

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman

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Number Seventy-Two

- ❖ *Klaus-Peter Keller's Marvelous 2016ers .* (pages 1-9)
- ❖ *The Outstanding 2016ers from Weingut Willi Schaefer.* (pages 10-15)
- ❖ *The Excellent 2016 Burgundies- Severe Frost Damage and Some Variation Does Not Put the Damper On a Very, Very High-Quality Vintage.* (pages 16-174)
- ❖ *A Bit Of Champagne Tasting For the End Of the Year.* (pages 175-184)

Coming Attractions

- ❖ *Another Full Roster Of Beautifully Mature Wines From Piemonte- Bruno Giacosa, Bartolo Mascarello, Marcarini, Giacomo Conterno, Produttori and Many More.*
- ❖ *Drinking Younger Burgundy: The 2007 and 2008 Red Burgundies Today.*
- ❖ *The Brilliant and Often Overlooked Grand Crus of Latricières-Chambertin and Chapelle-Chambertin.*
- ❖ *A First Look At the Excellent 2016 Vintage In the Northern Rhône.*
- ❖ *Right Time, Right Bank- Recently-Tasted Pomerol and St. Émilion.*
- ❖ *Bodegas Riojanas- Another Of the Great Classicists In Rioja.*
- ❖ *Ric Forman's Iconic Winemaking Career- Charting the Course For California Greatness From Stony Hill to Sterling, Newton and Forman Vineyards.*
- ❖ *Anselme Selosse of Champagne Jacques Selosse- Paving the Way in Avize. The 2013 and 2014 White Burgundy Vintages- Drinking Now?, Château Pichon-Lalande, The Hill of Corton, The 2017 German Vintage, Champagne Bruno Paillard, More 2016 Beaujolais, The Annual Loire Valley Report, Nicole Chanrion, Château Ausone, Off the Beaten-Path Italian Wines, Château Montrose, Louis Boillot's Pommard "les Croix Noires", Special Club Champagne, Catching Up On Sauternes, Aged Muscadet, Clape Cornas, Mature Loire Reds, The 2001 Bordeaux Vintage, Marquis de Laguiche, Recently-Tasted Alsace Wines and a Special Feature on Chambertin and Clos de Bèze.*

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KLAUS-PETER KELLER'S STELLAR 2016ERS



Klaus-Peter Keller and Tino Siewert tasting pinot noir in the vineyards during the harvest of 2017.

As I had knee surgery in March of 2017, I did not have the chance to make my customary spring trip to taste the new vintage in Germany. Klaus-Peter Keller very kindly offered to meet me in Burgundy this past November, and in addition to scheduling some Burgundy tastings for himself, he also brought along a range of his 2016ers for us to taste together. So, though I missed most of my favorite estates' wines in 2016, I can at least offer notes on the very, very fine range of 2016ers from this great estate in the town of Flörsheim-Dalsheim in the Rheinhessen. However, our tasting did not go off as originally planned, as Klaus-Peter was accompanied to Beaune by his wife Julia and our dear friend, Tino Siewert, who was one of the top merchants and importers in Germany. I had known Tino for many years and his love for Burgundy was as huge as his love for the wines of Germany (for example, he is Louis-Michel Liger-Belair's importer for Germany) and the four of us had intended to meet up in Beaune and taste the Keller 2016ers together, before settling in for some tasting of Burgundy over the following couple of days. Tragically, this was not to come to pass, as our friend Tino passed away from a heart attack while we were together in Beaune and we were not able to complete our tasting schedule and the wine world lost one of the great gentlemen in its ranks. So, my tasting of the 2016 Keller wines was postponed a week and I ended up working through the wines on my own, rather than tasting them together with Klaus-Peter, Julia and Tino. Consequently, this article is a bit shorter than would normally be the case with the customary background information that Klaus-Peter usually

shares over the course of our extended tastings at the domaine each spring, and also bittersweet for me to write due to Tino's untimely passing during his visit to Beaune in November.

However, despite the sadness that I will probably always associate with this tasting of these stellar 2016ers, there is also a bit of really happy news to share with readers about Weingut Keller, as their outstanding lineup of grand cru vineyards in the Rheinhessen has now been augmented by a very small slice of grand cru on the Mosel: the steep, very old vine parcel of the Schubertslay in the village of Piesport. Klaus-Peter and Julia Keller have taken over this seventy *ares* of vines in a unique subsection of the Goldtröpfchen from Julian Haart. As readers may recall from my last report on my visit with Julian to taste his 2015ers, the very steep Schubertslay is surrounded by red slate outcroppings that create a unique microclimate in this vineyard and which is planted with ungrafted Riesling vines that range all the way up to one hundred and twenty years of age. When I asked Klaus-Peter what he might like to craft from this small parcel, he characteristically replied that "we have no plans about what we want to produce- we will be happy about what nature delivers" and allow this to shape the style of the wine we will make here. He continued, "I think production will be around one Fuder per year." The first person to hear the news was, of course, Tino Siewert, as the Kellers shared news of the agreement with Julian Haart as they drove over from Germany with him to Beaune in November. Klaus-Peter's mother is originally from the Mosel and Klaus-Peter notes that "the region has always been like a second home to us, so it is not like adding a new region to our vineyards, but rather more like coming home to have the possibility to make wine from the Schubertslay- we will do our best." 2018 will be the first vintage of Schubertslay from Weingut Keller and I am already starting to salivate thinking about tasting it in the spring of 2019!

The 2016 growing season in Germany was not a lot different than it was in Burgundy in this year, though German *vignerons* were spared the late April, severe frosts that came to define the vintage in Burgundy. However, they did share in the same constant, rainy weather in May and June, which required constant vigilance in the vineyards to keep mildew and oidium at bay, and the vineyard work was extremely hard, with the soils a muddy mess from constant downpours and never ending clouds and precipitation. By the end of June, the Hügelland had received 492 mm of rain- which is a full year's-worth of precipitation in just the first six months, with most of this falling in the two months of May and June! Happily, as was the case in Burgundy, July brought a respite of beautiful weather and the end of the rains, with plenty of sunshine, correct temperatures for the summer and the vines had a chance to get rolling on a proper growing season. However, all the clouds and rain had left their imprint and at the start of August the maturity of the bunches was fully fifteen to twenty days behind normal in this area of the Rheinhessen. It was going to take perfect weather in both September and October to bring everything to a successful conclusion in 2016, and this is exactly what Mother Nature delivered! September remained quite warm and with true Indian Summer conditions, the ripening caught up nicely. October was more of the same, with temperatures reverting to more customary levels for autumn, but the sunshine continuing and cool evenings helping to keep acidities up nice and high as the grapes continued to ripen and build up dry extract. Klaus-Peter and his team started picking in late October, but with the weather staying fine into November, plenty of the picking trickled over into that month as well. There are a few Auslesen and Beerenauslesen in the Keller cellars in 2016, but that is not the strength of the vintage, as it is the golden berries and beautiful thick skins of these autumn grapes that define this vintage, which is strong from the basic entry

level wines all the way up to the Grosses Gewächs bottlings. As is the case in Burgundy, while no one would have believed it on June 1st of 2016, it has turned out to be an outstanding and very, very high quality vintage!

The following wines were all tasted during the second half of my November trip to Burgundy, as Klaus-Peter and Julia Keller left all of the samples with me in the wake of Tino's passing and I at least had the possibility to share these beautiful wines with a few other friends who happened to be in Beaune during the same time, so the samples were nicely spread out amongst fans of the estate. One of my friends visiting in Burgundy at this time had already tasted the 2016ers with Klaus-Peter at the winery back in March and commented that the wines were decidedly more closed in November than they had been in the spring, so my notes that follow may turn out actually being on the conservative side for the wines. While Klaus-Peter and Julia Keller arrived in Beaune with fully two cases of 2016ers, this is obviously not their entire range from the vintage, so I do not have notes on as many different cuvées from this year as I do when I visit and taste *sur place* at their estate in Flörsheim-Dalsheim each spring. I have appended a few recent tasting notes on other wines from Weingut Keller to the end of this article, as I have been drinking a few of the bottles out of my cellar in recent times and Klaus-Peter and Julia also tucked in a bottle of the 2013 G-Max in the boxes of 2016ers to share during the tasting. As is Klaus-Peter's custom, we tasted the 2015 pinot noir cuvées alongside of the 2016 white wines. Of the 2015 pinots, the Bürgel and the Frauenberg were bottled in August of 2017, with the Morstein still in cask in November, but due for bottling before the end of the year.

Pinot Noir

2015 Bürgel Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

The 2015 Bürgel was all raised in two, three and four wine casks in 2015, which has given the wine a very, very discreet base of oak. Klaus-Peter was very careful not to let the ripeness get out of hand in 2015, as he noted "the vintage was no dissimilar to Burgundy in this year" and the Bürgel ended up at 12.9 percent alcohol (without any chaptalization) and is very, very elegant in profile. The wine offers up an excellent nose of cherries, red berries, a touch of bitter chocolate, a lovely base of dark soil tones and a dollop of cinnamon in the upper register from the whole clusters. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and beautifully balanced, with lovely intensity of flavor, fine focus and grip, moderate tannins and a very long, vibrant and classy finish. A marvelous Spätburgunder! 2022-2050+. **93.**

2015 Frauenberg Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs (Selection Massale)- Weingut Keller

The 2015 Frauenberg was also bottled in August and was showing beautifully in early November. This is more black fruity in this vintage than the lovely Bürgel, delivering a deep and pure bouquet of black cherries, sweet dark berries, a touch of cola, woodsmoke, lovely limestone soil nuances and a touch of both cinnamon and nutmeg from the stems. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a superb core of fruit, impressive transparency and excellent length and grip on the suave, ripely tannic and tangy finish. Great juice. 2023-2055+. **94.**

2015 Morstein Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs "alte Reben"- Weingut Keller

The 2015 Morstein Spätburgunder is a gorgeous wine in the making, with a beautifully sappy and black fruity bouquet of black cherries, sweet dark berries, a hint of cola, dark chocolate, woodsmoke, a beautifully complex base of chalky soil tones and a touch of nutmeg in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and already quite complex, with a

sappy core of fruit, great transparency, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, tangy and perfectly balanced finish. The wine today is quite a bit more primary on the palate than the nose suggests and this superb vintage of Morstein pinot noir will need a good eight to ten years to really start to blossom. It will be stunning in the fullness of time. 2025-2055+. **95.**



Julia Keller (center), friends and family in the “new baby” in the Keller lineup, the Schubertslay.

Scheurebe and Silvaner

2016 Scheurebe Trocken- Weingut Keller AP #4

The 2016 Scheurebe Trocken from Weingut Keller is a pretty youthful wine today and could do with a bit of bottle age to properly blossom, as the wine is a bit closed up behind its lovely girdle of acidity. The wine only comes in at twelve percent in this vintage, but it is rock solid and offers up a focused and classy bouquet of tart orange, grapefruit, lovely soil tones, a touch of bee pollen, wild yeasts and citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very mineral in personality, with plenty of core, bright, well-integrated acids and a long, gently spritzy finish. This is bone-dry and nascently complex, but real generosity on the palate is still several years away, despite the wine being quite light on its feet out of the blocks. 2020-2040. **90.**

2016 Silvaner Trocken “Feuervogel” alte Reben- Weingut Keller AP #17

The old vine bottling of Silvaner from Klaus-Peter is outstanding in 2016, coming in at a ripe and beautifully balanced thirteen percent alcohol. The youthful bouquet jumps from the glass in a blend of grapefruit, musky floral tones, orange peel, a touch of black currant, a beautiful base of minerality and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and focused, with a rock solid core, bright, beautifully integrated acids, superb balance

and a long, complex and racy finish. Silvaner simply does not get any better than this bottling in my experience! This is approachable today, but really deserves a few years in the cellar to blossom and start to show some of its secondary layers of complexity and I would not be surprised to find a few years down the road that my score is conservative. 2018-2035+. **91+**.

Riesling Trocken

2016 Riesling “von der Fels” Trocken- Weingut Keller

The 2016 von der Fels bottling of Riesling Trocken is once again a superb value from Klaus-Peter Keller, as this wine offers up the depth and complexity of most producers' Grosses Gewächs bottlings at a fraction of the price. The bouquet is pure and beautifully detailed, wafting from the glass in a blend of tart orange, wild yeasts, lemongrass, a very complex base of limestone minerality, petrol and citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and very elegant in profile this year, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a very long, vibrant and complex finish. This is already drinking very nicely, but will age for several decades and only improve as the years go by. 2018-2040. **92+**.

