

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman

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Number Sixty-Six

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**THE 2015 BURGUNDY VINTAGE:
A VERY RIPE AND HETEROGENEOUS YEAR**



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THE 2015 BURGUNDY VINTAGE: A VERY RIPE AND HETEROGENEOUS YEAR



The 2015 vintage in Burgundy has generally turned out splendidly and far better than I imagined when I heard stories a year ago of the torrid heat of the summer (which was the hottest growing season in Burgundy since 2003) and very high potential alcohols. As many *vignerons* will tell you, this year is a “solar vintage” and very much marked by the imprint of the extremely hot weather of the entire summer, but many of the wines have steered clear of the baked, roasted and overripe qualities of a vintage such as 2003 and have turned out far, far more interesting as a result. This is not to say that 2015 is a consistent and homogenous vintage of excellence, as there are certainly some wines defined by higher alcohol, aromatics and flavors of *sur maturité* and which are clumsy, roasted and far less interesting than the most successful tier of wines, but for those who have succeeded in 2015, the vintage will go down as one of the finest in recent memory. But with that said, please keep in mind that during my November trip to taste the new vintage, I am tasting almost exclusively at the very finest domaines of Burgundy and it is very easy to imagine, given the potential pitfalls of the growing season of 2015, that below this top rank of producers, the results are far less satisfying. It was a vintage where the timing of when to pick was critical, for sugars were soaring at the end of August and early September and starting even a few days late was a likely recipe to miss the chance to produce stunning wines.

The summer of 2015 got off to an early start, with April and May quite warm and the budbreak and early leaf formation accelerated. There was some rainy weather in May, which proved beneficial for the water reserves in the soil, as March had been uncharacteristically dry, and there was still the midsummer drought to come. The weather was sunny, if a bit unsettled, during flowering in early June and some vineyards witnessed reduced yields as a result of windy and imperfect conditions during the *floraison* and *millerandage* was a problem in several parcels. This was more true of the pinot noir than the chardonnay. But it was a very early date of flowering in 2015, echoing the exceptionally early starts of the growing seasons of 2003 and 2007 in this respect. From mid-June forward, the weather was hot, sunny and the maturity started to surge. But, there was virtually no rain in the months of June and July, so as the drought accelerated, maturity started to slow down as many vines struggled with hydric stress (particularly younger vines), and this was not really alleviated until some beneficial rain fell in the second week of August and got everything rolling again towards the finish line. As a result of the drought conditions of midsummer, the bunches were characterized by very small berries, thick skins and the ratio of skin to juice would be high, so that even if the number of bunches out on the vines was fairly normal, yields were further diminished (after the difficulties at flowering), as the berries simply did not have a lot of juice in them this year. But, other than the small size of the berries, *vignerons* reported that the grapes were generally in magnificent condition as they came into the *cuvée* and sorting was hardly necessary, other than pulling a few leaves out of the bunches. But, there was some instance of sunburn on the skins of certain bunches (those pulling leaves early out in their parcels would come to regret it in 2015), which if these were not spotted and removed have left their “roasted” imprint on the finished wine, even at domaines that picked on the early side. Early harvest time weather was particularly warm and successful *vignerons* with whom I spoke consistently mentioned that it was very important to get started promptly, for potential alcohol levels were climbing briskly in the high heat of the end of August and early September, and if one waited too long, the alcohol levels quickly got out of hand and heady in the resulting wines. Arnaud Ente in Meursault, who got started picking on August 25th, finishing five days later, noted that “my potential alcohol levels went from twelve percent on the first day to 13.5 percent by the time we finished picking, and this was all in the matter of five days!”

Normally, Burgundians like to say that a good vintage allows one hundred days from flowering to harvest to attain optimal ripeness, but several *vignerons* this year commented that if one tried to wait to get to the one hundred day mark, one ended up with overripe fruit, as the grapes matured at a brisker pace than normal in the torrid heat of the summer of 2015. Time and again, the most successful domaines got started picking earlier, in an attempt to preserve freshness in the wines, correctly surmising that depth of fruit and concentration were certainly not going to be hard to find in this vintage and the best wines would be those that were able to maintain their freshness and *typicité* to complement the very abundant quantity of fruit of 2015. However, the hydric stress of June, July and the first week of August also played a considerable role in the overall personality of the vintage, and despite the baking heat of midsummer, some vineyards were lagging in ripeness, as the vines shut down or slowed their maturation process to a crawl during the drought period. Consequently, one does sometimes come across wines that show rather chewy, slightly under-developed tannins, and clearly a key consideration on when to get started picking was also how ripe the tannins were underneath the veneer of the mounting sugar levels. After having decided when to pick, it was essential to bring in grapes as quickly as

possible, as the domaines were faced with fast-rising sugar levels and equal ripeness across the board from parcel to parcel, so it was not possible to start with the warmer *climats* and then proceed to parcels that are traditionally cooler sites, as everything was arriving to full maturity very briskly and at the same time. This is another reason for the heterogeneous nature of the vintage, for even within very successful cellars, not each and every wine is always a ringing success, as *vignerons* and their picking teams had to decide which parcels to bring in first, despite that fact that sugars were soaring in all parcels simultaneously and it was likely that some later-picked parcels would show some *sur maturité* as a result.

When it came to deciding picking times, several producers commented that it was not cut and dry to decide to go out and harvest early, as when they were making passes through the vineyards towards the end of August, pulling a few grapes from parcels to bring back to the winery and analyze, the aromatic development was not ideal in many instances, so one had to balance further aromatic development with a bit more hang time, versus higher sugar levels in the resulting berries if one waited a bit longer. Emile Boudot of Domaine Sauzet made this point and noted that “we decided to wait just a couple more days to get more aromatic development in the grapes, so we started on Monday, August 31st, rather than at the end of the week before, like some of our neighbors.” At Domaine Roulot, Annabelle noted that “we all planned our vacations a bit earlier in 2015, so that to be back before the end of August and put things in place for an early start to picking.” For producers in the Côte de Nuits, who typically start harvesting later than their counterparts in the Côte de Beaune, another factor that came into play was heavy September rains for those who waited a bit to pick, as rain arrived first on the 8th of the month and then started again heavily on the 12th and continued on and off again for an entire week, with some very powerful storms during this stretch. Jean-Marie Fourrier commented “that it mostly rained in the afternoon, so those under the rain could still pick fairly well in the mornings, and one has a three day window during rain before the vines work the water up into the berries.” Perhaps the grapes benefitted a touch from this and soaked up a some water and corrected their skin to juice ratios a bit, but it was difficult work out on the vines in the constantly wet afternoons for late harvesters in 2015. I often found that grapes brought in during the rainy period were showing far less signature of *terroir* at the time of my visit than wines made from grapes brought in earlier, but perhaps this was just a stage they were going through in November. At harvest time, overall acidities were not particularly robust, but the levels of tartaric acid in the grapes were fairly high, and this good level of tartaric acid has allowed the finished wines to often have good to excellent impressions of acidity, despite the low level of malic acid, due to the fact that the tartaric acids are quite present and as a result the pHs of the finished wines often changed very, very little after malolactic fermentation. This is one factor that clearly sets 2015 apart from other recent, very ripe vintages, such as 2009 and 2003, as there is far more acid bounce and vibrancy in the top 2015s than what can be found in wines from the aforementioned vintages.

Decision making during fermentation was also a key ingredient to the overall success of many domaine’s wines, as there was so much inherent power already in the grapes this year, that *vignerons* who sought to extract heavily and go for super-charged red wines have missed an opportunity with this vintage. It was not rare to hear producers echo the words of Véronique Drouhin Boss of Maison Joseph Drouhin, who commented that “we decided to be very gentle with our extraction this year, with only one punch down each day and one pumping over, and we

eventually settled on just doing the pumping over towards the end of the maceration, to retain as much elegance and freshness as possible.” Cécile Tremblay mentioned she took a similar approach with her superb 2015s, with little punching down and a maximum of one or two pump overs per day, seeking to avoid over-extraction and retain the purity and freshness of the wines. On the white wine side of the ledger, managing alcohol levels and retaining acidity was one of the big challenges for *vignerons*, and if one let the sugar levels get out of hand by picking too late, there was nothing that could be done to alleviate the overripeness and heaviness in the resulting wines. So there is a fairly wide range in the styles of 2015 white Burgundies, but with the very best wines showing bright and zesty acidity, refined and classically proportioned, which one never would have expected, given the heat of the summer of 2015. The most successful white Burgundies of 2015 are very impressively transparent and true to their underlying *terroirs*, with pure and generous fruit, but also plenty of soil signature. But, whether the white Burgundy is impressively crisp and pure in 2015, or big and blowsy and a bit heady from later picking, all of them share very open structural personalities out of the blocks and this will be a vintage across the board that drinks early and is not likely to make particularly old bones. This is true of the beautifully pure and impressively racy wines of the earliest pickers and the more top heavy, blowsy wines of those who waited. It will be a very good vintage to help keep bottles of the racier and classically snappy 2014 whites in the cellar maturing, as at least over the next few years, the 2015s are going to be the far more open vintage for drinking.

North in Chablis, readers may recall that the 2015 vintage will be remembered most often for the brutal hailstorm that struck on September 1st, only a day or two prior to the start of harvest, and devastated the vineyards in its path. Happily, it was a fairly localized storm, and despite a ferocity that dropped tennis ball-sized hailstones in its path, those down in the city of Chablis often did not even hear the hail falling, if they were not close to the path of the storm. The hail arrived from the south (in the direction of the village of Courgis) and cut a brutal swath through the eastern side of the band of grand crus, hitting principally Blanchots and the eastern half of Les Clos, and the premier cru vineyards of Montée de Tonnerre and Mont de Milieu and continuing up into the *villages* and Petit Chablis vineyards above these in the direction of the city of Tonnerre. The grapes were fully ripe when the hailstorm hit, and there was nothing to do but gather in the surviving grapes as quickly as possible in the wake of the storm and make the best of it. Vincent Dauvissat, who now has a small parcel of vines in Montée de Tonnerre, was out in these vines the morning after the storm picking his grapes, as he was planning to do so prior to the storm and simply had to slog through the mud and hailstones on the ground and bring in what was left of his grapes in this vineyard and Les Clos, as his parcel of vines there lie right alongside those of the Raveneau family in this grand cru and are on the eastern side of the hill and got hit by the hail. For those in the pathway of the storm, the losses were significant, with the Raveneau family losing two-thirds of their Blanchots and more than half of their Les Clos, and Vincent Dauvissat losing the same in his parcel of Les Clos. However, over on the Left Bank premier cru vineyards, not to mention the Grand Crus on the western side of the slope, there was no hail damage at all and yields were far more correct than in the hail-affected parcels. So in contrast to Domaines Dauvissat and Raveneau, Christian and Fabien Moreau lost about thirty percent of their production in Les Clos (having parcels further to the west in the vineyard) and Domaine William Fèvre lost about twenty-five percent in this cru, as only one of their parcels in Les Clos is on the eastern half of the vineyard slope.

The 2015 wines of Chablis tend, in general, to be a bit lower in octane than their corresponding compatriots down in the Côte de Beaune, and alcohol levels under thirteen percent are not uncommon and most wines are in the thirteen to 13.2 percent range and quite typical of the region. In contrast, the Côte de Beaune white wine that is under thirteen percent is fairly rare, and most are in the 13.5 to 14.5 percent range. The 2015 Chablis tend to generally have even better acidity than the wines from the Côte de Beaune, though they too are marked by a more forward personality than the racy and utterly classic 2014 vintage in this region. They should prove to be absolutely delicious to drink young and quite successful to age over the medium-term of ten to fifteen years, but many are so well balanced, that it would not surprise me to see some of them last far longer than one might surmise at the outset, given their wide open sensibilities at this point in time. Early drinking will also be the hallmark of the Côte de Beaune whites of this vintage, with some drinking early but heavy, blowsy, tropical and fairly alcoholic, while others will prove to be impressively bright, transparent and zesty. The very best 2015 Côte de Beaune whites very much recall the 1992s when they were young. Of the white Burgundies that I tasted from 2015 on this November trip, it was only a small percentage that seemed a bit flat and structurally flaccid from the extreme heat of the summer and similar to the 2003s at a similar stage. However, again, I am only tasting at my very favorite producers in November and my experiences may not be replicated as successfully with the next tier of estates. As was the case last year in 2014, one has to give the nod to the *Chablisienne* over their fellow *vignerons* in the Côte de Beaune for overall white wine success in 2015, but this does not mean that there are not some truly beautiful examples of white Burgundy found in the Côte de Beaune in this vintage. Of the wines that I tasted, of particular merit are Arnaud Ente's 2015 wines, as well as those from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard and Bernard Moreau, which are as pure, zesty and structurally tensile as any found in the vintage and truly offer up a purity and racy minerality that is far beyond what I ever imagined possible a year ago, when I first started hearing reports of the torrid summer and hot harvesting conditions of 2015.

As for the red wines from the 2015 vintage, they are all over the place stylistically, with a great many absolutely brilliant and legendary wines to be counted amongst their number. There are wines from a great many different stylistic camps to be found in this vintage, and there are some ringing successes in many of these variations. The torrid summer of 2015 certainly marked the red wines with its imprimatur, but in a variation of ways and some wines are far more appealing to my palate than other wines this year. All the red wines of 2015 will share one characteristic and that is tremendous depth of fruit, and this is the one theme that can be found in each and every red wine in the vintage. However, in some wines, the fruit is pure and sappy like a young 2010 or 2005 red, in others it is more voluptuous in texture, but nicely framed by other elements as one found in the young 1990 red Burgundies, in others it is more roasted in character and recalls 2009, and yet again in others it is overtly overripe in tone and far more similar to 2003 out of the blocks. As I touched upon a bit at the outset, there were a couple of ways to arrive at the more roasted and overripe aspects of the vintage, and one of these was of course to simply harvest too late. However, as I also mentioned above, there was significant rainfall from the 12th of September through to the twentieth, and people harvesting during this period would have actually brought in grapes with slightly lower sugar levels (once the water had worked its way up into the grapes), getting a bit more juice into the tiny berries, but perhaps at the expense of soil signature in the resulting wines. So, one can have overtly overripe aromatics and flavors tied to wines that are not alarmingly high in alcohol in 2015, if they were produced from grapes

brought in during the rainy period. Another way to have arrived at reds that show overtly roasted signs or *sur maturité* is to have used sunburnt grapes, where again, this character is not necessarily tied to the final alcohol level in the wine.



The village of Monthelie, nestled on the hillside, on a lovely Saturday morning in November.

However, though one will find mention of some roasted wines of this sort in the tasting notes below, this is not the majority of the wines that I tasted on this November trip, and there were a lot more red wines from the other stylistic camps of 2015 on display at the finest addresses in the Côte d'Or. There is not really any commonality of style from cellar to cellar amongst the successful *vignerons* in this vintage, and not even a consistency of style in a range of wines from a single domaine if the number of cuvées is large enough! Part of this I would attribute to the aforementioned fact that the sugars started soaring everywhere together at the end of August and early September, so that all the parcels owned by a domaine might be reaching optimal picking at the very same time, and one simply had to pick and choose which grapes to bring in first. So it is not a rare occurrence to find a few overtly roasted wines in a domaine's collection that is otherwise noteworthy for its sappy purity, soil signature and beautiful balance. And it is not only the purity and style of the fruit component in the red wines that varies from cuvée to cuvée, as also the texture and integration of the tannins in the wines also sees some variation. This would be caused more by issues of hydric stress during the month of July and first half of August, as younger vines without really well-developed root systems would have shut

down for a period of time and the tannin formation in the resulting wine would not be as complete. One can find a similar characteristic in some of the 2003 red Burgundies, and this element has gotten stronger in those '03s as time has passed and the opulent fruit has receded a bit. Perhaps the 2015s with this quality will prove to be better over the long haul in carrying tannins of this sort, as they wines also have far better acidity than the '03s and this may keep their own fruit components fresh and plump far longer than was the case in certain 2003s.

But, all of this discussion of the potential pitfalls of the red wines of 2015 does not do justice to the very large number of truly brilliant wines crafted in this vintage, and I have little doubt that the very best 2015s will compete with the very top reds produced in vintages such as 2012, 2010, 2005 and 1999, to name just a few of the high water marks in recent times in the Côte d'Or. Where one personally places them in the context of these other recent top flight vintages will have more to do with one's own palate preferences, rather than ultimate quality of the various vintage stars. The very best 2015 reds have truly monumental levels of fruit, either in a very pure and sappy interpretation that might recall 2010 or 2005, or in a more baked and slightly roasted style that more recalls 1999 or 1990 out of the blocks. The very best wines of the former category also have excellent soil signatures to go along with their lovely fruit, tied together with seamless, suave and very refined balances and they should be legends in the fullness of time. It is wines of this sort that Veronique Drouhin Boss was referring to when she noted that "the best 2015s may well recall wines from old-time vintages such as 1945 and 1929." With some of the very successful 2015 wines of the more roasted and powerful style that recalls a bit more the 1990 reds, I do not really have a sense of how they will evolve with extended bottle age, as the book is still not closed on the 1990s themselves, which were stunningly beautiful in their youth, went through a stormy, prune-y and far less interesting adolescence, and may well be starting to round the corner and regain some of their youthful freshness as they enter a new stage of maturity in recent times. And in drawing comparisons between the 1990s and these more roasted styled wines of 2015, one has to remember that 2015 has better acidity than 1990 and this may well be a positive factor in how well they evolve with bottle age.

While the best 2015 reds have lovely soil signatures to go along with their abundant and very charming fruit, this is not a vintage that is defined by its underlying *terroir* by any stretch of the imagination, and it is the gorgeous fruit here that takes center stage in the top wines. Not surprisingly, as all the different vineyards were arriving at peak maturity at the same moment in the heat of harvest time (at least prior to the rains that plagued those getting started late in 2015), better signatures of soil are found in the wines that were made from grapes picked first. So, one often finds the best expressions of *terroir* in the premier and grand crus, which would logically have been picked first at most addresses. This is not to say that there are not some really lovely village wines in 2015, but they are remarkable mostly for their really impressive depth of fruit this year (often with the concentration one only sees in grand crus in more classically balanced vintages!) and will often be at their best in their relative youth. There are also some really good "Bourgogne" bottlings on the red wine side of the ledger, as the little tannin that this category of wines has in 2015 is buffered by far more fruit than is typically found at this level in the young wines. And this is probably good news for those without really deep pockets, as there is no doubt that in the wake of the very serious frost damage of 2016, that prices for the 2015s will rise significantly over 2014. However, unlike the rise in prices one saw for the 2009s, the very best 2015s will most emphatically be worth the price of admission if one can afford them!

It seems to me that since there are so many variations on the theme of 2015 red Burgundy, it would be best to tackle the question of style on a camp by camp basis this year. For the overtly overripe and higher octane reds, I do not really have too much to say, as it is a style of wine that does not appeal to me and I do not really know when they will be at their best (if ever) to drink, but as I observed above, I did not taste a whole lot of examples in this style on my November trip. So let us start with the very ripe, but successful 2015s that somewhat recall the style of the young 1990 reds at a similar stage of development. There are truly some magnificent young wines of this style to be found in 2015, and it was really very nostalgic for me to sample some of these wines on this trip, as I was absolutely in love with the 1990s when they were first released. These wines are loaded with fruit, often quite black fruity in personality (even from vineyards one might often think of as red fruity in most vintages), have good, but not great signatures of soil, ripe, fine-grained tannins are usually amazingly deep and very long on the palate. As is typical with so many 2015s, they are also marked by really quite good acidity, as the higher level of tartaric acid found this year gives them a lift and vibrancy on the backend of the palate that is quite hopeful for a long and very, very positive evolution in bottle. Some of these are more “roasted” in personality than others, which is probably a reflection of some sunburn on the bunches, but by and large, this camp is pretty impressively fresh for such abundance of ripe fruit. Alcohol levels for this style can vary, ranging from thirteen to as high as 14.5 percent (and often still shockingly well balanced and showing no overt signs of heat on the palate at this level), but it is my gut feeling is that it will be the lower octane examples of this camp that last the longest, though some of the higher octane bottles may actually supply more fireworks over the middle term.

There is also another camp of the very successful 2015s that are far less “heroically proportioned” in style, and these are my personal favorites of the vintage and can be exemplified by the stunningly sappy and suave range of wines fashioned by Laurent Lignier of Domaine Hubert Lignier. There are plenty of truly beautiful red Burgundies to be found from this stylistic category in 2015, with pure, sappy fruit components at the core of each wine, impressively fine-grained and seamless chassis of tannins, zesty acids and the best soil signatures to be found in the vintage (though not as transparent in personality as corresponding 2014s). Some of these recall the young 2010s and others the more powerful 2005s. These will be the longest-lived wines of 2015 and it is amongst this camp that we may find the vinous equivalents of the 1945s and 1929s that some old-time Burgundy producers can see in the young 2015s. The wines from this camp are the most surprising to me, given the aforementioned growing conditions of the summer of 2015, and they are destined to be absolute classics in the fullness of time. Like the more powerful and overtly ripe wines of the vintage, they will offer the possibility to drink earlier than vintages such as 2005, as they do not possess the same firm structural chassis, but they may close down a bit once they are bottled and require a bit of patience before they start to drink with the unbridled generosity that they showed out of cask in November. Michel Lafarge, the venerable Volnay *vigneron* likens this camp to the 1929s and I see no reason to question his judgment and long experience in this regard!

There are also very successful 2015 reds that are more 1999-like in size and shape, and while I do not think that this camp will produce as many legendary wines as the ones just mentioned, they too are very fine wines and are going to find legions of fans in the marketplace. Then there are the wines that were a bit more perplexing to me, as they were rather grumpy at the

time of my visit and were rather hard to pin down, including at a few very top addresses such as Domaine Roumier. Both of these cellars had been racked in the autumn of 2016 and the wines were not particularly happy to be shown in November and I found them very hard to get a really good read on for this reason. At the time of my visit, wines of this genre were not showing their customary precision of minerality and were more or less defined by their fruit components, which were generous, but sometimes a bit baked in profile. Perhaps this was just a reflection of their recent *assemblage* or racking and the *terroir* in the individual wines will snap back into place with further *elevage*. However, I did note that at such domaines harvesting began a tad on the later side and picking teams had to contend with the rainy weather that arrived beginning on the 8th of September. Is it possible that a bit of soil signature was lost in the rains? Wines in this camp tend to have plenty of fruit, but did not show the same sappy freshness of the very finest examples and had slightly stewy or baked fruit components that was not all that endearing in November. There was also often a perception of a bit of backend heat in some of these wines, despite the fact that the reported alcohol levels were not all that dramatic. I have to assume that this was just a reflection of their stage of evolution in the cellars at this time, but I would be more sanguine if I knew that these wines had not been produced from grapes that came in during the rainy period of harvest.



Laurent Lignier of Domaine Hubert Lignier, who may well have made the most elegantly sublime 2015s on the Côte.

So where does this eventually place the 2015 reds in general in the pantheon of other recent top vintages? The answer is that one simply cannot generalize in this vintage, as there are far too many variations on the theme of 2015 to be found in the red wines to give a rating of greatness for the vintage as a whole. Certainly, the very best wines of 2015 are flat out brilliant and will be everything that the early hype surrounding the vintage claimed, but the vintage is extremely heterogeneous in style and one really must pick and choose to lay down the very best wines. This is not to say that there are not a lot of beautiful 2015 reds, as my tour of the very best addresses in November showed a lot of great wines in the making. However, in terms of consistent excellence, 2005 and 2010 both a step ahead of 2015, with only the very best expressions of 2015 likely to prove to be every bit as profound as the high water marks from both of those previous great vintages. Beyond the realm of the very best 2015s, there are still an awful lot of very strong wines, often more buxom and fruit-driven in personality than the *crème de la crème* of the vintage, but which will impress along the lines of the young 1990s, 1999s and best 2009s, and this is certainly not a club that any wine would be ashamed to be numbered amongst! Sometimes wines in this style also possess outstanding *terroir*, whereas others are more defined solely by their copious and truly beautiful fruit tones. When these types of wines hail from lesser *terroirs* and are priced lower, they will be great values, but where they originate in top grand cru *terroirs*, their ultimate quality is a bit less certain, as they will be priced in the same stratosphere as the very greatest wines of the vintage and may not be quite as satisfactory as a result.

In terms of pricing, there is no doubt that the 2015 vintage is going to be very expensive, as beyond the overall quality of the very best wines, there is also the consideration of the very serious frost damage that occurred in 2016. For those most affected by frost damage in 2016, there is little or no wine at all from the affected vineyards. To give but one example, for Domaine Chandon de Briailles in Savigny, whose *villages* and premier cru level parcels were all affected by frost damage, there are enough grapes in 2016 to produce one cask of Bourgogne Rouge, from a combination of all the affected vineyards! Fortunately, at least their grand cru vineyards were not affected by the frost and they have more or less normal yields there. Christophe Roumier, whose Corton-Charlemagne parcel was also hit hard by the 2016 frost did not even bother to pick the few bunches that were produced there, offering them to his neighbors instead. One cannot overstate just how bad the damage was in the affected vineyards in 2016, and this is going to put upward pressure on the prices of the 2015s that are not at all tied to the quality of the preceding vintage. Additionally, merchants seemed to be drawn to the ripest vintages in Burgundy and this will also play into upward pressure on prices, so this is not going to be an easy vintage to purchase for most folks. At least the very best wines will be well worth the price of admission for the intrepid.

One thing about 2015 that I have been puzzling over ever since I began tasting in Burgundy at the start of November of this year and which has persisted since my return to New York and the month I have spent writing about the vintage is the overall level of alcohol in the finished wines of 2015. I remember distinctly a year ago hearing reports from several *vignerons* of high potential alcohols in many parcels in 2015, with wines often cited as likely to fall in the 14.5 to fifteen percent range of alcohol. And yet, a year later, most of the wines that I tasted were far, far lower than the initial reports right after picking mentioned. I have been reflecting upon this facet of the vintage for many weeks now and still cannot reconcile the lower reported

alcohol levels of so many wines that I tasted this past November with the earlier reports from the preceding year, when grapes were noted as having very high sugar levels and alcohol levels were likely to be very high in 2015. While no *vigneron* reported lowering their alcohol levels in the cellars (but, I did not specifically ask anyone either), one has to wonder if the 2015 vintage witnessed a large number of domaines utilizing some method of lowering alcohol to get the wines' levels down to more accustomed numbers by the time of this November's round of tastings. Reverse osmosis and spinning cone distillation techniques have been around now for many years and are widely used in other regions around the globe to lower alcohol levels in the wines, so perhaps these were utilized on a wide-scale basis for the 2015 Burgundy vintage? I do not know this to be the case, but it would seem to me that it would be the most logical link to reconcile the reports a year ago of very high potential alcohol levels in the 2015s and the much lower reported alcohols in the wines during my extended tastings here in November. If this turns out to be the case, this would certainly be a pretty major difference between the 2015s and the 1945s and 1929s. If some modern cellar technique was used in 2015 to lower alcohols in a large number of Burgundies, this does not necessarily imply any less potential for the longevity and high quality drinking of the wines from the vintage, provided that the technique was done with expertise. It is just something to consider when confronted with the high price tags that will be attached to the star bottlings of the 2015 vintage.

A year ago, I was busy touting the exceptional potential of the 2014 vintage in Burgundy- for both red and white wines- and I am no less excited about the quality of these wines after having worked through a very large number of 2015s on the last trip to the region. I got the distinct impression that a great many *vignerons* share my unabashed enthusiasm for the 2014s, and this was often an unspoken undercurrent of our discussions in the cellars of the 2015 vintage. The more buxom, plush and showy 2015s are likely to more fully capture the imagination of the Burgundy marketplace in the coming months, and the best wines are indeed quite beautiful and have excellent potential, but right now, I am not so sure that the 2014 reds may not be even better for twenty-five or thirty years down the road. Witness the ups and downs that a very ripe vintage like 1990 had during its long and wandering journey after bottling, and it is certainly conceivable that some or many of the 2015 reds may well behave in a similar pattern. There is simply no way to tell right now, as this is really an unprecedented vintage in many respects. I am certainly not advocating skipping the best of 2015 Burgundy-red or white- if one is comfortable enough to face the prices, as the best wines are truly stunning, but it would certainly make sense to continue to pay attention to remaining stocks of top 2014 Burgundies as well, as this is a very, very, very fine vintage in its own right and perhaps has less question marks surrounding its own evolution in bottle than the riper and flashier 2015s.

Chablis

Despite the hail on September 1st, that devastated not only the vineyards that it hit, but homes, cars and everything else in its path (Isabelle Raveneau is still waiting for the contractors to come and finish up repairing her home, which was battered by this violent hailstorm), the vintage has turned out very nicely in the region. In general, the wines are lower in octane and a bit racier than their counterparts in the Côte de Beaune in 2015, and though they too will be a quite forward vintage, they possess really lovely balances and will be the longest-lived white wines of 2015. Reactions to the 2015s varies from vigneron to vigneron in Chablis, as Didier Seguin of Domaine William Fèvre is very content with how the wines have ultimately turned out,

as is Vincent Dauvissat, who feels it is an “exceptional vintage”, to Isabelle Raveneau, who feels that the wines are good, but “a bit too forward and generous in style to be considered a very top vintage.” One of the notable contrasts between Chablis and the Côte de Beaune in 2015 is the average alcohol level, as it is not rare in Chablis for the vintage to have produced wines such as Christian Moreau reported for his 2015s, which he noted “were most in the 12.8 percent range, with only an occasional wine reaching thirteen percent.” This is a bit different than the Côte de Beaune, where alcohols at most addresses are between 13.5 and fourteen percent, and though still very well-balanced, do not possess the same cut and backend lift as their counterparts in Chablis. Of the six domaines that I have tasted at so far in Chablis (I will be back here in the spring to visit Jean-Claude Bessin and Guillaume Michel, amongst others), my two favorite collections this year were from Domaine Vincent Dauvissat and Domaine William Fèvre, both of whom seem to have been able to find the raciness and mineral drive of a great vintage in the warm growing season of 2015.

Domaine Vincent Dauvissat (Chablis)

Vincent Dauvissat has made the finest range of 2015s in Chablis that I have yet tasted, as he really seems to have been able to retain superb freshness and cut in all of his wines to carry the generous, but very pure fruit that he has realized in this vintage. I always find it a good sign for longevity if young Chablis shows some elements of grapefruit on either the nose or palate, but this characteristic is very rare in the ripe year of 2015, but it is here in several of the young Dauvissat wines from this vintage. As I mentioned above, he wasted no time in getting out in the vines the day after the hailstorm of September 1st, as the domaine was already poised to start picking when the violent storm struck. The only wine that Monsieur Dauvissat had bottled at the time of my visit was his lovely 2015 Petit Chablis, as all the rest of the lineup was waiting bottling, which would start in a few weeks for the Chablis AC and in January for the premier and grand crus. As we tasted together, I tried to think of a vintage in the past chez Dauvissat that might have shared the style and shape of his excellent 2015s, but I was really at a loss and could not come up with anything really analogous. Monsieur Dauvissat thought they might age along the lines of his superb 1992s (and we shared a glass of 1992 Les Clos after the 2015s for him to show his point), but he observed that there is more depth in the young 2015s than the ‘92s showed out of the blocks. These are really stunning wines in 2015, which will drink sooner than his excellent range of 2014s and perhaps serve to allow the earlier vintage more time in the cellar to blossom. But, despite their slightly more forward personalities, the Dauvissat 2015s also possess truly exceptional balance and very good spines of acidity and will age long and gracefully. These are truly transcendental 2015s! Moving on to 2016, the Dauvissat vineyards got hit hard by the frost and production numbers are brutally down in the following vintage, which Vincent expects will force him to raise prices for his 2015s by twenty percent, as there is going to be so little wine the following year. He did note that the 2016s should turn out be very, very good, so “that is a little compensation for the frost damage.”

2015 Petit Chablis- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

There cannot be any finer examples of Petit Chablis in 2015 than this really lovely wine from Vincent Dauvissat and his children. The wine is crisp, vibrant and just exudes charm on both the nose and palate, as it offers up a classy bouquet of lemon, pear, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and classy,

with a very impressive core for its level, bright acids and excellent focus and grip on the long and energetic finish. 2016-2025. **89.**

2015 Chablis- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

Over the years, I have had some beautiful bottles of Chablis *villages* from Domaine Dauvissat, but the 2015 may well be the best yet! The wine jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of lemon, apple, pink grapefruit, superb minerality, beeswax and a topnote of white lilies. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very racy in personality (particularly for a 2015!), with a fine core, superb backend minerality and a long, zesty finish that is already showing the first hints of the candied lemon peel that will arrive with bottle age. This is premier cru quality without a doubt this year. 2016-2035. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Séchet”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2015 Séchet from Vincent Dauvissat is also excellent this year. The bouquet is bright nascently complex and quite expressive, wafting from the glass in a mix of pear, orange zest, paraffin, chalky minerality, just a touch of grapefruit and spring flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and simply rock solid at the core, with superb backend cut and grip. Excellent juice. 2016-2040. **92+.**

2015 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2015 Vaillons *chez* Dauvissat is every bit as good as the Séchet this year, but it is a bit more reserved in personality out of the blocks and will want a couple of years’ worth of bottle age to blossom. The bouquet is very promising, offering up scents of apple, lemon, white flowers, beeswax, chalky soil tones and just a hint of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and very refined in structure, with a lovely core, excellent focus and grip and outstanding backend mineral drive and cut on the vibrant and still modestly youthful finish. 2018-2040. **92+.**

2015 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

I was very curious to taste the Dauvissat family’s 2015 Montée de Tonnerre, as this vineyard, along with Blanchots, got hit the hardest by the hail at the start of September. The wine has turned out very well *chez* Dauvissat and I could not detect any signs of diminished energy from the hail the day before the grapes were picked, and it seems likely that the biggest damage done by the storm was to the crop load. The bouquet is very, very pretty, offering up scents of pear, apple, chalky minerality, apple blossoms and a dollop of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very long on the backend, with a good core, lovely generosity on the attack and a long, vibrant and focused finish. Fine juice and perhaps the premier cru here I would open first amongst these excellent 2015s! 2016-2040. **92.**

2015 Chablis “La Forest”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

I love Vincent Dauvissat’s La Forest and the 2015 is an absolutely classic version! The bouquet is pure, nascently complex and very expressive, wafting from the glass in a fine, fine blend of flinty, wet stone minerality, pear, lime, a whisper of the coming beeswax, candied lemon peel and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with an open attack, an outstanding sense of reserve at the core, bright acids and excellent lift and cut on the very long, zesty finish. This is fairly open in personality today, but it has additional layers of complexity to offer to those with a bit of patience. 2016-2040. **93+.**

2015 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The Dauvissat domaine’s 2015 les Clos is an outstanding bottle in the making, but this year the les Preuses may have just nosed it out for first place in the cellar. The bouquet is young, complex and beautiful, delivering a blend of apple, pear, beeswax, chalky, flinty minerality,

lemon zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nicely reserved in profile, with an excellent core, bright acids, lovely energy and an impressive sense of reserve on the very, very long, snappy and extremely well-balanced finish. 2020-2050. **95.**

2015 Chablis “les Preuses”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2015 les Preuses from Vincent Dauvissat is a stunning young wine. The bouquet is pure, vibrant and complex, delivering an aromatic constellation of grapefruit, pear, apple, oyster shell, paraffin, chalky minerality, white flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and racy, with a rock solid core, laser-like focus, great grip and cut and a very, very long, transparent finish. An utter classic. 2020-2050. **96.**



A very content Vincent Dauvissat in his cellars in Chablis.

Domaine Drouhin Vaudon (Chablis)

The Domaine Drouhin Vaudon wines were tasted alongside of their counterparts from the Côte d'Or at the large tasting of Drouhin wines that I attended in Beaune on November 10th. In their Chablis vineyards, the Drouhin family began picking on September 3rd and completed the harvest by the 11th of the month. The estate is now fermenting all of their grand cru bottlings in older, six hundred liter casks, with zero new oak used, while the premier crus are typically still raised in one hundred percent stainless steel. I did not taste the estate's bottling of Séchet from the 2015 vintage, but all of the other 2015s have turned out very nicely, with a couple fairly forward in style and others quite classic and promising of long aging potential. It is my distinct

impression that with each passing year, the wines from Domaine Drouhin Vaudon are getting better and better, as the team here fine tunes things and the effects of biodynamic farming continue to add more minerality and precision to the wines. A very good range of 2015s.

2015 Chablis “Réserve de Vaudon”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The 2015 Réserve de Vaudon is a lovely village wine, offering up a pure and wide open bouquet of apple, sweet grapefruit, chalky soil tones, a touch of straw and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and nicely ripe at the core, with very good backend mineral drive, good focus and grip, sound framing acids and a long, succulent finish. The *villages* parcels that make up the majority of this cuvée lie alongside of Montée de Tonnerre and these vines were probably also affected by the hail on September 1st, which I would imagine accounts for much of the very forward style of the bottling this year. 2016-2025. **89.**

2015 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The Vaillons was one of the last parcels harvested by the Drouhins in Chablis, as the grapes were brought in here on September 11th. The wine was raised entirely in stainless and is excellent this year, wafting from the glass in a vibrant blend of lemon, apple, chalky minerality, white flowers, straw and citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, bright and very racy for a 2015, with a fine core, lovely backend minerality and a long, focused finish that closes with fine cut and grip. Impressive. 2016-2035. **92+.**

2015 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The vineyard of Montmains is located over the on the Left Bank and I have not heard reports of vineyards on this side getting hit by hail, but the path of the storm travelled right over this vineyard. In any case, the 2015 Drouhin Vaudon Montmains is very laid back structurally this year, offering up a ripe bouquet of apple, beeswax, a touch of fresh almond, chalky soil tones and dried flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and again, wide open structurally, with a plush core, nice complexity and a long, easy-going style that will demand relatively early drinking. 2016-2025. **89.**

2015 Chablis “Mont de Milieu”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The Drouhins’ parcel of vines in Mont de Milieu are on the eastern side of the vineyard and perhaps they were spared from the path of the hail storm. In any case, this is an excellent wine and does not show any of the slightly lower structural intensity of wines made from grapes hit by hail, as it offers up a pure and vibrant bouquet of lemon, green apple, flinty minerality, straw and dried flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off lovely mid-palate depth, with fine focus and grip, zesty acids and a long, complex finish. A lovely bottle. 2016-2035. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Vaudésir”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

Happily, the vineyard of Vaudésir was outside of the path of the hail storm and the 2015 Drouhin Vaudon version has turned out beautifully. The bouquet is pure, ripe and very classy, soaring from the glass in a blend of pear, grapefruit, orange peel, chalky minerality, spring flower, a touch of oyster shell and incipient notes of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent at the core, with lovely soil signature, impressive raciness and cut, excellent focus and a very long, minerally and vibrant finish. This has a proper sense of reserve for a young grand cru that is not always easy to find in this vintage! 2018-2040. **93+.**

2015 Chablis “Les Clos”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The Drouhin family’s parcel of vines in Les Clos is on the eastern side of the vineyard, near to those of Domaines Dauvissat and Raveneau, and consequently, they were hit by the hail and lost twenty-five percent of the crop on September 1st. They collected their grapes on the 5th of September of 2015 and the resulting wine has turned out beautifully, offering up a pure and complex nose of lemon, pear, beeswax, wet stone minerality, spring flowers and a classic touch of flintiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very refined in style, with a rock solid core, lovely mineral drive and a very long, focused finish that closes with lovely grip and bounce. This is fairly accessible already and I suspect it will drink with great style from release, but should also age quite well. 2016-2035+. **93.**

Domaine William Fèvre (Chablis)

Didier Séguier was very, very happy with how Domaine Fèvre’s 2015s have turned out, given the very serious challenges presented by the hail on the first of September, not to mention the torrid temperatures in mid-summer. As he noted, in their grand cru holdings, they were extremely fortunate, as most of their vines in Les Clos were not hit by the storm (only one small parcel over on the eastern side, as most of their vines lie over on the western edge of the vineyard in the direction of Les Preuses) and they do not have any plots in the other grand cru most affected by the hail, Blanchots. In their premier crus, their Montée de Tonnerre was of course battered by the storm and they only produced twenty-two hectoliters per hectare here, but the wine has turned out beautifully. The domaine’s holdings in Mont de Milieu were also affected by the hail storm. Didier and his team were out in the vines on September 3rd to start picking early and brought in the grapes as quickly as they could, to retain as much cut and raciness as possible in “this solar vintage.” At the time of my visit on the 9th of November, only three wines (Petit Chablis and the two villages bottlings) had already been bottled, with the premier crus now all assembled in tank and scheduled for bottling at the end of November and the grand crus still primarily resting in casks for their mise after the first of the year.

2015 Petit Chablis- Domaine William Fèvre

If there is a better value in the world of white Burgundy than the always dependable Petit Chablis from Domaine William Fèvre, I am unaware of it! The 2015 is another fine success, offering up a bright and zesty bouquet of lime, green apple, a nice base of chalky soil tones and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and wide open in personality, with fine focus and sneaky length and grip. Good juice. 2016-2025. **88.**

2015 Chablis “Champs Royaux”- Maison William Fèvre

The 2015 Champs Royaux bottling is produced from purchased grapes, but shares the fine bounce and mineral undertow of the domaine bottlings from William Fèvre this year. The nose is pure and stylish, wafting from the glass in a mix of apple, a touch of tangerine, flinty minerality and spring flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and juicy, with fine focus and impressive backend grip and energy. A lovely example. 2016-2025+. **89+.**

2015 Chablis- Domaine William Fèvre

The “estate bottling” of Chablis *villages* from William Fèvre is even a step up from the very lovely Champs Royaux in 2015. The bouquet is deeper and more refined, wafting from the glass in a mélange of lime, green apple, a touch of oyster shell, chalky soil and fruit blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very nicely balanced, with a good core, fine focus

and impressive length and grip on the vibrant and nascently complex finish. This is really a serious example of AC Chablis this year! 2017-2030. **90+**.

2015 Chablis “Beauroy”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Domaine William Fèvre Beauroy is a lovely wine that will drink well right from the outset, but shows good backend verve and should age very nicely over the mid-term. The bouquet is a fine blend of apple, lime, wet stone minerality, citrus blossoms and an incipient note of paraffin in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely plump at the core, with impressive backend mineral drive, bright acids and lovely focus and grip on the long finish. Fine juice. 2016-2035. **91+**.

2015 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Montmains had only been assembled on the day prior to my visit to the domaine, but was still showing beautifully. The bouquet is quite minerally in profile (particularly for a 2015), wafting from the glass in a mix of apple, pear, white flowers, a touch of anise, complex minerality and white flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite racy, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, vibrant and complex finish. This is really good. 2018-2040. **92+**.

2015 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Vaillons from the domaine is a touch more fruit-driven in personality than the lovely Montmains this year, though still with a fine vein of chalkiness running from stern to aft. The bouquet delivers a lovely blend of pear, tangerine, chalky soil tones and a topnote of orange blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and really rock solid at the core, with impressively racy acidity, lovely focus and balance and a long, vibrant finish. 2016-2035+. **92**.

2015 Chablis “Les Lys”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Les Lys is one of the more forward premier crus in the cellar this year, but it is also quite complete in its mineral expression, to go along with all this beautiful fruit. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a beautiful blend of pear, tangerine, pungent floral tones, chalk and citrus peel. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a fine core, bright acids and good length and bounce on the long and vibrant finish. A charming wine that is very typical of 2015 in its early accessibility. 2016-2030+. **91**.

2015 Chablis “Mont de Milieu”- Domaine William Fèvre

Due to the hail in the vineyard, production in Mont de Milieu this year is only four casks. Didier Séguier decided to raise the wine entirely in three and four year-old barrels and it has turned out beautifully. The bouquet is pure and stylish, offering up a constellation of pear, apple, lime blossoms, chalky minerality and spring flowers. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and generous at the core, with lovely complexity, sound framing acids and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This does not quite have the same backend energy as the top premier crus this year, which is no doubt a result of the storm, but it is long, succulent and complex right out of the blocks. 2016-2030+. **91+**.

2015 Chablis “Fourchaume”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Fourchaume from Domaine William Fèvre is flat out delicious, jumping from the glass in a vibrant blend of pear, apple, chalky soil tones, lime blossoms and just a whisper of pastry cream in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and generous on the attack, with a fine core, very good focus and grip and very impressive backend mineral drive and lift on the long finish. 2016-2030. **92**.

2015 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Montée de Tonnerre *chez Fèvre* is absolutely stellar and it is a pity there will not be a customary quantity to go around to a thirsty world this year! The wine has cut, grip and an electric personality that is very rare in this vintage, as it soars from the glass in a blaze of lime, apple, a touch of tangerine, crystalline minerality and a topnote of citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and driven by a blade of minerality, with a rock solid core, laser-like focus and great grip on the very long, vibrant finish. Great juice. 2020-2040+. **94.**



Didier Séguier, Domaine William Fèvre's Managing Director, in the domaine's tasting room.

2015 Chablis “Vaulorent”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Vaulorent from William Fèvre is equally superb, offering up a deep, pure and nascently complex bouquet of pear, lime, orange blossoms, chalky minerality, a touch of paraffin and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nicely primary in personality, with a rock solid core, impeccable focus and grip, bright acids and a very long, focused and classy finish. Another stellar bottle in the making! 2019-2040. **94.**

2015 Chablis “Bougros”- Domaine William Fèvre

The vineyard of Bougros can often produce a more forward grand cru, but the 2015 from Domaine William Fèvre has plenty of cut and grip to go along with its beautiful fruit tones. The wine wafts from the glass in a classy mix of golden delicious apples, pears, lemon, a hint of the acacia blossoms to come, chalky minerality and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the

wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure, with a great core, fine mineral drive and a very long, vibrant and racy finish. 2019-2045. **94+**.

2015 Chablis “Vaudésir”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Chablis “Vaudésir” from Domaine William Fèvre is another lovely bottle, with a touch of exotica on the nose this year, but an utterly classic palate impression. The bouquet delivers a constellation of pear, lime, a touch of passion fruit, chalky minerality and apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with lovely purity on the attack, bright acids and fine backend mineral drive on the long and racy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2018-2045. **94+**.

2015 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 Valmur from Didier Séguier is utterly classic in profile and one of the most reserved and racy wines in the cellar this year. The top flight bouquet delivers a fine array of pear, beeswax, just a touch of tangerine, chalky minerality, white flowers and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and impeccably balanced, with a fine sense of reserve, a rock solid core, lovely soil signature and superb backend cut and grip on the very long and mineral finish. This will need some time to blossom, but will be one of the wines of the vintage. 2020-2050. **95**.

2015 Chablis “les Preuses”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2015 les Preuses from Domaine Fèvre is also a great wine in the making and it will be fun to compare its evolution over the coming decades to that of the Valmur. The wine is gorgeously complex on both the nose and palate out of the blocks, soaring from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, beeswax, chalky minerality, a touch of tangerine and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, young and very mineral in profile, with a superb core, laser-like focus and a very, very long and racy finish. Classic juice. 2020-2050. **95**.

2015 Chablis “Bougros- Côte de Bouguerots”- Domaine William Fèvre

Given how superb the 2015 “regular” Bougros is this year from Domaine Fèvre, I have very high expectations for the Côte de Bouguerots and they were not disappointed! The bouquet is deep, complex and very refined, delivering a fine constellation of green apple, pear, lime, crystalline, chalky minerality, spring flowers and a bit of flintiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied and utterly svelte in profile, with a rock solid core, great cut and grip and outstanding focus on the long, pure and seamlessly balanced finish. This is young and absolutely stunning! 2020-2050. **95+**.

2015 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine William Fèvre

Due to the hail damage in the domaine’s smaller parcel in this vineyard, overall yields were only thirty-five hectoliters per hectare in 2015, but the wine has turned out utterly brilliant and is the best of the range this year at Domaine William Fèvre. The bouquet is very pure and nascently complex, delivering a magical blend of apple, pear, flinty minerality, white flowers, wet stones and a youthful topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, racy and very, very mineral, with a great core, laser-like focus and stunning length and grip on the vibrant and still quite primary finish. The complexity here is going to be outstanding, but the wine will need a bit of time in the cellar to blossom. 2021-2050. **96+**.

Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils (Chablis)

This was my first visit to Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils, and I have long been overdue to start visiting this domaine each year when I am in Chablis, as I have enjoyed their wines for many years. Christian and his son Fabien have fashioned absolutely superb 2015s, with almost all of the wines in the 12.8 percent octane range. Fabien Moreau has been in charge of the winemaking here since 2002, after returning back to the domaine from his oenological studies and a handful of stages at other domaines, both in France and abroad. The domaine's farming is now certified organic. They also have moved almost all of their production to bottling under Diam corks, as they really like the certainty of no TCA bottles in the future. As Christian Moreau, whom I tasted with on this visit, commented, "we still bottle a few wines under both natural cork and Diam for comparison, but we really love the consistency that the Diam bottles have shown over time since we started experimenting with them in the 2007 vintage." The 2015 Vaudésir that we tasted was sealed under a natural cork, with the rest of the range under Diam. The estate began picking the first week of September in 2015. The village wine and premier crus were already bottled, as well as a very small percentage of some of the grand crus, with the majority of the grand crus scheduled for bottling in early January. Many of the cuvées include a substantial portion of the blend that is barrel-fermented, ranging from a third up to fifty percent, but the family only uses a tiny, tiny percentage of new casks, as they renew about two percent a year.

2015 Chablis- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Chablis villages from Domaine Moreau is an excellent example, offering up a bright and classy bouquet of apple, pear, lovely chalky soil tones, a dollop of straw and a discreet topnote of anise. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and crisp, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and a long, zesty finish. This has terrific acidity. 2016-2030. **89+**.

2015 Chablis "Vaillons"- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The Moreau family is one of the largest owners in Vaillons, as they have fully five hectares of vines in this fine premier cru, scattered over six parcels. Approximately one-third of this cuvée is barrel-fermented, but with only two percent casks out of this portion. The remainder of the cuvée is fermented and raised in stainless steel. The 2015 Vaillons is excellent offering up a ripe and vibrant nose of apple, a touch of tangerine, chalky minerality, lemon blossoms and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and focused, with a lovely core and impressive cut and grip on the long and perfectly balanced finish. Fine juice. 2016-2035. **92**.

2015 Chablis "Vaillons" Cuvée Guy Moreau- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

This was the first time I had ever tasted the Cuvée Guy Moreau bottling that the Moreau family produces from a section of their holdings in Vaillons. The first vintage of this bottling was the 2002 and it is produced from a ninety ares parcel of vines that were planted by Christian's grandfather, Guy Moreau, in 1933. In general, this is half barrel-fermented and half stainless steel-raised, but this varies from vintage to vintage and the 2015 is forty-five percent barrel-fermented. The wine is outstanding in this vintage, delivering an outstanding aromatic constellation of apple, lemon, chalky minerality, spring flowers, citrus zest and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit racier than the regular Vaillons, with a rock solid core, excellent focus and cut and a long, complex and zesty finish. This is excellent! 2018-2035+. **93+**.

2015 Chablis ‘Vaudésir’- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

As I mentioned at the outset, the Moreau family still bottles a small number of bottles under cork to compare with their evolution under Diam, and we tasted one of these natural cork bottles of the 2015 Vaudésir. The wine is fifty percent barrel fermented and offers up a fine nose of apple, pear, a touch of paraffin, orange blossoms, chalky soil tones and a gentle touch of vanillin oak in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely plush on the attack, with excellent mid-palate depth, bright acids and impressive length and grip on the long and complex finish. This is more forward in personality than the Cuvée Guy Moreau, but Vaudésir is one of the warmest grand crus. Good juice that will drink well from the moment it is released. 2016-2035. **92.**

2015 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The Moreau holdings in Valmur are older vines than their parcel in Vaudésir, and the wine is a small step up in quality in 2015. The bouquet has a nice touch of reserve to it out of the blocks, delivering scents of lemon, apple, chalky minerality, fruit blossoms, beeswax and just a touch of vanillin oak (this too is fifty percent barrel-fermented). On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and shows a fine girdle of acidity, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip, excellent balance and a long, complex and very promising finish. This could do with a few years in the cellar to fully blossom. Fine juice. 2018-2035+. **93+.**



Christian and Fabien Moreau in their cellars in Chablis.

2015 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The 2015 les Clos from the Moreau family is outstanding this year. The wine is deep, complex and already showing the first touch of candied lemon peel to come in its aromatic profile of apple, flinty minerality, candied lemon, dried flowers and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and absolutely rock solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, very good acidity and a long, complex and classy finish. This is going to be outstanding. 2019-2040. **94.**

2015 Chablis “les Clos” Clos des Hospices- Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Clos des Hospices is an outstanding wine in the making. This is the wine produced from a one hectare parcel in Les Clos that the Moreau family purchased from the Hospices in 1904 and which they have always kept separate from their other holdings in the grand cru. The vines were destroyed in the frost of 1985 and had to be replanted in 1988, and like the “regular” Les Clos, this was fifty percent barrel-fermented and includes two percent new wood. This sample was from tank, as nothing has been bottled yet of the 2015. The wine shows a lovely nose of lemon, tangerine, flinty, crystalline minerality, white flowers, lime peel and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a superb core, laser-like focus and a very long, racy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2019-2040. **95.**

2014 Chablis “les Clos” Clos des Hospices - Domaine Christian Moreau et Fils

The 2014 Clos des Hospices was the only 2014 that the Moreau family did not show at the Les Grands Jours tasting last March, so I include my note on this wine here from my visit to the domaine in November. As is typical of this bottling, it shows just a touch more vanillin oak influence than the regular bottling of les Clos, but this is still very understated and simply supports the lovely aromatic elements of lemon, apple, a touch of tangerine, crystalline minerality, white flowers and beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, racy and nicely reserved in profile, with a rock solid core of fruit, superb mineral drive and cut and a very long, racy and laser-like finish. High class juice. 2020-2050+. **95+.**

Domaine Patrick Piuze (Chablis)

I visited and tasted the 2015s with Patrick Piuze back in the spring of this year, catching the wines before they were bottled, rather than during my November trip. As Patrick likes to bottle early, the spring visit is the more logical time to taste the previous year's vintage, as it does not require opening up remaining bottles in the cellars a year or so out from the harvest. Patrick and his team were out in the vineyards the day after the brutal hail of September 1st and brought in the grapes as quickly as possible. As is the case in other cellars where some of the parcels were hit by hail and others spared, the range is a bit up and down here in 2015, with the hail-damaged parcels often producing wines that are quite round and forward in style, with the wines from parcels unaffected by the hail racier and more chiseled in structure. Even in the third week of March of 2016, some of the range of 2015s had already been assembled in tank for bottling a short time down the road, so we tasted the wines still in cask first at the time of my visit, and then followed up with those already assembled in tank. I have designated the wines already assembled with an asterisk in the notes below, and scored them in a range if they appeared still agitated from their racking.

