ripe and the rest in the middle - in other words we do not need everything perfectly controlled - we need to respect the contribution from the different parts."

"We had a reasonable crop enough to make me smile after the last years...I am concerned for my friends in the Cote de Beaune..they have suffered more than us."

Jean-Louis wines are elegant, refined, pure and 'light' in a good sense. His family came from Chambolle in 1870..and he feels that this Chambolle heritage is in the blood. "I like to feel I make Gevrey in a Chambolle sensitivity."

White Wines

Two very good white wines.

Bourgogne Blanc

Juicy and fresh and energetic. This has a very engaging sapidity. I like this a lot.

Marsannay Blanc

This is juicy and has lovely citrus and spice and vibrancy. This is just delicious; a pounce on the palate, plenty of structure too, good body. A lovely food wine with good stoney quality on the finish.

Red Wines

A Minima

This wine is produced using no sulphur and was bottled a week before the tasting. It is a Passetoutgrains with 50% Pinot Noir and 50% Gamay from vineyards on the border with Gevrey. Before the harvest it was bottled. Red fruits and sweet and juicy; nice sappy finish. Fresh and juicy. Wine for friends.

Veronique Fremy an oenochromatic artist created the label..it is very good!

Marsannay

Grasse-Tetes represents the main part of the cuvee. this year they have separated the two parcels one is Grasse-Tetes and the other part which represents 40% is near Couchey - however this is the blend. Lightly perfumed aroma. Silky and pure; light and fruity. Light fine textured tannins. Red currant fruits, lifted and slightly piquant - red peppercorn, fresh with nice tension at the end of the palate. It is quite delicate and pretty and so fresh.

Gevrey-Chambertin

This is pure and sweet and fresh. It has a lightness and elegance. It is crisp. Lucid fruit and light, fine tannins...very fresh finish...nice salt at the end. A light and elegant Gevrey village.

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Ostrea**

40% whole bunches. This is richer and spicier. Generous and rounded. More compact and layered. The tannins are firmer, still smooth, and it has a very nice fresh, crunched spicy bite on the finish. I like the energy. Score 16. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Petite Chapelle

This is smooth, full and rounded at the edges. A dark, generous, but fresh palate. Depth to the palate. It is juicy and spicy. Dark fruit and fresh spicy bite to the end of the palate...a slightly smoky note. Score 17.75 (It is clear there is more clay here)

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Prieur**

60% whole bunch.. More gravel in the soil and well drained.

This is smooth and juicy and fluid. It is more elegant than the Petite Chapelle, less full, but more refined. Vivid red fruits. There is intensity and tension. It streamlined and flows energetically across the palate to a fresh and vibrant finish. Score 18.25

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Capita**

This is 100% whole bunches..so a selection of the best bunches. Perfumed and aromatic - very floral - white and violet...must be the whole bunch. It has a velvet texture; pure and fluid, but in the mid palate it is sweet, a gorgeous nugget of sweetness, richness with equal measure of freshness..and on the finish streamlined and bright. Lovely supple quality...a suavity.....Score 18.5

***Chapelle-Chambertin**

Silky, pure and 'light' intense and so finely hewn. Upright at first, but then more linear and beautifully defined across the palate...delightful, very fine and precise...there is a delicacy and intensity to the finish..just a delight...very mineral at the end...cool and salty at the end...Score 19.5

Plants from 1937. "When I took over in 1990 I wanted to preserve the old vines...but I noticed each time I replanted an individual plant but it would die in 5 years..the soil was so very thin..now the 12 ares have gone - we tried everything..but we had to replant with a diverse plant material from the nursery." If I understand they have helped the top soil in some way..maybe evening it out as it had become too thin..or breaking the soil so more top soil..I will have to see next year.

Latricières-Chambertin

There is sweetness and juiciness and a flowing satin texture. The oak shows more for some reason... There is a rose petal aroma on the palate. Very floral on the finish too. It is refined and pure with that extract level of sweetness and freshness an essence of sweet fruit at the end. Score 19.45

***Le Chambertin**

This has light, precise floral aromatics...quiet and pure. Ah - so refined on the palate... so intense and focused and yet with a delicacy and luminosity on the finish....so very long..sends a shiver up your spine. Beautiful wine.

Stockists

UK: Contact the agents Champagne & Châteaux Ltd.; Berry Bros & Rudd; Corney & Barrow.

USA: Classic Wine Imports; The Stacole Co.; USA Wine Imports, NJ.

USA: Contact Patrick Lesec, France.

Domaine Dujac, Morey-Saint-Denis

Jeremy comments, "We had twice the annual rainfall, but despite this, when the weather became better in September the botrytis berries dried and it was easy to sort out."

"We had a small heat wave and some sunburn. (Heatwave 17th July his brother's wedding) berries fell off and we had to sort them. That was part of the yield loss last year. But the yield was better than in 2012 and 2013. Village was good, but grand cru not that good a yield. Some vineyards are having a hard time recovering."

"The hail licked the Cote de Nuits and we had a 10% loss. Then a month later a rain storm with some hail and that hit Monts Luisants area and here we made just 7 barrels of the usual 12. Clos de la Roche we had 25hl/ha instead of the 30 hl/ha we might expect."

"The threat of botrytis was averted. When you get botrytis very early - it can be attacked by other fungus, which reduces its effect. So it was not so bad."

"A bad August and good September is becoming a typical scenario. We are always so concerned and most years September is more lenient on us than July and August."

"We picked in super good conditions in September. We started the reds on the 12th and the whites on 16th and all in dry conditions. There would have been a north wind, but not that cold as all the ferments started very quickly ..."

"The skins were pretty thick - it could have been like 2007 - which was also a precocious vintage. The 12th September is an early harvest, but unlike 2007 there had been some sunshine and this had an effect on thickness and tannins. So no shortage of tannin."

Acidity: "Not big malic, but more malic than this year (2015) where there is almost none - normal levels about 2.5 g when we pressed."

"Sugar levels were not higher than 2013. It smells very ripe as a vintage, but the sugar levels do not reflect this."

"We have incredible colour. This is not due to cold soak. They were fermenting within 24 hours. It is a mark of ripeness. Here we have ripeness."

"It is rather a dark fruit vintage. The colours are deep and extracted very easily."

"We did less pigeage and more remontage in this vintage. Maybe because of climate change we have more vintages which come in with dark fruit profile and we need less extraction. I definitely feel that we are picking riper in recent years despite the cold summer in 2014. With early flowering we got more light. It may be an over cast day, but each day we get an extra day of light and pinot noir does not need much sunshine."

Style: "I feel it is ripe with structure. It is a fairly forward vintage. We do not make short term vintages really, but this is one which may well come forward earlier."

"it is not a great vintage, but it is a good vintage"

"There is a lot to like about 2014. Not shabby at all, but there is a class about the 2013."

"It is a little like the 2012 and the 2006; there was a plushness to the 2012 which it shares and with the 2006 there is fleshy vintage character. People struggle with the 2013 as it was cooler and leaner, while the 2014s are much more gentle. The 2013s have more crunchy fruit and are more transparent to the terroir than the 2014. We will see but maybe it is more vintage driven, but maybe also more vigneron driven - a vintage of different expressions ...we all shared a certain happiness at harvest, but it is what we do with it."

"We need vintages that are more forward like the 2014s. The 2015s might be like 2005 and will need time."

"I think they might go through that open for 2 years and then close down." They are a bit reminiscent of 2006 which stayed fairly open. They are also a little like 2012 which did close down, but not here I think."

White Wines

***Morey-Saint-Denis**

A savoury, stoney and slightly citrus palate. There is quite some fat here; marked generosity in the mid palate. The cool chalky character undercuts the fat and gives it a bite on the finish. Score 16. I do like this. From 2016

***Morey-Saint-Denis, Mont Luisants**

This was planted in 1998. More oak showing on the nose. This has so much vigour; it is compact, tight and unsprung. The cool, sappy vibrancy of the soil is there undercutting the concentrated fruit. It has a sweet and savoury potent finish. Score 18. From 2019

Two new appellations; land from Vincent Girardin. They are renting and farming it. It will go under the domaine label.

Puligny-Montrachet, Les Folatieres

This has intensity, a grip of dark minerality. It is very intense. The edges are clipped. It is fresh. It has vigour and powers to the finish. Score 18.15.

***Puligny-Montrachet, Les Combettes**

More reserved on the nose. There is a richness to the texture, apricot fruit; generous and delicious. It has a good deal of concentration and the smooth minerals come up under the fruit. A very good finish. Score 18.5

Jeremy comments. "The vines are very low yielding. We replaced the missing vines, but there is a lot of virus and a lot of very small berries. 30 hl/ha in 2014. We got a little hail."

Red Wines

***Morey-Saint-Denis**

This is dark and juicy. Delicious ripe fruit. Succulent and slightly spicy. Thick rich tannins. Spicy finish. Nice and fresh too on the finish. This invites drinking even though it is so young! Score 16

"If anything we extract the domaine wines less than the negociant, but they are always more structured..and I feel there is the influence of the bio culture...not sure how, but it is there," remarks Jeremy.

Chambolle-Musigny

Deep raspberry aroma; white pepper. Ripe aromatics. This has silky tannins and a smooth texture; juicy fruit. Dark fruit for Chambolle. It glides across the palate. Very harmonious. An inviting village Chambolle with a slightly burly base note and seductive texture. Score 16. From 2019

***Morey-Saint-Denis, Premier Cru**

This is velvety in texture with smooth, but structural tannins and really rather luscious juicy fruit, which is slightly spicy. Good depth and intensity on the palate and a more complex longer finish. Score 18. From 2019/20

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Gruenchers

Delicious dark cherry fruit. This is full and dense and juicy. A deep base note to the palate. This is a little dry on the finish. This maybe because the lees have been consumed in elevage - or settled to much to the bottom and might need a stir or may need racking. Score 17.75. From 2010

Gevrey-Chambertin, Aux Combottes

Dark blackberry and a touch of black current; appealingly ripe aromatics. Sweet and supple onto the palate. It is fluid and even. An elegant wine, which slices gracefully, but decisively across the palate. Svelte and seductive and dark. Slight hint of smoke on the finish. Score 18.65. From 2020/22

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Beaumonts**

Ripe red fruit aroma; Juicy on the palate. Very fresh and vibrant. Lively Beaumonts. This has depth and zest. This is a trim and energetic wine. I like it. Score 18.75. From 2020

"This is high up on the hill and on thinner soil: never much excess on Beaumont. 350m. Not at the very top," adds Jeremy.

Vosne-Romanée, Malconsorts

This is much plush. We are mid hill here; there is sumptuous fruit and velvet density. Rich and full-bodied. This has deep, purple crushed velvet feel. There is power here too. A burly and growly finish. Score 19. From 2022

Charmes-Chambertin

An abundance of gorgeous fruit on the front palate. Rounded and full-bodied. A good density in the middle. Not an easy moment for this wine; but never-the-less it has a richness and energy and seductiveness. The finish is long and at the end very aromatic. Score 19. From 2020/22

"I feel that this year is is not too burly; it has a meaty intensity, but is not just about brawn."

Echezeaux

Smooth and elegant with rather refined tannins. The wine is suffering a bit with CO2 as it finished MLF later; but the trim, silky sensation is there. Sweet dark fruit...score potentially 19.

***Clos Saint-Denis**

Lifted red fruit; an airy aroma. This is light-footed and so bright. It has a luminosity. Spiritual. Pure and fleeting. It has a vibrancy and ethereal character. The finish is taut and mineral. Lovely wine. Score 19.75. From 2020

Clos De La Roche

Full bodied with no lack of generosity; laden with thick, satin-smooth tannins. It has an unctuousness to the fruit. There is a languid feeling to the wine; velvet and dense, layered and complex. Score 19.5

***Bonnes Mares**

Very fresh and elegant; pure and energetic. There is wonderfully sweet dark fruit; a plumpness in the middle, but threaded with freshness and minerality. Fantastic finish...very pure, cool and lifted. The combination if the two soils creates a lovely harmony. Score 19.85. From 2024

This is about half and half of white to red soil. Until 2005 there was a greater percentage of red soil.

***Chambertin**

This is even, harmonious and so very composed; quiet wine; very intense and focused. It is precisely edged. A streamlined wine with a finish that goes on and on. Score 19.9. From 2024

***Romanée Saint Vivant**

There are airy floral aromas on the nose...so very enticing. Refined, silky and pure - a ribbon of fruit and minerality. It has finesses and delicacy, but is intense. Utterly delicious. The finish is so very long, wonderfully pure and aromatic and threaded with such sweet fruit. What a delightful wine. Score 19.9. From 2024

Stockists

UK: O.W. Loeb; House of Townend
USA: Chambers & Chambers; Wilson Daniels.

Domaine Des Lambrays, Morey-Saint-Denis

Thierry Brouin harvested on the 22nd of September; "We made a selection. It had a good balance of acidity and alcohol - all were less than 13%. But this is good.

The MSD is destemmed, but the 1er cru and Clos have whole bunches. "The extraction was regular, not as easy as the 2015," comments Thierry.

"The yields were 33 hl/ha. As the average is 35hl/ha it is not so bad. The whites were less. We still have the effect of the hail in 2013. The vines are taking time to recover."

"It is a good blend between 2001 and 2006. It has great finesses but with great structure. The 2013 is more elegant and finer, but not with the same body."

It is classic; I like to let the vintage be...to be non interventionist and let it be."

Ageing: "I don't know. I have surprises. Take the 1992 it was a light vintage and is now still delicious."

White Wines

Puligny-Montrachet, Folatières

A good deal of ripe fruit and it was bottled just 2 days ago. Plenty of concentration and well balanced with just enough acidity. This is underscored with dark, graphite minerality. There is a sweet minerality with succulence wrapped around. The finish is smooth and mineral. Score 18.5

***Puligny-Montrachet, Clos des Caillerets**

This is tense and compact. Shimmering cold chalky minerals. Quite reserved. This has tension and precision. A lovely long saline finish with a tingling vibration. Excellent finish. Score 19.

Red Wines

Morey-Saint-Denis

Somewhat floral on the aroma. Lifted. Pleasant ripe red fruit. Pretty and light. It is energetic and charming. Quite piquant. Cranberry notes and red peppercorn. Twang tannin. Appetising and accessible. Score 15.75. From 2018

Morey-Saint-Denis, Premier Cru

A dark fruit nose with a touch of spice. Dark cherry fruit on palate. It is juicy and silky smooth; pleasantly fresh and rather relaxed. It finishes on a cool note. Score 17.5. From 2019

***Clos Des Lambrays**

Rich and compact on the nose. Spices...ah wonderful somewhat exotic spices. The palate is rounded and juicy and supple - but so subtle. It is refined. Silky textured, it glides with some finesses. Not explosive wine; gentle and very long. Score 19. From 2020

"I am very happy with the style we are now making with the Clos. It is both refined and expressive...." says Thierry.

Stockists

UK: Berry Bros & Rudd Ltd.; O.W. Loeb; Lay and Wheeler, Hayes Hanson and Clarke;
Goedhuis; Justerini and Brooks; Laytons; Raeburn Wines; Flint Wines
USA: Weygandt-Metzler Importing Inc. PA

Domaine Lignier-Michelot, Morey-Saint-Denis

Virgile Lignier "I started to harvest on the 17th September - later than some. We had very good conditions, except on the 19th in the afternoon. Degrees 11.9 to 13 so this is good."

"I am very happy with the yields and now with the quality - after racking it is fine and fresh."

"In the beginning I was very prudent with the tannins, but we tasted every day and sometime twice, to be careful with the extraction - some parcels have whole bunches, but some were greener than others so we were very careful."

"Yes, I gave much attention to the tannins in the 2014. It was particularly important in this vintage..just one or 2 punch down for the Chambolle village for example, not to extract too much."

"It is fresh - between 3.4 to 3.60 after MLF. They changed a lot during the MLF; it was very straight and became rounder."

Everything has been racked and all is in tank now - so a good vision of the blend.

"I love this style of vintage...the range has a good respect of terroir."

Virgile is also using less SO₂ (see the entry for Tomas Bouley - he shares the same approach), refraining from using it until racking.

Virgile hopes his son Bertrand will take over one day. He is now almost eleven. "His road is very clear to him. He wants to stop school to study at the lycee viticole and then work with his dad." It is not an easy life though. Virgile and his wife get up at 5am every morning and start work at 5.30. They rent all but a tiny amount of the land, largely from his aunt and family, but they have to pay rent regardless of small vintages. He also buys in some grapes. It is a constant struggle with the bank...not least as grapes have escalated in price, but also as they have invested a lot in the winery. "It is not an easy life, especially when you do not own the land." Fortunately this year they have a decent yield of very fruit and accessible wines.

As Virgile remarks, "a very good vintage for restaurants"

Bourgogne

Lot of whole cluster older vines mainly from Morey and more than half from Chambolle. "I made 2 tanks and blend. (33 barrels). I do not have a tank big enough for the whole cuvee."

It is sweet and pure and cherry-ish. Lovely bright and lively fruit. Good energy. Zesty. A light and bright and easy Bourgogne.

Chambolle-Musigny, Vieilles Vignes

50% whole bunch and this is from Les Drazey (more limestone soil under Sentieres) and Gamaires under Bussieres (more a clay soil on MSD). 60-68 year old vines. Ripe raspberry aromas. Sweet and fruity upfront. Very juicy...succulence in the mid palate. Soft and smooth tannins... perfumed sweet finish. Decent finish for a village wine. A very 'typical' Chambolle. Score 16.

***Morey-Saint-Denis, En La Rue De Vergy**

One part, the lowest touches Clos de Tart. Virgile has a section on each of the three tiers. 1.5 hectares...This is spicy and expressive. Smooth onto the palate. Rounded and juicy mid palate; very fresh and really quite full. It is spicy and elegant and has a lovely long finish. Plenty of vivacity and tension and flowers at the end. My favourite of his four village wines...Score 16.45

Morey-Saint-Denis, Vieilles Vignes

Tres Girard; Les Cognees (more than 70 years old - down by R74 under the Chenevery - this is part village) and there is more limestone here than the his other parcels, which have more clay. 80% whole bunch - Virgile comments, "the massale selection is good and it is easy to make whole cluster."

Good depth of dark fruit on the nose. Sweet on the attack; plumply rounded and full. A generous body and depth. Full and rich and very accessible. The finish is spicy...spice and the crushed fresh grassy note at the end. Inviting. A crowd pleaser. Score 16.15. From 2016.

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Cuvee Bertin**

Les Seuvrees and Murots it's a blend of two parcels. This is light and has nice energy. Fine tannins. An elegant style. Well knit and pure. Skates across the palate. Score 16.5.

Fixin, Les Arvelets

This premier cru is at a different stage. Gun smoke aroma..and on the palate too...tinder box... this pack a punch...powerful and gutsy. Very fresh and has a bite to the finish. Blood and smoke. Score 17.

***Morey-Saint-Denis, Aux Charmes**

Gevrey side: Marl and then limestone underneath. The clay is deeper than for the soils in the next two - at the end of the combe grisas and so there are a lot of fossils that have been swept down. It is quite alluvial. The top soil has come down and shares that of Combottes; same soil but not the same exposition, alluvial and clay, 50cm the limestone beneath.

Violets on the nose - purple high toned flowers. Supple and floral onto the palate. It is lightish and straight and fluid. There is a certain delicacy here and the finish is slightly mineral...Virgile has a light touch here..."sometimes this plot can be heavy, but not this year." Score 17.2

Morey-Saint-Denis, Aux Cheseaux

"There is a fault here and there is more limestone coming up to the surface. 100% whole bunch, because the vines are old and the grapes are small and the stems are ripe. Just under Charmes but deeper soil with more clay."

I think the white flowers on the nose must be from the whole cluster. Full and fruity and inviting on the attack. Soft and rounded and juicy girth. The tannins are light, present and have a fresh sappy grassy freshness note at the end...Score 17.5. For 2018/19

Morey-Saint-Denis, Faconnières

Very small top soil of alluvial and old limestone clay with then rock underneath. Above the fault. The fault separates the Chenevery and the Faconnieres. "Same soil as Clos de la Roche," remarks Vigile.

Full-bodied, soft and generous. A juicy and broad wine, quite spicy and just a tad flamboyant. There is a lot of spice and aroma on the palate and a large structure - softened with aromatics, but pretty big nonetheless. Score 17.65. From 2018/19

***Morey-Saint-Denis, Les Chenevery**

A new part of the mother rock. This is much more raw in feeling now - just finished its MLF. the wine is much more compact, dense and tense and layered. There is fruit, but more evident is the grip of cold mineral under this. The tannins however are restrained. It is strong and dense on the

finish. A straight, well defined wine which needs time. My favourite of his MSD 1er Cru; quite a level up. Score 18.25. From 2019

Chambolle, 1^{er} cru, Cuvée Jules

Spices heady and rich. Exotic flowers. Very ripe and rich and full. Juicy and splashing. Gregarious and overtly sweet. It is so accessible...maybe a touch loose in the middle, but it tightens onto the finish and becomes more precise. Score 17.75

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Murgers

First vintage was 2012. This is sweet and full and juicy. Succulent and so very fruity. Soft tannins and plenty of spice too. The finish is spicy and sweet. Score 17.85.

Charmes-Chambertin

1.5 barrels and new oak. 80% whole cluster...now for three years I work in the vines the which are 80 years old

Sweet, volumous and richly textured. Velvet tannins. Rich, perhaps a tad opulent...very floral on the finish - very alluring. Score 19.15.

***Clos Saint Denis**

Just one barrel.

Lifted, pure and up toned. It is airy, delicate, but strong. Ethereal...wafting floral notes...finely wrought. The finish is quiveringly mineral, floral and precise. A fine finish..this Clos Saint Denis hit the spot, where others had not. Score 19.5. From 2020

Clos De La Roche

Big intensity and expression on the nose. Full and flamboyant. Punchy juicy and rich on the attack. A large generous and thickly textured wine. Sumptuous texture. Full crushed velvet. A rich and generous palate finishes with energy at the end....it is just delicious and very inviting. Score 19.5. From 2020

Stockists

UK: Hayes, Hanson and Clarke; Gunston Fine Wines ; Genesis

USA: Selection Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France for Polaner (NY) ; International Wine ; Triage (Oregon).

Domaine Du Clos De Tart, Morey-Saint-Denis

Jacques Devauges has recently taken over from Sylvian Pithiot. He joined the domaine from Clos de l'Arlet in January and had a 3 month handover. He can comment on the vintage, as he made it at Arlot, but not really on the cellar as Sylvian made the 2014s.

"The winter was not cold. A good and sunny spring and very dry. So the season was early with flowering around the 6th June in very good conditions. Sunny until mid July and then until mid August it was cold and humid and the vines were then delayed."

"Right on time in September we had the North wind and this means dry weather and cool weather...we had good conditions to finish the maturation and we started harvest on the 17th for 4 days."

"The grapes were pretty nice. There is always millerandage as 80% of the vines are more than 60 years old. Normal skins, not thin, and not big as in 2015."

"Less acidity than 2013. The acidity is not very high."

"The natural alcohol is 13.5%. Clos de Tart is a very sunny vineyard."

"In 2014 we have pleasure and seduction...a vintage with lots of seductive tannins which are chewy and sweet. It is very accessible and full of fruit and promises. So a vintage of pleasure."

Clos De Tart

We tasted 7 cuvées which related to the different ages (the younger vines first) and the different soils of the Clos. There is a very helpful map on the domaine's website.

www.clos-de-tart.com

I think may have cut out one of the samples we tasted when I was tidying up the notes after the tasting. Tasting in atmospheric but rather dim light in the cellar at the end of the day makes for fairly untidy notes, but you will certainly get a good impression of the different parts.

Sample one: This comes from the young vines. This is floral and pretty with crunchy red fruit. Fine tannins. Very sweet raspberry sweetness. This will - probably - become the second wine of the domaine - Morey-Saint-Denis, La Forge.

Sample two: 30 year old vines from more marly soils. Dense mulberry fruit. More depth and much firmer tannins. Rich and burly with plenty of grip. Fresh bite on the end.

In the next samples the average age of the vines is 60 years, which means some are 80 with much younger vines spot planted to replace older vines.

Just to recap on the soils:

Sample three: the bottom of the vineyard is calcareous rock (Bajocian limestone) with deep top soils of 1.5m and a low level of active limestone in this top soil. These vines are on the Bonnes-Mares side (the vines on the other side, next to Clos de Lambray are younger vines). Sweet fruit, richly and roundly full-bodied and juicy. Generous and plush. Deep velvet tannins and marked smoothness to the texture.

Sample 4: If you go up to the middle band of the vineyard 'block' there is the same mother rock but the top soil is just 30cm and includes some active limestone and the roots of course can access this much more easily. This is rather more refined. There is the tension under the palate. It is straight and clipped to a mineral finish.

Sample 5 Even less top soil here...more marl. More lifted aroma. This is pure and lighter bodied and airy. There is sweetness to the minerality on the finish. This is juicy and expressive. Very vibrant and pure.