2016 Westhofen Riesling Trocken- Weingut Keller AP #44

The Westhofen Riesling Trocken is made from the relatively younger vines in the Morstein vineyard, with their average age around thirty years. The bouquet of the 2016 version is outstanding, delivering a complex and almost exotic mix of grapefruit, lemongrass, wild yeasts, a saline note that reminds me of the ocean, chalky minerality and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and racy, with a fairly powerful personality for the 2016 vintage, a rock solid core, great focus and grip and a long, nascently complex finish. This needs time to truly start to blossom. 2022-2055. **94**.

2016 Pettenthal Riesling Grosses Gewächs - Weingut Keller

The stunning 2016 Pettenthal GG was sold at auction in Bad Kreuznach in September of this year. The wine is a very refined 12.5 percent octane and delivers marvelous promise in its pure, complex and almost exotic bouquet of lemon, white peach, wild yeasts, a gentle touch of petrol, really lovely red slate undertow, lemongrass and citrus zest. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and laser-like, with a lovely core, snappy, ripe acidity, fine mid-palate depth and simply amazing backend mineral drive on the very, very long, electric finish. This is a very, very young wine and will need at least a decade to start to stir, but its ultimate complexity is already laid out for all to see and all that is necessary here is plenty of self-restraint to allow it to reach its apogee. 2026-2075. **96+**.

2016 Hipping Riesling “H.M.” Grosse Lage- Weingut Keller

The Hipping 2016 this year comes in at only 11.5 percent octane and Klaus-Peter Keller decided its optimal balance point was above the nine grams per liter of residual sugar allowed for Grosses Gewächs, so the wine comes with no official Grand Cru classification. No matter, as the wine is absolutely brilliant! The 2016 Hipping offers up a beautiful aromatic constellation of apple, white peach, a hint of grapefruit, wild yeasts, red slate, apple blossoms, a touch of lilac and bee pollen in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, filigreed and fullish, with gorgeous depth and nascent complexity, ripe, classy acids, laser-like focus and a long, dancing and vibrant finish. This is the outlier stylistically amongst the grand crus in 2016, but it is every bit as good as the top Grosses Gewächs bottlings of 2016. 2025-2075. **95+**.

2016 Kirchspiel Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

The 2016 Kirchspiel from Klaus-Peter Keller is a beautifully refined example of this marvelous vintage, coming in at an even thirteen percent octane and offering up a very pure,

nascently complex nose of grapefruit, green orange, lemongrass, complex limestone soil tones, wild yeasts and petrol. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, focused and racy, with a superb core of fruit, great backend mineral drive, ripe, buried acids and great length and grip on the complex and utterly seamless finish. This is a young wine that deserves a good decade in the cellar, and it may shut down for a while, but it is so beautifully balanced that it is already pretty easy to drink in its remarkable youth. 2026-2065+. **95.**

2016 Hubacker Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

The Hubacker is the largest of the Keller family's vineyard holdings, totaling four hectares, and this was one of the first great *terroirs* that the family purchased. The yellow limestone here sets this wine apart a bit stylistically from the rest of the Hügelland grand crus, as the wine can often be a bit broader-shouldered in its youth. However, the inherent elegance of the 2016 vintage has offset this a bit, as the 2016 Hubacker is svelte and very refined this year. The bouquet offers up a youthful blend of fresh pineapple, sweet grapefruit, complex limestone tones, a touch of lemongrass, gentle notes of petrol and wild yeasts, lemon peel and a touch of Chablis-like wet stone. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and racy, with great focus and grip, lovely nascent complexity and a very long, tangy and perfectly balanced finish. This came in at 12.5 percent in the classic vintage of 2016 and this seems to be a perfect point of balance for this superb wine. 2030-2070. **95.**

2016 Morstein Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

The 2016 Morstein from Klaus-Peter Keller is a legend in the making. This too is only 12.5 percent alcohol and simply brilliant on both the nose and palate. The bouquet soars from the glass in a blaze of tangerine, sweet grapefruit, kaleidoscopic limestone minerality, just a whisper of petrol, citrus blossoms, a discreet touch of wild yeasts and a topnote of lemon zest. On the palate the wine is pure, deep, full-bodied and beautifully structured, with a rock solid core, crisp acids and stunning transparency taking over from the mid-palate back and utterly defining the wine on the very, very long and snappy finish. Magical young wine. 2030-2075. **97+.**

2016 Abtserde Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

The 2016 Abtserde is the most overtly (and beautifully) mineral of all the Grosses Gewächs this year in the Keller lineup, as the limestone minerality just rises up from the depths here on both the nose and palate. The very refined and complex bouquet offers up scents of pink grapefruit, lemon, green apple, layer upon layer of limestone, citrus zest and white flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very, very precise, with a superb core, racy acids and absolutely flawless focus and grip on the very long and balanced finish. This too is a very young wine and not one of the most powerful examples of Abtserde ever crafted by Klaus-Peter, but despite its impeccably balance out of the blocks, it is going to need at least a decade to really blossom. It should prove to be one of the legendary vintages of Abtserde produced to date by Klaus-Peter Keller. 2030-2075. **97+.**

2016 G-Max Riesling- Weingut Keller

The 2016 vintage of G-Max is just an outstanding bottle in the making. The pure, deep and slightly exotic nose offers up sweet grapefruit, tart orange, wild yeasts, complex minerality, a hint of blood orange, incipient smokiness, lemongrass and orange peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full, pure and still rather reserved in profile, with a rock solid core, great focus and grip, ripe, racy acids and stunning length and grip on the seamlessly balanced finish. This has stunning backend energy and is once again the pick of the litter amongst the dry Rieslings in the Keller cellars in 2016, but it seems that the gap between this bottling and several of the other Grosses Gewächs bottlings gets smaller and smaller with each passing year. 2030-2075. **98.**



Noble Sweet Wines

2016 Riesling Limestone Kabinett- Weingut Keller AP #9

The 2016 Riesling Limestone Kabinett from Weingut Keller is made from a selection from the Kirchspiel and Abtserde vineyards, with this vintage coming in at nine percent alcohol and having just over thirty grams per liter of residual sugar, which seems to be absolutely devoured by the limestone minerality and acids here, so that the perception is of an essentially dry wine. This beautifully filigreed and elegant rendition of Kabinett, offering up a pure and nascently complex bouquet of white peach, a touch of bee pollen, white flowers, very complex chalky minerality, discreet notes of petrol and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and beautifully transparent, with bright acids, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and dancing finish. A lovely wine. 2018-2040. **91.**

2016 Niersteiner Pettenthal Riesling Kabinett- Weingut Keller AP #20

The 2016 Pettenthal Kabinett is a marvelously delicate wine, with perfectly ripe grapes delivering a myriad of red slate minerality in the aromatic constellation of apple, delicate peach tones, petrol, kaleidoscopic slate minerality, a bit of wild yeasts and a gently floral topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, medium-bodied and racy, with great acid drive, plenty of mineral definition and a very long, pure and youthful finish. Whereas the Limestone Kabinett is already quite tasty, this beautiful Kabinett gives the impression of being a very young wine still and in

need of some extended bottle age to allow the aromatics to blossom. It will be a reference point example of Kabinett in due course, but patience is necessary. 2021-2055+. **93.**

2016 Niersteiner Hipping Riesling Kabinett Versteigerung - Weingut Keller AP #21

For at least the second year in a row, the Hipping Kabinett was an auction wine made available only in Bad Kreuznach in September. One whiff of the nose and I can very clearly see why Klaus-Peter decided to send this young and beautiful wine to the auctions. The bouquet is still very young, but already filigreed in its blend of fruit, complex slate minerality, petrol and esthery floral tones. Scents of white peach, apple, wild yeasts, petrol, delicate mineral elements, a touch of tangerine and very delicate floral tones in the upper register all emerge as the wine has a chance to blossom in the glass. On the palate the wine is pure, medium-bodied and even more filigreed than the Pettenthal, with lovely intensity of flavor, bright acids and laser-like focus on the long and nascently complex finish. Breathtakingly beautiful Kabinett! 2024-2055+. **95.**

2016 Westhofener Abtserde Riesling Spätlese- Weingut Keller AP #22

The Abtserde Spätlese shows great promise in 2016. A beautifully complex and youthful bouquet jumps from the glass in a blend of passion fruit, tangerine, chalky soil tones, wild yeasts, orange blossoms and the first notes of the honeycomb to come. The wine is deep, pure and fullish on the palate, with lovely focus and balance, a fine core, excellent mineral drive and a long, complex and vibrant finish. This wine has beautiful lift on the very refined and promising finish. 2021-2060. **94+.**

2016 Niersteiner Pettenthal Riesling Auslese- Weingut Keller AP #24

The 2016 Pettenthal Auslese is every bit as delicate and filigreed as the two Kabinetten from Nierstein in this classic vintage, but with the depth and nascent complexity of a wine that will ultimately outshine the two marvelous Kabinetten. The bouquet is still very youthful, but already marvelously complex, delivering scents of white peach, pear, wild yeasts, honeycomb, esthery floral tones vaguely reminiscent of acacia blossoms and violets and a beautiful undertow of slate minerality. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and electric with ripe acids, with great focus and complexity, stunning balance and a very, very long, vibrant finish. I get absolutely no sense of botrytis here and imagine this was simply made from clean, golden berries. A great, great wine. 2024-2090. **97.**

2016 Westhofener Abtserde Riesling Auslese- Weingut Keller AP #26

The 2016 Westhofener Abtserde Riesling Auslese from Weingut Keller is a marvelous wine, offering up a pure and vibrant bouquet of sweet pear, a touch of fresh pineapple, honeycomb, a beautiful base of limestone, apple blossoms and a esthery topnote of bee pollen. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and fullish, with marvelous filigree, bright, racy acids and great nascent complexity on the very long, very pure and dancing finish. I love the backend limestone minerality that drives this wine on the finish, marrying with the gorgeous fruit to produce a truly spectacular bottle of Auslese. 2024-2090. **97.**

2016 Niersteiner Hipping Riesling Beerenauslese- Weingut Keller AP #27

The Beerenauslese from the Hipping shows all of the delicacy that this vineyard has been famous for down through the centuries, tied to the most beautiful expression of clean and gentle botrytis. The wine offers up a pure and exotic nose of pear, white cherries, lilacs, a lovely touch of slate minerality, fruit blossoms and bee pollen. On the palate the wine is pure, medium-bodied and hauntingly balanced, with an ethereal lightness of step that is very rare with BA. The acids are bright, ripe and electric and the wine is very, very long, complex and vibrant. Just a stunning bottle of Beerenauslese! 2020-2100. **97.**

Other Keller Vintages Tasted Recently

2013 G-Max Riesling- Weingut Keller

The 2013 G-Max has not yet started to really blossom, but there are signs of secondary layers of complexity starting to stir on both the nose and palate and things are starting to move here below the surface and it will not be all that long until this wine is really starting to drink with generosity. The bouquet offers up a lovely blend of apple, tangerine, a touch of grapefruit, salty limestone, still just a bit of wild yeasts, lemongrass and citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and very racy, with a blossoming attack, outstanding mid-palate depth and enormous backend energy and mineral drive on the long, complex and zesty finish. This is a great, great wine that is already very easy to drink, but still climbing in quality and will be even better with a bit more bottle age. 2020-2065+. **97.**

2010 Pettenthal Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

I was expecting the 2010 Pettenthal to still be pretty buttoned up behind its excellent girdle of acidity, but this bottle was really showing well and starting to drink with generosity. The bouquet is deep, pure and expressive, wafting from the glass in a fine combination of passion fruit, sweet grapefruit, petrol, a beautifully complex base of slate, dried flowers and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and supremely elegant in profile, with a fine core, ripe acids and superb backend mineral drive on the very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. Great juice. 2018-2040+. **95+.**

2006 Abtserde Riesling Grosses Gewächs- Weingut Keller

I have been dipping into my cache of 2006ers from Klaus-Peter on occasion of late, just to see how the wines are doing as they pass their eleventh year in bottle. This bottle of Abtserde is starting to really drink beautifully and is one of the most developed and open 2006ers that I have tasted from the estate in the last year. The deep and utterly beautiful bouquet delivers a fine constellation of apple, an exotic touch of guava, a complex base of limestone minerality, petrol, orange peel and still a lovely topnote of wild yeasts. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and still plenty racy, with a fine core, excellent focus and grip and a long, vibrant and wide open finish. The 2006 Abtserde is just reaching its plateau of maturity and has decades of life still ahead of it, but if you happen to have a bottle handy, this is a very, very good time to start drinking it! 2018-2035+. **96.**