2015 Petit Chablis- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

My two favorite examples of Petit Chablis in the region are those from Pat Piuze and Vincent Dauvissat. As readers may recall, this wine hails from the *lieu à dit* of Petit Preuses,

which lies up above the grand cru on the slope. It had just been assembled and fined prior to my visit, and so was not entirely on form. The bouquet offers up very pretty notes of pear, apple, chalky soil tones and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and quite open, with a solid core and nice complexity on the zesty finish. I am sure this will be very tasty. 2016-2021. **87-88.**

2015 Chablis “Terroir de Chichée”- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

The 2015 Terroir de Chichée is a nice, ripe and plump *villages* that is more fruit-driven than in most years, but no less enjoyable. The bouquet offers up a very pretty blend of pear, sweet lemon, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and a bit of paraffin in the upper register. On the palate the wine is fullish, crisp and quite long on the backend, with a good, juicy core, sound framing acids and a wide open and very tasty finish. 2016-2020. **88.**

2015 Chablis “Terroir de Decouverte”- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

The 2015 Terroir de Decouverte is also quite forward and juicy out of the blocks, but there is depth, focus and good balance here as well. The generous nose jumps from the glass in a blend of tangerine, apple, chalk, spring flowers and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a good core, sound acids and very good length on the succulent and classy finish. 2016-2021. **88+.**

2015 Chablis “Terroir de Courgis”- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

The hailstorm passed over Courgis, but there is no sign of any lack of energy or structure in this lovely Chablis AC bottling from 2015. The nose is bright and complex, offering up scents of apple, pear, a touch of tangerine, fine minerality and a zesty topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and nicely complex, with good mid-palate concentration, quite good acidity and lovely length and grip on the focused finish. Good juice. 2016-2021. **89+.**

2015 Chablis “Terroir de Chablis”- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

The Terroir de Chablis bottling this year was two-thirds barrel-fermented by the domaine, but the wine had just been assembled and was a bit on the agitated side at the time of my visit. The bouquet is fresh and classy, offering up scents of pear, apple, lime peel, chalky minerality, floral tones and a touch of hay in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and juicy on the attack, with a good core, sound framing acids and good length on the plump finish. I imagine this wine will have more cut and grip once it has bounced back more completely from the *assemblage*. 2016-2021. **88-89+?**

2015 Chablis “Terroir de Fyé”- Domaine Patrick Piuze *

Patrick Piuze noted that the vines that go into the Terroir de Fyé bottling were also hailed upon in the September storm. The wine was still showing quite nicely at the time of my visit, offering up a bouquet of pear, a touch of pink grapefruit, a fine base of soil, gentle notes of straw and dried flowers and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and nicely focused, with a good core, fine balance and a long, open and zesty finish. This is showing very well indeed! 2016-2021. **89.**

2015 Chablis “La Grande Vallée”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The “La Grande Vallée” bottling from Patrick Piuze is one of my favorite of his lovely range of Chablis *villages* cuvées, and the 2015 has turned out very nicely indeed. The wine has an excellent nose of pear, beeswax, citrus zest and a fine, complex base of chalky minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and zesty in personality, with a lovely core, excellent grip, fine soil inflection and a long, vibrant and complex finish. High class AC! 2016-2023. **90.**

2015 Chablis “Vaillons” Les Minots- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The vineyard of Vaillons was happily outside of the path of the storm and the 2015 Minots from Domaine Piuze is a lovely wine, albeit quite forward in personality this year *vis à vis* the classically racy 2014 version. The bouquet offers up a ripe and very pretty blend of pear, paraffin, a touch of fresh apricot, citrus peel and a lovely base of limestone. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, round and succulent on the attack, with a fine core, very good backend minerality and a long, zesty and wide open finish. The acids here frame the wine nicely, but this will not make old bones in this vintage. 2016-2025+. **91.**

2015 Chablis “la Forêt”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 la Forêt bottling *chez* Piuze is lovely and shows a bit more raciness on the palate than the generous Minots. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of lemon, tart orange, chalky minerality, spring flowers and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and fairly forward in personality, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, ripe and zesty finish. This is very tasty already! 2016-2025+. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Vaillons” Les Roncières- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The Roncières is a new bottling from Patrick Piuze in 2015, with these vines lying alongside those of les Minots in the larger cru of Vaillons. This is a cooler site, with the thirty-five year-old vines planted north-south and the wine has a dramatically different personality as a result. The bouquet on the 2015 Roncières is lovely, delivering a fine constellation of lemon, pear, chalky soil tones, anise and a topnote of white lilies. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and crisp, with lovely depth in the mid-palate, bright acids and fine backend cut and mineral drive on the complex and classy finish. A fine new addition to the lineup! 2016-2030. **92+.**

2015 Chablis “Butteaux”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 Butteaux has also turned out very well indeed from Monsieur Piuze. This is one of the warmest *climats* in all of Chablis, so a bit more generosity in this warm vintage is not too surprising here, but there is lovely balance to go along with the depth of fruit and very good transparency as well. The nose wafts from the glass in a stylish blend of pear, a touch of tangerine, chalky soil nuances, beeswax and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, juicy and rock solid at the core, with good framing acids, a nice base of soil tones, really attractive fruit and fine length and grip on the bouncy finish. Good juice. 2016-2025. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Vaulorent”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

Patrick Piuze has crafted a really strong example of Vaulorent in 2015, with the wine offering up beautiful complexity and purity in its bouquet of green apple, flinty minerality, dried flowers, a touch of smokiness and a topnote of orange peel. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality in comparison to these other premier crus, with a rock solid core, fine mineral drive and a long, zesty and nicely structured finish. This is really strong in this vintage! 2016-2030+. **93.**

2015 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 Montée de Tonnerre from Domaine Piuze has turned out quite alright in this difficult vintage, but it is a bit lower in energy than the unaffected premier crus and the hail can be felt in its very forward personality. The nose is quite complex in its mix of fresh apricot, tangerine, chalky soil tones, a bit of beeswax and a topnote of lemongrass. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and juicy in personality, with a plump core, sound framing acids and a long, clean and fairly fruit-driven finish. Not surprisingly, given the horrific hail damage in this vineyard,

the wine does not show the usual complex minerality of this great *terroir*, but there is still a lot to like here for early drinking. 2016-2023. **89.**

2015 Chablis “Blanchots”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

Patrick Piuze noted that there was one silver lining to the hail damage in Blanchots in 2015, for as the vines here are planted north-south, the hail damage was principally on one side of the rows and a bit more of the crop was able to survive as a result. The wine is pretty, but again, lacks the customary energy of the domaine’s typical example, as it offers up a nose of pear, apricot, chalky soil tones, beeswax and anise. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, fresh and wide, wide open in personality, with sound framing acids and a long, easy-going and tasty finish. 2016-2023. **89.**

2015 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

Patrick Piuze’s parcel in les Clos is situated on the Blanchots side of the vineyard, so these two were hit by some hail in 2015. Nevertheless, the wine shows a bit more vibrancy on the nose and a bit more energy on the palate, with the bouquet wafting from the glass in a classy blend of pear, tangerine, flinty minerality, dried flowers and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a lovely core of fruit, very good framing acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This will last a bit longer in bottle than the Blanchots and is a step up as a result of less direct pummeling by the hail. 2016-2030. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Bougros”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 Bougros is really a lovely bottle in the making from Patrick Piuze this year, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of lime, pear, chalky minerality, gentle smokiness and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and nicely reserved in profile, with a rock solid core, fine soil inflection, bright acids and impressive length and grip on the focused and still quite youthful finish. This will be excellent and need at least a year or two in the cellar to fully blossom. 2018-2035. **93+.**

2015 Chablis “Côte de Bouquereaux”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The Côte de Bouquereaux is even a bit more youthfully structured than the Bougros in this vintage and is one of the top wines in the cellar *chez* Piuze in 2015. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a superbly mineral blend of pear, lime, beeswax, very complex, almost crystalline minerality, white flowers and citrus zest in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully framed by its racy minerality, with a superb core of fruit, excellent focus and grip and a very long, vibrant and still quite primary finish. A very impressive 2015 Chablis! 2018-2035. **94+.**

2015 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 Valmur here is also impressively reserved out of the blocks this year, offering up a deep and classy nose of lemon, green apple, stony minerality, apple blossoms and a topnote of lemon zest. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and rock solid at the core, with lovely transparency, bright acids and a very long, mineraly and tightly-knit finish. There is great depth behind the girdle of acidity here and this is going to be an outstanding example of the vintage in the fullness of time. 2019-2035. **94+.**

2015 Chablis “les Preuses”- Domaine Patrick Piuze

The 2015 Domaine Piuze les Preuses was also showing beautiful structural integrity out of the blocks in the spring. The bouquet is pure, complex and very classy, offering up a youthful constellation of tart orange, pear, beeswax, a touch of oyster shell, citrus zest and dried flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nascently complex, with

lovely mid-palate depth, bright acids and a very long, focused and racy finish. This is outstanding and has a tensile personality that is very, very rare in 2015. 2020-2040. **95.**

Domaine Raveneau (Chablis)

Isabelle Raveneau and her father and uncle are perfectly content with the quality of the 2015s that the domaine has produced this year, though as Isabelle noted, “it is a very forward vintage that will drink well early, but probably will not age all that long.” However, several of their finest parcels were hit particularly hard by the hail at the start of September, as their Montée de Tonnerre, Chapelots, Blanchots and les Clos parcels were all directly in the path of the storm. As is customary in short vintages, the little bit of Chapelots fruit that survived the storm has been blended into their Montée de Tonnerre cuvée, which will also be very, very short in quantity this year. To give some idea of just how bad the damage from the storm was, the Raveneau family lost seventy-five percent of their normal production in Montée de Tonnerre, two-thirds in Blanchots and half in les Clos (as their parcel lies on the eastern side of the slope and was caught in the path of the hail. The family started picking on September 3rd and brought all of their grapes in by the ninth of the month. The wines have turned out beautifully in their more forward style, with lovely underlying minerality, sound acidity for the mid-term and no need for any extended aging prior to starting to enjoy these lovely wines. They do not possess the classic cut and racy precision of the celestial 2014s here, but no one is going to be disappointed with any of the 2015 Domaine Raveneau wines!

2015 Chablis- Domaine Raveneau

The Chablis *villages* bottling *chez* Raveneau is always an excellent wine and the 2015 is no exception. The bouquet is ripe and very stylish, wafting from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, lemon and a nice base of minerality. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and wide open in personality, with a fine core and lovely mineral drive on the long and vibrant finish. This will not make old bones, but will be very tasty from the moment it is released. 2016-2025. **90.**

2015 Chablis “Forêt”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2015 Chablis “Forêt” from Domaine Raveneau is a very classy example of this more forward vintage, as it jumps from the glass in an already very detailed aromatic blend of apple, pear, spring flowers, chalky soil tones and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely generous on the attack, with a good core and fine backend minerality and grip on the vibrant finish. The acids here lift the wine nicely, but there is not the customary cut of a more classically racy young vintage from the domaine. Good juice. 2016-2035. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine Raveneau

The Raveneau family’s 2015 Montmains is very similar stylistically to the Forêt, offering up lovely balance and focus to go along with early accessibility. The bouquet delivers a lovely mix of apple, pear, lemon, wet stones and a topnote of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and elegant, with fine mid-palate depth, good framing acids and lovely focus and grip on the very well-balanced finish. This too will drink upon release, but also should age fairly well on its impeccable balance. 2016-2035. **91+.**

2015 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2015 Vaillons is fairly ripe in personality, but couples this with impressive length and grip on the backend. The bouquet is pure, refined and succulent, wafting from the glass in a blend of lemon, apple, chalky minerality, beeswax, white lilies and incipient notes of candied

lemon peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and very nicely balanced, with a fine core and excellent energy and grip on the long and vibrant finish. Fine juice. 2016-2035. **92.**

2015 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Raveneau

It is really a shame that so much of the family’s Montée de Tonnerre was wiped out by the hail of early September, as the wine has turned out truly beautifully in this vintage. The bouquet is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the previous premier crus, offering up scents of pear, lemon, flinty minerality, spring flowers and incipient notes of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and displays excellent *nervosité*, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a very long, zesty and complex finish. There is nothing laid back and easy-going about this excellent vintage of Montée de Tonnerre. 2017-2040. **94.**

2015 Chablis “Butteaux”- Domaine Raveneau

As Butteaux is a warmer vintage, it is not surprising that the inherent generosity of the 2015 vintage is in evidence in this lovely wine. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely blend of pear, apple, beeswax, chalky soil tones and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more fruit-driven in personality than the Montée de Tonnerre, but with a very good spine of acidity running the length of the wine as well. There is a possibility that this wine may firm up nicely after bottling. 2016-2035. **93.**

2015 Chablis “Blanchot”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2015 Blanchot from Domaine Raveneau is a beautiful wine, with all of the customary elegance of this cru already apparent aromatically and on the palate. The bouquet offers up a very pure and refined mélange of lemon, pear, beeswax, chalky minerality and a potpourri of floral tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and focused, with a lovely core, fine balance and a very long, vibrant and zesty finish. The acids here frame the wine nicely, but this is going to be hard to resist in its youth! 2016-2035+. **94.**

2015 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine Raveneau

The Raveneau family’s 2015 Valmur is a ripe and very refined wine, with the synthesis of the vintage’s generous fruit and the cru’s fine mineral drive beautifully entwined. The nose wafts from the glass in a gregarious mix of apple, pear, paraffin, chalky minerality and just a whisper of vanilla in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with an excellent core of fruit, fine soil signature, bright acids and excellent length and grip on the focused finish. There is a lovely veneer of puppy fat here, but my gut instinct is that this wine will start to show a firmer structural chassis after bottling and probably will want a few years in the cellar before drinking. 2020-2050. **95.**

2015 Chablis “Clos”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2015 Clos from Domaine Raveneau is an outstanding example of the vintage, which like the Valmur, shows some uncharacteristic early generosity on the attack, but plenty of backend structure and grip. The bouquet is a fine blend of apple, pear, beeswax, chalky minerality, citrus zest, spring flowers and just a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with fine acidity and a long, vibrant finish. Like the Valmur, there is plenty of generosity on the attack today, but this too should show more firmness after bottling and I would not open a bottle for at least a few years. 2020-2045. **95+.**

Gevrey-Chambertin:

Domaine Denis Bachelet (Gevrey-Chambertin)

In contrast to some of his neighbors in Gevrey-Chambertin, Denis Bachelet decided to pick early in 2015 and was out in the vines early in the morning of September 5th to start bringing in the bunches. His strategy has paid handsome dividends and the entire range here is simply outstanding, with a great sense of elegance and purity that is missing in some of the later-harvesters' wines in this vintage. Monsieur Bachelet noted that hydric stress was a problem in some parcels in 2015, with his vines in a couple of his Bourgogne parcels really suffering at times during mid-summer's drought, but the older vines in his top plots were able to still find water reserves during the worst heat of the summer. The cellar had been racked at the end of June of 2016 and was showing extremely well at the time of my visit.



Denis Bachelet in his cellars in Gevrey-Chambertin.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Denis Bachelet is excellent. The nose is pure and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a blend of black cherries, cassis, dark chocolate, a touch of meatiness and a discreet framing of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is fullish, tangy and very well-balanced, with a nice touch of sappiness at the core, gentle backend tannins and good length and grip on the focused finish. 2019-2035. **88.**

2015 Côte de Nuits Villages- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2015 Côte de Nuits Villages from Domaine Denis Bachelet is another very strong example of the vintage, with the nose jumping from the glass in a superb blend of black cherries, black plums, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, grilled meats and a nice framing of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a sappy core, tangy acids, silky tannins and lovely focus and grip on the finish. Structurally, this wine will be accessible early on, but I would let it develop in bottle for at least four or five years before really starting to drink it, as it will blossom beautifully. 2021-2045. **90.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2015 Gevrey old vine bottling is also very, very fine this year. The bouquet offers up a lovely blend of sweet dark berries, cassis, grilled meats, chocolate, a fine base of black minerality, woodsmoke and a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and quite plush on the attack, with a fine core of fruit, impressive backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and lovely lift and grip on the long finish. This will drink early by the standards of this cuvée, but is so beautifully balanced that it should also age long and gracefully. 2021-2060. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Evocelles”- Domaine Denis Bachelet

I love the *terroir* of les Evocelles and Denis Bachelet's 2015 version shows it to fine effect. The bouquet is flat out gorgeous, jumping from the glass in a blend of sappy black cherries and black plums, bitter chocolate, grilled meats, plenty of black mineral tones and just a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine beautifully synthesizes its sappy fruit component and excellent minerality, with a fine core, suave tannins and excellent length and grip on the vibrant and tangy finish. Just a lovely bottle! 2021-2060. **92.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Corbeaux” V.V.- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2015 Corbeaux is very, very elegant *chez* Bachelet this year, with a sense of reserve that is not evident in any of the previous wines and which augurs very well for its evolution over the long haul. The bouquet delivers a fine constellation of black cherries, cassis, espresso, dark soil tones, grilled meats, raw cocoa and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very, very transparent in personality, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and grip on the long, poised and youthful finish. 2023-2065. **93.**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2015 Charmes-Chambertin from Denis Bachelet is absolutely stunning. It is not a powerful wine by any stretch of the imagination, but it is bottomless and utterly refined on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is youthfully complex, offering up a complex blend of black cherries, black plums, grilled meats, a stunning base of soil tones, bitter chocolate, spicy oak and an exotic topnote of toasted hazelnut. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and seamless, with a sappy core, outstanding soil signature, great focus and backend energy and a long, suavely tannic and primary finish. This will be a great wine in the fullness of time. 2025-2075. **96.**

Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils (Gevrey-Chambertin)

The Burguet family has always been late harvesters and this was the case again in 2015, with picking not starting here until the 15th of September. This probably helped knock alcohol levels down a bit, as it had rained pretty heavily prior to their starting out into the vines to gather bunches and skin to juice ratio would have been better as a result of the rain. However, my impression at the handful of domaines that I visited on this trip where picking was later was

that the rains also diminished the impression of terroir in the resulting wines, and I felt this was true to a certain degree with the Burguet 2015s. I did not ask about specific alcohol levels for the finished wines, with the exception of the Gevrey AC bottling, which came in at an even thirteen percent, but which was showing on the borderline of sur maturité to my palate, with plenty of chocolate and fruit aromatics and flavors that were far more baked than fresh. There are certainly some ringing successes in 2015 chez Burguet, but overall, their traditional approach of picking later may not have accrued its customary benefits in the torrid summer of 2015.

2015 Bourgogne “les Pincés Vin”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Burguet is very ripe, but also deep and tangy. The bouquet offers up scents of red and black cherries, chocolate, spice tones and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and modestly tannic, with not a whole lot of soil signature, but good length and grip on the backend. 2016-2025. **86.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cuvée Symphonie”- Domaine Alain Burguet

The 2015 Gevrey villages bottling from the Burguet brothers is a dead-ringer for their father’s example of this bottling back in the 1990 vintage, which I knew very well and drank with quite some frequency back in the day. The bouquet offers up a fine blend of black cherries, red plums, grilled venison, chocolate, a nice dollop of soil and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a good core of fruit, moderate tannins and very good length and grip on the quite ripe finish. This gets up to the threshold of overripeness, but never goes over the line. 2021-2050. **89.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Mes Favorites”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

Not surprisingly, the old vine bottling of Mes Favorites is more precise and pure than the first two wines in the lineup. The nose wafts from the glass in a complex blend of red and black plums, black cherries, cocoa, grilled meats, dark soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is e33p, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with fine length and grip, ripe tannins and a bit of roasted reflection of the summer poking out on the backend. 2021-2055. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Burguet family Champeaux is all musky red fruit this year, with the nose offering up a complex constellation of strawberries, cherries, a touch of raspberry, a good dollop of soil tones, gamebird, mustard seed and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and quite transparent, with a sappy core, sound acids and very good length and grip on the moderately tannic finish. The wine was showing just a bit of backend heat at the time of my visit. 2023-2060. **92.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The new cuvée of Lavaux St. Jacques here in the Burguet cellars is also very red fruity this year, delivering a sappy blend of red plums, cherries, cocoa, soil, grilled meats and cedar on the nose. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary at the present time, with a sappy core of fruit, ripe tannins, tangy acids and a long, warm vintage finish that shows elements of baked fruit. This is very well done in its style, but it shows its later picking date. 2023-2060. **92.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Echézeaux”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Echézeaux” from Domaine Burguet was showing well at the time of my visit, with lovely purity in its aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, gamebird, chocolate, a nice base of soil and spicy wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied,

tangy and loaded with sappy red fruit at the core, with moderate tannins and good length and grip on the finish. 2021-2050. **89+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Vosne AC *chez Burguet* is a pretty fruit-driven wine this year. The bouquet is bright and sappy, offering up scents of red plums, raspberries, cocoa, a touch of dark soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and sappy, but with a bit lower in energy than the Chambolle and Gevrey *villages* bottlings, with moderate tannins and a fairly long, plush finish. There is a surface plushness here, but not a lot in reserve at the core. 2020-2045. **88**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Rouge Dessus”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Rouge Dessus from Domaine Burguet is a notable step up from the *villages* in the mid-palate, and the wine is decidedly more complex on both the nose and palate. The bouquet offers up scents of red plums, cherries, just a hint of raspberry, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, Vosne spices and cedar. On the palate the wine is broad-shouldered, full and ripe, with a velvety texture already quite evident on the attack, a sappy core, tangy acids and good length and grip on the suavely tannic and nicely focused finish. 2021-2050+. **92**.

2015 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2015 Burguet family Clos de Bèze is a ripe and very classy wine in the making. The bouquet delivers a fine blend of red and black cherries, red plums, cocoa, a hint of summer truffle, complex soil tones, spiced meats and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and sappy at the core, with excellent complexity, ripe, suave tannins and a long, tangy and very well-balanced finish. This is very impressive in its style. 2025-2075. **94+**.

Domaine Fourrier (Gevrey-Chambertin)

As was the case at Domaine Roumier, I did not catch the 2015s at Domaine Fourrier in a great stage of their evolutions for tasting in mid-November, as all of the wines had been assembled in tank only the week prior to my visit. Consequently, I found the wines still rather unsettled and harder to get a read on than many other estates' 2015s. Jean-Marie Fourrier started picking a bit later in 2015 than some of his neighbors, not getting out in the vines until the 10th of September and gathering in the grapes through the 15th of the month. This coincided with the rainy week in the Côte d'Or, but Jean-Marie noted that it rained mostly in the afternoons during this stormy week and it was possible to pick fairly easily in the mornings. He also commented that one has a seventy-two hour window to bring in grapes in rainy conditions, as this is how long it takes for the vines to process the water in the soil and cycle it up into the bunches. The Domaine Fourrier wines all range in the 12.9 to 13.3 percent alcohol range in 2015, but some cuvées showed plenty of ripeness in their aromatic and flavor profiles. Given that the wines had just been racked and were not yet settled in, it was a very difficult tasting, and my sense that some of the bottlings showed a bit less soil definition in 2015 than in most other recent vintages chez Fourrier could be as much a result of their recent assemblage as a reflection of the style of the wines in this vintage. The wines all shared a lovely, sappy fruit component (mostly red fruit tones) and the musky floral aspects of 2015, but given that they were just racked and still obviously agitated, I have scored the wines within a range. Some were still in a state where they were rather jammy and unstructured (which I attributed entirely to the recent racking), whereas others were a bit more precise and showed the detail of their structural chassis much better. It was really a bit of a rollercoaster ride. But, really none of the wines were all that happy about being tasted and the tasting ended up being a pretty hazy sketch of the vintage chez Fourrier. Happily, the range of négociant bottlings that Jean-Marie is producing as well these

days had been racked a week earlier than the domaine bottlings, so a few more of these were better recovered and easier to taste. Jean-Marie Fourrier has been making such excellent wines for so long now that I have a hard time imagining that he “missed” in the 2015 vintage, but, due to all of the wines having been assembled a week or two prior to my visit, it really was one of the most difficult tastings of the trip!

Domaine Wines

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Bourgogne Rouge from Domaine Fourrier is a very red fruity and sappy example, offering up a nose of cherries, wild strawberries, cocoa and musky floral tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, sappy and tangy, with good length on the plush finish. 2016-2025. **86-87+?**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Clos Solon”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Clos Solon from Jean-Marie Fourrier is also quite ripe and sappy on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, beetroot, musky floral tones, chocolate and a dollop of soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and sappy, with a good core and a touch of suave, backend tannin. This will only need a few years in the cellar to start drinking nicely. 2019-2035+. **88-89?**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Chambolle V.V. *chez* Fourrier is also very pretty, red fruity and sappy in personality, but it is a bit less musky with ripeness than the Clos Solon. The nose is a blend of red plums, a touch of black cherry, raw cocoa, gentle balsamic tones and a nice base of chalky soil nuances. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and shapely, with a sappy core, gentle tannins and a long, still quite primary finish. This seems likely to offer more precision and minerality once it has snapped back into place than the Clos Solon. 2021-2040+. **88-90?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Aux Echézeaux”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Gevrey “aux Echézeaux” had bounced back a bit better from its racking and was showing a bit more structural precision than the first wines of the tasting. The wine is quite red fruity on the nose, offering up scents of blood orange, strawberries, cocoa, a touch of mustard seed and a nice signature of soil. On the palate the wine is fullish and quite suave on the attack, with a good core, tangy acids and a long, modestly tannic finish. 2021-2040+. **89-90+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Gevrey V.V. was also showing a bit better than some of the wines in the cellar and again, a bit more precision was evident here. The nose is a bit more deeply-pitched than the aux Echézeaux bottling, offering up scents of red plums, cherries, mustard seed, gamebird, floral tones and a nice touch of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with good length and grip on the tangy and modestly tannic finish. 2022-2045. **89-91?**

2015 Vougeot “Petits Vougeots”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Petits Vougeots from Jean-Marie Fourrier was really grumpy still after its recent racking and shaken on both the nose and palate. The wine has loads of red fruit, with a mélange of red plums and beetroot in ascendancy, to go along with notes of mustard seed and chalky soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy, with ripe tannins, but it has not yet recovered from the racking and is hiding its shape completely. 2023-2050? **89-92+?**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Clos Sorbés”- Domaine Fourrier

In contrast to the out of sorts Petits Vougeots, the 2015 Clos Sorbés was actually showing quite nicely. The bouquet is very pretty, delivering a mix of cherries, beetroot, red plums, a fine

base of soil, gamebird and raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins, promising nascent complexity and very good length and grip on the nicely balanced finish. This is probably more emblematic of the entire range here, once the wines have bounced back from their racking! 2022-2050. **91+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Gruenchers”- Domaine Fourrier

After the very good showing of the Clos Sorbés, the 2015 Gruenchers was back to the more agitated side of the cellar and the wine was very difficult to get a proper read on in mid-November. The wine is certainly long and sappy, with plenty of red and black cherry fruit, plums, chocolate, gamebird and soil in evidence on the mélange of aromatic scents. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and the tannins are suave, but this wine is out of sorts and not showing a whole lot of balance or focus at the present time, due to its racking. 2023-2060? **90-92+?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cherbaudes”- Domaine Fourrier

With the 2015 Cherbaudes from Domaine Fourrier, we again have a wine that was basically back in balance after the *assemblage* and was showing pretty nicely. The bouquet is a fine, red fruity blend of cherries, plums, beetroot, *pigeon*, mustard seed, roses and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, good focus and balance and a long, fine-grained and tangy finish. This will be quite good. 2023-2060+. **92-93.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Goulots”- Domaine Fourrier

Sadly, as the les Goulots here is one of my absolute favorite cuvées, was about as shaken as could be. There is plenty of sappy red fruit here, to go along with notes of cocoa, mustard seed and soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and agitated, with plenty of sappiness at the core, but no semblance of the balance inherent in the wine. 2023-2060? **90-93?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Champeaux *chez* Fourrier was also still out of sorts from its racking. The wine seems deeper and more soil-driven than the Goulots, but this could just be the relative states of recovery of the two wines. There is a mix of sappy red and black cherry fruit, grilled meats, cocoa and plenty of soil elements on display here, but they have not yet snapped back into focus. The wine is full-bodied, long and the tannins are suave, and I have to imagine that this will be a lovely wine when it is back in balance. 2024-2060+? **92-93+?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Combes aux Moines”- Domaine Fourrier

As the rollercoaster ride continued in the cellars here, the 2015 Combes aux Moines was showing nicely and had bounced back pretty well. The nose is a lovely blend of plums, red and black cherries, grilled meats, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, mustard seed and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, tangy and quite sappy at the core, with fine focus and balance, ripe, nicely-integrated tannins and a long, tangy and very promising finish. Nice to catch a wine more or less on form! 2025-2065+. **92-93+?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos St. Jacques”- Domaine Fourrier

The regular bottling of Clos St. Jacques in 2015 from Domaine Fourrier was once again, out of whack from its *assemblage*. The aromatics here are a red fruity blend that features notes of cherries, red plums, grilled meats, cocoa, mustard seed and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and has plenty of mid-palate stuffing, with good tangy acids and a long, ripely tannic finish. It is hard not to imagine that this is going to be very good. 2025-2075? **92-94?**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos St. Jacques” Cuv. Centenaire- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 vintage will again feature a Cuvée Centenaire bottling of Clos St. Jacques from Jean-Marie Fourrier, as two casks will be bottled on their own. This was happily a bit more

recovered than the regular bottling, as it wafts from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, grilled meats, cocoa, musky floral tones, a great base of minerality, and a topnote of spices. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impressively pure, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and excellent length and grip on the long and complex finish. This is likely to be stunning. 2025-2075+. **94-96?**

2015 Griotte-Chambertin- Domaine Fourrier

The 2015 Griotte from Domaine Fourrier was again, still plenty agitated from its recent racking and quite difficult to taste. The wine is deep, sappy, full-bodied and very long, with fine-grained tannins. The nose offers up a mélange of red plums, cherries, musky rose scents, chalky soil tones, cocoa and vanillin oak. The constituent components here are very promising, but this wine is shaken and grumpy! 2027-2075+? **94-96?**

Négociant Wines

2015 Vosne-Romanée “aux Réas”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Vosne-Romanée “aux Réas” from Jean-Marie Fourrier is produced from a parcel of forty-two year-old vines. This is far more black fruity in profile than any of the domaine wines, as it offers up scents of black cherries, a touch of dark berry, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, herbs, gamebird and soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite transparent in personality, with a good core, tangy acids and moderate tannins on the complex finish. This was showing quite well at the time of my visit. 2023-2055+. **91.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 les Chaumes from Monsieur Fourrier was also recovered nicely and showing marvelous purity on both the nose and palate. The first class bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex blend of red and black raspberries, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, cocoa and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and precise, with a fine core, excellent backend mineral drive and a v3ery long, tangy and ripely tannic finish. This will be a terrific example of Chaumes! 2025-2065. **92+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 les Amoureuses from Jean-Marie Fourrier was recovered beautifully and was absolutely singing at the time of my visit. Needless to say, I was thrilled! The bouquet is pure and stunning, jumping from the glass in a musky blend of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke, complex minerality, musky floral tones and new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very refined in profile, with a sappy core, fine soil inflection, moderate tannins and a very long, complex and vibrant finish. This will be terrific juice. 2025-2075. **95.**

2015 Echézeaux- Jean-Marie Fourrier

Jean-Marie Fourrier’s 2015 Echézeaux was less recovered than the Amoureuses and Chaumes, but clearly has lovely raw materials and I am sure the wine will be excellent. The bouquet is quite red fruity for a 2015 Echézeaux, offering up a mélanges of red plums, cherries, duck, chocolate, a good base of soil, Vosne spices and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and very good length and grip on the finish. I am sure that once the focus locks back into place with a few more weeks of recovery time, this will be stellar. 2025-2075. **93-94+?**

2015 Clos Vougeot- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Clos Vougeot was on form and showing lovely potential. The nose is a classy blend of red and black cherries, venison, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, bitter chocolate and new

oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully soil-driven in personality, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip, ripe, chewy tannins and a long, perfectly balanced and nascently complex finish. All this wine needs is time alone in the cellar to blossom! 2027-2080. **94.**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Charmes-Chambertin from Jean-Marie Fourrier was also showing very well at the time of my visit. The bouquet is deep, pure and complex, offering up a very red fruity blend of strawberries, cherries, a touch of orange peel, grilled meat, a fine base of soil tones, raw cocoa and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very refined in profile, with a lovely core, excellent backend minerality and a very long, focused and ripely tannic finish. Marvelous Charmes in the making. 2025-2075. **94+.**

2015 Latricières-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Latricières-Chambertin *chez* Fourrier was also nicely recovered from its racking, but this is a more reserved wine out of the blocks than the last several in the lineup. The nose offers up a nicely cool fruit blend of cassis, dark berries, espresso, venison, dark soil tones and cedary new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and still very primary finish. This will blossom nicely, but it will need time. 2027-2075+. **94.**

2015 Mazoyrès-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Mazoyrès-Chambertin from Jean-Marie Fourrier was really showing well at the time of my visit and the wine was absolutely singing on both the nose and palate. The bouquet soars from the glass in a very pure and nascently complex blend of cassis, dark berries, espresso, grilled meats, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, very suave tannins and a long, tangy and impeccably balanced finish. 2024-2065+. **95.**

2015 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Clos de Bèze was much more shaken still from its recent racking than most of these other *négociant* bottlings. The bouquet is still absorbing its spicy new oak, with plenty of fruit underneath, but this was really one of the most agitated wines I tasted in the entire cellar and it was impossible to take even an approximate note. It is very long and deep and I have to imagine, given how superb most of these other *négociant* bottlings were showing, that this will be outstanding.

2015 Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2015 Chambertin was more settled in on the nose than the Clos de Bèze, but this too was quite shaken still on the palate and impossible to really get a proper reading on. The bouquet shows some classic aromatic Chambertin notes of cherries, red plums, grilled meats, mustard seed, orange peel, soil and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is very deep and rock solid at the core, but it is agitated and not in a proper stage for evaluation. Like the Clos de Bèze, I am sure this is going to be outstanding, once it has settled back into place.

Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Philippe Harmand and his team were out picking early in 2015, starting to bring in grapes on September 5th and hustling to collect all the fruit as quickly as possible. The resulting wines are amongst the finest I have yet tasted from the domaine! I was very happy to visit this year in November, rather than the following spring, as I found all the wines still in cask and not yet racked, so most were in optimal condition for tasting. A couple were slightly reductive, but it

was quite easy to swirl them a bit more and induce them to give up their charms, and the entire lineup here is indeed poised and charming in style in 2015. This is not to say that there is any shortage of depth and muscle in these beautiful 2015s, but their calling card this year is sappy fruit, coupled to great soil signatures and utterly suave, potentially velvety textures that will be glorious to drink at their peaks. The superb quality of this range of 2015s should not take anything away from the other recent great vintages chez Harmand, as each and every year here since I have been visiting regularly (starting with the 2008 vintage) has been full of outstanding wines that perfectly captured the character and potential of each successive vintage, and in particular, the 2014s here are equally impressive. But, my gut feeling is that Philippe Harmand and his father Gérard have one of the greatest vintages of the last quarter century here on their hands with these stellar 2015s, and this is a domaine that should be on every Burgundy lovers' short list of "must have" Gevrey-Chambertins!



2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2015 Bourgogne was showing very nicely in November, offering up a bright and red fruity nose of cherries, a touch of blood orange, pretty spice tones, raw cocoa and a nice dollop of soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, tangy and very nicely balanced, with a good core of fruit, very modest tannins and lovely length and grip on the finish. This will drink beautifully from release and is a classy example. 2016-2030. **88.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2015 Gevrey *villages* from Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy was one of the wines that was just a touch reduced, but a bit of coaxing revealed a very classy example. The nose is more black fruity in personality this year, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, a touch of dark berry, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure on the attack and very transparent in personality, with fine-mid-palate depth, lovely focus and grip and a long, bouncy and modestly tannic finish. Good juice. 2018-2040. **90.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “en Jouise”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2015 Gevrey “en Jouise” is also an excellent *villages*, with a bit more overt sappiness than the straight AC this year, as these sixty-five year-old vines have really excelled in this vintage! The bouquet is flat out superb, soaring from the glass in a blaze of sappy black cherries and cassis, grilled meats, dark chocolate, lovely minerality and just a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and very shapely this year, with lovely sappiness at the core, fine mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and impeccable balance on the complex and vibrant finish. This is really good! 2020-2050+. **91.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

As readers will recall, the domaine’s Clos Prieur is a blend of the two sections of this vineyard, with thirty percent of the cuvée made from the premier cru sector of Clos Prieur Haut and the balance old vines in the *villages* portion of Clos Prieur Bas. The vines in the lower section are now eighty-five years of age. This is stellar as well in 2015, with a bit more of a reserved personality than the en Jouise, as it offers up a deep and classy bouquet of dark berries, black cherries, raw cocoa, incipient notes of grilled meat, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent focus and grip, tangy acids and a very long, ripely tannic and still fairly primary finish. This will need a bit more time, but will excellent. 2022-2050+. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The Harmand-Geoffroy Vieilles Vignes bottling all hails from their parcels on the northern side of the commune and was raised in forty percent new oak this year. The wine was showing beautifully at the time of my visit and seems likely to drink just a tad sooner than the Clos Prieur. The bouquet delivers a fine mélange of sappy black cherries and sweet dark berries, raw cocoa, grilled meats, a touch of bonfire and a lovely base of smoky new wood. On the palate the wine is plush, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with suave tannins and really lovely acidity adding vibrancy and bounce on the long and complex finish. Fine juice. 2021-2050+. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Perrière”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2015 Perrière from Philippe Harmand is excellent, and interestingly, this was raised in less new wood than the Vieilles Vignes this year (thirty percent). The wine is pure and refined on both the nose and palate, with the excellent bouquet wafting from the glass in a lovely combination of cassis, dark berries, black minerality, dark chocolate, incipient notes of grilled meats and a deft framing of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and utterly classic in profile, with a fine core of fruit, great backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and tangy finish. This is a superb example of this underrated and beautiful Gevrey premier cru. 2024-2065. **93.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Bousière”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 015 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Bousière” from Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy is also a lovely example of the vintage, but it was a tad behind some of the other wines in the cellar in terms of *elevage* and had not yet fully integrated its new wood component, despite the fact that

only thirty percent was new this year. But, this is just a passing phase and the wine will be excellent. The bouquet offers up scents of black cherries, cassis, espresso, woodsmoke, gamebird, a fine base of soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a superb core, lovely transparency, ripe tannins and a long, youthful and chewy finish. This will be very elegant in the fullness of time. 2023-2055+. **92.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2015 Champeaux from Philippe Harmand was also a touch reductive at the time of my visit, but again, with a bit of coaxing, this wine began to absolutely sing. The bouquet is ultimately deep, pure and nascently complex, delivering a constellation of black cherries, dark berries, grilled venison, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with excellent focus and balance, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and a very long, soil-driven and classy finish. I love good Champeaux and this is an outstanding example in the making. 2024-2065+. **93+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

One of the very finest examples of Lavaux St. Jacques is unequivocally the bottling from Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy and the 2015 will be a stellar wine with a bit of bottle age. The bouquet is deep, pure and very precise, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, espresso, raw cocoa, grilled meats, black minerality and a well-judged base of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, intense and impeccably balanced, with outstanding depth at the sappy core, great soil signature, suave tannins and a very long, tangy and still quite primary finish. Just add time in the cellar! 2025-2075. **94.**

2015 Mazis-Chambertin- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The only thing I might have done differently from Philippe Harmand with this magnificent Mazis-Chambertin is I might have used a bit less new wood, just to allow the *terroir* here to shine through even brighter, as Philippe raised this wine in ninety percent new wood this year. It is not that the oak is in the way at all, as it is seamlessly integrated into this beautiful wine, but I would just be curious to see what this great wine might have looked like with less new wood. In any case, this wine is utterly stunning, as it offers up a truly superb aromatic constellation of red and black plums, sappy black cherries, roasted meats, raw cocoa, a very complex base of minerality, a touch of hazelnut and a base of smoky new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and simply rippling with energy, with tangy acids, ripe tannins, a very sappy core and laser-like focus on the pure and very complex finish. This will be a very, very elegant and sappy example of Mazis at its apogee. 2027-2075+. **96+.**

Domaine Armand Rousseau (Gevrey-Chambertin)

The 2015s chez Rousseau were just singing at the time of my visit, as the cellar had been racked in June and July of 2016 and the wines were in marvelous form in mid-November, with the exception of the domaine’s Gevrey AC cuvée, which was a bit reductive again and anticipating its next racking. These are truly a beautiful set of wines in 2015, but it is hard to say that they will ultimately eclipse the equally profound vintage of 2014 at Domaine Rousseau. The domaine chose not to chapitalize at all in 2015 and the range of alcohols in the finished wines ranges from an even thirteen percent up to a high of 13.7 percent. Generally, twenty percent whole clusters were retained for the wines in 2015. These are very deep, very pure and very flashy examples of the 2015 vintage and fans of Domaine Rousseau are certainly going to be delighted with the entire range here, but those 2014 Rousseaus are very, very special too!

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos du Château”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The new addition of the Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos du Château” at Domaine Rousseau is really lovely in 2015, offering up a beautiful and very red fruity personality on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of cherries, strawberries, raw cocoa, gamebird and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and very elegant in profile, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip, gentle tannins and lovely length and bounce on the well-balanced finish. 2019-2045. **90+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The bottling of Gevrey AC from the domaine’s own parcels was quite grumpy at the time of my visit, and despite some extended swirling to try to get the sense of reduction to back off, it remained pretty cantankerous on the nose. Consequently, I could not take a precise note and give the wine a score, but I did note that underneath the reduction the wine has plenty of crunchy fruit, good soil signature and a long, tangy and focused finish. I am sure it will be very, very good, but it was out of sorts in mid-November.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

On the other hand, the 2015 Lavaux St. Jacques *chez* Rousseau was absolutely singing at the time of my visit, offering up a beautifully pure, sappy aromatic constellation of red plums, cherries, a touch of grilled meats, raw cocoa, a whisper of vanillin oak and a pungent topnote of roses. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely transparency, fine-grained tannins and outstanding length and grip on the vibrant and utterly seamless finish. A marvelous Lavaux! 2023-2060. **92+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cazetiers”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

Out of the blocks, the 2015 Rousseau Cazetiers is every bit as expressive as the Lavaux St. Jacques, but it is a touch more reserved in personality on the palate today. The bouquet is beautiful, offering up scents of cherries, red plums, violets, grilled meats, a touch of spice, dark soil tones and cocoa. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully focused, with sappy mid-palate depth, a great base of soil, suave tannins, very promising complexity and a long, tangy and elegant finish. Another stellar premier cru in the making. 2023-2060. **92+**.

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

It is interesting, given all of the sappy red fruit tones in the wines served ahead of the 2015 Charmes-Chambertin, to find how black fruity this wine is this year. The bouquet is deep and very pure, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, grilled meat, dark soil tones and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with a rock solid core, ripe, perfectly-integrated tannins and a very long, tangy and youthful finish. This is a spitting image of the young 1993 Charmes, with perhaps just a bit more mid-palate stuffing. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Mazy-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Mazy-Chambertin *chez* Rousseau was raised in twenty percent new wood this year and was showing beautiful potential. The nose delivers a fine constellation of black cherries, dark berries, currant leaf, a complex base of black minerality, venison, a hint of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and shows off lovely mid-palate depth, with fine focus and grip, suave tannins and lovely balance on the long, nascently complex and tangy finish. Another lovely bottle in the making. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Clos de la Roche from Domaine Armand Rousseau was also raised in twenty percent new oak this year and the wine is one of the best young vintages of this cru that I have

tasted from the estate! The stunning nose soars from the glass in a sappy and complex mélange of red and black plums, cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, a superb base of soil, vanillin oak, just a touch of mustard seed and a musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, but also with a nice sense of structural reserve at the same time. The finish is very, very long, ripely tannic and perfectly balanced, with great grip and vibrancy. This will be stellar juice in the fullness of time, but it will deserve at full decade in the cellar to allow all of its secondary layers of complexity to emerge. *Chapeau!* 2025-2080. **94+**.

2015 Ruchottes-Chambertin “Clos des Ruchottes”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Clos des Ruchottes is stunning this year, with more overt structure than any wine up to this point, but also with the sappy purity of fruit and great transparency of the top wines of the vintage. The bouquet is superb, delivering a great blend of red and black cherries, red plums, cocoa, a complex base of minerality, grilled meats, woodsmoke and a touch of vanillin oak (thirty percent new wood was used this year for this cuvée). On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with outstanding sappy depth at the core, great transparency, fine-grained tannins and simply stunning backend energy and lift on the focused and complex finish. A great wine. 2027-2085. **95+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos St. Jacques”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Clos St. Jacques from Domaine Rousseau was in a bit of an adolescent phase at the time of my visit, as this wine received eighty percent new oak in this vintage and it was still in the process of fully integrating its new wood component into the body of the wine. The nose wafts from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, red plums, gamebird, complex soil tones, spices, raw cocoa and cedary new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, tangy and quite sappy at the core, with fine soil signature, ripe tannins and a long, chewy finish. Today, this wine is working at its oak and not in the same pretty state as so many of these other 2015s, but underneath the wood is a great wine in the making and once everything falls into place, it will be superb. Today, it is hard to say that it will be better than the great 2015 Clos des Ruchottes, but traditionally, it usually ends up just a touch higher up the scale and this may well be the case with the 2015 in the fullness of time. As I tasted this wine, I kept imagining how it might have been showing if it too had been raised in only thirty percent new wood! 2025-2075. **95**.

2015 Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Rousseau Chambertin is an utterly profound bottle in the making. The bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, soaring from the glass in a blaze of raspberries, red plums, red and black cherries, cocoa, a gorgeous base of soil, violets and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with seamless, haunting beauty, suave tannins, bright acids and glorious complexity on the very, very long, very refined and vibrant finish. This will deserve a full fifteen years of bottle age to really start to drink with its secondary layers on full display, but unless it closes down after bottling, it is going to be so tempting to open earlier that a great many bottles may well fall to infanticide! 2030-2100. **98**.

2015 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2015 Clos de Bèze from Domaine Rousseau is brilliant. The bouquet is bottomless and musky in personality, albeit, more reserved at the present time than the Chambertin, offering up scents of red plums, cherries, gamebird, very complex soil tones, raw cocoa, hints of fresh nutmeg, exotic spices and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, focused and sappy at the core, with great soil signature, ripe and seamless tannins, tangy acids and laser-like

focus on the very, very long and potentially brilliant finish. This will need plenty of time to blossom, but it will be a legend! 2030-2100. 98.



Domaine Rossignol-Trapet (Gevrey-Chambertin)

I arrived at Domaine Rossignol-Trapet on this trip without an appointment, but as I was right across the street at Denis Bachelet's cellar and finished very early, I thought I would at least pop into the office here and make an appointment for my next trip to the region in March. Graciously, David Rossignol said that he had an hour free and offered to let me work my way through his 2015s right on the spot! Needless to say, I was more than delighted to comply! The Rossignol brothers have made stellar 2015s, as this was another domaine to start harvesting on the early side and to really hustle to get the grapes brought in as quickly as possible. Picking here began on September 7th and the entire domaine was collected in five days in 2015. As David Rossignol noted, "maturation was really blocked from hydric stress until a bit of rain on August 3rd got the ripening started again." He mentioned that the first blush of color in the berries had arrived nearly a month earlier, on July 13th, but with the drought conditions, there was no further hint of the berries turning red until that storm on August 3rd, after which the colors changed in the course of a day. The brothers decided to go an extra step this year to protect the elegance and typicité of the vintage and did not use a single new barrel for the vintage, choosing boldly to use all two and three year-old casks for every single wine in their lineup, including their grand crus, and these are unequivocally, the greatest set of young wines I have ever had the

pleasure to taste from Domaine Rossignol-Trapet! As is customary in November here, the Bourgogne was already bottled, the Beaune “Theurons” had already been assembled in tank and was destined for bottling a short time after my visit, and the wines from Gevrey-Chambertin were all still in cask and not yet assembled. As we only had an hour to taste together, Monsieur Rossignol only showed two of his Gevrey premier crus during my visit, so I did not taste the Cherbaudes, Corbeaux or Combottes on this visit. But, based on how beautiful everything else showed on this trip, I would imagine that these three premier crus are also very successful as well in this vintage.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Rossignol-Trapet had been bottled in mid-September of 2016 and had bounced back nicely by the time of my visit. The bouquet is pretty and very sappy, jumping from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, chocolate, a whisper of grilled meat and a topnote of violet. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, good focus and grip, tangy acids and a long, velvety finish. This is a superb example. 2016-2025+. **88.**

2015 Beaune “Theurons”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Theurons was showing very well, for only having been racked three weeks prior to my visit, offering up a pure and sappy nose of black cherries, plums, chocolate, an excellent base of soil tones, a touch of gamebird and a very discreet framing of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, beautifully sappy at the core, with moderate tannins, really good acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. This has the purity of a 2010! 2020-2050. **90+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Gevrey “Vieilles Vignes” was still in cask and was really singing at the time of my visit. The bouquet is pure and very refined, offering up scents of red and black cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a hint of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and a bit more reserved in personality than the Theurons, with a lovely core, fine-grained tannins and a long, primary and vibrant finish. This will be first class Gevrey, but give it four or five years to really start to sing. 2020-2045. **90.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The premier cru of Clos Prieur is usually one of the most black fruity wines in the commune, so when I come across an example that also shows a touch of red fruit, I get very excited. This is the case with the superb example from the Rossignol brothers, as this wine has an almost exotic touch to its beautiful bouquet of red plums, red and black cherries, grilled meats, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of mustard seed in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a fine core of fruit, excellent soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, focused and vibrant finish. This is dynamite wine in the making. 2022-2065. **92+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Petite Chapelle”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Rossignol-Trapet Petite Chapelle is also outstanding, with the same lovely synthesis of pure and sappy fruit, fine transparency and a very promising sense of reserve that augurs so well for its future evolution in bottle! The bouquet is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a blend of red plums, cherries, cocoa powder, a very complex base of soil, violets and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very elegant, full-bodied and soil-driven, with as pretty a core of sappy red fruit as one could ask for, with fine-grained, seamless tannins, laser-

like focus and a very long, tangy and complex finish. This will be velvety and hauntingly complex at its apogee. 2023-2065. **93+**.

2015 Latricières-Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Latricières-Chambertin from Domaine Rossignol-Trapet is a classic in the making, with great depth, elegance and nascent complexity very much in evidence on both the nose and palate. The nose is pure, deep and nicely black fruity, delivering a fine constellation of black plums, black cherries, dark berries, bitter chocolate, complex dark soil tones, gamebird, woodsmoke and a touch of nutty oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully sappy at the core, with lovely transparency, seamless tannins and great length and grip on the very refined finish. Stellar juice. 2025-2075. **95**.

2015 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The Rossignol brothers have crafted an absolutely stunning Chapelle-Chambertin as well in 2015, and I cannot choose a favorite amongst these two brilliant examples! The bouquet is pure and such a classic expression of this great *terroir*, soaring from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, red plums, cocoa, gamebird, a beautiful signature of soil, smoke, a gentle touch of vanillin oak and an exotic topnote of hazelnut. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already quite velvety on the attack, with a sappy core, great transparency, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, elegant and youthful finish. Simply stunning. 2025-2075. **95**.

2015 Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2015 Rossignol-Trapet Chambertin is every bit as brilliant as one would expect from a great vintage and a great *terroir*. The bouquet is deep, pure and gloriously soil-driven, as it delivers a great aromatic constellation of red and black plums, a touch of chocolate, beautiful spice tones, kaleidoscopic soil, hints of the grilled meats to come, violets, woodsmoke and a bit of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very, very pure, with a sappy core, refined, sophisticated tannins, lovely acids and great focus and grip on the very, very long, complex finish. Brilliant. 2025-2075+. **96+**.

Domaine Joseph Roty (Gevrey-Chambertin)

As is the custom when visiting Domaine Joseph Roty in November, the focus of our tasting this year was their fine, fine lineup of 2014s, as the Roty family prefers to show finished wines, rather than barrel samples of the 2015s. I really enjoyed popping back in on a full range of 2014s, as it is always a great pleasure to revisit a vintage that I have not tasted in depth for at least six months and see how it has taken shape at one of the very top domaines in all of the Côte d'Or. Pierre-Jean Roty is very, very content with the style and quality of the 2014 vintage here, as well he should be, as these are truly beautiful wines in the making. The tasting served as an excellent reminder of just how outstanding the 2014 vintage is for both reds and whites in the Côte d'Or, and though the red wines look likely to be forgotten by the market in the wake of the 2015s' release (if history can be any guide in this regard), there is little doubt that the 2014 vintage of red Burgundy is truly outstanding and will repay those savvy enough to salt some away in the cellar for future enjoyment. Pierre-Jean Roty told me that the family has decided to bottle everything under the Domaine Joseph Roty label from this vintage forward, which will include the parcels that Philippe Roty had bought on his own and which were bottled under his own label prior to his passing away last year. This is a brilliantly successful vintage chez Roty and no one should overlook these stunning 2014s in the frenzy to latch onto the most successful 2015s of the vintage! It will be very interesting next year to taste the 2015 vintage from the

Rotys, as their truly stunning lineup of 2014s has certainly thrown down the gauntlet to the next vintage in the pipeline here!

2014 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Bourgogne Aligoté from Domaine Joseph Roty is a very lovely example, offering up a vibrant bouquet of lime, green apple, a fine base of chalky soil and a touch of lemongrass in the upper register. On the palate the wine is fullish, crisp and focused, with a good core, very nice balance and grip and a zesty finish. Good juice. 2016-2021. **88.**

2014 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Bourgogne Blanc *chez* Roty is a bit more aromatically reserved in personality than the Aligoté, offering up a pure and youthful nose of apple, peach, a touch of smokiness and a fine signature of soil. On the palate the wine is fullish and more expressive than the nose suggests, with a good core, fine focus and mid-palate depth and a very energetic backend of impressive length and grip. This will need a couple of years to blossom and should age very nicely for its level. 2018-2030. **89.**

2014 Marsannay Blanc- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Marsannay Blanc from the Roty family is quite impressive, with depth and lovely complexity evident on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of lime, crab apple, a touch of grassiness, fine, chalky soil tones and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and zesty, with an excellent core of fruit, fine transparency and a long, impressively racy and focused finish. This is really good this year! 2016-2030. **90.**

2014 Marsannay Rosé- Domaine Joseph Roty

To my palate, the Rotys make the most ageworthy example of Marsannay Rosé and their 2014 is a lovely wine that is just starting to blossom. The nose delivers a fine blend of melon, strawberries, chalky soil tones, dried flowers and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, zesty and quite serious, with a good core, fine soil signature and lovely length and grip on the vibrant finish. This will probably cruise along nicely for a decade. 2016-2025. **89.**

2014 Coteaux Bourguignons- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Coteaux Bourguignons from Domaine Joseph Roty is a lovely wine, with its red fruity character derived from its gamay component, as the wine wafts from the glass in a pretty blend of strawberries, cherries, a touch of pepper, a fine base of soil and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is medium-full, tangy and nicely balanced with a bit of backend tannin, fine focus and grip and sneaky length on the finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **87+.**

2014 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Roty is excellent in this vintage, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of red plums, cherries, cocoa, a nice touch of meatiness, smoky overtones and a fine base of soil. On the palate the wine is fullish, tangy and nicely structured, with good depth at the core, fine soil signature and modest tannins on the finish that will want a few years in the cellar to soften up. 2018-2030+. **89.**

2014 Bourgogne “Pressoniers”- Domaine Joseph Roty

As is typical *chez* Roty, the 2014 Pressoniers is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the above wine, but also a tad longer and deeper and will age for a few more years. The bouquet is pretty and quite Gevrey-like in its mélange of red and black cherries, grilled meat, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a bit of toasty new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, tangy and focused, with a good core, lovely transparency and a touch of backend tannin perking

up the long and vibrant finish. This is still young and will also need a few years to blossom. 2019-2035+. **89+**.

2014 Marsannay- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Marsannay *villages* from the Rotys is a lovely wine that will drink beautifully from the moment it is released. The nose wafts from the glass in a classy blend of plummy fruit, black cherries, grilled meats, a fine base of soil and a touch of raw cocoa in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and shows off very good mid-palate depth, with a bit of well-buffered tannin, fine acids and a long, nascently complex and nicely transparent finish. Good juice. 2016-2035+. **90**.

2014 Marsannay “Saint Etienne”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The bouquet of the Domaine Roty 2014 Saint Etienne is a deeper and more black fruity blend than in the AC, offering up scents of black cherries, plums, grilled meats, coffee, excellent soil signature and a touch of toasty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with a core of refined fruit, moderate, chewy tannins and excellent balance and grip on the long, pure and focused finish. This is a lovely bottle of Marsannay in the making, but it will need a few years in the cellar to start to come fully into its own. 2019-2040. **90+**.

2014 Marsannay “Ouzeloy”- Domaine Joseph Roty

There is a terrific Ouzeloy in the making here at Domaine Roty in the 2014 vintage, and this will be one of the best bargains to be found in the vintage. The bouquet is vibrant and very expressive, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, lovely meaty tones, dark soil, woodsmoke, a touch of mustard seed, bitter chocolate and a discreet base of toasty oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and nicely sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins and lovely backend energy on the young and very promising finish. 2020-2045+. **91+**.