Marl has less than 50% carbonate and is so soft you can easily break it. It is full of fossils.

The limestone bedrock at the bottom has more than 50% carbonate and is therefore much harder.

The uppermost part is marl with Premeaux which is like marble - a very strong limestone... This has a slightly smoky and aromatic nose and palate. Exotic spices. It is tight and sappy and has tension. Not at all fruity. Coiled power...very interesting wine.

This combination of all but the young vines has the aromatic notes of the high part...in the middle you have supple and elegant fruit - some is plush and plump. There is depth and intensity and richness, but with supple smoothness and the finish is focused, straight and mineral...quivers with minerality at the end. Overall very refined - substance...and subtlety.

As Jacques makes clear, it is not a blend but a putting together of that which the vineyard has offered. they are not blending to make a wine to fit the image of Clos de Tart, a little more of less of this or that each year. that is a fine art of blending used masterfully in Bordeaux and Champagne to make blends, but not what Burgundy is all about.

"We have the privilege to work on all these different geologies. We can work on all the plots to make the most of them as individuals...we can raise them and only when they are grown - they are adult wines - we can put them all together and like a great team, they all contribute to the success of the team," says Jacques.

Stockists

UK: Coney and Barrow

USA: Elite Wines; Wine Berry (NYC) Comaines et Saveurs

Domaine Ghislaine Barthod, Chambolle-Musigny

Ghislaine Barthod says she remembers the flowering was quite good and passed very well, "so we had a beautiful set. It was more difficult to work in June and July as we had rain...hoeing the soil for example was difficult". The harvest was 14th Sunday..and "the problem was with the rain we had some botrytis. The skin of the grapes was quite thin so we had to take care with sorting...worse where there is grass as the humidity collects here, but the grass is also good competition."

"This vintage just an infusion not to try and extract a lot - in a vintage like this it is important."

"With the lower sugar levels we were careful not to affect the balance and to stay in the style of the vintage."

"The drosophile were just near the house, as we have fruit trees in the garden..we made a selection for these vines."

"The MLF was finished before May and they racked before the harvest. The MLF did not make a lot of difference in that they were quite accessible before the MLF too - the malic was not high."

"I think we have a good point where we have ripeness, but not over ripe and we have the freshness on the finish...we have a good balance. I think it is not a 'cool' style of vintage..for the fruit is ripe."

"But it seems to have the freshness and energy of a cold year...as we have the freshness and the energy on the finish."

"I think we have a lot of spicy character in the vintage."

"I think it will always stay open with the crunchy red fruit. It comes at a good moment between the 2013 and the 2015."

I asked Ghislaine what she made of the market for Burgundy today. "The quantity has been small the past years since 2009 and the interest has increased...so there is pressure on the prices and these have gone up. We wanted the 2015 to be a better volume ,but it is also quite small, so it will not relieve the pressure."

"I think the greater interest in Burgundy is two fold - Bordeaux became so expensive and people were put off by the prices and looked else where to Burgundy, but also that tastes change and as you get older you look for the delicacy and purity we can get in Burgundy."

The domaine's traditional markets are the UK, Japan, US and Norway and this has not changed much from the late seventies in her father's day. A new market is Spain. She does not sell much to China...a few cases only.

***Bourgogne**

A quantity of ripe summer fruits on the nose. Richness to the texture; quite surprisingly so...full and fruity. Really juicy and inviting fruit; very fresh at the end. Just delicious. Yum.

Chambolle-Musigny

A blend of 10 parcels. Less clarity of fruit on the nose...it was a bit reduced. On the palate this is tight and energetic and quite straight. There is matter here; really quite contained. It has plenty of freshness. Crunchy red cherry fruit. Crunchy tannins...lively on the finish. More piquant and zesty and a touch saline at the end. Score 16.35 From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny, Aux Combottes

Ripe dark cherry fruit. Warm aroma. Black cherry fruit. Rich, satin texture; full-bodied for Chambolle and generous. Some muscle here. Quite large and juicy. Even a bit burly. It is large from the front of the palate to the finish...which is fresh. Ghislaine says "a crescendo." 18. From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Chatelots

The nose is more upright and spicy. Good tension on the attack. It is zesty, vital and bright. Crunchy red fruits; slightly more grassy tannins; it is contained, it is spicy and zesty on the finish. Score 18.2

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Beaux Bruns

This is deep and dark and sweet. An alluring ripeness to the nose. soft and juicy and generous on the the palate. It is plump. the tannins are more refined, thick and smooth. There are subtle hints of dark chocolate. The finish is a little spicy. A warm and rich and comforting Chambolle. Score 18.25 "we recognise the Beaux Bruns," says Ghislaine.

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Baudes**

Dense and restrained aroma. Darker red fruit and spice. It is full and velvet. There is power and intensity and richness. It has svelte muscle. Smooth and dark chocolate and very fresh and mineral and straight finish. Very well honed. It is rich and vigorous wine. you sense the fact there is more earth here, a depth of top soil, but there are also some rocks which give the minerality... for it is straight, powerful and mineral and fresh at the end. Score 18.55 From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Charmes

Vivid red fruit aroma. Volume and generosity. Juicy red fruits. Curvaceous. It is full-bodied...there is a tension here too. the tannins are much more refined..they sit in the palate. It becomes more focused and fresh at the end. there is a slight note at the end which disturbs me...slightly herbal Score 18. From 2018

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Greunchers**

It is I find this has a more complex aroma than Charmes. There is fruit and spice. It is lifted and ripe...even a touch exotic. Lovely texture, satin smooth and refined. It ripples elegantly. the palate is very nicely woven. A ribbon of fresh fruit. A long and elegant and pure finish...If the Charmes slightly underwhelmed, this exceeds expectations. Score 18.6. From 2019

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Fuées**

There is an intensity and sweetness, ripeness of dark fruit on the nose. Straight and very pure. It powers across the palate. It is elegant and very energetic. It has a taut and cold core, enveloped in a real succulence and sweetness of fruit. Cold and warmth from the sweetness are juxtaposed and enticing. It is a confident wine. It is vigorous and straight on the finish. This has the potential for ageing. Score 18.75 From 2020

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Véroilles**

This has lifted aroma of red peppercorn, white pepper, orange zest...flowers..intriguing and very cool in tone. The palate is fine and refined. Delicate and tight. It has a quiver of bright mineral which flies across the palate and is long and flighty on the finish. A lively long and vibrating finish...delicacy and intensity and at the very end salt.....Score 18.65

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras**

Slightly more standoffish cool aromatics, raspberry fruit, plenty of spices too. Supple and elegant and then it battens down. It has smooth ripeness and intensity. There is a lot of density and matter here in the middle. It is juicy and woven. There is a richness of fruit; ample fruit around the mineral core. The finish is assured and straight and really rather powerful. Score 18.85. From 2020

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras

"Les Cras always has energy..that is what I see in the wines," remarks Ghislaine after the tasting.

We decided to taste these ten vintages. Time was not elastic so we focused our energies and next year we shall do the more recent vintages, but I felt it was best to focus on vintages which are more likely to be ready. We tasted from 2008 backwards, but the notes are ordered chronologically.

*****Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 1999**

This is intense. Decant it. Battened down. Wait and you find the flowers. This is pure and straight; lots of fresh minerality and direction. You taste the terroir, the cool mineral and the sweet fruit. Precise, taut and directed. I do like the vitality and the nervosity on the palate still. Very youthful. Unbelievable really. Very distinguished. A cut above. It has hardly moved at all.

"The grapes were the same in 2015 so I hope we have the same sort of vintage," remarks Ghislaine:

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2000**

This has tertiary notes...quite an unctuous, open and expressive bouquet. The palate is rich and rounded and generous - so very different to the more precise 2001. This is open and aromatic and a mineral smoke. It has a much looser, easy palate than the 2001. Just so inviting. Soft tannins. I would drink this now. Decant it...and enjoy.

****Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2001**

This an evolved aroma. Nutty with toasty and sweet hay notes. It glides across the palate..elegant, fresh and seamless. A svelte, fresh mineral and pure palate. For me this is just perfect now. "Yes," Ghislaine says "this confirms what I say to my customers - now for the 2001 and the 2002 and you are right it is the perfect moment for 2001..."

****_***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2002**

Oh this is nice - fresh and upright with plenty of red fruit.. still youthful, but with signs of evolution in the integration of the palate..and on the nose.. but not in the flavours. Plumptuous and rich. A thick texture helps to give the wine its youthful appearance. It is lovely now or you could wait. It has vigour and it still in the fruity spectrum. It is just a charmer...have it now for its fruit and rich texture or wait for more complexity.

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2003

Well really rather gorgeous fruit on the nose...rich and just evolving into more tertiary characters as it opens in the glass. Plump and rounded and generous. No need to decant it. The fruit is so obvious - sweet and rich. There is plenty to enjoy and it will not repay much more ageing I think. It is really expressive now. Mushroom and dark chocolate and hoofy...yum..it is not heavy at all...and it is fresh. The only thing I would add, is that it is a touch drying at the end. I would drink this now. Ghislaine thinks maybe if you leave it, "it could become more fine and more pinot...so maybe take risk and wait like '59..it was difficult to know when to drink in that vintage, as with this one - to wait or to drink..."

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2004

This is soft and accessible on the nose. That 2004 note is wafting away...to give a slightly smoky note...it becomes much more interesting with aeration. It is straight. It is still more bell pepper. It

is pretty fresh and tight and while it has the character of the vintage stamped on it, this is much mellowed. It has an herbaceous note; a crushed black peppercorn, leafy edge. It smooths with aeration. I could drink this now. After ten years the balance is there...Score 17.5. Decant it and drink it...or you could wait...not going anywhere in a hurry. On balance I would wait...it could continue to improve...

*****Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2005**

This is still so youthful and intense. Berry and stone. Bitter notes and so tense. It is compact and tight and so very pure. It sings across the palate. Just delicious and so very fresh and youthful. A lovely long and mineral finish. Very vibrant. As it opens and you have the flowers and spice ... somewhat exotic flowers. The texture is sophisticated, subtle and intense and satin smooth. Sweetness at the end. Such a lot of matter. The texture is very refined. Score 19. This is a heavenly wine. You can wait...or you could just begin to enjoy it. Sensational.

***-**Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2006**

Rich and full and dark, some more evolved note, but with richer, heavier spicy notes and a touch of mushroom. Full and rounded and juicy. It is really juicy and fleshy. There is weight to the palate, underscored with the minerality of the terroir. There is more precision at the end of the palate. This is showing well now, you could leave it though to slim down a bit or it might be better to decant this and then it would be great with a meal. The nose begins to open out and is so inviting. "I remember at the beginning there were small wild berries," says Ghislaine. The minerality and freshness is there to undercut the richness...it has the Cras bite at the end of the palate.

***-**Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2007**

This is open and expressive. Very aromatic and shows development to more forrest floor notes. It is silky and supple and juicy. This is just perfect now - poised between fruit and more developed characters. there is sweetness and freshness and at the end some tight and aniseed notes... a lively bitterness at the end. The texture is silky. This is the moment to start drinking this wine. Take a bottle and see how you go. If you want the fruit and some evolution this is a good moment. From now onwards.

Ghislaine remarks, "there are elements of the 2014 as the 2007 is ripe...but with the freshness of les Cras so you get the balance."

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras 2008**

Cherry kernel...smells cold and reserved. It is liquorish, spicy .. very spicy. It is tight and zesty and vital. Fennel notes. Liquorice. It needs more time. There is a lot of freshness with the minerality and the reserve here..the tension means you need to wait. The acidity and the matter have not yet come together. From 2017

Stockists

UK: Richards, Walford & Co – principal agent.
USA: Neal Rosenthal Wine Merchant, NY.

Domaine Louis Boillot et Fils, Chambolle Musigny

"What was most important, was the beginning of September' remarks Louis Boillot, "all the maturity of the skins and the pips happened then. Five days difference in harvest. 5 days in the Cote de Beaune before the Chambolle started."

"Small berries in the Cote de Nuits, but the skins were average thickness, while in the cote de Beaune the skins were much thicker."

"The Cote de Nuits needed just a small extraction and in the Cote de Beaune, no extraction!"

"In the Cote de Nuits there is much fruit and density and the texture is silky and at the same time good freshness and a really good balance."

"In the Cote de Beaune there are big tannins and a big concentration as there are such small berries. We need more time for the Cote de Beauneand I will make a fining with milk in December. Also in the Cote de Beaune I will bottle later in April and May..it needs time."

Louis has vineyards across both Cotes and things were touch in the Cote de Beaune. Three very nice wines to start...a little blip with the Cote de Beaue..and nicely back on track with the Cote de Nuits.

Bourgogne

Two parcels near Gevrey. Juicy and bright fruit. Some darker fruits too. Spicy. Zesty. The finish is punchy. This has quite a lot of structure. A very Gevrey Bourgogne.

***Côte de Nuits Villages**

Crunchy red fruits. More refined tannins. Very lively. Lovely red fruits. Red cherry and appetising. It is straight, peppery and lively on the finish.

***Fixin**

From 50 year old vines, located under the premier cru Clos de Chapitre in Fixin. Very spicy aroma. Nice soft tannins, soft and sweet red fruits. Full and juicy, but with some grip too. There is some concentration and a energetic sap at the finish. A good Fixin.

Beaune, Epenottes

60 year old vines. This village wine is located between the border with Pommard and the premier cru of Beaune Epenottes. 22-23hl/ha. It is juicy and full and sweet at the front, red fruits, but the tannins are really quite sturdy and dry.

Pommard

20 year old vines. The fruit is dark. The palate is compact and the tannins are assertive. A robust palate. Plentiful, robust tannins and sweetness to the fruit and it is fresh at the end. Score 15.

Volnay, Les Grands Poisots

I prefer this to the Pommard. Sweet red fruit, juicy and energetic. Lively palate and the finish is fresh. Lighter and smoother tannins. The fruit is fresh on the finish. Score 15.6.

Gevrey-Chambertin

50 to 60 year old vines. Dark fruit and high toned spice. Purple. This is light and lively and 'pretty' for a Gevrey. Pure and zesty. Good energy onto the finish. Attractive, fruit driven and fresh. Score 16.

Volnay, Les Angles

The vines are at least 35 years old. The fruit is red and juicy. Full-ish body. The tannins are firm. The aromatics are there on the finish. There is freshness on the finish...I find the tannins a little dry. 60% loss...the berries fell off in the vineyard.

Volnay, Brouillards

Ripe cherry red fruit aroma. There is sweetness with very ripe aromatics. Quite jammy. Sweet strawberry fruits. A broad palate. There are plenty of tannins here too. The structure and the balance is certainly better than the Angles. Score 17

Volnay, Caillerets

This is more delicate on the palate. Light and straight and neat. I like the defined edges. The tannins are much more refined. There is a zesty energy and at the end there is the saline minerality. Score 17.5

Pommard, Fremiers

70 loss to hail. It is red, spicy and juicy. The tannins are firm, plentiful and robust. There is some nice concentrated fruit in the mid palate and Louis considers that with the finish the tannins will be smoothed and rounded with the fining.

Pommard, Les Croix-Noires

The vines here are at least 70 and 80 years old. I prefer the aroma here and the fruit to Fremiers. This is sweetly fruity and dense. Dark and juicy, spicy and rich. The tannins are plentiful, but sweeter and smoother. This is more successful. Together with the Caillerets these are the two more successful from the Cote de Beaune.

Louis will fine the Volnay and the Pommard during the winter. I think this will certainly help with the tannins.

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Evocelles**

Lively focus of sweet fruit on the nose and palate. A keen line, energetic and ripe and rich too. The tannins are trim and the it is athletic. There is depth and also notable energy on the finish. very good indeed and really out performs its village appellation status.

Gevrey-Chambertin, Champonnets

This is cool and light and breezy. Easy red fruits. Soft tannins. Inviting and quite relaxed...and at the end a sweetness. Most appealing. Score 17.75

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Cherbaudes**

This is denser and richer and more muscular. There is plenty of extract. The tannins are smooth and ripe. the fruits is red and rich. There is freshness and a cool slate bite on the finish. Much more sophisticated and longer. More serious. Score 18.5

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Pruliers**

Succulent red fruits. Chamois-smooth tannins. Super refined for Pruliers. Subtle and sophisticated and really everything in place. A long and elegant finish. Score 18.65.

Beaujolais, Moulin A Vent

This is a new venture for Louis and his son Clement who is now twenty and has finished studying. They bought the vineyard 2013 and this is the first vintage is in 2014. Clement and Julien Millet (Francois Millet's son) made the wine together.

All the vines in the 4 hectares they have purchased are aged from 50-60 years

Moulin a Vent

This cuvee is made with four smaller parcels under the windmill. The grapes are all de-stalked. Two pump overs per day. Just one pigeage at the beginning and 3 week vatting. 10% new oak in 500l barrels and 50% in vat. The balance in older barrels. It was bottled in August. It is fruity and juicy and easy. Soft tannins. Lot of fruit. Juicy. Good body too. Some spice at the end. Very attractive.

Moulin a Vent, Les Rouchaux

This is smooth and supple. Juicy and deeper in the mid palate. Sweet and succulent and soft tannins. It is suede soft. It is clearly an elegant lieut-dit. A level up.

***Moulin a Vent, Les Brussellions**

This is fresh and red and fruit. there is more tension here. The tannins are silky. It is more lively on the finish. More of a crunch and zest at the end. I like this. My favourite.

Stockists

UK: Richards Walford – Principal Importer

USA: Neal Rosenthal

Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier, Chambolle-Musigny

Frederick voices his concerns over the fate of fine wines. He has decided not to release Musigny with the other wines in the cellar, but to keep it a few years, just to give it some ageing - to give it a start. "Grand Cru such as Musigny and I would also add Montrachet, Romanee-Conti and La Tache, are hidden when young...it is not the same for Bonnes-Mares or Amoureuuses." He is frustrated that restaurants do not mature wines and the wines are consumed when they are not ready. Moreover they are competing with wines which are made to be drunk young..and customers can be disappointed. He worries that there are many people drinking wines now that have never tasted mature wines."If they do not inherit a cellar they will never know what it will taste like when it is mature and the restaurants could be providing this experience, but they choose not to."

"The weather was balanced. July was more rainy than we would have liked. Early on we had some spots of rot, usually later than in July. However if it is early the vines tend to develop some resistance. The worse experience is when you get rot in perfectly clean vines. When it has been dry and the conditions for rot come late - near the harvest and then it can spread quickly."

"The vines were healthy. I am more concerned with drought than with rain. What we like as good weather is not necessarily what the vine likes. So sunny and warm does not make better wines. I was worried about possible porriture acid, but only in very few spots. It can be very unpleasant and the smell of vinegar can be very strong..if it spreads...but in the event it was not an issue."

"September was balanced with sun and a few days of rain, which was Ok. With experience I do not worry so much about the weather. After 30 vintages I find the wines that I like to drink are from cooler and somewhat rainy vintages, more than hot and dry vintages. There is a real misconception about this - if the key to great Burgundy wines is sunny and dry weather Burgundy would not have had the success it has had over the centuries. The most typical wines we make are in relative cool vintages. Good wines are more important that 'great wine' - always people want great wines..this is wrong as with the idea of greatness is an anticipation of something with comes in the future...greatness is not a measure of the reachable pleasure."

"Really what I want to do now is just to let the terroir speak and be as natural - ie to let nature speak..the soil and the climate. I have given up the idea of crafting wines. I want the winemaking to be transparent. I am still amazed..at how different the wines are - why is a Musigny a Musigny? I am still amazed at how strong the differences are and I have no control of it. It is there and it is magic and what interests me in my wines is what I cannot control and it is this experience that I want to show to people. Showing off my skill as a winemaker is simply not interesting...but showing the fascinating complexity and beauty of nature - well that is fascinating."

All but the Musigny had just been racked (the Musigny was being racked when I visited, but we tasted from a barrel which had not been racked.) Frederick was not that comfortable with the moment for the wines, feeling they may have opened and be more expressive on one hand, but the flesh had been temporarily lost with the racking..the tasting is just an impression of the wines at a moment in time and of course is always very subjective. Frederick worried too much, but he is of course very attentive to the changing nuances in his own wine and is bound to feel a little concerned if they are not seen in the best light.

"Everything is there..it will just take time to marry together and integrate..and to develop substance. There is a beautiful fruit quality."

"I am very happy with the potential of the wine, the quality of the fruit and the balance. There is everything there to make a very beautiful vintage."

"I think they will be very attractive early, although I have no worry about ageing them. The balanced weather gives balanced wines. More is not always better...I am uncomfortable with the concept of 'great' and the 'greatest' wine in my life etc..it is misleading for the public."

"I see a close parallel with 2012 in the style of the two vintages. 2012 had very pretty fruits and was attractive and seductive in the barrels. I am surprised now with the evolution in the bottle for now there is an unexpected density and in the mouth the fruit though still there is hidden. I am usually wrong with the prediction for the wines evolution, but with the 2012 it is like this. I thought it would be a wine to drink early. And now I do not recommend to drink the wine early. More potential for development than I thought. Not as easy and friendly as I thought...and more potential. I speak a lot of 2012 as I think the evolution might be the same with 2014."

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Gorgeous fresh red fruits. It is sweet and juicy and rounded. Expressive and aromatic; very aromatic...fine and precise and so fresh on the finish...with a light and lively mineral lift to the end. Such an elegant and 'light' Chambolle.

As mentioned above Frederic feels that the wines have lost a bit of weight from the racking, though may have gained precision in the aromatics and will re-gain that flesh with the ageing over the next winter.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, La Maréchale

Dark fruit and spice. Bramble fruits with fine and supple tannins. Good energy under the fruit. Very zesty and fresh on the finish with coolness, fruit and some grip. Score 18

***Chambolle-Musigny, Les Fuées**

High toned and pure. A lively sweetness, satin texture, straight and so juicy. There is a lovely intensity of fruit around the cool, mineral core and the finish is sweet and saline. I do like this. Score 18.65

Bonnes-Mares

Delicious sweetness of fruit. Deep red juicy aroma. It is succulent and velvet textured and so pure. Under the ripe fruit there is delicious freshness and cool minerality. It is supple and fluid and svelte; a rippling sleek quality to the texture. It is a complex and quiet wine which carries to a long, precise and really quite aromatic finish. Score 19.5

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Amoureuses

Pure and aromatic. It is silky and very fresh. Gorgeous red fruits and seductive in the middle. Only on this did I have the impression of the racking. Lively and long on the finish.

***Le Musigny**

This has not been racked. So this is at a different stage. It is more closed on the nose, but there is the succulence and depth in the palate. It has a gorgeous energy, focused, pure and defined... it has a lovely long line. There is tension and precision and intensity at the end of the palate....wonderful crystalline finish. Such a delight to taste.

Stockists

UK: Georges Barbier of London; Haynes, Hanson & Clark; H & H Bancroft; Fields Morris & Verdin; Howard Ripley; Tremayne & Webb; The Winery.
USA: Martin Scott Wines Ltd.; Wines Unlimited; Selection Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France.

Domaine Georges & Christophe Roumier, Chambolle-Musigny

Blooming was OK. It was an early season we had alternative rain and clear weather to August. We started on the 16th. We had lovely days and at the end of August we had a peak of temperature and this was when the fruit flies began..wet and warm and this pushed up the ripeness to the level where we wanted to pick."

"Average sugars, but we had very good phenolic ripeness. As the fruit set was OK this was a crop with some juice in the berries. My main concern was the phenolic ripeness and when we saw that we had it, we picked. The colour came very quickly and it was very specific for this vintage and then the tannins appeared a bit later - the extractability of the phenolics was good. Acidity is good...the MLF finished in July..."

Christophe used some whole bunches as he usually does commenting "maybe not as much as when it is really ripe, so about 25-30%. The fruit was clean. We did not have much botrytis - just a little and it was easy to sort....Everyone was worried by fruit flies and the acetic bacteria and VA, but it was not a problem."

"I racked the wines last week. I wanted to rack. I like the style of the wines as they are very fruit driven, nice substance and elegance in the tannins and nice flavours..I am prepared to bottle a little early - maybe Jan or February rather the April or May."

"Precise and graceful - without a big body."

"It is difficult to predict how much to age, but I think I will like them young...I would rather people benefit from the fruit, but the grand cru will age."

"We had closer to normal yields - 2014 is most close to the average...for the global production."

"In style it is difficult...a more vibrant 2006, but more intensity and deeper fruit than 2006. So not exactly that. I cannot think of a really close vintage.. maybe 2007 ...2011 is more tannic, not as easy."

Just a delight to taste these wines.

***Bourgogne**

Gorgeous fruit. Really sweet and juicy and elegant too. Very fresh and rounded and softly textured. Excellent and scrumptious Bourgogne.

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Spices - fragrantly lifted and elegant. Silky texture, fine and precise at the edges. Very juicy... fresh red cherry fruit. Lightly rounded and nicely energetic. A bitter note of cherry and almond kernel..very fresh on the finish. Such a fruit and stylish village Chambolle. Quintessential Chambolle style.