**WEINGUT WILLI SCHAEFER'S BEAUTIFULLY
ETHEREAL AND CLASSIC 2016ERS**



Christophe and Andrea Schaefer very kindly sent me the range of their 2016ers this past fall, after I had let them know I would not be able to make my customary visit to the winery in Graach in the spring of 2017, due to my knee surgery at that time. With the busy schedule of a winegrowing family with two young sons, the wines did not arrive to brighten my doorstep until the latter half of November of 2017, and with my almost as busy schedule trying to get the notes from my November Burgundy trip written up first, I was not able to sit down to this amazingly pure and elegant range of middle Mosel Riesling until the second of the New Year, making 2018 a very, very fine tasting year out of the blocks! The 2016 vintage in the middle Mosel was marked by a late flowering and two passes of hail through the village of Graach and its neighbors, with the first coming through at the end of May, and then a second, lighter bout with hail in early August. Given how dry the second half of the growing season was in Germany (as was also the case in Burgundy in 2016), the hail-damaged berries simply dried up and fell off of the vines, concentrating yields in the parcels that were hit by the second round of hail, but otherwise not affecting the quality of the grapes that were unscathed from this storm. As Christophe Schaefer observed, “the hail in August may have actually been beneficial for us, as it cut back yields enough in those vines to allow the sugars to mount nicely and we were able to

making a bit of Auslese from those parcels.” However, the very dry conditions in August, September and early October meant that there was virtually no botrytis to be found out in the bunches and Christophe categorizes 2016 as really a “classic Kabinett and Spätlese vintage”, and the breadth of superb bottlings at these two levels is very impressive from the Schaefer family. With sugar levels quite a bit higher in the plots hit by the second round of hail, there was the possibility in 2016 to produce three really refined, non-botrytized Auslesen from the Domprobst and one from the Himmelreich vineyard. The estate began selected harvesting on October 11th of 2016 and brought in their last bunches at the end of the month. As was the case in the 2015 vintage, given the strength of the growing season of 2016 was in classic Prädikat bottlings, there is again no Grosses Gewächs produced a Weingut Schaefer in this vintage, but fans of drier-styled Rieslings would be well-served to snap up the straight 2016 Graacher Trocken bottling, which is of excellent quality again this year.

Tasting through this lovely range of elegant and beautifully balanced 2016ers, one thing that strikes me about these wines is that they are a bit more defined by their refined fruit tones this year than their underlying minerality, and this is most evident when tasting the offerings from the Himmelreich vineyard. It is possible that the high temperatures that characterized the month of September of 2016 might have helped craft this perception of a more fruit-driven vintage (at least out of the blocks) in 2016, as the sugars climbed pretty dramatically during the heat of September. Given how cold and wet the first couple of months of the growing season had been in the middle Mosel, the sunny days and high temperatures were essential to get the vines back on schedule and without this, it would have been a very uncharacteristically lean vintage in this sector of Germany (harkening back to the decade of the 1970s in style), but the beautiful Indian Summer weather allowed sugars to climb briskly and the vines were pretty much back on schedule nicely by the start of October. However, when sugars climb quickly, it is never the same as when they move up incrementally over the course of the second half of the growing season, and the perception of the minerality in the wines of 2016 has to take a backseat at the present time to the beautiful and very elegant fruit tones of the vintage. It is not that the minerality here is absent, but in the Domprobst and Himmelreich, the underlying *terroir* of these two grand crus usually plays such a defining role in the younger wines of a new vintage, and this is particularly true when the vintage in question is not a botrytis year, as is the case with the 2016ers. But, the dichotomy of the growing season of 2016, with such difficult and cool weather for the first half and such dry and hot conditions on the backend, eventually leading to a classic October, has shaped the style of the wines and tilted them a bit in the direction of the fruit components of the wines in these early days, so it is a quite uniquely proportioned vintage out of the blocks when viewed within the context of the interplay of minerality and fruit. Whether the underlying minerality will assert itself more vigorously with bottle age is one of the very interesting questions for the evolution of this vintage in bottle, and which we will not know the answer to for another decade or two. But, as the notes below will attest, even if this does not prove to be the case, the wines will have no difficulty delighting fans of the estate with their glorious array of pure, pristine fruit tones and framing expressions of minerality.

2016 Graacher Riesling Trocken AP #6- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Estate Riesling Trocken from the Schaefer family is a lovely follow-up to the excellent 2015 version. This particular sample was tasted from a screwcap finished bottle, which I assume is the version that came to the US, but I do not know if the wine is sealed under natural

cork for other markets. The bouquet on the 2016 Estate Trocken offers up a fine blend of pear, white cherry, petrol, slate and a full panoply of spring flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, fullish and just a touch spritzy from trapped CO₂, with lovely depth and detail, bright, ripe acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and balanced finish. This was just a touch bitter from its closure when first opened, but with a few minutes in decanter, blossomed to show properly and very well indeed. 2018-2035+. **90.**

2016 Graacher Riesling Feinherb AP # 7- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Graacher Riesling Feinherb from Christophe Schaefer is a lovely wine, offering up just a whisper of sweetness on the palate to go with a fine undertow of slate and petrol. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic blend of green apple, a touch of pear, petrol, a lovely signature of Domprobst-like slate and a discreet topnote of lilacs. On the palate the wine is crisp, fullish and beautifully balanced, with bright acids, fine focus and grip and a long, nicely youthful finish. This is as dry as a Kabinett bottling, but a bit fuller in personality. Fine juice. 2018-2035. **89.**

2016 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett AP #2- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Himmelreich Kabinett from Weingut Schaefer has some act to follow, as the 2015 version of this bottling was one of the most beautiful young Kabinetten that I tasted from that vintage. The 2016 Himmelreich Kabinett is nicely ripe and generous in style on the nose, offering up a pure and complex bouquet of pear, tangerine, bee pollen, a lovely base of slate and a topnote of sweet fruit blossoms and lilacs. On the palate the wine is fullish, crisp and shows a lovely interplay of ripe fruit, minerality and an open structural chassis, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Out of the blocks, this cannot match the ethereal filigree of the 2015 version, but it is still a very classy glass of Kabinett. 2018-2040+. **91.**

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett AP #3- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Domprobst Kabinett is a bit more precise and racy than the Himmelreich Kabinett this year and this is going to be a classic in the fullness of time. The bouquet is more reticent out of the blocks than the above wine, offering up a very pure blend of pear, fresh lime, beautiful slate minerality, bee pollen, hints of the petrol to come, and a very discreet savory note that might turn to an exotic touch of laurel or fern with extended bottle age. On the palate the wine is medium-full, delicate and very much defined by its underlying minerality, with a lightness of step of classic Kabinetten, bright, well-integrated acids and lovely length and grip on the complex and dancing finish. This is really lovely in 2016. 2022-2045+. **93+.**

2016 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese AP #17- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Spätlese from Weingut Schaefer is a really lovely and textbook example of this superb vineyard. The bouquet is pure, vibrant and nascently complex, offering up scents of delicious apple, white cherries, vanilla bean, slate and a lovely range of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is bright, fullish and very pure, with bright acids, fine focus and grip and a nice touch of backend minerality carrying the truly beautiful fruit tones to a very successful closing number. Elegant and classic. 2020-2045. **92.**

2016 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spätlese AP #8- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The same subliminal challenge is presented with the 2016 Himmelreich Spätlese from Christophe Schaefer, as he produced an absolutely magical version of this from the 2015 vintage and the memory is hard-pressed to let go and move on! The 2016 Spätlese AP #8 is the only bottling at this Prädikat level from the Himmelreich vineyard this year and the wine offers up a truly lovely nose of lime zest, tangerine, crystalline minerality, a hint of the white cherries to

come and esthery floral tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and more filigreed than the Himmelreich Kabinett this year, with a lovely core, impressive focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and vibrant young finish. I really like this in 2016, but it does not quite possess the same electric cut and grip of the magical 2015 version. However, in its very refined and understated manner, it is going to age long and gracefully and be a great drink at age ten or twelve! 2022-2050+. **92+**.

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese AP #10- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The AP #10 Spätlese from the Domprobst is a very impressive 2016er, delivering excellent precision on both the nose and palate and already a sense of elegance that is not always easy to find in a young Domprobst. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a refined blend of pear, orange zest, petrol, complex slate undertow and a topnote of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is crisp, medium-full and youthfully complex, with a lovely core of fruit, marvelous slate signature, bright, zesty acids and excellent length and grip on the perfectly balanced finish. There is a certain sense of delicacy here that I adore. Really a lovely, lovely Domprobst Spätlese! 2022-2055+. **93**.

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese AP #5- Weingut Willi Schaefer

Christophe Schaefer's AP #5 Spätlese from the Domprobst vineyard shows a bit more of a tropical fruit edge than the AP #10 version, which just adds an additional layer of complexity to both the nose and palate. The bouquet is pure and totally captivating, wafting from the glass in a blend of fresh pineapple, tangerine, a touch of pear, complex slate minerality, bee pollen and a discreet floral topnote redolent of lilacs. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and utterly complete, with a superb core, great focus and grip, impressive backend mineral drive and a very long, dancing and filigreed finish. This exudes the elegance of the 2016 vintage, but retains an extra element of energy to unfold with bottle age that will help it just outpace the very lovely AP #10 Domprobst Spätlese. Gorgeous wine. 2022-2055+. **94**.

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese AP #13 (Auction)- Weingut Willi Schaefer

Having missed the auctions yet again this September in Trier, I was thrilled to see that Andrea and Christophe Schaefer had been kind enough to send along their auction bottling of Spätlese from the Domprobst in my range of samples. This is a stunning young Spätlese, soaring from the glass in a very refined and complex constellation of pear, tangerine, bee pollen, exotic floral tones redolent of iris blossoms and lilacs, a lovely base of slate, a hint of lavender and somewhere in the upper register a faint resinous touch that reminds me of rosemary and is totally exotic. On the palate the wine is pure, refined, fullish and perfectly filigreed, with a lovely core, ripe, seamless acids and a well water quality that I most often find in great Kabinetten, but almost never in Spätlese! This is not as flamboyant as the 2015 version, but this is a magical bottle in its own right and need take a backseat to no wine! 2023-2060. **95**.

2016 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese AP #4- Weingut Willi Schaefer

There is only a single Himmelreich Auslese in the Schaefer cellars in 2016 and it is a lovely wine. The bouquet is very pure and still fairly reserved, but with a bit of coaxing offers up a fine blend of pear, hints of white cherry, delicate minerality, spring flowers and a dollop of savory elements in the upper register that are going to add a quite exotic note to the wine when it starts to blossom. On the palate the wine is refined, full-bodied and light on its feet, with great purity and bounce, an ethereal sense of balance and a very long, bright and crystal clear finish. This is quite an understated Auslese out of the blocks, but the depth and intensity of flavor here suggest it will be quite the extrovert when it has fully blossomed with bottle age. I really like this wine. 2024-2065+. **93**.



Andrea and Christophe Schaefer in front of the entrance to their elegant tasting room.