2014 Marsannay “Boivin” - Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Marsannay “Boivin” from Domaine Joseph Roty is another fine example of the commune, with a bit more red fruity personality than the Ouzeloy this year. The bouquet is a fine blend of red plums, cherries, cocoa, a classy base of minerality, bit of meatiness, cedar and a bit of mustard seed in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very transparent this year, with a fine core, suave tannins and a long, tangy and well-balanced finish. 2020-2045+. **91**.

2014 Marsannay “Clos de Jeu”- Domaine Joseph Roty

As is always the case *chez* Roty, the 2014 Clos de Jeu is outstanding and will compete favorably with the Ouzeloy as the best Marsannay in the range at the domaine this year. The bouquet is deep and classy, jumping from the glass in a mix of black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, black minerality, raw cocoa, woodsmoke and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with a fine tannins, lovely acids and impressive mineral drive on the long and nascently complex finish. Beautiful Marsannay! 2020-2045+. **91+**.

2014 Côte de Nuits Villages “Queue de Hareng”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The Roty version of Côte de Nuits Villages is always lovely, as this parcel lies near those of Denis Bachelet and Louis Boillot and there is good dirt under these pinot vines in the village of Brochon. The *lieu à dit* for this bottling lies up above the vineyard of les Evocelles and the 2014 is excellent, delivering a fine bouquet of cherries, a touch of strawberry, grilled meats, cocoa, woodsmoke, cedar and a topnote of mustard seed. On the palate the wine is fullish, juicy and nicely complex, with a good core, modest tannins and fine length and grip on the vibrant finish. Really tasty, everyday Burgundy! 2016-2035. **90+**.



Pierre-Jean Roty in the family domaine's cellars in Gevrey-Chambertin.

2014 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Gevrey *villages* bottling from the Roty family is also quite charming in style, wafting from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, grilled meats, chocolate, a fine base of soil, a touch of nutty oak and lovely spice tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and very suave on the attack, with a good core, a touch of backend, seamless tannin and a long, focused and tangy finish. This has very fine bounce and shape on the backend and will drink well from very early on in its life. 2017-2040. **90+**.

2014 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champs Chenys”- Domaine Joseph Roty

There will now only be a single bottling of Champs Chenys *chez* Roty, as the domaine has decided to blend the two parcels of old and very old vines together starting in 2014. This is terrific wine, delivering a superb and complex aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, sweet dark berries, grilled meats, espresso, black minerality, woodsmoke, fresh thyme and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite tangy in personality, with an excellent core of fruit, fine focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic and very classy finish. 2022-2060. **92**.

2014 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Brunelle”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 la Brunelle from Domaine Roty is also lovely, with a more red fruity and forward personality than the Champs Chenys this year. The bouquet delivers a lovely blend of cherries, red plums, cocoa powder, mustard seed, a fine base of soil and a nice framing of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a good

core, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex and very elegant finish. 2020-2050. **91+.**

2014 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Clos Prieur from the Roty family is also an excellent example of the vintage, with the wine again more black fruity in tone on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of cassis, black cherries, grilled meats, espresso, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely chewy on the backend, with fine mid-palate depth, nascent complexity and a long, transparent and tangy finish. This is really a very, very good bottle of young Gevrey AC! 2022-2060. **92.**

2014 Gevrey-Chambertin “Fontenys”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The vineyard of Fontenys can sometimes be a bit bound up in its structural elements when young and a bit adolescently grumpy in early tastings, but not this 2014, which is one of the most elegant and pure young examples of this vineyard that I can recall tasting *chez* Roty. The bouquet is deep, pure and very refined, wafting from the glass in a blend of black cherries, black plums, grilled meats, raw cocoa, mustard seed, black minerality and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very deep at the core, with tangy acids, ripe, seamless tannins and marvelous focus and grip on the long and seamlessly balanced finish. A stunning young vintage of Fontenys! 2025-2065. **94.**

2014 Mazy-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 vintage of Mazy-Chambertin from the Roty family is destined to be one of their finest from this grand cru! The bouquet is deep, pure and stunning, soaring from the glass in a blaze of black plums, red and black cherries, venison, raw cocoa, a very complex base of black minerality, woodsmoke and a touch of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, ripe, seamless tannins, tangy acids and laser-like focus on the perfectly balanced and soil-driven finish. Like the 2014 Fontenys, this is supremely elegant out of the blocks this year! 2026-2080. **96+.**

2014 Griottes-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Domaine Roty Griottes-Chambertin is also a brilliant wine in the making, with a slightly more reserved personality this year than the Mazy. The bouquet is deep, pure and shows of a lovely sheen of sappiness in its blend of red and black cherries, spiced meats, chalky soil tones, mustard seed, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and sappy at the core, with stunning soil inflection, great nascent complexity, ripe, well-integrated tannins and outstanding length and grip on the tangy and very, very promising finish. This reminds me very strongly of the great 1993 Roty Griottes in its youth! 2027-2080. **97.**

2014 Charmes-Chambertin “Trés Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2014 Charmes-Chambertin “Trés Vieilles Vignes” from the Roty family is also stunning wine, as it perfectly synthesizes seamless balance and the inherent power of these ancient vines. The nose soars from the glass in a youthful constellation of black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid in the mid-palate, with firm, ripe and perfectly integrated tannins, tangy acids, outstanding focus and grip and a very, very long, soil-driven finish. There is plenty of sappiness here in reserve, but this wine will need to shed a bit of ripe tannin before that element comes to the fore. Great, great young wine! 2027-2080. **97+.**

Domaine Trapet Père et Fils (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Jean-Louis Trapet has made some of the most brilliant examples of the 2015 that I tasted on this trip, though not everything in the cellar is magical. He wisely chose to pick his white grapes after his reds, as the pressure to get everything in at the optimal moment required some sacrifices, and consequently, his white wines are a bit soft and “hot vintage” in character. But, this was a small price to pay to be able to craft some of the most pure, refined and stunning red wines to be found in the Côte de Nuits in this vintage! The two white wines and the two examples of Bourgogne rouge produced here were bottled in September of 2016, with the remainder of the red wine lineup still in cask. The Trapet lineup of 2015s was one of these where each wine had slightly different vintage characteristics, with a couple of wines very reminiscent of young 1990s, others more like roasted 2009s and others (the very best to my palate) like theoretical crosses of 2005 and 2010 in personality. But, in each variation on the stylistic theme of the vintage, the wines were crafted exquisitely and the consistent quality here is exemplary. This is just the nature of the 2015 vintage, as one has to assume, with all of the grapes ripening at exactly the same time, Jean-Louis and his picking team descended on the top vineyards first and then moved down the appellation hierarchy as the days went by, and I am sure that this accounts for the various styles one finds amongst the 2015 Trapet wines. Jean-Louis began to harvest on September 6th in 2015, with most of the red wines ending up in the thirteen to thirteen and a half percent range of alcohol. The one surprisingly ripe wine in the cellar this year is the Petite Chapelle, which is over fourteen percent octane, but Jean-Louis observed “that this is a warm climat in general and this was just the natural alcohol level in the wine when we brought in the grapes this year.” I should add that the wine is absolutely stunning and shows no signs of its octane level on either the nose or palate, as it is pure and transparent on the nose and cool and sappy in the mouth.

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Bourgogne Blanc was bottled in September of 2016, and though it is only 13.5 percent in octane, it seems rather ripe and 2003-like in personality. The bouquet offers up a ripe, warm vintage mélange of peach, papaya, a touch of nuttiness and a dollop of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows surprisingly good acidity for its rather deep-pitched aromatic and flavor profile, with solid length, but a rather chunky character. Not bad. 2016-2020. 87.

2015 Marsannay Blanc- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Marsannay Blanc was bottled at the same time as the Bourgogne. This too is ripe and forward on the nose and palate, with the bouquet offering up scents of peach, apple, nutskin, a bit of browned butter and chalky. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, surprisingly vibrant out of the blocks, but without a lot of structure behind the plump fruit. The finish shows decent length, but this too seems likely to need drinking up on the early side. 2016-2020. 87.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge “à Minima”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Minima bottling of Bourgogne (which is made without added SO₂) is very pretty and was showing nicely at the time of my visit, having recovered from its *mise* a few months earlier. The bouquet is ripe and impressively pure, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, woodsmoke, a nice base of soil tones and a touch of chocolate. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and bouncy, with a lovely core of fruit, fine focus and balance,

gentle tannins and a long, tangy and impressively light on its feet finish. This is delicious Bourgogne! 2016-2025. **88.**

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 “regular” Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Trapet is also excellent, with the wine showing more of its Gevrey character than the Minima out of the blocks. The fine bouquet delivers scents of black cherries, bonfire, roasted meats, dark soil tones and a nice touch of mustard seed in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plump, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, very modestly tannic finish. This too has lovely acids to add vibrancy to its plushy fruit. 2016-2030. **88.**

2015 Marsannay- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Marsannay from Jean-Louis Trapet is a fine bottle that very much recalls the 1990 vintage in style (which is not true of most of these 2015s), with a ripe and gently roasted personality. The wine is only thirteen percent octane, but I still suspect that it was harvested a bit later than the premier and grand crus (which would be logical). The bouquet is quite pure in its style, offering up scents of red and black cherries, dark soil, roasted meats and a bit of bonfire in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, good focus and grip and a long, tangy finish. I know this is only thirteen percent, but it seemed just a touch warm to my palate on the backend- perhaps it was just the stage the wine was in that day? 2016-2025+. **88.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Gevrey AC *chez* Trapet is another wine that is the spitting image of a young 1990 red Burgundy and it is lovely in this style. The bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, offering up a blend of red and black cherries, grilled meats, black minerality, woodsmoke and a topnote of bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is plush, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely soil signature, suave tannins and excellent focus and grip on the very long and classy finish. Village wines do not get a lot better than this bottle! 2016-2035+. **90+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Ostrea”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Ostrea Gevrey blend is a lovely wine, with the cuvée recalling a bit the 2009 vintage *chez* Trapet in its aromatic constellation of baked black cherries and plums, roasted meats, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, youthful and rock solid at the core, with firm, ripe tannins, excellent focus and backend soil drive, tangy acids and a very, very long, primary finish. This will need time in the cellar to blossom, but it will be a fine bottle in its prime. 2022-2050. **91.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Petite Chapelle”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Petite Chapelle from Jean-Louis Trapet is a stunning wine, and there was a twinkle in his eye when Jean-Louis noted “that the wine is more than fourteen percent alcohol- all natural- this year!” This was the last parcel picked in 2015, with the berries very small and the wine has great depth of fruit and a grand cru presence on the palate. The bouquet is a gorgeous blend of red and black cherries, dark chocolate, grilled meats, woodsmoke, a very complex base of soil and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with superb soil inflection, fine-grained, seamless tannins, lovely focus and grip and a very long, totally cool and classy finish. There are a few more higher octane reds in 2015 that are absolutely perfect in their balance, as is the 2015 Petite Chapelle, and how this is possible I have no idea! This wine will be approachable after a few years, but it really deserves a decade of bottle age to allow it to fully blossom and start to hit on all cylinders. 2025-2065. **93+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

In contrast to the freakishly ripe Petite Chapelle, the 2015 Clos Prieur from Domaine Trapet is one classic customer, coming in at 13.2 percent octane and offering up superb purity on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is young and classic, wafting from the glass in a blend of black cherries, cassis, black minerality, venison, woodsmoke, espresso and just a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off outstanding mid-palate depth, with a very transparent profile, fine-grained tannins and a long, perfectly focused and tangy finish. Utterly classic in style and exceptional in quality. Just add bottle age! 2025-2065. **93.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Capita”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

Amongst this stellar lineup of 2015 premier crus *chez* Trapet, the Capita is the finest this year. The bouquet is deep, pure and nascently complex, delivering a refined, sappy blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, grilled beef, black minerality, woodsmoke and a gentle framing of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very intensely flavored, with a rock solid core, great mineral drive, ripe, chewy tannins and great length and grip on the still very primary finish. This is a powerful premier cru that is also seamless and flawlessly balanced. Great juice. 2025-2065. **94.**

2015 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

Jean-Louis Trapet’s 2015 Chapelle-Chambertin is a great young wine, coming in at 13.5 percent octane and offering up magical depth and purity on both the nose and palate. The celestial bouquet offers up a youthful blend of sappy black cherries, plums, cocoa powder, gamebird, a very complex base of soil, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly refined, with a broad and precise attack, sappy core, marvelous transparency, and a very long, suavely tannic and stunning finish. Brilliant wine. 2027-2100. **96.**

2015 Latricières-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

Latricières-Chambertin is the cooler *climat* than Chapelle, and for that reason, it always excels in ripe, warm vintages such as 2015. This is more reserved than the flamboyant Chapelle, but every bit as stunning, as it soars from the glass in a mix of black cherries, cassis, bitter chocolate, grilled *pigeon*, a great base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a bit of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and properly reserved in personality, with a rock solid core of black fruit, great soil signature, fine-grained, ripe tannins and a very long, very pure and chewy finish. Another magical wine. 2030-2100. **96.**

2015 Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2015 Chambertin from Domaine Trapet is utterly brilliant, as it is a big, massive and utterly poised and refined example of the vintage. The heroically proportioned wine is still the essence of Chambertin, as it delivers a brilliant bouquet of black plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, grilled meats, a very complex base of soil tones, a touch of graphite and a refined framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and simply bottomless at the core, with a great synthesis of soil signature and sappy, pure fruit. The finish is endless, with fine-grained tannins, lovely acids and stunning complexity. This is one of the wines of the vintage in 2015, without a doubt! 2030-2100. **98+.**

Morey St. Denis

Domaine Dujac (Morey St. Denis)

Jeremy Seysses and the team at Domaine Dujac got started picking the pinot noir on September 7th this year and brought all of the fruit in by the 11th of the month, or just in advance of the really heavy rain that started in Burgundy on the 12th of September in 2015. They had

already brought in the white grapes earlier, with the Morey “Monts Luisants” chardonnay picked on the 27th and 28th of August and the new Pulignys either right before, or just after this. Despite the whites being picked early, they are nicely ripe in style, with the Monts Luisants at 14.5 percent and the I imagine the Pulignys just under this level, but they very much recall the lovely style of young 1992 white Burgundies and are ringing successes here this year. The 2015 red wines from Domaine Dujac are truly stunning and amongst the very finest lineups to be found anywhere in the Côte d’Or in this vintage. Some 2015s had been racked at the time of my visit, others not, but the whole cellar was showing beautifully in mid-November. In general, the villages level reds in 2015 at Domaine Dujac are all just under thirteen percent, most of the premier crus right around thirteen or 13.1 percent and the grand crus all falling in the 13.3 or 13.4 percent range, so this is hardly one of the riper collections to be found in the vintage. Like other standout producers, the Domaine Dujac wines are a beautiful synthesis of sappy, pure and generous fruit tones and great transparency and typicité, so that each cuvée is absolutely emblematic of its underlying terroir.

Domaine Dujac Vins Blancs

2015 Morey St. Denis Blanc- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Morey St. Denis Blanc *villages* was still sitting in its cement egg at the time of my visit and is the coolest white in the lineup this year, coming in at 12.8 percent alcohol. The wine is very, very pretty on both the nose and palate this year, with the bouquet offering up scents of peach, apple, chalky soil tones, white lilies and a touch of vanilla in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty, with a fine core, lovely soil signature and a long, well-balanced and vibrant finish. This will drink very well right out of the blocks. 2016-2025. **89.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Monts Luisants” Blanc- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Monts Luisants shows a touch more exotic fruit influence on the nose than the *villages* bottling, but this too is bright, vibrant and very nicely balanced. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of pear, a touch of pineapple, beeswax, chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent at the core, with lovely bounce and focus, zesty acids and a very long, complex and flat out tasty finish. This will probably age beautifully on its impeccable balance, but it is cut from a more forward style this year and may well be at its best in its early days, which promise to be generous and delicious. 2016-2030+. **90+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 Folatières from the Seysses family is excellent, offering up lovely cut and precision for the vintage. The bouquet is a classic blend of white peach, apple, chalky soil tones, incipient notes of *crème patissière*, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and crisp, with a juicy core, lovely focus and grip, very good acids and a long, poised and still quite primary finish. I would opt for giving this at least a year or two in the cellar to allow it to blossom more completely. 2018-2035. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Combettes”- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 Combettes from Jeremy Seysses is excellent and very, very classic in aromatic and flavor profile. Having drunk a lot of young Combettes back in the day from the 1992 vintage, it is hard not to say that this wine is the spitting image of those examples, as the balance of fruit, soil and acidity is very, very similar. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine blend of white peach, tangerine, chalky minerality, a touch of beeswax, fruit blossoms and vanillin oak.

On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and gloriously succulent at the core, with fine minerality, bright acids and excellent focus and grip on the refined and nascently complex finish. Again, just a couple of years in the cellar to allow the secondary layers to emerge would be my course of attack with this beautiful bottle. 2018-2035+. **93.**



Jeremy Seysses in the cellars at Domaine Dujac.

Domaine Dujac Vins Rouges

2015 Morey St. Denis- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 Morey *négociant* bottling from Dujac Fils et Père is a very ample wine, with the ripeness of the vintage more in evidence than in any others in the cellar this year. The bouquet is ripe and black fruity, offering up notes of black plums, black cherries, venison, cocoa and a nice base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plump at the core, with ripe tannins, tangy acids and very good length and grip on the fairly generous finish. This will only take a few years in the cellar to really start to blossom. 2020-2045. **89.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 Chambolle AC bottling from Dujac Fils et Père is sappier and more precise on both the nose and palate than the Morey *villages*, but this may simply be a reflection of their respective points in their *elevage*. The nose jumps from the glass in a fine blend of red plums, cherries, cocoa, a touch of hazelnut and a lovely base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tangy and lighter on its feet than the Morey, with a sappy core, modest

tannins and fine length and grip on the very well-balanced finish. This will drink with style and verve almost immediately. 2017-2045. **91.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 Gevrey *négociant* bottling here is stylistically a bit in between its two counterparts from Morey and Chambolle, as it is still a bit primary (like the Morey), but also very nicely delineated and showing excellent potential. The nose is a young and quite classic mix of red and black cherries, chocolate, lovely soil tones, a touch of venison and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality, with a good core, fine length and grip and a tangy, moderately tannic and still quite primary finish. This will need a bit of time and should ultimately end up just a touch more elegant than the Morey AC version from Dujac Fils et Père. 2019-2045. **89+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Damodes”- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2015 les Damodes bottling from Dujac Fils et Père is excellent. The bouquet is nicely red fruity in its mélange of cherries, pomegranate, woodsmoke, venison, nutskin and a complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with moderate tannins, bright acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and youthfully suave finish. Fine juice in the making. 2022-2055. **91+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 domaine bottling of Chambolle-Musigny from the Seysses family is one of the most beautiful village wines that I tasted during my entire trip and I would love to have a case of this in the cellar! The bouquet is stunning, soaring from the glass in a sappy blend of red plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, chalky soil tones, woodsmoke, violets and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and impressively tangy, with a very sappy core, moderate, suave tannins and really impressive length and grip on the perfectly balanced finish. Dujac clients with good connections, make sure you add some of this to your pile of premier and grand crus! 2019-2045. **92.**

2015 Morey St. Denis- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 domaine bottling of Morey AC also strikes me as a step up from the *négociant* version, as this is more pure and more focused than the former example. The bouquet is not quite as generous as the Chambolle above, but equally refined in its expression of plums, black cherries, dark soil, venison, woodsmoke, fresh herbs and bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured, with a fine core, ripe, moderate tannins and a long, well-balanced finish. This too is a classy *villages*. 2020-2045. **91.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru”- Domaine Dujac

I wish I had cellared more of this bottling over the years, as it is one of the most underrated wines in the stellar Dujac lineup. The 2015 Morey “Premier Cru” seems destined to be one of the greatest ever of this cuvée, as it offers up a beautifully pure and very sappy bouquet of cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, a gorgeously complex base of soil, gamebird, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with impressive transparency, suave tannins and a very long, vibrant, complex and classy finish. Superb juice. 2023-2065. **93.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Gruenchers”- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Gruenchers had not yet been racked at the time of my visit and consequently, was just a touch more reserved on both the nose and palate than the stunning Morey “Premier Cru”. But, make no mistake, this is going to be outstanding as well. The bouquet is very refined in its mix of red and black cherries, cocoa, gamebird, chalky soil tones and a deft framing of

vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and impeccable balance on the long, refined and utterly classic finish. This may well catch the above wine in the fullness of time, but at the moment, I have to give a very, very slight nod to the Morey “Premier Cru”! 2024-2065. **92+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “aux Combottes”- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Combottes from Domaine Dujac had been racked two weeks before I tasted it and had bounced back very nicely. This is a very, very transparent red fruity example of the vintage, wafting from the glass in a fine constellation of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, a hint of nuttiness, a great base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with lovely purity and depth at the core, suave, seamless tannins and a long, vibrant and perfectly balanced finish. Just lovely. 2025-2065+. **93**.

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Charmes-Chambertin from Jeremy Seysses and the family is another beautiful wine in the making, with a bit more sappiness at the core than the stellar Combottes, but every bit as much soil inflection and breed. The bouquet delivers a lovely blend of sappy red and black cherries, woodsmoke, gamebird, nutskin, complex soil tones, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very refined structurally, with a rock solid core, lovely backend minerality, ripe tannins. sound acids and a long, pure and elegant finish. 2025—2075+. **94+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Beaumonts”- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Dujac Beaumonts is a very black fruity wine that perfectly captures the essence of this vineyard. The bouquet delivers scents of black plums, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, a bit of roasted gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and shows a nice touch of sappiness to its black fruit core, with fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex and tangy finish. This is very 1993-like in profile, but the Seysses family also makes far more refined Beaumonts today than was the case back in that era. A fine, fine bottle in the making. 2025-2065. **92+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Malconsorts”- Domaine Dujac

I think I write this almost every year these days, but the new vintage of Domaine Dujac Malconsorts is absolutely stunning! The bouquet is pure, vibrant and complex, soaring from the glass in a complex blend of raspberries, cherries, a touch of blood orange, duck, crystalline minerality, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great mineral drive, laser-like focus, fine-grained tannins and a stunning sense of weightlessness that is a joy to behold on the very, very long and vibrant finish. Magical. 2024-2065+. **95**.

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Echézeaux from Domaine Dujac is another outstanding wine in the making. The bouquet is deep, very elegant and again, sappy, as it delivers a fine constellation of red and black cherries, dark chocolate, gamebird, woodsmoke, dark soil tones, vanillin oak and an exotic topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, sappy and full-bodied, with a lovely core of fruit, refined, seamless tannins, good acids and excellent length and grip on the soil-driven and very promising finish. 2025-2075+. **94+**.

2015 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Dujac Clos de la Roche is another marvelous synthesis of elegant, sappy fruit and classic soil signature. The gorgeous bouquet soars from the glass in a blaze of red and black plums, cocoa, *pigeon*, a complex and classy base of soil, woodsmoke, a touch of nutskin and

vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, sappy at the core and very, very pure and soil-driven at the same time, with seamless, ripe tannins and a very long, nascently complex and refined finish. There is a touch more reserve here than in the 2015 Echézeaux and this will need just a bit more time in the cellar to reach its apogee. 2027-2075+. **95+**.

2015 Clos St. Denis- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 Clos St. Denis from Domaine Dujac is very, very special this year. The bouquet is sappy and flamboyant, delivering a vibrant constellation of red plums, raspberries, cherries, raw cocoa, beautiful spice tones, complex minerality, vanillin oak and lovely, musky floral tones in the upper register that are also found in the Romanée-St.-Vivant this year. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, tangy and amazingly defined by its minerality (which is hard to believe, given how beautiful the fruit is here!), with a sappy core, ripe, perfectly integrated tannins, lovely acids and laser-like focus on the very, very long, very refined and complex finish. 2026-2075+. **96.**

2015 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Dujac

As one would expect, the 2015 Bonnes-Mares from Domaine Dujac is not quite as exotically floral and flamboyant as the Clos St. Denis, but every bit as good. The bouquet is deep and youthful, offering up a superb blend of red and black cherries, venison, woodsmoke, a touch of mustard seed, raw cocoa, complex soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off outstanding mid-palate depth, with firm, ripe tannins, bright acids and laser-like focus on the very long and very promising finish. This is structured quite a bit like the 2005 was out of the blocks! 2028-2085. **95+**.

2015 Romanée-St.-Vivant- Domaine Dujac

The 2015 RSV from the Seysses family is magical juice in the making. The bouquet is pure, sappy and perfumed, wafting from the glass in a constellation of raspberries, red plums, cherries, Vosne spices, complex soil tones, vanillin oak and a musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and sublimely elegant, with a sappy core, tangy acids and a very, very long, elegant and suavely tannic finish. Stunning juice. 2027-2085. **97.**

2015 Chambertin- Domaine Dujac

I tasted some absolutely monumental young examples of Chambertin from the 2015 vintage, and the Domaine Dujac with the very, very best this year! The bouquet is young and flat out stunning, soaring from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, plummy overtones, raw cocoa, incipient notes of grilled meat, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, vanillin oak and violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and still quite primary, with bottomless depth, great focus and grip, fine-grained tannins, bright acids and laser-like focus on the elegant, sappy and soil-driven finish. Sheer brilliance! 2030-2100. **98.**

Domaine des Lambrays (Morey St. Denis)

Thierry Brouin was in good spirits at the time of my visit, despite being hobbled a bit by a recent broken leg, which occurred during an accident he had while riding his motorcycle. But, he was moving around very well for a one-legged man during our visit, and no doubt a bit of the bounce in his step was a result of the outstanding quality of his 2015s at Domaine des Lambrays. Monsieur Brouin and his team began picking this year on September the 3rd and have crafted a very beautiful and elegant set of red wines in this vintage. The cellar had been racked in March of 2016 and bottling was to commence early in the new year. I did not taste the two Puligny-Montrachet premier crus on this visit, but the three red wines were absolutely singing in early November. They are all classically black fruity in personality, with just glorious purity of fruit at

the core, very refined structures and superb signatures of soil that promise a very long and graceful evolution in bottle. Monsieur Brouin has crafted so many beautiful vintages since his arrival at Domaine des Lambrays that it is hard to say that 2015 ranks ahead of some of the other great recent vintages here, such as 2010 or 2005, but these 2015s will eventually be ranked right up there with the greatest recent years at this iconic estate over the last quarter of a century!



2015 Morey St. Denis- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2015 Morey *villages* from Domaine des Lambrays is a beautiful example of the vintage, wafting from the glass in a pure and vibrant blend of black plums, black cherries, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke, dark chocolate and just a touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very plush on the attack, with a lovely core of fruit, very good soil signature, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and very well-balanced finish. This is an extremely classy village wine this year! 2020-2050. **91.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru”- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2015 Morey “Premier Cru” bottling from the domaine is extremely refined and suave in personality, with great precision and nascent complexity. The nose offers up a beautiful constellation of cassis, dark berries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, a bit of bonfire and a distinctive topnote of chicory. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and very pure, with lovely transparency, excellent depth in the mid-palate, fine-grained and utterly seamless tannins and impressive backend energy on the long, focused and very classy finish. 2022-2060. **92+.**

2015 Clos des Lambrays- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2015 Clos des Lambrays includes ninety-five percent whole clusters this year and is a stunning wine in the making. The bouquet is deep, pure and very expressive out of the blocks, soaring from the glass in a blaze of black plums, sweet cassis, espresso, woodsmoke, gamebird, raw cocoa, a great base of dark soil tones and a nice framing of cedary oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with laser-like focus, great balance and grip and a very long, fine-grained and vibrant finish. This will take at least a decade to blossom, but it will be a great wine in the fullness of time. 2025-2075+. **96+**.

Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils (Morey St. Denis)

Laurent Lignier has produced one of the best ranges of 2015s that I tasted on my November trip. He did not start picking particularly early, only getting out in the vines on September 8th, which was four or five days behind several of his colleagues in the Côte de Nuits, but he has managed to retain a level of freshness and transparency in his 2015s that is truly stunning. As Monsieur Lignier commented, “the acids are a bit low in 2015, but the tartaric acids are at a good level and these give the wines some nice tension, so that despite this being a ‘solar vintage’, the results are very, very interesting.” I’ll say! The 2015 Lignier wines range from 12.8 to 13.2 percent octane, with the lone outlier of the Morey St. Denis “la Riotte”, which came in at 14.3 percent (but amazingly, tastes totally cool in the mouth). There are a pair of new cuvées in the cellar this year, one of which is an old vine bottling of Chambolle AC hailing from two different lieux à dits (Drazey, below the premier cru of les Sentiers on the slope, and les Gamaires, which lies alongside the Morey border below la Bussière) and is from parcels of fifty-plus year-old vines in both climats. The other is a new Gevrey AC bottling from the vineyard of les Seuvrées, which is on the Morey St. Denis border and just below Mazoyrès-Chambertin on the slope. The 2015 vintage will also be the very last for the great old vines in the parcel of Pommard “Chanlins” farmed by Monsieur Lignier, as these vines, which were planted in 1931 and 1937, have succumbed to the battering of hail in recent years and were grubbed up after the 2015 vintage, so fans of this cuvée will be very well-served to search out bottles of the stellar last vintage of this old vine cuvée. Laurent Lignier has fashioned a truly sensational range of 2015s, with great typicité evident in each and every wine, so that red fruity villages like Chambolle or Pommard are just loaded with sappy red fruit, whereas others are more a blend of red and black fruity tones, and all of them very, very transparent to their underlying soil signatures. The structures here are as suave and seamless as any in the Côte d’Or in 2015 and the wines exude a sense of elegance and perfume that is truly sensational up and down the appellation hierarchy. Simply a breathtakingly brilliant range of 2015s chez Lignier!

2015 Bourgogne “Grand Chailiot”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2015 Bourgogne had just been assembled in tank ten days prior to my visit, but it had recovered nicely and was showing very well indeed. The bouquet offers up scents of black cherries, pomegranate, dark chocolate, lovely soil tones and a touch of nutskin in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and very nicely balanced, with a lovely core of fruit and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This will drink nicely with only a couple of years’ worth of bottle age. 2018-2035. **89**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The new *négociant* Chambolle “Vieilles Vignes” is really excellent. This was raised in twenty percent new wood this year and is made from purchased grapes. The bouquet is pure,

sappy and very transparent, jumping from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, cocoa, chalky soil tones, violets and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and seamless in its balance, with a lovely core of fruit, fine-grained tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and very pretty finish. *Trés Chambolle!* 2021-2060. **91.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “la Bussière”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Chambolle “la Bussière” is from the domaine’s own vines and makes a very interesting counterpoint to the new Vieilles Vignes bottling, as this *climat* is flanked by the two that comprise that bottling. Additionally, these vines are forty-five to fifty years of age, so they are nearly the same as the above. This too is excellent, offering up a beautiful nose of black plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of vanillin oak. Aromatically, this is a touch more reserved than the above, but also deeper. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and has wonderful mid-palate depth, with lovely sappiness, suave tannins and a long, tangy and very refined finish. High class *villages*. 2023-2060+. **91+.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Trés Girard”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2015 Trés Girard (which is also made from purchased grapes) is excellent this year, with a very perfumed and elegant profile on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of plums, cherries, cocoa, dark soil tones, violets and gamebird. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and utterly refined, with a sappy core, ripe, seamless tannins and excellent length and grip on the seductive finish. This is a bit more forward than the Chambolle “la Bussière” and every bit as fine. 2021-2060. **91.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “Trilogy”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

In former days, this wine was just bottled as Morey St. Denis *villages*, but, with the addition of the Trés Girard bottling, the name was augmented to differentiate this wine from the domaine’s own parcels and the above, which is made from purchased grapes. I love the combination of purity and sappy black fruit in the Trilogy bottling in 2015, as the wine delivers a superb nose of black cherries, blueberries, violets, dark soil tones, gamebird, a touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with great purity at the sappy core, fine soil signature and lovely backend grip on the long and ripely tannic finish. This is deep, elegant and will be very, very easy to drink! 2024-2065+. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

There are now three distinct Gevrey *villages* bottlings *chez* Lignier, with the original domaine bottling comprised of two parcels of vines- one high up on the Combes de Lavaux and the other right next to Clos Prieur. This is really lovely and quite classic in profile in 2015, delivering a fine and complex blend of red and black cherries, espresso, black minerality, incipient grilled meat, a touch of cedar and a gentle topnote of mustard seed. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and pure on the attack, with a sappy core, tangy acids and lovely focus and grip on the fine-grained finish. High class AC. 2022-2060. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “La Justice”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

I have liked the La Justice bottling from Laurent Lignier since it made its debut in the 2009 vintage and the 2015 is again a very lovely example of the vintage. The wine is finer and more delicately styled than the straight Gevrey AC, wafting from the glass in a very elegant blend of cherries, red plums, cocoa powder, roses, a touch of gamebird, a lovely base of soil tones and just a dollop of cedar. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and very suave on the attack, with a good core, modest tannins and a long, tangy and very refined finish. This is only 12.5 percent alcohol this year! 2021-2055. **91.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Seuvrées”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Gevrey-Chambertin “les Seuvrées” bottling is another new cuvée in the lineup, which hails from a very well-situated *lieu à dit* just below Mazoyrès-Chambertin. These vines were planted in the 1950s and 1960s and are now in a very good place. The 2015 included twenty-five percent whole clusters this year and offers up a deep and sappy nose of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, mustard seed, hints of the grilled meat to come, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with lovely sappiness at the core, fine focus and soil signature and a nice sense of reserve on the very long and ripely tannic finish. A fine new addition! 2023-2065. **91+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Poisets”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

I know that les Poisets is only *villages* level wine, but with vines planted in 1947, this is so often at premier cru quality level and this is again the case in 2015. The bouquet is superb, wafting from the glass in a youthful blend of dark berries, black plums, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, nutskin, *pigeon* and just a touch of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved out of the blocks, with a fine core, great mineral drive and a very long, suavely tannic and focused finish. This will be a very elegant rendition of Nuits when it is fully mature. 2024-2060+. **91+**.

2015 Pommard “Chanlins”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The final vintage of these very old vines is indeed fittingly brilliant this year, offering a beautiful, very red fruity nose of cherries, quince, pomegranate, lovely spic tones, stony minerality, a touch of cedar and a floral topnote redolent of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, very pure and transparent, with a sappy core, outstanding focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and lovely balance on the very long, tangy and nascently complex finish. This will be a superb bottle and is one of the great, great values of the vintage! 2023-2065. **92+**.

2015 Pommard “En Brescul”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Pommard “En Brescul” cuvée, which made its debut last year in the Lignier lineup, is also excellent. This parcel lies next door to Beaune “Clos des Mouches” and offers up a fine red fruity bouquet of cherries, pomegranate, a touch of nutskin, a lovely base of soil, gamebird, peonies and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and again, beautifully transparent, with fine core, ripe tannins and impressive length and grip on the long finish. This is a bit broader on the attack than the tightly-knit and intensely flavored Chanlins, which is quite understandable, as these are only eighteen year-old vine and cannot supply the same structure as those ancient vines in Chanlins. But, this too is an excellent young wine and is not out of place in the company of the old vine Chanlins. 2023-2060+. **91**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Chabiots”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2015 Chabiots from Monsieur Lignier is stunning, soaring from the glass in a red fruity blaze of strawberries, cherries, chalky soil tones, a gardenful of roses, raw cocoa, a whisper of mustard seed and a nice framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish, transparent and very intensely flavored, with lovely depth at the core, fine-grained tannins, bright acids and a very, very long, supremely elegant finish. This is simply gorgeous. 2023-2065+. **93**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Baudes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

As one would expect, the 2015 les Baudes has a bit more black fruit to it this year than the Chabiots, but this wine too is all in finesse and purity. The bouquet is very transparent and pure, offering up scents of red and black cherries, cocoa, violets, a lovely base of soil, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with

lovely soil signature, suave, seamless tannins and a very long, vibrant and beautifully balanced finish. Another stellar Chambolle! 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Morey St. Denis “les Chenevières”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

To the best of my recollection, this is the first vintage where the les Chenevières has been bottled on its own *chez* Lignier. The wine was raised in one-third new wood this year and offers up a ripe and classy nose of baked red and black cherries, woodsmoke, a fine base of dark soil, gamebird and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite flamboyant out of the blocks, with a fine core and soil inflection, ripe tannins and good length and grip on the complex finish. This does not show the same surreal elegance as the Chambolle premier crus, but it is a very good bottle in the making. 2021-2055+. **91**.

2015 Morey St. Denis “la Riotte”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

As I noted in the introduction, the 2015 la Riotte is the ripest wine in the Lignier cellars in this vintage, coming in at a full 14.5 percent octane, but it does not show this on either the nose or palate! The bouquet is deep and very precise, offering up scents of red and black cherries, espresso, dark soil tones, venison, mustard seed, a touch of bonfire and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and lovely balance and grip on the very long and bouncy finish. This is a pretty extraordinary wine, as I have seldom come across a wine with this level of alcohol coupled to such soil signature and elegant balance! 2023-2060. **92**.

2015 Morey St. Denis “les Chaffots”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The les Chaffots vines are starting to close in on their fiftieth birthday (planted in 1968) and the wine is beautifully pure and elegant in profile in 2015. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, dark chocolate, superb soil tones, gamebird, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with very suave tannins, lovely focus and backend grip and a very long, vibrant and complex finish. *Toute en finesse*. 2023-2065+. **93**.

2015 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

I often think of the Morey “Vieilles Vignes” Premier Cru bottling *chez* Lignier as a baby Clos de la Roche, and this sensation is very much evident in this superb 2015 version. The bouquet is deep, stunning and quite youthful in its mélange of plums, red and black cherries, *pigeon*, raw cocoa, a great base of soil, nutty new wood and an exotic topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite primary in personality, with lovely sappiness in the mid-palate, fine-grained tannins, impeccable balance and a very, very long and very promising finish. Great juice. 2025-2075. **94**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Perrière”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

I have loved the Gevrey “Perrière” *chez* Lignier since its debut release of 2009 and the 2015 version is going to be one of the finest yet! The bouquet is beautiful and very transparent this year, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of sappy red and black cherries, espresso, grilled meats, black minerality, woodsmoke and a deft touch of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very minerally in personality, with a sappy core of fruit, refined, suave tannins, great focus and grip and a very, very long and intensely flavored finish. This is not the most powerful premier cru in the cellar this year, but along with the Chambolles, it might be the most elegant! 2023-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “aux Combottes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Domaine Lignier parcel in aux Combottes was planted in 1957 and lies up at the top of the slope, so this is one of the coolest sections of a fairly cool vineyard, which certainly was

not a disadvantage in the torrid summer of 2015! The wine offers up a beautifully complex bouquet of red plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a touch of mustard seed, lovely soil tones and a touch of cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully soil-driven, with lovely sappiness at the core, suave, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and excellent focus and complexity on the very long, very pure and classy finish. 2025-2065+. **94.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Didiers”- Hospices de Nuits (Dom. Hubert Lignier Père et Fils)

Laurent Lignier racked this Hospices de Nuits wine into four year-old barrels as soon as it arrived in the cellars, which has allowed the wine to nicely integrate the smoky new oak elements of wines from this organization. The result is an excellent 2015, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of dark berries, black cherries, venison, a touch of coffee bean, dark soil tones and smoky new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a rock solid core, good soil signature and a very long, ripely tannic and well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2023-2060+. **92+.**

2015 Griotte-Chambertin- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The second vintage of Domaine Hubert Lignier Griotte-Chambertin is outstanding. The bouquet is beautifully red fruity and perfumed, soaring from the glass in a mix of cherries, red plums, strawberries, chalky soil tones, cocoa, woodsmoke, cedar and a topnote of roses. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very red fruit in personality, with a sappy core, lovely soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, nascently complex and transparent finish. Lovely Griotte in the making. 2025-2080+. **95.**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

Both the 2015 Charmes-Chambertin and Clos de la Roche include twenty-five percent whole clusters in this vintage. The Charmes is stunning, offering up a nicely reserved and bottomless bouquet of red and black cherries, *pigeon*, raw cocoa, mustard seed, woodsmoke, a very complex base of soil and a discreet framing of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very sappy at the core, with excellent transparency and grip, impeccable balance, fine focus and a very, very long, suavely tannic and seamless finish. Just gorgeous! 2025-2080+. **95+.**

2015 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Domaine Lignier Clos de la Roche is one of the wines of the vintage in 2015. This is a majestic wine in the making, soaring from the glass in a refined constellation of plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a stunning base of soil tones, woodsmoke, pungent violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a great sense of reserve, superb backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, very refined and energetic finish. Young Clos de la Roche is very rarely this elegant and refined in profile! 2025-2085. **98.**

Domaine Taupenot-Merme (Morey St. Denis)

Romain Taupenot began harvesting on September 8th in 2015, so his picking team had to deal with the precipitation that fell during this week- sometimes very heavily. However, like some of the wines that I tasted that were brought in during this rainy week, I did not sense any lack of soil influence in any of these lovely wines, which was the case at a few other cellars who had also picked during this week. The wines tend to fall in the 13.2 to 13.6 percent range for the most part, with the typical black fruity style of Domaine Taupenot-Merme (Romain practices a short “cold soak” à la Henri Jayer for his reds), but with lovely balances and fine signatures of soil in

each and every wine. The cellar had been racked two weeks prior to my visit, so some of the wines were a tad grumpy about being shown in mid-November, but most had bounced back nicely and were showing lovely potential. Romaine Taupenot has been on quite a hot streak in recent vintages and his 2015s will rank right up there with his finest recent vintages. I was quite surprised at the end of our range of 2015s when Romain said “we have one more grand cru to taste” and poured his Clos des Lambrays, which I had never tasted here on any previous occasion and did not know that he produced. I knew that the Domaine des Lambrays did not have a complete monopole of the Clos des Lambrays, but I was unaware until this visit who else owned rows of vines in this superb vineyard and was very, very pleased to find that Domaine Taupenot-Merme had a very small slice of the grand cru. Now, I will have to make up for lost time!

2015 Auxey-Duresses- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Auxey-Duresses AC from Romain Taupenot is going to be a lovely bottle, with the generous fruit of the vintage nicely framed by a good base of soil. The nose wafts from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, a nice touch of soil and a gentle whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, tangy and fairly forward in personality, with a good core, just a touch of backend tannin and good length and grip on the finish. Good juice. 2019-2040+. **89+**.

2015 Auxey-Duresses “Premier Cru”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The Taupenot family’s Auxey Premier Cru bottling is more black fruity in 2015 than the *villages*, offering up a fine bouquet of black cherries, dark berries, woodsmoke, *pigeon*, soil and just a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and vibrant, with a good core and impressive mineral drive on the long and gently tannic finish. This is still pretty primary in personality, but will be lovely with a bit of bottle age. 2021-2050. **91**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Chambolle AC *chez* Taupenot was showing very well at the time of my visit, with a nice bounce of sappiness on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a good base of soil, a bit of cedar and a floral topnote redolent of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tangy and quite elegant in profile, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and a long, focused finish. Good juice. 2019-2050. **90**.

2015 Morey St. Denis- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Morey St. Denis AC from Domaine Taupenot-Merme is also very elegant in profile this year, offering up a bright bouquet of black cherries, a touch of cassis, cocoa, dark soil tones, mustard seed, incipient notes of gamebird and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, suave and nicely transparent, with a good core, ripe, well-measured tannins and fine length and grip on the vibrant finish. 2020-2050. **90+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Gevrey AC here is a bit more red fruity than the Morey *villages*, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of cherries, red plums, mustard seed, lovely minerality and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and every bit as transparent as the Morey, with a fine core of fruit, suave tannins and a long, focused and bouncy finish. This will be another excellent *villages* with a bit of bottle age. 2020-2050. **90+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “la Combe d’Orveau”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Combe d’Orveau from Romain Taupenot is one of the ripest wines in the cellar this year, coming in at 13.6 percent octane, but is totally cool in the mouth and shows no signs of

overripeness on the nose. The bouquet is pure and sappy, offering up a fine constellation of red plums, cherries, cocoa, gamebird, a lovely base of soil, cedar and a gentle topnote of mustard seed. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a rock solid core, excellent acidity and a very long, fine-grained finish that closes with an almost saline note of minerality. 2023-2060+. **92.**

2015 Morey St. Denis “la Riotte”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The La Riotte this year is really characterized by refined elegance and is one of my favorite premier crus in the cellar in 2015. The bouquet delivers a lovely blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, woodsmoke, a touch of venison, a complex base of dark soil tones, gentle notes of mustard seed and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a soil-driven personality, lovely focus and grip and a long, fine-grained and elegant finish. Fine juice. 2023-2060. **92+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Bel Air”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Taupenot-Merme Gevrey “Bel Air” is a bit more reserved in personality than the lovely La Riotte, but it too shares excellent depth at the core and a suave structural chassis and will be a superb wine with sufficient bottle age. The bouquet delivers a fine blend of red and black cherries, a complex base of dark minerality, mustard seed, a touch of gamebird, cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and impressively tangy, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic and refined finish. 2022-2060+. **92+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Pruliers”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

Most examples of young Pruliers that I taste are overtly black fruity in personality, but the 2015 version from Romain Taupenot has a lovely touch of red plum on both the nose and palate that is very exciting. The nose wafts from the glass in a ripe and pure blend of black cherries, red plum, hints of the forest floor to come, raw cocoa and a fine base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a sappy core, an impressive soil signature, fine-grained tannins and excellent backend lift and energy on the long finish. This is excellent. 2025-2070. **93.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les St. Georges” Cuvée Sires de Vergy- Hospices de Nuits (Romain Taupenot)

I was very impressed with every 2015 example from the Hospices de Nuits that I tasted on my November trip and Romain Taupenot’s version of Cuvée Sires de Vergy was no exception. The wine delivers a deep and complex nose of red and black cherries, gamebird, a superb base of soil, woodsmoke, raw cocoa and a touch of smoky new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very sappy at the core, with a fine veneer of elegance, suave, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and grip on the nascently complex finish. High class juice. 2022-2065+. **93.**

2015 Corton “Rognet”- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Corton “Rognet” is the ripest wine in the Taupenot cellars this year, coming in at 13.9 percent octane, but again, remaining quite cool in the mouth. The bouquet is deep, sappy and quite black fruity in personality, wafting the glass in a mix of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of chocolate, venison, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a rock solid core, refined, ripe tannins and lovely length and grip on the focused and still very primary finish. This will be excellent. 2025-2075. **93+.**



Romain Taupenot, in the domaine's very comfortable tasting room in Morey St. Denis.

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Taupenot Charmes-Chambertin is absolutely superb, offering up outstanding potential on both the nose and palate. The first class bouquet jumps from the glass in a sappy mélange of black cherries, black raspberries, French roast, a bit of venison, black minerality, hints of mustard seed, cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, vibrant finish. Great Charmes! 2025-2075. **94+**.

2015 Mazoyères-Chambertin- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

The 2015 Mazoyères-Chambertin from Domaine Taupenot-Merme is every bit as promising as the Charmes-Chambertin, delivering a superb bouquet of sweet dark berries, dark chocolate, lovely floral tones, roasted venison, vanillin oak and a distinctive topnote of currant leaf. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, sappy at the core and supremely elegant in profile, with lovely focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and lovely backend energy on the long finish. Fine, fine juice. 2025-2075. **94+**.

2015 Clos de Tart- Domaine Taupenot-Merme

I was surprised to see how red fruity the 2015 Clos de Tart was from Romaine Taupenot this year, given how beautifully black fruity all the other grand crus were in the cellar. The bouquet is pure, refined and quite esthery, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of cherries, a touch of raspberry, gamebird, a very refined base of soil, woodsmoke, a delicate touch of

mustard seed and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a lovely core, impressive nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and a very long, very pure and very promising finish. *Toute en finesse*. 2025-2075. **94+**.

Domaine Cécile Tremblay (Morey St. Denis)

I absolutely loved Cécile Tremblay's range of wines in 2015, though these were some of the riper wines that I tasted during my November trip and stylistically, they very much recalled the 1990 vintage to my palate. In fact, having owned some of Henri Mayer's 1990s back in the day, they very much reminded me of those wines, to give some idea of the quality and the potential of this range of riper 2015s chez Tremblay! Cécile and her team began picking on September 8th and consequently, had to dodge around the rains a bit during picking. The wines are quite ripe here in 2015, with the Bourgogne 13.5 percent, most of the villages and premier crus in the fourteen percent range and the grand crus fully 14.5 percent alcohol (all natural), but none of them shows any signs of heat and the flamboyant beauty that many deliver on both the nose and palate will make them some of the legendary wines of the vintage. Madame Tremblay commented that "I wanted to be very, very careful with the extractions in 2015, so I treated the wines very, very gently in the cellars and only pumped over the wines once or twice a day, with no punch-downs, so as to protect the elegance of the vintage." She noted that some vignerons were arguing that the great raw materials of 2015 offered an opportunity to make hugely powerful wines that might last one hundred years, but that she was not tempted to go in this direction, and as the wines started to blossom in cask, "I was very, very happy I had chosen the direction that I did for the wines." A few of the wines had just been assembled ahead of my visit and were a bit grumpy about being tasted in early November, but with the rest of the cellar absolutely singing, it was very easy to give those in a slightly agitated state the benefit of the doubt and I would fully expect them to finish at the high end of the range that I gave to them. I did not take a note on the Chambolle AC at all, as the wine was just too upset from its recent racking, but given how strong everything else was in the cellar this year, I am sure that this too is lovely. Cécile Tremblay has made so many stunning wines in the last half dozen vintages that it is hard for me to say that her 2015s place at the very top of her string of great successes here, but they are beautiful, flamboyant wines of breed and complexity, and for those who may never have had the chance to taste Henri Mayer's wines during his career, these 2015s will provide a real window into what the wines of Monsieur Mayer tasted like in their youth!

2015 Bourgogne "la Croix Blanche" Rouge- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Madame Tremblay is a lovely example, offering up a really beautiful bouquet of black cherries, plums, cocoa, dark soil tones and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a nice touch of sappiness and a long, balanced and vibrant finish. 2017-2030. **89**.

2015 Morey St. Denis "Trés Girard"- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Morey St. Denis "Trés Girard" from Cécile Tremblay is an outstanding village wine and was the first one in my tasting notes to be described as "very Mayer-like". The sappy nose jumps from the glass in a blend of sweet dark berries, black plums, gamebird, dark chocolate, smoky oak and a touch of bonfire in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very sappy at the core, with just a touch of backend tannins, fine focus and a long, very well-balanced and classy finish. Lovely juice. 2019-2045. **90**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Vosne Vieilles Vignes was one of the wines that was grumpy at the time of my visit, having only been assembled ten days prior to my visit, and I scored the wine in a range for this reason. The wine had not yet snapped back into precise focus after its racking, but offered up scents of black cherries, plums, chocolate, gamebird, dark soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a nice sense of sappiness at the core, fine-grained tannins and very good length and grip. I am sure this will be a fine example. 2020-2045. **90-91.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Feusselottes”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Feusselottes from Madame Tremblay is a very good bottle in the making, with the ripeness of the vintage giving it a black fruity and chocolaty personality, but still with a fine underlying signature of soil. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a blaze of black plums, black cherries, cocoa, *pigeon*, lovely soil tones, woodsmoke and nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already quite velvety, with a sappy core, suave tannins and lovely length and grip on the beautifully balanced and opulent finish. Lovely juice. 2020-2050. **92.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Beaumonts”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The cooler microclimate of Beaumonts has produced the lowest octane wine in the Tremblay cellars in 2015, as this wine comes in at 13.2 percent and is really stellar. The bouquet is precise, pure and sappy in its constellation of black raspberries, black plums, gamebird, dark soil tones, a touch of bonfire and a lovely base of smoky new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very shapely, with a rock solid core, fine soil inflection and bounce, seamless tannins and a very, very long, elegant finish. Great Beaumonts in the making. 2021-2060+. **94.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Rouges Dessus”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Rouge Dessus is another excellent Vosne-Romanée in the making. This too is up at the top of the slope and is one of the cooler wines in the cellar as well, coming in at 13.5 percent and the wine is every bit as promising at the 2015 Beaumonts. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a fine blend of sweet cassis, black cherries, venison, dark, almost salty soil tones, dark chocolate, woodsmoke and nutty oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with lovely mid-palate depth, fine focus and grip, lovely backend minerality and energy and a very long, suavely tannic and poised finish. Great juice. 2023-2065. **94.**

2015 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2015 Tremblay Chapelle-Chambertin is the ripest wine in the cellar in this vintage, coming in at a full 14.5 percent alcohol, but it is perfectly balanced and just stunning. The deep and pure nose soars from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, black plums, cocoa, a touch of grilled meat, superb soil tones, vanillin oak and an exotic topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and absolutely plush on the attack, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, ripe, fine-grained tannins and stunning length and grip on the perfectly balanced, cool and flamboyant finish. A marvelous wine. 2025-2075. **95+.**

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

As superb as the 2015 Chapelle is from Cécile Tremblay this year, her Echézeaux is the star of the cellar by quite some margin in this vintage! The brilliant wine delivers a magical bouquet of black cherries, plums, raspberries, bitter chocolate, a very complex base of soil, smoked duck and smoky new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very sappy at the core, with great focus and grip, fine-grained tannins, glorious purity of fruit and a very, very long, plush and complex finish. Stunning juice. 2025-2075. **98.**

Chambolle-Musigny

Domaine Ghislaine Barthod (Chambolle-Musigny)

Ghislaine Barthod has made absolutely beautiful 2015s, as she began harvesting early and brought all of her fruit in before maturity levels got out of hand or the week of rain arrived on September 12th. Her team was out in the vines on September 5th in 2015 and consequently, alcohol levels here are all between 12.8 percent and 13.2 percent, with no chaptalization required at all this year. Malolactic fermentations here were fairly brisk, finishing up between March and April of 2016 and Madame Barthod racked the cellar at the end of August, prior to the preparations getting started for the harvest of 2016. As Madame Barthod commented, “what I like about this vintage is there is a beautiful ‘sucrosité’ to the fruit of 2015, but every wine shows excellent ‘typicité’ at the same time, so ever cuvée very true to its underlying terroir this year.” As was the case at many domaines in 2015, yields are down again in this year, from a combination of a bit of millerandage during the flowering and the small berries, which simply did not yield a lot of juice when they were pressed. As a result, yields are down fully twenty-five percent from 2014 here. But, other than the quantity, there is a whole lot to smile about in the chez Barthod in 2015, as these are some of the purest, sappiest and beautifully transparent wines to be found in the village of Chambolle this year and they will rank right up there with vintages such as 2005 and 2010 as the very finest wines produced by Ghislaine Barthod since the turn of the century. The villages Chambolle and the premier crus will probably be accessible within a few years, but my gut feeling is that it would be utterly foolish to open any of the premier crus until they have had at least eight or nine years’ worth of bottle age, as there is so much more to come in each and every one of these wines that it would be a waste to open bottles until the secondary layers have fully emerged and the ripe tannins have peeled back properly. This is a simply stunning range of 2015s, with all of the elegance, perfume and complex minerality of a great, great vintage in Chambolle-Musigny!