Morey-Saint-Denis, Clos De La Bussière

Dark and spicy aroma. Full on the front palate. Richly textured; smooth and generous. Quite a full and firm body and plenty of tannins...fresh bite to the finish. Quite a burly wine for this cellar. "This is more tannic than some MSD," remarks Christophe, "maybe is this due to the iron in the clay."

I asked Christophe how he would define the character of Morey-Saint-Denis (in general so a village wine maybe) which he does by comparing it with Chambolle. "In MSD the wines are a bit

more earthy and stronger in comparison with Chambolle. They are always stronger...not as robust as Gevrey-Chambertin...they have a good fruit, more than Chambolle sometimes which can be more floral. Chambolle can be drier - in the minerality, while MSD can be more fruity and with stronger tannins. There is a cross over on the boarder...some at the edge of Chambolle can have more Morey style. There is very little MSD village wines...and this description not include En La Rue de Vergy - which is stony and mineral and more like Chambolle."

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Combottes

Just perfectly ripe, red fruit - juicy and splashing. In the middle sweet and delicious. Then it tightens somewhat. There is a bitter cherry note here too; very appetising; touch of anise. Tight and mineral and stony on the finish...a savoury mineral bite..It has a bunched, unsprung energy cloaked in fresh fruit. Score 18.45.

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras

Fresh, lifted, pure and upright. Vivid red cherry fruits. Satin supple texture. This is very refined, singing and mineral. A lively long line. The sweetness of the fruit with the taut mineral core... gives it a happy vitality..and there is a vibration at the end ..very fine, pure and precise. Score 19

"Cras is quite homogenous as a terroir. All together is about 3 hectares...we have 1.75 hectares... mainly next to les Fuees - the north part..." He uses 35% whole bunch.

Charmes-Chambertin

Very aromatic, warm and slightly exotic. Ripeness of darker red fruits. Plenty of volume in this generous palate. Spicy and open. A full and expressive wine...at the end there is focus..tightens in with a spicy and grassy, minty tension and freshness.

"The whole bunch does show more in Charmes-Chambertin and it gives it the details. It is strange used on the others in the same way it does not show. It has density and the whole bunch throws it into relief."

***Ruchottes-Chambertin**

More restrained and batted down on the nose. However it leaps energetically and vividly onto the palate. Straight and channelled and chiselled. The texture is fine - a ribbon of satin. It has just delicious fresh and singling fruit in the precise and linear palate. It has no austerity in this vintage. The cool mineral core is enveloped in fruit.. I do like this wine...the finish is long, assured, sweet and saline..and very precise. This gathers momentum...and carries on and on. A stunner! Score 19.5

"A beautiful penetrating wine - I love the texture and the touch of this wine."

Bonnes-Mares

Dark and seductive with a hint of spice on the nose. Deep fruit and cool grip. This is svelte, muscular, smooth and strong. Dense and compact and layered.. a powerful finish. Fresh and spicy on the finish. Score 19.5

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Amoureuses

Supple seductive texture, splashing fruit. It has delightful energy, wonderful depth of succulent red fruit and such intensity. It is beautifully defined..and flowing. The aromatic define the finish..which is very precise and pure. Score 19.5

***Le Musigny**

Wonderfully intense aroma. The essence of rose petals. It was surprisingly expressive, showing beautifully despite just having been racked. Gorgeous fruit, very precise; supple, smooth tannins, a real depth and density to the middle, but lifted and airy too....shimmering with minerals. .A

wonderful long finish, so assured and penetrating, mineral and floral at the same time. Just divine.

Stockists

UK: Armit Wines; Domaine Direct; Haynes, Hanson & Clark; Berry Brothers; Laytons; Gerard Seel Ltd.; Justerini and Brooks; Tanners Wines Ltd.; The Wine Society.
USA: Seagram Château & Estate Wine Co.

Domaine Comte Georges De Vogüé, Chambolle-Musigny

François Millet recalls the season "the spring was so warm we were worried we might be picking in August - we had summer in the spring...but luckily the summer was mild, not a lot of sunshine, quite a lot of rain...and it slowed down the growing season. September was good and we caught up with maturity and we started harvesting on the 13th September. I don't count the 100 days any more...it may be around 100 days."

Chambolle had some hail on 28th which caught some vineyards more on the south side, a little on Musigny and Amoureuses. We had about 10-20% damage...we have a little more than yield than in 2013, but still below average."

"Everything is a comprise with 2014 - the freshness and minerality, which is medium...the ripeness is medium - so we have some red and some black fruits...sometimes a comprise is a good thing - like spring time - it begins to give you some warmth..we play in this sort of vintage with the freshness and sweetness."

"It is a serene and convivial vintage. The 2013 was extreme - like in winter, when the light is clear there is a clarity of the landscape with no vegetation; while 2014 is a different view - more serene. The beginning of something - like in the spring where there is some vegetation...it is fresh."

As ever a treat to taste with Francois Millet and his metaphors.

Chambolle-Musigny

Sweet red cherry fruits and cherry blossom on the nose. It is juicy, crunchy, zesty. It has a lively energy and a deep splashing fruitiness...and a delish bitter cherry kernel note on the finish... sweet and fresh.

Chambolle-Musigny, Premier Cru

The young vines of Musigny are now 15 and 25 years old. "At 25 there is a change..when you see the vines moving into something more mature." There is lovely sweetness, fresh too - a contrast of ripe sweet cherries, darker than the Chambolle, and lively bite. Such a smooth texture - a supple fluidity ...flowing with a rippling presence on the palate. Very elegant on the finish... there is real depth to the palate.. but with youthful exuberance. Score 18.5

"Yes this is more than a teenager...you get a frank attitude a spontaneous - a river not a lake - you are at the back of the river in springtime," muses Francois.

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Amoureuses

Gorgeous texture is the first thing I notice - like a bolt of satin fabric unfurled in an elegant flourish across the palate. A sheen and fluidity to the texture. There is a good deal of depth to the mid palate...so aromatic...a cornucopia of spices..and flowers with a touch of ginger and white pepper...the finish is intriguing...the texture is delightful and the freshness is lively, but is entwined in the wine and within the fruit... There is an lithe energy on the finish. Just lovely. Score 19.2

"The vintage brings to Amoureuses a certain sensual elegance," murmurs Francois...looking into his glass lost in thought.

Bonnes Mares

This is dark, ripe bramble fruits, black, but some red too, mulberries, ripe and juicy. Immediately you sense the purple depths of crushed velvet, spices, deeper more exotic spices..there is a touch of bitter chocolate..touch of nutmeg. Supple and sensual..cushioned depths...not rich though..it is trimmer than that, it has a certain vigour..honed...but not standoffish in any way.

Somewhat prosaically for Francois he remarks "The juiciness is probably the red clay which you always get..in 2013 it is wild, not easy to approach..I love the vintage but even if you have the sweetness of the red clay in 2014 it is a pleasant springtime...(warming again to his spring and winter theme, which I do like). It is more conciliatory..a more open minded Bonnes-Mares in 2014...ready to make concession which is rare. The 2013 and the 2014 have the same potential, but they are different."

***Musigny**

A subtle perfume, very pure. Quiet finesses - light, yet so very intense. Focused essence of fruit and minerality; a very precise fine line. A beautiful shimmering mineral thread. Perfect..

"This defines the vintage - the beginning of spring, beginning to wake up...the freshness is very obvious."

Stockists

UK: Contact the importer Corney and Barrow

USA: Chambers & Chambers; Dreyfus Ashby & Co.; H2 Vino; Ideal Wine & Spirits; Import!;
North Berkeley Imports; The Stacole Co Inc; The Wine Company; Atlanta Wholesale;
C'est Vin

Domaine Arnoux-Lachaux, Vosne-Romanée

I tasted with the charming Pascal Lachaux.

The first four wines were just racked yesterday. The Chambolle was still coming up from the cellar. They picked from 18th September for 6 days. The Bourgogne will be bottles after 2 months the others have 3 months in tank and will bottle be in January dependant on tasting.

Pascal and his son Charles, who work together, use from 40-60% whole bunch for all the wines. They started this with the 2012s. Some of the wines have 100% (this is in the notes).

A few days later I caught up with Charles and asked him about his impression of the vintage.

"I think it was a great season..the worse was in July when it started to rain and it was hard for the grapes to ripen. We had to be careful. It helped that we had the grass. In 2015 the grass helped to reduce the yields which is good, while in 2014 it helped absorb the rain and keep the grapes healthy."

"Quite ripe. We have a good vintage...ripe and easy. It helps as we can drink these vintages earlier and then we can put some other vintages to age in the cellar."

"We did tough work in the vineyards. I have more people working in the summer and we pass through the vineyards more often and it helps to have more healthy fruit. I use more whole bunch and have reduced the barrels. I want less extraction. I want pure and rounder wine..not wines which are too easy, but wines which have the potential to age as well."

Charles has increased the level of whole bunch: "I like the freshness you get from this style of wine. It is a paradox - a wine which is lighter and more complex....these are wines which have which provoke emotions - the perfume - take the older wines of Dujac, DRC and Confuron-Cotetidot. We get it in them, but you need to leave the wine for 10 years."

"How much whole bunch I decide to use is more about the vintage than the terroir. But you never know. This year I have some NGS village in which I used 100% and I preferred it to some Vosne-Romanee. During the growing season I get a feeling of what I want, but in everything I have increased the level in 2015. I have 8 wines with 100% in 2015...I like the magic of the whole bunch...but I have to be careful."

"I cannot compare this with another vintage. No vintage has this roundness and is as easy...and those that I may think are a little alike are too old."

"I do not think it will be a homogenous vintage though. The quality depends on pruning and so on...the quantity the work in the vineyard - what is great is really great and what is average is really average. 2014 was a challenging vintage. The 2015 was too easy!"

"I do not think this is a vintage for ageing really...depend on the appellations - a nice balance but not for a very long time."

"We have pH 3.60 and 3.90. So it will not really age well. So village 3-5 years; premier cru 5-10 and from 6 years for grand cru."

***Bourgogne**

50% land near Chambolle and the remainder near Vosne-Romanee and NSG. This will be bottled in December.

Lovely deep red fruit. Mulberry rich fruit with fresh acidity to balance. The tannins are firm and supportive. Plenty of stuffing. A very good Bourgogne. Top notch.

An excellent flight of village wines follow. They are all good and all have typicite.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges**

Lifted blackberry fruit with notes of blueberry. Abundant sweet fruit attack. This is quite full-bodied and juicy and generous. The tannins full, rich and slightly chewy in a good and zesty manner. It is fresh and energetic. It is very inviting. Score 16.25

Chambolle-Musigny

Five parcels - on the N/W. All of the 5 parcels are above the premier cru. This is being racked now, as we were tasting it. Actually shows quite well; lots of red fruit, bursting, juicy and bright. The tannins are more refined and the energy is here, but more of a dancing, uplifted wine. Very Chambolle. Score 16.25

***Vosne-Romanée**

This has been closed down by some SO2. It is tight, but you can taste the intensity; the power and the depth here. It is a layered, deep village wine, punching well above it's weight with an assertive, long finish. Score 16.25

Vosne-Romanée, Les Hautes Maizières

This is quite generously fruity at the beginning. Appealing red fruit. The tannins are lighter and slightly peppery. It is fresh and really quite elegant. It finishes on fruit with a nice lift. Score 16.25. From 2018/19

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Poisets**

Pascal comments that the berries in the vineyard here are always very small because the vines are 75 years. "The small grapes make all the difference." Just 7 barrels
Blueberry fruit and some deeper spice. Rather an elegant aroma. Hedgerow fruit, lively intensity. The aromas float on the palate. good intensity. The texture is smooth. The finish is nicely lifted. It has a great deal of charm. Score 16.45. From 2018/19

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Procès

This is muted in comparison as it has not been racked. It has quite a lot of cold grip. There is a tension and edge to the wine. The tannins are firm, not burly exactly but bullish. The wine has vigour and finishes on a dark mineral note. There is a lot of clay in the soil. Score 17.25. From 2019

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Clos Les Corvées Pagets**

There is a floral note on the aroma. This is very elegant. Soft, satin tannins. Lighter-bodied and perfumed on the palate. White soil. It is fresh with light acidity woven into the palate. This is

really quite fragrant on the finish too. It has a supple energy. It is immediately very harmonious... at ease. I do like this. Score 17.75. From 2019

Vosne-Romanée, Les Chaumes

Red fruit with appealing notes of pomegranate and red spice. Again plenty of energy here; it is lightish, has fine tannins and an easy balance. It is quite piquant. With a good bite on the finish. Lighter and charming. Score 17.25

***Vosne-Romanée, Aux Reignots**

Two and a half barrels. This is 100% whole bunch. 65% new oak. This has a very intriguing aroma with spice, white pepper and lifted notes. There is the spice on the palate too. This is tight and finely layered and sophisticated. It is neatly edged and pure. the stems give a freshness. It has bright tension. A complex wine. It is not obvious in any way; more hidden and really rather fined. I do like this. Score 19.35. From 2020/22

Clos De Vougeot

New oak at 85% and 100% whole barrel. This is full-bodied and rich and has depth and power, but is not burly. it is powerful and dense; such plentiful fruit; well concentrated. It is quite a showy wine and in this way the opposite of Reignots. I tried another sample which was not in new oak and this was so different; much more floral. the blend should be best. Score 19.25. From 2024

***Echezeaux**

Lovely sweet dark berry fruit on the nose. This is debonair, sweeping and harmonious. It's woven together quite seamlessly. A Fred and Ginger wine...effortless. Score 19.45. From 2022

Latricieres-Chambertin

Lifted spice, red peppercorn aroma. Hints of white flowers too. 100% whole bunch... This is a tauter firm structural wine; a vertical wine; but this slighter gaunter structure is draped elegantly in aromas. I like the floral notes on the finish. Score 19.45. From 2022/24

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots**

This is succulent on the nose, full and rich on the attack. Velvety tannins; full and generous. This is a full structured wine. There is density and intensity. I do like the aromatic rose petal notes - dark red fleshy rose. This scent carries to the finish. Complex and inviting. Score 19.25. From 2022

***Romanée-Saint-Vivant**

Gorgeous aroma; so fragrant. Satin silky and rippling. It is graceful and at ease with itself. such intensity coupled with an almost a languid energy and a sublimely smooth texture. The finish is laden with fragrance. Just wonderful. Score 19.75. From 2022/4

Stockists

UK: Agent Armit Wines; Private Cellars Ltd etc

Domaine Sylvain Cathiard, Vosne-Romanée

Sebastien Cathiard says the weather was a lot easier than 2013. The flowering went well as the weather was warm and in 3 to 4 days it was done. "We sprayed less than in 2012 and 2013 - a lot less. We started to use just organic products. "I do not want to be certified organic for the moment...for example on the 2013 I tried and then stopped, as I had to spray."

"We were happy with the sun at the end of August..as the first three weeks were good. No green harvest. ..very little as we have old vines and 2014 we had a good quantity."

"Just a touch of botrytis in the Bourgogne and just a touch from the fly - de-selected in the vineyard. Gas on the top of the tanks and lids so the flies could not get in. So no problems of acetic acid."

"We started picking on the 12th. The skin was thicker..the 2014 less millerandage. The seeds were ripe, but not completely ripe like 2015 where the seeds were exceptional. But the skin breaks easily. We cool it first to 10 degrees for 10 days...so we go slowly. The colour is there...but no difference in how it came out compared with 2013. We pump over twice per day in this time and we punched down similar to 2013..maybe one or two less..as the matter came easily. And the vatting was 23 to 27 day so pretty much the same."

"12 to 13 degrees and so we chaptalised a little.

"We did not have a lot of acidity. We had enough tartaric though. It was not a strong MLF..we did not lose much acidity."

Sebastien has reduced the new oak. As ever this is music to my ears.

Bourgogne in barrels of one year.

Village in 50% new oak.

Premier cru and RSV new oak 2/3

No wine with 100%

"I have also changed the toast. We were with medium (+) and now medium (-). I think this toast gives tension and I like this." This effect of this was clear in Murgers. Where I tasted this oak - in some of the earlier wines, it does seem subtler..

85% Remond and Francois Freres and now experimenting with some Chassagne..

"I will not bottle early, as the MLF are later here starting from April and some are still finishing. Before filling the barrels I reduced the temperature to 10 degrees as I did not want the MLF to start quickly as the pH was already high." So he feels they are less ready..."I like to have the 2 winters in barrel."

"Yields were a little bit more in 2014 than average...and a lot more than 2013. then 2015 is average."

"Maybe a little like 2001 with more matter...and less acidity. Maybe a mix of 2001 and 2002. Not like 2011, for me it had a sensation of less acidity and the 2014 is more balanced and more fresh. When you try the 2011 you feel it is a more sunny ripe vintage."

Sebastien is refining his approach and gets better each year. I think it must be his fourth year now. The wines become more precise, more translucent to the terroir. I have always like the wines here, but he is taking a wonderful set of terroir to another level.

***Bourgogne**

So much fruit on the nose. Juicy, full and deep. Splashing. Lots of depth in the mid palate and such a lively freshness too. Really sweet on the finish. Top notch - ridiculously outperforms its lowly status.

***Vosne-Romanée**

This was in one of the new reduced toast oak barrels. The fruit is rich and deep and juicy. Very aromatic. The new oak is subtle and the finish is pure and fine. It is good oak..and another sample from a one year old barrel - the nose is fruitier and more lifted, redder and spicier. the palate is pure and streamlined and juicy and bright and fresh. Together this will make a very elegant Vosne-Romanee; supple and juicy and nicely plump in the middle with plenty of depth (it absorbed the new oak happily) and a lively floral finish. Top notch.

Nuits-Saint-Georges

Aux Athées. It is deep soil with clay. Rounded, ripe and dark and fruity with some slightly exotic spice. This has a liquorice twang to the palate together with the dark cherry...which is very appetising and gives it freshness. Fine, slightly sinewy tannins. It is fresh and quite energetic..and gives it a nice bitterness on the finish. Score 16.25 (This will have 50% new oak which the sample had not)

Chambolle-Musigny, Le Clos De L'Orme

This wine and from here onwards the samples have approximately the percentage of new oak for the final wine. These are old vines. 85% are over 70 years old.... Aromatic, spicy, some sweet notes from the oak, but floral too. Really richly textured with depth and succulence to the mid palate. It is rounded, generous and fruity. A very concentrated village wine. It is also nicely fresh...A little bit of the oak on the finish, which for the moment masks the aromatics, but it is long and fresh after the rich palate. A super-charged Chambolle.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Thorey**

Floral notes on the nose. An elegant and finely textured NGS. It is lively and pure and silky. There is sweetness to the fruit, more red fruit here and a touch of dark. Lovely fine tannins. The finish is mineral and pure and long. Lovely balance. I do like this. Spot on. Score 18.5

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Murgers

Dark purple fruit aroma, deep blackberry notes and full and expressive. The attack is large; a generous wine. Full and succulent and soft, ripe, but not rich, more loosely textured...an easy generosity...but there is a tension at the end of the palate...the oak works well with this...it stretches the finish and gives a lift at the end after the open palate. Score 18.25

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Reignots**

This will have just 60% new oak at bottling. Floral notes, violets and light high spices...and it is so elegant..ripples on the palate 'light' but intense...pure and focused..there is minerality and tension and a long and refined finish. the vines are younger and I think this just accentuates the floating elegance and airy character of this wine....Score 18.75 a high score for its elegance and because I like it.

***Vosne-Romanée, En Orveaux**

Cool, cranberry aromas..on this upright nose. It is cool and fresh on the nose and it pounces onto the palate. Zesty and energetic and grippy. It is like a cat on hot coals..pouncing over the palate...nice tight finish... red peppercorn piquancy and lively....tight finish. This is a wine to make you smile..Score 18.65

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots

A dense and full aroma. It is broad, full and muscular. It is so smooth though - the tannins are rich and velvety. There is depth and matter and a dark base note to this wine, but nothing burly or robust.... (accessible maybe as this is a lower acid vintage, it is so accommodating) The finish is powerful and broad. A more muscular wine, but very well honed...it will age very elegantly....the texture is lovely...Score 19.

Vosne-Romanée, Les Malconsorts

This is purple and spicy on the nose. Ripe fruit on the attack to a straight and vigorous palate. I like the tension here and the intensity. There is a firm core to the wine and power and density; but nothing heavy, it is athletic and has a pure and straight and vibrant finish. This will gain flesh as it ages...and more exoticism..it has just finished MLF, but looking good. Score 19

***Romanée-Saint-Vivant**

Two thirds new oak now...one of the three...oh I say..a delightful aroma of rose petals, heady rose garden in summer. All about the texture...sweepingly elegant and satin-smooth on the palate..deep, intense and pure. there is a vivid quality to the fruit, gorgeous freshness and such a scented, pure and refined finish....so aromatic at the end.....

Stockists

UK: Berry Bros & Rudd; David Roberts Domaines; Goedhuis; Justerini and Brooks; Lay & Wheeler; O.W. Loeb; Robert Rolls Fines Wines; Flint Wines
USA: Selection Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France.

Domaine Jacky Confuron-Cotétidot, Vosne-Romanée

"You have a lot of aromas and red fruit and perhaps you have some spices and it is full, in general, not too full, but you have wine..wine you can drink with food - it not light wine. I will not bottle early. If people say they are going to bottle in 2 months it is crazy..madness...and maybe they pick before me...so they will have more tannins."

In 2014 the domaine still produced an average of just 22 hl/ha. "When you do not produce, the wine becomes too rare and it becomes too speculative and this is the problem. A lot of people make a lot of money on the work of the producer."

These wines are built to last, but it was surprising how accommodating a couple of examples of the 2013 were; how the tannins had mellowed.

Bourgogne Pinot Noir

Dark red fruits; somewhat spicy with a floral lift. Sweet attack to a full juicy and energetic palate with Christmas spices. Plenty of rich, firm tannins...fresh at the end. Top notch Bourgogne.

Vosne-Romanée

Lively red fruits with some rose petal. Soft, sweet and full. A rounded, plump and juicy palate. Very zesty; crushed fresh grassy notes with the ripe raspberry fruits. The tannins are firm and sweet and there is an appetising bite at the end. Score 16. From 2019

Nuits-Saint-George

Upright, aroma with briar notes and light bramble fruits. Lightly gliding, sweet and smooth onto the palate. It is quite 'light' bodied, slightly rounded, elegant..the tannins are light, give a bit of tension and there is a slight bitter twang - touch of dark chocolate..to the end of the palate. Score 16. From 2018/19

Nuits-Saint-George 2013

Smooth and silky and energetic. Surprisingly finely textured...supple on the palate. Blueberry fruits and lively energy and really quite precise on the finish..it has focused. Surprisingly supple texture...only bottled a few months ago...and this is NSG in 2013...

***Chambolle-Musigny**

Guerippes, more structure and tannins, from the 'bowl', Premieres (more fruit as more clay in the soil in this parcel which bought 2 years ago) Condemennes, La Mal Carrees and Athets
Summer fruit; rich raspberries...expressive ripe aromatics. Supple, smooth palate; crushed rose petals and a cushioned depth. Full soft tannins. It is both sappy and succulent. The ample palate tightens in with the crushed, nettle finish..there is a bitter note of almond kernel at the end...
Score 16.5 A very aromatic wine. From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny 2103

Soft and juicy onto the palate. Rounded and aromatic. Here the tannins are fuller and richer than the NSG 2013 and the acidity combines to give more more tension...but the tannins are smoothed...it is coming round...again quite surprising evolution.