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese AP #11- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The AP #11 Auslese is one of three from the Domprobst in the 2016 vintage. The wine is beautifully pure and refined on the nose, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of pear, white cherry, a lovely underpinning of slate, lime blossoms, a touch of violet and a topnote of bee pollen. On the palate the wine is precise, full and absolutely seamless, delivering a lovely blend of perfectly ripe fruit and slate, with bright, ripe acids, outstanding focus and grip and a very long, very pure and promising finish. This is still very early days for this lovely Auslese, which will need a full decade or more in the cellar to really start to stir. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese AP #14- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The AP #14 Auslese from the Domprobst from Christophe Schaefer was made from a selection of bunches that were above 105 Oechsle in various sectors of the vineyard, which gives the wine a bit more depth and flavor authority than the more ethereal AP #11 version. The wine is really lovely on both the nose and palate, albeit, still quite young and primary. The bouquet is a superb blend of pear, delicate citrus tones, a salty slate undertow, a hint of savory elements and the promise of mango-like fruit tones to come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and vibrant, with a rock solid core, lovely notes of slate and flowers and a very long, zesty and pure as well water finish. This is so seamlessly balanced that much of its secondary layers are buried in the structure, only poking out briefly like sun behind a cloud, but they are clearly in residence and this is going to be a stellar wine in the fullness of time. 2026-2070. **94.**

2016 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese (Auction)- Weingut Willi Schaefer

The 2016 Auction Auslese from the Domprobst is Christophe Schaefer's finest Auslese in this vintage and the wine is stunning, though still a puppy in need of plenty of bottle age. The bouquet is young and very promising, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of tangerine, pear, white cherries, lime blossoms, a nice base of slate minerality and a touch of bee pollen in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and dancing, with a great core, stunning balance and a very long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. This not a flashy wine by any stretch of the imagination, but it will be one of those legendary, non-botrytized Auslesen a couple of decades down the road that everyone will marvel at and wish that they had put more bottles in the cellar! 2028-2070. **95+**.

**THE 2016 BURGUNDY VINTAGE:
OFTEN EXCELLENT QUALITY TEMPERED BY A VERY SHORT CROP**



La Côte d'Or in all its October splendor.

2016 Vintage Overview and Assessment

Pages 19-31

Chablis

Domaine Jean-Claude Bessin

Pages 31-33

Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

Pages 33-35

Domaine Drouhin-Vaudon

Pages 35-36

Domaine William Fèvre

Pages 36-40

Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

Pages 40-43

Domaine Raveneau

Pages 43-45

Gevrey-Chambertin

Domaine Denis Bachelet

Pages 45-46

Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

Pages 47-48

Domaine Fourrier

Pages 48-52

Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

Pages 52-55

Domaine Armand Rousseau

Pages 55-59

<i>Domaine Rossignol-Trapet</i>	<i>Pages 59-61</i>
<i>Domaine Joseph Roty et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 61-66</i>
<i>Domaine Trapet Père et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 66-68</i>
Morey St. Denis	
<i>Domaine Dujac</i>	<i>Pages 69-71</i>
<i>Domaine des Lambrays</i>	<i>Pages 71-73</i>
<i>Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 73-77</i>
<i>Domaine Cecile Trémbay</i>	<i>Pages 77-78</i>
Chambolle-Musigny	
<i>Domaine Ghislaine Barthod</i>	<i>Pages 78-81</i>
<i>Domaine François Bertheau</i>	<i>Pages 81-82</i>
<i>Domaine Louis Boillot</i>	<i>Pages 82-85</i>
<i>Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier</i>	<i>Pages 86-88</i>
<i>Domaine Georges Roumier</i>	<i>Pages 88-91</i>
<i>Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé</i>	<i>Pages 91-93</i>
Vougeot	
<i>Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat</i>	<i>Pages 93-95</i>
Vosne-Romanée	
<i>Domaine Liger-Belair</i>	<i>Pages 96-99</i>
<i>Domaine Méo-Camuzet</i>	<i>Pages 99-103</i>
<i>Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret</i>	<i>Pages 103-106</i>
<i>Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg</i>	<i>Pages 106-108</i>
<i>Domaine Georges Noëllat</i>	<i>Pages 108-111</i>
Nuits St. Georges	
<i>Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 112-114</i>
<i>Domaine Henri Gouges</i>	<i>Pages 114-116</i>
Savigny-lès-Beaune	
<i>Domaine Simon Bize et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 116-118</i>
<i>Domaine Camus-Bruchon</i>	<i>Pages 118-120</i>
<i>Domaine Chandon de Briailles</i>	<i>Pages 120-122</i>
<i>Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot</i>	<i>Pages 122-125</i>
Beaune	
<i>Maison Joseph Drouhin</i>	<i>Pages 125-134</i>
Pommard	
<i>Domaine Michel Gaunoux</i>	<i>Pages 135-137</i>
Volnay	
<i>Domaine Marquis d'Angerville</i>	<i>Pages 137-138</i>
<i>Domaine Huber-Verdereau</i>	<i>Pages 138-141</i>
<i>Domaine Michel Lafarge</i>	<i>Pages 142-145</i>
Auxey-Duresses	
<i>Domaine Gilles Lafouge</i>	<i>Pages 145-148</i>



The last vestiges of autumn hanging over la Côte d'Or in the mid-November sun.

Meursault

<i>Domaine Arnaud Ente</i>	<i>Pages 148-151</i>
<i>Domaine Antoine et François Jobard</i>	<i>Pages 151-154</i>
<i>Domaine des Comtes Lafon</i>	<i>Pages 154-157</i>
<i>Domaine Guy Roulot</i>	<i>Pages 157-159</i>

Puligny-Montrachet

<i>Domaine Jacques Carillon</i>	<i>Pages 159-161</i>
<i>Domaine Jean Chartron</i>	<i>Pages 161-164</i>
<i>Domaine Leflaive</i>	<i>Pages 164-166</i>

Chassagne-Montrachet

<i>Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard</i>	<i>Pages 166-171</i>
<i>Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils</i>	<i>Pages 171-174</i>

**THE 2016 BURGUNDY VINTAGE:
OFTEN EXCELLENT QUALITY TEMPERED BY A VERY SHORT CROP**



Looking across the vines to the village of Aloxe-Corton.

The 2016 vintage in Burgundy will long be remembered for the devastating frosts that struck so many top vineyards at the end of April of this year, causing severe damage and drastically cutting back the crop in the vineyards most affected by the freeze. But, at some point in the future, the superb quality of the wines will take precedence over the frost in the minds of most Burgundy lovers and 2016 will be remembered more for the excellence of the vintage. For a great many of the wines of 2016 are truly exceptional. It is an uneven vintage in some ways, as the frost damage was not the same in each parcel that was hit, and there are also plenty of vineyards that were completely spared any damage when the frost struck on the evening of April 26th. So, one sees a variety of styles to the wines, depending on whether the vines had any frost damage at all, and if they were hit by the frost, how severely the damage was, as some vineyards were merely touched and yields might be down anywhere from five or ten percent, but others were absolutely decimated and yields in these vineyards can be down by as much as ninety percent in the parcels most severely frosted on that cold morning. In fact, several bottlings are missing from their customary place in the lineups of certain domaines, as they simply did not have enough grapes to make wines from those parcels most damaged. To give just one example

of how bad the frost damage could be, at Domaine Chandon de Briailles, there will be no bottlings from their premier cru vineyards of Île de Vergelesses and Les Vergelesses in Pernand, nor les Lavières and Fournaux in Savigny-lès-Beaune, as well as no *villages* level bottling from Savigny in 2016, as the small quantity of remaining grapes at harvest time in all of these vineyards in 2016 were pooled together to make a single cuvée of Bourgogne rouge. And, all of the production from these five appellations together only combined to make two hundred cases of Bourgogne! So, you can see just how severe the frost damage could be in 2016.

However, the frost damage was not uniform as one went up and down the Côte d'Or, and it was different in Chablis as well. Here is a short synopsis of how the frost generally affected each village in the Côte d'Or, working from north to south: Marsannay was devastated by frost, neighboring Fixin was lightly touched, Gevrey-Chambertin was not particularly hard hit, with the exception of Chambertin, Latricières-Chambertin and most of the northern premier crus on the Combe de Lavaux, where frost damage was quite extensive and these vineyards lost between fifty and sixty percent of potential croploads. But, to show just how localized the frost damage could be in 2016, while Chambertin was hard hit by the frost, neighboring Clos de Bèze was completely untouched and the crop load here was quite typical of a normal year! Moving south, the village of Morey St. Denis was virtually unscathed by frost (in the Clos de Tart and Clos des Lambrays, yields were the highest in these vineyards since 1999), but Chambolle-Musigny was hit very, very hard and had the most extensive frost damage between Marsannay and Nuits St. Georges. Musigny lost about half its potential crop to the frost, many of the top premier crus were damaged extensively (Ghislaine Barthod and Domaine Dujac will produce no Gruenchers for example), les Amoureuses was extensively reduced, but in the vineyard of Bonnes-Mares, it depended primarily where your rows of vines were situated in the vineyard as to how bad the frost damage was in 2016. The northern half of the vineyard, on the Morey border, was virtually untouched by the frost, but the southern half was hard struck, so that Domaine Comte de Vogüé, whose lovely parcel in Bonnes-Mares occupies the southeastern corner of the Grand Cru, lost more than half of their crop in this grand cru. It was not only north to south that the frost varied, but also where one was on the slope. Christophe Roumier, who has a sizable parcel of Bonnes-Mares right above the Comte de Vogüé's block of vines, had far less frost damage here than further down the slope, as the cold air descended and settled in the de Vogüé section on the southern end of the vineyard. As one *vigneron* commented, there was just no logic to where the frost settled that morning.

Continuing the frost tour of 2016 in the Côte d'Or, Vougeot was also substantially affected by frost, with the small premier crus badly hit and certain sectors in the Clos also badly frost damaged (it was a year when it was actually beneficial to have vines down by the Route Nationale), but not as extensively as was the case in neighboring Chambolle-Musigny. The vineyards in Flagey were moderately frosted (with sectors of both Echézeaux and Grands Echézeaux affected, as well as some of the premier crus here), but next door in Vosne-Romanée, there was almost no frost damage at all and the village escaped virtually unscathed. In Nuits St. Georges, the Vosne side north of the center of town was generally spared, but the band of great premier cru vineyards south of the town were devastated and yields are down from fifty to seventy-five percent in most of these vineyards. Up on the hill of Corton, the central section in Aloxe-Corton avoided almost all of the frost damage, so top vineyards like Bressandes, Clos du Roi and Renardes had very good yields, but on the sections facing further east in Ladoix were hit

hard and those further west in Pernand-Vergelesses were also decimated. The frost damage was so severe in the Pernand sector of Corton that Christophe Roumier did not even bother harvesting his very small number of bunches in his parcel of Corton-Charlemagne, but rather just gave them to his neighbors across the road, Domaine Simon Bize, as they had enough grapes in their parcel to make a very small cuvée of Corton-Charlemagne. And in all of these villages, the premier cru and *villages* parcels further down the hill were hit far harder by frost than the grand cru parcels up at the top.

In Savigny-lès-Beaune, I already mentioned how badly hit the vineyards were here, and this was probably the most damaged of all the villages in the Côte d'Or in 2016 from frost, with the possible exception of Chassagne-Montrachet and Marsannay. After all of the severe hail damage that Savigny has had to endure over the last five years, it would have been nice if it had been spared heavy frost devastation as well, but it was not to be. Beaune was also badly hit in places by the frost, but not everywhere, as for instance, Clos des Mouches on the Pommard border was largely spared. Both Pommard and Volnay were hit by the frost, with Pommard losing more crop in the *villages* sections, rather than the premier crus, whereas in Volnay, the freeze was more widespread and several premier crus were also badly frosted. Meursault was spared in places and frosted badly in others, so yields vary pretty dramatically based on which parcel of vines a wine hails from, but happily, at least the premier cru band of Charmes, Genevrières and Perrières were affected modestly, and over on the Blagny side of the appellation there was no frost at all. But in this commune, it was *villages* level vineyards and Bourgogne planted here that were the hardest hit, so that vineyards such as Clos de la Barre and En la Barre lost close to seventy percent, *lieux à dits* such as Tillets and Meix Chavaux were down more than a third, and one can see there wide variations to the frost damage in the village. Puligny-Montrachet was less affected by frost, with the painful exceptions of Montrachet, Bâtard-Montrachet and (to a lesser extent) Chevalier-Montrachet, which were all severely hit. Amongst the Puligny premier crus, only Chevalier's next door neighbor of Caillerets was really badly frosted, with other premier crus receiving far more gentle treatment by Mother Nature. But, just next door in Chassagne-Montrachet, frost damage was extensive virtually everywhere and the premier crus here were very badly affected. For example, Alexandre Moreau will produce no wine from Chenevottes, Champgains or Vergers in 2016, as the tiny number of bunches left in these three vineyards after the frost were insufficient to even make miniscule cuvées and whatever production survived the frosts went into the Chassagne AC cuvée.