2015 Bourgogne “Bons Batons”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 Bourgogne is really lovely from Madame Barthod, offering up a bright and sappy nose of red and black cherries, cocoa, a fine base of soil and a nice touch of gamebird. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and nicely mineral in profile, with the sappiness of the nose showing up again at the core, and the finish long, gently tannic and tangy. This will be really tasty with a couple of years bottle age and was one of the very best examples of Bourgogne I tasted in November! 2018-2030+. **89.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 Chambolle AC chez Barthod is also lovely, wafting from the glass in a beautifully sappy and floral blend of red and black cherries, violets, raw cocoa, a nice touch of soil, incipient notes of *pigeon* and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a sappy core of fruit, fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Just a gorgeous Chambolle *villages* in the making. 2021-2055. **90+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Combottes”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 Combottes from Domaine Barthod is very elegant and again, very floral in personality this year. The nose wafts from the glass in a blend of red plums, cherries, peonies, chalky soil tones, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and vibrant, with lovely depth in the mid-palate, fine backend bounce and grip, suave tannins and lovely sappiness on the long finish. This is lovely wine. 2022-2060+. **91+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Chatelots”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 Chatelots has a bit more black fruit in its blend than the Combottes or AC, but still plenty of red fruit tones to go along with this. The bouquet is pure and complex, offering up notes of black cherries, red plum, raw cocoa, a great base of soil, a touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and sappier at the core than the Combottes, with a fine soil signature, vibrant acids, fine-grained tannins and outstanding length and grip on the focused finish. 2024-2065. **92+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Beaux Bruns”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The Beaux Bruns 2015 from Domaine Barthod is a bit more reserved out of the blocks than the previous wines, but this is a very good sign for its potential down the road. The bouquet is deep, pure and gently musky in its aromatic constellation, offering up scents of black cherries, pomegranate, a lovely touch of spice, cocoa, gamebird, vanillin oak and a whisper of mustard seed in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured, with a fine kernel of sappy fruit in reserve at the core, suave tannins and lovely acids and focus on the long, primary and very promising finish. 2025-2065. **92+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Baudes”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 les Baudes *chez* Barthod is also outstanding, with a very pure and sappy quality to its fruit, coupled to truly beautiful transparency. The nose jumps from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, pungent violets, a touch of *pigeon*, complex soil tones, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and so beautifully concentrated at the core, with lovely *sucrosité* and soil signature, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, nascently complex and tangy finish. This is a lovely bottle in the making. 2024-2065. **93**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Gruenchers”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 Gruenchers from Ghislaine Barthod is absolutely beautiful, delivering simply gorgeous fruit tones on both the nose and palate, coupled to outstanding *terroir*. The bouquet is a sappy and nicely reserved blend of red plums, red and black cherries, cocoa, violets, a stunning base of soil tones and a hint of vanillin oak in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with beautiful transparency, great focus and grip, a sappy core and a very long, vibrant and palate-staining finish. The tannins here are seamlessly interwoven into the gorgeous fruit of the wine. 2024-2065. **93+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Charmes”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Madame Barthod has two parcels in the vineyard of les Charmes, with one in the section of deeper soil towards Chatelots and the other planted to seventy year-old vines in the more stony section of the vineyard, towards les Hauts Doix. The combination of the two is what makes this wine one of the finest examples of the vineyard, as it always possesses the beautiful fruit that the vineyard is renowned for, but with a great spine of minerality from those old vines as well. The 2015 is simply superb, delivering a nascently complex bouquet of red and black cherries, pomegranate, incipient notes of gamebird, stony soil tones and a musky topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully balanced, with the wines fine structure just buried in fruit. The tannins are fine-grained, the acids tangy and the finish is very, very long, pure and complex. All this beautiful bottle needs is time in the cellar to fully blossom! 2024-2065. **93+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Fuées” - Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 les Fuées from Ghislaine Barthod is one of my two favorite wines in the cellar this year, but truth be known, there is not any of these premier crus that I would not love to have in serious quantity in my personal collection! The bouquet on the 2015 Fuées soars from the

glass in a brilliantly complex and sappy blend of red plums, raspberries, black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, gorgeous minerality, peonies and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy, with a marvelous spine of minerality, great focus and backend energy and a very, very long, suavely tannic and seamless finish. Beautiful wine. 2025-2065+. **94+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Veroilles”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Les Veroilles can often be a bit marked by its savory fresh herb tones when young, but this is not particularly evident this year, as the wine is more muskily floral in 2015. The bouquet is very lovely, offering up scents of cherries, red plums, stony minerality, *pigeon*, just a touch of savory nuances and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality, with a stony soil signature, a fine core, ripe tannins and a long, bright and bouncy finish. This will be excellent. 2025-2065. **93.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Cras”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2015 les Cras from Madame Barthod is brilliant wine in the making! The nose is youthfully complex, very pure and flat out stunning, delivering a fine constellation of red plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, gorgeous minerality, a touch of mustard seed, plenty of violets and a gentle framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plenty sappy at the core, but more defined by its gorgeous soil tones than it is by its generous fruit. The finish is fine-grained, pure and tangy, with stunning balance and focus and magical length and grip. This is just a quintessential example of the great *terroir* of les Cras! 2027-2080. **95.**

Domaine Louis Boillot (Chambolle-Musigny)

Louis Boillot has made an absolutely stunning range of 2015s. He and his team began picking early this year, getting out first in the vineyard of les Angles in Volnay on September 2nd and working through the vines as quickly as they could. The last grapes in the Côte de Beaune were picked on September 6th in the Volnay villages parcel of les Grands Poisots. The resulting wines have all ended up between 13.3 and 13.8 percent alcohol in 2015 (the very old vines in the Gevrey premier cru vineyard of Cherbaudes reached that upper limit), with great sappiness at the core and outstanding typicité across the board. Monsieur Boillot racked his entire cellar in mid-September, so that the wines had received fully two months to recover prior to my mid-November visit and were absolutely singing when we tasted them together. There is only a single cask of Volnay “Caillerets” in the cellars in 2015, as Louis Boillot had to replant forty percent of his small parcel in the wake of the hail of 2012, so this is going to be a difficult bottling to find from him in this vintage. However, as all of the 2015 Volnay and Pommard premier crus are stunning and very true to their respective terroirs, if one finds les Angles or La Croix Noire instead of Caillerets in the marketplace, do not hesitate to snap those bottles up immediately! In fact, I cannot recall ever having tasted two finer Pommard premier crus from Monsieur Boillot than his two in the 2015 vintage!

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Boillot is a lovely wine, offering up a bright and nascently complex nose of black cherries, dark berries, a nice touch of grilled venison, dark chocolate and a good base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with just a bit of backend tannin on the impressively long finish that will need to be waited out. A fine example. 2018-2030. **87+.**



A very content Louis Boillot in his cellars in Chambolle, after finishing up our tasting of his 2015s.

2015 Côte de Nuits Villages- Domaine Louis Boillot

Monsieur Boillot's 2015 Côte de Nuits Villages is really superb and a definitive step up from the very good Bourgogne bottling this year. The bouquet shows plenty of breed and nascent complexity in its blend of black cherries, raw cocoa, a touch of grilled meat, gentle smokiness, dark soil tones and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely focus and balance, a dollop of fine-grained tannins perking up the long and vibrant finish. Very classy juice in the making. 2019-2035+. **90.**

2015 Fixin- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Fixin AC from Monsieur Boillot is excellent, as this parcel of old vines is planted on clay soils that nicely ameliorated most of the hydric stress issues of mid-summer and the ripeness here is exemplary. The nose wafts from the glass is a black fruity blend of cassis, black cherries, dark chocolate, a touch of currant leaf and a fine base of soil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and again, beautifully sappy at the core, with ripe tannins, fine soil signature and a long, youthful finish. This does not quite have the same sense of elegance as the Cote de Nuits Villages, but it has depth and personality. 2021-2040. **89.**

2015 Pommard- Domaine Louis Boillot

All of the Pommards *chez* Boillot are extremely elegant in personality in 2015, and this extends to this excellent *villages* level bottling. The bouquet is very pure and refined for young Pommard, wafting from the glass in a classy mix of black cherries, plums, a fine base of soil

tones, gamebird, woodsmoke and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy in the mid-palate, with impressive transparency, suave, ripe tannins and lovely focus and grip on the long, seamless and really promising finish. 2023-2055+. **90+**.

2015 Beaune “Epenottes”- Domaine Louis Boillot

Epenottes is one of the warmest *climats* in Beaune, but the 2015 from Louis Boillot has steered clear of any signs of overripeness and is really a lovely and exuberant example of the vintage. The nose delivers a fine blend of black cherries, dark berries, gamebird, violets, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and shows plenty of sappiness in the center of the wine, with excellent soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long and well-balanced finish. Lovely juice. 2023-2055. **91+**.

2015 Volnay “les Grands Poisots”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 les Grands Poisots from Domaine Boillot was a touch reduced at the time of my visit, but opened up nicely with just a bit of extended swirling in the glass in reveal a bouquet of cassis, dark soil tones, *pigeon*, bitter chocolate and a bit of bonfire in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and ripely tannic, with fine concentration at the core, lovely balance and grip and a long, youthful and classy finish. A fine Volnay AC in the making. 2022-2055. **90**.

2015 Volnay “les Angles”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Volnay “les Angles” from Louis Boillot is excellent on both the nose and palate, with the combination of transparency and pure, sappy black fruit very, very attractive. The bouquet is a fine constellation of black cherries, sweet dark berries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a fine base of dark soil tones and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and seamless in structure, with a sappy core of black fruit, a fine base of soil, suave tannins and lovely length and grip on the beautifully focused and nascently complex finish. This is a very classy bottle. 2022-2060+. **92+**.

2015 Volnay “les Brouillards”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The domaine’s 2015 example of les Brouillards is another excellent young Volnay, with a bit more red fruit than what is found this year in the les Angles. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, a touch of red currant, stony minerality, venison, currant leaf, raw cocoa and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with a fine core, tangy acids and excellent length and grip on the ripely tannic and beautifully balanced finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065. **92**.

2015 Volnay “les Caillerets”- Domaine Louis Boillot

Monsieur Boillot was considering bottling all of this in magnums in 2015, due to the shortness of the crop and the great potential for the cellar of his Caillerets this year. The bouquet is very refined and utterly classic in profile, delivering scents of cherries, red currants, venison, lovely spice tones, stony minerality and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and extremely elegant in personality (particularly for young Caillerets, which can often be a bit masked behind its structure in its early days), with a lovely core of fruit, fine soil signature, suave, seamless tannins and great grip on the very long and nascently complex finish. Really strong Caillerets! 2025-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Pommard “les Fremiers”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 les Fremiers from Louis Boillot is so refined, transparent and sappy at the core, that I am tempted to say I have never tasted a finer example of this cuvée from the domaine. The nose jumps from the glass in a stunning blend of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a marvelously complex base of soil, fresh nutmeg and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure,

full-bodied and sappy at the core, with excellent transparency and nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and a very long, perfectly balanced and very poised finish. Great juice. 2024-2075. **94.**

2015 Pommard “la Croix Noire”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The stunning 2015 la Croix Noire is every bit as refined as the les Premiers this year and perhaps even a touch more complex! This is a beautiful wine in the making, delivering a stunning aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, a touch of raspberry, gloriously complex minerality, cocoa, *pigeon*, just a touch of new oak and a gentle topnote of exotic spices. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and mineral-driven in personality, with a great core of sappy red fruit, fine-grained tannins, stunning focus and grip and a very, very long, seamlessly balanced and vibrant finish. Brilliant young Pommard! 2025-2065+. **94+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Gevrey AC *chez* Boillot is a lovely example, delivering a fine nose of red and black cherries, black minerality, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, incipient notes of grilled meats and a gentle topnote of mustard seed. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely transparent, with a very good core of pure fruit, modest tannins and good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. 2019-2040+. **90.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes” from Domaine Louis Boillot is excellent this year, offering up a refined bouquet of red and black cherries, a touch of grilled meat, dark soil tones woodsmoke and a gentle framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and vibrant, with a good core, fine soil inflection, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and very nicely balanced finish. Coming so soon after the two stunning Pommard premier crus would be difficult for any wine in this tasting lineup, but the Gevrey V.V. held its own! 2021-2045+. **91.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Evocelles”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Evocelles from Monsieur Boillot is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a classy blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, grilled meats, dark chocolate, fine soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with suave tannins, lovely balance, impressive grip and a long, refined and focused finish. *Toute en finesse!* 2020-2050. **92.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Champonnets”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 les Champonnets is very, very red fruity this year, offering up a pure and classy bouquet of red plums, cherries, cocoa, gamebird, a fine base of soil and a gentle framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nicely reserved in profile out of the blocks, with lovely mid-palate intensity, fine focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic and very nicely balanced finish. This will need some extended bottle age to blossom, but will be excellent. 2023-2060+. **92+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Cherbaudes”- Domaine Louis Boillot

I know that this is the highest octane wine in the cellar, but it is also one of the most elegant and pure! The 2015 Cherbaudes from Monsieur Boillot is an outstanding wine in the making, soaring from the glass in a vibrant and sappy aromatic blend of black cherries, red plums, woodsmoke, a stunningly complex soil signature, gamebird, a touch of mustard seed and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off marvelous, sappy depth in the mid-palate, with ripe, fine-grained tannins, lovely breed and backend refinement and a very long, soil-driven and classy finish. A stunning young Cherbaudes! 2025-2075. **94.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Pruliers”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2015 Pruliers *chez* Boillot is also stunning, as these very, very old vines have produced a marvelous wine in this vintage. The nose is pure and nascently complex, offering up an utterly classic blend of dark berries, black cherries, gamebird, bitter chocolate, a complex base of dark soil tones, a discreet base of vanillin oak, woodsmoke and a nice touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very transparent in personality, with a sappy core, refined, ripe tannins and impeccable focus and grip on the long and seamlessly balanced finish. I tasted truly exceptional examples of Pruliers at Domaines Chevillon and Gouges this year, but Louis Boillot's is every bit as refined and promising! 2025-2075. **94.**

Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier (Chambolle-Musigny)

Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier and his team at the Château de Chambolle-Musigny began picking on September 3rd for the chardonnay in the Clos de la Maréchale, with the pinot noir harvest getting started on the 8th of the month in 2015. Yields were very low here in 2015, with the average only twenty-five hectoliters per hectare. Monsieur Mugnier observed that he had been giving thought to comments he had seen to the effect that being a vigneron is analogous to an artist, but which he disagreed, noting that “a vigneron is not an artist, but a gardener, as the quality of the vintage is always realized in the vineyard.” He and his team must have been putting in some long hours in 2015 out in the garden, as the lineup of wines here is exemplary and truly beautiful to behold, with great sappy purity to their fruit components, excellent typicité and exceptional balances that promise long and glorious evolution in bottle. The cellar had not yet been racked at the time of my visit on November 17th and the wines were in beautiful shape for tasting, with a wide range of red and black fruit tones, floral scents, excellent minerality and plenty of structure elements seamlessly woven into the deep fruit tones of the wines. There is an exotic musky quality to the fruit tones in both the Amoureuses and Musigny here this year that is very, very exciting, and I may well have never tasted a better young vintage of Bonnes-Mares than the magical 2015 in the cellars here this year!

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 Chambolle *villages* from Monsieur Mugnier is lovely, wafting from the glass in an elegant and nicely transparent blend of sappy strawberries and cherries, gamebird, chalky soil tones, exotic spice notes and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already quite velvety on the attack, with a sappy core, lovely soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, focused and tangy finish. Classy AC. 2021-2050. **90+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 Clos de la Maréchale is outstanding on both the nose and palate, with a fine synthesis of pure fruit and striking soil signature. The bouquet delivers a fine constellation of black cherries, pomegranate, gamebird, raw cocoa, lovely soil tones, a nice touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of orange peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very soil-driven in personality, with excellent mid-palate depth, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, tangy and well-balanced finish. 2023-2060. **92.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Fuées”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 Domaine Mugnier les Fuées is beautifully sappy, but also quite black fruity in tone this year, as it offers up scents of plums, black cherries, musky floral tones, a hint of blood orange, lovely minerality and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-

bodied and vibrant in personality, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip, tangy acids and impeccable focus on the long and suavely tannic, complex finish. This will need a good decade to offer up its fully complement of layered complexity, but will be accessible earlier for those who would like to enjoy its beautiful, sappy fruit of youth. 2025-2065. **93.**

2015 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 vintage of Bonnes-Mares is one of the most beautiful young examples of this wine *chez* Mugnier that I have had the pleasure to taste! The bouquet soars from the glass in a sappy and very pure blend of cherries, red plums, blood orange, cocoa, *pigeon*, mustard seed, chalky soil tones and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with marvelous sappiness at the core, vibrant acids, great freshness and bounce and a long, complex and fine-grained finish. A stunning young Bonnes-Mares. 2025-2075. **95.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 les Amoureuses from Domaine Mugnier is stunning. The bouquet soars from the glass in a musky, red fruity blend of cherries, blood orange, kaleidoscopic minerality, raw cocoa, gamebird and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven, with a sappy core of fruit, suave, seamless tannins, bright acids and laser-like focus on the very, very long, vibrant and still quite primary finish. Like the les Fuées here, this wine is so refined in its balance that it will be accessible from a relatively early age (if it does not close up after bottling), but will really deserve at least a full decade in the cellar to properly blossom. It will be very long-lived. 2025-2080. **95+.**

2015 Musigny- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

Monsieur Mugnier’s 2015 Musigny is one of the most beautiful wines of the vintage, but one will of course have to wait many years for its release, as it is going to be a long-lived wine. The bouquet is very, very pure, nascently complex and again, exotically musky in its constellation of red plums, red and black cherries, cocoa, musky floral tones, gamebird, mustard seed, gloriously complex minerality, peonies and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and bottomless at the core, with plenty of sappy fruit on the still very youthful attack, suave, ripe tannins, tangy acids and brilliant focus and grip on the very, very long, transparent and magical finish. 2030-2100. **97+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale” Blanc- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2015 Clos de la Maréchale Blanc is very, very pretty, wafting from the glass in a perfumed and succulent aromatic blend of pear, beeswax, fresh almond, orange blossoms, chalky soils and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a fine core, lovely focus and balance and a long, zesty and wide open finish. This will drink with great charm from release. 2016-2030. **92.**

Domaine Georges Roumier (Chambolle-Musigny)

Christophe Roumier was away at the time of my visit, but we were graciously received by his sister Delphine, who has worked with Christophe for many years. As we were a fairly large crowd for the tasting, I did not get to ask a lot of technical questions I might have if Christophe had been hosting us and the tasting was a smaller group of people, but this is the spirit of November in Burgundy these days, so I am always to try and cooperate and join another party of tasters if it eases the hectic scheduling of the domaine. In any event, the wines here were not singing with their customary precision and brilliance at the time of my mid-November visit and I have been pondering this ever since tasting the wines. I have known Christophe Roumier for about as long as anyone in the Côte d’Or and I have drunk so many great wines made by him

over the years that I am accustomed to his collection from the current vintage always being amongst the tasting highlights of my November visit, so to catch his 2015s in a grumpy stage was a bit of a surprise. Christophe began picking a bit later than some of his neighbors in this vintage, getting out on September 7th to collect the fruit in his parcel in Corton-Charlemagne and Musigny, and then attacking the rest of his vineyards from September 10th onwards. This, of course, meant that he and his picking team had to contend with the very heavy rains that descended on the region from the 12th of September and hampered picking for much of the following week. The wines had been racked at the start of September according to Delphine Roumier, so one would have expected the collection to have bounced back nicely and being showing fairly well, but many of the wines were not all that happy about being tasted. As Christophe was travelling, I did not get a chance to ask about alcohol levels of his 2015s, but many of the wines seemed plenty ripe to my palate. As was the case in some of the other cellars I tasted in on this trip where the vigneron began harvesting a bit later and had to contend with the heavy morning rains from the 12th of September forward, I noted a slightly baked fruit component to the Roumier wines of 2015, coupled with a bit less soil signature than one routinely finds at this great domaine. I left wondering if 2015 will simply be one of the less successful vintages in Christophe's fine career, or if the wines were simply out of sorts at the time of my visit and will be far more interesting when they get back in a good mood. Having been tasting young Burgundy out of cask for nearly thirty years now, I generally feel very comfortable assessing wines at this stage of their evolutions, but I am not at all confident with my impressions chez Roumier this year, and it may well be that I am underestimating these 2015s. But, by the time of my visit here, I had already been in the cellars for two solid weeks and had seen an awful lot of variations on the theme of 2015 and should have been able to better get a read on these young wines than I did, so perhaps my impressions will in the end prove to be accurate. In any case, given my relative lack of comfort with how the wines were showing and Christophe being away and not available for technical questions, I have scored the wines in a range this year. I hope to have a chance to revisit the vintage on my spring trip when Christophe is not on the road, so that I might see the wines for a second time and get a better handle on how this vintage has evolved chez Roumier. As we were a large group in the cellars, we did not taste the full range of cuvées during my visit.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2015 Chambolle AC from Domaine Roumier is quite ripe on both the nose and palate, or at least was showing in this manner at the time of my visit. The bouquet is a mix of baked red and black cherries, gamebird, a good dollop of minerality, roses and raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows plenty of depth at the core, with moderate tannins and just a touch of backend heat warming up the long finish. 2023-2055. **87-89?**

2015 Morey St. Denis "Clos de la Bussière"- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2015 Clos de la Bussière was also showing itself to hail from the riper side of the vintage, delivering a bouquet of black cherries, chocolate, venison, dark soil and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and fairly powerful in personality, with broad shoulders, a bit more mid-palate purity out of the blocks than the Chambolle AC, modest tannins and a long, buxom finish. 2023-2060. **88-90?**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny "les Cras"- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2015 les Cras from Christophe Roumier is very black fruity in personality this year, wafting from the glass in a ripe blend of black cherries, black plums, chocolate, woodsmoke,

gamebird and bass notes of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with a fairly fruit-driven personality out of the blocks, a gentle stewiness to the very ripe fruit tones, moderate tannins and a long, velvety finish that does not today show a lot of tannin or grip. There is a large veneer of puppy fat fruit here and there may well be this wine's customary structure underneath the sheen, but it is hard to locate it today. 2020-2050. **89-91?**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2015 les Amoureuses from Domaine Roumier is ripe, sappy and musky on both the nose and palate and was the freshest seeming wine in the lineup up to this point in the tasting. The nose is deep, nascently complex and again, fairly ripe in personality, offering up scents of red and black cherries, plums, cocoa, gamebird, soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very long, with a sappy core of ripe fruit, good grip and a moderately tannic, plush finish. A big and bold Amoureuses this year. 2025-2065+. **92-93+?**

2015 Ruchottes-Chambertin- Christophe Roumier

The 2015 Ruchottes-Chambertin *chez* Roumier is again quite ripe in profile on both the nose and palate. The wine offers up an aromatic constellation of red plums, black cherries, venison, chocolate, soil, a touch of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fairly ripe, chewy tannins and good length and grip on the slightly stewy finish. The acids here are quite good and give some lift to the ripe fruit on the backend. 2025-2075. **92-93?**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Christophe Roumier

The 2015 Charmes Chambertin from Christophe Roumier is one of the most red fruity wines in the cellar this year, with a baked fruit component that recalls the style of the fruit in the 1982 Bordeaux vintage (and is quite attractive in its way). The bouquet is a sappy blend of cherries, strawberries, venison, soil, roses, mustard seed and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, plush on the attack and sappy, with good length and grip on the long and nicely balanced finish. This was the first wine up to this point where I did not have a sense of fairly high alcohol. 2023-2065. **92-93?**

2015 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2015 Bonnes-Mares from Domaine Roumier was my favorite of the range that we tasted this year, as here the ripe fruit seems better reined in by classical structure and the potential for the long haul seems far more certain. The youthful bouquet still has plenty of sappy fruit in its blend of red and black cherries, gamebird, woodsmoke, superb soil tones, chocolate and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary in personality, with a rock solid and sappy core, substantial, ripe tannins and a very long, ripe and nascently complex finish. There seemed to be just a touch of backend heat here, but perhaps this was just the stage the wine was in at the time of my visit? In any event, it a properly structured young Bonnes-Mares and will demand quite some bottle age to start to soften. 2027-2085. **94-95?**

Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé (Chambolle-Musigny)

François Millet is very happy with how his 2015s have turned out, noting that “of course, this is a solar vintage, but we also have lovely purity and typicité as well that makes the wines very engaging, with a good level of acidity that keeps them fresh and inviting on the palate.” The team at Comte de Vogüé began harvesting on September 3rd in 2015. The cellar was in the midst of its second racking at the time of my visit on the 17th of November, and the wines across the board are in the thirteen percent range in this vintage. There is a beautiful sappiness to the very pure fruit tones here that is marvelous, but none of these wines is even remotely close to overripe

in personality, and the entire range of cuvées is also very mineral and site-specific in its expression of underlying minerality. Clearly, picking early here was a recipe for brilliance and the 2015 Comte de Vogüé bottlings will one day take their place up at the very pinnacle of recent vintages at the domaine. However, as Monsieur Millet was quick to mention, “we should not forget the 2014 vintage, which is more cool and classic in profile, but also very, very interesting” and one gets the sense that as content as he is with how the 2015s are turning out here, his personal preference may always be the utterly classic and superb 2014s. I might be in his camp as well, as there is no doubting that the domaine made great 2014s, but I suspect that the market’s imagination is going to be utterly captured by these beautiful, sappy and transparent 2015s!



2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The 2015 Chambolle-Musigny AC from Domaine Comtes de Vogüé is a lovely wine in the making, with a vibrant and sappy personality that will make for fine drinking in the not too distant future. The lovely bouquet jumps from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, raspberries, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil tones and a touch of nutskin in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with a good core, excellent backend mineral drive and fien length and grip on the moderately tannic finish. High class AC. 2023-2055. **90+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Premier Cru”- Domaine de Georges de Comte de Vogüé

The young vine Musigny is always a lovely bottle here and the 2015 is another fine example in the making, albeit, quite black fruity out of the blocks this year. The bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, delivering a fine constellation of black cherries, blackberries, raw cocoa, a nice touch of spice, woodsmoke, violets, excellent minerality and a nice touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, impressive soil signature for the vintage, with a sappy core, good acidity, moderate tannins and fine focus and grip on the young and promising finish. 2025-2065. **92+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Comte de Georges de Vogüé

As Monsieur Millet noted, the domaine is the third largest holder of vines in Amoureuses, with fifty-five *ares*, which only follows the fifty-nine *ares* of Domaine Joseph Drouhin and the full hectare owned by Domaine Robert Groffier. The 2015 Comte de Vogüé version is going to be an excellent wine, as it jumps from the glass in a really pure and primary blend of red and black cherries, violets, raw cocoa, spices, a complex base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and seamless, with a superb core of sappy fruit, excellent focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and simply superb mineral drive on the long and complex finish. The combination of sappy, pure fruit and great soil complexity is rare and very exciting for the future of this fine bottle. 2025-2075. **94.**

2015 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The 2015 Bonnes-Mares from the domaine is truly exceptional. The bouquet delivers almost bottomless depth in its sappy blend of black cherries, sweet blackberries, cocoa, a complex base of soil, woodsmoke, gamnabire3d, violets and cedar wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very vibrant in personality, with a great core, ripe, seamless tannins and outstanding focus and grip on the very long, youthfully complex and vibrant finish. Despite its beautiful depth of sappy fruit here, this is a very minerally wine as well and it is going to be stellar in the fullness of time. 2027-2080. **95.**

2015 Musigny “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The 2015 Musigny was just finishing up its racking at the time of our visit, but the cask that had been racked two days previous was showing fairly well and gave a good read on the ultimate potential of this young wine. The nose offers up a very pure and sappy constellation of red and black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a complex base of soil tones, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and again, very sappy at the core, with marvelous delineation and nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and bright acids adding lift and energy on the very, very long, vibrant finish. A great Moose in the making. 2027-2095. **97.**

Vougeot

Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat (Vougeot)

Charles van Canneyt and his team got started picking on September 7th in 2015 and had completed the harvest by the time the heavy rains began on the 12th of the month. None of the wines had been racked at the time of my visit in mid-November, with the exception of the Bourgogne rouge, which had been bottled just prior to the harvest of 2016. The wines are not high in alcohol this year, ranging generally from thirteen to 13.3 percent, with the highest octane cuvée the 2015 Nuits St. Georges “Murgers”, which reached 13.5 percent. Monsieur van Canneyt did not chapitalize at all in 2015. The resulting wines here are truly beautiful and amongst the vinous highlights of the entire vintage, with the wines beautifully pure, transparent

and absolutely emblematic of their respective terroirs, while at the same time completely awash in the beautiful, sappy fruit of the vintage. What I love about this range of 2015s is that each and every commune's wines really shows its village of origin, so that the Chambolles are ablaze in sappy red fruit, floral nuances and chalky soil tones, the Vosnes are more musky and exotic and the Nuits bottlings are more plummy, black fruity and suavely structured. Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat has been rock solid consistent since I first began visiting them in the 1990s, but the last five years here have seen Charles on an amazing hot streak and this domaine is clearly at the very pinnacle of producers in the Côte d'Or today.

2015 Bourgogne- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Hudelot is a really lovely example, with its middleweight format just loaded with pure, red fruit. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a very expressive mix of cherries, pomegranate, woodsmoke and a good dollop of soil. On the palate the wine is medium-full and intensely flavored, with good length and grip, bright acids and a long, bouncy finish. This is not overly complex, but it is very good for its level. 2016-2025. **88.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Hudelot Chambolle *villages* is really refined and sappy this year and is the kind of wine that every Chambolle lover should seek out! The bouquet is pure and utterly enchanting, offering up a sappy blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, lovely, chalky soil tones, gentle smokiness, floral tones and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows excellent backend mineral drive, with a sappy core of fruit, modest tannins, tangy acids and impressive focus and grip on the long finish. This will be drinkable upon release, but I would opt for giving it a few years in the cellar to allow the secondary layers to blossom. 2020-2050. **90+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

There is that nice, musky Vosne element on display here on both the nose and palate, despite the fact that this 2015 *villages* offering is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the ready to go Chambolle AC. The nose offers up a very refined and classy blend of black raspberries, cherries, cocoa powder, gamebird, lovely minerality, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with fine-grained tannins, good acids and fine length and grip on the classy finish. The 2015 Hudelot Vosne AC will want a bit of bottle age to come into its own, but will be excellent once it is ready. 2021-2050. **90+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Au Bas de Combe”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The domaine's vines in Bas de Combe are now seventy years of age and this wine is really superb in this vintage. The bouquet is very pure, elegant and soil-driven, jumping from the glass in a blend of black cherries, plums, nutskin, raw cocoa, superb minerality, incipient notes of *pigeon* and a stylish framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine core, impressive transparency and a long, ripely tannic and seamless finish. This is premier cru quality and a very elegant rendition of Nuits St. Georges this year! 2022-2055. **91.**

2015 Vougeot “Petits Vougeots”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Petits Vougeots from Charles van Canneyt is simply stunning on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a perfumed constellation of red plums, cherries, cocoa, chalky soil tones, a touch of gamebird, roses and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great transparency, impeccable focus and balance, silky tannins and marvelous grip on the very long and very classy finish. *Très Chambolle* in personality this year,

which is probably the case every year! This is one of the greatest sleepers of the vintage. 2020-2060. **92+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Murgers”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

I love the *terroir* of Murgers and the 2015 from Monsieur van Canneyt is a complete classic in the making. The bouquet delivers a superb mix of plummy fruit, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a touch of venison, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with excellent soil inflection, ripe tannins, vibrant acids and excellent backend energy on the long, focused and poised finish. This is properly reserved out of the blocks and will need a full decade to blossom, but it will be stunning juice when it is ready! 2025-2065+. **93**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Charmes”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Chambolle “Charmes” from Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat is another absolutely succulent example of the vintage. The nose delivers a lovely, floral mix of red and black cherries, plums, cocoa, gamebird, pungent violet tones, chalky soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off marvelous mid-palate depth, with lovely sappiness, fine-grained tannins and a very long, complex and utterly seamless finish. High class juice. 2023-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Beaumonts”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

Charles van Canneyt commented that “with our parcel at the very top of Beaumonts, this is a very cool wine for us, and in a solar vintage like 2015, this was definitely an advantage.” This wine has turned out beautifully in this vintage, offering up a very pure and vibrant bouquet of red and black cherries, a touch of dark berry, *pigeon*, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones and a nice base of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and very minerally in profile, with great detail and depth, suave, seamless tannins and a very long, complex and tangy finish. 2024-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Suchots”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

In contrast to the parcel of Beaumonts that is at the very top of the vineyard, the family’s plot of vines in Suchots are down low in the vineyard, next to the cemetery in the village. Suchots is usually one of the most black fruity premier crus in Vosne-Romanée, but the 2015 from the domaine has plenty of red fruit tones in its superb bouquet of red and black raspberries, lovely Vosne spice tones, black minerality, raw cocoa, a touch of bonfire and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully pure on the attack, with stunning transparency, a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and a long, complex and very soil-driven finish. This is one of the finest vintages of young Suchots *chez* Hudelot that I have ever tasted! 2025-2065+. **94**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Malconsorts”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Malconsorts from Charles van Canneyt is pure magic. The celestial bouquet soars from the glass in a complex and sappy blend of musky red plums, red and black raspberries, duck, cocoa, a beautiful base of soil, a touch of fresh nutmeg and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a primary personality (particularly in comparison to the Beaumonts and Suchots this year!), with velvety tannins, bright acids and marvelous backend energy on the long and seamless finish. This is every bit as beautiful as Jeremy Seysses’ version of Malconsorts and is one of my absolute favorite premier crus that I have tasted so far in the vintage! 2025-2065+. **95+**.



Charles van Canneyt in the courtyard at Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat.

2015 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Clos Vougeot from Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat is also outstanding and is quite black fruity this year. The nose offers up a nascently complex mix of black plums, black cherries, gamebird, dark chocolate, a superb base of soil, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with lovely purity and focus, ripe, suave tannins and excellent length and grip on the perfectly balanced finish. This wine is very plush on the attack, but nicely soil-driven and structured on the backend. It will be stunning at its apogee. 2025-2075+. **95.**

2015 Romanée-St.-Vivant- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Romanée-St.-Vivant from Charles van Canneyt is a glorious wine in the making, but this is a bit more reserved out of the blocks than the Clos Vougeot and will need a few more years of bottle age to fully blossom. The bouquet is young and will be kaleidoscopic in its complexity when mature, as it wafts from the glass in a blend of sappy black raspberries and black cherries, raw cocoa, duck, a lovely mix of understated Vosne spice tones, great minerality and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows gorgeous sappy mid-palate depth, with refined, ripe tannins, tangy acids, lovely mineral drive and brilliant backend energy on the perfectly balanced and nascently complex finish. A great wine in the making. 2018-2100. **98.**

2015 Richebourg- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2015 Hudelot Richebourg is very black fruity in personality, but also of stunning potential. The bouquet is a fine constellation of plums, black cherries, cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke, lovely soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, ripe tannins, tangy acids and outstanding length and grip on the focused and seamless finish. This is a very young wine and does not yet show the same nascent complexity as found in the RSV, but it will be a great example of Richebourg in the fullness of time. 2030-2100. **97+**.

Vosne-Romanée

Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair (Vosne-Romanée)

There is a new wine in the Liger-Belair cellars in starting in 2015, as the first Clos Vougeot produced by Louis-Michel was crafted in this vintage, for grapes he now has a long-term contract to purchase. The vines for this cuvée have been certified biodynamic and the wine was raised entirely in new oak, albeit three hundred liter casks, in 2015. It is a great new addition to the lineup here. The team at Liger-Belair began picking on September the 5th in 2015, making them one of the earlier harvesters in this vintage and it shows in the purity and sappy beauty of their entire range of wines in this vintage. The wines range from thirteen to 13.5 percent alcohol and Louis-Michel commented that he chapitalized just a touch in this vintage to keep the fermentations going a bit longer. The cellars were destined to be racked for the first time at the end of November (a couple of weeks after my visit) and Louis-Michel intends to bottle in January (with the exception of the usual early-bottled cuvée of la Colombière, which was already bottled).

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Clos des Grandes Vignes” Blanc- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Clos des Grandes Vignes Blanc is a beautiful white in the making, with really fine underlying acidity and purity to carry the generous and gently exotic fruit. The grapes here were brought in on September 7th and the wine offers up a ripe and beautifully musky bouquet of peach, passion fruit, sweet almond, lovely soil tones, acacia blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, bright acids and lovely freshness and bounce on the complex and classy finish. 2016-2025. **92**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Vosne *villages* from Domaine Liger-Belair is very pretty wine, but it is a bit behind the others in the cellar, as it was one of the latest to finish up its malo and was still in cask in mid-November. The wine is a touch reduced, but with some coaxing offers up scents of raspberries, cherries, Vosne spice, duck, lovely soil tones and a generous serving of spicy new wood. On the palate the wine is medium-full. pure on the attack and nicely transparent in personality, with modest tannins and very good bounce on the long and focused finish. A very good *villages*. 2019-2045. **89**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “la Colombière”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 la Colombière was showing very well and had completely bounced back from its early autumn bottling. The complex bouquet is pure, perfumed and classy, wafting from the glass in a mix of red plums, black raspberries, cocoa, duck, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke, nutty oak and a topnote of fresh nutmeg. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the

core, with plenty of sex appeal, moderate, seamless tannins and lovely length and grip on the tangy finish. High class juice. 2020-2050. **91.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Clos du Château”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Clos du Château had been assembled in mid-September (just before the start of the harvest of 2016) and was destined to be bottled early in the new year. The wine is also very pure and stylish, delivering scents of raspberries, beetroot, fine minerality, gamebird, a bit of bonfire, Vosne spices and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite solid at the core, with lovely soil signature, modest tannins and a long, vibrant and silky finish. There is a touch more dimension and depth on the Colombière this year, but the Clos du Château is also excellent. 2019-2045+. **90+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 les Chaumes from Domaine Liger-Belair is quite laid back structurally this year and is going to be awfully tasty right out of the blocks. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of raspberries, cherries, duck, woodsmoke, a good base of soil and a fair bit of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is fullish, focused and quite suave on the attack, with a plush, velvety core, modest tannins and good length and grip on the wide open and generous finish. Good juice. 2020-2055. **91.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Suchots”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

In most vintages, Suchots is a very black fruity *terroir*, so I always get excited when one finds an example such as the 2015 from Liger-Belair that shows so much red fruit as well. The bouquet here is simply beautiful, soaring from the glass in a blaze of red plums, black raspberries, cherries, cloves, gamebird, a fine base of soil, cinnamon and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully driven by its minerality on the backend. The core is pure and sappy, the tannins are fine-grained and beautifully integrated and the finish is long, focused and tangy. Lovely wine. 2023-2060. **92+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “aux Cras”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The Nuits St. Georges “aux Cras” was the very last wine to finish its malo in 2015 and the wine was fairly reduced on the nose at the time of my visit, but it was also absolutely stellar on the palate and there was no difficulty in evaluating this beautiful wine. The bouquet eventually offers up scents of black plums, sweet dark berries, *pigeon*, woodsmoke, nutmeg, dark soil tones and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very, very pure, with a sappy core of fruit, fine soil signature, seamless tannins and a very long, elegant and complex finish. This is very reminiscent of Henri Mayer’s Murgers back in the day! 2025-2065. **93.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Petits Monts from Louis-Michel Liger-Belair is a beautiful wine on both the nose and palate. The bouquet soars from the glass in pure blend of black raspberries, black plums, superb minerality, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, gamebird and nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with a sappy core of black fruit, lovely minerality, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and lovely backend lift and focus on the long and vibrant finish. Just a beautiful example of this great *terroir*. 2025-2065. **93+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “aux Brûlées”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

There is only a single cask of the 2015 Vosne-Romanée “aux Brûlées” in the Liger-Belair cellars this year, so this beautiful wine will only be bottled in larger formats. The bouquet is deep and flamboyant, offering up a great blend of black raspberries, sappy black cherries, duck, cocoa, gamebird, and exotic and pungent note of lavender, a beautiful base of dark soil tones and nutty

new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins, excellent acids and fine length and grip on the seamlessly balanced and very sappy finish. This is brilliant wine! 2023-2065+. **94+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Clos des Grandes Vignes”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Clos des Grandes Vignes was a bit behind the other premier crus in the cellar this year in absorbing its new oak, but there is no doubt it will be excellent in the fullness of time. This is a bit more structured out of the blocks than the fine aux Cras from Nuits, as it offers up a black fruity nose of sappy black plums and black cherries, bonfire, venison, dark soil tones and toasty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very energetic on the backend, with a rock solid core, tangy acids and lovely focus and grip on the very long and nascently complex finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065. **93+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “aux Reignots”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Reignots from Louis-Michel Liger-Belair is flat out brilliant. The wine is so flashy when first served, but quickly firms up in the glass to show excellent structure for the long haul. The bouquet soars from the glass in a blaze of sappy black cherries, black raspberries, a bit of plumminess, duck, a touch of curry and other savory elements from the whole clusters, great soil tones, Vosne spices and a generous serving of cedary new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great mineral drive, laser-like focus, suave, seamless tannins and a very, very long, tangy and complex finish. 2025-2075. **95+**.

2015 Clos Vougeot- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The vines for the new Liger-Belair Clos Vougeot are located mid-slope, towards the Vosne-Romanée side of the vineyard and have been farmed biodynamically for many years. This is a truly superb example of Clos Vougeot, though I would love to see it raised in a bit lower percentage of new wood. The bouquet of the inaugural vintage of 2015 is deep, pure and nascently complex, delivering a fine blend of plums, black cherries, *pigeon*, raspberries, a beautifully complex base of soil, exotic spices, cocoa and plenty of spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with excellent complexity and breed, fine soil signature, ripe tannins and a very long, tangy and promising finish. Welcome to the family! 2025-2075. **95**.

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 Echézeaux from Liger-Belair was also a bit behind some of the other wines in the cellar and had not yet completely integrated its new wood. The bouquet shows quite a bit of spicy new oak in its blend of red and black raspberries, roasted duck, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, Vosne spices and that new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fine transparency, vibrant acids, ripe, chewy tannins and excellent length and grip on the beautifully focused finish. All this will demand is some patience. 2025-2075+. **95**.

2015 La Romanée- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2015 La Romanée from Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair is utterly brilliant. The bouquet is a stunning constellation of black raspberries, plums, black cherries, gamebird, woodsmoke, cocoa, glorious soil tones Vosne spices and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very, very pure on the attack, with great sappiness at the core, magical backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a very long, focused and tangy backend. There is a real peacock’s tail of a finish here that seems to last forever. Brilliant juice. 2027-2100. **98**.



Looking back at the village of Vosne-Romanée from the vineyard of Romanée-St.-Vivant.

Domaine Méo-Camuzet (Vosne-Romanée)

Jean-Nicolas Méo is very, very happy with the quality of his 2015s, which he ranks up with their very best years at the domaine, “which for us were 1990, 1999 and 2005.” At the very top level of premier and grand crus, it is hard not to be swayed by Jean-Nicolas’ enthusiasm, as there are some utterly brilliant wines here in 2015, but I am not sure if all of the village level wines of 2015 will be able to match the same quality as was found here in the other vintages that he mentioned. To my palate, there is just a touch of overripeness to some of the village level and premier cru bottlings chez Méo in 2015, but this is not true of every cuvée and it is certainly not something that most tasters are going to find troubling in the least. But, that said, some of the lower level bottlings had also just been racked prior to my arrival to taste in early November, and it seems very likely that they will show more precision once they have distanced themselves a bit from the racking. Like many cellars in Burgundy, the 2015s from Domaine Méo-Camuzet offer a variety of stylistic profiles, depending on which order they were picked, with the most precise and exciting wines coming from the vineyards where the grapes were taken first. I did not get to chat as long as customary this year with Jean-Nicolas, as German winemaker and journalist, Armin Diel, arrived with his group earlier than scheduled and Jean-Nicolas went off to organize their tasting, while I continued through the lineup with winemaker, Peer Reiss. So, I did not get to ask Jean-Nicolas about the very laudable move to age one or more of the Cortons in 2015 in only fifty percent new oak, which of course is a trend that I was very, very happy to hear about from Peer! Given the amazing range of terroirs in the Méo lineup of wines, I would

be very enthusiastic to hear of more cuvées receiving less new wood in the future, as I often dream of Brûlées or Cros Parantoux raised entirely in one wine barrels in my flights of fancy! Of the growing range of excellent white wines in the Méo cellars, I only tasted the two most basic wines this year, as the Meursault and Corton-Charlemagne had only been racked the day before my visit and I saw no point in trying to taste them right after their racking. In the notes below, where a wine has just recently been racked, if it seemed still a bit agitated, I have scored it within a range to be fair to the wine. So, while not every wine here is brilliant, the vast, vast majority of the cellar is outstanding and this is clearly one of the finest recent vintages at Domaine Méo-Camuzet, with the very best cuvées here destined to be outright legends in the fullness of time.

2015 Bourgogne Haute Côte de Nuits Blanc “Clos St. Philibert”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Clos St. Philibert had been racked two weeks prior to my visit and was showing very well indeed, with a ripe, wide open and very pretty personality. The bouquet offers up a pure blend of apple, peach, fresh almond, chalky soil and a touch of bee pollen in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plenty solid at the core, with lovely focus and grip, sound framing acids and a long, vibrant finish. Good juice. 2016-2025. **89.**

2015 St. Romain- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 St. Romain from Méo-Camuzet is another ripe, wide open and juicy example of the vintage, but it does not show quite the lift on the backend as the Clos St. Philibert. The bouquet offers up a plush blend of pear, apple, chalk and spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent, with a good core and balance, but fairly gentle acids that will ask for drinking up a bit earlier than the Clos. 2016-2021. **88.**

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Bourgogne Rouge from Domaine Méo-Camuzet had not yet been racked and is one of the riper wines in the cellar, coming in at a full 13.5 percent octane, but this works very nicely in this wine and gives some early plushness that is most attractive. The bouquet offers up a 1990-like, baked fruit blend of red and black cherries, chocolate, a good base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and velvety on the attack, with a fine core and a long, plush finish. This is really a lovely example and will drink well from the start. 2016-2030. **88.**

2015 Marsannay- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Marsannay had only been racked a week prior to my visit, so perhaps this was not so happy being tasted. The wine shows a bit of roasted fruit character on both the nose and palate, but also very good depth. The bouquet is a blend of black cherries, plums, chocolate, soil and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, plump and really quite long on the backend, with a bit of *sur maturité* informing the finish. 2016-2035. **86-88?**

2015 Fixin- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Fixin AC from the domaine had also been racked just the week before my tasting. The wine seemed to show more soil definition on both the nose and palate than the more fruit-driven Marsannay, and also seemed a bit less roasted in personality. The nose wafts from the glass in a mix of sweet dark berries, black cherries, dark soil tones, espresso and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with good length and grip on the well-balanced and modestly tannic finish. This should prove to be a fine example. 2016-2035. **88-89.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Gevrey AC *chez Méo* had not yet been racked and was really showing nicely at the time of my visit. The wine offers up a very pure and sappy nose of black cherries, plums, cocoa, a touch of meatiness and a deft framing of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and succulent on the attack, with a fine core, modest tannins and a long, ripe and complex finish. There is just a bit of baked fruit tones evident on the very backend of the wine, but this is a tasty bottle of Gevrey AC that will drink well from release and should age quite well. This is quite 1990-like in profile. 2016-2040. **89+**.

2015 Morey St. Denis- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Morey *villages* was one of the latest wines to finish its malo in the cellars this year and was not entirely on form in early November. The bouquet is a bit grumpy, but offers up scents of black cherries, chocolate, venison, smoke and a good base of dark soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with plenty of length and a bit of backend tannin. With more *elevage*, this wine should snap nicely into focus and it would surprise me if this is not ultimately every bit as fine as the Gevrey *villages*. 2019-2040. **88-89+**.

2015 Pommard- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Pommard AC from Domaine Méo-Camuzet was one of my very favorite wines in the cellar at this level. This is produced from forty to fifty year-old vines and was raised in twenty-five percent new wood in this vintage, which has allowed it to really show outstanding soil signature in both its precise nose and palate. The bouquet shows a lovely, red fruity personality in its blend of cherries, pomegranate, woodsmoke, venison, a complex base of soil and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave for young Pommard, with a sappy core, lovely transparency and a long, ripely tannic and nicely focused finish. This has grip and good underlying structure. 2020-2045+. **90+**.

2015 Fixin “Clos Chapitre”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Fixin “Clos Chapitre” from Domaine Méo-Camuzet shows more minerality and precision than the *villages* bottling from this commune, though it too has a bit of a “roasted fruit” personality. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, bitter chocolate, venison and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely pure on the attack, with a good core, modest tannins and just a whisper of *sur maturité* perking up on the long finish. 2020-2045+. **90**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Chambolle AC *chez Méo* is fully fourteen percent this year, making it one of the riper village wines in the cellar, but it was not showing any signs of overripeness. The wine was also one of the last to finish up its malolactic fermentation, but was showing quite well in early November, wafting from the glass in a fairly fruit-driven constellation of black cherries, plums, violets, a dollop of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, long and focused, with a sappy core and a long, gently chewy finish. Good juice in the making here. 2020-2045. **90**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Feusselottes”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

Ironically, despite this being a full half point lower in octane than the Chambolle AC, this was showing more of a roasted personality and really is quite a dead-ringer for a 1990 red Burgundy. The bouquet is a ripe blend of baked black cherries and plums, chocolate, game, soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush, with a good core, a fruit-driven personality and a long, ripely tannic finish. This is quite adolescent today and perhaps

more precision and soil signature will emerge with bottle age, but today, it does not seem to be a step up from the AC. 2021-2050+. **90.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Cras”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 les Cras from Domaine Méo-Camuzet includes fifteen percent whole clusters this year and is also 13.5 percent octane. The wine was showing very well at the time of my visit, wafting from the glass in a complex mix of red and black cherries, chocolate, gamebird, soil, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and primary in personality, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic finish. This will be a fine example. 2022-2060+. **92.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Argillières”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 les Argillières was another late finished of its malolactic in the Méo cellars this year, but the wine seemed in good spirits and showed well during my visit. The bouquet is excellent, jumping from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, nutskin, gamebird, a fine base of soil, cedar and nice spicy elements in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and soil-driven, with a very solid core, ripe, fine-grained tannins and impressive length and grip on the focused finish. This is one of the coolest premier crus in Nuits and this has certainly benefited it in the hot summer of 2015. 2023-2060. **92+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Perrières”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 les Perrières *chez* Méo is simply stunning. The bouquet delivers a superb blend of red and black cherries, blood orange, gamebird, outstanding minerality, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and sappy, with lovely focus and balance, fine-grained tannins and a very long, energetic finish. This is dynamite Nuits in the making, but some patience will be required! 2023-2060. **93+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Didiers Cuvée Jacques Duret” Hospices de Nuits- Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Hospices de Nuits bottling in the Méo-Camuzet cellars, the Cuvée Jacques Duret, is also an excellent wine, though there was only a single cask that was purchased, so the wine will be hard to find. This is stylistically different than the other Méo Nuits premier crus, but it is a fine bottle in the making, as it offers up a very black fruity nose of black cherries, black plums, dark chocolate, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, ripe tannins and excellent length and grip on the well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2021-2055+. **92+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “aux Murgers”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Murgers *chez* Méo is one of the ripest premier crus in the cellar this year, coming at a full 13.9 percent octane, but it shows absolutely no signs of *sur maturité* on either the nose or the palate. The bouquet is pure, complex and flamboyant, as it offers up scents of sappy black cherries and dark berries, espresso, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins, superb focus and grip and a very, very long, vibrant and utterly refined finish. I remember well drinking the 1989 and 1990 Méo-Camuzet wines in their youth and this is remarkably similar! 2023-2075. **94.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “aux Boudots”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Boudots is just a touch lower in octane this year, coming in at 13.5 percent and is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the Murgers, but it too is outstanding! The bouquet delivers a complex blend of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, venison, a fine base of soil, a touch of nutskin, smoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and

very sappy at the core, with great precision and grip, fine-grained tannins and a very long, nascently complex finish. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Vosne-Romanée from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is my favorite of the *villages* bottlings in the cellar this year. The bouquet is pure, complex and beautifully focused, offering up scents of black raspberries, black cherries, Vosne spices, woodsmoke, soil and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, refined and full-bodied, with a sappy core, impressive soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy finish. This will be lovely. 2020-2045. **91**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Chaumes is also a very lovely wine in the Méo cellars this year, with its 1990-like personality very much in evidence. The bouquet offers up a seductive blend of red and black cherries, chocolate, a fine base of soil, gamebird, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, moderate tannins and fine length and grip on the focused and classy finish. Fine juice. 2020-2045+. **91+**.



Jean-Nicolas Méo in the cellars at Domaine Méo-Camuzet.

2015 Corton “les Vignes Cents”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 les Vignes Cents was raised in fifty percent new wood this year. The wine is excellent, wafting from the glass in a fine aromatic constellation of black cherries, pomegranate, a fine base of soil, venison, chocolate and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied

and quite transparent in personality, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long, youthful and beautifully balanced finish. This is outstanding young Corton. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Corton “Perrière”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Corton “Perrière” from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is also an outstanding example of the vintage, with some whole clusters included this year. The bouquet is deep, primary and nicely reserved in profile, offering up a quite black fruity blend of dark berries, black cherries, espresso, soil tones, woodsmoke, venison and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary in personality, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and soil-driven finish. I did not take note of how much new wood was used for the Perrière, but I imagine it was similar to the Vignes Cents. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Corton “Clos Rognet”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Clos Rognet is another superb Corton in the making *chez* Méo, with the wine offering up a very, very pure and still quite primary bouquet of red and black cherries, plums, venison, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a rock solid core, fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and youthfully promising finish. The only missing ingredient here is time in bottle! 2025-2075. **94**.

2015 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Clos Vougeot from Méo-Camuzet is beautifully ripe and pure, coming in at 13.5 percent octane and offering up a sappy nose of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, a lovely base of soil, a touch of bonfire and a fine framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, plush and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, ripe tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and classic finish. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Echézeaux from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is also outstanding, with a deep and very black fruity personality this year showing promise of great refinement at its apogee. The nose wafts from the glass in a primary mix of black cherries, black plums, *pigeon*, complex soil tones, cocoa, a dollop of fresh herbs and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and a very long, focused and vibrant finish. Marvelous juice in the making! 2025-2080. **94+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Brûlées”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Brûlées was a bit reduced at the time of my visit, but was destined to be racked the following week. This is going to be a great wine when it is ready, as the nose offers up impressive complexity and purity in its constellation of black cherries, black plums, venison, dark chocolate, complex minerality, woodsmoke, cedar and just a touch of exotic, savory elements in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great length and grip, impeccable focus and balance, fine-grained tannins and a certain sense of wildness on the very long and exotic finish. Brilliant juice. 2025-2075. **95+**.

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Cros Parantoux”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The sheer beauty of the 2015 Méo Cros Parantoux is enough to take one’s breath away! This is a very young and utterly brilliant wine, wafting from the glass in an exotic blend of raspberries, cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, complex minerality, classic Vosne spice tones, violets, a hint of mint, lavender and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and seamless, with a sappy core of fruit, great soil inflection, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, refined and tangy finish. Magical juice. 2025-2080. **98**.