***Gevrey-Chambertin**

Ripe summer currants on the aroma, red and black and juicy - as if you crushed a big handful of them stalks and all in your hand and inhaled. Fresh and ripe. The smell of summer with a hint of peppery spice. The palate is elegant and trim - neatly defined. It is zesty and energetic. There is an appetising sappy note with a touch of liquorish at the end. A very neat and energetic Gevrey. I do like this. Score 16.65

Pommard

This is much spicier; darker and dense on the nose...3 barrels for 0.8 hectares. It is full compact, a lot of tannins here, much more structured, there is a lot of matter. the spice is on the finish..it is very thick; the tannins are not hard at all...but a sense of less juice to the tannin. Give it time. Score 16+. From 2019

Chambolle-Musigny, Derrières la Grange

Gorgeous aromatics, full and floral..heady with rose petals. Full and luscious, generous palate. Ripe and juicy. After the open and expressive palate, there is energy is on the finish. It becomes more focused. It's very Chambolle. Score 18.25 From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Craipillots

Concentrated high toned aroma with dark berries. Full and quite compact on the palate. Plenty of dark, slightly chewy tannins and fresh twang at the end...Score 18. From 2019

Gevrey-Chambertin, Petit Chapelle

Inviting ripe red fruit aroma. A gently rounded palate. Soft and juicy and red - really quite splashing fruit. The texture is supple the tannins rather refined and soft. It has a fruity finish vibrant with crushed, crunchy red cherries .. very sweet. Score 18.45 From 2019/20

***Gevrey-Chambertin, Lavaux-Saint-Jacques**

Excellent concentration of aromas - red fruit and spice punch from the glass. Rich and ripe and compact on the palate. There is depth and density and intensity. This is supercharged. You get the energy behind...a fresh sweep. The finish is deliciously ripe, sweet and powerful. Top notch. Score 18.75. From 2019/20

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Vignes-Rondes

Plump spicy rich aroma. Soft, full-bodied and plump. The fruit is juicy black cherry, generous and splashing ..soft, rich texture and supple tannins which become more sappy at the finish. This lifts to an energetic finish. An happy, expressive wine. Score 18.35. From 2019/20

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots

Rich aroma. This is dense, full, rich and compact. ..layered. It is smoothly muscular and vigorous. Plenty of ripe fruit in the layers. Full, powerful and rich on the finish. Very structured. Score 19. From 2022

Echézeaux

Pure and concentrated and focused. Very supple and sweet and fluid and juicy and dark...Runs along the palate; nicely woven and I do like the freshness on the finish. Score 19. From 2020

Clos De Vougeot

This is big, burly and dense. A broad and structured wine. Butch. There is generous fruit in the layering...and it finishes on a really sweet and spicy note. Score 19.2. From 2022

Charmes-Chambertin

Full, airy, volume to the palate. Finely aromatic in the palate. Full and generous, but airy. It has intensity and intention on the finish...it is fine and tight and long at the end. I do like the finish. All about the focus on the finish. Score 19.5. From 2020

Mazis-Chambertin

Delirious intensity fruit on the nose. I meant to say delicious - but this will do nicely. Wonderful layering and intensity in the palate. The fruit is so sweet and fresh at the same time. Full and satin textured with very refined tannins ...It is strong and athletic up front and fine and energetic and so very long on the finish. Score 19.75. From 2022

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots

****Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 2009**

Waft of rose petal on the front palate. Luscious ripe fruit; rich and generous. Quite hedonistic and fulsome. The tannins are surprisingly firm still...needing time to integrate. From 2020 Score 18.65

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 2008

Dark and inviting aroma with hints of exotic spice market. Supple onto the palate, but then the firm tannins make themselves know. they are not unpleasant, but have a fresh almost minty note to them. You feel that bite of freshness on the finish after the dark, somewhat liquorish note of the fruit. It's intriguing now. It may well soften more. Score 18.

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 2007**

Very pretty aromatics. On the palate, delicate and silky; it slips seductively. It floats elegantly. Woven with fresh acidity. A red rose petal finish..very aromatic. What a charmer and so fresh at the end. Lovely now, but it will keep. Score 18.25

*****Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 2005**

Very this has hints in the bouquet of somewhat more mature wine. slight note of damp woodland in summer mixed with ripe summer berry notes. Packs a punch on the palate. Juicy, full and rich. Plenty of firm and supportive tannins, but they are tamed. It is powerful and has notable vitality. It grows, gathering momentum and stature across the palate. Really interesting now, but on an upward trajectory. Score 18.75

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 1999**

Sweet foxy bouquet. Notes of new mown hay. It's inviting and enticing. Supple textured; so silky. It ripples easily across the palate. It is very fresh and lively...a zesty core though the wine..and it has a vibrant finish. Lovely now, but it needs food to balance the cold, fresh grippy note on the finish. Score 18.

***-**Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 1996**

Browning colour. Lovely ripe, mature aroma. It is scented and soft in the palate. Generously rounded. Almost juicy (a memory of juiciness) in the middle, but delicate as dried rose petals at the edges. the freshness and slight spice work well on the finish here to balance the faded plumpness of the palate. Now. Score 18.25

I tasted this without knowing the vintage and I am really very pleasantly surprised. The 96s could be quite severe in acidity, but this is lovely.

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots 1983

This has an almost honeyed sweetness on the nose; with quite a burst of fresh coffee and buttermints. Again the rose petals - at the front of the palate fleshy, but then dried petal through the palate. It is thinning like paper..but it is fresh and has a bite at the end and aromatics beyond this. Score 17.75

Stockists

UK: Lea and Sandeman
USA: Village Wine in New York

Domaine Jean Grivot, Vosne-Romanée

Etienne was in New York so I tasted with Matilde. We missed a few wines out and went back to pick some up, but there were still some wines missing...a somewhat swift tasting with some gaps...so bear with the notes...

They started harvesting on the 18th...

The MLF finished in July but for Clos Vougeots, which was in September. All on lees and will stay here until December than racked and blended and in in-ox tanks until February.

Matilda remarks that "during the harvest there was good juice and the juice was red. We did as usual just one pump over a day and just one pigeage at the end."

In 2014 they have a new de-stemmer. "We had full berries..we made some cold pre-fermentation. We found we have more suavity from this de-stemmer..and precision...and maybe more elegance. We never use whole bunch as every vintage we find a reason not to do this."

"Just after we put in barrels, all the wines were very smooth..so I was impressed that after the MLF the wines found more tension and so you have the smooth tannin and the minerality and tension...and so the 2014 is very lively and drinkable and charming, but with energy..."

"It is a charming vintage, drinkable and accessible. We are surprised at the colour and the skin at harvest was incredible. We have smooth tannins, but lively too..after the MLF we have minerality and complexity...not the 2012 complexity, but it is good..."

"We have the drinkability of 2011, but this is more complex and rich, but also it has vibration and the minerality and energy..."

Bourgogne

Smooth red fruits, juicy and ripe and rounded. Lively finish.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Charmois**

Red fruit sweetness, nice intensity and focus. A distillation of pure redcurrant fruit and fresh on the finish. Satin tannins...soft and sweet...there is an engaging note this vintage, maybe as the acidity is softer Charmois has an unusual easy charm with less of edgy personality. 15.95.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Lavières**

This has an elegant texture, silky and refined and delicate for NSG. Dark fruit, pastille, pure and very sweet on the finish...a very nice balance of sweet fruit and freshness. The balance is pitched perfectly here...and the finish is both sweet and fresh. Smooth and inviting. 16.35

Vosne-Romanée

Red fruits, quite lifted. Pure and delicate; zesty, light, slightly leafy, refreshing tannins. Very fresh on the finish. An elegant village wine. Score 16.15

Vosne-Romanée, Les Bossières

Quite rich and full and gutsy; there is a punchy, forthright character to the wine. Lots of energy and rich fuller tannin...with good concentration to match. The finish has lots of fruit. Score 16.2

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Pruliers

Quite rich and full on the nose; on the palate smooth and seductive, yet trim too...A strangely supple charm to this side of the village...just the bit of grip to the end. Quite soft and appealing for Pruliers? Score 17.75.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Roncières**

Very lifted and spicy - herbs..flowers...something intriguing. Yes I like this; it has a floral violet lift and a bite; much more vibrant and lifted and spicy...there is more freshness here too. Aromatic at the end of lift the palate. Energy here too. Of the 3 NSG this is the one for me. It grabs your attention. Score 18.35.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Boudots

Really needed racking...but a big and soft and full wine. lots of body and juicy fruit and velvet texture.

Vosne-Romanée, Les Rouges

This is tense and pounding...it is energetic and has crushed, pomegranate red fruit and bright, zesty crunchy tannins. An energetic wine with plenty of freshness and leafy brightness at the end. Lively and intense...Score 18.35

Vosne-Romanée, Les Beaumonts

Ripe and quite seductive aroma. Straight and energetic. It has quite a lot of tannins. They are very firm and at this moment in time and this rather defines the palate. A straight and vigorous palate. Quite tannic bite at the moment. score 18.25

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Brûlées**

Rich and smooth and dense. Succulent and juicy. A firm core, but velvet texture and fresh on the finish. Ripe with a vigorous core. It is bizarre for the Beaumont and Brulees seem in role reversal this year. I prefer Brulees. It has intensity, richness and a strong inner core. Score 18.65

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Reignots**

Very elegant..finely textured, silky and delicate, and intense...it floats on the palate. Very precise and pure. Just a lovely finish...focused and long...glides on floral notes...just wonderful. Very discreet....Score 18.85. I do like this.

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots**

This is deep and juicy and has plenty of flesh and generosity. Depth to the texture; velvet tannin, smooth and dense mid palate. An accessible and urbane Suchots. And there is a floral quality to the palate and on the finish...aromatic.... Top notch Suchots. Score 19

***Clos De Vougeot**

Deep and darker..a fulsome rich powerful aroma. Full on the palate too. juicy and generous and at this moment remarkably open. A broad, wine, soft, but not too heavy..and not too rich..it is underscored with a certain energy under the palate...Score 19

Echezeaux

Refined aroma...much more subtle than the Vougeot - silky aroma. Ripples, elegant and pure and entwined...it has some power too; becomes a straight and focused....Long finish with quite a lot of tannins. Score 19

***Richebourg**

The aroma is discreet; floral, complex...flowers and spice and fruit...a subtle perfume. This is intricate on the palate; there is lightness and elegance and a vibrance...such a fine filagree to the

texture. The fruit are lifted on a fresh cloud... and such a pure, sensual and mineral finish...a big leap up. Score 19.80

Stockists

UK: Ballantynes of Cowbridge; Berry Bros & Rudd; Bibendum; Goedhuis; Lay and Wheeler;
Raeburn Fine Wines; Seckford; The Wine Society;

USA: Diageo Château & Estate Wines.

www.domainegrivot.com

Etienne is also on facebook under Domaine J Grivot

Domaine Anne Gros, Vosne-Romanée

I tasted with Anne and Julie her daughter, who is now 25, and has done 4 vintages.

"I was concerned by the warm weather in September; worried by the acidity declining..and botrytis and the flies. I watched this and was so careful to monitor the wines and in fact it was one of the lowest VAs I have ever had."

"It is balanced and pleasant; sedative and ripe without being too over ripe...the yields are a little bigger than the last 4 years - but still 30% down."

"It should be like 2007 in the conditions but we do not see this in the wines - the 2007 is more jammy and cooked," says Anne. Julie says "maybe like 2012," Anne says "no, no..this is sweeter."

"I never try to extract too much. I like the harmony in the wine." Anne uses both pigeage and remontage. "I never try to take too much. The fermentation in 2015 was quicker ..more sugar - the temperature came naturally to 32 degrees, while it is usually 30. The 2014 was slower and lower in temperature. The fermentation was quick and foaming in 2015."

"The 2014 is a good standard and harmonious."

White

Bourgogne Blanc

Paquiers under the R74 just 2 barrels of 500l. Smells ripe. Spicy and exotic. "A little like 2006," muses Anne. There is a richness to the full and rounded palate. Generous. The acidity is soft. "It has clay and is a quite stony place...so always full..." she adds.

***Bourgogne Blanc, Hautes Côtes De Nuits, Cuvée Marine**

This has a lively lime note...very pure and high toned and tense...Grabs the palate...This is racy and zesty. Straight and nicely ripe citrusy character.

Red

***Bourgogne, Hautes Côtes De Nuits**

450-460 altitude. Vines are 15 years old and so the acidity is not high and it's always ripe. Soft and juicy and attractive. Very zesty. (Anne finishes harvest with H-C white at same time as Richebourg. "Low yields on 10,000 density and the crop is low and small berries," she remarks.) It is a lively and sweet wine. A balanced, fruity and appealing Bourgogne.

Bourgogne negoce

Not her vineyards and young vines. Bouffales and Maladireres. Just 9 year old vines and she makes 2000 cases. Good ripeness. Sweet notes - almost a hint of chocolate. Very lively. Soft tannins. Attractive.

***Bourgogne**

0.8 hectares from 4 parcels in Vosne-Romanée and Nuits-Saint-Georges. 45 year old vines.. It is tight and zesty and bright with splashing red fruit. There is tension here too...really rather fine tannins for a Bourgogne, which sit easily in the palate lightly...pure on the finish. Lovely. What's not to like?

***Savigny-Les Beaune, Les Lavieres**

40-60 year old vines. Just 4 of the usual 6 barrels. Light and pure and gentle. Sweeps easily across the palate. Nice concentration; pure and fresh. This is really very nice....I like sappiness with the fruit-forward notes. A wine to give pleasure. Score 17. From 2018

***Chambolle-Musigny, La Combe d'Orveau**

Ripe raspberry fruit. This is fresh and has verve. Light, fine and tense tannins. It has a dancing energy and a lively long mineral finish. Races onto the finish. Precise...Score 17.25.. From 2019

"This has a 3.6 pH and yet really straight - it is minerality and not acidity."

Gevrey-Chambertin

A negoce wine, Les Criox de Champs - on the plain. Anne bought this in grapes, but it was not that easy with the owner - agreeing on picking dates etc, so she will not do it again. A one off. "On the plain, but poor and stoney soil...I liked the look of the soil and the vines were 50 years old." It is elegant and slightly herbal in a good way and fresh. Soft tannins...and a twang. It is elegant and 'light' in a nice way. Score 15.65. From 2018

Vosne-Romanée

North exposure and from 1903. This has some concentration...plenty of acidity too...it is compact and has coiled vigour. The tannins are ripe and structural...and it finishes on minerality...Plenty of intension at the end. Score 16.25

Echézeaux

Crunchy, juicy and snappy at the front. It has a straight and elegant line onto the palate. It is well edged and vibrant...light and refined tannins, not quite the suavity, but certainly I like the clarity to the palate...and it finishes with precision. Score 18.5. From 2020

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Vignerondes

A barrel purchased at the Hospice de Beaune auction. "It is a small vineyard - 4 hectares and mainly Faiveley so you cannot find much..I tasted this and thought I would be proud to make this and it would not be out of place in my cellar."

It is sweet and succulent and juicy with soft tannins and a fresh finish.."just one barrel..just to interest the customer," says Anne.

Nuits-Saint-George, Les Domodes

Negoce. Bought this cuvee since 2009 in grapes. 'It is a good climat!' says Anne. Harvested on the 13th so 2 days before the estate. Ripe raspberry sweetness on the nose and slight spice. Satin smooth. Succulent and rounded. It is fresh and has a sweet soft lusciousness ...with appealing freshness. Quite velvety texture. A very accessible style. Score 17.85.

Clos de Vougeot

Vines are from 1904. "In 2010, 2012, 2013 and 14 and 15 - all small berries with millerage... so tannins more from skin than seeds on Clos de Vougeots."

Inviting summer fruits on the attack. Ripe aromatics and plenty of spice - white peppercorn. It is full and structural. There is a tension and layering. It is a big wine, but becomes so much more

elegant in this cellar...and it shimmies on to the finish....with lively dark, black fruit and black pepper on the finish.Score 19. From 2020/22

***Richebourg**

This has light touch of exotic spice on the nose...hint of ginger...maybe from the oak..but appealing. Ah this is in a league of its own. A distillation of pure and vibrant fruit. Satin smooth tannins; such a silky texture. Wonderfully intense. Very refined. It has an airy, lifted and floating character. It flies across the finish and has a gossamer texture and great finesses. Score 19.85. From 2020/22

Stockists

UK: Adnams; Laytons Wine Merchants; Lay & Wheeler Ltd; Howard Ripley.

USA: Atherton Wine Import; North Berkeley Imports.

www.anne-gros.com

Domaine Michel Gros, Vosne-Romanée

"The spring was very dry from March till June and warm and the opposite in July and August it was rainy and cold about 1 centigrade less than average for July and 2 centigrade less for August and 50% more rain..and September was 1 centigrade more than average.

Rain July 100mm and 60 mm is average.

Rain August 80 to 100mm and the average 60

Rain sept 20mm and the norm is 60mm

"We began harvest on the 15th and finished at the end of September, 2 weeks later."

"We had some oidium and mildew as the spring was so dry. The drosophile was a new and big problem, sometimes in the past in a small place, but the first time we saw this so aggressively. Why? Maybe because the winter was so warm and also the weather in July and August were very humid and maybe also as it was a new variety from Asia - new in Europe over the past 2 years. We saw the problem 3 weeks before the harvest..everyone was on holiday..we were afraid..we did not know what had happened in the vine. We did a big sorting..one person sorted for 3 who picked. It was more complicated as the grapes could look ok but you smell the vinegar... sometimes you need to smell the grapes and it was not 100% successful. However it was lucky the VA goes in the fermentation..(the old vintners used to take a barrel with VA from one vintage and put it into the new vintage when it was fermenting). We measured the VA after fermentation and it was normal."

"I changed the vinification a little. I added selected yeast and I made no pre-ferment maceration - just in case, inside the grapes, the insect continues to produce acetic acid..and at the end I made a warm maceration.." So he increased the temperature to 38-40 degrees for two days after the sugar was fermented.

"For the rest the maturity was OK. We had about 12degrees natural and the acidity was OK. The MLF was very late from May until now in October. Maybe as I have air con in the cellar now and the MLF is later and slow."

"The racking has not been done. Some SO2 after the MLF in summer as I did not have time to rack. Some CO2 also... so I find the wine is more retarded."

"The pH is normal - from 3.4 - regional appellation to 3.6 for the Vosne-Romanee..so normal."

"If we had not had the problems of the flies it would have been normal yield...but we lost 10-15%. But the Hautes-Cotes no problems with drosophile."

Style: "For me it is an approachable wine but with body and fullness with ripe tannins and no aggressively. It will be good young, but will age 10 years."

"A good vintage, not a top vintage...a vintage to enjoy."

There are some excellent Hautes Cotes de Nuits here in white and red and of course Clos de Reas, always a lovely wine.

***Bourgogne Blanc, Hautes Côtes De Nuits, Cuvee Fontaine Saint Martin**

A cooler aroma, slight lemon; fresh and juicy and more savoury mineral. On the palate some tension. It is zesty and fruity, but savoury and stoney too. And it has a breadth as well.....this is a wine for a meal. "Yes," says Michel "it's very good with snails."

"Marl de Pernand...so it is like Pernand and the Corton hill...deep soil and yellow, not much stone, not rocky, but clay with chalk. I do skin contact for 24 hours...not usual in Burgundy. I like tis because it reduces the acidity (the K acts with the acidity and the pH increases)..and then the wine is richer as you get elements of the skin and this ages very well. I have made it like this for 20 years and I never have problem of oxidation and I think this is due to skin contact...though if I have botrytis I do not use skin contact..so I make it this way in 3 of 4 vintages."

Red

Bourgogne

From the parcel is the other side of the R74 in VR. Very nice juicy fruit; quite sprightly. The fruit is red and zesty..it is lively on the finish. Light and crunchy tannins. Appetising.

A note on Bourgogne, Hautes Côtes De Nuits

There was just one cuvee but Michel now makes two. He explains "I have 12 hectares, so I made 2 cuvees. I have always made 2 vinifications. I now own the total lieut-dit Fontaine Saint Martin - 7 hectares and 3 is in chardonnay (the wine above) and 4 in Pinot Noir. This parcel is steep and the sub soil is interesting as we have the sub soil of the mountain of Corton. Now I can say a monopole. It is different, it is more intense and more serous and more ageing potential and with more density." Michel a two year old barrel on the Cuvee Fontaine Saint Martin and a on year old barrel on the first cuvee if I understood correctly, but apart from that the vinification and ageing are the same

Bourgogne, Hautes Côtes De Nuits

Fresh and red and a touch of black fruit. High toned. Soft and fruity; plenty of red fruits, juicy and supple and energetic. Very nice forward fruity wine with sappy acidity at the end. These parcels are a little higher than Cuvee Saint Martin and south facing. 3 parcels.

***Bourgogne, Hautes Côtes De Nuits, Cuvee Fontaine Saint Martin**

It is facing E/S-E. The aroma is deeper and denser. This is much stricter. Pure tense and straight. Clipped at the edges, much more mineral and vibrant...put also more channelled and tense...More potential, less easy going..I like the tight finish.

Nuits-Saint-Georges

The cuvée of parcels on the Vosne side. A blend of parcels between Vosne and NSG. It is supple and smooth. A very Vosne style NSG. Soft and juicy dark fruit. Splashing and easy, but also very fresh. It is appetising and bright. A little rounded in the mid palate. The tannins are present and correct, supportive and twangy and fresh. Score 16

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Challiots**

The top soil is 1m deep - agile and the flint stones. This is deeper and richer and 'stronger' than the Vosne side NSG. It is quite compact and has a smoky dark note...colder in feel and a savoury cool sappiness on the finish..somewhat austere and certainly straight. "This cuvee ages very well" It is edgy. Score 16.25

***Morey-Saint-Denis, En La Rue De Vergy**

A lifted pure aroma.. pure and rippling, silky and elegant...fine minerality and tension. It hits that trebble note...pure and singing....salty finish. Love it. He bought is 20 years ago from the pervious owners of Clos de Lambray. The owner didn't like using the tractor here as it is steep, so he sold it to Michel. Just 4 barrels of MSD. He has 0.25 hec. Score 16.5

Vosne-Romanée

This has some seductive aromatics. Quite scented. plumptous and juicy. Elegant and appealing. It has a succulence and juiciness. Soft tannins, smooth texture. Summer fruits on the finish..which is fresh and just nicely long enough. "This is always a more approachable cuvee than the MSD" Score 16.15

Chambolle-Musigny

This is somewhat sumptuous on the attack..very juicy and and aromatic at first and then it tightens and the core is racy...tight and zesty and mineral and the tannins show a little more... there is a finesse and energy at the end. (this has just finished the MLF). score 16.25

10 barrels - he does not divide the parcel to vinify separately ..so he does not know which bit gives what. But all are old vines...some are are lower near the r74, "but rocks have been taken down from the combe and can be found all the way down to the R74."

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Premier Cru

Aux Vignes Rondes and Murgers. Dark fruits, brambles; succulent and juicy on the attack. A quite fleshy wine. Plenty of soft tannins. Ample middle. But darker and straighter on the finish. Touch of liquorice. Bit of a bite to the tannins, but an appetising, fresh bite after the lush fruit. It freshens at the end. This is just 4 barrels together...and the parcels are 200m apart and the same altitude. Score 18.

Vosne-Romanée, Aux Brulées

Seductive for about 2 seconds and then it tightens in. Straight, clipped and much more austere. You sense the ripeness, there is density and my goodness it is compact and contained. The 'richness' is cold and channelled and the finish is long and more savoury. A more difficult wine right now, but with potential. Score 18.5. (Finished MLF 1 month ago).

Michel says it is too closed and needs air...he bottles in August an elevage of 2 years. He put them in tank in April and then fines. He does this "after the pruning, so this is a good time. And in August I have finished the work in the vines..and so I can bottle...for my wines it is necessary to bottle late, the wines are closed young...the cellar is very cold and the evolution is slow and so I must bottle later. At the beginning when I worked with my father it was always 2 to 2 and a half years and now I have reduced a bit."

***Vosne-Romanée, Clos Des Réas**

The aroma is pure and straight. Silky texture and so refined. It is sensual and yet reserved...it is elegant and finely wrought. It has just a lovely balance and harmony...a long and fluid and fresh finish..it has its own personality which is apart. Balance and texture. Score 18.65

"It is always that Clos de Reas is open and Brulee is closed...or the opposite."

Clos de Vougeot

The vines are now 28 years old. An elegant expression of this terroir, supple, smooth and somewhat exuberant...very fruity..the juicy fruit covers the frame, but it is there behind...more muscle...it builds on the palate...it becomes larger in the mouth..but at the end fruity still. A more accessible Clos de Vougeots and I like it for being less burly and more elegant. score 19.

"It is always a cuvee which is easy to approach young."

Stockists

UK: A & B Vintners; Hayman, Barwell Jones Ltd.; Fine & Rare Wines; Harvey Nichols; Lay and Wheeler; Thorman Hunt

USA: Andomia Wines; Chambers & Chambers; Martin Scott Wines

Canada: Vins de Terroir Wine Selections

Website/Email

www.domaine-michel-gros.com

domaine-mgros@wanadoo.fr

Domaine Lamarche, Vosne-Romanée

Nicole says "For me it was difficult for the culture, but not for the harvest..we had to control the volatile acidity. The organic culture is a philosophy of work for me. I do not need to be certified." Harvested on the 16th.

"It had a balance of tartaric and malic..since 2010 in my vines I never have a problem of acidity. For 2015 for example I began the 10th..you had 2 choices in 2015 - you think you pick early for acidity or later for phenolic maturity." Nicole waited until after the rain and found she more acidity than before. "In 2014 I used a little chaptalisation to prolog the fermentation.

"I always adapt my work to the vintage and the appellation, but I always do a preferment maceration...I am always looking for fruit and finesse and power..but you have to be careful in 2014..if you punched down too much it would be vegetal..I taste my juice every day - so some pump over and some punch down." Long slow MLF. She does not cool them before barreling.

All is blended and waiting in in-ox vats. She bottled 3 wines before harvest.