In the vineyard of Montrachet, it was the Chassagne side that was the most heavily frosted, with the Marquis de Laguiche parcels on the Puligny end losing "only" fifty percent of production, whereas in the Chassagne end, six domaines: DRC, Comtes Lafon, Lamy-Pillot, Fleurot-Larose, Guy Amiot and Domaine Leflaive, had to combine their scant number of surviving bunches to make a single small cuvée (two barrels-worth, being vinified at Domaine Leflaive) which will find a charitable outlet somewhere down the line, and none of these domaines will offer a Montrachet 2016. Saint Aubin was also very heavily damaged by the frosts, so one can easily appreciate that some villages were far, far luckier than their neighbors in 2016, and it should really come as no surprise that there can be fairly wide swings in stylistic expressions of the vintage, depending on the level of frost damage in the vineyards. Up north in Chablis, the frost of 2016 was also very aggressive and crop losses typically ranged from up to fifty percent in top premier and grand crus and even more extensive in Chablis *villages* and Petit

Chablis, with sometimes more than eighty percent of the potential yields were lost. So, there are some surprisingly concentrated examples of Petit Chablis to be found in 2016, as yields were sometimes as low as ten or twelve hectoliters per hectare for Petit Chablis! But again, the frosting varied dramatically from vineyard to vineyard, so one can see better croploads in some parcels than others located right next door.

In short, the frost damage in Chablis and the Côte d'Or was the worst to hit the region since 1981, and for many of the younger generation of producers, this was their first experience with the threat of frost, as the general assumption in the region has been that in this age of global warming, frost was the least of a *vigneron's* worries these days in protecting a potential crop. Not only was the extent of the frost damage unprecedented in a generation, but also where the frost damage occurred was also completely out of the realm of experience of even the most seasoned of winegrowers in Burgundy, as it struck in areas on the slopes that generally have not been frost-prone, and stayed away from areas that are historically cooler and more likely to have frost issues in a spring cold snap. The actual date of the great frost of 2016 was the morning of April 27th, as temperatures plunged in the wee hours of the night to six degrees below zero Celsius. The problem was that as dawn unfolded, the skies were crystal clear, which allowed the sun to quickly burn the young shoots that were frosted, with the ice on the young growth acting as a magnifying glass and exacerbating the damage. And unlike most past episodes of extensive frost damage, it was not the lower lying, *villages* and Bourgogne parcels (where the cold air normally descends to in freezing bouts in Burgundy), but more often in the very best vineyards mid-slope, where the frost damage was most keenly felt. In Meursault, you had more typical behavior by the frost, hitting many of the lower-lying parcels, but in most other villages badly affected, this was not the case and it was a lot of top premier and grand cru plots of vines that were frozen. Proximity to the tree line at the top of the slopes was also not ideal when the frost of 2016 hit, as often these areas can be a bit more damp in the early morning than where the open wind has more play in the vineyards, and the dampness also contributed to greater frost damage on that fateful late night and early morning in April.

In Chablis, not only did many *vignerons* face substantial crop losses due to the frost damage on the morning of April 27th, which was certainly every bit as serious as further south in the Côte d'Or, but there was also again substantial hail damage on May 13th, further reducing bunches on the vines in the area most affected. The hailstorm came from the direction of the villages of Préhy and Courgis and hit much of the ridge of vineyards that runs northwest from these towns towards the core area of vines centered around the town of Chablis itself. This ridge houses premier crus such as Montmains, Butteaux and Forest, as well as substantial *villages* level parcels. Fortunately, the hail did not continue on to strike the premier and grand crus on the ridges across the Yonne, so the damage was fairly localized to this one ridge of vineyards, but it was substantial where it fell. As several *vignerons* mentioned to me when discussing the frost damage, and comparing it to the heavy hail damage that many villages in the Côte de Beaune and sections of Chablis have had to withstand over the last five or six years, at least with frost damage, whatever fruit that remains can often end up being of very high quality, so you can end up making very good wine in frost-damaged years, but in hail years, if the hail hits later in the season, then it can leave its mark on the resulting wines in a far more invasive manner. However, as we will discuss in a bit more detail below, one of the side effects of the great frost of 2016 is that some *vignerons* were forced to use secondary bunches in their wines in 2016, which would

often be just left out on the vines for the blackbirds in more typical growing seasons. In 2016 in heavily frosted vineyards, it was not uncommon for *vignerons* to use these secondary bunches if they ripened, so that they would have enough fruit to work with in the most severely frost-damaged parcels. Of course, this could be problematic as well, as these small, secondary bunches do not always ripen on the same schedule as the bunches from the first shoots that survived the frost.



Sadly, frost and hail were not the only challenges Mother Nature threw at *vignerons* in Burgundy in 2016, as the pressure from mildew was the strongest one has seen here in many, many years in the first half of this growing season, so on top of many producers having lost huge chunks of their potential crop in the frost of April 27th, they then had to get out in the vines almost non-stop for much of the months of May and June to try and keep the mildew at bay, as it rained on and off again almost unremittingly for six weeks in the early summer. Winegrowers would just finish off treating their vines to protect them from mildew from the last storm when the skies would open up again, with heavy rains washing away the treatments that had just been completed and it was necessary to slog back out in the mud of the vines and apply more sulfur, or lose the crop completely to the particularly aggressive mildew that was spawned in the wet and (in June) warm conditions of 2016. Not everyone was as successful in fighting this mildew epidemic, which further cut back crop size at domaines who had less success in the battle. And then, almost miraculously, nature relented and the second half of the growing season of 2016 was idyllic and what grapes that were still out on the vines started to prosper beautifully and *vignerons* realized that the quality of the fruit might actually turn out to be splendid come harvest

time! July and August were dry, sunny and generally not too hot (evening temperatures stayed nicely cool in August, maintaining very good acidity levels, which are readily apparent in the wines), so maturity progressed nicely, but modest water reserves had some worrying about hydric stress as an impingement to complete ripening as the season rolled towards its conclusion. Providently, there was some rain in the second week of September that alleviated these concerns and the harvest got started around the 21st of September for the earliest pickers in the Côte de Beaune and concluded in early October under absolutely ideal conditions.

As I hope the last discussion has outlined in some depth, the foundation for a rather heterogeneous vintage in Burgundy was created by the severe frost damage of late April of 2016, not to mention the mildew threat and the hail in Chablis in May, but what came across most strikingly from the fifty domaines I visited during my November trip to Burgundy is that it is really an excellent quality vintage. For decades to come, the natural tendency will be to compare the 2016 vintage to the heavily praised and rather powerful 2015 vintage that preceded it, as well as the promising 2017 vintage that is now bubbling away in the casks in the cellars of the region and which may also turn out very well indeed. The possibility that the market will try to overlook the excellent 2016 vintage seems pretty likely (having in some circles perhaps over-hyped the 2015s in order to raise prices accordingly) and look ahead to the copious quantity of 2017s that will hit the market a year and a half down the road. For, as is often the case the year following a devastating frost in Burgundy, the vines had plenty of pent up energy awaiting the growing season of 2017 and the size of the crop in this coming year is very, very generous (often the largest since 1999) and the potential for a large number of high quality wines in 2017 is already quite apparent, though it is still very early days for the wines from this vintage and this is a story for next year. Recall that after the last devastating frost damage in 1981, the following year of 1982 produced a huge crop of pretty good wines, but which could have been of superb quality if the yields had not been so very, very high. So some tempering of expectations is probably warranted with the 2017s, at least at this early stage, and we will wait to see how they evolve in cask over the coming year. But, at the very least, in these very early days for the vintage, it is nice to see cellars that have been really empty of casks since 2011 stocked robustly again, so that the Burgundians will have quite some stocks of wine to sell when this vintage is bottled. However, no matter how good 2017 ultimately turns out in terms of quality, it seems likely to also throw a bit of a shadow on the 2016 vintage in Burgundy in the marketplace (particularly if the exuberance of pricing at the Hospices de Beaune auction of 2017s this year is any indication), which will be a shame, given that the 2016 vintage has produced an awfully large number of absolutely stunning wines!

As I have alluded to above, stylistically, the 2016s can vary a bit one from the other, in both the red and white wine categories, and given that I have only tasted at fifty domaines so far, I have to imagine that further down the food chain, there could be some less than satisfactory examples to be found in 2016. But, at the top tier of Burgundy domaines, there are a lot of truly exceptional wines from this vintage and I would be very, very surprised to not see some 2016s eclipse their more highly-touted brethren from 2015 when a couple of decades have receded from these shores. That is just how beautiful the very best 2016s can be and there are some future legends awaiting bottling from this vintage. When it came to red wines, many producers echoed Louis Boillot in Chambolle-Musigny when he said that “I tried to be very gentle with the extraction in 2016, not punching down and doing less pump-overs so as to guard the inherent

elegance of the vintage.” And elegance is something that is shared by all the best red wines of 2016, coupled often to truly beautiful and generous levels of pure and sappy fruit and plenty of *terroir*. Just how good are these top 2016s? Well, I have a hard time not agreeing with Claude de Nicolay of Domaine Chandon de Briailles when she said “the closest vintage I can think of similar to our 2016s would be 2010- they have the same pure fruit tones and great *typicité* found in that earlier vintage.” The most veteran winegrower in all of Burgundy, Michel Lafarge, is also very, very positive about the potential quality of his family’s 2016s, and interestingly, he cannot recall a vintage in his very long experience that reminds him stylistically of the beautiful 2016s, which he feels are quite unique in their combinations of beautiful fruit, great soil signature and suave, tangy structural elements. That is just how serious these top wines are in 2016!

While the vast, vast majority of wines I tasted during this trip were outstanding in quality, not everything was absolutely singing at the time of my visits and some wines seemed quite a bit less vibrant and exciting than some of their neighbors in the casks in the first three weeks of November. After reflecting upon these variations for quite a while after my trip, I think that the differences in how wines presented themselves can be attributed to a few key causes. Looking first at the variations in the red wine fold, there were essentially two types of wines that were not really showing well at the time of my visit, with one being wines that seemed rather laid back structurally and way too easy going in comparison to many of their brethren. According to several *vignerons* whom I spoke with about this aspect of the red wine vintage, they felt that the vintage in general had shown more of this characteristic throughout their first year in cask and it was not really until the harvest of 2017 was safely in that the 2016 red wines started to deepen and show far better structural elements. As they described them, I imagined wines along the structural lines of the 2000 red Burgundies for many of the 2016s over their first twelve months in barrel- which is not necessarily a bad thing- but, the wines turned the corner around September of this year and were showing far better precision, structural chassis and vibrancy as the wines entered their second year in cask. As the completions of malolactic fermentations varied quite a bit in 2016, wines could be in very different stages of development in my November tastings. So, in cases where certain wines were still rather laid back and easy-going, while others were showing excellent structures and vibrancy, I attributed this trait to those particular wines just being further behind in their evolutions and likely to also deepen, firm up and show more precision with further barrel aging, as the majority of red wines of 2016 had done in cellars where the wines were singing at the time of my visit.

The other major variation in the shape and style of the red wines of 2016 is more attributable to their level of frost damage in late April of that year, with the wines showing different characteristics based on how severe the frosting was in a particular parcel of vines. As Christophe Roumier commented, “I am starting to think of 2016 as actually two vintages- one where the frost damage was minimal, and another, where the frost damage was very severe- as the wines are really quite a bit different from each other in terms of texture of tannins and pace of evolution in the cellars.” He plans to probably vary his bottling of the wines accordingly, bottling the wines less affected by frost on the earlier side, as they are in a really beautiful point of their evolution right now and it does not seem likely that they will gain more with any extended time in cask. Other wines, are still rather chewy and adolescent, where the frost damage was most extensive, and those wines are likely to be given more time in barrel to evolve prior to the *mise*. Today, some of the more heavily frost-damaged sites have produced wines that do not

yet show the same elegance, purity and vibrancy of those less frosted or spared completely, and this is true up and down the Côte d'Or. But, there is nothing hard and fast about this characteristic, for one can find in the same cellar, wines that were from vineyards that were quite heavily frost-damaged and which were singing with the same purity and eloquence as wines from parcels not hit by the frost at all, whereas other wines were still grumpy, adolescent and have a slight coarseness today to their tannins that is not emblematic of the vintage in general. So, the heterogeneous nature of this vintage is often quite apparent, even if most cellars have a surfeit of great wines waiting in the wings and only the occasional grumpy wine from a heavily frost-damaged parcel.