2015 Richebourg- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2015 Richebourg from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is every bit as beautiful as the Cros Parantoux. The bouquet is pure, refined and nascently complex, offering up a marvelous mix of red and black plums, black raspberries, cocoa, beautiful soil tones, duck, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, young and impeccably balanced, with a sappy core, lovely transparency, refined tannins and a very long, very suave and endless finish. Words cannot do this wine justice. 2027-2085. **98.**

Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg (Vosne-Romanée)

The Mugneret sisters have crafted beautiful 2015s that recall a bit a blend of the 1990 and 1999 vintages here. The wines are ripe, but also very pure, show lovely soil signatures and will age beautifully. The Mugneret-Gibourg team began picking on September 4th this year, aiming to retain freshness and bounce in their wines by not letting the ripeness get too high. The entire cellar was racked in July of 2016 and the wines were in lovely form at the time of my visit in mid-November. A few of the wines were now assembled in tank, whereas others had been racked from cask to cask. The sisters decided to de-stem everything in 2015 and chose to chapitalize a tiny bit (usually one-tenth of a degree) just to prolong the alcoholic fermentations a bit longer. The ripest 2015 wine in the cellar is the Bourgogne rouge at 13.9 percent, with most of the other wines between 13.3 and 13.5 percent in octane. Of the three beautiful grand crus here, the Echézeaux and Clos Vougeot both came in at 13.5 percent and the Ruchottes at an even thirteen percent. The wines have plenty of sappy, pure fruit on display this year, along with very good soil signatures once one rises up into the premier and grand cru level, with beautifully suave structures and potential for long and very lovely evolution in bottle. The big surprise chez Mugneret on this visit was not the superb quality of the 2015s, as this has been one of the most consistently excellent estates in all of Burgundy for many, many years now, but rather, the beautiful and very tastefully appointed new tasting room that greets visitors as they enter from the cuverie. It is a very chic and welcoming venue for visitors to the domaine.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg is the ripest wine in the cellar this year, coming in at 13.9 percent alcohol, but it remains a very pure and pretty wine. The bouquet offers up plenty of ripe fruit tones in its mix of black cherries, blackberries, chocolate, gentle smokiness and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with beautiful balance and grip, velvety, modest tannins and a long, succulent finish. This is awash in puppy fat right now and may show more soil signature down the road, but it may also always be a bit more fruit-driven in personality. Either way, it is a lovely example of its level. 2016-2025+. **88.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Vosne AC from the Mugnerets is cut from a similar stylistic cloth as the Bourgogne, but with more breed and inherent elegance also in evidence. The bouquet is ripe, pure and chocolaty in profile, wafting from the glass in a perfumed blend of black raspberries, black cherries, chocolate, a touch of gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and voluptuous on the attack, with a sappy core, ripe, seamless tannins and lovely focus and grip on the very long, fruit-driven finish. Despite the generosity of beautiful fruit tones here, this wine is nicely cool and classy in the mouth. 2016-2035. **90.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Nuits V.V. is a lovely wine, with a bit more soil definition in early evidence on both the nose and palate, but also the beautiful fruit tones of the vintage *chez* Mugneret also very much in play. The bouquet offers up a lovely constellation of red and black cherries, plums, gamebird, sweet nutskin and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy, with a fine core, good acids and focus, a bit of backend tannin and a long, complex and gently chocolaty finish. This is ripe, detailed and delicious. 2021-2055+. **91+**.

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Feusselottes”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Feusselottes from the Mugneret sisters is a lovely example of the vintage, with ripe, pure and sappy fruit beautifully bound to a fine base of soil tones. The bouquet is a fine, fine blend of sweet blackberries, black cherries, chocolate, violets, a lovely signature of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip, nascent complexity and a long, velvety and suavely tannic finish. This is loaded with puppy fat fruit of great charm, but there is a good base of soil underneath and one day it may rise up and compete with all this glorious fruit, but for the first decade of the 2015 Feusselottes’ life, this wine is going to be about the prettiest, sappiest fruit one can imagine. 2021-2060. **92.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Chaignots”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Chaignots is really lovely, offering up plenty of ripe fruit, fine *typicité* and a generous, but substantial structural chassis for long-term cellaring. The exuberant bouquet jumps from the glass in a blaze of black plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, sweet nutskin, dark soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, beautifully balanced and sappy at the core, with fine soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and lovely focus and grip on the long, classy and still fairly youthful finish. A completely charming young Nuits! 2023-2055+. **92.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Vignes Rondes”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

As is so often the case *chez* Mugneret, the 2015 Vignes Rondes is more structured and reserved in personality than the Chaignots. The bouquet is deep and very elegant this year, offering up a youthful blend of red and black cherries, gamebird, lovely soil tones, a bit of bonfire, nutskin and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary, with a rock solid core, chewy tannins, good acids and impressive length and grip on the nicely balanced finish. Unlike the Chaignots, which might tempt one to open it early, the Vignes Rondes will demand a solid decade’s worth of bottle age to blossom. However, it will be lovely once it is ready. 2025-2055+. **92.**

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Echézeaux from Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg is excellent, displaying outstanding breed and depth on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a refined blend of black plums, black raspberries, *pigeon*, bitter chocolate, woodsmoke, a nice touch of Vosne spices and cedary new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved on the attack, with a sappy core, fine backend soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and very promising finish. Lovely juice. 2025-2075. **94+**.



Christine and Marie-Andrée Mugneret in their newly decorated tasting room- best wine bar in Vosne?

2015 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

I really like the potential of the ripe and pure 2015 Clos Vougeot *chez* Mugneret, as this wine reminds me more of a cross between the beautiful 1993 and 1999 vintages of this cuvée. The nose is deep and sappy, offering up a fine blend of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, beautiful soil tones, a touch of fresh nutmeg and cedar wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a rock solid core, tangy acids, fine minerality and a very long, ripely tannic and still quite primary finish. There is a nice sense of reserve on the finish here that augurs very, very well for its future development. 2025-2075. **95.**

2015 Ruchottes-Chambertin- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2015 Ruchottes-Chambertin from Domaine Mugneret is a bit cooler and more reserved in profile than the other two grand crus here this year, but there is nothing wrong with that! The bouquet is pure, refined and very soil-driven in personality, offering up scents of blackberries, black cherries, raw cocoa, a fine base of dark soil tones, incipient meatiness, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and focused, with plenty of mid-palate stuffing, excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and youthful finish. This may well be the least flamboyant wine in the Mugneret cellars this year, but over the long haul, this may also have the finest potential! A marvelous wine. 2027-2075+. **95.**

Domaine Georges Noëllat (Vosne-Romanée)

Maxime Cheurlin began harvesting on September the 12th in 2015, and immediately felt he had started a bit on the late side. Happily, as his family also has a domaine in Champagne, a quick call to his father in Champagne brought another handful of harvesters to add to the team and he was able to bring in all of his grapes in the following three days. As he noted, given that he had started a bit later than he would have liked, they did a very careful sorting in the cuverie and took out bunches with overripe grapes, as he wanted to avoid any taste of ‘sur maturité’ in the wines of 2015, and he has done a very good job in this regard. None of the Georges Noëllat 2015s is over 13.5 percent octane, with most wines falling in the 12.8 to 13.2 percent range and almost all of them offer up remarkable purity and lots of red fruit, which is pretty rare to find in this vintage. There are several new cuvées in the cellar in 2015, and a few more coming in addition in 2016, as Monsieur Cheurlin has contracted to buy grapes in a couple of new vineyards and has also incorporated a few parcels that had been produced under Domaine Charles Noëllat in the past. The new wines this year included a Bourgogne Côte de Nuits, Gevrey-Chambertin “en Champs” and Chambolle-Musigny “Feusselottes”. Given the relatively late start to picking here, I fully expected to find wines that showed some signs of sur maturité on the nose or palate, but this was not the case and the whole range really showed lovely delicacy and soil signature, not to mention quite reasonable alcohol levels. I imagine that Monsieur Cheurlin was very careful with the extraction in 2015, seeking to retain as much elegance as possible in the finished wines, and he mentioned that he had his new barrels toasted very, very gently as well this year, looking to safeguard refinement in the finished wines.

2015 Bourgogne Côte de Nuits- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The new Bourgogne Côte de Nuits from Maxime Cheurlin is a lovely, red fruity wine in 2015. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of raspberries, cherries, cocoa, fine minerality and a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and stylish, with a good core and just a bit of backend tannin on the long and very nicely balanced finish. Good juice. 2018-2030+. **88.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “en Champs”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

There are only two and a half casks of Gevrey “en Champs” this year, but Monsieur Cheurlin observed that they have been able to add some parcels in the *lieu à dit* of aux Echézeaux in 2016, so the Gevrey *villages* cuvée will increase to ten barrels next year. The 2015 Gevrey is very pretty and again, very red fruity in personality, offering up a fine blend of cherries, strawberries, lovely spice tones, a good base of soil, raw cocoa and a touch of mustard seed in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and nicely transparent, with a good core, tangy acids and very good backend lift on the gently tannic finish. A classy AC and a fine new addition to the portfolio at Domaine Georges Noëllat. 2018-2040. **90+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Vosne AC from Domaine Georges Noëllat seems quite a bit riper on nose than the Gevrey *villages* bottling, but this is only thirteen percent alcohol. The complex bouquet is a ripe blend of backed raspberries and cherries, Vosne spice tones, chocolate, gamebird, soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and already quite plush on the attack, with a deep core, suave backend tannins and a long, velvety finish. This is good, but does not quite have the same freshness and precision of the Gevrey “en Champs”. 2016-2035. **89.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Feusselottes”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

There are only two casks of the new Feusselottes in the Noëllat cellars, with one of them new this year. Maxime Cheurlin will begin to pick the grapes here in 2016, but the owner of the vines did so in this first vintage. The wine offers up a very pretty and quite delicate bouquet of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a lovely base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, suave and silky, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and lovely focus and grip on the long and elegant finish. A lovely new member of the family! 2021-2055. **92.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 les Chaumes from Monsieur Cheurlin is excellent. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a vibrant blend of raspberries, cherries, a lovely base of soil, hints of the duck to come, Vosne spices and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, elegant and quite sappy at the core, with moderate, ripe tannins, good soil signature and a long, focused and vibrant finish that closes with very good grip and nascent complexity. The Chaumes was raised in fifty percent new wood this year, which frames the wine beautifully, while still allowing a fine base of soil tones to come through. Fine juice. 2022-2060. **92.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Petits Monts from Domaine Georges Noëllat is again very pure and perfumed. The nose delivers a classy blend of cherries, red plums, raspberries, duck, raw cocoa, lovely minerality, woodsmoke, fresh nutmeg and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with as sappy core, a nice base of soil, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and energetic finish. Most young examples of Petits Monts are quite black fruity in personality, but I love the red fruity tones found in this charming wine. 2022-2060. **93.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “aux Cras”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Nuits “aux Cras” was the one premier cru here that showed a bit of the vintage’s ripeness on the nose, but the palate remains pure, transparent and velvety in style. The bouquet offers up scents of baked red plums and cherries, chocolate, a good base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very plush on the attack, with fine complexity, ripe tannins and good length and grip on the slightly roasted finish. This is still a very good wine, but it does not quite share the same purity and sense of delicacy of the other 2015s in the cellar here this year. 2023-2060. **91.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Boudots”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Boudots from Monsieur Cheurlin is more refined and precise on both the nose and palate than the riper Cras. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely blend of red plums, cherries, pomegranate, nutskin, gamebird, cocoa powder, a good base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely soil-driven in personality, with a sappy core, ripe tannins and lovely length and grip on the still fairly youthful, but very promising finish. Fine, fine juice in the making. 2023-2060. **93.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “les Beaux Monts”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Domaine Noëllat version of les Beaux Monts is excellent. The nose offers up a refined aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, venison, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a base of toasty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very nicely balanced, with fine-grained tannins, very good focus and grip and a long, soil-driven and plush finish. This is very 1990-like in style. 2023-2060. **93.**

2015 Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Echézeaux from Domaine Georges Noëllat is a beautifully complex wine right out of the blocks. The complex and very expressive bouquet is a refined blend of red plums, red and black cherries, duck, cocoa, violets, a great base of soil, fresh nutmeg and nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in personality, with lovely purity and focus, a sappy core, suave tannins and a good signature of soil on the very long, fine-grained and classy finish. This just exudes sex appeal out of the blocks! 2025-2075. **95.**

2015 Grands Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2015 Grands Echézeaux from Monsieur Cheurlin is also a beautiful bottle in the making. The bouquet is pure and impressively complex, jumping from the glass in a blaze of black plums, red and black raspberries, bitter chocolate, gamebird, a very complex base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a superb core of fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, vibrant and utterly classic finish. Great juice. 2025-2075. **96.**



Maxime Cheurlin, in the golden vineyard of les Chaumes with his mother on a beautiful autumn day.

Nuits St. Georges

Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils (Nuits St. Georges)

It is a pretty good morning in Burgundy when one starts the day at the cellars of Domaine Dujac and follows up with a visit to Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils! Bertrand

Chevillon has fashioned another absolutely stellar range of wines in 2015, as he was another vigneron to start picking very early- in this case, September 3rd- and the team had brought in all of the grapes by the 10th of the month. Monsieur Chevillon noted that the malos here generally finished up in January of 2016, with the exception of the Chaignots, which took until April to finish up its secondary fermentation, and with the earlier malos, the wines were absolutely singing at the time of my visit. Perhaps the best vineyards in Nuits St. Georges were advantaged a bit in 2015, for the higher clay content in the soils of many of these parcels may well have benefited the vines during the height of the midsummer drought, and certainly the entire range of 2015s from Domaine Chevillon possess absolutely perfect ripeness, without ever showing signs of periods of blocked maturity during the toughest moments of hydric stress in July. This is truly a great range of young Burgundies- though I very often say the same thing when tasting the new vintage here, as this is one of the most consistently excellent producers in all of the Côte d'Or. Monsieur Chevillon was in a very good mood as we tasted through the 2015s, as he is obviously very content with the style and quality of the vintage here, but he was also quick to mention that "we should not forget the 2014 vintage in the enthusiasm for the 2015s, as that too is a very, very good vintage!" He is absolutely right on that score and it will be interesting to see which vintage will place a bit higher up when twenty or thirty years has gone by, as they are two very, very strong vintages from Domaine Chevillon and there is a lot to recommend each year. The 2015s are of course, sappier and denser wines at the core, but they also have really lovely typicité and this is emphatically not a "fruit-driven" vintage chez Chevillon and lovers of terroir are going to have no issues whatsoever with this superb range of wines.

2015 Nuits St. Georges "Vieilles Vignes"- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The old vine bottling of Nuits AC is excellent *chez* Chevillon in 2015. The bouquet is deep and very pure, offering up a complex blend of black cherries, black plums, bitter chocolate, gamebirds, a fine base of soil, a touch of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure on the attack and sappy at the core, with lovely soil signature, ripe, seamless tannins and fine length and grip on the nascently complex finish. This will be approachable quite early by the standards of young Nuits, but will age long and gracefully as well. A beautiful *villages*! 2020-2050. **91.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges "Chaignots"- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2015 Chaignots was the one wine to lag a bit finishing up its malolactic fermentation in this vintage, but as it had finished up in April, it was still showing just fine in mid-November. The bouquet is excellent, wafting from the glass in a very pure and sappy blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, lovely soil tones, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very, very sappy at the core, with fine focus and grip, seamless tannins and a long, pure and succulent finish. Chaignots is always the most forward premier cru in the Chevillon cellars and the 2015 version is going to be simply stunning to drink from a young age! I would still try to leave it alone in the cellar for four or five years and let some of the secondary layers here emerge, but will fully understand if folks want to drink it in its beautiful blush of youth! 2021-2060. **92+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges "Bousselots"- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2015 Bousselots from Domaine Chevillon is nearly as sappy in personality as the Chaignots, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of plums, black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of nutskin, violets, *pigeon* and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a sappy mid-palate, lovely soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a

very long, focused and classy finish. This is not quite as deep as the Chaignots this year, but it is every bit as good. 2020-2060. **92+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Roncières”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

A few years ago Monsieur Chevillon blinded me on an older vintage of Roncières and I finally started to treat this wine with the respect that it deserves! The 2015 is another outstanding bottle in the making, with more overtly red fruit on both the nose and palate, but the same transparency down to the soil and the same suave structural sophistication. The bouquet delivers a superb mix of red plums, raspberries, cherries, lovely soil tones, a touch of nutskin, gamebird, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and loaded with sappy red fruit at the core, with excellent focus and grip, a more reserved personality and a very long, ripely tannic and elegant finish. This will be outstanding. 2022-2060. **93**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Perrières”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2015 Perrières is stunning and shares a very red fruity character with the Roncières. The bouquet soars from the glass in another sappy blend of raspberries, cherries, red plums, cocoa, nutskin, stony minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins, great purity of fruit and a very, very long, refined finish. The combination of sappy red fruit and stony soil tones here is outstanding and this is going to be a dynamite bottle once it has reached its zenith! 2023-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Pruliers”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

Like all of these wines *chez* Chevillon, the 2015 Pruliers is utterly classic in its expression of vineyard personality, but loaded with pure and plush fruit tones that give it a veneer of elegance that is not always easy to find in a youthful Pruliers. The bouquet is beautiful, delivering a blend of black cherries, dark berries, black plums, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, a touch of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with excellent soil signature, a rock solid core and a long, vibrant and ripely tannic finish. It is just very rare that young Pruliers shows this kind of structural refinement out of the blocks! 2025-2075. **94**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Cailles”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

One would expect the 2015 Chevillon les Cailles to be outstanding, given that Monsieur Chevillon and his team started picking early and that is exactly what this wine is- outstanding! The bouquet is flat out great, as it soars from the glass in a blaze of sappy red and black cherries, plums, gamebird, a complex base of soil, dark chocolate, woodsmoke and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very deep in the mid-palate, with a more reserved personality in the mouth than the stunning nose suggests. The tannins here are suave and seamless, the acids bright and the core happy in sappy adolescence all the way through to the very, very long and promising finish. This is a puppy and will really deserve some extended cellaring to show all its facets, but unless it really closes down after bottling, it is going to be loaded with temptation to drink on the early side! 2025-2075. **95**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Les St. Georges”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The vineyards of Les St. Georges can often be very black fruity out of the blocks, but the 2015 *chez* Chevillon shows off a beautiful blend of both red and black fruit in its nascently complex and perfumed nose of black plums, red and black cherries, complex minerality, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, violets, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and utterly seamless, with great depth in the mid-palate, laser-like focus, ripe, utterly

refined tannins and a very long, very complex and perfectly balanced finish. This is brilliant wine! 2027-2075. **96.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Vaucrains”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2015 Domaine Chevillon Vaucrains is all red fruit this year, coupled to beautifully complex minerality and a ripe, seamless and substantial structural chassis. The bouquet is very elegant out of the blocks for Vaucrains, delivering a great constellation of cherries, blood orange, gamebird, stony minerality, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and just loaded with sappy fruit at the core, with ripe, suave tannins, excellent focus and grip and amazing backend mineral drive on the beautifully balanced and nascently complex finish. Another legend in the making *chez* Chevillon in 2015! 2027-2075. **96.**

Domaine Henri Gouges (Nuits St. Georges)

Grégory Gouges has made some of the most elegant and beautiful examples of the 2015 in the entire Côte d'Or. Grégory decided to start picking on September 1st (one of the earliest in the Côte de Nuits) and consequently was able to bring in his entire range prior to the first day of rain on September 8th. The malolactics here were pretty early in general, as was the case in most cellars for the 2015s, and Grégory had racked several of the wines already in anticipation of earlier bottling, which was slated to start after the first of the year. As has been the case for the last several years, the fruit for the Bourgogne and Nuits St. Georges villages was completely destemmed, whereas the premier crus included a percentage of whole clusters in 2015. Yields are once again very low in 2015 chez Gouges, with the average only twenty-four hectoliters per hectare, with the short crop attributed to both millerandage during flowering and the drought conditions of the growing season, which produced tiny berries, with thick skins and very little juice. As Grégory Gouges noted, “the yields were so short this year that we only produced a single cask of the premier cru of Chaines Carteaux to be bottled under this label, as we had to give eight or nine casks to the Nuits ‘villages’ cuvée so that we would have enough Nuits AC to cover all our markets.” The wines are some of the coolest and classiest to be found in Burgundy this year, with alcohol levels between 12.8 and 13.2 percent and the wines simply exuding soil signature and beautifully pure, sappy black fruit. It is one of the greatest recent vintages from Domaine Henri Gouges, which is saying something, as this estate has been on an incredible hot streak over the last decade. Do not miss these brilliant 2015s!

2015 Bourgogne- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Gouges is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a pure and classy bouquet of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and very long, with beautiful focus and balance, a suave core and a nice touch of gentle tannin perking up the long and vibrant finish. *Toute en finesse.* 2018-2035. **88+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges- Domaine Henri Gouges

This is definitely going to be a year to buy the Nuits AC from Domaine Gouges, as the contribution of all that Chaines Carteaux into the blend has given this wine a really refined and classy personality right out of the blocks! Like the Bourgogne, this had already been assembled in tank for bottling early in the new year and was absolutely singing at the time of my visit, jumping from the glass in a blend of sweet dark berries, red and black cherries, cocoa, gamebird, a touch of bonfire and a beautiful base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied,

refined and loaded with sappy fruit at the core, with lovely transparency and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, energetic and very pure finish. A gorgeous *villages*. 2020-2050. **91.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Chaignots”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2015 Chaignots had also been racked and assembled in anticipation of bottling at the start of the year and was a bit grumpy to be tasted at the time of my visit. The wine is very black fruity and chocolaty in personality this year and was the one wine in the Gouges cellars that I thought was a bit reminiscent of the 1990 vintage. The bouquet is deep and exuberant, offering up scents of black plums, black cherries, venison, chocolate, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary in personality, with a bottomless core of sappy fruit, ripe tannins and a very long and promising finish. This will be excellent. 2023-2065. **92.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Chaines Carteaux”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The single cask of Chaines Carteaux reserved for the premier cru label had been racked only five days prior to my visit, but was less grumpy than the Chaignots. This is going to be a very elegant vintage for this wine, as it delivers a refined bouquet of cassis, red and black cherries, a fine base of soil, gamebird and a distinct topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite transparent in personality, with a fine core of fruit, very suave, seamless tannins and a long, tangy and soil-driven finish. A beautiful wine in the making- too bad there will only be twenty-five cases! 2023-2060+. **92.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Clos des Porrets”- Domaine Henri Gouges

While writing my profile on Domaine Gouges last year, I finally came to realize just how much I love the Clos des Porrets bottling here, and the 2015 is destined to be one of the reference point vintages of this fine cru in the years to come. This and the remainder of the cellar was still in cask and had not yet been racked. The bouquet on the 2015 Clos des Porrets is utterly superb, wafting from the glass in a classy blend of red and black cherries, plums, bitter chocolate, a great, complex base of soil tones and a touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core of fruit, laser-like focus and a very, very long, fine-grained and vibrant finish. This will be a stunningly elegant and sappy example of Clos des Porrets at its apogee and should prove to be a very, very long-lived wine. 2025-2075. **94.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Pruliers”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2015 Pruliers *chez* Gouges was a bit more closed down in cask than the Clos des Porrets, but shared the same purity and sappy core of the vintage here. The primary nose offers up a classically black fruity blend of cassis, dark berries, dark chocolate, venison, woodsmoke and that same topnote of currant leaf as found in the Clos des Porrets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very well-balanced, with a rock solid core, fine soil signature, ripe tannins and a long, tangy and perfectly focused finish. This is still a very young wine and will demand some cellaring, but it will be excellent in the fullness of time. 2026-2075. **93+.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Vaucrains”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2015 Vaucrains *chez* Gouges is a legend in the making. The bouquet is flat out stunning out of the blocks, soaring from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, sweet cassis, bitter chocolate, gamebird, a very complex base of soil, woodsmoke and a pungent topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully structured, with a potentially very sappy core of fruit, fine soil inflection, seamless, ripe tannins and a very, very long, vibrant and utterly pure finish. This will prove to be a very, very elegant rendition of Vaucrains when it

is fully mature, but it is loaded at the same time. Picture the tangy precision of a 1993 and the sappy core of a 2005 and you will get the picture! 2027-2075+. **95.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Les St. Georges”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The comparison of the 2015 Vaucrains and Les St. Georges from the Gouges family is going to continue on long after I have moved on to the next world, as these two wines are going to be reference point vintages of their respective cuvées for half a century or more! Today, I cannot choose a favorite, as the 2015 Les St. Georges is equally brilliant, offering up a pure and bottomless bouquet of sappy black plums and black cherries, raw cocoa, incipient notes of *pigeon*, a very complex base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a faint hint of graphite in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with an utterly seamless profile, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and laser-like focus on the very, very long and still very young finish. A brilliant wine in the making. 2027-2075+. **95.**



Elodie Michelot in the cellars at Domaine Alain Michelot in Nuits St. Georges.

Domaine Alain Michelot (Nuits St. Georges)

Elodie Michelot and her team began picking fairly late in 2015, getting out in the vineyards to start collecting the pinot noir only on the 12th of September as the week of rains really arrived in force (their Nuits St. Georges Blanc fruit had been brought in on the 4th). She recalled that it was so stormy at times during their picking that on their last day, they brought the grapes in through a torrential downpour and stiff winds that eventually led to losing the

*power in Nuits St. Georges and they had to wait many hours until the power came back on to crush the grapes from the last day's picking. As she noted, at least the stove at the domaine is gas, so her mother could cook a meal for the workers waiting around in the cuverie or offices, with candlelight supplying their illumination for hours during the teeth of the storm. The resulting wines have ended up fairly ripe, ranging from 13.8 up to 14.1 percent in alcohol, but most show remarkably fine purity to their fruit components and only a couple showed any signs of *sur maturité*. I also did not find the sense of "soil diminution" in the Michelot 2015s, which did seem to plague a few of the other collections I tasted in this vintage from later-collected grapes, as these wines all seemed to retain very good soil signatures, despite the relatively late start to harvest. Why this was the case I have no idea, as others picking around this time produced pretty fruit-driven wines that were often showing slightly stewy or baked fruit tones and very little soil signature, but these are not found in the Domaine Michelot 2015s. As I said in the introductory remarks about this vintage, it is very heterogeneous in style. I would put the 2015 Michelot range in that 1990-lookalike camp for the most part, but as I went into a bit in the introduction, this style is characteristic of how the 1990 red Burgundies tasted when young, not in their more prune-like stage of development ten or fifteen years out from the vintage. In their youth, the 1990s were really stunning, with succulent, buxom and pure fruit tones and very good underlying soil signatures and were a great joy to drink, as will be the case with the Domaine Alain Michelot 2015s.*

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Michelot family's Bourgogne is really excellent, offering up a sappy and black fruity bouquet of black cherries, cassis, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a topnote of dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and generous at the core, with a nice touch of backend tannin and fine length and grip. Good juice. 2018-2030+. **88.**

2015 Morey St. Denis- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Morey AC is one of the few wines in the Michelot cellars this year that does show a touch of overripeness on the nose, offering up scents of backed black cherries, chocolate, grilled venison, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and fresher than the palate, with a good core, tangy acids and a long, ripely tannic finish. The tartaric acids here give the wine nice lift and detail on the palate. Not bad at all, albeit in a slightly riper style. 2021-2050. **89.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges "Vieilles Vignes"- Domaine Alain Michelot

The old vine bottling of Nuits is excellent in 2015, with a bit more freshness on the nose than in the Morey AC. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a very classic mélange of dark berries, black cherries, a touch of nutskin, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil and a bit of venison. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very well-balanced, with a fine core, ripe, seamless tannins and very good bounce and grip on the long and youthful finish. This is a very special *villages* in the making. 2023-2060. **91.**

2015 Morey St. Denis "les Charrières"- Domaine Alain Michelot

Interestingly, though the Morey AC showed just a bit of *sur maturité* on the nose, the Michelots' 2015 les Charrières is very pure and nicely reserved in personality. The nose wafts from the glass in a very classic blend of black cherries, dark berries, woodsmoke, game, bitter chocolate and a fine base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very nicely structured, with a plump core of black fruit, fine soil signature and a long, tangy and moderately chewy finish. Good juice in the making. 2023-2060+. **91.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “la Richemone”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 la Richemone from Elodie Michelot is outstanding, with plenty of sappy and pure fruit nicely augmented by excellent soil signatures on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a lovely blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke, a hint of the black truffle to come and dark soil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully sappy, with excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, focused and tangy finish. This is really delicious and will be a great bottle when it is mature. 2022-2065+. **92+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Cailles”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Michelot les Cailles is not quite as flamboyant in style as the la Richemone, but it too has gorgeous fruit and lovely soil nuances. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine constellation of black cherries, dark berries, dark chocolate, a fine, complex base of soil, venison, a touch of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a good core of sappy fruit, ripe, well-integrated tannins and fine balance and grip on the long, vibrant and focused finish. 2024-2065+. **92+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Champs Perdrix”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Champs Perdrix is all plush black fruit this year and is a touch riper in personality than the la Richemone or les Cailles. The nose delivers a blend of black cherries, roasted meats, dark chocolate, woodsmoke and dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more fruit-driven in personality than any of the other premier crus in the cellar this year, with a sappy core of fruit, ripe tannins and a long, plump and moderately chewy finish. This is really very good in its style, but I like the greater soil signature found in some of the other Nuits premier crus this year. 2022-2060. **91+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Chaignots”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Chaignots *chez* Michelot is excellent, delivering an exuberant aromatic constellation of black plums, black cherries, dark chocolate, gamebird, a lovely base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very nicely structured, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and impressively soil-driven finish. This is lovely juice in the making. 2023-2060. **92+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “les Vaucrains”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Vaucrains from Domaine Michelot is a touch riper than some of these other premier crus, but this is more along the lines of 1982 Bordeaux and it does possess excellent structure, soil signature and never seems to stray over the line into notes of *sur maturité*. The buxom nose wafts from the glass in a mix of baked black cherries and cassis, dark chocolate, roasted venison, a fine base of soil and a topnote of bonfires. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite powerful in profile, with a rock solid core, fine length and grip and a chewy, well-balanced and seriously structured finish. This will take at least a decade to blossom, but it should prove to be excellent. 2025-2065. **93**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Les St. Georges”- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Les St. Georges from Elodie Michelot is absolutely stellar with a cooler profile than the more powerful Vaucrains, but all of the purity and inherent soil complexity one expects from this great vineyard. The bouquet is a superb blend of red and black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a very complex base of soil, vanillin oak and a lovely topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and very precise, with a sappy core, outstanding transparency, ripe, seamless tannins and a very, very long, classic finish. This is great juice. 2025-2075. **94+**.

2015 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Alain Michelot

I love the 2015 Clos Vougeot from Domaine Michelot, as this wine has layers of beautiful black fruit coupled to a simply stunning signature of soil. The nose soars from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, black plums, cocoa, *pigeon*, woodsmoke, incipient notes of black truffle, vanillin oak and a kaleidoscope of soil nuances. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly seamless, with again, stunning sappiness at the core, great length and complexity, suave, ripe tannins and outstanding focus on the very pure and classy finish. 2025-2080. **95+**.

2015 Nuits St. Georges “la Perrière Noblot” Blanc- Domaine Alain Michelot

The 2015 Nuits St. Georges Blanc from Domaine Michelot had been bottled in September and is a very pretty, rather forward wine that will drink very well from the outset, but not make old bones. The bouquet offers up a succulent blend of peach, apple, white soil tones, a hint of fresh almond and a floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and round, with a good core of juicy fruit, sound framing acids and a long, wide open and tasty finish. 2016-2023. **89+**.

Savigny-lès-Beaune

Domaine Simon Bize et Fils (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

Chisa Bize and her team have made some lovely 2015s, with the ripeness of the vintage mirrored in generous fruit components, but with all of the wines beautifully synthesizing this element with classic Domaine Bize minerality and structural integrity. She was one of the latest harvesters in the Côte de Beaune that I visited on this trip, and she and her team did not get out in the vineyards to start picking until September the 12th. Nevertheless, the wines showed lovely purity and soil signatures and none had any issues of sur maturité in evidence at the time of my visit. As is customary in November at the domaine, many of the wines had already been racked into tank in anticipation of bottling in the new year, with only the Hospices de Beaune cuvée and the Grands Liards still resting in cask. Most of the wines this year are in the 13.5 percent range for alcohol (with only the Vergelesses reaching up to 13.8 percent, but this wine is stunning in 2015), with lovely depth of fruit, firm, classic structures and plenty of minerality. I did not taste the 2015 Aloxe “les Vercots”, or the Savigny premier crus of Serpentières or Marconnets this year.

Vins Blancs de Simon Bize et Fils

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Savigny Blanc *chez* Bize had been racked at the start of September, but had not yet been bottled at the time of my early November visit. The wine is really pretty and shows lovely precision on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, chalky minerality, white flowers and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and very transparent in personality, with a lovely core, fine, zesty acids and impressive focus and grip on the classy finish. 2016-2030. **90+**.

Vins Rouges de Simon Bize et Fils

2015 Bourgogne “les Perrières” Rouge- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Bourgogne “les Perrières” rouge had been racked in mid-September and was showing quite nicely with a bit of air. The nose is quite black fruity this year, offering up scents of black cherries, dark berries, espresso, gamebird and a nice touch of Savigny spice in the upper

register. On the palate the wine is [pure, fullish and quite soil-driven in personality, with a good core, a bit of backend tannin and a fine sense of reserve on the long and nascently complex finish. This will be an excellent example. 2020-2040. 89+.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Bourgeots”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Bourgeots *chez Bize* was showing lovely potential at the time of my visit, with plenty of depth, good structure and a fine sense of soil signature. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and Savigny spices. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great backend mineral drive, ripe, chewy tannins and impressive length and grip on the youthful finish. 2022-2050+. 91.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Grands Liards”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

Chisa Bize noted that this was her favorite wine in the 2015 vintage. The bouquet is deep, pure and utterly classic, offering up a fien blend of red and black cherries, red currants, venison, stony soil tones, a touch of bonfire, a discreet base of cedar and a topnote of Savigny spices. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nicely reserved in personality, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and excellent length and grip on the tangy and soil-driven finish. Fine, fine juice. 2024-2055+. 92+.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Fourneaux”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Fourneaux from Domaine Bize is superb and one of the sappiest wines in the cellar this year. The bouquet is deep, pure and youthfully complex, delivering a fine constellation of sappy black cherries and sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, a nice touch of spice tones, *pigeon* and a stellar base of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and tangy finish. All this outstanding Savigny needs is some time in the cellar to blossom! 2025-2065. 92+.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Talmettes”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Talmettes is another fine premier cru in the making, but this is cut from a slightly riper stylistic cloth than the Fourneaux (despite being the same octane at 13.5 percent). The bouquet wafts from the glass in a smoky blend of black cherries, chocolate, roasted venison, bonfires, soil tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a fine core and impressive backend energy. The finish is moderately tannic and fairly fruit-driven for this bottling (or awash in beautiful puppy fat fruit at the present time), and while it will be lovely, my heart has been won by the stellar Fourneaux this year. 2021-2055. 91.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Guettes”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2015 Domaine Bize les Guettes is an outstanding young wine and utterly classic in profile. The bouquet is deep, nascently complex and very promising, offering up scents of dark berries, black cherries, just a hint of red currant, woodsmoke, gamebird, Savigny spice tones and a superb base of stony minerality. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins, impeccable focus and grip and a very long, soil-driven and vibrant finish. Fine, fine juice. 2025-2060. 93.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Vergelesses”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The les Vergelesses is the ripest 2015 red in the cellar this year, coming in at 13.8 percent, but it beautifully synthesizes ripe fruit and classic minerality and will be a fine, fine bottle in the fullness of time. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine combination of black cherries, raw cocoa, cassis, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, a touch of cedar and a classic Savigny spice box in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, but

with superb transparency as well. The core is rock loaded with fruit, the minerality on the backend is admirable and the tannins are ripe and perfectly integrated on the long and nascently complex finish. A superb bottle. 2025-2065. **93.**

2015 Beaune “Cuvée Nicolas Rollin”- Hospices de Beaune (Domaine Simon Bize et Fils)

The 2015 Cuvée Nicolas Rollin is a bit riper in personality than the domaine’s own wines. It offers up a bouquet of black cherries, black plums, chocolate, soil tones, woodsmoke and plenty of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, ripe and quite chewy, with a plush attack, a sappy core and a long, tannic finish. This was the first vintage for the new winemaker at the Hospices de Beaune and the few examples that I tasted from the vintage were not all that exciting. 20210-2050. **88.**

2015 Latricières-Chambertin- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

Latricières-Chambertin is one of the coolest grand crus in Gevrey and I tasted several outstanding examples from the 2015 vintage as a result, including this outstanding version from Domaine Bize. The bouquet is pure and refined, delivering a lovely constellation of black cherries, black plums, bitter chocolate, grilled meats, woodsmoke, a complex base of dark soil tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a lovely core of pure fruit, excellent soil signature, ripe tannins and a very long, very focused and seamless finish. Just lovely! 2026-2075. **95.**



Madame Chisa Bize in the domaine’s cellars in Savigny.

Domaine Camus-Bruchon (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

Guillaume Camus was one of those who opted to pick early in 2015 and the elegance and transparency of his wines are exemplary as a result. He began harvesting on September 2nd and had all of the grapes brought in by noon on the 7th of the month. The beauty of the earlier picked grapes of 2015 is that they still possess absolutely marvelous, sappy fruit tones to go along with the fine signatures of soil, and they show really lovely typicité on both the nose and palate. Guillaume observed that “the only wine that really struggled with the hydric stress of the vintage was the Beaune “Clos du Roi”, which we picked last, as the old vines in the other parcels alleviated many of the problems of the drought of midsummer.” The alcohol levels of the wines here are really impressive for 2015, with most of the reds either 12.9 or an even thirteen percent. Monsieur Camus has decided that in most vintages, he will now rack the wines towards the end of October after the next year’s picking, so that they are ready to show when the world descends upon Burgundy in November to sample his wines, as he commented that it makes sense to have the wines in a good stage for their debuts to his clientele. But, as I was here very early in my trip, on the 5th of November this year, the wines had only been racked and lightly filtered a week prior to my visit. Consequently, it is quite possible that there was even more mid-palate sappiness in each of the red wines than they showed at the time of my visit, so my scores may end up being slightly conservative for the wines! I did not taste the 2015 Chorey-lès-Beaune on this visit and cannot remember why this was the case. Monsieur Camus did note that the very, very old vines in his parcel of Narbantons were so damaged by the heavy hail damage of 2013 and 2014 that it may well be necessary to replant a portion of them in 2016. He mentioned that “they were okay in 2015, but it is easy to see that their vigor is way down in one section and they may not be able to continue on much longer.” This is a problem that many estates in the Côte de Beaune are facing as a result of all the hail damage here in the last five years.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Goudelettes” Blanc- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Goudelettes” Blanc from Monsieur Camus is really lovely and vivacious in style, wafting from the glass in a vibrant blend of apple, lime blossoms, fresh almond and a lovely base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely racy for the vintage, with a good core, a nice dollop of backend minerality and good cut and grip. Lovely juice. 2016-2025. **90.**

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

I always like the Camus family’s Bourgogne rouge, which ages very nicely in my experience, and the 2015 will be another lovely example. The bouquet delivers a youthful and nicely red fruity blend of cherries, red currants, a touch of Savigny spices, gentle smokiness and a nice base of soil. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and tangy, with a good core, just a bit of backend tannins and nice bounce and grip on the fairly long finish. 2018-2030. **87+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Cuvée Reine Joly”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 version of Cuvée Reine Joly from Camus-Bruchon is a lovely village wine, offering up impressive depth of fruit, fine soil signature and a nice sense of reserve to carry it nicely in bottle. The bouquet delivers a mix of red currants, cherries, woodsmoke, a touch of venison and stony soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely tangy, with a fine core of fruit, fruit, ripe tannins and good acids on the long, transparent and nascently complex finish. 2021-2050. **89+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Pimentiers” Vieilles Vignes- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

Guillaume Camus raised his fine, old vine Pimentiers in fifteen percent new wood in 2015, which really seems like a perfect percentage for this wine. The wine jumps from the glass in a fine aromatic constellation of red plums, cherries, a touch of orange peel, refined soil tones, Savigny spice and hint of the *pigeon* to come. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with fine focus and grip, lovely balance and a long, fine-grained and very promising finish. This is 12.9 percent octane in this vintage! 2023-2060. **91+**.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Grands Liards” V. V.- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Grands Liards from Domaine Camus-Bruchon is also just under thirteen percent in alcohol in this vintage and it too is an excellent, red fruity and soil-driven example of the year. The bouquet delivers a fine mélange of cherries, red currants, a touch of venison, coffee, a bit of mustard seed, Savigny spice tones and a topnote of bonfires. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent, with a superb core of fruit, lovely balance, ripe tannins and impressive length and grip on the seamless and youthful finish. All this excellent wine needs is some time in the cellar to blossom. 2023-2060. **92.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Gravains”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Gravains from Guillaume Camus is outstanding. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a very pure blend of red and black cherries, a hint of currant, woodsmoke, gamebird, dark soil tones and a topnote of bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows a more seamless tannic structure than the two old vine *villages* bottlings. The core is rock solid, the soil signature here is excellent and the long, ripely tannic finish shows excellent balance and vibrancy from good acidity. This is high class juice in the making. 2024-2070. **93.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Lavières”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 les Lavières *chez* Camus is outstanding as well, as Monsieur Camus commented that “the clay in the soil here helped the vines continue to ripen during the period of hydric stress and the grapes were absolutely perfect when we brought them in.” The bouquet is a fine, elegant and youthful blend of black cherries, pomegranate, raw cocoa, gamebird, a fine base of soil, just a touch of vanillin oak and a pungent topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with excellent minerality, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and seamless finish. A beautiful bottle of Savigny in the making. 2023-2070. **93+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Narbantons” Vieilles Vignes- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Narbantons from Camus-Bruchon is also a lovely bottle in the making, but it is a bit more bound up in its structural elements today and will need a bit more time in the cellar to blossom (which seems to always be the case with Narbantons). The bouquet is deep and nicely red fruity, wafting from the glass in a blend of cherries, red currants, bonfires, Savigny spices, a lovely base of soil and incipient notes of *pigeon*. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very nicely balanced, with a rock solid core of fruit, very good soil inflection, ripe tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused finish. 2024-2070. **93.**

2015 Beaune “Clos du Roi”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Clos du Roi is another very good example of the vintage, but here, one can sense a bit of the fits and starts of the maturation process due to hydric stress. The wine seems far riper on the nose than any of the Savignys this year, offering up a chocolaty blend of black cherries, roasted meats, the aforementioned chocolate, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and chewy, with a plump core of fruit, firm tannins and good length and grip on the focused finish. There is a certain lack of vibrancy here *vis a vis* the Savigny premier crus and this has far more 2009 personality than any other wine in

the cellar this year. Still not a bad wine by any stretch of the imagination, but the Savignys were more blessed in this vintage. 2021-2050. **89+**.

2015 Pommard “Clos des Arvelets”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2015 Clos des Arvelets chez Camus is outstanding, with a fine sense of elegance to its structural profile and lovely sappiness at the core. Like the top Savignys, this is a very transparent wine this year, offering up an excellent nose of red plums, pomegranate, woodsmoke, gamebird, a complex base of soil tones, vanillin oak and an exotic topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and outstanding length and grip on the nascently complex and very, very promising finish. Great juice in the making. 2025-2075. **94**.

Domaine Chandon de Briailles (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

I did not arrive at Domaine Chandon de Briailles at the most opportune of times, as most of the cellar had been racked two weeks prior to my visit and the wines were still rather grumpy on the 7th of November. Harvesting here started on August thirtieth for the white wines and September 2nd for the reds, with all of the grapes collected by September the 8th. Claude de Nicolay reported that the wines ranged mostly from 13.5 to fourteen percent alcohol, with the lowest octane wine of the vintage being the Île de Vergelesses Blanc at 12.9 percent and the highest being the red wine from the same vineyard, that came in at an even fourteen percent due primarily to very, very short yields of fifteen hectoliters per hectare. The red wines in general this year seem like pretty big wines by the very elegant stylistic standards of Chandon de Briailles, but they also generally show good signatures of soil and do not seem overtly overripe in profile. The biggest difficulty I find when tasting wines still a bit out of sorts from racking is that the focus is often the last thing to bounce back, and this was true of quite a few of the wines in the cellars here on this visit. Due to the agitated nature of many of the wines from the racking, I have scored most of them in a range this year, to be fair to the wines. I cannot recall tasting a young vintage at Chandon de Briailles as difficult to get a firm read on at this point in their evolutions, but each vintage responds differently to its racking and these wines, despite admirable depth and plenty of ripe fruit, were not all that happy to be tasted at the time of my visit.

Vins Blancs

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses “Île de Vergelesses” Blanc- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Île de Vergelesses Blanc is the coolest wine in the cellar this year, coming in at 12.9 percent. The wine is lovely on both the nose and palate, wafting from the glass in a pretty and wide open aromatic blend of pear, a touch of fresh pineapple, quince, chalk soil tones, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and vibrant, with a lovely core and very good length and grip on the complex finish. This will drink beautifully from the start. 2016-2030+. **91**.

2015 Corton Blanc- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Corton Blanc from Domaine Chandon de Briailles is also excellent. The nose delivers a fine aromatic constellation of pear, honeysuckle, chalky soil tones, almond, orange zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent, with a fine core, a long, complex and zesty finish. This has fine acidity for the vintage, but it too is cut in a more forward style and there will be little need to defer gratification! 2016-2035. **93**.

2015 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Corton-Charlemagne here is also excellent. The bouquet is ripe, complex and vibrant, delivering a lovely blend of pear, peach, chalky soil tones, acacia blossoms, hints of the *crème patissière* to come and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and wide open in personality, with excellent depth at the core, bright acids and a very long, very classy and complex finish. Lovely juice. 2017-2035. **93+**.

Vins Rouges

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune from Domaine Chandon de Briailles was completely destemmed this year and came in at 13.8 percent octane. The wine is very pretty and plush in style and seems to have bounced back better from the racking than some of its cellar-mates. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, Savigny spice tones, a good base of soil, raw cocoa and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and quite velvety on the attack, with a good core and a long, modestly tannic finish. This will drink well right from the outset. 2016-2035. **88-90**.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Fournaux”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 les Fourneaux from the de Nicolay family is another ripe, but well-balanced wine that is a bit cranky after its racking. This included ten percent whole clusters in this vintage. The nose is ripe and fairly black fruity, offering up scents of black cherries, a touch of currant, gamebird, stony soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a good core and fine length and grip on the suavely tannic finish. As is the case with the Savigny AC, the wine has not snapped back into focus after its racking, but the constituent components here are strong. 2021-2050. **89-91**.

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Lavières”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 les Lavières included forty percent whole clusters and this too is a ripe, but seemingly nicely soil-driven wine at the same time. Again, it is just not totally in focus after its racking. The bouquet is youthful, ripe and quite deep, offering up scents of black cherries, venison, a hint of currant, stony soil tones, smoke, a bit of chalk dust and a floral topnote redolent of both violets and an exotic touch of lavender. On the palate the wine is deep and plush, with its full-bodied format offering up plenty of mid-palate stuffing, suave tannins and lovely length and grip on the finish. If this wine snaps into focus (which I would fully expect once it has recovered), it will be lovely. 2021-2055. **90-92+**.

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses “les Vergelesses”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 les Vergelesses is very black fruity this year, offering up a buxom bouquet of cassis, black cherries, roasted venison, dark soil tones and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and generous on the attack, with a sappy core, just a bit of backend tannins and fine length and bounce. This too just seems out of focus from its recent racking, but should be lovely. 2019-2045. **89-91**.

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses “Île de Vergelesses”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Île de Vergelesses from Domaine Chandon de Briailles seemed to have bounced back from its recent racking better than some of the other wines in the range and was showing its inherent precision on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is deep and very promising, offering up a youthful blend of red currants, black cherries, spit-roasted venison, woodsmoke, raw cocoa and a fine base of stony soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, tangy and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long,

tangy and complex finish. Fine juice in the making and a wine that was happily easy to get a reading on at the time of my visit! 2023-2060+. **92.**

2015 Aloxe-Corton “les Valozières”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Valozières from Chandon de Briailles also included forty percent whole clusters this year. The wine is deep and quite black fruity, showing its “solar vintage” origins in its mélange of black cherries, roasted game, dark soil tones, incipient notes of *sous bois* and dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, nascently complex and well-balanced, with plenty of generosity in the core, ripe tannins and good length and grip on the finish. Again, this is not entirely snapped back into place, but the constituent components here are promising. 2021-2050. **89-91.**

2015 Corton “Maréchaudes”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2015 Corton “Maréchaudes” from the de Nicolay family was showing pretty well at the time of my visit, through there may well be more lurking here below the surface. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of black cherries, spit-roasted venison, a touch of coffee grounds, a fine base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, ripe and quite plush on the attack, with a sappy core, ripe, suave tannins and a long, powerful and potentially quite velvety finish. This gets right up to the line of *sur maturité*, but does not seem likely to cross that line and will be a big, voluptuous vintage of Maréchaudes. 2023-2060. **92.**

2015 Corton “Bressandes”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

Of the three 2015 Cortons in the cellar here, the Bressandes was by a good margin the grumpiest of the three at the time of my visit. Again, there are some fine raw materials on display here, as the wine offers up a deep, ripely fruit and nicely stony bouquet of black cherries, currants, stony soil tones, venison and Corton spices in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with firm, ripe tannins, plenty of length and power and a still very primary finish. This will probably snap nicely back into focus and place at the high end of my range. 2027-2075. **90-93.**

2015 Corton “Clos du Roi”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

There are only three casks of Clos du Roi this year at Chandon de Briailles, with one barrel new and the other two five to six years of age. This wine is not quite as out of sorts as the Bressandes, but again, there might still be more here than meets the eye. The bouquet is deep, ripe and nascently complex, wafting from the glass in a blend of black cherries, spice tones, vinesmoke, orange peel, game and a fine base of stony soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plenty solid at the core, with ripe, nicely integrated tannins, sound acids and a very long, chewy and primary finish. 2025-2075. **92-94.**

Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

Hugues Pavelot has crafted very impressive 2015s, with their riper style quite reminiscent of a cross between 1990 and 2009. These are big wines this year, but also very well-balanced, with the red wines ranging from 12.9 to 13.5 percent alcohol. As Monsieur Pavelot observed, “the alcohols are quite correct for the red wines, but a bit higher for the white wines this year.” He began harvesting early in 2015, starting to take in the chardonnay bunches on August 31st and the pinot noir on September 3rd. This was one of my first stops on my tasting trip, as I visited on November 3rd, and Monsieur Pavelot observed that “it was necessary to try and guard the freshness in the wines this year, which is why we started harvesting so early in 2015”, and this sentiment would be echoed in many other cellars I visited over the course of my trip. The cellar was in varying stages of elevage at the time of my trip, with the Chorey-lès-Beaune

already bottled, the village wines fairly recently racked and the premier crus still in cask. Amongst the white wines chez Pavelot, there is a new addition to the family, as Monsieur Pavelot has contracted to buy a small amount of Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeots” to add to the lineup. There were enough grapes to produce two cask of Morgeots in 2015, with the wine raised in a one wine and a two wine barrel, so no new oak. It is outstanding. All of the white wines, with the exception of the Morgeots and the Corton Blanc, had been bottled ahead of the harvest of 2016, with the goal to keep the wines as vibrant as possible. Most of the Pavelot white wines of 2015 are plump, generous and will drink well from the outset. The Chorey-lès-Beaune Blanc bottling of 2015 will be a singular experiment, as Monsieur Pavelot politely observed that the purchase of grapes here was “complicated” and he chose not to continue after this vintage with the arrangement. I did not taste the Corton-Charlemagne this year and do not know if Monsieur Pavelot continues to buy grapes to produce this wine, or has decided to just continue with his Corton Blanc bottling.



Hugues Pavelot in the newly-constructed tasting room at the domaine in Savigny.