"I am always looking for freshness, finesses and elegance." I have not visited this domaine every year. The last time was in 2011 vintage I think. I see a real evolution. Nicole was striving for the finesse and elegance in those vintages I have tasted and it was just eluding her...probably as she got the vineyards into shape..but now it is there. Just a delightful and refined flight of wines.

Bourgogne, Passetoutgrains

This is sweet and soft and very pretty. Soft tannins and acidity...but it is fresh. Raspberry fruits. Attractive for sure.

Bourgogne

Ripe strawberry fruits. Soft and easy and fruity. More body than the passetoutgrains and more structure. A delicate and juicy and very feminine Bourgogne.

***Bourgogne, Hautes-Côtes**

This has more tension. It is pure and quite fragrant. It has a silky texture..I like the freshness there is more of a fresh crunch...red cherry crunch to this wine. A notch up...

Vosne-Romanée

Perfumed and lifted...summer fruits. Subtle, juicy and delicate.. 'light' Vosne-Romanee...silky on the palate...light freshness at the end. Very pure..and fresh at the end...score 16

Vosne-Romanée, Les Chaumes

The palate is sweet and light and juicy...delicate and very aromatic...It skates across the palate. The finish is pure and tight and light and fresh....a delicate and precise Chaumes. I like the precision on the finish. It is good Chaumes, which can be a little underwhelming, but this is not at all. Score 18.15.

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots

A rich and supple palate; curvey and supple and sensual Suchots....it has the body and richness, but remarkably seductive for Suchots. Score 18.5

***Vosne-Romanée, La Croix Rameau**

This was bottled before harvest. Red and vivid fruit. The palate is also bright, smooth and silky, There is a depth to the texture...runs like a river of satin on the palate..threaded with freshness and smooth minerals...just a delight...to a lovely long, scented and sensual finish. This is refined and sensual. Score 18.65

Nicole says, "I bottled as I saw the moment..I did not want the wine to have more in oak...I wanted to capture the moment.."

Vosne-Romanée, Aux Malconsorts

This has a rich aroma. More spice..slightly exotic. Full and generous and velvet. There is a juicy depth to the wine. Tension and power for this has a firm core..a straight tension core which carries to the finish...but the fruit wraps around this firm core...very fresh and long and direct at the end. Score 18.75

"I would always like to keep in these more masculine appellations a more feminine touch...it is Pinot noir and should be seductive..."

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Cras**

Upright arresting red fruits and a slightly smoky note. A smooth silk to the texture, but under this there is a much cooler and more savoury, dark smoke, dark minerality. The finish is cool and biting and savoury with bitter almond kernel...very long. I like this a lot...It is as if Nicole would like to harness it and make it more feminine, but the terroir says no..I am grippy and cold and will stay that way! I like the tussle between the two. Score 18.5

Echezeaux

This is smooth and seductive and juicy. Urbane...flows elegantly on the palate, but it does have a tad of tension under the palate....I like the finish...pure and more sappy and fresh....a very nicely balanced wine. Score 18.95

Clos de Vougeot

1.30 hectares. Four parcels on the main road, one under the château, which is the largest and one to the south, which is the smallest.

A much bigger aroma. Broad and full and a touch burly. It is full, square in structure, but with some lovely sweet summer fruits drapes over this frame. The finish is cooler and more grippy and dense... fresh, long and powerful. The power comes after the fruit. Nicole shows her light touch, but the terroir is there...it is respected 19.35

Grands Echezeaux

This is deeper and darker on the aroma than the Echezeaux. The texture is richer there is a muscularity, but these bigger tannins are smooth and generous. A depth to the mid palate...more complex. The finish has purpose. There is an extra level of vigour here and power onto the finish...Score 19.4.

Nicole says, "I think Echezeaux is the baby and Grand Echezeaux the parent...with good maturity and velvet in Echezeaux...and the Grand Echezeaux has more tannins..and more power..so all is bigger..."

***La Grande Rue**

This is pure and lifted, but discreet... Ripe, but so delicate. An elegant and pure and harmonious palate. It is quiet and threaded with minerals. Straight and delicate but so very intense. What a lovely long finish...shimmers with minerals...I love the finish. A quiet, precise and pure wine...

"I think it has its own identity - feminine and discreet and a little of the finesses of Romanee-Conti..and maybe a bit of wider La Tache...it is complicated...some characteristics of all around...it is not exuberant wine..."

***La Grande Rue, Cuvée 1959**

This was the original La Tache parcel. Nicole now makes this small parcel separately - just 2 barrels. She ages it in 300 year old oak from the Fontainebleau forest.

This is smooth and alluring, but still discreet. There is a sumptuous silk to the palate; vigour and density and richness. It evolves on the palate revealing its vitality and density, but with no weight...It has a long and channelled and refined finish. Powerful and long. It is excellent...it has the power, while the main cuvee has the finesses.

Stockists

UK : Richard Walford (Agent)

USA: Domaine et Saveurs (Agent)

Domaine Du Comte Liger-Belair, Vosne-Romanée

Louis-Michel describes the season as 'weird'. "The spring was ok. The growing season went well but was tiring...we were more and more in the vineyards. We started harvest on the 15th. Yes we used the sorting table, but not that much. We made 350 litres of rose from the grapes we took off the sorting table. We selected some bunches for whole cluster - about 15% for some of the premier cru."

"Long settling one week to 10 days...so it is always fine lees. No need to rack as the lees are clean, so not until bottling. We never use SO2 before the racking for bottling." Louis-Michel uses just pump over.

"The wines showed well after the fermentation when were deciding to press, but when we had put them in barrels they really were not so nice and I was afraid - I'm serious the village wines was fine, but the premier cru. But it was like this in 2013. I think from 2013 we have the results of the biodynamics and now when they go into the barrels they take more time to focus..yes something to do with the biodynamic farming, particularly before the MLF. The MLF was later in April and May and then they started coming round."

"A mix of the 2002, in that it is ripe but not over ripe, and the 2010, for the balance and the freshness."

"I love the freshness of this vintage, and I like the '10s for this too, but the 2014s have more ripeness of tannins, which is like the 2002..this is not lush in any way."

White

Nuits-Saint George, Clos des Grands Vignes

Chardonnay was grafted in 2010 onto rootstock of vines planted in the 80s. Louis-Michel deliberately oxidises the juice at the press so it goes in the barrel quite brown..which should make it more resistant to oxygen later. Just a touch of sulphur in the summer. The vineyard was being run on biodynamic lines before...and is now under the full biodynamic regime..

Very spicy, ripe pear fruit aromatics. Rich and rounded and generous. The fruit is exotic with notes of lychee and pineapple; fresh underneath.

Reds

Vosne-Romanée

An expressive wine, plenty of rich fruit, ripe tannins, very vibrant and juicy. Exuberant, but also rather elegant. Blend of 3 barrels of 350l...there is some spice and an exotic note at the end, maybe it was just the end of the white in my glass! Score 16.25 From 2018

Vosne-Romanée, La Colombière

Below the house is a 0.6 hectare parcel of 60-80 year old vines. The soil is clay. It is full and rounder. Again juicy, but with darker fruit, more depth and silk to the tannins. Plump, but vibrant under the rich fruit.. and more refined. Score 16.5 from 2018

Vosne-Romanée, Clos Du Chateau

Floral aromas waft enticingly from the glass. A rounded palate, rounded with aromatics. It has an airy volume...volume to the palate with no weight. The aromatics are heady - rose garden on a summers day. Alluring. Score 16.5 from 2017/18

Vosne-Romanée, Les Chaumes

This is a really tiny 50 year old parcel of 0.12 hectares, well placed just below La Tâche (top north/west position on a more limestone soil. 15% positive selection of whole bunch on the sorting table.

High toned red aroma. Upright. Crushed red cherries on the front palate; sit up and take notice. Refined tannins, energetic across the palate; vivid fruit. Fresh with the crunch of the whole cluster on the finish...an engaging grassy bite which lengthens the wine.. Score 17.85. From 2018

Vosne-Romanée, Les Suchots

Darker and more reserved on the nose. Rich, full and broad. This has a grip on the palate, a gentle but firm grip. There is tension here too and a certain smooth muscle. Dark cherry fruit and a note of fennel at the end. I do like the fact than Louis Michel likes bitterness...for this has that good appetising bitter note, as do many of the wines...It makes this richer wine more intriguing. Score 18.5. From 2019

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Petits Monts**

Delicately scented in the glass and perfumed on the palate with white flowers. It is subtle and refined. Gauzy, soft and elegant. It is charming and wafts across the palate; balletic...delicate and rippling on the finish...just lifted with a hint of almond kernel at the end... Score 18.65. From 2017

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Cras**

This has the intriguing note of smoke: puff of gun powder on the palate too. There is tension and a cold grip. It is assertive, well defined and pacy. Savoury wine, somewhat austere with a cold direct finish. 18.5. From 2019

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Clos des Grandes Vignes.

Full, dark and juicy upfront. Quite a powerful wine. Somewhat muscular, but svelte. Under the richness the coolness and mineral and a spicy lift. Rich and cool. Score 18. From 2019

***Vosne-Romanée, Les Reignots**

Delicate and lifted; airy perfume with a touch of ripe wild berries. A little shy. This is satin smooth onto the palate; light athletic body - trim, but with a richness of texture and lovely depth. On the end a note of cocoa - bitter sweet with the fruits...fresh and straight and long. Score 18.85. from 2019

***Echézeaux**

This is an energetic Echezeaux. They can be so debonair, smooth, deep and elegant. This is all those things, but with a energetic current underneath. It engages. Score 19.25

***La Romanée**

This has wonderful intensity on the finish, which is exquisite...perfumed and focused and with a fine glimmering thread of minerality to the very end.

Stockists

UK: Justerini & Brooks; Richards Walford.
USA: Vinalia, CA; Wines Unlimited.
UK & USA: Contact Selections Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France.

Domaine Méo-Camuzet, Vosne-Romanée

"A kind of hatched seasons, warm, cold and wet in the end everything went well, but somehow this season had an effect as the vines seemed to have stopped maturing...some low sugar levels even though the weather was nice..even in September, when we checked the sugar level in the grapes, it was the same a week later...the tannins evolved but not the sugar. They were between 12 to 12.5...most at 12.5. We chaptalised them a little. Started picking on the 13th with the Clos Vougeots as ever and Corton. I had anticipated something a little higher, that's all."

"The acidity is decent.. at harvest above 5-6g and pH 3.10-3.2, but they changed a lot after MLF. We are below 4 around TAs of 3.3 - so there was sizeable malic acidity and now the pH varies - 3.6 relative high pHs.."

"It is extremely average.."

"We did some green harvest in 2014..we wanted a decent yield this year, but we knew we had to green harvest..record yield of 35hl/ha in Fixin..we needed no saignee. No sorting....5% that's it. Not much in unripe grapes."

Drosophile - "We went into the vineyards and de-selected and this kept it in check. There was some botrytis too, which was associated in some way with it but in general the crop was sound and healthy..very little problem, and in the end the VA was very low."

Jean-Nicolas is racking less this year. He may not rack some of the wines until bottling. "2014 relatively slow MLF latest in August...but this is a moment of more SO₂...but not like a vintage such as 2009 when you have to be very vigilant with possible VA. He notices that organic spraying does increase the level of reduction in the wines as he sees more of this in the domaine wines, versus the negoce."

"I think we have nice wines. I am confident in the wines..we are looking for balance..we can have extremes. They are not so rare as they were in the past, but this is nice and balanced. 2013 was so much more difficult...the 2014 was easier and nice quantities..good to have more fruit..it is good to see the vineyards producing somethings..not to be on a downward trend."

Meo-Camuzet, Frere et Soeur

Marsannay

The same fruit for the past 3 years. They have over a hectare themselves which remains constant. This has been racked and blended. From the Couchey side. Red fruits. Quite light and pretty. Light tannins. Slightly lean maybe....they had to leave this until the end of harvest to get the ripeness.

Two very nice wines from Fixin.

*Fixin

From a steady supplier. High parcel situated to the North. This has sweet light cherry notes; fresh and juicy. I prefer this to the Marsannay. Silky tannins...sweet and fresh on the finish. It is a charmer indeed.

Fixin, Clos du Chapitre

This premier cru has a nice richness, some flesh. It is dense and juicy and energy and mineral. It is much more compact than the village wine and is tense on the finish. here.

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Cras

Ripe raspberry fruit. It was harvested on the 13th as it gets ripe. Sweet and fruity and rounded. Quite light on intensity. The parcel is high, just below the forest. This has very ripe aromatics. The minerality comes in at the end. Score 17.5 (They are responsible for everything in the vineyard).

Domaine Wine

***Vosne-Romanée**

Les Communes and some Les Barreaux which is harvested late and has high acidity although this year the pH is quite high for this vineyard.

Nicely perfumed and pure with slight spice. Sweet fruit. It is silky and rounded and juicy. It is nicely aromatic..this sweeps elegantly and with minerality to the end. A light, aromatic and elegant Vosne-Romanee. Score 16

Vosne-Romanée, Les Chaumes

There are ripe redcurrant notes...and spice. This is silky and elegant and lightly rounded. A light freshness under the palate. Slight grip at the end...it is quite soft and aromatic and finishes on a more lifted note. Slight spice at the end too. Score 17.75.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Boudots

10% whole cluster. A deep and inviting nose. Note of dark chocolate with hedgerow fruits. It is ripe, nicely concentrated; quite sweetly rounded and very easy with its soft tannins. There is a freshness and crushed minty, spice character on the finish. Score 17.85

Jean-Nicolas says he has been 'playing' with this wine for a few years "in 2014 it barely reached 31 hl/ha and it never has much acidity and I feel the sweetness however pleasant didn't really reveal the full potential so I added a little stem to reveal the potential and increase the finish."

Corton, Perrieres

First crop was in 2009. "We have to harvest later because sugar levels are not high and we have a lot of minerality and we need ripeness for flesh. We use a little stems...but I would have liked to harvest a day or two later, but we had an issue of the drosophile...and we had to manage this." Deep red fruits on the nose. The palate is tense and straight. it is channelled. The fruit has ripeness and aromatics. There is tension and a cold core to the wine. Neat edges and a long cold mineral, vigorous finish. Score 18.75

***Corton, Clos Rognets**

More power on the nose. A full, strong and dense wine. It is muscular, smooth and deliciously rich with a compact palate. It powers to the finish. Plenty of vigour and intension...a longer finish. score 19.25

***Clos De Vougeot**

Expressive dark fruits aroma. Very spicy, slightly exotic and ripe. Full on the attack. A wine of volume, but is not weighty. It has much breadth, but is nicely contained. There is a sweetness of

fruit here. 12.5, so it is not heavy in anyway. It is fresh. The tannins are more refined and quite spicy and there is a tension and spice at the end of the palate. Score 19.45

This sample was a blend of the large parcel below the castle and Le Grand Maupertius. Sometimes Jean-Nicolas releases the 2 cuvees separately. The vineyards are very different..in the big parcel near the castle the soil is very shallow..you hit rock quickly. while in the other part you can dig 2 metres...sedimentary soils."

Vosne-Romanée, Brûlées

Lovely depth and intensity to the aroma. Sweet and vibrant and juicy. There is a happy energy here, but there is tension under the palate. Focused and pure and straight and quite powerful on the finish. The finish is long and taut. Score 18.65

Vosne-Romanée, Cros Parentoux

As always a slow evolution...longer slower MLF...finished in August. Harvested on the 20th. It is spicy with warm floral notes... Crushed purple velvet up front. (Always an acidic wine pH 3.12 at harvest, which is high for this climat!). There is purple fruit enveloping the palate, while the core is channelled. Lots of structure. This has plenty of freshness and intensity and a vibrancy. Actually this really quite strict on the finish. Score 19.

Richebourg

Red fruits a certain luminosity on the nose (harvested on the 17th). Seductive and come hither on the front palate., but then more stand offish..dense and intense, with a delightful texture, gorgeous satin ribbon rippling through the mid palate. This is a big step up. There is a cool vibration on the finish. Score 19.65

"I realise we have a Richebourg which is cooler and more austere than other Richebourg and sometimes it is very seductive, but has a coolness which does not show in the figures, a freshness that needs some time and I think in 2014...it may take the usual 10 years."

Stockists

UK: Berry Bros & Rudd; Fields Wine Merchants; Richards Walford;
USA: Boston Wine Co.; Garnet Wines; Kermit Lynch.

Domaine Mugneret-Gibourg, Vosne-Romanée

Marie-Christine and Marie-Andrée. "We thought it would be an early vintage as the flowering was the beginning of June, but we harvested third week September. No big problems, but we were more anxious because of the drosophile than we needed to be."

"It's a classic vintage and as it finished MLF early, we can taste it more easily. We waited a long time for the racking until the end of July..for all the appellations..."

"Normal production and we are very happy for this...more like the yields of the 2014"

"The skins were normal. As the summer was cool, we waited until we had the maturity...it was a slow maturity...it is different in the maturity to 20015. It's a more classic maturation. The flowering was early and so it was more than the 100 days...on the 15th August. We had to switch on the heating in the in August it was so cold..it is a small detail, but it reminds me of how cool it was," says Marie-Andree. "Remembering the fresh summer, we see why the fruit is red."

"Before October we compared it with 2007 - a very pleasant and pinot vintage with the expression of terroir, but now it is different - more like 2002 maybe...For the moment I think 2002..as they may change over the second winter...the freshness and precision and complexity...sometimes the wines can be very different before and after the second winter... but the MLF was finished a while ago."

*Bourgogne

In 1935 the vines for the Bourgogne were declassified from Vosne-Romanée status, but Georges Mugneret's father always maintained that he was happy to have some good Bourgogne as an entry level to the portfolio. The yield 30-35 hl/ha and this is Bourgogne.

Lovely fresh fruit; juicy and red and bright. Light tannins. Plenty of energy. Fresh. A lot of wine for a Bourgogne.

*Bourgogne 2013

About the 2013s - This was bottled in March...the Clos Vougeots was the last to be bottled in early June.

This is leaner, more zesty and mineral than the 2014. It is edgier. Pounces on the finish. Substance and energy. Plenty of fruit too. I like it. Top notch.

*Vosne-Romanée

Perfumed, light and elegant. Silky texture - pure and rippling. It is lively and fresh. Red cherry fruit...zest and spice at the end and a touch of almond kernel..a slight bitterness which I like. Score 16.5

Vosne-Romanée 2013

Deep red fruit ...more spice. The tannins are silky. There is more acidity than in the 2014 - marked tension and nervousity ...and sappier on the finish. Score 16.5

"The MLF took a long time in 2013...and the wine is different...I always thought energy with the 2013s," remarks Marie-Andree.

*Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Chaignots

1.2 hectares. Alluring perfume; floral notes. Red fruits. There is richness of bramble fruit too and a floral note on the palate. Zesty, but also elegant....the fruit glides across the palate. It has

energy and it 'light' and just slightly spicy. This has the freshness...lively to the end...Score 18.25. It is delightful...From 2019

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Chaignots 2013

This is pure - dark fruit and cold on the nose. It has a straight, lively and channelled palate. A tight core to the wine. The floral notes are of white flowers and there is a sappy tension and energy on the finish. Score 18.35

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Vignes-Rondes

"We have just 0.25 - so we have 4 to 5 barrels. 4 is the limit. Under 4 is too difficult"

This is pump and rich on the nose. More of a purple aroma. Full and juicy up front. A broad and splashing palate. More tannins, slightly robust and certainly less refined than the Chaignots. More gutsy. It has an exuberance though, which is engaging. Score 18.25.

"The difference in altitude is really small., "says Marie-Christine, "one is above the other..8 to 10 metres...and the soil is different. ..it is heavier... the days after a storm you can wear shoes in Chaignots and you need boots in VR. It is windy in Chaignots and sunnier as the sunrise catches the slope."

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Feusselottes

Really ripe raspberry fruit. Expressive. Satin smooth; really quite ripe with a smooth thickness to the texture, a viscosity..and good depth. Here again a bitter savoury appealing note which carries to the finish..a very light note of aniseed.... Score 18.2.

Chambolle-Musigny, Les Feusselottes 2013

Less ripe raspberry and more ripe red currant and summer fruits on the nose. Lifted and tense strike. It is fine and tight; the tannins are finely grained and powdery and there is an undercurrent of tension..I like the bright and bitter snappiness to the end..it bites...it is longer than the 2014. Score 18.25

Echezeaux

Lovely clear aroma. Fresh and pure. Fluid and silky. This has sapidity...a lovely flowing freshness with the fruit..and an energetic finish. It has the warmth of the vintage and a cool energy and freshness. On the ball. I like this. Score 19.25.

"Yes says Marie-Andree, "a combination of cool and warm - like the weather - warm in July and at the beginning and the August it was cool....31st August it was cold and dark! No light and I was waiting...and then it changed. The date of harvest was very difficult to choose..we hesitated between the 2nd and 3rd weekends in September, but as we wind and light and it was not too hot in September we could wait...we gained phenolic ripeness ...we do not do a lot of analysis - but it was the taste of the grapes...the skins tasted riper."

Echezeaux 2013

Pure, lively and energetic. It has tension and a swiftness on the palate. It has less easy charm than the 2014; but it has a tauter, firmer structure, more liquorice black bite to the palate. A complex wine. Score 19.4

***Ruchottes-Chambertin**

Up-toned and spicy. It has vivacity and tension. On the attack it has vivid and lively fruit too. It has energy and zest and purpose. A tension to the core. There is the cold minerality; the sappy stoney savoury note on the long finish. A lovely finish...salty at the end. "The young parcel brings the exuberance of the fruit I think," says Marie-Andree. Score 19.25

***Ruchottes-Chambertin 2013**

Up-toned. Haughty. On the attack silky, pure and tight; it is flighty and has a lively sweetness and purity. It;s lovely and lively and even more elegant than the 2014. Very fine tannins..and a lovely purity to the finish...you taste the minerality of the soil, but in a fine way...very precise...Score 19.35

Clos De Vougeot

After Ruchottes this is a much bigger, broader and riper aroma. Strangely the palate is sweeter at first than the nose would suggest, but the mid palate delivers density and power and muscle. It has quite a lot of brute force on the finish. Energy, compact but not heavy in any way. A savoury sweetness at the end. Score 19.25

“and we found the liquorice at the end with the crunch,” says Marie Andree and Marie-Christine.

Clos De Vougeot 2014

Dense and full aroma, but not rich. The palate is juicy and full and generous fruit covers the burly frame. Sweetness at the and of the palate; an unexpected ripeness...and juiciness. The balance is delicious. 19.3.

Stockists

UK: H & H Bancroft; Berkmann Wine Cellars; Haynes, Hanson & Clark; Lay & Wheeler Ltd.; Lea & Sandeman; Howard Ripley.

USA: Esquin Imports Inc.; Ideal Wine & Spirits Co. Inc.; North Berkeley Imports; Michael Skurnik Wines; The Stacole Co. Inc.; Vintner Select; The Wine Company.

Domaine De La Romanée-Conti, Vosne-Romanée

I tasted with the genial Bertrand de Villaine and a charming couple from Minnesota who had been buying DRC since before the Ark.

Thoughtfully Aubert de Villaine puts down his thoughts about the vintage on paper and these are a few extracts from his notes.

"Flowering was extremely early, quite spread out due to the cold nights, but complete. We observed millerandage, especially in older vineyards, but no coulure this year."

The report describes the violent hail storms of the 28th June, causing devastating damage to Beaune, Pommard and Volnay. Immediately after the storms came a short heat wave which scalded the most exposed berries. Many berries fell unaided and the rest were sorted at harvest.

"July brought all a vigneron does not want..out of season cold; a significant lack of sun and much rain, humidity and traces of botrytis."

Despite the inclement weather the grapes progressed slowly to ripeness, although the veraison lasted so long that the domaine observed a marked difference in the ripeness of the berries.

However he was clearly pleased as punch with September: "All the best a vigneron can wish for....North wind, dry and sunny weather, moderate heat...the maturation accelerated and almost exploded as the vineyards were making the most of the water reserves accumulated in July and August."

The "last anger of the Gods" as he describes it, was a big storm on the 19th. It came with the threat of botrytis which was somehow rebuffed. Thick skins may have helped...and a last lovely few days finished off the maturation process happily.

They harvested here from the 16th to the 24th; pausing for the storm.

Bertrand recalls the fruit having, "a bit more millerandage. Small light and concentrated berries.. The skin have stronger skins - an adaptation of the vine to protect the seeds as a reaction to global warming maybe."

The report describes the red grapes having "wonderful structure, colour and taste...and a good quantity." They had more vats in 2014 than in 2009.

"2014 has a good yield really, much more than in 2013," says Bertrand who also tells me that 20-30% are destemmed for all the cuvee in 2014. He feels that the whole bunch is so important to have everything, "this is the real representation of the fruit."

They are doing some experiments with 2 sizes of barrels - other than the 228l - to assess the effect of the lees I think, but I presume also the oxygen exchange and the oak itself. They have a feuilletes and larger format too. This is an aside; the harvest is in the traditional 228l. We tasted from Francois Freres 100% new oak.