In the category of white wines, there are also elements of variation stylistically that seem consistent with how heavily frosted a particular parcel of vines was in late April. Here, some of the wines that seemed to have been most affected by the frosts exhibit far more easy-going structures, with plush and generous fruit components, good soil elements, but without that snap of backend electricity that the very finest white wines of the vintage display in spades. Some of the wines from this camp that I tasted also seemed a bit diffuse at the core in comparison to many others from the vintage. Maybe, as seemed to have been the case with some red wines, certain white wines of this group will gain structure with further cellar time. Variations in the energy of the white wines is also a fairly frequent occurrence in areas with heavy frost damage. There are also some very, very concentrated white Burgundies in 2016, some of which recall the super-concentrated whites of 2012 from parcels with very small crop loads from the 2016 frost damage. Other 2016 whites are just splendid, with zesty acids, gorgeous fruit, great *typicité* and already stunning complexity on both the nose and palate. Many of this stylistic camp, which I would put forth as the greatest of the white wines of 2016, seem likely to drink well from a fairly early date (earlier on in their respective evolutions than the fine 2014 whites for example), but also to age as long as gracefully as the long reach of premature oxidation will allow. The vintage has definitely produced some absolutely epic white Burgundies in the Côte d'Or, and this goes for Chablis as well, where there are some truly brilliant wines on display in some of the cellars I visited. I should mention that my trip to Chablis was cut short by two domaines this year, as I was hit with food poisoning on my last evening in Chablis and after trying to soldier through the collection at Domaine Raveneau the following morning, it became pretty clear that my severe nausea was going to win out if I tried to continue my round of appointments and I had to very reluctantly cancel visits to Domaine Christian Moreau and Domaine Patrick Piuze later that day and return to my sick bed. I will be back in Chablis in March to hopefully cover more domaines, but with such short yields in many cellars, it may not be possible for producers to show their 2016s at this later date.

In summation, the 2016 vintage is one of the least homogenous stylistically in recent memory, and yet, at the same time, clearly one of the finest vintages of the last fifteen years as well! While the two precepts seem a bit contradictory, they really are not and this becomes pretty clear as one gets a chance to really sample a wide array of 2016s. For the red wines, the 2016 vintage has to at the very least be ranked right up there with the 2014 vintage (which a significant percentage of *vignerons* are now starting to rank as comparable in quality to the more muscular 2015s), and the best 2016 red wines are probably every bit as magical as the best wines from 2010 and 2012. This is emphatically no minor red wine vintage in Burgundy! The biggest problem with the 2016 reds at the top of the food chain is their relative scarcity, as a great many

wines were produced in very small quantities and allocations, which are already extremely complicated with the heavy veneer of profiteering that now defines today's Burgundy market, likely to be even more so with such short production numbers for a great many wines. However, some of the very best red wines of 2016 hail from non-frosted vineyards and in these cases, yields are excellent and there will be ample wine to be found for intrepid Burgundy lovers that care more about the actual quality of the wines they put in their cellars, rather than the simplistic market hype centered around vintages. For, as was the case with the 2009 reds, the very, very good 2015s have probably been overpraised to some extent by merchants looking to find another "boom vintage" to take long margins on, as they did previously with both the 2005s and 2009s, and this will affect how they present the 2016s when they trickle into the pipeline. This is not to say that the best 2015s will not be stunning wines in the fullness of time, but rather simply to reflect upon the fact that a lot of purple prose was attached to the significant price hikes taken on the 2015s, and twenty years down the road, there may well be a sizable percentage of 2016 reds that are even superior to their 2015 counterparts.



A sign of how warm the fall of 2017 was in Burgundy- mid-November roses still in full bloom at Clos des Lambrays.

In comparing the best 2016 reds to other top recent vintages, they are far, far more elegant out of the blocks than the more powerful 2015s. But, they are also far more plush and sappy in fruit presentation than the equally transparent and utterly classic 2014 red wines, and for the next decade, unless the 2016s firmly close down after bottling, they will provide even more pleasure for early drinking than the lovely 2014 reds. This sappiness to their fruit they share with

the other two recent, short-cropped and very high quality vintages of 2010 and 2012 (particularly in the Côte de Nuits), but out of the blocks, this sappy fruit is not buried down in the center of the young wines, as was the case with both 2010 and 2012, but is currently right up front, so that the temptation will be to drink them in their beautiful youthful phases, even though they possess all of the requisite components to also age very long and gracefully. The cool nights of August and September of 2016 have allowed the wines to retain really beautiful acidity and great soil signatures to go along with all of this depth of fruit, and the combination is totally seductive. If one could picture a combination of the very best attributes of the 2000 and 2010 red Burgundy vintages, coupled with great acids and truly stunning vibrancy, one can start to get an idea of the style and beauty of the very best red wines of 2016. At the fifty domaines I visited in November, the vast, vast majority of red wines from this vintage are truly superb.

As for the white wines of 2016, there is a bit more variation than in the red wines and it is not quite as consistently excellent of a vintage as it is for the red wines, but that said, there are also an awfully large number of truly excellent wines. Some are better structured and more classically proportioned than others, but all the best wines share truly gorgeous fruit, very good soil signatures and plenty of depth and concentration. I got the feeling that where *vignerons* were working with parcels with very, very short crops from frost damage, many sought to avoid the super-concentrated style found in some 2012 white Burgundies and have produced more classically proportioned wines in 2016. They may still be concentrated from low yields, but they have retained more of the typical cut, grip and mineral drive of more classically-styled vintages. As Alexandre Moreau mentioned, when talking about some of his bottlings from the most severely frosted parcels, “they are concentrated from the very low yields, but at the same time, I think we did a very good job at maintaining the classic style of wines from our domaine, with plenty of minerality and racy personalities, as I did not want wines that are too heavy from the short crop.” As I was limiting my November visits to many of the most talented *vignerons* in Burgundy, I can imagine that there are other estates where the results in 2016 are less satisfying than what I found on this trip, and there are probably a significant number of rather dense, overly-concentrated white wines to be found from the vintage of 2016.

One aspect of the vintage of 2016 that I find quite unique in my experience tasting young vintages here (and my first vintage tasted out of cask in Burgundy was 1988) was the somewhat widespread use of second generation fruit in the most severely frosted vineyard parcels. In most vintages, these small, secondary bunches lag behind the regular bunches in terms of maturation and are simply left out on the vines at the time of harvest. However, in 2016, many *vignerons* opted to pick these grapes and include them in their cuvées from the most frost-damaged parcels, figuring that their maturation was pretty much in line with the first generation bunches that survived the frosts and it made no sense to leave any grapes out on the vines in a year where so many parcels were simply decimated by the frosts. As Christophe Roumier commented about his use of some secondary bunches, “the weather for the first two weeks after the frost on April 27th was very, very cool, so the first generation bunches that survived the frost really did not have a chance to mature at all over the next couple of weeks, due to the low temperatures, and probably for this reason, the two generations of bunches ripened along similar paths.” But, where these secondary bunches were included is probably one of the keys to the different personalities of some of the wines from heavily frost-damaged parcels, in comparison to those vineyards which escaped relatively unscathed from the frosts. The smaller secondary bunches were often more

concentrated than the first generation bunches, so that heavily frosted vineyards often produced wines at higher natural alcohol levels than those untouched by frost, and probably the variations in tannin textures amongst some of the wines can also be attributed to some degree to the inclusion of secondary bunches. But, not everyone who had badly-frosted parcels opted to use secondary bunches, so it is just another variable in the various personalities of some of the 2016s. That said, it should also be noted that *millerandage* was also quite prevalent amongst first generation bunches in frost-damaged vineyards, so there was going to be some variation in concentration and tannin textures simply due to the widespread differences in berry size in these bunches- whether or not second generation bunches found their way into the vats.

Yet another stylistic point of departure from cellar to cellar and wine to wine in 2016 was the use of stems, as this was sometimes used not for the positive aspects that the stems would bring to the finished wines (though most stems were admirably ripe in 2016), but to better fill up the fermenters for many of the very, very small cuvées that were going to be made from the vineyard parcels with the severest frost damage. Often a layer of stems would be placed between layers of grapes to try and get a bit more volume in the fermenters for really short crops, and there are probably some 2016s that included more stems than customary to get a bit better volume for the fermentations. New oak was also used quite differently in 2016 than might be customary at some domaines, as some producers used more new wood for small cuvées, as the choice was one new barrel out of two (or sometimes out of one) or no new oak and casks that had previously been used instead. Again, at the domaines I visited on this trip, I did not see examples where the wines were raised in all new oak just to use up new barrels that had been ordered, but I have to imagine that this was a strong possibility at certain domaines in Burgundy faced with very small yields in 2016. Other *vignerons*, such as François Jobard in Meursault, decided to use absolutely no new oak for any of his wines in 2016, as faced with some very small cuvées and wines that had such lovely balances as they were, he preferred to just store his new casks ordered for 2016 and save them for 2017. Other producers, with the frosts having hit in late April, were able to cancel orders for some of their new casks and use their customary percentages of new oak in 2016. Yet another point of variance from cellar to cellar and wine to wine in 2016.

So, given all of these variables and potential pitfalls in 2016, how could we have ended up with so many truly great wines in this vintage? I have no idea. Suffice to say that the second half of the growing season in Burgundy was absolutely perfect, so that if *vignerons* could manage to win the war against the mildew threat in May and June, they were rewarded with perfectly ripe grapes come the end of September and early October. In the vineyards that were spared the most severe frost damage, this often meant that yields would be down anywhere from a third to a half, but the style, quality and personality of the resulting wines was absolutely top rate, with great fruit, lovely structures, outstanding soil signatures and plenty of zesty acidity to keep the wines fresh, vibrant and bouncy on the palate. Where they will ultimately end up being ranked in the pantheon of so many great vintages in Burgundy in the twenty-first century remains to be seen, but it seems likely that the very best reds and whites of the vintage will end up placing up towards the very top. As Christophe Roumier remarked about his best wines of 2016, “I initially thought that they might end up similar to the very, very good 2001s, which is a vintage that I happen to like very much, but now, it is quite clear that the 2016s are superior to that vintage.” His next door neighbor, Frédéric Mugnier, noted that “the very best 2015s will

probably end up even better than the best 2016s, but they are going to need a lot of bottle age to reach that stage and for probably the next twenty or thirty years, a lot of people are going to prefer the 2016s.” The 2016 Burgundy vintage is not a convenient vintage that fits neatly into the mass marketing paradigms of our modern age, but then again, virtually no vintage of Burgundy falls into that category (with the possible exception of the 2005 reds), and building a Burgundy cellar is about finding the best wines in any village or vintage, not just buying blindly across the board in the so-called “great years”, and the savvy Burgundy shopper already knows this and has the tools at their disposal to tackle the 2016 vintage properly and discover firsthand just how beautiful the very top wines of this vintage have turned out. It is a vintage that will reward the sophisticated (and deep-pocketed) Burgundy shopper from the outset and also deliver great wines at full maturity two, three or four decades down the road. And, as the notes below will attest, the 2016 Burgundy vintage is not a year where a very small percentage of wines at the very top of the pyramid are great, but where a very, very large percentage of the wines are exceptional! And this is true up and down the quality hierarchy of appellation, as I have probably never tasted more truly stunning Bourgogne Rouge and Blanc bottlings, or Petit Chablis, as I have tasted from 2016. Not all wines had the same fair chance at greatness, due to the frost damage variations that I have gone into in depth, but I have tasted very few wines from 2016, if given half a chance by the frost, that have not turned out beautifully.



Chablis

As will be discussed in more detail in next year’s report, Chablis did not fare as well with spring frosts in 2017 as those in the Côte d’Or and the region will once again be hit hard next year by crop limitations because of frost damage. This is in notable contrast to the Côte d’Or in 2017, where *vignerons* in each village worked together on the coldest evening of the spring of

2017, burning hundreds of bales of hay to keep the frost damage at bay, by creating a blanket of smoke that blocked the sun from burning the young shoots on the vines, as had been the case the year before. As Chablis is further north, the frost was more severe and no preventive measures were effective in 2017, so producers in this region are going to be facing the same crop shortfalls next year that were so evident in 2016. I will go into this in far more detail next year, but it is important to keep this in mind when shopping for Chablis right now, as this is probably a very good time to snap up any remaining stocks of 2014s that one sees in the market and prepare to move quickly to secure 2016s from your favorite domaines once you see them, as there is not a lot of 2016 Chablis in the pipeline and 2017 is again going to be another very short crop in the region. As mentioned above and in the notes that follow, I tasted some truly exceptional examples of Chablis from the 2016 vintage and this is a very, very high quality vintage in this section of Burgundy. I will be back to hopefully taste more 2016s on my spring trip next year, but given how small the yields were in this vintage, I am not sure how many *vignerons* in the region are going to be happy showing 2016s at that time, so my report on the region may be shorter in this vintage than is customary and not cover as many producers as usual. From what I tasted, I am tempted to declare that the Chablis vintage of 2016 was a bit more consistent in style than was the case with the white wines in the Côte de Beaune, but this could only be a reflection of having visited a smaller and less representative sampling of Chablis domaines in November. Due to the yield constraints of the vintage in Chablis, I profoundly regret my food poisoning having cut short my time in Chablis and my missing tasting 2016s from two of my favorite producers, Patrick Piuze and Christian Moreau.