Vins Rouges

2015 Chorey-lès-Beaune “les Beaumonts”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The Chorey “les Beaumonts” is produced from grapes that Monsieur Pavelot buys, but he is responsible for the harvesting in this parcel. This had already been bottled in September. The wine is under thirteen percent octane in 2015, but a ripe and generous wine that recalls 2009 in

its aromatic blend of black cherries, chocolate, woodsmoke, a touch of red currant and a very good base of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and long, with good focus and backend bounce, modest tannins and very good length and grip on the finish. Good juice that will drink with generosity from the outset. 2016-2030+. **89.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Savigny *villages* had been assembled into tank prior to my visit, in anticipation of bottling early in the new year. This too is ripe and generous in personality, but shows a bit more structure right now than the generous Chorey. The bouquet delivers a fine blend of red and black cherries, Savigny spice tones, dark soil, a nice touch of violets and a topnote of dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and deep at the core, with a quite black fruity personality this year, ripe tannins and very good length and grip on the primary finish. This will need a couple of years in the cellar to blossom, but it will come forward fairly briskly for this cuvée and will be very tasty. 2018-2040. **90.**

2015 Aloxe-Corton- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Aloxe AC had been racked only two weeks prior to my visit, but was showing very nicely despite its recent movement. The bouquet is ripe and chocolaty this year, recalling 2009 again in stylistic terms, but also fresh and nicely balanced. The nose wafts from the glass in a mix of black cherries, chocolate, roasted venison, dark soil tones, a nice touch of spice and just a hint of cedar in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a fine core, good length and grip and a moderately tannic, very well-balanced finish. A lovely *villages* in the making that displays the depth and plushness of the vintage to fine effect. 2018-2040. **90.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Peuillets”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Peuillets is excellent *chez* Pavelot, with more of a young 1990 character to it than the *villages* level bottlings. The bouquet is ripe, but also pure and vibrant, delivering a fine blend of sappy plums and black cherries, chocolate, gamebird, lovely soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy in personality, with lovely mid-palate depth, suave tannins and impressive length and grip on the complex and succulent finish. This will need a few years to soften up its tannins completely, but will drink with real generosity and style from about age five onwards. Good juice. 2021-2055. **91+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Serpentières”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Pavelot Serpentières is another fine example of the vintage, with the lovely ripe fruit nicely grounded in a vein of minerality. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a ripe blend of black plums, dark chocolate, roasted *pigeon*, a touch of Savigny spice tones, vanillin oak and fairly complex minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and nicely balanced, with plush fruit on the attack, a fine core and impressive mineral drive on the long and ripely tannic finish. I really like the interplay between the generous fruit and the underlying minerality in this wine. 2022-2055. **92.**

2015 Beaune “Bressandes”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Bressandes was the only red wine in the cellar that seemed to show some signs of *sur maturité* on both the nose and palate this year, but as Monsieur Pavelot observed, “Bressandes is a warmer vineyard.” The wine is the highest in alcohol of the 2015 reds *chez* Pavelot, but this is only 13.5 percent. The bouquet delivers a roasted blend of black cherries, cassis, chocolate, a touch of fig, roasted venison and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, plush and very ripe, with plenty of depth at the core, modest tannins and a long, fruit-driven and meaty finish. This has some of the aromatics one might have found in a

theoretical cross of 2009 and 2003, but the tannins are ripe and beautifully buried in fruit and I am sure that there will be folks out there that like this style even better than I do, as the wine is really loaded with fruit. 2021-2045+. **89.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Lavières” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 les Lavières was a bit grumpy at the time of my visit, having been racked not too long in advance of my trip, and perhaps it is even better than it was showing on this particular day. This too seems a bit riper than most of the other Savigny premier crus in the cellar in 2015, but it is also nicely structured and shows a good base of soil as well. The bouquet is a complex blend of black cherries, plums, chocolate, game, a touch of spice tones and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured, with a plump core, ripe tannins and a long, focused and nascently complex finish. The fruit tones here are not quite as ripe as in the Bressandes, but they show the torrid summer conditions a bit more today than for example, the Guettes or Gravains. 2021-2055. **90-91+.**

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses “les Vergelesses” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Les Vergelesses had not yet been racked and was really showing well at the time of my visit. Here, the ripe fruit of the vintage does not push the limits and is beautifully tied to its soil signature. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classy blend of black cherries, black plums, grilled venison, chocolate, a lovely base of soil, a touch of cigar smoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, good soil signature, fine-grained tannins and impressive length and grip on the vibrant finish. This will be buxom, generous and sappy at its apogee and will make loads of friends. 2020-2055. **91+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Guettes” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 les Guettes is styled similarly to the les Lavières, as it is cut from the riper side of the vintage, but it is a bit fresher in profile today on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is sappy, black fruity and chocolaty, offering up scents of black cherries, cassis, dark soil tones, gamebird, chocolate and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a succulent attack, sappy core, fine focus and grip and a bit of backend tannin adding nice structural tension to the generous and very pretty fruit tones of the wine. Good juice in a riper, 1990 style. 2022-2055. **91+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Gravains” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

Amongst the Savigny premier crus *chez* Pavelot this year, the Gravains and Dominodes show the finest aromatic precision and are my two personal favorites. The 2015 Gravains is going to be a lovely wine, as it wafts from the glass in a nascently complex and sappy nose of black cherries, cassis, complex soil tones, gamebird, Savigny spice, cocoa and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure, with the plush fruit of the attack coupled to lovely backend minerality. The wine has plenty of sappy fruit at the core, moderate, well-measured tannins and excellent focus and grip on the very long finish. This is a lovely bottle in the making. 2022-2055. **92+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “la Dominode” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Domaine Pavelot Dominode is outstanding, with its generous, sappy black fruit tones anchored by impressive minerality and excellent backend structure. The nose delivers a fine constellation of black cherries, sweet dark berries, Savigny spices, bitter chocolate, venison, dark soil tones, cedar and a touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and still quite youthful finish. Fine juice. 2024-2060. **93.**

Vins Blancs

2015 Chorey-lès-Beaune Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Chorey-lès-Beaune Blanc from Domaine Pavelot is a pretty and easy-going wine, but it is not in the same league as the other whites in the cellar and I have to assume that the date of harvest was one of the issues between Monsieur Pavelot and the owner of these vines. The nose offers up a generous blend of crab apple, chalky soil tones, almond and a musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, ripe and juicy, with sound framing acids, modest complexity, but good length. Not bad. 2016-2023. **87.**

2015 Saint Romain Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Saint Romain is a notable step up in bounce and precision from the Chorey Blanc. The bouquet is pure and focused, offering up scents of apple, salty minerality, a nice touch of citrus peel, spring flowers and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a good core, enough acidity to give the wine vibrancy and a long, juicy finish. This is fairly soft and will want drinking on the early side, but there will be plenty of early pleasure available here. 2016-2023. **89+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

Hugues Pavelot's 2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc is outstanding and this will drink beautifully from the get go, but has a bit more backend mineral complexity and grip than the very tasty Saint Romain. The nose jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of pear, apple, lime peel, stony minerality and a topnote of white lilies. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely juicy on the attack, with a fine core, sound framing acids and lovely shape and focus on the long and mineral finish. A lovely example. 2016-2030. **90+.**

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses Blanc - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2015 Pernand Blanc from Domaine Pavelot is another very pretty wine, but this is a touch more marked by the torrid summer conditions and does not possess quite the same bounce and mineral drive as the Savigny Blanc this year. The bouquet is a bit deeper-pitched, offering up scents of apple, lemon, almond skin, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and plush on the attack, with a fine core, good focus and grip, but fairly soft acids on the backend. 2016-2021. **89.**

2013 Chassagne-Montrachet "Morgeots"- Jean-Marc et Hugues Domaine Pavelot

The new Morgeots from Hugues Pavelot is outstanding. The bouquet is deep, pure and utterly classic in its aromatic constellation of apple, pear, lemon blossoms, chalky soil tones, citrus zest and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a lovely core, bright acids and a very long, pure and vibrant finish. Lovely juice. 2016-2035. **93.**

2013 Corton Blanc- Jean-Marc et Hugues Domaine Pavelot

The 2015 Corton Blanc *chez* Pavelot is a very good bottle, but it too shows a bit of the influence of the torrid summer growing conditions. The bouquet is ripe and wide open, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, apple, chalky soil tones, nutskin, white flowers and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite forward in personality, with a succulent core of fruit, good bounce and grip and a long, vibrant and succulent finish. This has good acids, but it is showing plenty of generosity out of the blocks and will drink best in its youth. 2016-2025. **91+.**

Beaune

Maison Joseph Drouhin (Beaune)

Maison Joseph Drouhin has made some truly stunning wines in 2015, but as is the case in so many cellars in this vintage, there is no one style in evidence in their large range of wines, with some reds very pure and 2010-like and others bigger and more 1990-like in style. The consistent quality is of a very, very high standard here in 2015 (no surprise on this front, as the domaine has been on a hot streak since the late 1990s and awfully good for decades before that, I might add!) and there are dozens of great wines in their portfolio of 2015s, but the wines will vary a bit stylistically from parcel to parcel. The Drouhin team began picking on September 2nd in 2015, with the grapes coming into the cuverie in absolutely beautiful condition and sorting was hardly necessary. As Véronique Drouhin Boss noted during our tasting in early November, “we adapted our vinification techniques to protect the potential elegance and purity of the finished wines and we are very happy with this decision.” In addition to the Côte d’Or wines from Maison Drouhin, I also tasted a fine range of their Chablis bottlings from their Domaine Drouhin Vaudon (which are listed in the Chablis section) and various bottlings from the Mâconnais, Côte Chalonnaise and Beaujolais as well from 2015. The latter three will appear in the next issue, as I have articles planned for all three regions for Issue 67 and it makes sense to list those wines amongst their peer group. Not surprisingly, given the large spread of vineyard with which the Drouhin family works, the style of the wines here varies a bit from cuvée to cuvée and tasting through the maison’s range of 2015s is a lovely microcosm of the vintage in general. Amongst the red wines, some recall very vividly the young 1990s, others the 1999s and still others 2009 or 2010. All are very well-made in their respective idiom, but it is a vintage where Drouhin lovers would be well-served to focus in on the particular style of red Burgundy they like the best, as there are plenty of superb and varied options available in 2015. The period of blocked maturation in midsummer, due to hydric stress, is probably reflected here a bit in the decision of the Drouhin winemaking team to de-stem a significant percentage of their cuvées in 2015, though this may also have been a result of the small, thick-skinned berries of the vintage, which already provided sufficient tannin in comparison to the amount of juice in the grapes. Amongst the red wines, one finds a variation of styles in the villages and some of the premier crus, but at the top levels, the wines are quite similar in style and absolutely brilliant. This is not surprising, as with all the vineyards reaching peak maturity at the same time, the logical move would have been to pick the grand crus first. On the white wine side of the ledger, a great many 2015 Drouhin wines at the village and premier cru level show a 1992-like personality, with ripe, pure fruit, good soil signatures and a good chassis of framing acids that give the wines lift and freshness today, but do not seem likely to carry them over the long haul. Others are racier and more like 2010 whites, with great purity and more structural integrity for longer aging potential. It was interesting that this year, a larger number of cuvées were still in cask or tank at the time of our November tasting, as the trend here over the last decade has been generally to bottle on the earlier side than many of the Drouhins’ neighbors, but with the 2015s, the wines are getting a bit longer elevage than has been the norm in recent times, reflecting perhaps the great depth and slow pace of evolution in the cellars of this top flight vintage. Our tasting did not feature a few of the regular cuvées that I taste every year, so there are no notes on the Amoureuses, Bonnes-Mares and Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”, but I have little doubt that they too are stellar in 2015.

Vins Blancs de Maison Drouhin

2015 Meursault- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Meursault AC is a pretty wine, but a bit soft on the backend and will probably want drinking over the first decade of its lifetime. The nose wafts from the glass in a stylish and nicely balanced blend of apple, hazelnuts, a touch of iodine, chalky soil tones and a gentle framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a good core, fine focus and detail, sound framing acids and a long, poised and succulent finish. 2016-2025+. **90.**

2015 Meursault “Genevrières”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Meursault “Genevrières” from Maison Joseph Drouhin is one of my favorite white wines in their lineup this year, as the bottle offers up gorgeous complexity and breed on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is an absolutely classic mix of apple, passion fruit, iodine, salty soil tones, hazelnut and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied, focused and suave on the attack, with a fine core, very good framing acids and fine lift on the long and vibrant finish. This is not overly racy in personality, but it is so impeccably well-balanced that it should age nicely, but it is going to be very hard to resist in its sparkling youth. 2016-2035. **93+.**

2015 Meursault “Perrières”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Drouhins’ version of 2015 Meursault “Perrières” is really a lovely and quite youthfully seductive wine, and it is going to be very hard to keep one’s hands off of this bottle in its youth. The nose wafts from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, iodine, almond, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and quite vibrant, with a very good core of fruit, lovey acids and a very long, zesty and youthful finish. More complexity will arrive with further bottle age, but this is so good out of the blocks, that I cannot really see any reason to defer one’s gratification. Very 1992-like! 2019-2040. **93+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Puligny AC from Maison Drouhin has a bit more cut and grip than the Meursault *villages*, but conversely, this is also a riper wine. The bouquet shows plenty of ripe fruit in its mélange of apple, peach, spring flowers, chalky soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, plump and fairly broad-shouldered, with a good core, very good backend structure, but not quite the same complexity as the Meursault AC that preceded it in the lineup. 2016-2030. **90.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos de la Garenne”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Clos de la Garenne from the Drouhins is very pretty and quite forward in personality this year, with sound framing acids, but an open-knit and inviting structure that will allow drinking immediately upon release. The bouquet is a blend of white peach, tangerine, chalky soil, incipient notes of *crème patissière*, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, ripe and full-bodied, with a generous core, sound framing acids and pretty good length and grip on the wide open finish. 2016-2035. **91.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières” from Maison Joseph Drouhin is another very pretty wine that recall the 1992 version of this bottling, with its forward and charming personality promising to make it very popular out of the blocks. The fine nose delivers scents of apple, peach, butter, spring flowers, chalky, a hint of acacia blossom and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a good core, lovely

balance and focus, good framing acids and a long, wide open and complex finish. Very tasty. 2016-2030+. **91+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Chassagne *villages* from Maison Drouhin is a good, solid bottle, but this too is a bit riper than ideal and lacks a touch of lift as a result. The nose wafts from the glass in a blend of peach, pear, spring flowers, vanillin oak and soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit compact in personality, with sound framing acids, good focus, but not as much personality out of the blocks as the other *villages* level bottlings this year. 2018-2030. **89**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Embazées”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The vineyard of les Embazées is high up on the slope in Chassagne, on the Santenay border, upslope from many of the *lieux à dits* that are sold under the Morgeot appellation (and perhaps Embazées is also entitled to be sold this way). This is another very nice Drouhin white Burgundy for earlier drinking, as the acidity here frames the other elements in the wine nicely, but there is not a lot of cut or grip in reserve for the true long haul. The bouquet delivers a mix of apple, pineapple, dried flowers, a dollop of soil, a touch of citrus peel and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a touch soft, with a good core, very nice focus and balance, nascent complexity and a long, wide open finish. More complexity will emerge here with bottle age, but this is a bit *tendre* in structure and I might opt for drinking it earlier on in its evolution. 2016-2030+. **90+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeot” Marquis de Laguiche- Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Chassagne “Morgeot” from the Laguiche holdings is an absolutely stunning wine, with more cut, grip and backend sizzle than most of the other premier crus in the Drouhin stables this year. The gorgeous bouquet soars from the glass in a vibrant blend of apple, pear, a touch of fresh almond, lemon blossoms, chalky soil tones, hint of the *crème patissière* to come and a deft base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and zesty, with an excellent core, great focus and grip and lovely backend energy on the long and laser-like finish. Great juice! 2016-2040. **94**.

2015 Beaune “Clos des Mouches” Blanc- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Clos des Mouches Blanc is another absolutely beautiful wine. It is deep, pure and complex on both the nose and palate, and though it is a tad less racy than the superb Laguiche Morgeot, it is every bit as refined and stunning. The bouquet is a magical blend of pear, apple, iodine, chalky soil tones, plenty of Clos des Mouches smokiness, vanillin oak, hints of the pastry cream to come and a delicate topnote of acacia blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with excellent mid-palate depth, lovely brightness and bounce, very precise focus and a very long, vibrant and dancing finish. Superb juice. 2016-2035. **94**.

2015 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Joseph Drouhin (Estate)

The 2015 Corton-Charlemagne from Maison Drouhin is an excellent wine, with the vintage’s early generosity very much in evidence on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is ripe, pure and complex, with a fine blend of pear, fresh almond, chalky soil tones, *crème patissière*, vanillin oak and a gently musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, focused and full-bodied, with the generosity of the Aloxe side of the hill, a great core, impressive nascent complexity, lovely acids and a very long, pure and wide open finish. This will not be a long distance runner by the standards of Corton-Charlemagne, but it will deliver a couple of decades of outstanding drinking! 2016-2035. **94**.

2015 Montrachet “Marquis de Laguiche”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Marquis de Laguiche Montrachet is a dead ringer for the 1992 version when it was young, and that was one absolutely beautiful bottle to drink in its prime! The bouquet is ripe, pure and very complex, offering up scents of pear, apple, *crème patissière*, lemon zest, a beautiful base of chalky soil tones, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and powerfully constructed this year, but with seamless balance, lovely acids and a very, very long, focused and absolutely dazzling finish. I suspect, if this ages alongside of its 1992 predecessor, then it will be at its most beautiful over the first decade of its life in bottle. 2016-2035+. **96.**



Vins Rouges de Maison Drouhin

2015 Coteaux Bourguignons- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Coteaux Bourguignons from Maison Joseph Drouhin is a fifty-fifty blend this year of Gamay and Pinot Noir. The wine offers up a ripe aromatic blend of black cherries, dark berries, dark soil tones and a bit of chocolate in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely plush for this level, with good generosity on the attack, a good core and a long, well-balanced finish. This is pretty fruit-driven in personality, but tasty. 2016-2025. **87.**

2015 Rully Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Maison Drouhin makes a couple of really, really fine Côte Chalonnaise reds these days and these are now consistently amongst the very best values to be found in red Burgundy. The

2015 Rully rouge is really, really good this year and more interesting than many more famous appellations in other cellars! The nose is pure, ripe and complex, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of cherries, plums, gamebird, stony soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and impressively soil-driven in personality, with a fine core, good backend grip and a long, gently tannic and tangy finish. This is high class juice at a very affordable price! 2019-2040. **91.**

2015 Côte de Beaune Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Côte de Beaune from Joseph Drouhin is made up entirely of declassified, small parcels of Beaune premier crus, with the exception of one *lieu à dit* located up at the top of the slope (next to the premier cru of les Aigrots) that is only entitled to *villages* status, and another one which lies on the Savigny border and is the upper section of Marconnets. Consequently this is always another excellent value and the 2015 is very, very good, with a 1990-like personality that offers up scents of red and black cherries, chocolate, a touch of violet, *pigeon*, a good base of soil and a topnote of fresh herbs. On the palate the wine is plush, full-bodied and offers up very pure fruit, with a fine core, modest tannins, a good base of soil and lovely length and grip on the classy finish. Fine juice for the price! 2016-2035. **90.**

2015 Chorey-lès-Beaune- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Chorey-lès-Beaune is often one of my favorite red wine values in the Drouhin lineup (I still have a few of bottles left of the 1999, which I bought a couple of cases of back in the day), but the 2015 is one of the riper and more roasted examples of the vintage here and a bit ales elegant this year than in other recent top vintages. The bouquet offers up scents of roasted black cherries, grilled *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rather robust in style for this cuvée, with a good plump core, some chewy backend tannins and good length and grip on the broad-shouldered finish. This is a good wine, but not as charming this year as it can be in other vintages. 2017-2035. **87.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Clos des Godeaux”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Clos des Godeaux was picked a bit later than some of the other Côte de Beaune parcels, as the thin soils here resulted in some hydric stress during the mid-summer and the grapes were not brought in until the 9th of September. The wine is very good, but the sample was still a bit reduced at the time of our tasting and it is hard to say just how good it will ultimately be in its adolescent state. The nose shows notes of smoke, game, black cherries, dark berries, herb tones and soil (once the reduction is swirled away a bit). On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and chewy, with a bit of youthful *herbacité* showing, ripe tannins and very good length and grip. As this wine was completely de-stemmed in 2015, I have to assume that the touch of *herbacité* here is from the hydric stress and it is hard to give this a precise score when it is in such a grumpy state right now. This is usually a very, very strong bottling *chez* Drouhin, so my gut feeling is the higher score in the range will ultimately be correct. 2022-2050. **88-91.**

2015 Beaune “Grèves”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The yields were very short in the Drouhins’ parcel of Grèves this year, as they only have seven casks (with a normal crop they will usually have a dozen). The wine includes twenty percent whole clusters this year and is one of the riper and more roasted wines in the lineup in terms of personality (perhaps a bit of sunburn was in play here). The bouquet offers up notes of roasted black cherries and cassis, chocolate, hung game, dark soil tones and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a plump core, modest tannins and very good length and grip on the fairly fruit-driven finish. This is like a cross of 2009 and 1990 in style. 2021-2050. **90.**

2015 Beaune “Clos des Mouches” Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Clos des Mouches rouge was a touch reductive at the time of our tasting, but again, with a bit of swirling, it was easy to get the wine to open up. This is another pretty roasted style of 2015, with a 2009-like or 1990-like personality, but plenty of depth and complexity in this style. The bouquet offers up notes of baked black cherries and cassis, spit-roasted gamebird, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, dark chocolate and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins, good focus and grip, impressive complexity and a big, long and fairly powerful finish. 2022-2060. **92.**

2015 Côte de Nuits-Villages- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Maison Drouhin’s 2015 Côte de Nuits-Villages is excellent and this is one of the lower level bottlings that shows absolutely perfect ripeness in its complex and stylish nose of black cherries, cassis, espresso, dark soil tones, fresh thyme and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and very transparent in personality, with lovely focus and grip, a good core and just a touch of modest tannin perking up the long and tangy finish. This is a blend of grapes from Prémieux, Corgoloin, Comblanchien (all south of Nuits St. Georges) and Fixin this year. Fine juice. 2019-2040. **89.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Chambolle *villages* from Maison Drouhin is excellent this year, with its feet firmly planted in the 1990-like stylistic camp. The bouquet offers up a fine blend of baked red and black cherries, chocolate, gamebird, a fine base of soil, a touch of hazelnut and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite pure on the attack, with a sappy core, fine acids and soil signature and a long, focused and modestly tannic finish. Good juice. 2020-2050. **90+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Vosne AC is outstanding from the Drouhins this year, with more of a 2010-like personality than the Chambolle *villages*. This blend includes grapes from the premier crus of Chaumes and Malconsorts this year, in addition to larger parcels down by the RN-74. The bouquet is pure and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a mix of black raspberries, black cherries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, Vosne spice and a touch of lead pencil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, precise and sappy at the core, with excellent mineral drive, suave tannins and a very long, vibrant and tangy finish. A really dynamite *villages*! 2020-2050. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Gevrey *villages* this year *chez* Drouhin is also very refined and pure in personality, with a bit more reserved personality than the Vosne AC, but nearly equal potential. This cuvée includes thirty percent premier cru fruit in its blend and offers up a fine bouquet of black cherries, black plums, chocolate, gamebird and dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and fairly fruit-driven in personality (though with purer fruit than in the more roasted Chambolle AC), with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and lovely focus and grip on the long and youthful finish. This will want a few years in the cellar to blossom. 2020-2045. **90+.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “Premier Cru”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Chambolle Premier Cru bottling from Maison Drouhin is back in the 1990-stylistic camp, with bottomless depth of gently roasted fruit and a nice touch of meatiness on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of black cherries, dark chocolate, roasted venison, woodsmoke and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is

deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a gently roasted personality, suave, seamless tannins and excellent focus and grip on the nascently complex finish. A fine bottle in its style. 2021-2055. **91.**

2015 Chambolle-Musigny “les Baudes”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 les Baudes is cut from the same stylistic cloth as the Premier Cru bottling, with a bit more mid-palate depth and a bit more structure in evidence on the palate. The bouquet is deep, gently roasted in personality and complex, offering up scents of black cherries, chocolate, roasted *pigeon*, dark soil tones, a bit of fresh herbs and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary in personality, with sappy core of fruit, ripe tannins and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. 2023-2060. **91+.**

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cazetiers”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Cazetiers from Maison Drouhin has turned out superbly well this year, with great sappiness and purity of fruit expression, excellent transparency and soil complexity and truly lovely balance. The bouquet is pure, youthful and vibrant, jumping from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, bitter chocolate, grilled meats, black minerality, a whisper of fresh herbs and a lovely, discreet base of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and quite plush on the attack, with excellent mid-palate sappiness, refined soil signature, tangy acids, lovely focus and grip and a very long, precise and fine-grained finish. This is outstanding and very pure. 2022-2060+. **93.**

2015 Nuits St. Georges “Les Procès”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Nuits St. Georges “Les Procès” from Joseph Drouhin was still a bit reductive at the time of our tasting, but a bit of swirling induced the wine to blossom a bit and there is no doubt that this will be very fine in the fullness of time. The nose is a classic, black fruit blend of sweet dark berries, black cherries, roasted venison, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil tones, woodsmoke, a youthful touch of stems (thirty percent whole clusters were used here in 2015) and a gentle base of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent balance and focus, a fine soil signature and a very long, ripely tannic and tangy finish. This has classic Nuits structure, but also the elegance of the vintage. 2024-2065. **92+.**

2015 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Petits Monts was a touch reductive at the time of our tasting, but like the other wines in this stage of their evolution, a bit of swirling opened up the wine beautifully. This is a flat out brilliant vintage of Petits Monts from the domaine, with a synthesis of ripe, pure fruit and stunning underlying minerality that recalls both the 1990 and 1993 versions of this bottling. The bouquet is simply spectacular, soaring from the glass in a very pure mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, espresso, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, duck, a touch of youthful stems and a stylish base of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a sappy core, great transparency, fine-grained tannins, lovely acidity and a very, very long, complex and tangy finish. *Toute en finesse!* 2023-2075. **95.**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Drouhin family has a relatively new source for Charmes-Chambertin, as their long-time supplier of many decades decided to stop selling grapes five or six years ago. The 2015 may well be the best Charmes *chez* Drouhin since the source of the grapes changed, as the wine is outstanding. The bouquet is pure, complex and beautifully expressive, soaring from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, venison, coffee, dark chocolate, a superb base of soil, mustard seed and new oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, complex and shows off lovely

depth at the core, with fine-grained tannins, excellent focus and grip and a very long, nascently complex and perfectly balanced finish. This is outstanding wine in the making! 2021-2060. **94.**

2015 Mazis-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Mazis-Chambertin has only been in the Drouhin lineup for a few years now, and I imagine it does not yet have the following of wines such as their Griotte, but the 2015 may well be the vintage where serious Burgundy lovers need to ask about getting a few bottles of this wine, as it is brilliant! The wine is supremely elegant on both the nose and palate in 2015, with the bouquet delivering a mix of black cherries, sweet cassis, espresso, black minerality, roasted *pigeon*, a touch of currant leaf and a fine base of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with impeccable balance, a sappy core of black fruit, lovely focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, soil-driven finish. Great juice. 2023-2075. **94+.**

2015 Clos de Vougeot- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Clos de Vougeot from Maison Drouhin is another outstanding wine. The family's parcel of vines lies next to those of Domaine Méo-Camuzet, just below the château. The bouquet is pure, reserved and very deep, offering up a constellation of black plums, black cherries, venison, bonfires, a complex base of soil, a youthful touch of stems and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a powerful personality this year, a fine chassis of ripe tannins and a very long, classic and nascently complex finish. Just add bottle age! 2027-2085. **94.**

2015 Grands Echézeaux- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Grands Echézeaux from Maison Joseph Drouhin is a ripe, refined and very sappy example of the vintage, with greater purity than was found in either the 1990 or 2009 versions of this wine when young. The bouquet is superb, soaring from the glass in a blaze of black plums, black cherries, gamebird, a complex base of soil, chocolate, woodsmoke and nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very plush on the attack, with great sappy depths at the core, ripe, seamless tannins, great focus and grip and a very, very long, soil-driven and stunning finish. A great example of the 2015 vintage! 2027-2085. **94+.**

2015 Griotte-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Griotte *chez* Drouhin was another sample that was a bit reductive at the time of our tasting and I suspect that the malo here was a bit behind some of the other wines in the cellar, as it was a bit more marked by its whole clusters than most of the other wines as well. However, with a bit of coaxing, it was very easy to see that this wine is going to be excellent, as it delivers a fine nose of black cherries, dark berries, grilled meats, chocolate, dark soil tones, mustard seed and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with excellent focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, primary finish. 2025-2085. **94.**

2015 Musigny- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2015 Musigny from Joseph Drouhin is a stunning young wine in the making. The wine included about a third of whole clusters this year and offers brilliant pedigree on both the nose and palate. The bouquet soars from the glass in a sappy blend of black cherries, black plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a beautifully complex base of soil, woodsmoke, violets and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and already velvety on the attack, with its full-bodied format carrying great sappiness at the core, marvelous soil inflection, bright acids and a very, very long, seamlessly tannic and utterly refined finish. I have to imagine that someday, when this great wine has reached its apogee, it will drink a bit like the 1971 does today, but my gut instinct is that the 2015 Musigny is even better in all aspects. Great juice that will take its

place amongst the pantheon of the greatest Drouhin Musigny vintages of the last quarter century. 2027-2085+. 97+.



Volnay

Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay (Volnay)

This was my first visit to taste with Bernard Glantenay in Volnay and I was very, very impressed by the quality of his 2015s. I had only drunk a few bottles of his wine prior to my visit and was so happy they had convinced me to stop by for a visit, as these were excellent and utterly classic examples of Volnay, Pommard and Puligny-Montrachet. Monsieur Glantenay took over the direction of the family domaine from his father Thierry in the 2005 vintage, after having worked side by side with him for several years. The harvest started here on August 27th for the family's parcel in Puligny "Folatières", with the red wines starting to come in on September 4th. Bernard Glantenay decided to de-stem his Bourgogne and villages level wines in this vintage, and used anywhere from twenty-five to thirty percent stems for his premier crus. The alcohol levels are quite proper for earlier harvesting in 2015, with the Bourgogne thirteen percent, virtually everything else 13.5 percent, with the sole exceptions of the Clos des Chênes and Santenots, which are in the upper thirteens in this vintage, with no chaptalization. There are plenty of old vines here, with the oldest parcel being fully ninety years of age in the climat of Pommard "les Saussilles", which is a sliver of a premier cru that lies right alongside of Beaune "Clos des Mouches" on the border between the two communes. All of the wines here remained in cask, with the exception of the Puligny "Folatières", which had already been assembled in tank.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The Glantenay family's parcel of Bourgogne lies down near the RN-74 in the village of Volnay. This is a lovely example of its level, offering up a very pretty bouquet of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa and a nice touch of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and juicy at the core, with good focus and grip and just a touch of backend tannin on the long finish. Good juice. 2017-2030+. **87+**.

2015 Volnay- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The Volnay AC *chez* Glantenay also includes two very small parcels of premier crus in the blend. The wine has turned out very nicely in 2015, with a very 1990-like personality in its aromatic mix of black cherries, plums, chocolate, a touch of gamebird and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite velvety on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, good soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, moderately tannic finish that closes with a lovely note of chocolate. A fine *villages*. 2019-2040+. **89+**.

2015 Pommard "la Riotte"- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

This *climat* lies just to the north of Château de Pommard and across the street from Grands Epenots. This wine had the latest malo in the cellars in 2015 and was showing just a whisper of reduction at the time of my visit, but a bit of gentle swirling chased this away and revealed an excellent wine underneath. The bouquet is lovely, offering up a classy blend of black cherries, dark chocolate, gamebird, an excellent base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and absolutely singing, with a sappy core of fruit, superb soil signature, ripe, moderately chewy tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and potentially quite elegant finish. All this outstanding AC needs is some bottle age. 2021-2045+. **90.**

2015 Volnay "les Brouillards"- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

Bernard Glantenay's rows of vines in les Brouillards lie right alongside of those of Louis Boillot and are sixty years of age. The 2015 included one-third whole clusters and is excellent, wafting from the glass in a refined blend of sweet dark berries, black cherries, French Roast, dark soil tones and incipient notes of *pigeon*. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully sappy at the core, with beautiful balance and nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and focused finish. This is a lovely bottle in the making. 2023-2060+. **92.**

2015 Volnay "Santenots"- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The 2015 Santenots was the ripest wine in the Glantenay cellars this year, coming in at close to fourteen percent, and Monsieur Glantenay observed that he would have liked to have been able to bring in the grapes just a day or two earlier, but with everything ripe at the same time, choices had to be made. That said, the wine is really very good and again is very reminiscent of a young 1990 red. The wine was also made with one-third whole clusters and offers up a sappy nose of cassis, black cherries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, powerful and very well-balanced, with a rock solid core of fruit, suave tannins and a very long finish that shows quite good mineral drive. These are twenty-five to forty year-old vines, so now well into their prime. Good juice that is every bit as good as the les Brouillards in ultimate quality, though stylistically, I might have a slight preference for the Brouillards. 2022-2060+. **92.**

2015 Pommard "les Saussilles"- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The premier cru vineyard of les Saussilles is one that I have seldom encountered before, but I was very, very impressed with the 2015 version from Monsieur Glantenay. These are ninety year-old vines and the wine has turned out beautifully in this vintage. The bouquet shows a touch

of its youthful stems (thirty percent whole clusters were used), but this is already starting to turn to cinnamon, as the wine jumps from the glass in a complex and classy blend of red and black cherries, a touch of pomegranate, gamebird, lovely soil tones, smoke, cedar and a hint of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality, with a fine core of fruit, excellent transparency, tangy acids and excellent focus and grip on the ripely tannic finish. This is excellent! 2025-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Volnay “Caillerets” - Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The Caillerets *chez* Glantenay saw no new oak this year, as it was raised entirely in two wine barrels, and Monsieur Glantenay observed that “the bunches were all tiny berries this year.” The wine is very, very fine, wafting from the glass in a classic aromatic mix of red and black cherries, a touch of currant leaf, *pigeon*, stony soil tones and a bit of spice in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully soil-driven, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and impeccably balanced finish. 2025-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Pommard “Rugiens”- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

There is only a single case of Rugiens in 2015, which was also raised in a two wine barrel and included forty percent whole clusters. These are forty-one year-old vines situated at the very bottom of the upper section of Rugiens. The bouquet is deep, pure and absolutely superb, offering up a youthful blend of cherries, quince, venison, stony soil tones, woodsmoke, just a whisper of stems and a touch of cedar in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite suave on the attack, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and a very long, soil-driven and tangy finish. This is a classic example of Rugiens and a superb wine in the making! 2025-2070. **94**.

2015 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The Glantenays’ parcel of vines in Clos des Chênes lies just above those of the Lafarge and Lafon families, with half of the parcel fifteen years of age and half fully eighty years old. The 2015 version includes thirty percent whole clusters and offers up a pure and utterly classic bouquet of black cherries, sweet cassis, dark soil tones, gamebird, a touch of youthful stems and a gentle framing of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with a very suave attack, excellent mid-palate concentration, ripe tannins and superb length and grip on the focused and impeccably balanced finish. A fine, fine bottle of Clos des Chênes! 2025-2070. **94**.

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay

The 2015 Folatières from Domaine Glantenay is a lovely, forward example of the vintage. The bouquet is bright and classy, wafting from the glass in a mix of peach, apple, a touch of hazelnut, gentle notes of *crème patissière* and a floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent, with a fine core of fruit, lovely focus and grip, sound framing acids and a long, complex and bouncy finish. This will not make old bones, but will deliver plenty of enjoyment over the near term. 2016-2025. **91**.

1989 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine Bernard et Thierry Glantenay (375 ml.)

As this was my first visit to the domaine, Bernard Glantenay generously opened up a half bottle of his father’s 1989 Clos des Chênes. The wine is drinking very well today in half bottle, and is probably even better in full at this point in its evolution, as it offers up a deep and complex nose of black cherries, black truffles, *pigeon*, forest floor, porcini and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and still shows just a touch of tannin, with fine focus and grip and a long, classic finish. I get the sense that Bernard is making even more refined

wines today than his father did back in this era, which augurs very well indeed for the young 2015s in the cellar here. 2016-2030+. 91.



Bernard Glantenay outside of his cellar door in Volnay.

Domaine Michel Lafarge (Volnay)

Frédéric Lafarge started picking on September 5th in 2015, bringing the crop in briskly, as yields were once again way, way down at this iconic domaine in Volnay. The red wine harvest was fifty percent of a “normal” crop load in 2015 and the whites were off by one-third this year. Monsieur Lafarge noted that millerandage was an issue during flowering, but the primary difficulty is the battering that the family’s parcels in Volnay have taken over the last several years from repeated pummeling by hail. Much of the production of 2015 was lost due to the severe hail damage of 2014, as the vines simply needed more energy to try and recover a bit from last year’s battering. Since 2011, the Lafarge family has brought in the equivalent of two harvests (in five years) in grape production, due to the abuses of Mother Nature and many parcels may have to be replanted down the road if the cycle of hail does not cease. For example, in the family’s parcel of Beaune “Grèves”, which was planted to ninety-four year-old vines, twenty-five percent of the old vines had to be replanted after the hail of 2014. Last year I had reported that all of this was going to have to be dug up, but happily, three quarters of the old vines seemed to bounce back well enough that only a quarter of the parcel ended up being replanted. But, despite all of the difficulties that the Lafarge family has faced in the last five years in Volnay, which is no different than what every other vigneron in the family has had to suffer through with the repeated hail damage, the mood was decidedly upbeat at the time of my

visit here on the 16th of November. Michel Lafarge, the family's patriarch and probably the most experienced vigneron in Burgundy today loves the style and quality of the 2015 vintage here, which as I noted in the introduction to the vintage, reminds him of the legendary 1929 vintage. The range of 2015s chez Lafarge are some of the most red fruity wines I tasted in this vintage, which is generally more black fruity in character at most domaines, due to the very hot summer, but this is not the case in most of the Lafarge wines, which just explode with red fruity personalities and glorious transparency. The Lafarges have enough production in their small parcel in the Volnay premier cru of Pitures (located next to Domaine d'Angerville's Clos des Ducs) to make a single cask this year, which will be bottled on its own in magnums in 2015- clearly an indication of just how highly the Lafarges rate the potential of the vintage! The range of 2015 Domaine Lafarge wines was one of the most magical collections that I tasted during my nearly three weeks of non-stop tasting on this trip! In addition to the superb lineup of Côte de Beaune 2015s that I tasted on this trip, I also ran through Chantal Lafarge's lovely 2015 Cru Beaujolais bottlings, but I will publish those notes in Issue 67's Beaujolais piece, rather than here.

Vins Blancs de Domaine Lafarge

2015 Bourgogne Aligoté “Raisin d’Orée”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The Lafarge family's 2015 Bourgogne Aligoté “Raisin d’Orée” comes in at 12.7 percent octane and is absolutely lovely on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a blend of peach, tangerine, stony minerality, a touch of hazelnut and a topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully focused, with vibrant acids, a fine core and lovely length and grip on the classy finish. Fine juice. 2016-2025+. **89.**

2015 Meursault- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Meursault AC from Domaine Lafarge is excellent and quite racy in personality for the vintage. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic mélange of pear, apple, chalky soil tones, fresh almond and a musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a fine core of fruit, lovely transparency and impressive cut and grip on the long and zesty finish. This will drink beautifully from release, but will have no difficulties aging long and gracefully. 2016-2035+. **91+.**

2015 Meursault “Vendanges Sélectionées”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Meursault “Vendanges Sélectionées” this year was raised without new wood and the wine is outstanding on both the nose and palate. Scents of apple, pear, a touch of passion fruit, iodine, spring flowers and a lovely base of minerality create an outstanding aromatic constellation for the wine. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and racy in personality, with lovely succulence at the core, fine mineral drive, snappy acids and great length and grip on the focused and very classy finish. Great juice. 2019-2045. **93.**

2015 Beaune “Clos des Aigrots” Blanc- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Beaune Clos des Aigrots Blanc saw ten percent new wood this year and is really lovely. The bouquet is pure and nicely reserved in personality, wafting from the glass in a blend of white peach, apple, a hint of the honeycomb to come with bottle age, chalky minerality, beeswax and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with a lovely touch of salinity to the mineral expression here. The wine is focused, beautifully balanced and racy on the backend, with excellent length and grip. 2020-2045. **93+.**

Vins Rouges de Domaine Lafarge

2015 Bourgogne Passetoutgrains “Cuvée Exception”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Cuvée Exception is a lovely wine, wafting from the glass in a blend of black cherries, cranberry, a touch of pepper, gravelly soil tones and a hint of gamebird. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and intensely flavored, with good acids and just a touch of tannin on the focused finish. 2016-2035. **88.**

2015 Bourgogne Passetoutgrains “Cuvée Exception” Magnum- Domaine Lafarge

In 2015, Frédéric Lafarge made one cask of Cuvée Exception by the ancient methods of hand-destemming all the bunches and this single cask will be bottled exclusively in magnums. It may have a separate name by the time it is released, but for today it is just the Magnum version of Cuvée Exception. This wine is more complex and refined on both the nose and palate, offering up scents of cherries, red currant, gamebird, stony soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of fresh thyme in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and more defined by its minerality than the regular example, with a good core, vibrant acids and lovely length and grip on the very gently tannic finish. 2016-2035. **90+.**

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Bourgogne *chez* Lafarge is very red fruity this year, delivering a vibrant nose of raspberries, cherries, *pigeon*, woodsmoke and a lovely base of minerality. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent, with a touch of ripe tannin on the backend, a good core and fine length and grip on the very well-balanced finish. A lovely example. 2020-2040. **90.**

2015 Volnay- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Volnay *villages* from the Lafarge family is excellent, offering up impressive purity and vibrancy on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a classy blend of red and black cherries, red plums, gamebird, superb minerality and a topnote of raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with bright acids, lovely focus and grip and a long, seamless and moderately tannic finish. Beautiful wine. 2024-2060+. **91+.**

2015 Volnay “Vendanges Sélectionées”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

Again, the 2015 Vendanges Sélectionées” from Domaine Lafarge is atypically red fruity for this vintage. The bouquet is pure, lifted and nascently complex, wafting from the glass in a mix of raspberries, red plums, chalky minerality, gamebird, a touch of nutskin, lovely spice tones and a floral topnote redolent of rose petals. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with lovely generosity on the attack, a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and outstanding mineral drive on the very long and energetic finish. Not surprisingly, this is a bit more reserved in personality than the straight *villages* out of the blocks, but it will be outstanding with sufficient bottle age. 2024-2065. **92+.**

2015 Beaune “Clos des Aigrots”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

While there was no hail in Volnay in 2015, there was a bit in the Clos des Aigrots (the Lafarge family simply cannot be spared!) and this vineyard had the lowest yields at the domaine in this vintage- fifteen hectoliters per hectare! The wine has turned out beautifully, but there is going to be very little of it. The bouquet is a beautiful blend of strawberries, cherries, blood orange *pigeon*, a complex base of minerality and a gently spicy topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tight-knit and tangy, with a sappy core of red fruit, fine transparency, suave tannins and a long, primary and beautifully balanced finish. Great juice in the making. 2025-2065+. **93.**

2015 Beaune “Grèves”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Beaune “Grèves” from Domaine Michel Lafarge is another excellent wine, and again, this wine is just awash in beautiful red fruit this year. The bouquet delivers a lovely mix of cherries, red plums, raspberries, gamebird, a hint of cocoa, great minerality, woodsmoke and a topnote of fresh nutmeg. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tangy and very transparent in personality, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and a long, complex and very energetic finish. Marvelous Grèves! 2025-2065+. **93+**.

2015 Pommard “Pézerolles”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Pézerolles from the Lafarges is very refined and elegant out of the blocks for a young Pommard. I have not tasted an example of this *chez* Lafarge since the 2011 vintage and it was nice to see the 2015 vintage has produced this bottling, as it is one of my favorite examples of Pommard. The 2015 is going to be a great wine, as it delivers a complex aromatic constellation of red plums, cherries, a touch of blood orange, *pigeon*, raw cocoa, lovely soil tones and roses in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very sappy at the core, with fine soil signature, tangy acids and a very long, ripely tannic, seamless and refined finish. Great juice. 2025-2075. **94**.

2015 Volnay “Mitans”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Lafarge Mitans offers up a lovely blend of red and black fruit on the nose this year, delivering a complex mix of red and black cherries, a touch of red currant, gamebird, lovely spice tones, a fine base of soil, mustard seed and a whisper of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tangy and quite Caillerets-like in personality this year, with ripe tannins, tangy acids and fine focus and grip on the long and youthful finish. 2025-2075. **93+**.

2015 Volnay “Pitures”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

This is the first time I have ever tasted the Pitures on its own from the Lafarge family. The vines in this parcel are thirty-five years of age and the bouquet just revels in its pure and sappy fruit tones of cherries, raspberries, blood orange, to go along with notes of *pigeon*, lovely soil notes and a bit of upper register spice. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite tightly-knit, with a fine core of fruit, excellent focus, ripe tannins and a long, tangy and well-balanced finish. After all the sappy red fruit on the nose, I was expecting a wine that was a bit more accessible on the palate, but this wine is properly balanced in the classic Lafarge style and will need some bottle age to really start to drink with generosity on the palate. Fine juice. 2023-2065. **93**.

2015 Volnay “Caillerets”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Caillerets is simply stunning and may very well be the greatest vintage of this wine I have yet tasted from the Lafarge family. The bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, soaring from the glass in a blaze of red plums, raspberries, a touch of nutskin, stony minerality, cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very minerally in personality, with a sappy core of red fruit, excellent focus and balance, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, nascently complex and tangy finish. 2025-2075. **94+**.

2015 Volnay “Clos du Château des Ducs”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2015 Clos du Château des Ducs is another absolutely brilliant wine in the making. The bouquet delivers a stunning aromatic constellation of raspberries, red plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a beautiful base of minerality, gentle smokiness and just a whisper of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and very much defined by its kaleidoscopic minerality, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins, bright, vibrant acids and laser-like focus on

the very, very long and seamless finish. Have I ever tasted a better young vintage of Clos du Château des Ducs? 2025-2075. **95.**

2015 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

I am so accustomed to tasting a very black fruity young Clos des Chênes *chez* Lafarge that the very red fruity and sappy character of the 2015 version signals that this is indeed a very special vintage for this bottling. The bouquet is brilliant, delivering scents of red plums, cherries, a touch of blood orange, *pigeon*, a dollop of cocoa, beautiful minerality, mustard seed, roses and cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and gloriously sappy at the core, but again, the wine finds its personality more in its great signature of soil than in its beautiful fruit. The finish is very, very long, seamlessly structured, ripely tannic and vibrant, with stunning focus and grip. Sheer brilliance. 2027-2085. **96.**

Auxey-Duresses

Domaine Gilles Lafouge (Auxey-Duresses)

As I had not managed to visit Domaine Lafouge last year, I was pleased to see that Gilles Lafouge has acquired a new cellar and chais in the village, which gives him quite a bit more room to work during harvest and for the élevage of the wines. As readers know, this is one of my favorite domaines in all of Burgundy these days, as I find both the red and white Lafouge wines utterly classic in style and they are probably the very finest values to be had in all of Burgundy today. Monsieur Lafouge was very kind, given that I had missed tasting his 2014s on my two trips to the region last year, to open up a selection of his 2014s after we had tasted through the 2015s and I have included notes on those wines as well here, having not had the pleasure to taste them a year ago. Gilles Lafouge began harvesting on September 4th of 2015 and as is the custom here, most of the wines (with the exception or one or two with late malos) had been assembled in tank prior to the start of the harvest of 2016. Bottling was scheduled to start for the white wines two weeks after my visit on the 12th of November. The 2015s were showing beautifully on both the white and red side of the ledger and there was a distinct correlation to the 2015s here and the beautiful 2005s chez Lafouge. There was also a new cuvée on display in the cellars this year, as Monsieur Lafouge has acquired a parcel of mostly older vines in the Pommard lieu à dit of les Noizons. This is a very well-situated AC ranked vineyard that lies up above the premier cru of les Pézerolles on the slope. The domaine had bought the parcel back in 2013, but in both that year and 2014 it was hailed on and 2015 is the first year of production from the vines. One section is only fifteen years of age, but the remainder of the parcel is planted with forty, sixty and seventy year-old vines, so this is primarily old vines. The 2015 was showing very fine potential and this is a most welcome new addition to the lineup chez Lafouge!

2015 Vins Blancs

2015 Auxey-Duresses Blanc “les Hautés”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 Auxey Blanc *villages* bottling is going to be excellent this year, as the wine offers up a very pretty and stylish bouquet of pear, apple, a touch of fresh almond, white flowers and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nicely open on the attack, with a fien core and lovely backend mineral drive and grip on the long and vibrant finish. This is 13.5 percent octane and seamlessly balanced. 2016-2025. **90.**

2015 Auxey-Duresses Blanc “les Boutonniers”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The les Boutonniers *climat*, which lies alongside of the Meursault border, has produced a more reserved 2015 than the les Hautés bottling. The nose wafts from the glass in a vibrant blend

of apple, a hint of fresh pineapple, chalky minerality, almond and a pungent topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure in profile, with a superb core of fruit, fine soil inflection, bright acids and impressive length and grip on the focused finish. This is high class juice. 2016-2030. **91.**

2015 Meursault- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 Meursault AC from Monsieur Lafouge is outstanding and perhaps just a bit racier than the two very, very good Auxey blancs in the cellar this year. The bouquet is pure and classic, delivering a fine constellation of apple, pear, hazelnut, chalky soil tones, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and quite wide open on the attack, with a fine core, lovely acidity and a long, focused and succulent finish. Fine, fine juice. 2016-2030. **91.**

2015 Meursault “Meix Chavaux”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 Meix Chavaux *chez* Lafouge is a very refined example of the vintage, jumping from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, a touch of lime, chalky soil tones, hazelnuts and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a fine core, lovely focus and balance and a long, bouncy and wide open finish. The acids here support the wine nicely, but there does not seem to be quite the cut here today as is found in the Auxeys and straight Meursault AC, but perhaps this is just a bit more puppy fat in this wine? 2016-2030. **91+.**

2015 Vins Rouges

2015 Auxey-Duresses Rouge- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 Auxey Duresses AC rouge was racked and assembled a bit later than most of the other wines in the cellar, having only been moved to tank three weeks prior to my visit. Nevertheless, the wine was showing very well, with a very fresh personality on both the nose and palate. The lovely nose jumps from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, a touch of plums, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, just a touch of nutskin and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality (perhaps due to its later racking?), with a fine core of fruit, moderate tannins and a long, focused and tangy finish. This will be a lovely bottle. 2020-2050. **90.**

2015 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “Climat du Valle”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 Climat du Valle is outstanding from Gilles Lafouge, with a fairly black fruity and tightly-knit personality that augurs very, very well for its future evolution in bottle. The bouquet delivers a nascently complex constellation of plums, black cherries, cocoa, gamebirds, a refined base of soil and a nice touch of woodsmoke in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite powerful for this cru, with a rock solid core, ripe, fine-grained tannins and a very long, suave and promising finish. This will be terrific with a bit of bottle age! 2022-2055+. **92.**

2015 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “la Chapelle”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 la Chapelle *chez* Lafouge is equally outstanding, jumping from the glass in a vibrant blend of black plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, *pigeon* and a topnote of distant bonfires. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a fine core, refined tannins and perfect focus and grip on the very long, youthful and seamless finish. Just add a bit of time in the cellar and this wine will be outstanding. 2023-2060. **92+.**

2015 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “les Duresses”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2015 les Duresses from Domaine Lafouge is outstanding and competes with the Chanlins for the top wine in the cellar in this vintage. The wine is a bit more youthfully structured than the la Chapelle at the present time, but the depth, purity and nascent complexity here are simply superb. The bouquet offers up a deep and sappy blend of plums, black cherries, chocolate, dark soil tones, violets and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and ripely tannic, with excellent mid-palate depth, ripe tannins, tangy acids and excellent focus and grip on the gently chewy and intensely flavored finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065. **93+**.

2015 Pommard “les Noizons”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The inaugural vintage of les Noizons from Domaine Lafouge is excellent, offering up a deep and very pure nose of red and black cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, just a hint of mustard seed and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite suave in personality for a young Pommard, with a sappy core of fruit, fine focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic and nascently complex finish. Fine, fine potential here and quite clearly of premier cru quality in 2015! 2022-2050. **92**.

2015 Pommard “les Chanlins”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

There are fully five casks of Chanlins this year, with only one of them new, which allows the wine to really show its underlying signature of soil in 2015. The bouquet is pure and superb, wafting from the glass in a blend of red and black plums, cherries, raw cocoa, violets, *pigeon*, a very complex base of soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with lovely purity and focus, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, soil-driven and refined finish. Chanlins lies right on the Volnay border and is a continuation of the Rugiens vineyard on the slope and consequently, is one of the most refined premier crus in the commune. This is great Pommard in the making! 2025-2070. **94**.

2014 Vins Blancs

2014 Auxey-Duresses Blanc “les Boutonniers”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The les Boutonniers *climat* was hailed on in 2014, so this wine is a tad lower in energy and pretty laid back in personality compared to the 2015 version. The bouquet is quite pretty, wafting from the glass in a mix of green apple, lemon, chalky dust, a touch of crab apple and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and gently structured, with a good core, quite good complexity and a long, open and easy going finish. This is very tasty, but not quite up to its customary level. 2016-2022. **88**.

2014 Meursault- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2014 Meursault AC is pure, focused and shows more energy on both the nose and palate than the Boutonniers this year. The nose is a classic blend of apple, pear, chalky minerality, a touch of iodine, apple blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and vibrant, with a fine core of fruit, lovely focus and grip and a long, zesty and focused finish. Good juice. 2016-2030. **90+**.

2014 Vins Rouges

2014 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “la Chapelle”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2014 vintage of la Chapelle from Domaine Lafouge is an absolutely classic example in the making, wafting from the glass in a youthful and vibrant blend of red and black cherries, complex soil tones, a touch of raw cocoa, woodsmoke, gamebird and a whisper of vanillin oak.

On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and properly reserved in profile, with a lovely core, excellent focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, youthful and tangy finish. The only missing ingredient here is bottle age! 2021-2055. **92.**



Gilles Lafouge outside of his new cuverie in Auxey-Duresses.

2014 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “les Duresses”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2014 les Duresses from Gilles Lafouge is equally classic and a dynamite wine in the making. The pure and classy nose offers up a youthful constellation of cherries, red plums, bitter chocolate, excellent soil tones, woodsmoke, a dollop of mustard seed and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully transparent, with a rock solid core, ripe, moderate tannins and a long, focused and tangy finish. This is a beautiful wine that will give the more plush 2015 a serious run for its money when the two vintages reach full maturity! 2021-2055. **93.**

Meursault

Domaine Arnaud Ente (Meursault)

Prior to booking my trip to taste the 2015 vintage this November, I thought a bit about the torrid growing season and thought to myself that if anyone could have made a great success out of this vintage for white wines, it would be Arnaud Ente. For many years now, he has been very, very careful to pick early and “retain freshness and minerality” in his wines, as he likes to say, and this is exactly what he did in 2015. Arnaud Ente has fashioned some truly beautiful, soil-driven and refined examples of the vintage, which was no easy thing, given the climactic conditions of the fin de saison of 2015. He decided to start picking on August 25th this year, “to

guard freshness and acidity” and picked as briskly as possible, so as to retain elegance and bounce in the vintage. He noted that the ripeness was surging in the heat at the end of August, so that “we started bringing in grapes at twelve percent alcohol potential and the last grapes we brought in produced wines at 13.5 percent- all in a matter of five days!” The resulting wines are beautifully pure and impressively low in octane, with the Aligoté at an even twelve percent, the Bourgogne Blanc at 12.5 percent and all of the Meursaults at thirteen percent, with the exception of the old vine La Sève du Clos, which came in at 13.5 percent. In the context of the vintage, these are really quite extraordinary, and as Monsieur Ente observed, “as we were finishing up, I noticed that some of my colleagues had not even started picking in 2015.” Unspoken was the thought that we both shared that those resulting wines are probably not particularly “Burgundian” in personality. There is a purity, vibrant cut and backend mineral drive to each and every one of these Domaine Ente bottlings that is extremely impressive in 2015, as at even some of the other very successful white Burgundy estates, the wines show just a touch of almond-like nuttiness on the tail end of the palate that I also find in the top 2003 white Burgundies and is a reflection of the baking heat of the summer. This characteristic is nowhere to be found in the range of 2015s chez Ente, which are truly amongst the very finest white wines to have been produced in this vintage. Most likely, they will not be as long-lived as several other recent vintages from Monsieur Ente, but they are outstanding wines that will delight fans of classic white Burgundy.

2015 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2015 Bourgogne Aligoté from Monsieur Ente is a very pretty and pure bottle, wafting from the glass in a vibrant aromatic constellation of apple, tangerine, lovely minerality and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is elegant, focused and full-bodied, with a very good core, lovely energy and bounce on the backend and a long, classy and zesty finish. This has excellent acidity. 2106-2025. **90.**

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Arnaud Ente’s 2015 Bourgogne Blanc is also very stylish, with an overtly Puligny-like personality this year (two-thirds of these grapes hail from Bourgogne-ranked parcels in Puligny-Montrachet, the other third from parcels in near the Clos des Ormes vineyard in Meursault), offering up a lovely bouquet of apple, white peach, chalky soil tones, white flowers and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely round on the attack, with vibrant acids, lovely focus and grip, a good core and a long, suave finish. This is wide open in personality right out of the blocks, but has fine supporting acidity and will not need to be consumed in the flash of an eye. 2016-2025. **90.**

2015 Meursault- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2015 Meursault AC from Domaine Ente is another very pure and classy example of the vintage (sensing a theme here?), delivering an excellent nose of pear, apple, iodine, hazelnut, lovely minerality and a floral topnote redolent of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and very refined on the attack, with a juicy core and impressive backend mineral drive on the long and zesty finish. Like the Bourgogne Blanc, this is really giving and succulent at the outset and will deliver plenty of pleasure from release, but it is also impeccably balanced and will keep nicely. 2016-2030+. **91+.**

2015 Meursault “Clos des Ambres”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2015 Clos des Ambres, coming in at an even thirteen percent, is quite far removed from my pre-tasting expectations of the style of the vintage’s white Burgundies, as it offers up

really impressive cut and grip on its long and very precise finish. The bouquet is lovely, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, orange zest, hazelnut, classy minerality and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant, with fine complexity, impressive mid-palate depth, with a bit more snap and grip than in the Meursault *villages* bottling, as well as more of sense of reserve, which is a very good sign in the 2015 vintage! 2017-2035+. **92.**

2015 Meursault “Petits Charrons”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Petits Charrons has a very thin topsoil over a serious base of stone, and I worried that hydric stress might have been an issue here, but the 2015 version from Arnaud Ente shows nothing but perfectly measured ripeness and great bounce and charm. The bouquet is pure and so expressive, jumping from the glass in a blend of passion fruit, apple, orange zest, a delicate touch of hazelnut, beautiful floral tones and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and vibrant, with its full-bodied format utterly seamless and the finish long, crisp and complex. This just sings with elegant refinement. 2016-2035. **93.**

2015 Meursault “la Goutte d’Or”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2015 Goutte d’Or *chez* Ente is another absolute classic in the cellars, offering up a pure and expressive bouquet of apple, passion fruit, iodine, lovely minerality, hazelnuts and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and nicely broad-shouldered in personality, with a superb core, excellent focus and grip and outstanding backend lift on the very long and soil-driven finish. Like all of these Meursault bottlings, this is a cool thirteen percent in octane. This is a touch bigger across the board than the Petits Charrons, but it has the same lightness of step on the palate and very impressive cut and grip. 2016-2035. **94.**

2015 Meursault “la Sève du Clos”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The old vines of the la Sève du Clos bottling from Monsieur Ente produced the only wine over thirteen percent in the cellar this year, with the wine coming in at 13.5 percent, but sharing the same pure and classic style of the remainder of the cellar. This is truly a stunning wine in 2015, delivering a magical bouquet of pear, passion fruit, iodine, orange blossom, stunningly complex minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and the most reserved in personality of all the Ente Meursault this year, with a rock solid core, superb backend energy and cut and a very long, vibrant and minerally finish. The half degree more octane here gives the wine more mid-palate density, without sacrificing any raciness. Great juice. 2018-2035+. **95.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Referts”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

As is so often the case *chez* Ente, the 2015 Referts is a very lovely and elegant example of the vintage. The bouquet is complex and airy, wafting from the glass in a constellation of apple, tangerine, chalky soil tones, spring flowers, fresh almond and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, complex and gossamer-strung, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and a long, wide open and zesty finish. The balance here is simply impeccable and this will delight from day one! 2016-2030. **92+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Champgains”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The second vintage of Champgains from Domaine Ente is also excellent, but the wine is far more reserved in personality than the seductive Referts and will need a few years’ worth of bottle age to start to stir. The bouquet offers up a primary blend of apple, peach, lovely limestone minerality, a touch of nutskin, hints of the butteriness to come and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, bright acids and

impressive grip on the long and youthful finish. All this needs is a bit of patience. 2018-2035+. **92+**.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Monsieur Ente observed that this wine is a blend of one-third pinot from the village of Puligny and two-thirds from Meursault, with the Puligny parcel particularly well-placed for Bourgogne. The wine came in at 12.5 percent octane and is a lovely middleweight in the making, wafting from the glass in a mix of cherries, pomegranate, nutskin, woodsmoke, a touch of fresh thyme and a nice dollop of soil. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and soil-driven, with just a wisp of backend tannins and fine length and grip. I would never have imagined such a delicately-styled pinot would have emerged from the torrid summer of 2015! 2018-2030. **89**.