Nothing is racked. It is racked only before bottling. Bertrand feels that they should not rack them, "it is too aggressive". Interestingly at DRC only 3 to 4 barrels are blended together for bottling, not the entire production. They feel it is less disturbing for the wine than combining all together.

Bertrand remarks on hearing my thought on the quietness of Romanee-Conti (see tasting note below); "We are all very Zen. We are not rushing around. We are a little detached in a way, just making the wines peacefully. We are in no hurry.. Consider, that decisions Aubert made about vineyards 25 years ago are now coming to fruition. For example this year is the first that La Tache is all planted; not all in production that will take another few years, but the planting has taken years and years. With Romanee Saint Vivant we have made such changes over time - there are great differences here between 2000 and 2010."

In 2000 Bertrand came back to Burgundy. He made contact with his uncle Aubert and decided to go the lycee to study and effectively re-train for a life in wine. In 2008 he joined the domaine part time and from 2011 he has been here full time. "This is a wonderful life," he comments. "It is a life, not a responsibility (in answer to the question posed by my fellow guests if his role was a big responsibility). "The interest of the domaine is more important than the people," he adds. And you can tell this is no glib response. He is clearly thoroughly chuffed to devote his life in service to this family domaine.

Bertrand's other passion is cooking. He loves making pastry. If he has a problem to solve or something is worrying him he bakes in the evening. As someone who also loves cooking and baking, I can quite understand why he bakes to relax and find a calm place to think.

He speaks a little about the importance of local produce for his cooking and links this to wine. "A new generation of winemakers want everything as pure as possible. We are looking for the best raw materials. It is like food. We want local production. You take the essentials from around you."

Of the vintage he adds: "I feel that with all the wines, they are in place and in order and I think that is part of the warming of the climate. There are no angles. I think this is a very fruity vintage."

It was a delightful tasting.

Corton

This is a blend of Les Renardes, Les Bressandes and Le Clos du Roi. Racked before the harvest. 60% whole bunch. They acquired the vineyards in November 2008 and 2009 was the first vintage. They are revitalising the vineyards with spot planting and re-grafted as well as pulling out some Bressandes and replanting. The blend of the three appellations goes directly into the barrel. They started with 100% new oak, but have pulled back to around 70%.

Surprisingly perfumed on the nose. An abundance of sweet fruit on the front palate. Juicy in the middle. Full-bodied, but soft wine. Gorgeous fruit; very plumpuous. There is good energy here too and the underlying acidity marries well with the rich fruit. Score 19.25 From 2020/

Echézeaux

Smooth black fruit aroma; almost slightly chocolatey. Satin-smooth it slides seductively across the palate. The acidity is lovely here too; quite piquant tannins. Hints of dark chocolate. A fresh and spicy finish. It has an easy harmony. Score 19.35. From 2020

Bertrand comments: "Here it is close to the bedrock and I feel this thin top soil is part of the immediacy of the terroir expression. It is thin soil and so the roots can tap into the bedrock and the terroir character."

Grands Echézeaux

This is spicy and purple on the nose. Creamy notes. (Maybe because the MLF had finished recently). This much more retarded than Echezeaux. Dense on the attack. Rich, dark slightly smoky and spicy...but with a hint of ripe strawberry. It is more compact, coiled and colder than the Echezeaux. An assertive finish. Score 19.5. From 2024

"Here you feel the wine is in process...takes its time," adds Bertrand.

***Romanée-Saint-Vivant**

DRC have 80% of Romanee Saint-Vivant. 5.5 hectares. The remainder is divided between 6 or so other owners.

Delightfully perfumed - with hints of ripe raspberries on a summer afternoon. Gorgeous texture; silky-smooth and so supple. The acidity is woven into the fruit. It ripples across the palate swathed in aromas. It is a very sensual wine with an aromatic and balletic finish. Score 19.9. From 2020/22

He loves this and says "it is very lifted..at the end makes you go to the skies..."

Richebourg

Plush on the nose. Deep and velvety upfront to a compact, muscular, but so very honed palate. Smooth seductiveness combine with power and density. It is layered. The finish is long and vigourous. A toned wine. Score 19.85. From 2024

La Tâche

There is a liquorish note and hints of dark cherry. Slightly exotic spices..just a waft of the spice market. On the palate it is rich and full-bodied, but markedly reserved. The tannins are deep, taut, firm. There is coiled vigour and battened down power. The finish is strict and has great tension. From 2024

Bertrand comments "La Tache is no more a firework wine; it is not as explosive. The richebourg on the other hand was always more reserved and now is more luscious."

***La Romanee-Conti**

This is delicate, fine and pure on the nose with hints of violets and peonies. It is discreet onto the palate - it glides silky and very quiet. Here one finds purity and such refinement. It is seamless. Perfect equilibrium. Finish is superb and gathers in intensity, but with remarkable subtly. All is quiet. A wine of great finesses. Score 20. From 2024

Stockists

UK: Contact the UK agents: Corney & Barrow. John Armit Wines; Berry Bros & Rudd; Eldridge Pope; Fine & Rare Wines Ltd.; Justerini & Brooks; Lay & Wheeler; Planet Wine Ltd.; Reid Wines.
USA: Wilson Daniels Ltd.

Domaine Jean Chauvenet, Nuits-Saint-Georges

Christophe Drag: "We are lucky with the 2014. The '04s have not been good for us in the past - '64, '74, '94 and of 2004, but this 04 was the exception."

"We had enough sun and rain. Flowering was from 5th July. No mildew or oidium. It was easy. We started harvest 13th September and finished on 18th in the sunshine. The temperature was 12-13 degrees in the morning and 23 degrees in the afternoon. I cooled some cuvee."

"45-48 hl/ha so good juice. We have not had this this since 09, but the character is different with much more freshness."

"The acidity is good. Tartaric 5-5.5 and the malic between 2.3 and 2.7. The MLF was slow. It ended in August. Racked first in September. We had no lees the wine had eaten it all. The debourgage is always 7 to 10 days and so we have 10 litre of lees in each barrel, but for some reason in 2014 it was almost all gone when we racked, just 2 litres maybe."

Christophe uses a cold pre-fermentation for a week and this help the colour...10-12 degrees. "In 2014 just a small punching down - more of an infusion."

"The 2014 vintage was unexpected, as the 04s have been so difficult...it has been a great surprise. Good balance and energy. Crunchy red cherry fruit."

"A little like 2001 for the energy and the 2002 for the structure."

"When we have freshness with pinot noir, each parcel is very distinct. I prefer the 2014 to 2009. The 2009 maybe great for Burgundy in the world, but it is heavy wine. You cannot finish the bottle, but 2014 yes I like the freshness, the balance, the black and red fruits and the stones and spice...and that there is a big difference in the north to the south side."

***Bourgogne hit**

Rich, dark and ripe aroma. Full and expressive. Sweet fruit, smooth and generous. Very nicely full and juicy with a fresh and sweet finish. 1 parcel around the estate. This is spot on.

Nuits-Saint-Georges

Three parcels on the north side - Petit Charmotte, Saint Jacques and Allots. Ripe forest fruits. Sweet and slightly smoky. Quite elegant and plumply rounded and lifted at the end. 25% new oak... Allier forrest. Finish is nicely lifted. Score 15.85. From 2018

Vosne-Romanée

"South of V/R Aux Raviolles next to Grivots. the earth is grey..not brown, no stone. just a little sand and no stones..80cm deep." This is sweet and rounded and quite luscious up front but with a dark and firm, robust core. It has a firm finish and good freshness. Certainly a sturdy Vosne-Romanee. Score 15.75. From 2018

***Nuits-Saint-Georges Lavières**

6 and half barrels this year so he made it separably.

Sand and gravel of 60 to 70cm depth and then lave; small stones. This is the oldest parcel in the estate - 1936. This is floral on the nose. It is subtle, delicate with a silky texture and fine grained tannins and a floral note. It flows easily and harmoniously. I much prefer this to the village blend. Score 16.5

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Aux Argillats**

Youngest vineyard at the domaine planted in 1991. The row orientation is important as it is north south, so despite the fact the vineyard is south facing, the sun does not hit the grapes and they never 'cook'. 3 barrels - one new. It is sweet and dark and pure. It is succulent, energetic and ripe, but quite straight too and has a grip and freshness on the finish. The tannins are smoothly firm. It's a very nicely balanced wine. Score 17.95. From 2018 They also get the influence of the combe and its fresh wind, so it is fresh.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Damodes

Black and purring and dark chocolate on the nose. Milk chocolate on the palate though, creamy texture and ample bodied. Soft and rich with nothing ponderous. It is relaxed and open. On the finish it is fresh and you get more of a zesty tannic bite - bitter chocolate at the end and a vibrant note. Very engaging. Charmer. Score 18.15 From 2018

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Boussetots

This is rather surly on the nose, full and broad with quite a chunky frame. It is a big wine. The tannins are robust. It is dark and slightly chewy. It will take time to knit. the most rustic on the north side. Score 17.65. From 2019

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Rue De Chaux**

East south east facing. small stone here. This is sweet and smooth and juicy. It is full and succulent, but elegant and very nice and fresh. Ripe but with tension. some spice too and it finishes very energetically. It tightens in and becomes focused. A lovely balance here. Score 18.25. From 2018/19

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Poulettes

16.9 ares. He does not always make this. Not in 2012. Terrace with stones and if it is hot the stones retain the heat and give it during the night. "So we tend to harvest first to keep the freshness." It gets very hot in the summer and also the first to flower. Just 4 or 5 growers here. There is a big wall behind and this concentrates the heat too. Quite an exotic nose. It is sweet and full. A thick texture to the wine. Deep dark fruit, prunes and christmas spices. It is very rich and exotic. It is ripe, but had well defined edges. Somewhat savoury and stony on the finish. The minerality underscores the wine. Score 18.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Perrières**

This is just below Les Poulettes.

Floral aromas. high toned and more delicate after the nose on the Poulettes. slim, trim and pure. This is elegant and refined. Streams across the palate. Quite balletic for a NSG. Flows on dark fruit and cool minerals. There is some finesse. Smooth mineral finish. Lovely long finish. "We have the wind here, and not in Poulettes, to keep the freshness." Straight and well defined. I really like this. Score 18.65. From 2019

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Vaucrains**

Dark and rich and compact aroma. Ripe blackcurrant fruit. Full immediately on the front palate. Rich, dark and dense. Very layered and compact. Lots of dark matter; it has a coal-like minerality, a savouriness with the sweetness. A bunched vigour. It is really very good. Score 18.75. From 2020

Stockists

UK: Richards Walford; Berry Brothers
USA: Russel Hermann

Domaine Henri Gouges, Nuits-Saint-Georges

"The 2014 was more classic than 2012 and 2013. The work was easier in the vineyards, working the soil, managing the vine..in 2013 it was difficult to find good days for spraying etc..we would have a few days of good weather in 2014 and then some rain...so it was easier. April and May were drier than normal - just a little - and then mid August more rain and then warm - and why some vineyards could have more acetic bacteria. We had no oidium, very little botrytis, very little 3-5%..but it was very important to select the fruit - and we were careful with the drosophile near fruit trees and houses.

Started harvest 15th September. The level of rain was higher in August but the botrytis did not spread..we decided to wait a little - for the phenolic maturity. At the domaine we have grass in the rows, so each year low yield but good competition with the weather...in the 2015 vintage maybe too much competition. We have quality.

"The yield was more normal with 28hl/ha for Vaucrains - to 36hl/ha for village. (2015 is 21hl/ha - 26hl/ha). We never try to have 40hl/ha. We cannot have 50 and get the structure only in a vintage like 2005 or 09. So we always prune the vineyards to have a small potential. We do not want to take any risks. For many years we have preferred to concentrate in the vineyards and not the winery."

"For a few years with the new winery we can control the extraction more accurately. We could see the colour of the wine very quickly. It was dark in a few days. We did not make too long a vinification as I wanted elegant and fine tannins..the extraction was easier and quicker than in 2013 for example...we finished at a higher temperature to fix colour and tannins...32 degrees when 1000 density just for 5 to 6 days. (usually 28-30 for the fermentation). Not much pigeage - just 2 a day and one pump over. They have been 100% de-stemmed as usual."

"Everything is in barrel, but we have already started to rack the cuvees..usually ageing is 16-20 months, but exceptionally for this vintage we have lovely fruit and an accessible vintage and I am afraid to leave them too long and maybe the wine will close. So I will age the wines less this year."

"It is not easy to compare - yes with the weather, but not with the same quality. I do not feel there is another vintage. Maybe with 2002 for the structure - maybe as accessible as 2007, but not with the same style. Not 2006. Not 2005 - beautiful but very closed. 2011 a different style... the phenolic ripeness was better in 2014 than in 2011...the concentration of sugar was high in 2011 so we made an early harvest...so it was different. It has a bigger structure than 2008. Maybe we can say as accessible as 2007 and 2011, but different."

"The style is accessible - the acidity level is good...it is good to have wines which are more approachable more quickly than usual. The ripeness was very good, but the structure of the tannins gives the wine a potential for longevity...the 2008 it good now, while the window for the 2014 will be longer. I don't think it will close. It is a more classic vintage."

"I much prefer this to the 2009."

Greg has a light touch. He has been following a path since he took over from his father and uncle, modifying the domain style, not losing its identity, but certainly making it more elegant. There was a bit of a transitional stage, but now he has arrived. A lovely flight of wine.

***Bourgogne**

Two parcels one on the top of the hill and the other on the far south. This is bright and pure and zesty. Lively red fruits, crunchy red cherry. Bright and pretty. Very nice indeed.

Nuits-Saint-Georges

9 parcels all between the middle to the south. This has deep red cherry fruit; it is straight, quite tense. Nice clipped edges... pure and bright. Quite peppery tannins. It has a touch of sinew to the tannin. I like it. Channelled and fresh and red. So this will be bottled a little earlier to keep the freshness. Score 16

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Chaignots**

It is quite perfumed, floral. Light footed, vivid fruit; the tannins are finely grained. It is delicate, fresh and pure. The finish is light and slightly floral...it wafts to the finish. Score 18.35

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Chaines Cartaux

This by contrast is on the far south side, above Les Saint-Georges on quite a steep slope. Chaines are stones and cartaux is a small barrel. This is always reduced. They have tried everything and this is the way it is...until it has had a year or two in bottle. The texture is smooth as silky. It has dark fruit; it is elegant and fine. the freshness is woven into the palate. Like satin and smooth... very charming...it is not very south side really. "It never has the structure of the south side. There is sand here and this is different to the other parcels." this always needs time in bottle as it is reduced for some time. Score 18

From 2009

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Clos Des Porrets Saint-Georges

3.5 hectares of Clos des Porrets, "It is a good representation of NSG strict and straight."

Deep red fruits on the aroma. Upright. It is full with quite a ridged structure. The tannins are firm. Ripe fruit, plenty of fruit the middle....but not quite filling the big frame The acidity is there too. It is quite robust, but not heavy, lifted and fresh still. A second winter to enrich the palate would be good. Score 18.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Pruliers

Slightly prune fruit. Dark and spicy; full and rich. This is a big boned wine; slightly tarry note to the tannins; Slightly smokey. I like the juiciness splashing to the fruit in the mid palate...this year, fresher in the mouth than the prune on the nose. The balance with the sweet fruit is very good.. The finish is long and fresh. Score 18.45

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Vaucrains**

Rich, dense, vivid, dark and pure fruit. Very expressive. Sweet on the attack. It slips quite quietly for Vaucrains and so elegantly on to the palate and then it grips more. It like the compact mid palate...but elegantly done - the style has really changed at this domaine - it is a lovely finely layered palate, strong wine, but elegant. Black and smoky. the tannins are smooth and finer than in the past. Score 18.5

"For today it is difficult to keep a bottle 25 years, as we had to do in the past at the domaine, so I have really tried to have this accessibility to the wine and to keep the freshness and to be careful with the tannins. I do not want to lose the identity of the domaine...but also the distinction of each terroir. We make the same work in the vineyards and in the cellar for the Bourgogne to the Les Saint George so each express the terroir first."

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Saint-Georges**

Sweet dark fruit aroma; rather refined. Lovely concentration of fruit on the front palate; satin across the palate. A lovely harmony and quiet precision to the palate. Subtle and seductive and just a delight. A wonderfully long smooth and intense mineral finish. Much longer. Score 19.

***Nuits-Saint-Georges, Les Saint-Georges 2013**

Bottled in February. Red cherry fruit, sweet and energetic and a lovely vibration on the palate. It is very zesty and pure and the minerality is very evident... very precise. A sophisticated wine. Score 19.25.

White

Bourgogne Blanc

1500 bottles - "you have to be careful with the yield so you have to keep in check." The palate is savoury and salty, pear and stony - straight and soft. A bit underwhelming this year, but maybe as it has just been bottled. Score 15.5.

***Nuits Saint-Georges, La Perrières**

This appellation lies above Porrets. Henry Gouges was very instrumental in drawing up the AC in NSG, and the INAO, in recognition of this help, gave him special permission to plant his mutant pinot in 1936. 1,200 bottles. This has more energy on the aroma. Spicy and rich on the palate; It has plenty of stony mineral, savoury grip and freshness. A good deal more complex. Much more vibrant to the finish. I do like this. Score 18. Form 2018

Stockists

UK: Averys; Flint Wines; Genesis Wines Ltd; Hayman Barwell Jones Ltd.; H & H Bancroft; O.W. Loeb & Co. Ltd.; Raeburn Fine Wines; Howard Ripley; Anthony Sargeant Fine Wines; Charles Taylor Wines Ltd. & Montrachet; Frank Ward Ltd
USA: Vineyard Brands Inc.
France: Selection Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France.

Domaine Laleure-Piot, Pernand-Vergelesses

Chorey-Les-Beaune, Les Champs Longs

Deep clay soil, flat, but you can get richness here. Bottled before harvest. Raspberries on the nose. Slight spice. Full and sweet palate; open and juicy. A fruit forward wine with some lively acidity behind the fruit which really freshens the finish. Spot on. Score 15. From now onwards

***Savigny-Les-Beaune**

This is from the 3 terroir. Summer fruit aroma. Some spice here. Soft and juicy attack. A fuller, slightly firmer, but finer structure than the Chorey. There is a tang of liquorish at the end. Score 15.25. From 2016/17

Pernand-Vergelesses, Clos de Bully

Dark fruit aroma; Slightly more muted. Forest fruit on the front palate. A fruit driven style; somewhat more earthy with robust tannins; but appealingly so; all wrapped up in juicy dark fruit and a fresh lifted end. Score 15. From 2017

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Ile de Vergelesses**

Quite muted on the nose at the moment. This is silky on the fruit palate. Very nicely managed tannins. Straight and energetic. Good firm and decisive finish. Lovely. Score 16.85. From 2018/19

UK: Hayes, Hanson and Clark

Domaine Remi Rollin, Pernand-Vergelesses

Simon Rollin recalls the vintage "The main thing was the poor flowering for Chardonnay, because it was too warm in the first days in June it caused coulure. I never have seen this but my father-in-law had seen this before. The crop of chardonnay for the Corton Charlemagne and Sous Fretille was one third less; the pinot noir is less sensitive, so we had a good crop of pinot noir."

"Other than that the season was almost nice after 2012 and 2013. It was easy in comparison, not real problem with disease. We harvested in good conditions. We began on the 11th and finished on the 19th"

"The pinot noir had nice sized berries with thin skins which were easy to work; to extract."

The chardonnay berries were harder and concentrated; harder to press than a vintage like 2015 or 2011."

"The sugars were correct; not exceptional! The acidity - it looked very acid at harvest..the pH was 3.1 for both white and red. It is a vintage we need maturation in the barrel..it was a high malic vintage. We have the opposite in the 2015 very little..."

Tannin: For 4 to 5 years we have done less pigeage; very light extraction and we did the same in 2014. It was easy to get soft tannins and the density of the wine."

"In 2014 we had three week vatting for the premier cru and the Aloxe Corton. With a long time we have less action in the vat - rather it is slow and soft. After the fermentation we warmed the tank to 35 to 38 degrees and kept it like this for one to two days and then refresh the wine before putting in barrel. This to stabilise the colour and we fix the 'fat and the roundness' of the wine....we don't use this technique every year. We used it this year because we feel we do not have as ripe tannins as in 2015 or 2013 and it is a technique to soften..we find the tannins come at the end of the fermentation and if we think we need to be careful, we use this technique."

"We like a late MLF in order to keep the wine a longer time without sulphites; so with the reds we cool before we put in barrel. then we get the MLF in the spring."

Whites and debourbage: "The press is between 3 to 4 hours and during this we refresh the juice to 10-12 degree then we leave to settle 12-20 hours and then afterwards we separate just the very heavy lees. In barrel we want the exchange with the sediment - 'batonage naturel.'"

They have some 400l barrels. "It is interesting for the oak exchange. There is less wood effect on the wine. It was good first for the Hautes Cotes de Beaune. (They started with this cuvee 10 years ago). Now they use it on some Pernand-Vergelesses too. It would not be interesting for Corton Charlemagne. It would not have enough exchange...not enough oxygen for this for the ageing."

"Yields are down on average in 2014. For example in a normal year they have 9 barrels, but we did this last in 2009; and in 2014 we made just 6 and a half."

The Hautes Cotes and Pernand-Vergelesses were bottled at the end of August and the Aligote was bottled in May.

The Style of the whites: "Gourmand wines. A good surprise. At harvest we were worried by the acidity, but afterwards the acidity is well balanced. The whites are soft and fat wines."

"The whites are a little like 2012 but with more richness and deeper."

"If you compare with the 2013, it will come forward more quickly be not as strict. But in comparison with the 2011 it will age better, for it is more concentrated and is more balanced than 2011. It will be good to age, but accessible too."

Style of the reds: "Nice fruity fresh wine with good structure which is balanced. I did not think the balance would be there when we harvested."

"Not an exceptionally ripe vintage but all have ripe fruit and dark fruit which is a surprise."

"It is not so easy to compare a vintage with reds as you can find freshness and minerality of 2008, but with more concentration. Like the 2010 with easier and softer fruit."

"A vintage which should age well. I am sure it will be drunk young for the fruit and the freshness though."

White

***Bourgogne Aligoté**

The main parcel was planted by his grandfather in 1964 and the rest is 25 years old with some young vines of 7 years old. It is the back of the Corton hill and on limestone poor soil. It is good terroir to keep the yield in check. "The main thing is to control the yield. We are allowed to do 72 hl/ha and in 2014 it was less than 60 hl/ha...planted on 1100 per hectare." Fermented in tank. White peach aromas and flavours. It is nicely rounded and has a fresh tart acidity with plenty of minerality. Delicious.

***Hautes Côtes de Beaune**

The parcel is 300m from the winery on the limit of the appellation. Barrel fermented. Large barrels are used to minimise oxidation. Simon uses the cooper Damy. Matured in barrel until June and bottled in August. Slight apricot and white pepper. Creamy roundness to the palate from the barrel fermentation.. Plenty of fruit up front and a ripe citrus twang to finish. Very pleasing indeed. It is an attractive and affordable wine.

Pernand-Vergelesses

From several parcels around the village. A blend of almost all the village terroir it seems. Pleasant enough aroma; the attack is soft and creamy. It is nicely rounded. I do like the zesty grapefruit that runs from the mid palate and gives a real boost on the finish. A very well balanced wine. Score 14.5

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux**

Back of Sous Fretille, almost the same exposition, but a different terroir. Sous Fretille is very windy and Les Cloux is in a combe behind and has a southerly exposure. No wind and some limestone; not as much limestone as Sous Fretille though. Highest village in altitude but the first they pick. "For the past 10 years we looked specifically at this terroir and in 2008 made it separately - just 2000 bottles for trials 2008-2010 and then 2011 really began with this. The

vines are 25 years and a newer parcel now 8 years. We were the first in 2008 and now other colleagues are doing it too.”

Good ripeness on the aroma; subtle lemon. It is surprisingly full but taut at the same time. Good minerality in the mid palate. It has plumpness and a touch more depth and it is cut with the strict finish. Score 15.5

Pernand-Vergelesses, Sous Frétille

Racked from barrel two weeks ago. This is sweet on the attack. It has lively richness; more focus in the mid palate and greater depth. The minerality is wrapped in sweet fruit; it glides into the finish. Lovely sweet and shimmering minerality. Simon would ideally like to age this for 5 years minimum. So from 2019. Score 16.65.

Corton Charlemagne

Racked and in tank and will be bottled in November. Smooth stone aroma, more reserved than Sous Fretille. Slight hint of freshly cut pear. This grips the palate. It is a stronger, more masculine wine. Good density. Muscular. The palate is straight, broad but edged. The finish is long and powerful. There is a savoury stone minerality. Score 18.75. From 2020/22

“In this this vintage there is a great différence in 2014, the grand cru is very high level and very powerful and deep and Sous Fretille is softer.”