Domaine Jean-Claude Bessin (La Chapelle Vaupelteigne)

Jean-Claude Bessin's son, Romain, has joined him full-time at the winery and another generation of excellence here is now falling nicely into place. As always, it was a great visit to taste in the Bessin's cellars in the small village of La Chapelle Vaupelteigne, but there was not a lot of wine here from the 2016 vintage, as the crop was fully eighty percent down from a normal vintage's yield. The problem was not only the frost at the end of April, which hit the Bessin's parcels hard, but the family is in conversion in their vineyards to biodynamic farming as well, so the mildew pressure took its toll more seriously here than at domaines where they are more willing to aggressively spray against the threat. Sadly, as is the case in many other domaines in Chablis, the 2017 vintage will also be very tiny here, as frost again hit them very hard in the spring. The 2016 lineup chez Bessin will be limited as a result of the very small yields, as there is no bottling of la Forêt this year, as the production was too small and the grapes here were simply blended into the Montmains to make a more viable-sized cuvée. Similarly, there is only a single bottling of Fourchaume here in 2016, as the old vine La Pièce au Comte bottling was not produced in 2016 for the same reasons. While the quantities here are very small in 2016, the quality of the wines themselves is flat out excellent and one of the best young vintages I have had the pleasure to taste chez Bessin. One will have to move quickly to find their 2016s in the market, but they will be very rewarding to those who act early and secure some of these beautiful young Chablis bottlings before they disappear from the market. Because of the extremely small crops here in 2016 and 2017, the Bessins will not be able to participate in the usual spring tastings of Les Grands Jours next March, as they simply will have no wine to show. Let's hope the 2018 growing season here will bring a return to a "normal" crop size, to go along with the usual outstanding quality of the family's beautiful wines!



Jean-Claude Bessin and his son, Romain, outside of the family cellars on a brisk November morning.

2016 Chablis “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin

The 2016 Chablis “Vieilles Vignes” from the Bessin family is simply superb and one of the very best village wines I tasted on my entire three week November trip to Burgundy. The bouquet is pure and vibrant, jumping from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, chalky soil tones, a touch of oyster shell and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, lovely transparency and grip, zesty acids and lovely focus and lift on the long and complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2018-2035. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin

The 2016 Montmains is also a truly exceptional example of the vintage. The wine delivers an outstanding aromatic constellation of lime, apple, chalky minerality, beeswax, citrus zest and already a lovely hint of the candied lemon elements to come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with lovely intensity and focus, impeccable balance and a very long, racy and electric finish. 2018-2040. **93.**

2016 Chablis “Fourchaume”- Domaine Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin

The 2016 Fourchaume from Domaine Bessin is another absolutely classic example of this great premier cru vineyard. The wine offers up a beautiful and very refined nose of pear, a touch of tangerine, complex soil tones, citrus peel, white flowers and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely racy in profile, with great mid-palate depth, bright acids and a very long, complex finish that closes with impressive energy and grip. The addition of the old vines here has really given this outstanding backend energy. 2021-2045. **93.**

2016 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin

The 2016 Valmur from Monsieur Bessin and his son Romain is stunning on both the nose and palate, with the same depth and mineral drive of the tow superb premier crus, but a superior girdle of acidity to give the wine an even racier profile. The beautiful nose is nascently complex, delivering scents of pear. Lemon, paraffin, complex, chalky minerality, spring flowers and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and shows no shortage of depth at the core, with lovely mineral signature, racy acids and a fine sense of grand cru reserve on the very, very long, focused and snappy finish. Great juice in the making. 2022-2055. **95.**

Domaine Vincent Dauvissat (Chablis)

Vincent Dauvissat and his children have made some of the most beautiful wines to be found in Chablis in 2016. He began harvesting on September 26th and finished up within a week or so, as yields were down pretty dramatically in some of his parcels. This was particularly true in his vines in the Petit Chablis, where the crop was down by two-thirds in this vintage! Some of the cellar had already been racked a week or so prior to my visit on the twentieth of November, while other wines were still in cask and were to be assembled in tank in the coming weeks. Bottling for the 2016s was likely to be at its customary pace here in the Dauvissat cellars, with some wines bottled on the earlier side to be shipped to the American market in time for Christmas, while others would wait until after the first of the year and a spring release. The wines vary just a bit in stylistic terms based on how badly they were hit by the end of April frost, with the Petit Chablis and Chablis villages showing quite forward personalities, albeit, still with lovely spines of acidity. Other wines were quite structured and reticent, such as the premier cru of Séchet, while other premier crus and the two grand crus were absolutely classic in personality and stunning in quality. A couple of wines seemed to have quite ripe fruit, perhaps cut along the lines of the 1992s here, whereas others were more tensile out of the blocks and seemed like they might be a touch lower in octane. But, these were slight variations in the Dauvissat cellars, and overall, this is one of the most successful and beautiful vintages here in recent memory.

2016 Petit Chablis- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

With fully two-thirds of a normal crop wiped out here by the frosts on April 27th, it is not too surprising that the resulting wine is truly exceptional in quality. This is not a wine that is overly concentrated, as is the case with some severely frosted whites in 2016, but a wine of great precision, depth of fruit and mineral drive. The bouquet is superb, offering up scents of pear, apple, chalky minerality, beeswax and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and zesty, with a rock solid core, lovely focus and grip and a very long, vibrant finish. Superb juice and truly transcendental Petit Chablis. 2018-2030. **90.**

2016 Chablis- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

To the best of my recollection, the Chablis *villages* from Domaine Dauvissat was down about fifty percent in 2016. The wine is absolutely outstanding for its appellation offering up a pure and zesty bouquet of pear, lemon, chalky limestone minerality, citrus zest and a nice touch of oyster shell in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and absolutely rock solid at the core, with great cut and grip and a very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. A beautiful wine. 2018-2040. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Séchet”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2016 Séchet from the Dauvissats shows outstanding potential and is nicely reserved in profile out of the blocks. The wine offers up a classic, youthful bouquet of lemon, apple, beeswax, chalky soil tones and white flowers. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tightly-knit, with a racy girdle of acidity, a fine core and lovely focus and grip on the perfectly balanced and snappy finish. This will need a couple of years to really start to stir. 2020-2040+. **92.**

2016 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

In contrast to the youthful Séchet, the 2016 Vaillons is going to turn heads from the moment it is released. The bouquet is ripe, pure and complex, wafting from the glass in a blend of apple, pear, tangerine, spring flowers, a touch of beeswax and a lovely base of limestone soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully defined by its undertow of minerality, with bright acids, fine cut and grip and a long, complex and vibrant finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2040. **92+.**

2016 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2016 Montée de Tonnerre *chez* Dauvissat was a bit less affected by frost and the wine is very elegant in profile and superb in quality. The complex nose delivers a lovely constellation of lemon, pear, chalky minerality, white flowers and a pungent topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and more reserved on the attack than the Vaillons, with a superb core of fruit, lovely transparency, bright acids and great backend mineral drive on the very, very long and perfectly balanced finish. A classic in the making. 2021-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “la Forest”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2016 la Forest from Domaine Dauvissat is another absolutely classic wine in the making and one of the finest young vintages of this iconic Chablis bottling that I have had the pleasure to taste. The gorgeous bouquet offers up marvelous precision and mineral signature in its blend of apple, pear, a touch of youthful grapefruit, flinty minerality, orange peel and hints of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, racy and absolutely rock solid at the core, with brisk acids, laser-like focus and excellent grip and length on the complex and zesty finish. A gorgeous wine in the making. 2020-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “les Preuses”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2016 les Preuses *chez* Dauvissat is again, absolutely classical in profile, which means it is already delivering kaleidoscopic minerality in its vibrant nose of lemon, green apple, beeswax, layer upon layer of chalky minerality, spring flowers and a nice touch of orange zest in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full and properly reserved in personality out of the blocks, with a great core, stunning mineral drive, great, snappy acids and a very, very long, focused and complex finish. A great, great Preuses in the making! 2022-2060. **96+.**

2016 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine Vincent Dauvissat

The 2016 les Clos from Vincent Dauvissat is another stellar wine in the making, with the low yields of the vintage here manifesting in a more powerful and bracingly youthful grand cru. The bouquet is a classic mix of lemon, pear, citrus peel, flinty minerality, fruit blossoms and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with racy acids, a huge spine of minerality and a very, very long, snappy and still quite primary finish. Of the two Dauvissat grand crus in 2016, the les Preuses will provide more enjoyment early, despite the fact that both wines deserve to be forgotten in the cellar for at least the next five years! For those who put a bit more premium on power in their grand cru Chablis, the plus sign

can be appended here, but my heart has to give the slight nod to the more ethereal and potential elegant les Preuses here in this marvelous vintage! 2022-2060. **96.**

Domaine Drouhin Vaudon (Chablis)

Overall, the Drouhin family's production in Chablis was down fifty percent from a normal crop in the vintage of 2016, with almost all of the loss attributable to frost damage at the end of April, rather than mildew pressure or hail damage in May. Of all of the Drouhin parcels in Chablis, sadly, the one that was hit the hardest by frost was their parcel in les Clos, as they are located mid-slope on the eastern side of the vineyard (towards Blanchots) and here the frost damage was quite extensive. On the other side of les Clos, the frost was far less of a factor and producers on this end of the vineyard did not lose anywhere near as much crop as the Drouhins did in this grand cru. Consequently, the Drouhins' production of this bottling is down by seventy-five percent in 2016. I tasted these wines as part of a large tasting in Beaune at the domaine, with wines from the Côte d'Or, Côte Chalonnaise and the Mâconnais also included, so I did not get think to ask more specific information about several of these other Chablis bottlings. As a result, I do not know what percentages of the crop were lost in the family's other Chablis holdings in 2016. But, the quality of the 2016 Drouhin Chablis bottlings is excellent.

2016 Chablis "Réserve de Vaudon"- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The 2016 vintage of Réserve de Vaudon is absolutely lovely and will drink very well from the moment it is released, but possesses lovely inner tension and the cut and grip to also age very well over the middle term. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex and utterly classic blend of lemon, green apple, oyster shell minerality and a nice topnote of straw. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and racy in profile, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and a long, snappy and complex finish. High class *villages* level Chablis! 2018-2030+. **90+.**

2016 Chablis "Vaillons"- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The 2016 Vaillons from Domaine Drouhin Vaudon is a bit more forward in personality this year and will drink very well from the outset. The classic bouquet offers up a lovely mix of apple, spring flowers, a touch of beeswax and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and zesty, with a fine core, lovely generosity of fruit on the attack, bright acids and fine backend limestone mineral drive on the complex and quite wide open finish. This has plenty of acidity, but they play a supporting role here and the wine will be drinking with style from the moment it hits the market. 2018-2035. **91.**

2016 Chablis "Montmains"- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

The 2016 Montmains from the Drouhins is showing more of a sense of reserve out of the blocks than the charming Vaillons, but with the same depth at the core and impressive complexity waiting in the wings. The superb bouquet wafts from the glass in a bright and stylish blend of green apple, lime, lemon, spring flowers and wet stone minerality. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and nicely reserved in profile, with a good core, excellent cut and grip and superb backend mineral drive on the complex and racy finish. This will probably not need too much time in bottle to blossom, but I would try to leave it alone for at least the coming year and really let it start to hit on all cylinders. 2019-2035+. **92.**

2016 Chablis "Vaudésir"- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

All of the Drouhin Chablis grand cru bottlings these days are raised in two to five year-old casks, allowing for a gentle micro-oxygen exchange, but without any overtly oaky influences on the wines. The 2016 Vaudésir is outstanding, offering up a deep and youthfully complex

aromatic constellation of lemon, pear, a touch of paraffin, a very complex base of limestone minerality, apple blossoms and a very, very discreet whisper of vanillin oak in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with an excellent core, lovely transparency and a very long, focused and racy finish. A superb Vaudésir! 2020-2040. **93+**.