2015 Volnay “Santenots”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2015 Santenots from Domaine Ente is another cool and classy example of the vintage. The bouquet offers up a nicely black fruity blend of black cherries, raw cocoa, pomegranate, dark soil tones, gamebird, a touch of nutskin and a very gentle hint of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully energetic on the backend, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and impeccable focus and balance on the long and very promising finish. High class juice. 2022-2050+. **93**.



Arnaud Ente in his very comfortable tasting room at the domaine in Meursault.

Domaine François et Antoine Jobard (Meursault)

Antoine Jobard began picking early in 2015, starting the harvest on September 3rd and bringing in the grapes as quickly as possible. The entire cellar had been racked from cask to

cask before the harvest of 2016 and was scheduled for assembling in tank not long after my visit and bottling right after the first of the year. A few of the wines were a bit reductive at the time I was here in mid-November, but only the Meursault “en la Barre” was recalcitrant in this regard and refused to blossom with some coaxing, so I have scored that wine within a range. The others that showed a bit of reduction generally blossomed with some encouragement. Of the range of Jobard wines this year, I found the Meursault bottlings to be particularly bright and zesty for the vintage and really liked everything that I tasted. The Puligny “Trezin” was also nicely racy for the vintage, but the two new additions from Saint Aubin were a bit more generous in style and did not quite have the same cut and grip as the wines from the Jobard’s home village of Meursault.

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Bourgogne Blanc from Antoine Jobard is a very nice example, offering up a generous nose of apple, tangerine, iodine, hazelnut and a good base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely racy for the vintage, with a good core and really quite good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. 2016-2030. **88.**

2015 Meursault- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Meursault *villages* from Domaine Jobard is very lovely, with a nice sense of reserve on the palate, but an open and very charming bouquet. The nose wafts from the glass in a mix of apple, orange, refined minerality, hazelnuts and a touch of iodine. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and very refined in profile, with a good core, lovely cut and backend lift and a long, nascently complex finish. Just a lovely bottle. 2016-2035. **90.**

2015 Meursault “En La Barre”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

This was the one wine that was reduced in the cellar and really proved obstinate and did not blow off with some coaxing. Underneath the reduction is a wine that is full, focused and quite racy for the vintage, with fine backend minerality and very good grip. I am sure that this will be a very good example, but it was impossible to take a precise note at the time. 2016-2035. **89-91?**

2015 Meursault “Tillets”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

Whereas the 2015 En La Barre was rather inaccessible, the Tillels was absolutely singing. The bouquet is pure, nascently complex and vibrant, offering up scents of apple, passion fruit, hazelnut, iodine, a fine base of chalky soil tones and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and crisp, with a good core, fine focus and grip, again, a nice sense of more waiting in reserve and a long, well-balanced and very vibrant finish. High class juice. 2018-2035+. **91+.**

2015 St. Aubin “Perrières”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

I really like Antoine Jobard’s example of St. Aubin, but in 2015, these wines are decidedly more generous in style out of the blocks than the Meursault bottlings. The 2015 Perrières offers up a nicely floral and gently tropical aromatic blend of pineapple, apple, musky floral tones and chalky soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and ripe in personality, with a plump core and good length and grip, on the still fairly adolescent finish. There are sound framing acids here, not to mention fine depth, but the wine seems likely to be destined for earlier drinking. 2017-2030. **89+.**

2015 St. Aubin “Sur le Sentier du Clou”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Sur le Sentier du Clou from Antoine Jobard was showing just a whisper of reduction at the time of my visit, but this wine blossomed nicely with a bit of extended swirling.

Out of the blocks, this seems a bit more precise and racy in personality than the Perrières, offering up a very pure bouquet of pear, tangerine, a touch of nuttiness, iodine and a topnote of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite a bit more racy in personality than the above, with a good core, a nice dollop of backend minerality and very good length and grip. This is still a bit more forward in personality than the Meursaults here, but it is a lovely wine in the making. 2017-2035. **91.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Trézin”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The vineyard of Trézin is located high up on the slope in the hamlet of Blagny, so it is not surprising that this has retained lovely raciness for the vintage. The Jobard vines here are sixty-six years of age and the wine has really excelled in this year, offering up a pure, minerally nose of white peach, apple, a touch of orange zest, spring flowers and impressive minerality. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely tensile, with a fine core, lovely focus and balance and excellent length and grip on the vibrant and quite elegant finish. This is really fine this year and will be a great value! 201802935+. **91+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Champ Gains”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Puligny “Champ Gains” *chez* Jobard has also turned out beautifully, with a bit more mid-palate amplitude than the Trézin, but again, very good vibrancy for the vintage. The bouquet is pure and classy, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, white peach, a touch of almond, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with a plump core, bright acids and a long, nascently complex finish. The very top Meursault premier crus have a touch more cut this year, but this is not a wine that is overly generous out of the blocks and will also age very nicely. 2019-2040. **92.**

2015 Meursault “Blagny”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Meursault “Blagny” from the Jobard family is excellent, with a wide open nose and a nicely structured palate that augurs very well for its future development. The bouquet is the essence of Meursault, offering up a constellation of apple, passion fruit, a fine base of soil, toasted almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent acidity for 2015, impressive focus and balance and a long, still fairly primary and classy finish. Give this a couple of years of bottle age to allow the palate to catch up with the expressiveness of the nose. 2019-2040. **92+.**

2015 Meursault “Poruzots”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Poruzots from Domaine Jobard was a touch reductive on the nose, but absolutely stellar on the palate in mid-November. With coaxing, the bouquet delivers scents of apple, tangerine, hazelnuts, iodine, great minerality, a gentle floral topnote redolent of geraniums and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off outstanding mid-palate depth, with fine backend mineral drive, racy acids and outstanding length and grip on the poised and very well-balanced finish. 2020-2045. **93+.**

2015 Meursault “Genevrières”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Jobard Genevrières is outstanding. The nose wafts from the glass in a refined constellation of passion, fruit, apple, salty minerality, hints of the butter to come, hazelnuts, iodine, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly classic, with lovely purity at the core, fien cut and grip and impressive backend lift on the very long, almost saline finish. Just a beautiful bottle of wine in the making. 2020-2050. **94.**

2015 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2015 Charmes *chez* Jobard is also a lovely wine, with just a touch more generous style than the Poruzots and Genevrières this year, but still impressive acidity for the vintage. The

bouquet is pure and beautiful, delivering a blend of pear, tangerine, buttered almonds, salty soil tones, orange blossoms and a deft framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and supremely elegant, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids, lovely complex and a very long, suave and vibrant finish. This is going to be hard not to drink right out of the blocks, as it is flat out delicious, but I would try to hold it for at least a few years in the cellar and allow some of its secondary nuances to come more to the fore. 2019-2045. **93+**.

Domaine des Comtes Lafon (Meursault)

I tasted with Stéphane Thibodaux this year at Comtes Lafon, as Dominique Lafon was away in Paris on the day that I had requested for a visit. As Stéphane has worked alongside of Dominique in the cellar for many years, it is always a pleasure to be hosted by him if Dominique is away from the domaine. As is our custom in the cellars here, we started tasting with the red wines in cask, followed by the new vintage of Mâconnais wines and finishing with the Côte de Beaune whites. I have included the notes on the 2015 Lafon Mâconnais wines in the next issue's feature on the region this year, rather than printing them here, so that they can be amongst similar bottlings in that report. The domaine began harvesting on Friday, August 28th in 2015, starting the job over the weekend, as they wished to retain freshness and not let ripeness get out of hand, with the last of the red grapes brought in on September the 5th. The Comtes Lafon reds of 2015 are pure, focused and utterly stunning, with great individual soil signatures and seamless balances that are destined to provide beautiful evolution in bottle. The white wines from the Côte de Beaune are equally pure and refined, with the slightly more open and accessible structures of the vintage in evidence, and they will provide beautiful drinking from a fairly early age. The 2015 La Goutte d'Or was very late to finish up its malo and as the temperatures dropped in the cellars, the wine was racked up to tank to complete its secondary fermentation. At the time of my visit, it was still agitated from the change of scenery and I did not take a note on it for that reason. The Porusots was also one of the late malo wines of 2015 and it had not quite finished up its malo at the time of my visit, so again, I did not take a note on the wine. But, as the remainder of the whites here were absolutely singing, it is hard not to imagine that these two wines are also outstanding in 2015.

Côte de Beaune Rouges

2015 Monthélie "les Dureses" Rouge- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Monthélie is beautifully red fruity this year, despite being the last parcel collected on September the 5th. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of strawberries, cherries, a fine base of soil tones, violets, woodsmoke and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and gorgeously transparent, with a fine core, excellent length and grip and a focused, vibrant and softly tannic finish. This year the les Dureses will drink beautifully right from the outset. 2016-2035. **90**.

2015 Volnay "Clos des Chênes"- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

This year the grapes from the Clos des Chênes were brought in on August 31st and the wine has turned out beautifully and utterly classic in profile as a result. The nose delivers a fine, complex and nicely black fruity constellation of cassis, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, gamebird, currant leaf, dark soil tones and deft framing of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and impressively tangy, with a lovely core, fine shape and bounce on the backend, moderate tannins and plenty of energy on the long finish. Fine, fine juice! 2022-2060.

93.

2015 Volnay “Champans”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

These very old vines in Champans have produced a superb example of the 2015 vintage, but as is so often the case *chez* Lafon, this wine will demand a few more years in the cellar than the Clos des Chênes before it starts to drink with generosity. The bouquet is pure, youthful and simply beautiful, wafting from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, pomegranate, woodsmoke, a bit of meatiness, a fine base of soil and a touch of spicy wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and broader-shouldered than the Clos des Chênes, with a fine core, excellent soil signature, ripe tannins and a very long, tangy finish. These vines are now ninety-six years of age and they have produced a superb wine in this vintage. 2025-2060+. **93.**

2015 Volnay “Santenots du Milieu”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Santenots du Milieu from Comtes Lafon is another absolutely stellar young bottle of Volnay. The bouquet is pure, focused and utterly classic in its mix of black cherries, cassis, dark chocolate, gamebird, a complex base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke, cedar and a pungent topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great transparency, fine-grained tannins, excellent acids and a very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. Classic juice that may well rival wines from this vineyard such as the 1978, 1989, 1993 and 1999 here in the fullness of time. 2022-2060. **94.**

Côte de Beaune Blancs

2015 Meursault- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The straight 2015 Meursault AC from Comtes Lafon will drink beautifully from the moment it is released and will be a wine to look for on restaurant lists, as it simply exudes class and purity. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely blend of apple, passion fruit, lovely minerality, a touch of iodine, spring flowers and gentle vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and wide open in personality, with a fine core of pure fruit, lovely soil inflection and a long, vibrant and zesty finish. Just a beautiful *villages*. 2016-2030+. **90+.**

2015 Meursault “Clos de la Barre”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Clos de la Barre is also excellent, with a bit more mineral complexity and backend length and the very good Meursault AC this year. The wine delivers a superb aromatic constellation of pear, apple, a touch of fresh coconut, hazelnuts, chalky minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and solid at the core, with lovely acids, fine focus and grip and a long, complex and vibrant finish. *Toute en finesse*. 2016-2035. **92.**

2015 Meursault “Désirée”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Meursault “Désirée” from Domaine Lafon is very pretty and fairly fruit-driven in profile this year. The bouquet is a lovely mélange of pear, apple, citrus blossoms, hazelnut and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, succulent and nicely balanced, with juicy acids, fine focus and bounce and a long, complex finish. This does not have the same base of minerality as the Clos de la Barre, but it is very, very easy to drink! 2016-2025. **91.**

2015 Meursault “Bouchères”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Bouchères from the domaine was showing beautifully at the time of my visit, with lovely fruit tones, a fine base of soil and plenty of zesty energy on the backend. The nose jumps from the glass in a blaze of apple, pear, iodine, hazelnut, chalky soil tones and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very refined in structure, with a good core, lovely focus and balance, bright acids and very good length and grip on the finish. This too is going to be an absolute charmer right out of the blocks. 2016-2035. **92+.**

2015 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Comtes Lafon Charmes is superb, offering up depth, purity and early sex appeal. The bouquet is a classic blend of apple, a touch of fresh coconut, pear, chalky minerality, spring flowers, almond and vanilla. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and vibrant, with a great core of very pure fruit, impressive soil signature, bright acids and lovely cut and grip on the long, complex and very accessible finish. This wine has the balance to age very nicely, but given how good it will taste out of the blocks, good luck trying to keep your hands off of this wine in its youth! 2016-2035. **93+**.

2015 Meursault “Genevrières”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

Last year, the Genevrières was my favorite premier cru in the cellars, and it is again absolutely stellar in the 2015 vintage. This is classic Genevrières on the nose (perhaps Meursault’s most elegant wine), wafting from the glass in a fine mix of apple, pear, passion fruit, salty minerality, hazelnut, iodine and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very refined, with a fine core, bright, zest acids, excellent focus and grip and a very, very long, complex and classy finish. 2016-2035+. **94**.

2015 Meursault “Perrières”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2015 Perrières *chez* Lafon is another stellar success for the vintage, with a nice touch of reserve in evidence on both the nose and palate which augurs very, very well for its future evolution. The bouquet is pure and classy, offering up scents of pear, apple, a touch of pink grapefruit, hazelnut, iodine, lovely minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a fine core of fruit, excellent soil signature, bright acids and fine cut and grip on the long and utterly refined finish. This will be approachable out of the blocks, but I would give it at least a couple of years in the cellar to allow its secondary layers of complexity to start to emerge. 2018-2040. **94+**.

2015 Montrachet- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

If you are a fan of the Comtes Lafon Montrachet and comfortable enough to shop for it, make sure to put in extra effort to finding bottles of the 2015 version, as the frost damage here was so severe in 2016 that there will be none produced from the domaine. The quantity of grapes in the vineyard was so small that Comtes Lafon has pooled their grapes with those from five other domaines in the vineyard (including DRC and Domaine Leflaive) to make a blended Montrachet in 2016 from their combined grapes. The 2015 Montrachet is stunning wine, soaring from the glass in a magical blend of pear, tangerine, fresh almond, chalky, complex soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very, very pure on the attack, with a great core, stunning energy and a very long, laser-like and racy finish. Sheer brilliance! 2020-2060. **98**.

Domaine Guy Roulot (Meursault)

The team at Domaine Roulot began picking on August 27th of 2015, correctly surmising that retaining freshness was going to be the key to success in the vintage. Starting this early allowed the entire range to fall between thirteen and 13.5 percent alcohol, which is quite low for the vintage. As is so often the case chez Roulot in November, the wines had been assembled in tank to complete their élevage, with bottling slated to start soon after the new year. The 2015s here have turned out very nicely, with a forward, succulent and nicely transparent style that will make fans early, but which also seems well-balanced enough to also age quite nicely over the mid-term. They are a lovely follow-up to the more tensile and utterly classic 2014s from Domaine Roulot and will be the superior vintage to drink young, which should allow the racy

2014s here to blossom beautifully with a bit of bottle age. The superb range of lieux à dits here are quite typical of the best white wines of the vintage, with fairly open and gregarious personalities, but coupled to lovely typicité and zesty acids and will drink well from early on in their evolutions. Once one reaches the premier cru 2015s chez Roulot, one finds a bit more sense of reserve, even better girdles of acidity and impressive potential for mid-term aging. Domaine Guy Roulot has clearly made one of the finest ranges of 2015 white Burgundies in the Côte de Beaune and those vigneronns in the village of Meursault who argued that picking early was a mistake in 2015 (unbelievably, there was a very vocal minority who did so via social media) were clearly clueless about how to best handle this vintage!

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Guy Roulot

Like many of the Bourgogne level bottlings from folks who picked early, the Domaine Roulot version has benefited from the generous fruit of the vintage, while still retaining its shape and bounce. The bouquet is a lovely blend of apple, peach, a touch of nuttiness and a good dollop of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nicely primary in personality, with sound framing acids and sneaky length and grip on the finish. 2016-2021. **87.**

2015 Meursault- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Meursault *villages* from Domaine Roulot is a lovely example of the vintage, with a plump and generous core coupled to a stylish format. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classy blend of apple, tangerine, hazelnut, chalky soil tones and just a touch of iodine in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent at the core, with fine focus and grip, good acids and fine length on the well-balanced finish. This will delight from day one. 2016-2030. **89+.**

2015 Meursault “Vireuils”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Vireuils from the Roulot family is excellent, with a touch more refinement and nascent complexity than the straight *villages*. The bouquet is pure and bright, offering up scents of lime blossoms, apple, tangerine, chalky minerality, spring flowers and a touch of citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, complex and shows good depth of ripe fruit at the core, with very good focus and grip, an elegant profile and good bounce on the zesty finish. Good juice. 2016-2035. **90+.**

2015 Meursault “Meix Chavaux”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Meix Chavaux *chez* Roulot is just a touch less ripe than the Vireuils this year (13.1 versus 13.4 percent), as this is a cooler *climat*. This has translated into just a touch more cut and transparency, though this too has a lovely core of ripe fruit. The nose wafts from the glass in a refined blend of lime zest, pear, tangerine, stony minerality, nutskin, a touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely soil-driven in personality, with fine mid-palate depth, good cut and grip and a long, zesty and fairly muscular finish. I might be inclined to give the Meix Chavaux a couple of years in the cellar to allow the backend to catch up with the beauty of the bouquet. 2018-2035. **91+.**

2015 Meursault “Luchets”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Roulot version of Luchets is also noteworthy for its fine cut and spine of acidity in this vintage and the wine is excellent. The bouquet is quite classic, offering up a constellation of pear, a touch of tangerine, fresh almond, chalky soil, iodine and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely mineral in personality, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids and impressive length and grip on the very well-balanced finish. Lovely juice that will drink well from the moment it is released. 2016-2035. **92.**

2015 Meursault “Tillets”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The spate of hail damage in Meursault in the last several years has claimed another victim in the Domaine Roulot parcels of Tillets, as after the 2015 vintage it has been necessary to replant two-thirds of the old vines here, as they had just not bounced back from all of the hail damage in previous years. So, beginning in 2016, there will be much less Tillets to go around. The 2015 was a bit unsettled from its *assemblage* and not singing as much as the Luchets at the time of my visit, but the constituent components here are exemplary and it will probably be every bit as good in the long run. The nose offers up a lovely blend of pear, passion fruit, hazelnuts, dried flowers, a touch of vanillin oak and a fine vein of minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit adolescent today, with a good core, fine acidity and lovely length and grip. This is not particularly focused at the present time, but this has to just be a stage for the wine and this will no doubt be lovely with a bit of time to settle in. 2018-2035. **91-92.**

2015 Meursault “Tessons” Cuvée Mon Plaisir- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Tessons from Domaine Roulot is really a stylish and vibrant example of the vintage. The bouquet is pure, complex and lifted, offering up scents of lime zest, chalky minerality, sweet grapefruit, chalky minerality, hazelnuts, vanillin oak and iodine. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and transparent, with a fine core, zesty acids and lovely mineral drive on the long and energetic finish. This is really a lovely bottle of wine and so impressive for its freshness in the context of 2015! 2018-2035+. **92+.**

2015 Meursault “Poruzots”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Poruzots is very, very elegant this year *chez* Roulot. The wine comes in at 13.5 percent octane, but also has very low pH and is one of the most tensile wines in the cellar, despite it also being one of the riper. The bouquet is a very classy mélange of apple, pear, hazelnut, lovely minerality, orange peel, white lilies and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and shows off lovely mid-palate depth, with fine focus and grip, impeccable balance and a long, zesty and impressively racy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2019-2040. **93+.**

2015 Meursault “Clos des Bouchères”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Clos des Bouchères is also very nicely racy and shows a sense of reserve that is a very, very good sign in this generally quite wide open vintage. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of apple, pear, just a touch of nuttiness, crystalline minerality, gentle floral tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and very pure, with a rock solid core, bright acids and lovely focus and balance on the long and zesty finish. This has excellent backend mineral drive. 2019-2040. **93+.**

2015 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine Guy Roulot

Like all of these other 2015 premier crus *chez* Roulot, the Charmes has a nice sense of reserve that augurs very well for its positive evolution in bottle. The bouquet is pure and very refined, wafting from the glass in a blend of tangerine, pear, hazelnut, chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with excellent mid-palate depth, bright, zesty acids and fine backend precision on the nascently complex and impressively long finish. 2020-2045. **94+.**

2015 Meursault “Perrières”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2015 Meursault “Perrières” from Domaine Roulot is absolutely stellar. The bouquet is pure, vibrant and refined, offering up a complex constellation of pear, passion fruit, fresh almond, beautiful chalky minerality, iodine and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and seamlessly balanced, with a fine core, snappy acids and outstanding length and

grip on the focused and nascently complex finish. This is the lowest octane wine in the cellar in 2015 at an even thirteen percent, and as is so often the case, also the finest of a very strong range of 2015s. 2019-2045. **95+**.

Puligny-Montrachet

Domaine Jacques Carillon (Puligny-Montrachet)

Jacques Carillon has made another very strong set of wines in the 2015 vintage, but this is no surprise, as he never seems to miss and always seems to maximize the potential of any given growing season. Monsieur Carillon began harvesting on September 2nd in 2015 and has produced wines that beautifully synthesize the ripe fruit of the vintage and good underlying minerality and vineyard personality. They are a fairly forward set of wines by the high standards of Domaine Carillon, but very much reflective of their vintage. Jacques is quick to point out that “the 2015 vintage has produced wines to drink sooner than the 2014 vintage”, but they make a lovely pair, as the more forward and succulent 2015s will allow the racier and more structured 2014 Carillon wines to age nicely for a handful of years and blossom properly. Amongst the 2015s chez Carillon, the Puligny-Montrachet villages and Chassagne “les Macherelles” will both drink beautifully from release and the premier crus here will only want a year or two in the bottle until they too start to hit on all cylinders. The wines show a fine combination of ripe fruit and underlying soil signatures, with good acids and lovely bounce and vivacity on the palate. They will not make particularly old bones, but they are perfectly balanced wines and will drink with great charm and complexity over the middle term.

2015 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2015 Puligny AC from Domaine Carillon is very pretty, as it offers up a bright and wide open bouquet of white peach, apple, chalky minerality, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, deep and plush on the attack, with a good core, fine transparency down to the soil, bright acids and fine cut and grip on the long and juicy finish. 2016-2030+. **90+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Macherelles”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2015 Chassagne “les Macherelles” seems a touch riper on the nose than the Puligny villages this year chez Carillon, but this wine is every bit as pure and shows a superb chassis on the palate for mid-term aging. The bouquet delivers a blend of apple, peach, a touch of orange zest, deep soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with a vibrant personality, crisp acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This vineyard has a fair bit of clay in the soil and this probably helped the vines during the drought conditions in July, so that the maturity here is exemplary. 2016-2030+. **91+**.

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Champs Canet”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2015 Champs Canet is beautifully floral this year, with lovely ripe fruit and strong soil tones found on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of white peach, apple, chalky soil tones, a touch of orange zest, vanillin oak and a floral topnote of lemon blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and very refined, with a lovely core, fine cut and grip and a long, poised and still fairly primary finish. This is readily accessible on the palate, but there is another layer of complexity lurking just below the surface and couple of years’ worth of bottle age will be rewarded with a very stylish glass of Puligny. 2018-2035+. **92.**



2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Perrières” - Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2015 Perrières is the most reserved of the four premier crus in Monsieur Carillon’s cellar this year. The wine is pure and vibrant, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of pink grapefruit, pear, stony minerality, citrus peel, vanillin oak and a nice touch of musky floral scents in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nascently complex, with a great core, bright acids and excellent focus and cut on the long and classy finish. 2018-2040. **92+**.

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Referts”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

These are Monsieur Carillon’s oldest premier cru vines and the 2015 Referts has turned out beautifully. The bouquet is bright, ripe and very pure, offering up scents of apple, peach tangerine, citrus peel, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite primary in profile, with a plush core of ripe fruit, excellent mineral drive, bright acids and excellent focus and grip on the long finish. Fine, fine juice. 2018-2040. **93**.

2015 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2015 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet from Domaine Jacques Carillon is a superb young wine. The nose wafts from the glass in a complex and very deep mix of lemon, white peach, apple, a beautiful base of chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent purity on the attack, fine focus, racy acids and lovely cut and grip on the very long, refined and promising finish. This will need some bottle age to truly blossom, but it will be a great wine at its apogee. 2020-2050. **95**.

Domaine Jean Chartron (Puligny-Montrachet)

Jean-Michel Chartron was away to Bordeaux at the time of my visit, but I was graciously received by his sister, Anne-Laure, who is his partner in the family domaine. Anne-Laure Chartron reported that they began harvesting on August the 27th in 2015, as they wanted to get out in the vines early and capture as much freshness as they could for this vintage. A few of the wines had been already bottled, prior to the harvest of 2016, as is customary at the domaine, with the remainder of the lineup up to grand cru assembled in tank and preparing for the start of bottling early in the new year. The grand crus were still in cask and would not be assembled until after the holidays. Alcohol levels generally were in the fourteen percent range Madame Chartron observed, but the wines also shared lovely, vibrant acidities as well and were bright and zesty wines across the board. Most of the 2015s here are quite forward and generous out of the blocks, with the balance to age nicely over the middle term, but this will be a vintage that will provide a lot of enjoyment early on in the evolutions of the wines. The raciest wines in the cellar have the structure to go twenty years or more in bottle, but this is not a vintage chez Chartron where one will have to defer one's gratification for too long before starting to pull corks and enjoy some very lovely 2015 white Burgundies. In general, the wines are a touch more broad-shouldered in profile than the svelte 2014s here, but they all show beautiful typicité down to their underlying soils and the fruit tones here are ripe, pure and very, very attractive in character. Another strong range of wines from Jean-Michel Chartron.

2015 Bourgogne Blanc “Clos de la Combe”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Bourgogne Blanc chez Chartron had been bottled in the fall and was showing very nicely, with a bright and zesty personality and a middleweight format. The nose delivers a stylish blend of apple, pear, a nice touch of chalky minerality and a gentle floral topnote. On the palate the wine is medium-full, vibrant and juicy at the core, with quite good length on the bouncy and very satisfying finish. 2016-2021. **88.**

2015 Haute Côtes de Beaune Blanc “En Bois Guilleman”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 En Bois Guilleman bottling had also been bottled prior to harvest of 2016 and showed lively acids and plenty of pure fruit on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a mix of peach, apple, chalky soil tones and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, open and juicy at the core, with crisp acids and lovely length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This will not make old bones, but will have a fine, five year run. 2016-2021. **88.**

2015 Rully “Montmain”- Domaine Jean Chartron

Domaine Chartron always makes a very good example of Rully and the 2015 is lovely, with a fine synthesis of the stony minerality of the commune and the generous fruit tones of the vintage. The wine wafts from the glass in a mix of apple, lemon blossoms, a touch of fresh almond, lovely minerality and a gentle topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a spherical core, sound framing acids and a long, wide open finish. This is nicely ripe and generous out of the blocks and will drink best in its youth. 2016-2020. **88+.**

2015 Santenay “Champs Perrier”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Santenay Blanc is really very, very good from Domaine Chartron this year. The bouquet is pure, vibrant and extroverted, jumping from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, *crème patissière*, tangerine and chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and bright, with bright framing acids, fine focus and grip and a long, complex and succulent finish.

Again, this is for drinking in its relative youth, but it is going to provide a lot of pleasure during that time. 2016-2022. **90.**

2015 Pernand-Vergelesses “les Belles Filles”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Chartron family's Pernand Blanc is also very fine and vibrant. The bouquet offers up a lovely, ripe and zesty blend of tangerine, apple, stony minerality, citrus blossoms and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and shows lovely mineral drive on the backend, with a fine core, lovely focus and a long, racy finish that closes with impressive lift and grip. Lovely juice. 2016-2025. **90+.**

2015 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Pimentiers” Blanc- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 vintage produced some lovely examples of Savigny blanc, in the cases where producers were not hustling to bring in their red grapes first in the village. This of course was not an issue at Domaine Chartron and their 2015 Pimentiers Blanc is excellent, offering up a vibrant nose of apple, pear, lime zest, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and very well-balanced, with a good core, fine length and grip and a long, vibrant and nascently complex finish. 2016-2025+. **91.**

2015 Meursault “les Pierres”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Domaine Chartron Meursault AC bottling is very pretty and wide open in personality. The bouquet delivers an inviting blend of apple, almond, a touch of pastry cream, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and broad-shouldered, with a good core and sound framing acidity and a long, laid back and wide open finish. This has fine depth, but not quite the same backend energy as found in the Pimentiers this year. 2016-2022. **90.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Benoites”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Chassagne *villages* from the Chartron family is also very good, with a bit more youthful vivacity in evidence on the nose than the Meursault this year. The bouquet is a bright blend of apple, tangerine, stony soil, a touch of citrus peel, white flowers and vanillin oak. on the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows a nice touch of reserve out of the blocks, with good acids, a fine core and very good length and grip. 2016-2025. **90+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Puligny AC *chez* Chartron is another wide open and very tasty example of the vintage that will offer early appeal. The nose wafts from the glass in a blend of white peach, apple, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent, with a good core, fine balance, lovely, zesty framing acids and fine length and generosity on the very well-balanced finish. This will keep the longest of these three *villages* bottlings in 2015, but it too will be very tasty out of the blocks. 2016-2030. **91.**

2015 St. Aubin “Murgers des Dents de Chien”- Domaine Jean Chartron

Murgers is one of the warmest premier crus in St. Aubin and the 2015 version from Domaine Chartron is a lovely, very pure and wide open example of this fine *terroir*. The bouquet wafts from the glass is a mix of pear apple, spring flowers, chalky soil tones, pastry cream and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep[, full-bodied and crisp, with a good spine of acidity, a succulent core and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. Very tasty juice. 2016-2025+. **91.**

2015 St. Aubin “Perrières”- Domaine Jean Chartron

This year, the Perrières from Domaine Chartron is the St. Aubin in the cellar with the superior cut and grip. The nose is first rate, offering up a fine constellation of pear, tangerine, lemon zest, white flowers, chalky minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure,

full-bodied and very long, with fine complexity, good mid-palate depth and fine backend energy and grip on the long and classy finish. This is really lovely in 2015! 2016-2030. **92.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Caillerets”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Chassagne “Caillerets” (one has to remember that this is the only cellar in Burgundy where there are two Caillerets in the range!) is outstanding from the Chartrons, with a forward, but pure, deep and very refined personality that will make for outstanding drinking from an early age. The gorgeous nose soars from the glass in a blend of pear, apple, lemon blossoms, chalky minerality, hints of the *crème patissière* to come and a suave base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and vibrant, with an excellent core, lovely focus and balance, bright acids and fine nascent complexity on the very long finish. This is a touch reserved today, but I have the sense that it is going to come forward briskly from young Caillerets and will drink with great style after only a couple of years’ worth of bottle age. 2018-2030+. **92+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Domaine Jean Chartron

Folatières is always one of the most forward and generous premier crus in Puligny and this is the case with the fine 2015 example of Jean-Michel Chartron. The bouquet offers up a fine constellation of apple, pear, pastry cream, chalky soil tones, vanillin oak and a topnote of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and already drinking with great style, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids and a long, complex and delicious finish. Fine juice. 2016-2035. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos de la Pucelle”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The old vines in the Clos de la Pucelle (planted in 1917) have really succeeded in the 2015 vintage and this is a superb wine in the making. This is still more primary in personality than the Folatières and will want a few years in the cellar to blossom, but it will be superb, as it offers up a nascently complex aromatic blend of pear. White peach, chalky minerality, orange blossoms, hints of the *crème patissière* to come and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and vibrant, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and a long, focused and very classy finish. Gorgeous juice. 2018-2035. **93+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos des Caillerets”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Domaine Chartron Clos des Caillerets is a brilliant example of the vintage. The bouquet is deep, pure and utterly superb, delivering scents of apple, white peach, orange zest, chalky minerality, lime blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and shows off stunning backend mineral drive, with a rock solid core, excellent cut and grip and a very, very long, classy finish. Grand cru quality! 2018-2035+. **94.**

2015 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Corton-Charlemagne from Domaine Chartron is very, very strong this year and I actually prefer it to the Bâtard in this vintage! The bouquet is outstanding, soaring from the glass in a complex blend of pear, lemon, tangerine, chalky minerality, fresh almond, vanillin oak and just a hint in the upper register of the honeycomb to come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and racy in personality, with a rock solid core, excellent focus and grip and a very long, pure and vibrant finish. Excellent wine. 2018-2040. **94+.**

2015 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Chartron family’s Bâtard-Montrachet is more structured out of the blocks than the Corton Charlie, but this is also a higher octane wine and is really a powerful version of this cru in this vintage. The bouquet delivers a youthful blend of apple, pear, white flowers, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very deep, powerful and full-bodied, with a rock solid core, sound framing acids and a very long, youthful and muscular finish. Jean-Michel

Chartron trades grapes with another famous neighbor for his Bâtard grapes, and though I did not visit this other estate on this trip, I would guess that they started picking just a bit later than the Chartrons in 2015. 2017-2035. **93.**

2015 Chevalier-Montrachet “Clos des Chevaliers”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2015 Clos des Chevaliers from Jean-Michel is a superb young wine. The bouquet is deep, pure and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a classy constellation of apple, pear, a touch of tangerine, chalky minerality, *crème patissière*, white lilies and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite racy in profile for the vintage, with marvelous mid-palate depth, lovely cut and grip and a very long, very refined and zesty finish. Lovely juice. 2020-2045. **95.**

2015 Montrachet- Maison Jean Chartron

The 2015 Montrachet *chez* Chartron is also an outstanding example of the vintage, offering up a deep, pure and very refined bouquet of peach, apple, spring flowers, a touch of fresh almond, a great base of chalky soil tones, vanillin oak and just a hint in the upper register of the butteriness to come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very beautifully balanced, with a fine core of very pure fruit, fine soil inflection, bright acids and excellent length and grip on the focused and very classy finish. This is one of the few Puligny-based examples of Montrachet to be found outside of the Laguiche family holdings. 2018-2040. **95.**

Domaine Leflaive (Puligny-Montrachet)

Eric Remy is quite content with how the 2015s from Domaine Leflaive are evolving in tank. He started picking on the 28th of August this year and finished brining in the last grapes eight days later. As he noted, in the last week of August, the grapes were starting to taste very good, despite the analysis suggesting that a few more days would be ideal, and when the weather forecast was for heavy rains and hail (which is exactly what hit Chablis at this time), the domaine moved decisively and started bringing in their grapes on the 28th. Fortunately, the hail forecast for this period did not materialize in the Côte de Beaune. As Monsieur Remy noted, though the malic acid this year was quite low, due to the heat of midsummer, the tartaric acid levels were very good and he observed that the “pHs did not move much at all from the period before malo to the completion of the second fermentations” and the wines have retained quite good acidity, given the heat of 2015. As he pointed out, 2015’s growing season really had more similarities with 2003 than any other recent vintage, and given the extreme heat and the drought conditions of July and August, he is very, very happy with how the wines have been evolving during their élevage. The range of 2015s here is not quite as powerful as those from Domaine Sauzet this year, as the domaine started picking a bit earlier, but like so many of the white wines of this vintage, they will drink on the earlier side and there will not be any strong reason to defer gratification more than a few years before drinking these lovely 2015s in earnest.

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Bourgogne Blanc from Domaine Leflaive is ripe, pure and nicely open in personality and will drink well from the outset. The bouquet delivers a fine blend of pear, apple, honeysuckle and a fine base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and quite vibrant in personality, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, racy and impressively fresh finish. Good juice. 2016-2030. **89+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Puligny *villages* from the domaine is really excellent and reminds me very much of the 1992 version in its youth. The bouquet is pure, complex and very expressive, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, delicious apple, spring flowers, a touch of *crème patissière* and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids and lovely cut and mineral drive on the long and classy finish. Just a delicious bottle. 2016-2035. **92.**



Autumn colors abound outside of the offices of Domaine Leflaive in Puligny.

2015 Meursault “Sous la d’Ane”- Domaine Leflaive

Domaine Leflaive’s 2015 Sous la d’Ane is very pretty and stylish, but it does not show the same mid-palate depth or backend minerality of the exceptional Puligny AC this year. The bouquet offers up a refined blend of apple, a touch of tangerine, chalky soil tones, almond and apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely light on its feet, with a respectable core and really lovely fruit tones, but not the same grip or mineral drive as found in the previous wine. However, there is good length here and plenty of like at the same time. 2016-2025. **90+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Clavoillon”- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Clavoillon was showing very nicely at the time of my visit, with plenty of elegance in evidence on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a fine and quite floral

constellation of lemon blossoms, apple, pear, chalky soil tones, a touch of fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite open structurally, with a fine core, sound framing acids and good mineral drive on the long and still fairly primary finish. More complexity will emerge with further bottle age, but this wine is going to be difficult to keep one's hands off of in its youth, if it does not firm up a bit more after bottling, as it is wide open and already delicious to drink today! 2018-2035. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet "Folatières"- Domaine Leflaive

Monsieur Remy noted that the Folatières was picked just ahead of the Clavoillon this year, which may explain this wine's slightly superior cut and grip on the backend. The bouquet is pure and utterly classic in its mélange of apple, white peach, hints of the pastry cream to come,. Chalky soil tones, beeswax, apple blossoms and discreet vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with fine mid-palate depth, bright acids and lovely length and grip on the vibrant finish. Lovely juice. 2016-2035. **92+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet "Combettes"- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Combettes was really showing beautifully at the time of my visit to Domaine Leflaive. The bouquet is pure, complex and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of lemon, pear, tangerine, chalky minerality, beeswax, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and quite nicely defined by its underlying minerality. The core is plush, the acids are zesty and the finish is very long, focused and complex. A fine, fine example that will want at least a couple of years in the cellar to fully blossom, but will drink well from a fairly early age. 2018-2035+. **93+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet "Pucelles"- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Pucelles from Domaine Leflaive is also very pretty and stylish, but there is just a touch of almond on the backend of this wine on the palate that indicates that it is a touch deeper-pitched than the stellar Combettes this year. The nose is a very, very stylish blend of white peach, apple, orange zest, *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones, almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and quite primary on the attack, with a generous core, good acids and grip and a very long, focused and complex finish. The closing note of almond and the slightly better backend lift in the Combettes this year gives it the very slight nod over this pretty Pucelles. 2017-2035. **93.**

2015 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet from Domaine Leflaive is excellent and will drink very well with only a few years in the cellar. The bouquet is deep, pure and complex, wafting from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, tangerine, beeswax, chalky soil tones, almond, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and still fairly primary in personality, with a fine core, sound framing acids and lovely focus and grip on the long, perfectly balanced finish. 2020-2045+. **94.**

2015 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

The 2015 Bâtard-Montrachet is a bit more reserved than the domaine's Bienvenues this year, with a simply stunning aromatic constellation and impeccable focus and balance on the palate. The bouquet soars from the glass in a vibrant constellation of pear, apple, a touch of orange zest, incipient notes of beeswax, pastry cream, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and displays superb mid-palate depth, with racy acids and outstanding backend mineral drive on the long and zesty finish. There are already hints of the candied lemon elements to come here at maturity and this is absolutely stellar in 2015. 2020-2050. **96+.**

2015 Chevalier-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

I love the 2015 Chevalier as well from Domaine Leflaive, but this year, I have to give a very slight nod to the Bâtard! The bouquet here is pure and classy, offering up a very zesty nose of apple, pear, fresh almond, chalky minerality, hints of the *crème patissière* to come, spring flowers, orange zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, deep, and full-bodied, with a fairly reserved personality out of the blocks, a plush core, good acids and fine minerality on the long and complex finish. 2020-2055. **96.**

Domaine Etienne Sauzet (Puligny-Montrachet)

I had the pleasure to taste again this year with Emile Boudot, who was quite content with the style and early accessibility that the 2015s will display from Domaine Etienne Sauzet this year. The Boudot family was one of the proprietors in Puligny that decided to wait just a few days before getting out in the vines, “in search of a bit more aromatic development” noted Monsieur Boudot, so the harvest here began on Monday, August 31st, which was a few days later than some of the earliest harvesters in Puligny and Meursault. As I observed in the introductory remarks about the vintage, potential alcohol levels were rising quite briskly in the heat of late August of 2015, and the Domaine Sauzet wines are a bit more powerful as a result of starting the harvest at the very end of the month of August this year. This is not to say that the wines are not reflective of their underlying terroir, as the transparency here is very good indeed in 2015, but the wines are ripe and a bit buxom in personality in this vintage and will drink very well on the earlier side. There is a new bottling in 2015, as the family has purchased a parcel of forty to fifty year-old vines to produce a Haute Côte de Beaune Blanc to bridge the gap between the Bourgogne Blanc and the Chassagne and Puligny AC bottlings. As is customary at Domaine Sauzet in November, almost all of the cellar had been assembled in tanks already and would be bottled in the spring, with the exception of the first couple of wines in the lineup, which were bottled right before the harvest of 2016. The only other 2015 not yet raked was the Montrachet, which remained in cask at the time of my visit, but which was scheduled to be assembled in tank in the coming weeks (once the heavy traffic of visitors to the domaine eased up a bit). Bottling for the villages level wines and premier crus was expected to start in early March of 2017.

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The Domaine Sauzet 2015 Bourgogne Blanc will drink beautifully from release, with a bit more mid-palate amplitude this year than in most vintages. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a ripe blend of apple, tangerine, a touch of almond, good soil tones and a gentle floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, juicy and forward, with good balance and respectable framing acids on the wide open finish. A good example. 2016-2025. **87+.**

2015 Bourgogne Haute Côte de Beaune Blanc- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Bourgogne Haute Côte de Beaune Blanc is a very tasty new comer to the Domaine Sauzet lineup. This is a four hectare parcel of vines, so there will be a fairly sizable number of bottles available in the market. The bouquet on the 2015 is quite stylish, offering up scents of lemon, apple, chalky soil tones, almond and citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite racy for a 2015, with a plump core, fine focus and grip and lovely length on the well-balanced finish. 2017-2030. **89.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Enseignères”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Chassagne “Enseignères” from Domaine Sauzet is lovely, albeit a bit more fruit-driven in personality this year. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a ripe blend of apple,

peach, floral tones, a touch of orange zest, gentle soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plump on the attack, with a fairly adolescent profile, sound framing acids and good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. I would opt for giving it a couple of years in the cellar to allow some of its secondary layers of complexity to emerge. 2019-2035. **90.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

It is always interesting to compare the Chassagne “Enseignères” (which hails from a single plot of vines along the Puligny-Chassagne border, abutting Coche-Dury’s Puligny “Enseignères” rows) and the Puligny *villages* bottling *chez* Boudot, which is from a variety of different parcels scattered around the commune. My gut feeling is that the Puligny always has a bit more fruit complexity from its variety of different *lieux à dits*, but a bit less precise expression of soil, and this is the case again in 2015, but ironically, this bottling also shows more mineral drive out of the blocks than the Chassagne. The bouquet here is really very stylish, wafting from the glass in a very floral blend of apple, white peach, lemon zest, chalk, musky floral tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and has a nice vein of minerality running the length of its spine, with a juicy core and a long, vibrant and quite powerful finish. Good juice. 2019-2035+. **90+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos de la Garenne”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Clos de la Garenne from Domaine Sauzet is a perfect example of the vintage here, as the wine is ripe and offers plenty of fruit muscle, but also shows excellent fidelity to its underlying *terroir*. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of apple, tangerine, wet stone minerality, spring flowers, citrus zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and complex, with a generous core of fruit, very good cut and grip and a long, intense finish. This will need just a couple of years in the cellar to start to blossom and will drink with plenty of style from an early age. 2018-2040. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Champ Gains”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Champ Gains is just a touch less racy in personality than the Clos de la Garenne, but this makes sense, as it is not quite as cool of a *climat*. The bouquet is loaded with zesty citrus elements in its vibrant blend of apple, white peach, chalky, white lilies, vanillin oak and every imaginable note of citrus zest that one can imagine. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and almost velvety in texture, with a rock solid core, fine focus and balance and a long, juicy finish. This will drink immediately upon release (unless it closes down after its *mise*) and will probably not age quite as long as the Clos de la Garenne, but it will deliver plenty of pleasure along the way. 2016-2035+. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Hameau de Blagny”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Hameau de Blagny has turned out beautifully this year, offering up a pure and vibrant nose of apple, peach, a touch of almond, orange blossoms, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, young and plump at the core, with good framing acids, fine focus and grip and a long, succulent and still fairly youthful finish. Good juice. 2018-2040. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Truffières”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Truffières *chez* Boudot is a bit exotic this year, as the heat of the summer has given this lovely wine a nice tropical allure on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of pear, tangerine, a touch of papaya, lovely soil tones, musky, acacia-like floral tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and absolutely seamless, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, energetic and complex finish. There is a bit

of warm vintage character here (this is also a warmer, sheltered parcel of vines), but also excellent depth and complexity! 2017-2035. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Referts”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Domaine Sauzet Referts also has a touch of warm vintage character to it, but this is coupled to admirable purity and structural integrity. The bouquet is generous and gregarious, offering up scents of peach, apple, a touch of pineapple, chalky soil tones, orange peel and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and bouncy, with a solid core, fine acidity and a long, nascently complex and zesty finish. This is more powerfully styled than the 2014 version, but impeccably balanced. 2017-2035. **92.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Perrières”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Perrières from Domaine Sauzet is ripe and very, very pure, with a bit more raciness and overt mineral drive than the lovely Referts. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of apple, pear, chalky minerality, orange zest, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of lemon blossoms. On the palate the wine is ripe, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent acidity and focus, good backend minerality and lovely length and grip on the suave and well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2018-2040. **93.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières” - Domaine Etienne Sauzet

As I have mentioned in the past, the domaine’s parcel of Folatières lies in the little plot known as En la Richarde, which lies upslope from Caillerets and is by a wide margin the most mineral-driven section of Folatières and to my palate, produces the most exciting wine from this premier cru. The 2015 Folatières from Domaine Sauzet is superb, jumping from the glass in a complex mélange of apple, lemon zest, tangerine, chalky minerality, orange blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more reserved in profile than most of these premier crus, with a fine core of ripe fruit, bright acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This will want a few years to fully blossom, but will prove to be outstanding. 2019-2040+. **93.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Champ Canet”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 version of Champ Canet from Domaine Sauzet is excellent, delivering a ripe and very floral bouquet of apple, orange, chalky soil tones, a dollop of pineapple, fruit blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and quite plush on the attack, with a fine mid-palate depth, zesty acids and a long, powerful and impressively refined finish. This is very much emblematic of the ripe 2015 vintage, but there is plenty of breed and complexity to go along with the more powerful personality of the wine. 2018-2040. **92+.**

2015 Puligny-Montrachet “Combettes”- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Combettes from the Boudot family is outstanding and reminds me quite a bit of the 1992 version when it was young. The bouquet is ripe and flat out beautiful, wafting from the glass in a blend of lemon, apple, tangerine, chalky minerality, citrus zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and seamless, with a fine core, bright acids and impeccable balance and grip on the long and quite powerful finish. Fine juice. 2020-2045. **94.**

2015 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Bienvenues from Domaine Sauzet is also a fine, fine bottle in the making, sharing the more powerful profile of the vintage here and plenty of soil signature as well. The complex nose delivers a fine, youthful constellation of apple, tangerine, a touch of pineapple, great minerality, floral tones, lemon peel and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with a nice sense of reserve out of the blocks, fine focus and

grip, excellent acids and a very long, youthful finish. This will be excellent with a bit of bottle age. 2021-2055. **94+**.

2015 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

Interestingly, the 2015 Bienvenues seems more flashy out of the blocks this year than the deep and very impressively reserved Bâtard-Montrachet. The bouquet is pure and ripe, but also refined, wafting from the glass in a mix of apple, lemon, just a whisper of pineapple, pastry cream, chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and rock solid at the core, with bright acids, impeccable focus and balance and a very long, still very primary finish. This will be a classic bottle of Bâtard in the fullness of time. 2020-2055. **95**.

2015 Chevalier-Montrachet- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

The 2015 Chevalier-Montrachet from Domaine Sauzet is stunning. The ripe and very pure nose delivers a classy constellation of pear, tangerine, lemon zest, *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones, orange blossoms, a touch of fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and fairly broad-shouldered, with a bottomless core of fruit, great focus and breed and a long, racy and complex finish. This beautifully synthesizes the power of the vintage here with the inherent elegance and minerality of great Chevalier. 2021-2060. **96**.

2015 Montrachet- Domaine Etienne Sauzet

As I mentioned at the outset, the 2015 Montrachet was the only wine in the Sauzet cellars that remained in cask, as the malo here was a touch later to finish than any of the other wines. The bouquet is pure and stunning, soaring from the glass in a blaze of apple, pear, lemon zest, a beautiful base of chalky soil tones, hints of pastry cream, vanillin oak and incipient notes of the butter to come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite powerful in personality, with seamless balance, a great core, lovely focus and balance, superb acidity and a very, very long, zesty and oh so promising finish. 2022-2065. **96+**.

Chassagne-Montrachet

Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard (Chassagne-Montrachet)

Céline Fontaine has made absolutely superb 2015s, and this is one of the very finest and raciest collections of white Burgundies to be found in the Côte de Beaune in this vintage! The team here at Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard started picking on the first of September and Céline reported that yields were far lower in the village of Chassagne-Montrachet for pinot noir than chardonnay, so there is going to be very little red in 2015 and in 2016, the frosts were particularly damaging to the estate's red wine vineyards again, so things are going to be very, very slim again next year. While most of the domaine's reputation is based on their utterly superb white wines, I also very much love the red wines here and find them some of the best-kept secrets in all of Burgundy, so such short crops in 2015 and 2016 will be hard to take. Madame Fontaine chapitalized the red wines a tiny touch, just to keep the fermentations going a bit longer, but the wines have all come in around 13.1 percent in this vintage. The Chassagne "Clos St. Jean" rouge this year is more new oaky than usual, as there were only two casks in 2015, so one of them was new. The 2015 white wines from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard are absolutely superb, with great purity and depth of fruit, truly vivid expressions of underlying soil tones and zesty personalities that are low octane, vibrant and display lovely cut and grip for the vintage. They are amongst the very finest white wines produced in the Côte de Beaune this year! As is the custom chez Fontaine, the whites had all been bottled in September of 2016. Most of the white

wines fall in the thirteen to 13.3 percent alcohol range in 2015, with the ripest wine in the cellar this year the Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet, which is 13.5 percent octane.

Vins Blancs

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Fontaine-Gagnard 2015 Bourgogne Blanc is lovely, ripe and juicy, with loads of personality for its fairly low octane of 12.8 percent. The bouquet is a fine blend of apple, peach, fresh almond and chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and really has good depth at the core for its level, with bright acids and sneaky length and grip. Highly satisfying. 2016-2023. **88.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Fontaine family Chassagne AC is very pretty and floral in personality this year, wafting from the glass in a vibrant blend of pear, peach, lovely soil tones, a potpourri of white flowers, a very discreet touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent in the mid-palate, with very good acidity, fine focus and a long, zesty and wide open finish. High class *villages*. 2016-2030+. **89+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Maltroie”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Maltroie from Céline Fontaine is utterly classic, delivering a fine bouquet of apple, lime zest, stony minerality and a lovely topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and classy, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, vibrant finish that closes with excellent cut and bounce. Lovely juice and very 1992-like in its combination of early accessibility and great *typicité*. 2016-2035+. **91.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Clos St. Jean”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Clos St. Jean is one of my absolute favorite premier crus for pinot noir in Chassagne, but I am often a bit less enamored of this wine as a white. However, the 2015 from the Fontaine family is really lovely, with great charm and breed, and quickly disarmed my prejudices for this *terroir* planted to chardonnay! The bouquet is a pretty and very complex blend of apple, pear, Orange zest, a touch of fresh almond, lovely soil tones, a hint of beeswax and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely mineral in personality, with a fine core, impressive focus and grip and a long, complex and vibrant finish. Like the Maltroie, this wine is wide open out of the blocks and drinking with great style already, but possesses the balance and sound spine of acidity to also age gracefully. 2016-2035+. **91+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet- “Clos des Murées”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Clos des Murées from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard is very pretty and more discreet and reserved in personality than the first few premier crus. The bouquet offers up a youthful blend of apple, pear, citrus blossoms, beeswax, a good base of soil and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tightly-knit out of the blocks, with a good core, great backend length and energy and a complex, very promising finish. This will need a year or two to really come into its own, but it will be a fine bottle for many years to come. 2018-2035+. **92.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Chenevottes”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

One of the most vivid wine memories I have from my early days in the wine trade is the 1992 Chenevottes from Colin-Deleger, which I drank very often in its youth. Those memories came flooding back to me when I put my nose in the glass of the beautiful Fontaine-Gagnard Chenevottes from 2015, as this wine shares that same youthful exuberance and complexity. The bouquet is deep, pure and very expressive, soaring from the glass in a classic blend of apple,

pear, lemon blossoms, a hint of *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and very zesty, with a fine core, bright acids and excellent focus and grip on the complex and beautifully balanced finish. Great juice. 2016-2035+. **92+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet Vergers"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Fontaine family's parcel of vines in Vergers lie right on the border with Clos St. Jean and celebrated their forty-fifth birthday in 2015. This too is a classic expression of Vergers, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of pear, tangerine, chalky soil tones, citrus zest, spring flowers and a deft framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a touch more reserved in personality than the Chenevottes, with a fine core and excellent cut and grip on the long and nicely soil-driven finish. Give this a year or two to blossom fully. 2018-2035+. **93**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet "Morgeots"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Morgeots from Céline Fontaine is very, very elegant this year. The nose delivers a refined blend of lemon, pear, a touch of beeswax, chalky soil tones, white flower, gentle mintiness and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with fine mid-palate depth, racy acids and impressive focus and grip on the long and still fairly primary finish. Another delightful wine in the making, but like the Vergers, it will be better with a couple of years in the cellar. 2018-2035+. **92+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet "la Grande Montagne"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Grande Montagne from the Fontaines is excellent and really shows a lot of stony minerality on both the nose and palate this year. As Céline Fontaine commented, "these vines are now twenty-five years of age and they are just starting to come into their own now and showing better minerality in the wine." The bouquet is pure and classy, wafting from the glass in a mix of pear, tangerine, stony minerality, citrus blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nascently complex, with fine grip and length on the backend, but not quite the same inherent elegance found in a few of the premier crus that preceded it in the tasting lineup. 2016-2035+. **91+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet "Boudriotte"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Boudriotte from Fontaine-Gagnard was really showing well at the time of my mid-November visit. The bouquet is pure and very stylish, offering up scents of apple, chalky soil tones, a touch of beeswax, floral tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite pure on the attack, with a fine core, bright acids and impressive length and grip on the stylish finish. This sample had been opened the evening before, and though the wine was showing well and I saw no reason to open another half bottle, it is possible that I am underrating it just a tad, due to the fact that it had been open for a bit. 2016-2035+. **92**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet "Caillerets"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Caillerets from the Fontaine family is a brilliant young wine. The bouquet is pure, complex and vibrant, delivering a stellar constellation of apple, pear, lemon zest, beautifully complex base of limestone minerality, a hint of mint and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with laser-like focus, excellent grip and a very long, racy and perfectly balanced finish. Half the vines here were planted in 1960 and the other half a quarter century ago, and the combination of relatively young vines and older vines provides both striking mineral signature and glorious fruit tones. Stunning juice! 2018-2040. **94+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Romanée”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard’s 2015 la Romanée is equally stunning on both the nose and palate! The bouquet jumps from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, orange zest, chalky minerality, citrus oils, a hint of fresh almond, apple blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, very intense at the core, with racy acids, great backend mineral drive and a very long, vibrant and lifted finish. Great wine. 2018-2040. **94+**.