Vertical

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux 2014

Scented; spicy and rich. Lovely fruit, supple and generous with the minerality cutting through 15.5

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux 2013

This also has that distinctive perfume; slightly exotic. It is thinner, racy and has plenty of energy. The minerality is very apparent; white chalky core to the wine. This has so much personality. It has a different style to the 2014; keener, leaner, more mineral and less ripe. 15.5. From 2017

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux 2012**

This has the rich viscous texture of the 2012. This wraps around the minerality. It is thick and juicy. A full and almost unctuous wine. the minerality cuts through to keep it really fresh. a wine to repay ageing. Impressive for a village wine. Score 15.75. From 2018

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux 2011

This shows more mature aroma; grilled nuts and hay which are also apparent on the palate. This is delicious now. It is easier. It has freshness sweetness and a supple soft more powdery minerality. Drink now and enjoy. Score 15.

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Cloux 2010

This is just the older vineyard which they were bottling just to get the impression of the terroir. It has a more mature aroma. It is straight and quite strict with plenty of depth and intensity. The finish is sweet and mineral and surprisingly long for a village wine. Score 15.75.

Red

***Bourgogne, Hautes Cotes de Beaune**

Attractive red crunchy fruit. Bottled in August.. Sappy and snappy and fruity. Such a lively little wine. Soft tannins. Very fresh and appealing. Fresh bursting red fruit. Jolly nice.

From this point on in the tasting everything racked and in tank for the winter.

Pernand-Vergelesses

Dark cherry fruit. Bites on the attack. A slightly robust wine; grippy, fresh and very honest. Hints of liquorish. A food wine for sure. Quite earthy and fruity at the same time. Very fresh at the end. score 14.5. From 2016

Savigny-Les-Beaune, Aux Grands Lisards

An elegant and lightly perfumed aroma. This sweeps smoothly across the palate; there is greener tannin here. Perhaps just gets away with it. The acidity is there too. But it is not harsh, quite zesty. Score 15. From 2019

"A deep and massive vintage for Savigny probably because of the hail effect as it was one of the most damaged places by hail.

Aloxe-Corton

Somewhat spicier aroma. Sweet fruit upfront. Quite earthy and robust. Not rustic though. Lots of fruit; plenty of tannins with slightly tarry, liquorish zone. It's a full and honest wine. good for wholesome winter dishes. The tannins are well matched with the dark fruit. Score 15.25

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Fichots

This is full and generous; supple with plenty of juicy fruit upfront. It comes in with pretty dense tannic structure, but the tannins are well managed. They are thick and rich. I like the fresh bite to the palate. It is a sturdy red; plenty of muscle, but not at all strict. Score 16.5

"It is always a strict terroir so we must be careful with the tannins."

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Ils de Vergelesses**

A red fruit aroma - perfumed and inviting. Silky onto the palate. Lovely smooth texture. I like the freshness and minerality through the core of this wine. You can taste the cold minerals on the finish. It is a savoury wine at the end. Lighter and more elegant in body than Fichots. Score 17. From 2018

www.domaine-rollin.com

Stockists

UK: Justerini and Brooks; Raeburn; Tanners, The Wine Society and Andrew Mead.
USA: Rosenthal Wine Merchant Ltd, NY

Domaine Chandon De Briailles, Savigny-Lès-Beaune

Francois recalls "The hail was less hard than in 2013...we had more on Pernand Ile-de-Vergelesses (this has been hit several times badly is still suffering the aftermath in 2015) and SLB Lavieres. (but somehow this is stronger in 2015..it has recovered). We had less hail in Corton, but everywhere was hit to a certain extent. Nothing escaped. Nice crop at the beginning. Not much millerandage, while in 2015 more.

Harvested from the 18 to the 26th. "Very fine conditions we had a lovely season in September and we made the vintage in this part. We decided to wait a lot...we always start with Corton and finish with Savigny. It took a long time to get some ripeness. Quite low acidity; but still fresh and charming and full of freshness, despite lacking acidity in the analysis."

"Drosophile on Corton so we made a big selection of grapes...just on reds though and on the ripest grapes."

"Classical vintage like in 2012... We had to be very precise with the whole bunches, so we had to take care to select the best bunches as the ripeness not always there...for whole bunch."

Starting the bottling. Whites last week.

Francois has designed a new bottle with a smaller neck opening 17.5mm instead of 18.5mm and so the cork is more compressed and much tighter. A good indication of the quality control and attention to detail at this domaine.

"2008 but with more ripeness..richer than 2008 but the same freshness...maybe a little like 2002

"it is a fresh vintage...but the wines are richer - than say 2011 which is like this, but you feel more sugar richness - but like the 2008 and 2011 you have the freshness."

"Really charming wines, and very drinkable...definitely to drink before the body building 2013s. I hope people will drink them before the 2013s," remarks Francois.

White Wines

"A little similar to the reds in style - big whites, nice balance and very easy to taste, lots of aromas and open but with a good balance, not too heavy. That's why it is a bit like 2011, as we had big whites in 2011 too."

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Ile Des Vergelesses**

Savoury stone nose. It is ripe, juicy and slightly note of lychee...mandarin. Quite rich in the middle and then much more stony and cool on the finish. There is a warm minerality...the finish is quite long and slightly exotic.

Two parcels of plantings from different dates - one from 1985 - both which stretch from the bottom to the top of the vineyard - a vertical slice from top to bottom "or it is too complex to treat the vines, as not as the same on the white and the reds for spraying etc..."

Corton, Blanc

This is rich and full on the nose, but reserved too...but just bottled last week. There are notes of ripe pear...not at all citrus..much more white pear with a hint of spice. A full and rounded palate, generous and juicy and really quite succulent. After the broad girth, this focuses and becomes much more tense and fresh on the finish...not acidity, more a cold earthy minerality. score 18.5

Corton-Charlemagne

...This is still fermenting...

Red Wines

***Savigny-Lès-Beaune**

Nice fresh dark cherry fruit. Expressive. Spice, touch of ginger. This has lots of energy on the palate; dark fruit, sweet and splashing. Fine and zesty tannins. This is really attractive. Bright and juicy finish. Just delish

Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Aux Fournaux

The fruit is dark cherry and the body is soft, full-ish and nicely rounded. An easy going, quite succulent and soft wine. Really quite ripe flavours. Supple tannins. Touch of dark chocolate in the finish. This is a rich clay soil and it shows..inviting and easy premier cru. Score 16.

***Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Les Lavières**

30cm and clay and then hard limestone..roots in the limestone. this explains the floral aromas. sweetness of fruit and the minerals. This has more aromatics; strawberry and summer fruits, very expressive - and floral notes. Lovely silky palate..slips smoothly, glides easily..a very gentle, calm wine with fine texture...and gorgeous fruit. Delicate and delicious...and at the end, just the freshness which lift it...a touch of mineral, salty at the end. Score 16.5

Pernand-Vergelesses, Les Vergelesses

Clay deep and full of iron...still a little slope and facing East. Deep and juicy aroma; quite spicy..slightly exotic flowers...it really evolved in the glass. This has good punchy energy on the palate. It is juicy and compact and quite robust. A gregarious wine. The tannins are slightly rustic, but it is engaging and very fresh at the end...a crunch. Score 17

***Pernand-Vergelesses, Ile des Vergelesses**

A nice balance of clay and limestone which drains well...this has a refined aroma...more precise lifted floral aromatics, white flowers..very pure. Note of white pepper too. the palate is precise, elegant and very nicely defined. Straight - a fine core to the wine ...racy on the finish...a lively long, white mineral..talc...saline at the end. Delicate but intense. Score 17.5

Corton, Maréchaudes

Richer and full, summer fruit aroma. Deep cherry notes. Full-bodied and generous; juicy and open palate. Rich smooth tannins. It full, but not heavy; there is depth and a relaxed, easy character...a charmer. Forward and fruity and with just enough balancing freshness. Score 18.25

Corton, Bressandes

An aromatic nose, with hints of pink rose petal. This is silky and sophisticated. It is large in the middle, quite a lot of volume, but much airier than the Marechaudes, an elegant curvaceous body, the tannins are fine and lightly grained...the finish is cool, straight and mineral..white chalky minerality and very long. Score 19.

Francois says "a little earthy - you see it from a far...something in the soil and then this develops as the wine ages."

***Corton, Clos Du Roi**

Now I would be much more prepared to say this has an 'earthy' note on the nose. Ripe fruit and brambles...hedgerow. It attacks. The palate is fresh and vigorous; the tannins are firm, relatively finely grained, not burly, but taut and straight and dense. A much more muscular palate; It has an athleticism and there is intention and a strict, more colder more granite finish. Usually I prefer the more refined Bressandes, but I am drawn to the vigour of Clos du Roi this year. Score 19.

Stockists

UK: Haynes Hanson & Clark; H & H Bancroft; Lay and Wheeler; Lea & Sandeman; Tanners Wines Ltd;

USA: Beaune Imports; David Bowler and Ideal Wine.

Domaine Tollot-Beaut, Chorey-Lès-Beaune

I tasted with Cedric Gigant who explains that "the hail hit the East side of Corton and Beaune. We started harvesting on the 12th September. Just the quantity was affected by the hail."

The had some drosophila... especially the Beaune Blanches Fleurs, Corton Bressandes and some plots in Chorey les Beaune. The loss due to the hail averaged 20-30% depending on the appellation. The most affected areas were Beaune Grèves (between 40-50%), Beaune Clos du Roi and Corton Charlemagne. As Cedric says, "there was a severe sorting and this is why the optical sorting machine really helped!"

"We use the optical sorting machine. We programme in the grape variety and the ideal berry - the colour of the berry. The smooth tannins are due to the new way of receiving the clusters. The new destemming machine preserves the integrity of the berries, and the optical machine prevents the unripe berries, the insects, leafs, stems, to get into the vat. So once we pour the berries into the vat, they are intact. Previously, the berries were destemmed and then immediately transferred to the vat through a pipe, which were mostly crushed. It also prevents the seeds from being crushed."

"It prevents oxidation, preserves the purity of the fruit. A brand new process and even the de-stemming machine is new...so serious sorting...very effective."

"MLF were much easier than in 2013 and all racked in July."

"A vintage with good balance."

White Wines

***Bourgogne Blanc**

Some attractively ripe fruit on the nose. White peach, somewhat stoney, lifted and expressive... touch of lemon. The palate is also pleasantly rich and rounded and really quite full. Juicy too with a fresh and cool, crunchy bite at the end...just a hint of savoury at the end. This is mainly in Chorey...really rather good. Wine for food.

***Corton-Charlemagne**

A compact and intense nose; more citrus notes; ripe pear also. A touch of spice and fresh ginger. Rich on the attack. A juicy, full and quite dense palate; plenty of tension at the edges so it's deep and channelled...and really savoury and salty at the end...a long and saline, powerful finish. I do like this.

Red Wines

Bourgogne Rouge

Rather a floral aroma. Nice juicy fruit; red and crunchy; bright, good energy - lots of attractive fruit.

Chorey-Lès-Beaune

Plenty of red fruit on the nose..and a touch of spice. Really rather silky tannins; the tannins are very nicely grained...juicy, ripe mid palate. Pleasing bitter cherry bite too...bit of a twang of the new oak at the end..this has gone into a new oak barrel after the initial ageing until July in older oak. Very pleasing. score 14.5.

Chorey-Lès-Beaune, La Pièce Du Chapitre

Some floral notes; just a hint of exotic flowers. Rich strike and full middle; quite plump and very smooth tannins again...after the rounded mid palate, which is juicy, the finish is fresh and a bit spicy. (the tannins are very smooth and I wondered if the machine had helped with the tannins management here and Cedric thinks, "maybe as the berries are in perfect shape when they go into the tank this helps...as the grapes are not pushed through the pipe anymore in transit to the tank and not at all crushed..just perfect whole berries.."..see note above.

Savigny-Lès-Beaune

Red and juicy, but too marked by the oak. I tried another barrel..There is plenty of ripe raspberry fruit; sweet and quite juicy. A touch lean though. The Chorey, which I prefer, has more flesh. Heavy soils and mainly clay..I would expect more body here. Tad disappointing.

Two attractive premier cru in very different styles - equally good.

***Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Les Lavières**

Perfume aroma...floral. Glides easily onto the palate...it has a richness to the sweet fruit, but elegant and pure...lovely straight finish and plenty of perfume and just nicely balancing freshness. Fine texture....a fresh and pure finish. Score 16.75

Savigny-Lès-Beaune, Champs Chevrey

This is rich and juicy and full. There is good density of ripe fruit. Plenty of energy too and a fresh finish. More flesh and richer texture. Score 16.35

Beaune, Blanches Fleurs

Elegant and gliding...silky tannins...pure and rippling and juicy too...fine texture...lively longish finish...very neatly woven. Most attractive. Score 15.5

Beaune, Clos Du Roi

Rich and full, quite chunky, juicy and full, loose in texture. Big tannins, large grain..easy and generous...marked ripeness on the finish..and just balanced freshness. Very accessible. A easy going wine. Score 17.25

***Beaune, Grèves**

It is lovely to see this wine, as so much in Beaune has been affected by the hail. Refined, light and elegant across the palate. Precise with neatly defined edges. Lively and pure long finish with a cool minerality...lovely long finish. A big level up in sophistication. Score 18.5

Aloxe-Corton

Dark and spicy with lots of ripe fruit; quite a lot of oak too, but this punchy wine stands up to it. Robust, fruity, but not too rustic. As Cedric says "not as severe as you might expect a Aloxe-Corton village could be"

Aloxe-Corton, Les Vercots

The texture is good, supple and generous..nice full mid palate, quite plump and juicy. There is generosity and it is fresh on the finish...and quite spicy...and fresh at the end. An enthusiastic wine. Score 16.

Aloxe-Corton, Les Fournières

This is deeper and more concentrated and darker. Somewhat smoky and dense. At the same time is has a liquorice bite, dark and dense matter...a savoury, dark smoky bite to the finish...the sweet and bitter note..satisfying. Score 16.25

Corton

Upfront ripe red fruit, full aroma. Juicy and punchy. Full and structured. A strong wine. Lots of muscle. Compact...fresh balancing freshness at the end. Score 18.

***Corton, Bressandes**

Very floral aroma...quite exotic..very 'lifted'. the palate is lively, finer, pure and energetic. Fine tannins, straight and much more 'delicate' and more mineral too...I like the long and cool minerality on the finish. A precise and tight, saline finish. Score 19.

Stockists

UK: Adnams Wine Merchants; Berry Bros & Rudd; Bibendum Wine Ltd.; Domaine Direct; Direct Wine Shipments; Goedhuis & Co.; S.H. Jones Ltd.; Justerini & Brooks; Lay & Wheeler; O.W. Loeb & Co. Ltd.; Andrew Mead; Raeburn Fine Wines; Tanners; The Wine Society ; John Armit ; Findlater Wine merchants ; Gerrard Seal
USA: Diageo Château & Estate.

Domaine De Courcel, Pommard

A high level of ripeness to the fruit. The tannins are plentiful, but rich and soft for the main part... burlier in the Croix-Noires. They show good terroir definition. Ripe fruit and lower acidity makes the wines a bit more accessible than in some years. As ever Yves Confuron harvested late from the 20th. The balancing freshness is provided by the whole bunch which gives a zesty bite and spice at the end.

Yves Confuron took time away from the pigeage to taste...by then it was mid October, but his harvest is always late and so he is still at the grind stone - or rather in the vat, when the other vignerons in Burgundy have finished pressing a more than a week ago.

"We had a good period of hot temperature to finish the ripening," remarks Yves. "Tiny quantity but this gave us very good quality, but don't say this to anyone in Pommard." They harvested just 5 to 7 hl/ha. 60 hl for 10 hectares."

"It is impossible to make money in Pommard." The hail hit everything from Rugiens across the village. "We have just 10 hectares. It is good quality, but there is no wine...this is the problem since 2010. So it is minuscule and then how to allocate this?" It will not be much better in 2015 as the plant has suffered and does not recover quickly. It produced just 15hl/ha.

"Less than 25hl/ha it is not economic, but also it is not possible to make good pinot noir over 35 hl/ha. We had millerandage...good polyphenolic ripeness. Yes we used a little less pigeage..too small quantity of big maturity...".

"You see the good maturity and it is the same each year. If you pick unripened fruit, you may have a good balance, but no aroma..if you want to make just Pinot, you can pick in August....

"No you must have maturity to show the terroir."

"The terroir is the soil and the human story of the soil. Then the plant - you must work the soil and cut the roots to push them down where there is less oxygen and water.' He points out the difference in a vintage like 2014 of a good canopy 1.4m versus 1m for light and therefore for sugar and polyphenols... "you could only have minerals and water.. To get the best expression of the terroir you have to wait for full ripeness."

"It is very fine and precise with spices. A good balance. Not opulent, but fresh..you will have pleasure to drink it - not the most complex- but you can drink it."

Bourgogne

None this year.

Pommard, Vaumuriens

Deep, ripe red plum fruit aroma. The front of the palate is sweet and there is a quantity of ripe tannin. It soon tightens in to become a tight and mineral line. It is both spicy and zesty and biting on the finish. Lots of energy. 2018

Pommard, Les Croix-Noires

Courcel have 0.6 of the 1.2 hectares. Juicy and rounded; fleshy and succulent. A good deal of rich, chewy tannin. Quite muscular and dense. Touch of dark chocolate. Full structured and burly

Pommard. Deep black plummy fruit. Spice and freshness from the whole bunches at the end, which give it a fresh and minty lift. Score 17.85. From 2019

Pommard, Les Fremiers

Exotic perfume; heady and enticing. This is seductive and supple onto the palate; there is a lot of rich tannin, but they are supple. The texture is deep, velvety and smooth...it ripples on the palate. the Criox-Noires is more grounded, this while being full, is lifted, energetic and more refined. Very aromatic on the palate as well as the nose; spicy and exotic flowers....with the fresh lift at the end. Score 18.5

***Pommard, Grand Clos des Epenots**

Satin and svelte it strolls onto the palate. There is a soft sheen to the texture and the freshness is woven into the ripe dark fruit..it is very harmonious; very well mannered. There is intensity and depth to this long linear wine..which runs fluidly, easily across the palate. It purrs on the finish. Very contented. An understated wine. Top notch Epenots. Score 19. From 2020

Pommard, Grand Clos des Epenots 2012

This is very perfumed with cherry fruit on the palate and so silky; rich and 'strong' with bitter cherry freshness with the richness....long and seductive with is an appetising kernel bitterness at the end. Lovely.

***Pommard, Rugiens**

This pounces onto the palate. It is tense and vital. The fruit is deep red, but crisp; the tannins taut and fine. It is slim, trim and very energetic. There is cold stone minerality underscoring the fruit that surfaces on a finish which is direct, powerful and precise. Score 19. From 2022

Stockists

UK: Lea and Sandeman; O.W. Loeb & Co. Ltd.

USA: Diageo Château & Estate.

Domaine du Marquis d'Angerville, Volnay

"2014 was another interesting season," muses Guillaume d'Angerville. "A very warm start..good flowering - an early flowering in June..and it was progressing very well. We had no diseases and the vineyards were in good shape. No coulure and good number of bunches and all was looking good till mid June. We were all very happy. We did a tour in June and congratulated the team as everything was on time and most of the work in the vines was behind us...and then of course the hail came on the 28th June."

"It takes more than a hail storm to kill a Volnaysian! The hail was on Saturday at 5pm and on Monday at 6am we were back in the vineyards to start helping the vine." He adds that that some think that the hail is worse at weekends because the pollution is less...

"On Monday we were in the vineyards at 6am. We used arnica and valerian and ways to absorb the humidity - such as a powdering of clay for good healing of the skin."

"Afterwards the season was normal, but the vines took a week to 10 days to recover...nothing happens at this time, and so we were a little later for harvesting - on the 16th september. The conditions were good at harvest."

"The good news about 2014 is that not everything was damaged. Clos des Ducs was well protected by the village and the woods..historically this happens - it always hits Taillepieds and Champans when it comes from the South which is usually does."

"On average we harvested 25hl/ha...Clos de Ducs was around 34 hl/ha,"

"In the old days you had the abrupt and dry finish of a vintage with hail. In my fathers day you could taste a hailed vintage - now with the sorting...you cannot tell." Renaud de Villette who joined us later, also mentioned this..how things have changed... "the tannins are so fine you just would not know, unless you were told."

"But we had luck with the climate post hail,' adds Guillaume, 'for it was dry and windy and the dry berries dropped in the vineyards and of course the sorting was very important. We devoted more people to sorting."

Francois Duvivier (who had manages the vineyards and makes the wines with Guillaume) came up with an idea to 'clean' the grapes before the fermentation - the first run juice was decanted and settled, if I understand correctly, and the sediment at the bottom taken away (they use pump over here). He comments "we start to be very directed with the hail now."

"The texture and the style of the wines...in this vintage there is a sensation of sucrosicity in the texture."

"Happy and joyous with energy. Wines with purpose. After the trauma of the hail storm, they have come back from the dead...with such texture...and with extra momentum."

"The problem in Burgundy now is the land prices. They have escalated with different people with a different mind set to us, who see the land as an investment...they are likely to resell it. I will never sell my land. I am lucky to have inherited it. It is a family domaine to be handed on. But now if I want to buy, I have to compete with people who may see things differently from family domaines...it's not long term. And the other point is when they want to sell their wines, they do it

for a higher price than we want to - because they want to see a return on their investment. So we are left at wondering how to price our wines. We would normally increase a little each year if the wines merit it, but this now makes us look cheap in comparison, which is not good either."

"It belong to the group with 2008s and 2011s. It has more volume than the 2011 and more energy. It is a vintage like 2011 but with momentum and more depth...with more testosterone," says Guillaume. "A very classic Burgundy style," adds Francois.

"It is a joyous vintage..it has produced quite happy wines."

Guillaume and Francois have certainly risen to the challenge of the vintage. They do seem to get better and better at managing the hail. They have turned a crisis into a triumph, for these are pristine wines with sweet fruit and silky depth to the texture which equal the best that the Cote de Nuits has to offer from much less difficult circumstances.

***Bourgogne**

The vines are on the flat lands and this was badly affected by the hail storm...they made just 5 barrels.

The fruit is sweet, dark and juicy. Ripe and plentiful tannins. Lively and really rather concentrated for a Bourgogne. Over delivers and in a very Volnaysian style.

Volnay

Just 2 barrels from Grand Champs.

Summer fruits, expressive and appealing - ripe raspberry fruit..soft and juicy palate with smooth and full tannins. Rounded, plump and juicy. Very inviting. Fresh and bright at the end. Score 16.25. From 2018

"I think one of the things Burgundy is good at is making wines people can drink - I want my wines to be inviting," says Guillaume.

"A good wine is an empty bottle," adds Francois.

Pommard, Les Combes-Dessus

Dark and sweet and just slightly chocolately. Ripe, full and soft in the middle. Quite thickly textured and the tannins are smooth. Easy, dark and rich...this was the first converted to bio-dynamic in 2006. Another come hither wine. Score 16.

Volnay, Clos des Angles

There is real sweetness here and slight toast on the nose. The fruit is upfront with nice depth, supple rich texture and succulence. It's juicy and softly curved at the edges. Plump and then fresh. Score 17.85. From 2018/9

***Volnay, Fremiets**

This is high toned and upright on the aroma and then onto the palate it jumps - strict and pure and tense and bright. A direct wine. Ah so mineral and sappy and taut on the finish. I do like this energetic wine. Score 18.5. From 2019

Volnay, Cailleret

Flighty aroma. Airy and light-bodied. It is elegant and pure. Lucid fruit and delicate tannins with a floaty feel and gauzy quality...at the end talcy chalky minerals. Lovely. Score 18.4

The domaine had less than 0.5 hec and bought a 0.25 parcel recently, which they feel has brought more to the wine. In the original parcel the vines are now 15 years old and the new part

has vines of 50 years and is very close. "I like showing these wines together as the vineyards are just 50 years apart and the wines are so different," remarks Guillaume.

***Volnay, Taillepieds**

This cracks down on the nose. But then there is dark and sweet fruit on the attack - ripe wild berries. The body is straight and vigorous. It is channelled and dense with an austerity to the core, as you might expect, but this is enveloped in such succulence of fruit. On the finish the cold slate minerals entwine with sweet fruit - the finish is long combines cold and warmth...Score 18.75. From 2019

Volnay, Champans

22hl/ha sweet and smooth and rich, yet elegant too with its satin rich texture. Depth and elegance. It is fluid across the palate, very nicely woven and sweet and flowing onto the long and rich finish. Score 18.55. From 2019

***Volnay, Clos des Ducs**

This is more restrained on the nose. So pure, vivid and intense. Fine fluidity to the tannins..it is harmonious, has volume and excellent intensity. It has power, a certain svelte muscle with elegance. The texture is satin and it ripples onto a lovely long finish. Refined and yet it has a strength too. Score 18.8.

Meursault, Les Santenots

Richness, even a slight opulence, to the fruit. Rounded full-bodied and dense..the freshness comes up under the fruit...and refreshes the finish. Very concentrated. It is bunched and tense under the rich fruit. It is glossy, but finishes on a citrus cooler note. Score 18.

Domaine Clos de la Chapelle, Volnay

Made by Dimitri Bazas.

The vineyards of this domaine began the conversion to organic production in 2011. As there is a period of three years for the conversion, in the 2014 vintage they are now certified. The idea is to make wine with no filtration; so they are racked twice, once in the summer and again in November.

Beaune, Les Teurons

Plenty of juicy fruit; rounded. Good tension under the palate. It is just nicely concentrated; quite compact and finishes on lively red fruit. Score 17.25.

***Volnay En Carelles**

This is light, fruity and quite refined. Lightly handled. Pure, soft fruit on this rounded wine which ripples gently across the palate... to a fresh finish. Score 17.65

Volnay, Clos de La Chapelle

Badly hit by hail. 5 barrels of this from 1/2 hectares so 23hl/ha. Too little.

There is a richness here. Supple and succulent. The juicy fruit has plenty of intensity. It is somewhat battened down. The tannins are fine. It has energy and intensity. It is well defined and channelled. Score 18 From 2018/19

***Volnay, Taillepieds**

3 barrels from 0.5 hectares...tiny production.

This is very compact. So much fruit here; very layered and dense. This is a full and powerful Volnay for Volnay. Dark quartz, edgy minerality. It has a certain severity, but the density of fruit to balance. Excellent potential. Score 18.5. From 2020

***Pommard, Chalins**

Steep slope 80 year old vines with lots of limestone and good drainage. September 16th harvest. 12.2 degrees.

Pure, red, straight and decisive aroma. Floral notes. This races across the palate; lucid, tight, pacy and well defined. I like the edges. Very neat. It is strict and tense on the finish with sharp edged minerality to the very end. Very good indeed. Score 18.45.

Pommard, Grand Epenots

Flat and deep clay soil. Always harvested earlier september. This year on the 14th at 12.2%.

Dark and sweet, ripe blackberry aroma. Notes of bitter chocolate; Very compact. Much more tannin; plenty of tannin, liquorish and powerful. Lot of muscle, but with a second winter it will smooth out...this has the concentration of fruit, extract and balance to repay ageing. Score 18.5+. From 2021

Corton, Les Renardes

Plenty of red fruit on the nose. Juicy and full attack. Saturated fruit; real sweetness here mid palate. The tannins are smooth and offer support, but are in no way assertive. (they used 50% whole bunch for the first time here encouraged by the stalk ripeness). There is freshness and spicy lift at the end of the palate...like that floral lift. Score 18.5. From 2020

***Corton Bressandes**

Silky, elegant and pure. A refined textured Corton. It is tight and light and well defined. The tannins are surprisingly refined. The whole bunch has given a floral and fresh note here too. A delightful Bressandes. Score 18.75 From 2020

UK: Hayes, Hanson and Clark

Domaine Jean Marc Bouley, Volnay

Thomas Bouley was looking pretty tired in mid October. He is a father again. His wife had another daughter just two weeks before at the end of harvest. He was looking ready for a good night's sleep.

"It was exactly the same as 2011. Beautiful warm spring weather and very dry and the vines grew up well, but not so vigorously in the wood as 2011. Dry at flowering; then some millerandage and some coulure. No disease so it was easy after 2012 and 2013. But then the hail hit on the 28th. In July and August it was wet raining and raining, like the 2011 - the difference is the hail storm and not the same yields and therefore we have deeper wines with more concentration...for Volnay, Pommard and Beaune."

"Pommard was worse - Fremiers 95% so none this year. 1/2 a hectare wiped out. Volnay in the mid village 70-90%."

"It was very sad as 2014 would have been a very good crop level, unlike 2013 and 2012, which were small after flowering."

"The bunches were pretty small..and aerated with the hail storm - like 2012 and 2013..after the berries had fallen off."

"We had hail, but no drosophile unlike Cote de Nuits."

"For me they had thick skin and not so much juice and for that I started pretty early on the on the 13th September because I was afraid of the warm wind and not much juice..I did not want to lose more juice by dehydration. When it is an early vintage it matures fast - in early September good light and long days they matured fast."

"The vibrating table was important...for the dried hail affected berries. We have this since 2004, but we use it in every vintage even in 2015 when the vintage looks lovely, and the grapes look perfect in the boxes, it is amazing what is shaken out. The vibrating table takes out so much from dried flowers to ladybugs to dried or sunburnt berries.."

"Like the 2011 vintage, it is an early vintage, yet good freshness...not acidity as the pH is not low. Of course the other difference with the 2011 is the lady bugs, which is not the case in 2014...I could not believe the lady bugs falling under the vibrating table, although it was much worse in the 2004 vintage ..millions of lady bugs in Burgundy. The boxes at harvest were crawling with them - the boxes were orange...not just a problem in Burgundy, but in the Loire to the south of France...you had to use a vibrating table to get rid of them or you get the smell...thats' why we got the vibrating table in 2004. The typical green smell you get in Burgundy 2004s is not so much unripe fruit so much as ladybugs...even in the whites. In 2011 the problem was not as bad."

"We had to be more careful with extraction with the thick skins, but with all the work in the vineyards we have great concentration and the matter and the structure comes easily."

"Use of the whole bunch was by tasting. You have a taste and feeling for how much whole bunch, but it is always for the same appellations - Clos de la Cave has some and Beaune premier cru and quite a lot in Clos des Chene."

"The pH not so low, yet the feeling is fresher than the acidity levels. And the pH is very high here...we were speaking about the Rugiens. (They are all about 3.7, which is high, but the taste is not soft. "

"The MLF finished early in November..(very early), but I decided not to add sulphur after the MLF..just left the wine on lees without. The result was a softer feeling in the mouth and it was softer and sweeter and fresher. The lees are reductive, and I have a cold cellar and CO2 (from the MLF). When he racked at the end of June, he used a little sulphur, and then most went back to vat. "I prefer to put it in now and then less at bottling..so the shock is less after bottling."

The Hautes-Cotes de Beaune had no sulphur at all in barrels, just at racking to vat where it is now awaiting bottling. Most however at a little in June. "During maturation with a cold cellar it is interesting not to use SO2 especially with tannins and the lees - it protects itself. But of course with bottling it needs some, as the wine will be exported. If the wine is clean why use it during maturation. Yes SO2 is an antiseptic, but if it is clean it is not needed. But you must follow every barrel..."

"It is much deeper and more concentrated than the 2011s but it is in the same way..."

"2014 Ripe fruit with density and concentration of the terroir - the concentration of the terroir gives the freshness - even at a high pH. So with great terroir you have great ripeness and minerality."

Bourgogne

Racked three weeks ago. Gorgeous cherry fruit with hints of marzipan - almonds. This has tension and sweetness. Very bright fruit - lively and rounded. Sweet tannins. Spicy bitter zest on the finish.

"Between the road and the village and it always beautiful straight fruit and fresh. This year we bought 2 barrels of Beaune Les Epenots village wine and we blended in the vinification so we have 7 barrels. This is because we lost 86% of the harvest."

Bourgogne Hautes Côtes de Beaune

Racked three weeks ago. "Just our own vines and no hail, so we had a good yield...43 hl/ha never done this much and it was beautiful fruit. Picked on the 20th at the end of harvest. Soft, dark and juicy. It has light and ripe tannins. The fruit is darker - dark cherry. It is a little spicy. The tannins are light and smooth and fresh. It is zesty and has good freshness at the end of the palate. Beautiful red soil with rocks and you get that zesty note from this..

The following wine is on lees in barrels.

Volnay

This was the most affected by hail with 70-90% loss. Smooth and full and generous palate. Fleshy and juicy and sweet. The tannins are pretty punchy and a tad robust. He uses just an infusion in the vinification. He did just one punchdown. Score 15.65

***Volnay, Clos de la Cave**

About 30% whole bunches which is usual (although not in 2012 and 2013). High toned, red and juicy. soft and silky tannins. This is sweet and elegant and lucid. Marked energy. I do like the precision and pointed minerality on the finish. Score 16.25

Volnay Vieilles Vignes

100% de-stemmed as is the norm. Bottom of the slope. Warm and no wind. Below Carelles
A very ripe aroma. Sweetness on the front palate, deep and juicy. Dark fruit; full and rich and compact. Somewhat more burly, thick set tannins. Quite structural. Black pepper on the finish and spice from the vineyard. Old vines and small bunches and small berries...Score 16.25

Beaune, Les Reverées

80% whole bunch. At the bottom of the parcel 40% of a typical yield and at the top nothing. So assessed as 80% loss. Just three barrels from 0.5 hectare. Red, plummy and full. Soft and juicy and rounded; it is easy and open, quite loose and soft. There is more spice and freshness at the end of the palate. "the beauty of the whole bunches here to give the freshness at the end..the pH is very high, but it is fresh." Score 17.

***Volnay, Caillerets**

Red cherry fruit on the nose. Pure and vivacious. It is fine and elegant, pure and light and intense on the palate. Finely grained tannins. Lively red fruits. Light footed dancing energy. The minerality comes on the finish...really long and pure and tight and shaley, powdering chalky minerals at the end...Score 18.5. From 2019

Volnay, Carelles

This is sweet, deep, juicy and succulent. It is a fuller and gregarious style..but under the palate there is a density and punch and vigour. The finish is colder, more sappy...and fresh. score 18.5

"It has the sensation of freshness but in fact there is no acidity here," says Thomas. "Beautiful red soil first and then under the rock and you finish on the chalk which brings the freshness at the end."

Volnay, Clos des Chenes

40% whole bunch. Succulent to the aroma. Spicy and lifted. Juicy and full up front. Lively freshness. Supple satin texture. Rounded and full and quite rich...there is an aromatic intensity. After the rounded middle it is long, smoothly mineral and aromatic. Score 18.7

"The whole bunch has brought more elegance and freshness. It was very large and finished on too much mineral severity...with whole bunch it is much more harmonious."

Pommard

***Pommard**

From The only one is raked. It was too retarded in the cellar and needed some air to come on. This is Vaumuriens, which is not an easy vineyard North-East facing and higher with white soil. "Cold wind and white soil. It is difficult terroir - should be better in white." His grandfather had a vineyard in Chardonnay. But of course it was a Bourgogne.

This is just finishing the MLF...while the others were in November. None of the press juice..just the free run and so less lees and as a cold climate it is more retarded.

This is pure, vibrant and zesty - sweet red fruits. It has a high tone and taut backbone and I like the nervosity and cold mineral on the finish. Racy on the finish. No hail storm effect here, so you have the purity. Bigger yields so the balance is different. Score 16.

"In 2009 compact and shorter...but from 2010 it has lengthened...and you get the freshness and the length and the minerality."

Pommard, Premiers

. From 2011. None this year

***Pommard, Rugiens**

100% destemmed. It skates lightly and energetically onto the palate, fresh and vibrant and then it becomes much more tense and mineral and it could be austere, but it is not for there is sweet red fruit here enveloping the mineral. Lively salty and sweet finale. Focused wine clean, direct and pure. Score 18.85 From 2020

"This is at the top so no earth at all...it is focused and so pure and mineral.."

Stockists

UK: O.W. Loeb

USA:

Domaine Michel Lafarge, Volnay

Frederick Lafarge comments "The vines grew well in April and May and the flowering was good at the beginning of June. Four days of flowering which was quick. June was very dry as was May. Then we had the storm on the 28th and we lost 55% of the quantity. July and August were not sunny - cloudy and little rain which came often, but September was good and we began harvest on the 17th."

"Good grapes with good maturity. No drosophile and no botrytis."

Hail damage: There is no Pezerolles and in Beaune the losses were 80%. Volnay village 70-80% and Volnay 1er cru 55%.

"After the hail we had a lot of work to help the vines recover. We used many bio-dynamic preparations to help the vines which were so stressed by four episodes of hail - two in 2012, one in 2013 and now another in 2014...so we had a lot of work, but the grapes had good phenolic maturity by harvest."

"We have good phenolic maturity with normal sugar maturity, so the balance is very good."

"The expression of each terroir is very pure in 2014 it is a very good vintage"

Domaine Lafarge-Vial

In 2014 Frederick and his wife Chantal bought a domaine in Fleurie in the Beaujolais - 2.3 hectares. The domaine is at the limit of Cherouble. They have made and bottled, in mid October, 3 cuvees. It is a family enterprise and called Domaine Lafarge-Vial - to acknowledge this with Chantal's family name.

Frederick comments "It was a lovely vintage and early vintage in Beaujolais - good quantity and good quality. We are in biodynamics here too and the season was very easy."

"We aim to make a terroir wine here..not Gamay..we want to express the individual terroir."

Chiroubles

We de-stem the grapes and this has a fermentation of 9 days with remontage and pigeage. We age the wine in pieces and one third of barrels of 350 litres (the oak is 6 to 10 years. no new oak). Bottled in October.

Splashing red fruits and very fresh on the finish. Charming...just a little plump in the middle and soft, easy tannins. This is very appealing and easy to drink immediately.

Fleurie, Bel Air

Pink granite soil on a slope facing south east. Old vines between 45-65 years old. It is richer and fuller on the palate, more depth and intensity. It is quite dense and has warm minerality on the finish. More structured, but very accessible with delicious ripe fruit.

***Fleurie, Clos Vernay**

"First slope near Moulin a Vent - a higher parcel than Bel Air and we harvested later 10 days later. It is a clos with a wood around. A good terroir with granite and the parcel is 1.3 hectares." This is tighter, straight and pure. Lively singing minerals. Fresh red fruits. Very good energy. Zesty and mineral on the finish. Another charming wine. My favourite. Elegant and charming.

Domaine Lafarge

White

***Bourgogne Aligote**

They lost 35-40%. It is rich and concentrated. Lovely intensity and sweetness to the mid palate. There is real richness for an Aligote; sweet citrus fruit and then on the finish it is pure and straight.

Meursault

50% loss to hail. Three parcels under Santenots. This is zesty on the attack. Smooth and rounded in the middle, plump, but also elegant. Lovely minerality on the finish. There is richness and minerality. Very good on the finish. Score 16.

Beaune, Clos des Aigrots

Just one barrel. 95% affected by the hail. This is straight and decisive on the attack. Vigour, deep fruit and very taut. Well defined edges; a deep channelled Aigrots with a long sappy finish. There is a richness and viscosity to the texture...it finishes on a stony note. Score 18.

Red Wine

Bourgogne Passetoutgrains L'Exceptional

Dark fruit and black pepper, sappy and lively and sweet. It is quite spicy. A light and lively wine.

***Bourgogne Pinot Noir**

Crushed red fruit. Very pure and bright and lively. The tannins are light and slightly piquant. Zesty and appetising on the finish. This is a bright and energetic Bourgogne. I do like this.

***Volnay**

Expressive fresh red fruits, sweet ripe red cherry note on the nose. On the palate the fruit is elegant and red and juicy. It is a refined village wine..light and fluid tannins and pure on the finish with an appetising fennel note..just a delight. Score 16. From 2018

Volnay, Vendanges Sélectionnée

Sweet, ripely concentrated and intense fruit on the nose and on the front palate. It has extra depth, is fuller and has a richer texture...there are more tannins, but they are velvety. A delicious village wine. A good potential.

Beaune, Clos des Aigrots

Four owners in the clos which is at the top of Aigrots. Pounces onto the palate. Lovely vigour here. It is straight, mineral and tense. Clipped edges and savoury sappy on the finish. Score 18

"We harvest just with the team of the domaine as we have such tiny quantity."

***Beaune, Grèves**

This is high toned, lucid. Fine tannins..lovely linear wine in a ribbon of red fruit. Pure cherry expression. It is more refined than the Aigrots. There is a delicacy and purity. The Aigrots has more adolescent vivacity and this is calmer and more restrained. Score 18.25

Volnay, Mitans

It is sweet and full and generous. It is still very elegant in the domaine style. Rich tannins, rounded palate, really good freshness. Creamy...almost milk chocolate notes to the finish. score 18. From 2019

Clos du Château des Ducs

This combines elegance and power. It is ripe and juicy and compact. There is density and contained vigour in the mid palate. This is rich and ripe and the tannins are full and has a silky muscularity. Powerful finish, fruit driven finish. Score 18.5. From 2019

***Volnay, Caillerets**

Pure and high toned, high wired and clipped. The edges are neatly scored. It has finesses and shaley, talcy minerals. It is racy and ringing the finish..pure minerality and very long. Delicate and laced with lively red fruits. Exactly what Caillerets should be. Score 18.75. From 2019

***Volnay, Clos Des Chênes**

Aromatic on nose and palate - rose petal and silky, twirling expression. Full and generous. It is sensual and satiny and just gorgeous. It has a heady delight. Score 18.85. From 2019

Pommard, Pezerolles

No 2011, 12 and 14...but there is some to come in 2015.

Stockists

UK: A & B Vintners Ltd; Bibendum; Berry Bros & Rudd; Ben Ellis Wines; Fine & Rare Wines Ltd.; Gauntleys of Nottingham; Goedhuis & Co. Ltd.; Haynes,Hanson & Clark; Howard Ripley; Seckford Wines; The Winery.

USA: Selection Becky Wasserman, Le Serbet, France. Esquin Imports Inc.

Website/email

contact@domainelafarge.com

Domaine Nicolas Rossignol, Volnay

"For the third year we had the hail - you get used to it. We say ok it happens again. We work hard again in the vineyards. With the 2012 and 2013 we know we can have good results. Hail at the end of June..in all the vintages. We had sun and good conditions and near to the harvest we were really surprised...we had good leaves..we had loss with grapes but the vines were not so bad. We had a good canopy. We know the quantity will be small but the quality could be good. We sorted a lot of course but the purity of the juice the purity of the tannin was there. More acid than 2013, but a lovely balance and better roundness than 2013. Some of the power and richness of the 2012."

"In 2015 there is no hail! Hail affected quantity on Pommard hardest in 2014. The Volnay the yield is better and better...but in Pommard it has an impact on the older vineyards in Pommard in 2015 in terms of yield."

"In the cuverie I did not change much. We picked in small cases and put them in cars. I put them on a vibration table - I've had it since 2000. Now each year I use this whatever the vintage....it is amazing! insects and flowers etc - all things shake out. Lots of people in 2014 on the table - 8 to 10 people to select the best...even though we had good conditions after hail you have an impact and we have to take it away."

"Whole bunch..well I have to destem more this year - I was afraid of dry tannins. So it is less than usual while in 2015 more than usual."

"I was focused with the extraction - thick skin lots of concentration so less pigeage than normal - 3 to 4 in some for all the fermentation...like 2015 and 2012...we have good acidity so the extraction was easy. Two weeks, so less than normal. I am not so crazy for cold maceration - especially not in this type of vintage. It was cold for 4 or 5 days first, but they started quickly and this was right. Most of the time I leave them for 5 to 8 days after the fermentation has finished. I prefer post ferment to pre ferment. You extract the vertebra in the fermentation and then afterwards...keep on the skin for the combination of the tannins which will become nice and sweet. Usually you get the spine and then the post ferment for the muscle and flesh around, but in 2015 it gave it all at the same time. The 2014 was more classical extraction. We are more used to this kind of vintage...you build the wine as you do the extraction - some pigeage then stop etc..."

He has several different parcels for village Volnay for example - parcels which he has vinified separately and then blended in the Volnay for example - the most affected vineyards were below.. "The soils are so different I prefer to vinify each differently so I can extract differently and then blend for ageing..cannot age them differently - or for example the wine from the parcel on clay will be forward...the limestone will develop later..so I must age them together."

He applies the same principle to the wines he has blended from the premier crus. "My big trouble in 2014 was that I had to blend the wines - the terroir like Beaune 1er cru is a blend of 5 terroir ...too much damage and not enough grapes."

"The wines are big and thick so some have been racked." Next year he will have his own winery... about to built in November..

"Full and rich" style. It may be like 2012 and 2013. Power of 2012 and sweetness of 2013. You do not have the thickness of 2009 or strictness of 2005."

"The spirit of the vintage is elegant and charming and easy ...though the terroir will still show - if it is limestone it will be stricter..."

"There is a good quantity of tannins thick but it's ripe - so round tannins - as long as you do not extract too much!"

Age-ability: "A minimum of 10 years for village and 20 years for premier cru. You have everything for beautiful ageing. The problem with this vintage will be the 2015. However it is the best of the 04s (ie 2004, 94, 84 74). A very good vintage. I think one of the 5 best in the last 20 years."

Savigny les Beaune, Les Lavieres

"It's clay so I am careful with the extraction..at some moment I decided it is was too closed and we raked. We kept the fine lees and put back into barrels.

This is sweet, full and open. Very easy and expressive. This is very accessible. Red plummy fruit and easy tannins. Score 16.75

Beaune, Premier Cru

Reversee and Clos du Roi. This year de-stemmed. So north and south of the appellation. This is sweet and succulent at the front. There is power and density in the middle and then there is a sappy tension and freshness at the end...the two terroir work very well together...to be honest I think this is better as a blend.. It's a very satisfactory Beaune Premier cru. Score 18.35.

Nicolas adds "the hail teaches me that sometime the blend is better."

Volnay

"In 2013 the top of the hill in Volnay was damaged and in 2014 the bottom of the hill." He made them separately and blended before maturing as the clay soils would have matured more quickly than the higher more mineral ones.

A bouquet and palate of ripe, warm summer fruits. Sweet upfront and juicy with a mid palate bursting with energetic, fresh red fruits. Soft tannins, supple and inviting. It is vibrant and lively at the end of the palate...a certain verve. This is an elegant and bright volnay. Score 16.25

***Volnay, Chevret**

50% whole cluster. Pure, tight and nervy. I like the look of this, albeit reductive. It is tense and has a focused character and refinement. You can sense the elegance and charm. Score 18.35

Volnay, Clos Des Angles

30% whole cluster...usually 50% but it was not possible in 2014. Sweet, ample bodied and dense...needs to open, but on lees. It is rich and thick in ripe tannins. Some richer chocolate notes...a bit unctuous. Full and soft texture and quite creamy. It will be a fullish, plump and accessible wine. Score 18. From 2018/9

***Volnay, Caillerets**

Marked vibrancy of red fruit on the nose. It is delicate, lucid and refined...lively finesse to the tannins...silky and airy. Sweet and intense fruit. Such a delight this gossamer texture...and at the end it lifts with bright quivering minerality. Score 18.75. Always my favourite. From 2019/20

Volnay, Santenots

Now Nicolas buys more and more of this grower "so I can do what I want. I have 2.1 hectares. I can separate the parcels - some is on sandy soil for example - so I should make it all separately. There are three different types of wine. I follow the line of the vineyards to follow the soil. One gives the elegance and delicacy and another gives me the tannins and another the sweetness...the skin is so different ...if I vinify them all together it is average...Santenots is better and better as I understand each terroir..

Rich floral notes. Expressive. Sweet onto the palate. Juicy, curvaceous and deep the middle. Thick tannins, dark and spicy and then on the finish there is grip and intension. This will need time to marry. Score 18.5.

"I saw the level of the wines goes up with this attention to the detail...I had a nice perfume at the start and tannin at the end. Now I have all the parts..."

***Volnay, Roncerets**

Wilder after Caillerets, more spice and 'sauvage'. Plenty of purple, ripe fruit...but here there is tension and coldness. A bite under the fruit. Vigour and grip. Score 18.65

"for me Caillerets is a fine and mineral and soft and fresh and refined and Roncerets has sharp vigour and rustic..."

***Pommard, Les Vignots**

30% whole clusters. Juicy with red plum fruit, linear and channelled. Edgy energy and cold mineral. Quite spicy as well. This is nervy and tight...score 16.25 What a good village wine. From 2019

Pommard, Les Petits Noizons

Iron and clay. Luscious and juicy with sweet dark plum. Full and rounded mid palate. Soft tannins with a note of dark chocolate. This is much more accessible than Vignots, rich with lots of damson fruit....sweet fruit from these old vineyards. Score 16.2 From 2018

Pommard, Chaponnières

This has breadth, rich and full. Thick tannins. Dark and spicy and plenty of spice on the end. It has definitely got structure and concentration. Burly. Quite a powerhouse. Enveloped in rich black tannins. Nothing hard here though. Score 18.35

***Pommard, 1er cru**

This is ripe, dense and energetic on the front. Dark fruit and red too; there is grip and intensity and smooth wet stone minerals. I like the sappy and vigorous, fresh finish...this is really rather good...sometimes the blend is better...Score 18.65

"The situation of the hail makes me think I can blend and sometimes it is better..."

***Pommard, Epenots**

“When everything is in the terroir - well it’s just nice...” Old vineyards here now..Nicolas had just younger vines and now he is also renting some older vines...

Black satin on the palate. Seamless weave of fruit and supple tannins. Fresh and rippling at the end. This is elegant and stylish. A polished Pommard indeed. Score 18.85

Stockists

UK: Lea & Sandeman.

USA: Robert Kacher.