2015 Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Fontaine family makes one of the reference point examples of Criots-Bâtard and their 2015 is stellar. The wine delivers a ripe and very, very pure blend of pear, orange, chalky minerality, incipient notes of citrus blossoms and a stylish base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and powerful in personality, but with great purity and precision at the same time. The finish is very long, racy and strikingly transparent, with outstanding focus and grip. 2018-2045. **95**.

2015 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Bâtard-Montrachet from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard is a cool and classy customer, coming in at 13.1 percent octane and delivering great elegance and depth on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a stunning blend of pear, apple, lemon, chalky soil tones, a hint of the pastry cream to come, citrus zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very mineral in profile, with a gorgeous core of fruit, snappy acids and superb length and grip on the poised and perfectly balanced finish. Great juice! 2020-2050. **96**.

2015 Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Montrachet from Céline Fontaine is very similar in style to the Bâtard, offering up great precision and intensity of flavor without undue weight. The nose soars from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, spring flowers, a hint of almond, plenty of floral tones and a fine base of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and racy in personality, with a rock solid core, laser-like focus and enormous backend energy on the vibrant and endless finish. Sheer brilliance! 2020-2050+. **98**.

Vins Rouges

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Fontaines have three parcels that go into this bottling, with two in Chassagne and one in Volnay. The 2015 Bourgogne is very pretty, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of strawberries, cherries, a nice base of soil tones and a topnote of raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and tangy, with a touch of tannin and a nice core of sappy red fruit. A very strong example. 2016-2025+. **87+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 vintage has given a nice sheen of elegance to young Chassagne *rouge* bottlings that I tasted in November, and could this be the vintage where the market finally wakes up to what a good value the best red wines of the commune offer? The 2015 Chassagne *villages* from Céline Fontaine is excellent, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of red fruit and soil tones, as it offers up scents of cherries, strawberries, dark soil tones, gamebird and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very shapely, with a sappy core, moderate, well-integrated tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. A high class village wine. 2019-2040. **90**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Clos St. Jean” Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Normally, the family has six barrels of Clos St. Jean rouge, but in 2015, there was only enough production for two casks, as the tiny berries simply did not have much juice. So this wine was raised in fifty percent new oak this year, but has such lovely depth of fruit that this is not particularly evident on either the nose or palate. The bouquet is a fine blend of cherries, red plums, *pigeon*, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and impressively sappy at the core, with a fine signature of soil, suave tannins and a long, focused and nascently complex finish. This is a *terroir* that I find far more interesting for pinot noir than chardonnay, though the market in general would of course not agree with me. A fine bottle in the making. 2021-2050. **91+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeots Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Morgeots rouge is also outstanding from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard. The bouquet again shows plenty of sappiness in its constellation of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, cocoa, roasted *pigeon*, dark soil tones, cocoa and a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely structured out of the blocks, with a sappy core, fine transparency, refined tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully focused finish. Another really lovely 2015 Chassagne red! 2021-2050. **92**.

2015 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2015 Clos des Chênes from Madame Fontaine was also made from a very short crop, so that there is no more wine here in 2015 than was the case in 2014, when the parcel was hailed upon! The wine is excellent, soaring from the glass in a blaze of red and black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, gamebird, a lovely base of soil, cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a lovely core, ripe, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and complex finish. Classic Clos des Chênes! 2024-2065. **93**.

2015 Pommard “Rugiens”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Céline Fontaine shared that this parcel of vines in Rugiens, which was only planted in 1984, is diseased and is blocking proper lignification, so that the maturity here is always lagging these days behind their other parcels of pinot noir. This shows just a bit in 2015, as this wine is not quite as deep or sappy as the other premier crus in the cellar. The bouquet is very pretty and nicely red fruity in profile, offering up scents of cherries, quince, woodsmoke, gamebird, stony soil tones and a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is red fruity, tangy and soil-driven, with a full-bodied and moderately tannic format, good focus and grip and a long, nascently complex finish. A very good bottle in the making, but it is not quite in the same league as the top Chassagne premier cru reds in this vintage. 2021-2050+. **91**.

Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils (Chassagne-Montrachet)

Alexandre Moreau has produced truly stunning 2015s and this is one of the very best collection of white wines that I tasted from the Côte de Beaune during my November trip. The team at Domaine Moreau began picking on August 28th in this vintage, trying to retain freshness in the resulting wines and they have accomplished this beautifully. As is customary when visiting here in November, the wines were in varying stages of their élevage, with the Bourgogne bottlings bottled before the harvest of 2016, the St. Aubin and Chassagne AC assembled and ready for bottling soon after the new year, the premier crus also assembled, but not yet fined, and the grand crus still in cask. Amongst the reds, other than the Bourgogne, everything else had been assembled in tank two weeks prior to my visit for bottling after the holidays. Across the board here, Alex Moreau's 2015 white wines reminded me very, very strongly of the very finest

1992 white Burgundies that I drank back when they were released, as they share the beautifully pure and generous fruit of the '92s when young, coupled to the vivid typicité and zesty acidity that the vintage also showed out of the blocks. These days, many folks do not remember the 1992s when they were young, as they did not age as gracefully as a vintage such as the 1993 whites, and the wines were less interesting to drink in general at age fifteen or twenty than they were over the first five to seven years after bottling, when they were about as beautifully charming and classical in their soil expressions as one could hope for from a young vintage of white Burgundies. The 2015s from Domaine Moreau share this early beauty with the 1992s, and though it is too early to know how they will age over the long haul, during their early days, these are going to be brilliant white Burgundies that should be absolutely impossible to resist opening!

Vins Blancs

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Bourgogne Blanc from Domaine Moreau is very pretty, offering up a zesty nose of white flowers, pear, white peach, a touch of fresh almond and chalky soil nuances. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and juicy at the core, with good acids and fine length and grip on the bouncy finish. A lovely example. 2016-2023. **88.**

2015 St. Aubin “en Remilly”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The Moreau family's 2015 example of en Remilly had just been fined right before my visit and was not one hundred percent on form, so it may be that I have underestimated this lovely wine just a tad. Even in its jostled state, the wine was showing lovely potential, with a nose of pear, lemon blossoms, apple, chalky soil tones, a touch of *crème patissière* and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and nascently complex, with a succulent core, lovely soil signature and impressive length and grip on the zesty finish. 2016-2025+. **90+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

If there is anyone in the village that makes a more consistently beautiful bottling of Chassagne *villages* than Domaine Moreau, I would love to taste it! The 2015 version is another excellent example in the making, wafting from the glass in a refined and complex blend of apple, pear, a touch of orange zest, superb minerality, spring flowers, vanillin oak and the first presage of the pastry cream to come with a bit of aging. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and succulent, with excellent mid-palate depth, fine focus and backend mineral drive, bright acids and a long, crisp and classy finish. Fine juice. 2016-2030+. **92.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Clos St. Jean”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Domaine Moreau Clos St. Jean is a very stylish and classic example of this cru, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, a touch of *crème patissière*, a fine base of soil, lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and just a touch more reserved in personality than the *villages*, with a lovely core of fruit, excellent acidity, impressive balance and grip and a long, focused and elegant finish. 2018-2040+. **92+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Champgains”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Champgains from Alex Moreau was also showing beautifully at the time of my visit, offering up a bright and classy bouquet of lemon, apple, deep soil tones, citrus zest, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine acids, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and youthful finish. This will need a few years to unleash its secondary layers of complexity and will be delicious at its peak. 2019-2040+. **92+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Vergers”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Vergers *chez* Moreau is outstanding and will drink with great style and breed with a few years’ worth of bottle age. The bouquet is pure and nascently complex, offering up scents of pear, apple, chalky soil tones, a touch of citrus peel, lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite racy for the vintage, with a rock solid core of pure fruit, fine focus and balance, lovely detail and a long, crisp and very promising finish. 2020-2040+. **93.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Chenevottes”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

In the mid-1990s, I drank so much beautiful ’92 Chenevottes that the memory of this cru is indelibly etched in my memory. The Domaine Moreau 2015 immediately took me back to those days, as it offers up a gorgeous and absolutely classic expression of Chenevottes in its aromatic constellation of apple, a touch of tangerine, candied lemon, spring flowers, chalky soil tones and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and succulent on the attack, with a great core, impeccable focus and balance and a very long, vibrant and complex finish. This will be even better with a couple of years in the cellar, but good luck trying to keep your hands off of bottles of this beauty! 2018-2040. **93.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Maltroie”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

In my experience, Maltroie always shows more “wet stone” minerality than chalkiness in its soil component, and this is indeed the case with the lovely 2015 version from Domaine Moreau. The bouquet is superb and utterly classic in its profile of apple, pear, wet stones, lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more reserved in personality than most of these previous premier crus, with a rock solid core, bright acids and a very long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. This will demand a couple of years to blossom. 2018-2040+. **93.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeot”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Morgeot from Alex Moreau is a brilliant example of the vintage! The bouquet is pure, vibrant and very classy, soaring from the glass in a blaze of lemon, pear, complex, chalky soil tones, vanillin oak and lemon blossoms in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and utterly refined in profile, with a stunning core of pristine fruit, great soil inflection, bright, zesty acids and laser-like focus on the very, very long and very classy finish. Simply brilliant Morgeot! 2017-2045. **94+.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Caillerets”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Caillerets from Alex Moreau is also stunning young juice, delivering a superb bouquet of apple, pear, chalky minerality, a touch of beeswax, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and complex, with seamless, racy balance, outstanding focus and grip and a very long, youthful finish. This is more reserved in profile right now than the Morgeot, but it may well be every bit as fine at its apogee! 2019-2045. **94.**

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Grandes Ruchottes”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Grandes Ruchottes *chez* Moreau is simply stunning. The bouquet is deep, pure and utterly refined in its constellation of pear, apple, chalky minerality, hints of the *crème patissière* to come, lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, elegant and bottomless, with stunning balance and breed, a great core, bright, zesty acids and a very, very long, primary and scintillating finish. Just add bottle age! 2020-2045+. **95.**

2015 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Bâtard-Montrachet from Domaine Moreau was raised entirely in a one wine cask, with the wine racked into another one wine cask, so this may well be the only example of Bâtard in the Côte de Beaune that saw no new wood in this vintage! The wine is utterly brilliant, soaring from the glass in a pure and magical blend of lemon, apple, chalky soil tones, pear, incipient notes of pastry cream and a nice touch of vanillin oak (despite being raised in one wine casks). On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly beautiful in profile, with a great core, laser-like focus, bright acids and great length and grip on the perfectly balanced finish. A supremely elegant Bâtard in the making! 2020-2050+. **96+**.

2015 Chevalier-Montrachet- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The Moreau family's 2015 Chevalier-Montrachet is equally stunning on both the nose and palate. The classic and very beautiful bouquet delivers a classic blend of apple, pear, lemon, hints of the *crème patissière* to come, complex, chalky minerality, lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly seamless, with great balance and focus, a superb core of fruit, marvelous soil signature and a very, very long, vibrant and youthful finish. A wine that is very deep, light on its feet and includes all good things! 2020-2060. **97**.



Vins Rouges

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

Like the Bourgogne Blanc, the Bourgogne Rouge 2015 *chez* Moreau was bottled in mid-September of 2016 and had bounced back nicely by the time of my visit. The bouquet offers up a very pretty and black fruity blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, woodsmoke, a touch of roasted venison and a good base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite accessible out of the blocks, with a sappy core, just a touch of tannin and fine length and grip on the finish. Good juice. 2016-2025. **87+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “Vieilles Vignes” Rouge- Dom. Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Chassagne V.V. included twenty-five percent whole clusters this year and was raised in ten percent new oak. The wine was showing very nicely, despite only having been racked two weeks ago, as it offers up a pure and black fruity blend of black cherries, bitter chocolate, *pigeon*, a complex base of soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit chewy today (probably more a result of the recent racking than any sign of less-polished tannins), with a sappy core, fine soil inflection, lovely focus and grip and a long, promising finish. 2019-2045+. **90+**.

2015 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Cardeuse” Rouge- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 vintage will be a great one for the Cardeuse *chez* Moreau. The bouquet is deep, sappy and very, very pure out of the blocks, soaring from the glass in a stunning blend of black cherries, blackberries, raw cocoa, a touch of coffee bean, gamebird, dark soil, woodsmoke and already a nice touch of spices from its whole clusters (sixty percent for this bottling in 2015). On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great elegance and focus, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and outstanding balance on the long and impressively light on its feet finish. Young Chassagne *rouge* can be a bit bound up in its structural elements in certain vintages, but the early refinement of the 2015 Cardeuse is exceptional and augurs great things for the future. 2021-2060. **93+**.

2015 Volnay “Santenots”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2015 Volnay “Santenots” from Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils is another superb wine in the making. This vineyard usually produces very black fruity wines, so when I find some red fruit in the early makeup of the bottling, as is the case here, I get very excited! The bouquet is complex and classy, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, coffee bean, woodsmoke and a pungent topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip, suave tannins and a very long, tangy and nascently complex finish. Just add patience. 2022-2060. **93**.

A FEW MORE EXCELLENT 2015ERS (AND FRIENDS) FROM GERMANY



I have had samples floating around in my cellar for several months now from the fine German estates of Hofgut Falkenstein in the Saar Valley and Schloss Johannisberg in the Rheingau, but with Issue 65 having already been so massive, I did not get around to tasting these bottles until this December. Normally, I would like to accrue a few more tasting notes for this article, but given that the wines are probably already disappearing from the market, it seemed to make sense to put the notes out now in the hopes subscribers can still find a few bottles available. As readers may recall, I visited Hofgut Falkenstein and its fine proprietor, Erich Weber, a couple of years ago on one of my spring trips to German wine country. I had loved the wines that I tasted and had intended to be back there every spring, but did not manage to extend my trip on these last two years, so the estate's US importer, Lars Carlberg, kindly sent me samples of six of the estate's outstanding 2015ers. Naturally, my luck would find a couple of the bottles tainted with TCA (and I have had such a good run in 2016 with very few corked samples!), so there are only notes on four wines below from Hofgut Falkenstein. I had also acquired a nice range of samples from one of the Rheingau's oldest estates, Schloss Johannisberg this fall, from the 2013, 2014 and 2015 vintages, and had not found an opportunity to write those wines up as well, so I put the notes together from both estates and include them here in Issue 66.

As I have visited Hofgut Falkenstein on one occasion, I have reprinted my background information on the estate from that visit, for readers who may not recall or be familiar with the beautiful wines that Herr Weber is currently making at this fine property. Having not (yet) visited at Schloss Johannisberg, I do not have the same historical background information at my fingertips, but have put together a bit of information here from their excellent website. I hope to visit the estate on an upcoming trip to Germany and be able to add more personal experience to the background paragraph in the future. But, having been absolutely delighted with the quality of a few bottles from Schloss Johannisberg from the decades of the 1960s and 1970s at last February's Rieslingfeier, I reached out to the estate's importer for some samples and will make it a point of visiting here the very next time I am in the Rheingau!

Hofgut Falkenstein (Konz-Niedermennig)

This was my first visit to the lovely estate of Erich Weber of Hofgut Falkenstein, though I had the pleasure to taste one or two of his wines up in the Boston area a couple of years ago and liked what I sampled at that time. Erich started Hofgut Falkenstein on his own in 1981, piecing together old vine parcels in this back section of the Saar as opportunity allowed, so that today he has 7.5 hectares of vines scattered amongst the villages of Niedermennig, Krettnach and Falkestein. These villages are actually in a valley away from the Saar River, about equidistant between Wiltingen and Oberemmel, with most of the soils of these hillside vineyards either blue or red slate, though there is a bit of Diabas (as in the Saarburger Rausch) in the Altenberg. As this is a bit off the beaten path these days (though this was a very highly-regarded section of the Saar in the nineteenth century, when German wines were more fashionable on the international market and demand was sufficient for sites such as these to be cultivated), Eric Weber was able to buy prime parcels in these largely forgotten vineyards, planted with old vines (vine age ranges from forty to eighty years of age), and seventy percent of the vineyards are on ungrafted rootstocks. One has to imagine that there are plenty of other opportunities for great terroirs such as these that are also currently forgotten and largely abandoned scattered around the back valleys in German wine country these days. The estate is housed in a beautifully restored old press-house that used to belong to the Friedrich Wilhelm Gymnasium estate, and which Eric and his wife Marita restored themselves. It is a beautiful site and a wonderful place to visit, with the Niedermennig Herrenberg vineyard descending down from the cellar door and offering a beautiful view of this lovely back valley in Saarland.

The wines of Hofgut Falkenstein are wonderfully old school: everything fermented and aged in old fuders, using exclusively indigenous yeasts, with no de-acidification, no chapitalization and most of the range fermenting out to quite dry editions of Saar Riesling. The cellars are really more in line with what one expects in a small domaine in Burgundy from yesteryear, with plenty of mold on the walls, dark, damp and decidedly "low tech" in the best traditions of old school winemaking. Erich has been resistant to the recent changes in the wine laws that encourage dry Rieslings to be bottled without Prädikat information on the label, as he prefers to use the old system from the 1971 wine laws and bottle his wines with both a Prädikat level (to indicate must weight) and a designation of Trocken or Feinherb. In addition to a fine array of Rieslings, the estate also produces a bit of Pinot Blanc (which I did not sample on this visit) and Pinot Noir, which does not go through malolactic fermentation and is not chapitalized, so it is rather an individual expression of this grape. I had a chance to taste a bottle of the Pinot Noir a bit later in my trip in Germany, but managed to lose the note in the subsequent two and a

half weeks on the road, so proper notes on the Spätburgunder from Hofgut Falkenstein will have to wait for subsequent visits. Herr Weber describes the 2013 vintage as the “hardest of my career”, but the wines have turned out very well indeed and there were some very, very promising wines in the cellars awaiting bottling at the time of my visit in late March. Erich does not like to blend casks, so he will often have two distinct bottlings of Kabinett Trocken from the same vineyard in a given vintage, as is the case in 2013, with the Niedermenniger Herrenberg in this year. I have designated the two casks simply as numbers one and two, as it was too early for AP numbers. This is one cellar in 2013 where one can be certain that no de-acidification was undertaken for any of the wines (which will be quite rare in this vintage), but the wines are beautifully balanced and handle their snappy acids very well indeed, as there is plenty of dry extract to buffer them. This is a very fine estate producing impeccably well-made wines and they deserve an even wider audience than they currently have- though I do notice that some of the finest merchants in both New York and Boston are now stocking the Hofgut Falkenstein wines these days, so recognition of the fine work of Erich Weber is not going unnoticed!

2015 Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Feinherb AP #11- Hofgut Falkenstein

As I have mentioned in the past, the Herrenberg vineyard in Niedermennig has a section of blue-grey slate and a section of red slate, and Erich Weber prefers to bottle each section on its own. He has sixty to eighty year-old vines in both sections, so the primary difference here is the soil composition. The 2015 Kabinett Trocken Feinherb AP #11 is from the blue slate portion of the vineyard and was finished off at ten percent octane. The wine wafts from the glass in a lovely and youthful bouquet of discreet green apple, white flowers, glorious slate salinity, citrus peel and a touch of lemongrass in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-bodied, filigreed and racy, with a fine core, just a hint of residual sweetness (for all intents and purposes this is a dry wine), excellent focus and balance and a long, nascently complex finish. This is a very young wine and will blossom beautifully with a few years’ worth of bottle age and should age very long and gracefully. 2020-2050. **92.**

2015 Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett AP #12- Hofgut Falkenstein

Euchariusberg in Krettnach is a blue-grey slate *terroir*, and Erich has a parcel of eighty year-old, ungrafted vines in his section of the vineyard here. The 2015 Kabinett from the Euchariusberg is a classically filigreed and delicate example of this Prädikat, coming in at 8.5 percent and offering up beautiful, lilting complexity in its bouquet of lime blossoms, white cherry, a discreet touch of pink grapefruit, a dollop of wild yeasts, delicate slate tones and a touch of fresh mint in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-bodied, pure and utterly classic in profile, with haunting delicacy, fine intensity of flavor, bright, seamless acids and stunning length and grip on the still quite primary finish. This will be beautifully complex at its apogee, but it is so perfectly balanced out of the blocks that it is going to be very easy to drink long before it truly blossoms! 2020-2050. **94+.**

2015 Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese AP #3- Hofgut Falkenstein

The 2015 Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese AP #3 from Erich Weber is a young and promising wine, but this is quite reticent today on the nose and really demands some cellaring time to blossom. The nose reluctantly offers up scents of pear, wild yeasts, a touch of menthol, lime peel, slate and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is a bit more expressive out of the blocks, with its medium-bodied format offering up lovely purity, slate undertow and bounce on the long, crisp and beautifully balanced finish. This will be plenty

complex in the fullness of time, but right now it is a bit monolithic and in need of some time alone in the cellar. 2022-2055. **91+**.

2015 Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Auslese AP #5- Hofgut Falkenstein

The 2015 Euchariusberg Auslese AP #5 from Hofgut Falkenstein is a beautiful young wine in the making. This is a low fat, old school Auslese with no signs of botrytis and beautiful purity and structural sophistication, which will make old bones in the grandest of styles. The bouquet today is pure, youthfully complex and very promising, as it wafts from the glass in a mix of green apple, fresh lime, lilacs, salty slate minerality, dried flowers, hints of bee pollen and a very exotic topnote of wild fennel. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and racy, with a lovely core, laser-like focus, seamless, racy acids and stunning length and grip on the primary, but pure and oh so promising finish. This is a baby, as a 2015 Auslese ought to be and will need plenty of cellaring to reach its apogee, but it is going to be stunning once its journey reaches the higher ground! 2025-2075+. **94**.



Schloss Johannisberg (Rheingau)

Schloss Johannisberg is one of the oldest estates on the Rhine, as it can trace back its history fully nine hundred years, as the property was founded as a Benedictine monastery and was the first wine estate ever dedicated solely to the cultivation and production of Riesling. The towering hill of Johannisberg had already been famous for vineyard cultivation prior to the founding of the Benedictine monastery, as the first written mention of the vineyard can be traced

all the way back to 817 AD! The vineyard was first known as Bischofsberg, but the name was changed to Johannisberg in 1130 in honor of John the Baptist. The property remained in the Benedictine's hands until the secularization of church properties following Napoleon's conquest of the region in 1802, and the property passed into the hands of a Prince Wilhelm V, who eventually gave the estate to the Emperor of Austria, one of the Hapsburg dynasty in 1815. A year later, the Emperor ceded the property to his State Chancellor, Clemens Wenzel Lothar Fürst von Metternich, with the provision that ten percent of each year's production would still be given to the Hapsburgs. This continues on to this day. In 1971, with the establishment of the German Wine Laws, the hill of Johannisberg was given its own appellation. The vineyard actually sits a bit away from the Rhine River, with a primarily northerly exposition, rather than facing south and overlooking the river, like so many other vineyards in this section of the Rheingau. The estate's renovated castle sits at the summit of the hill, with the vineyards cascading down in a semi-circle on the northern side of the estate's buildings. To its immediate west is the town of Geisenheim, and a bit further along the Rhine to the east is the town of Eltville. Since its earliest days in the hands of the von Metternich family, the estate has color-coded its various cuvées produced from the hillside, with the original differentiation marked by wax seals on the bottles, and today, different colored stripes on the capsules of the wines. So, for example, today the QbA bottlings from Schloss Johannisberg bear a yellow stripe, Kabinetten a red seal, Spätlesen a green seal, Auslesen a pink seal and the estates' Grosses Gewächs a silver seal on the capsule. Sadly, of the nine samples that I received to taste from the estate, several were from the very difficult and rainy 2014 vintage, which is not emblematic of the high quality of the other recent wines that I have tasted from Schloss Johannisberg, as is also the case at several other top estates in Germany in this vintage. So please keep in mind just how difficult the end of season conditions were in 2014 when looking at the tasting notes below, as the true character and quality of the wines of Schloss Johannisberg these days is far more represented by the tastings notes on the estate's 2015ers, 2013ers and 2012ers in the notes below!

2015 Schloss Johannisberg "Gelblack" Riesling Feinherb AP #2

The 2015 Gelblack" Riesling Feinherb from Schloss Johannisberg is a very pretty and stylish bottle of nearly dry Riesling, coming in at 11.5 percent alcohol and offering only a modicum of buffering sweetness on the palate. The bouquet is quite impressive, offering up bright and zesty combination of tangerine, pink grapefruit, a touch of caraway seed, complex soil tones, lemongrass and citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is fullish, focused and very nicely balanced, with a fine core, vibrant acids and very good length and grip on the broad-shouldered and soil-driven finish. This is still a young wine and really could use three or four years in the cellar to more completely blossom, as right now the wine closes with a bit of citrus peel bitterness on the finish that needs to be waited out, but there are some very good raw materials here. 2020-2045. **89.**

2015 Schloss Johannisberg "Rotlack" Riesling Kabinett Feinherb AP #4

The 2015 Schloss Johannisberg "Rotlack" Riesling Kabinett Feinherb is more complex and delicately styled on the nose than the Gelblack Feinherb. The nose wafts from the glass in a blend of lemon, tart orange, salty soil tones, a touch of lilac and esthery topnotes redolent of discreet citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is medium-full, focused and more complex than the above, with a good core, a touch more buffering sweetness than in the Gelblack, good ripe acids and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This wine is eleven percent alcohol,

which is still pretty ripe for a Kabinett, but the balance works nicely at the table already and will be even better with some bottle age. 2018-2045+. **90+**.

2015 Schloss Johannisberg “Gelblack” Riesling Trocken AP #10

The 2015 Schloss Johannisberg “Gelblack” Riesling Trocken is a pretty good, solid effort for this rainy vintage, with a nice and quite open nose offering up scents of peach, a touch of orange, a good dollop of soil tones and dried flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is fullish, open and fairly complex, with a good core, sound acids and good length and grip on the finish. There is just a touch of uncleanness on the tail-end of the finish that keeps the score down a bit and belies the rainy harvest season, but overall, this is not too bad at all. 2016-2025. **87.**

2014 Schloss Johannisberg “Rotlack” Riesling Kabinett Feinherb AP #5

The 014 Schloss Johannisberg “Rotlack” Riesling Kabinett Feinherb is a touch lower in octane than the 2015 version, coming in at 10.5 percent alcohol. As readers may recall, there were harvest rains in 2014 in Germany, and though the Rheingau tends to ripen a bit earlier and had a chance to avoid at least some of the brunt of the bad weather, this bottling does not seem entirely clean on the nose or palate. The bouquet is relatively deep-pitched, offering up scents of fallen peaches, a touch of leather, dried flowers, gentle smokiness and soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and a bit *fluide*, without great depth at the core, solid acids and more a sense of broadness than intensity on the moderate length finish. This is okay for the vintage, but no better. 2016-2030. **84.**

2014 Schloss Johannisberg “Silberlack” Riesling Trocken Grosses Gewächs AP #8

The 2014 Schloss Johannisberg Grosses Gewächs has really turned out quite nicely for this difficult vintage, but I assume that the grapes for this bottling were brought in on the early side of the harvest. The wine is 12.5 percent octane and offers up an excellent bouquet of tangerine, a hint of grapefruit, a complex base of soil tones, just a whisper of dried lavender and a gently floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and young, with a fine core of fruit, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and snappy finish. This wine is more open on the nose today than on the palate, with a touch of youthful citrus peel bitterness poking out on the backend and it really needs some time in the cellar to blossom, but it is a strong 2014er. 2020-2050. **91.**

2014 Schloss Johannisberg “Grünlack” Riesling Spätlese AP #6

The 2014 Schloss Johannisberg “Grünlack” Riesling Spätlese is quite tasty and forward, offering up a pretty bouquet of tangerine, fresh apricot, a touch of soil salinity, bee pollen and hints of the honeycomb to come with further bottle age. On the palate the wine is medium-bodied and nicely sweet on the attack, with a good base of soil, quite good filigree, sound acids and good length and grip on the nascently complex finish. This is fairly sweet for a Spätlese, but the balance works very nicely. I would opt for drinking this wine over the next several years, as my gut feeling is that the lovely youthful veneer of sweetness the wine currently displays is a fine cover for any of the vintage’s vagaries that may be lurking below the surface. 2016-2025+? **89.**

2013 Schloss Johannisberg “Rotlack” Riesling Kabinett Feinherb AP #4

The 2013 Schloss Johannisberg “Rotlack” Riesling Kabinett Feinherb is a lovely and vibrant wine that is just beginning to show the first vestiges of its secondary layers of complexity on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a fine, complex constellation of tart orange, a

hint of white cherry, lovely notes of *fleur de sel*, spring flowers, hints of the honeycomb to come and a really lovely base of soil tones. On the palate this wine is medium-full, complex and very nicely balanced, with quite modest residual sweetness, a lovely core, fine soil signature and a long, filigreed and complex finish. This is not as powerful as the 2015 version, but is a tad more complete in its relative delicacy and is really a lovely bottle. 2016-2040. **91.**

2013 Schloss Johannisberg “Silberlack” Riesling Trocken Grosses Gewächs AP #8

The 2013 vintage of Schloss Johannisberg’s Riesling Grosses Gewächs is an excellent example of the vintage. The bouquet is starting to show a nice touch of development in its blend of sweet grapefruit, tangerine, salty soil tones, a hint of the honey to come, orange peel and a gently musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nascently complex, with a fine core, bright acids, fine focus and balance and a long, still fairly youthful finish. This is certainly approachable today at the table, but I would be inclined to keep it in the cellar for another handful of years and really allow it to blossom fully. Good juice. 2019-2050+. **92+.**

2012 Schloss Johannisberg “Silberlack” Riesling Trocken Grosses Gewächs AP #12

The 2012 Grosses Gewächs from Schloss Johannisberg is excellent on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex mix of peach, tangerine, a touch of sea salts, dried flowers, a fine base of soil and an exotic topnote of crushed violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, focused and very nicely balanced, with bright acids, fine delineation and a very long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. This is less evolved on the palate than the 2013 version and really deserves some cellaring to reach its peak. It should prove to be a long-lived and excellent GG in the fullness of time. 2021-2060. **93.**

THE CHAMPAGNE AND SPARKLING WINE REVIEW WINTER 2016



I often drink quite a bit of Champagne during my long November trip to Burgundy each year, as I find that after a long day of tasting great Burgundy in the cellars, I desperately need something with bubbles to reinvigorate the palate with dinner. A couple of the wine shops in Beaune really have a great selection of Champagne, so one of my first stops each trip is to pick up a handful of bottles of bubbly to have in the refrigerator of my *gîte* for palate recovery purposes after a full day in the cellars. Additionally, a couple of the wine bars in Beaune also have outstanding selections of Champagne, making it very easy to sample a fairly wide range of bubbly while I am there working on the my Burgundy notes, which allows for proper palate recovery operations on the nights I do not feel like cooking dinner. As these November Burgundy trips always lead into the holiday season upon my return to New York, I tend to accrue quite a few Champagne tasting notes over the last couple of months of the year, making this small article on Champagne a logical inclusion with the report on the new vintage in Burgundy for the year end issue of the newsletter.

One of the very pleasant surprises of recent samples that I received in December was the quality of the new releases from Moët et Chandon, whose current releases I had not tasted in

close to a decade. Friends in the Champagne region had told me that things were starting to stir qualitatively (in particular, regarding their approach to viticulture) at this giant in Épernay and I was happy to reach out to their representatives here in New York to try and get bottles of the current wines in the market to taste. The house has split their representation in the city into two divisions, so the folks in charge of the non-Dom Pérignon bottlings quickly replied to my request for samples and sent along a couple of Rosés and the Brut Impérial non-vintage. The other team, in charge of Dom Pérignon did not reply to my requests, but I will circle back around to them in the new year and see if they have enough time to answer an email once the crush of the holiday season is behind them. With the Moët bottlings, the two Rosés (their non-vintage cuvée and the 2008 vintage bottling) were indeed impressive and a big step up from what I remember, serving as evidence that the rumors I had heard in the region were on target. The current release of Brut Impérial was not in the same league as the Rosés, and though decidedly fresher than the wine I remember from a decade ago, was still in need of a bit of fine tuning to get it up into the league of many other *Grande Marques* non-vintage Bruts. But, the 2008 Vintage Brut Rosé in particular was so impressive that I will make a point to stop by for a visit when I am in Épernay in the spring and see what else is stirring here.

The other two houses that sent along samples for this end of the year issue were the fine *Grande Marque* of Alfred Gratien in Épernay and the superb smaller grower house of Janisson Baradon et Fils, which also happens to be located in Épernay. Alfred Gratien's wines I have known and loved for many years, as I used to pour their wines and those of Bruno Paillard by the glass back in my sommelier days in the mid-1990s, and the current releases from the house were simply excellent from top to bottom. I do wish they would join the modern age in Champagne and supply a bit of technical background information about each bottling, as even their website has virtually nothing to go on regarding *cépages*, length of aging of each cuvée *sur latte* or *dosage*, but at least the wines under the corks were outstanding. I reviewed a couple of bottlings from Janisson Baradon et Fils in the last article on Champagne, and in December, I was very happy to taste through their three single vineyard, mono varietal bottlings- two of which I had never tasted before. These include a one hundred percent chardonnay bottling from the *lieu à dit* of Toulette, a pinot meunier bottling from the vineyard of Chemin des Conges and a pinot noir-based bottling from the *lieu à dit* of Tue Boeuf. All three cuvées are produced from old vines (fifty-plus years of age), low yields (thirty to thirty-five hectoliters per hectare) and barrel-fermented in older Burgundy casks. Though the line of other bottlings at Janisson Baradon et Fils go through full malo, this is not the case with these three single vineyard bottlings, which are built for long aging. The only one I had tasted previously was the pinot noir cuvée from the vineyard of Tue Boeuf, which I drank seven or eight years ago and really enjoyed, so I was very happy to see the current release of this wine, as well as its other two single vineyard brethren.

One aspect that readers may notice in this article, in contrast to most Champagne features that appear in View From the Cellar, is the preponderance of Brut bottlings covered, rather than a higher percentage of Extra Brut or Brut Nature bottlings that would appear in a normal range of sample bottles. While I have warmed up considerably to the minimal *dosage* bottlings in recent years, the couple that I tasted while on the road fully underscored how important a bit of well-done *dosage* can be in certain circumstances, as for example, after one has worked through seventy-five or eighty young wines in the cellar over the course of the day. The few bottles of Extra Brut which I tasted while in Burgundy were just a bit too severe for my battered palate at

the end of a long day, and I found that in this context, a bit of buffering sweetness was very important for my enjoyment of the Champagne in question. While my drinking a glass of Champagne at the end of a long day of tasting is hardly a market paradigm for which producers should be aiming in general, it did put into perspective the idea that Champagne makers do need to take into account the wide variety of end-user palates that their wines are going to find in the market, and not just follow the current fashion of drier and drier bottlings. If it took me four days to finish a bottle of Madame Marie-Noëlle Ledru's vintage Blanc de Noirs bottling, because of its very minimal *dosage*, one has to imagine that there are less-seasoned palates out there who are simply not going to understand the excitement of the wine because of its very low *dosage*.

The key consideration in this regard seems to me to be the amount of time that the producer is willing or able to grant the wine in question to age *sur latte* in the cellars prior to disgorgement and release. There are not a lot of smaller domaines that can let their Extra Brut age fully six years on its fine lees, as is the case with the fine Jacques Defrance non-vintage Extra Brut, and if one is going to age the wine for a relatively shorter period *sur latte*, the acids are bound to be rather tensile if the wine is drunk- unless the buyer gives it some extended cellaring time. Those young, tensile acids in Extra Brut bottlings were emphatically not what my tired palate needed at the end of some of those long days in the cellar, and I am sure that they can be found to be equally formidable by a fairly wide segment of the Champagne market. If Champagne in general is going to continue to make advances as a wine to be drunk at any point in a meal, rather than just as an *aperitif* or as a celebratory wine, then growers will need to consider more carefully the role of *dosage* in the long-term future of these beautiful wines, and not just jump on the bandwagon of Extra Brut and Brut Nature. As I was working my way through the wine list at Maison du Colombier in Beaune one evening, there were dozens of wines that I love on the Champagne list that I passed over, simply because their *dosage* was too low for where my palate was at that point in the day, as well as the fact that I intended to drink the wine with the entire meal. It is just something to keep in mind for decision makers in the Champagne region, as there are not all that many producers who can age their Brut Nature or Extra Brut bottlings as long as is necessary for the acids to soften up a bit and allow the wine to drink with style and generosity. For smaller estates, the option to age a wine *sur latte* for three and a half or four years is often just not economically feasible, and a bit of discreet *dosage* may go a long way towards making their younger wines more enjoyable to drink right out of the blocks.

Non-Vintage Extra Brut

Jacques Defrance Extra Brut NV (Épernay)

The new release of Jacques Defrance non-vintage Extra Brut is from the base year of 2008 and spent fully six years aging *sur latte* prior to disgorgement, and then an additional year in bottle before it was released from the cellars. The wine was finished with a *dosage* of five grams per liter and is a fifty-fifty blend of chardonnay and pinot noir. The complex bouquet offers up a fine combination of apple, white peach, fresh-baked bread, lovely soil tones and a nice touch of hazelnut in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a fine core, excellent balance, refined *mousse* and a very long, elegant finish. The extended aging on its fine lees has buffered the acidity here beautifully and this wine is drinking with great style today, but clearly has many years of life ahead of it as well. High class juice. 2016-2030. **91+**.

Non-Vintage Blanc de Blancs Brut

Cédric Bouchard “le Haut Lemblé” Blanc de Blancs Brut “V10” Disgorged April 2014

The Blanc de Blancs “le Haut Lemblé” bottling from Cédric Bouchard is his smallest single vineyard, hailing from a parcel of chardonnay that is only eleven *ares* in size. This is bottled under the Roses de Jeanne label, but I simply could not fit all of the information in the above title for the wine. The 2010 “le Haut Lemblé” is an excellent wine, offering up a pure and vibrant bouquet of apple, lime, flinty minerality, citrus peel, just a touch of sourdough bread and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and still quite primary, with a good core, pinpoint bubbles and good mineral drive on the long and still fairly brisk finish. This is still a very young wine and really needs at least a few more years in the cellar to start to blossom. 2020-2045+. **92+**.

Henriot Blanc de Blancs Brut NV (Reims)

This was drunk at the Hostellerie des Clos in Chablis during my November trip to Burgundy. As there is no date of disgorgement on the back label, I am not sure if this is the same release as the most current in the US market, but the wine was showing very nicely. The bouquet offers up a classic blend of pear, lemon, chalky minerality, bread dough and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nicely focused, with refined *mousse*, lovely focus and balance and a long, zesty finish. 2016-2035. **91+**.



Non-Vintage Brut

Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne “Côte de Béchalín” Brut “V08” Disgorged April 2015

The “V08” code on the label of Cédric Bouchard’s Côte de Béchalín of course identifies this wine as from the 2008 vintage. This is a Blanc de Noirs bottling and the wine is lovely, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of apple, lime, pear, complex, chalky minerality, bread dough and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with refined *mousse*, fine focus and grip and a long, precise finish. Good juice that is starting to drink very well today, but has years and years of life still ahead of it. 2016-2035+. **92.**

Bernard Brémont “Grand Cru” Brut NV (Ambonnay)

I really wish the folks at Champagne Brémont would start putting the date of disgorgement on a back label, as this wine had obviously just been disgorged and should really have been kept in the cellar for a few more months to settle back into proper balance. For folks who may not have had this experience, when a wine is just disgorged, the *dosage* tends to float above the structure of the wine and the overall impression is of far more sweetness on the backend than is really there. Once the *dosage* is fully integrated into the wine, things returns to normal. I bought this bottle in Beaune in November and it was not in proper shape on the palate, though the nose was pretty. Scents of apple, white peach, Ambonnay smokiness, a fine base of soil and sourdough bread were all very promising. Deep, full-bodied and solid at the core, with elegant *mousse*, but overt sweetness on the long and vibrant finish spoiled the enjoyment of the wine and made it impossible to score fairly. Too bad, as I was thirsty after eighty 2015 Burgundies that day! ???

Alexandre Chartogne “Lettre de Mon Meunier” Extra Brut NV (Merfy)

I reported on this wine eighteen months ago, when I tasted it with Monsieur Chartogne at the family *maison* in Merfy. It is one hundred percent pinot meunier from the base year of 2010 and was finished with a *dosage* of four grams per liter. The additional bottle age has really allowed the wine to blossom nicely and I clearly underrated it a tad during my visit to the estate in the spring of 2015. The bouquet is deep, pure and complex, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of apple, white peach, gentle floral tones, *patissière*, complex minerality and a dollop of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and rock solid at the core, with very refined *mousse*, brisk acids and excellent length and grip on the focused finish. Though racy on the palate, this wine is nicely balanced and is already drinking pretty well, though it will be even better with further bottle age. 2016-2035+. **93.**

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut NV (Épernay)

The current release of Alfred Gratien non-vintage Brut is lovely wine, with find depth and complexity evident on both the nose and palate. The bouquet offers up scents of apple, lemon, *patissière*, lovely soil tones, bread dough and gentle smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and very nicely balanced, with a good core, elegant *mousse*, fine grip and a fairly long, still youthful finish. This will age nicely. 2016-2035. **90.**

Marie-Noëlle Ledru Brut NV (Ambonnay)

Madame Ledru makes one of my absolute favorite examples of non-vintage Brut, though she really prefers Extra Brut bottlings and probably only produces this as a nod to the marketplace. The current release is from the base year of 2012, was finished with a *dosage* of five grams per liter and is outstanding on both the nose and palate, offering up a complex nose of apple, white peach, complex chalky minerality, a touch of caraway seed and a topnote of sourdough bread. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and focused, with a lovely core, quite modest *dosage*, elegant *mousse* and a long, poised and very well-balanced finish. This

is lovely out of the blocks and will be even better with a bit of bottle age. To my knowledge, this is her classic blend of eighty-five percent pinot noir and fifteen percent chardonnay. 2016-2035. 92.

Moët et Chandon “Impérial” Brut NV (Épernay)

My tech sheet on the current release of Moët et Chandon non-vintage Brut “Impérial” does not specify the *cépages* precisely, but rather, states that both the pinot noir and pinot meunier percentages range from thirty to forty percent and the chardonnay twenty to thirty percent. Not too precise, but at least it is a ballpark of the blend. The wine is only aged twenty-four months *sur latte* and is finished with a *dosage* of nine grams per liter. The nose is bright and leesy in personality, offering up scents of apple, citrus peel, leesy notes, a good base of soil and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and modestly complex, with a good core, elegant *mousse* and the leesy notes of the nose carrying through on the fairly long finish. Of the three Moët cuvées that I tasted for this report, this was the least interesting. To my palate, a bit more aging *sur latte* is really necessary for this bottling to catch up with the likes of the Brut NV bottlings from folks like Pol Roger and Louis Roederer. That said, this is still a step up from examples I tasted of Brut Impérial a decade ago, so progress is certainly being made. But, the old Champagne mantra that “a *maison* is judged by its non-vintage Brut” needs to be given more weight here. 2016-2030. 86.

Louis Roederer Brut Premier NV (Reims) Served from Magnum

This magnum of Louis Roederer was drunk at dinner in Beaune in November and I have to believe that this is from the previous release of the wine, rather than the most recent iteration reported on in the last feature on Champagne. The wine is showing a nice touch of evolution on both the nose and palate, offering up a complex bouquet of apple, orange, a fine base of soil, bread dough, gentle smokiness and a dollop of citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and starting to show the first vestige of its secondary layers of complexity, with a fine core, elegant *mousse*, fine focus and grip and a long, classy finish. 2016-2035. 92.

Non-Vintage Brut and Extra Brut Rosé

Ayala “Brut Majeur” Rosé NV (Aÿ) Summer 2013 Release

When I last reviewed this release of Ayala non-vintage “Brut Majeur” Rosé, I suggested that a couple of years’ worth of bottle age would allow the wine to blossom nicely. Three and a half years in the cellar has indeed induced the wine to come completely into its own, as the wine now offers up a refined and complex nose of melon, white cherries, orange zest, chalky soil tones, a touch of cinnamon and fresh-baked bread. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite vibrant, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip, pinpoint bubbles and a long, crisp and complex finish. This is really at a nice point in its evolution right now, but there remains plenty of life ahead. 2016-2025. 91.

Bernard Brémont “Grand Cru” Brut Rosé NV (Ambonnay)

There is no information on the date of disgorgement on the back label of this wine, which is unfortunate, as this is always useful to know. In any case, this wine is the family’s classic blend of eighty percent pinot noir and twenty percent chardonnay, with ten percent of the pinot noir still red wine from Ambonnay. The new release is fairly deep in color and offers up a lovely, vibrant nose of cherries, blood orange, wheat toast, chalky soil tones and a topnote of rose petals. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and gently vinous, with a fine core, elegant *mousse* and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. The Brémont family finishes this

cuvée off with a *dosage* of twelve grams per liter, but it has excellent acidity and carries this level beautifully. 2016-2035. **91.**

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé NV (Épernay)

The new bottling of non-vintage Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé is a lovely wine. Like all of the Alfred Gratien bottlings, the *vins clairs* here are fermented and raised in small Burgundy-size barrels and do not undergo malolactic fermentation. The bouquet offers up a fine constellation of strawberries, cherries, wheat toast, lovely soil nuances and a touch of orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and focused, with refined *mousse*, a lovely core fine backend mineral drive and a long, complex and very well-balanced finish. This is a very classy bottle of non-vintage Brut Rosé. 2016-2035. **91.**

Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut Rosé NV (Épernay)

The current release of Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut Rosé is a truly superb bottle of Rosé. The bouquet is pure and refined, wafting from the glass in a youthful blend of white cherries, tangerine, a touch of blood orange, gentle spice tones, warm bread, complex, chalky minerality, dried rose petals and a hint of oak influence in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty, with a superb core, great soil signature, lovely focus and grip, elegant *mousse* and still a fairly serious girdle of acidity that will carry the wine far into the future. This is eminently drinkable today, but this is still a puppy and it will be far more interesting with eight to ten years’ worth of bottle age. It would be so nice if the *maison* would share some of the technical information about these bottlings. Great juice. 2016-2045+. **94.**

Moët et Chandon “Impérial” Brut Rosé NV (Épernay)

On my last couple of trips to the Champagne region, I have been hearing very good things about the goings on at Moët et Chandon these days and I will need to make an appointment to visit and taste here in the spring. Certainly the new release of the non-vintage Impérial Brut Rosé from the *Grande Marque* is a step up from the last iteration of this cuvée that I tasted, more than a decade ago. The *cépages* is approximately half pinot noir (with ten percent of this still red wine), thirty to forty percent pinot meunier (this also includes some still red wine) and ten to twenty percent chardonnay (precise percentages were not given to me) and the wine was finished off with a *dosage* of nine grams per liter. The color is a nice, deep salmon and the bouquet offers up a blend of cherries, blood orange, rye toast, a good base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and crisp, with a good core, elegant *mousse*, bright acids and good length and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. This has excellent acidity to carry the *dosage*, but there seems to be just a touch of backend tannin from the addition of still wine on the finish, that makes this more enjoyable at the table than as an *aperitif*. This is really quite good. 2016-2030+. **89.**

Champagne Bruno Paillard “Première Cuvée” Brut Rosé NV (Reims) Disgorged Jan 2016

The new release of Bruno Paillard’s Première Cuvée Brut Rosé is outstanding, and I am not sure if this is the same cuvée as I reported on in June, with a bit later disgorgement date, or is a new base year. In any case, the wine is again a classic blend of pinot noir and chardonnay and was finished off with a *dosage* of six grams per liter. The wine is quite pale salmon in color and delivers a fine aromatic blend of bing cherries, white peach, rye bread, gentle smokiness, a fine base of chalky minerality, orange peel and dried flowers. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and very well-balanced, with excellent depth in the mid-palate, very elegant *mousse*, excellent backend mineral drive and a very long, vibrant and very well-balanced finish. Lovely juice. 2016-2035+. **93.**

Savart “Bulles de Rosé” Premier Cru Brut NV (Écueil)

Disgorged October 2015

The Savart “Bulles de Rosé” is excellent wine. The *cépages* is seventy percent pinot noir, twenty-two percent chardonnay and eight percent still red wine (also pinot noir). The wine was finished off with a *dosage* of six grams per liter and offers up a very complex and still fairly youthful nose of strawberries, blood orange, chalky soil tones, fresh baked bread, caraway seed, orange zest and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, refined *mousse* and a long, crisp and complex finish. This is superb juice. 2016-2035. 93.



Vintage-Dated Blanc de Blancs Brut and Extra Brut

2008 Janisson Baradon et Fils “Toulette” Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The single vineyard bottling of Toulette from Janisson Baradon et Fils is a single vineyard, mono *cépages* cuvée produced from chardonnay vines that are more than fifty years of age and are cropped at thirty hectoliters per hectare. The *vins clairs* are barrel fermented in older Burgundy casks, with no malo and the wine is finished off with a *dosage* of two grams per liter, though the wine is still labeled as a Brut. The bouquet on the 2008 Toulette is starting to blossom very nicely and show some secondary layers in its constellation of pear, toasted almond, chalky soil tones, brioche, just a whisper of acacia blossoms and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and drinking beautifully, with bright acids, a superb core, elegant *mousse* and outstanding focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This is excellent,

though not quite as long as the single vineyard bottlings made from pinot meunier and pinot noir (see below). 2016-2035. **92.**

2004 Claude Cazals Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut Millésime (Mesnil-sur-Oger)

The 2004 Claude Cazals Extra Brut Blanc de Blancs is a fine bottle in the making, but at age twelve, it is still on the young side and with its low *dosage*, is still a bit severe structurally and in need of further cellaring to soften up a bit and start to drink with generosity. The nose is excellent, wafting from the glass in a mix of pear, hazelnut, chalky soil tones, spring flowers, brioche and a touch of buttery oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, brisk and complex, with a fine core, lovely length and grip, refined *mousse* and plenty of snappiness on the backend from the firm acidity of the vintage. To my palate, I would have loved this wine with a bit more *dosage*, as the flavors and aromatics are really attractive right now, but I would still keep bottles tucked away in the cellar for a few more years and hope the acids mellow out a bit more. 2019-2035+. **92.**

Vintage-Dated Brut and Extra Brut

2012 Janisson Baradon et Fils “Chemin des Conges” Extra Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The Janisson Baradon et Fils “Chemin des Conges” is a single vineyard Blanc de Noirs bottling based entirely on pinot meunier, from vines planted back in the 1960s, though this information does not appear on the label. The *vins clairs* are fermented and aged in used Burgundy casks, do not go through malo and the wine spends a minimum of three years aging *sur latte*. The 2012 Chemin des Conges is young and shows exceptional potential, as it wafts from the glass in a complex and very deep aromatic blend of peach, *patissière*, lovely soil tones, a touch of orange zest, a bit of oak influence and a gentle topnote of sweet nuttiness. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and beautifully balanced, with great depth at the core, bright, perfectly integrated acids, elegant *mousse* and outstanding length and grip on the still quite youthful finish. The wine is still young and shows its oak a bit on the backend, but this will integrate fully with a bit more bottle age. Yields here are only around thirty hectoliters per hectare and it shows, as this wine is rock solid at the core! I would opt for tucking this wine away in the cellar for at least a couple of years and allow it to fully blossom, though it is already quite easy to drink in its youth! 2018-2040. **92+.**

2012 Janisson Baradon et Fils “Tue Boeuf” Extra Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The 2012 Janisson Baradon et Fils “Tue Boeuf” Extra Brut is another single vineyard, single varietal bottling, this time produced entirely from pinot noir, from a *lieu à dit* near Épernay. Like the Chemin des Conges bottling, the *vins clairs* are barrel-fermented, do not undergo malolactic fermentation and the wine was finished off with a *dosage* of two grams per liter after aging a minimum of three years on its fine lees. This is the only single vineyard bottling from Janisson Baradon that I had tasted previously, as a friend shared a bottle of this cuvée with me six or seven years ago and I was very impressed at the time. The 2012 version is youthful and excellent, with a more refined, but also more tightly-knit nose and palate than the Chemin des Conges. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of tangerine, tart apple, complex minerality, bread dough, lemon zest and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, frothy *mousse* and excellent focus and grip on the very long and still very youthful finish. Whereas the Chemin des Conges is relatively approachable in its youth, this is still very snappy on the palate and really demands some bottle age to blossom fully. It will be dynamite when it is ready to drink! 2020-2045. **93.**

2010 Marie-Noëlle Ledru “Cuvée de Goulté” Bland ce Noirs Extra Brut NV (Ambonnay)

The 2010 Cuvée de Goulté from Madame Ledru is young and very promising. The bouquet is deep, pure and still youthfully primary, offering up scents of white peach, hazelnut, superb minerality, a hint of tangerine and *patissière*. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite brisk in personality, with elegant *mousse*, racy acids and excellent length and grip on the almost painfully youthful finish. Tuck this excellent wine away in the cellars for several years! 2020-2045+. **93+**.

2008 Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The 2008 Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” is a superb bottle of Champagne that is just starting to blossom on both the nose at age eight, but has many, many years still in front of it! The complex bouquet is just starting to develop a bit of toastiness in its blend of apple, white peach, chalky soil tones, a touch of *patissière*, dried flowers and just a whisper of oak influence in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a lovely core, refined *mousse*, bright and well-integrated acids and excellent mineral drive on the long and very well-balanced finish. As this wine does not undergo malolactic, this is still a tad on the young side on the palate, but it is accessible today and will be even better with a few more years in the cellar. It will age beautifully and I would be tempted to tuck this wine away in the cellar for five or six years and really let it blossom! 2016-245+. **94**.

2004 Benoît Lahaye Extra Brut Millésime (Bouzy)

Disgorged October 2014

I love Benoît Lahaye’s wines and his 2004 Extra Brut Millésime is an outstanding example of this fine, long distance runner of a vintage. The wine is composed of a blend of seventy percent pinot noir and thirty percent chardonnay, with all of the *vins clairs* barrel-fermented for this bottling and the wine aged *sur latte* under cork, rather than crown cap. The wine is starting to blossom beautifully at age twelve and offers up a complex and very refined bouquet of apple, white peach, *patissière*, gentle nuttiness, a fine base of soil, plenty of smokiness and an exotic, gentle topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, very elegant *mousse* and impressive length and grip on the focused and perfectly-buffered finish. With the lower *dosage* of Extra Brut, extended cellar aging was necessary, but as Monsieur Lahaye gave this wine nine and a half years on its fine lees, it has hit the ground running! 2016-2035. **94**.

2000 Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The 2000 Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Millésime is a very strong example of the vintage and at age fifteen, it is right in the midst of its apogee of peak drinkability. The bouquet offers up a complex constellation of apple, peach, fresh-baked bread, a fine base of soil tones, gentle hazelnut, fresh nutmeg and a topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a fine core, elegant *mousse*, lovely focus and balance, bright acids and a long, vibrant and detailed finish. 2016-2035. **93**.

Vintage-Dated Brut and Extra Brut Rosé

2008 Moët et Chandon “Grand Vintage” Brut Rosé (Épernay)

The 2008 Moët et Chandon “Grand Vintage” Brut Rosé is comprised of a *cépages* of forty-six percent pinot noir, thirty-two percent chardonnay and twenty-two percent pinot meunier, with fully twenty percent of the pinot noir added as still red wine. The bottling spent seven years aging *sur latte* and was finished off with a low *dosage* of five grams per liter. The

bouquet is excellent, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of cherries, blood orange, wheat bread, chalky soil tones, a touch of clove and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and light on its feet, with a fine core, elegant *mousse*, lovely nascent complexity, beautifully integrated acids and excellent length and grip on the classy finish. The higher percentage of chardonnay in the blend here gives this wine more lift and backend refinement than the non-vintage Impérial Rosé bottling. Most impressive! 2016-2035. **92.**