2016 Chablis “Les Clos”- Domaine Drouhin Vaudon

It is too bad that the Drouhins’ parcel of les Clos was so hard hit by frost in 2016, as the wine is absolutely stunning and it means that so many fewer people are going to get a chance to drink this beautiful example. The bouquet is pure, complex and superb in its precision, offering up scents of apple, lemon, flinty minerality, dried flowers, a touch of bee pollen and a lovely chalky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with an utterly classic profile, racy acids and great cut and grip on the long, laser-like and minerally finish. Great juice. 2020-2045. **94+**.

Domaine William Fèvre (Chablis)

Didier Séguier is very content with the quality of the 2016 vintage at Domaine William Fèvre, but yields are down in most vineyards here and there will not be a lot of wine available for several of the crus offered by the domaine. For example, at the villages level, yields are down fully seventy percent for the two bottlings from Domaine Fèvre, with the version bottled from the domaine’s own vines at this level going to be very limited, whereas the Champs Royaux cuvée, which Didier produces from purchased grapes, will be composed from different sources than is customary, as the usual suppliers of grapes for this bottling simply did not have enough grapes for the domaine’s needs and additional grapes were purchased further afield. Within the framework of the domaine’s premier and grand crus, yields ranged pretty dramatically, depending on the extent of frost damage, so production can be down anywhere from fifty to sixty percent in the most-affected vineyards, but where the frost damage was minimal, Monsieur Séguier was able to get yields in the range of thirty-five to forty hectoliters per hectare, which was fantastic in comparison to frosted parcels such as the domaine’s plot in Les Lys, which came in at twelve hectoliters per hectare! Similar variations were evident at the grand cru level as well here, with Domaine Fèvre’s Bougros cropped at twenty-eight hectoliters per hectare in 2016, but their Vaudésir at only sixteen! There is no separate Fourchaume bottling in 2016, as all of the domaine’s vines are situated in Vaulorent and there was not enough production to make two different cuvées in 2016. Across the board, the quality of the 2016s here is exemplary and as we tasted through the wines this past November, Didier would often just shake his head and say “what a pity we have so little of this wine this year” as a given wine would be flat out stunning. As is typical in November at Domaine William Fèvre, a couple of wines were bottled in the summer, others (almost all of the premier crus) bottled at the end of October and the remainder were in the process of being readied for bottling early in the new year. I have noted in the individual tasting notes in what stage the wine was at the time that I tasted it on November 20th. The 2016 vintage is a superb success at Domaine William Fèvre and it will behoove Chablis lovers to search out these wines earlier, rather than later, as some of the quantities are going to be microscopic.

2016 Petit Chablis- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 Petit Chablis from Domaine Fèvre had been bottled during the summer of 2017 and was showing very nicely at the time of my visit. The bouquet shows off a lovely combination of ripe fruit and good underlying minerality, wafting from the glass in a mix of

apple, orange, chalky soil tones and a nice touch of straw in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full and quite concentrated for Petit Chablis, with good focus and grip, crisp acids and very good length on the succulent finish. Good juice. 2018-2025. **87.**



2016 Chablis “Champs Royaux”- Maison William Fèvre

The 2016 Champs Royaux is a tasty bottle of Chablis that will drink well from the outset, but it cannot match the precision and grip this year of the bottling from the domaine’s own vineyards. The bouquet offer sup scents of green apple, tangerine, chalky soil tones and a nice topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite generous on the attack, with a good core, sound framing acids and good bounce and length on the finish. This was bottled over the summer. Easy drinking and ample in personality. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Chablis- Domaine William Fèvre

The very low yields in the *villages* level parcels of Domaine Fèvre can really be sensed here, as the wine has a depth and dimension at the core that is not customary with AC level bottlings in most vintages. The bouquet here is excellent, offering up a very pure and mineral-infused blend of lime, pear, limestone minerality, citrus peel and a nice touch of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full, long and racy, with a rock solid core, excellent backend mineral drive and a long, zesty and complex finish. This too was bottled in the summer and was really showing well in November. 2018-2035. **90.**

2016 Chablis “Beauroy”- Domaine William Fèvre

Like most of the 2016 premier crus in the Fèvre cellars, the Beauroy had been bottled a few weeks before my visit. The wine was showing very well, wafting from the glass in a blend of

lemon, wet stone minerality, green apple, spring flowers and a gentle topnote of chalk dust. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and zesty, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and excellent backend energy and mineral drive on the long finish. This was one of the premier crus that was barely touched by the frost, so yields here were thirty-five hectoliters per hectare. 2018-2035+. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine William Fèvre

In contrast to the Beauroy, the domaine’s parcel in Montmains was frosted badly and yields were less than half of those in Beauroy, coming in at fifteen hectoliters per hectare. The wine is excellent, but sadly, there will not be much of it around. The nose delivers a fine and quite classic blend of pear, apple, lime blossoms, chalky soil tones and a nice touch of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and complex, with a superb core of fruit, lovely transparency, excellent cut and grip and a long, complex and classy finish. Montmains is usually one of the workhorse premier cru bottlings from Domaine Fèvre, but it is going to be hard to come by in 2016. 2018-2035+. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine William Fèvre

Like almost all of the premier crus at Domaine William Fèvre from 2016, the Vaillons had been bottled in late October. Yields here were a bit better than in Montmains, though still just over twenty hectoliters per hectare, so this too is not going to be easy to find in the market. The wine is really superb this year, offering up a complex bouquet of green apple, pear, a touch of beeswax, chalky minerality and plenty of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and racy in profile, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip, zesty acids and a very long, nascently complex and supremely elegant finish. I really like this wine this year! 2020-2040. **92+.**

2016 Chablis “Les Lys”- Domaine William Fèvre

The yields in Les Lys were the smallest of any of the premier or grand crus in the Domaine Fèvre lineup, but the wine, even cropped at a miniscule twelve hectoliters per hectare, has retained its utterly classical shape and profile, rather than ending up overly concentrated. The resulting wine is truly the finest example of this vineyard that I have ever tasted from Didier Séguier, as the wine soars from the glass in a complex blend of orange, lime, pear, very complex minerality, white lilies and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sizzling in profile, with outstanding mid-palate depth, great focus and grip and a very, very long, racy and complex finish. Stunning wine. 2020-2040+. **93.**

2016 Chablis “Mont de Milieu”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 Mont de Milieu from Domaine Fèvre seems a bit more forward in personality than the last couple of these premier crus in the tasting, but with plenty of backend minerality to drive the wine nicely on the finish. The wide open bouquet delivers scents of orange, pear, chalky minerality and fruit blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and fairly fruit-driven in personality at the present time, with good cut and grip and a long finish that closes promisingly with plenty of minerality. Perhaps this is just showing more of its fruit after its bottling in late October and the underlying soil signature will come to the fore again as it settles in from its *mise*? 2018-2035. **91+.**

2016 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine William Fèvre

The Domaine Fèvre Montée de Tonnerre is absolutely stunning in 2016. The bouquet is pure, complex and very vibrant, soaring from the glass in a blaze of pear, green apple, a touch of anise, crystalline limestone minerality, citrus blossoms and a touch of flintiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full, long and focused, with a rock solid core, excellent

cut and grip and a very long, complex and energetic finish. Bottled in October. Great juice. 2022-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “Vaulorent”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 Vaulorent had just been filtered in preparation for bottling at the end of November, but despite this, the wine was absolutely singing at the time of my visit to the domaine. The bouquet is pure and flat out stunning, offering up a constellation of pear, lime, green apple, flinty minerality, lime blossoms and a topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off grand cru depth at the core, with racy acids and great focus on the very, very long, complex and snappy finish. I love the backend mineral drive here. 2022-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “Bougros”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 Bougros from Domaine Fèvre was in the same stage as the Vaulorent, having just been filtered in preparation for imminent bottling. The wine is very pure and very lovely, delivering a fine bouquet of lime peel, tangerine, pear, chalky minerality, spring flowers and a touch of flint. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and nicely reserved in profile, with a fine core, vibrant acids and great length and grip on the focused and racy finish. Lovely juice in the making. At twenty-eight hectoliters per hectare, this was one of the most “correct” yielding grand crus here in this vintage. 2022-2060. **94+.**

2016 Chablis “Vaudésir”- Domaine William Fèvre

The extremely short crop in Domaine Fèvre’s Vaudésir did not affect its classic styling one bit, as the wine soars from the glass in a complex aromatic constellation of lime, apple, flinty minerality, citrus peel, dried flowers and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is very deep, pure and full-bodied, with a very mineral personality, a rock solid core. brisk acids and outstanding focus and grip on the very long, snappy finish. Great juice in the making. 2023-2060. **94+.**

2016 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine William Fèvre

I cannot recall every tasting a better example of Valmur from Domaine William Fèvre! The 2016 shows off great purity and precision on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet delivering scents of pear, apple, beeswax, kaleidoscopic minerality and white flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, zesty and laser-like in its focus, with outstanding mid-palate depth, a sleek, seamless sense of balance and a very long, very complex and racy finish. Brilliant juice. 2022-2060. **96.**

2016 Chablis “les Preuses”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 les Preuses from Domaine Fèvre is another brilliant young wine. The bouquet shows all of the mineral complexity of this great *terroir*, wafting from the glass in a refined mix of grapefruit, pear, white flowers, lime zest, a hint of beeswax and a glorious bath of limestone minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and very solid at the core, with stunning backend mineral drive, lovely focus and grip and a very long, very pure and dancing finish. 2023-2065. **96.**

2016 Chablis “Bougros- Côte de Bouguerots”- Domaine William Fèvre

In the rarefied air of the Fèvre 2016 grand crus, it really is hard to choose a favorite, as they are all stunning examples of their underlying *terroirs*. The 2016 Côte de Bouguerots is a brilliant young wine, wafting from the glass in a fine aromatic blend of pear, apple, fresh lime, flinty and chalky minerality and a potpourri of white flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, concentrated and racy, with great focus and cut, impeccable balance and a very long, nascently complex and energetic finish. Great juice. 2023-2065. **95+.**

2016 Chablis “les Clos”- Domaine William Fèvre

The 2016 les Clos from Didier Séguier is a fitting close to this *tour de force* tasting of the vintage. The wine is stunning on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet offering up scents of apple, lime, a hint of tangerine, smoky overtones, flinty minerality, wet stones and dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, brisk acids and great backend mineral drive on the very young, very long and snappy finish. This will need bottle age to blossom, but it will be a great example of les Clos in the fullness of time. 2024-2065. **96.**

Domaine Louis Michel (Chablis)

Guillaume Gicqueau-Michel reported that Domaine Michel’s production overall was down fifty percent in 2016, but the severest damage from the frost was in their Petit Chablis and Chablis AC vineyards, where yields were down by more than seventy percent. Not only was frost a factor, but the hail storm on May 13th that came in via Préhy and Courgis wiped out the production completely of 1.8 hectares of vines at the Chablis AC level owned by the family. However, despite the very short crop here, Guillaume was upbeat about the quality of the wines here in 2016, with the wines showing superb depth, purity of fruit, classic expressions of terroir and lovely, zesty personalities that give the wines lift and plenty of personality on the backend. As is customary here in November, the Petit Chablis, Chablis AC and many of the premier crus had been bottled ahead of the harvest of 2017, with the remaining small handful of premier crus (Séchet and Butteaux Vieilles Vignes) that had not been bottled yet intended for bottling at the end of the year or early in the new year. The grand crus were to be bottled in the early spring. This is an outstanding vintage for Domaine Louis Michel et Fils!

2016 Petit Chablis- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

This is going to be a superb example of Petit Chablis. The bouquet is deep and bright, offering up scents of apple, pear, chalky soil tones, white flowers and a touch of Fourchaume-like woody tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and rock solid at the core (from the very low yields), with bright acids and excellent cut and grip on the long finish. A lovely wine and a great bargain. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Chablis- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Chablis AC from Domaine Michel is also outstanding this year, with the short crop giving the wine impressive depth and mineral drive. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a very chalky blend of green apple, lime, a touch of oyster shell and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a fine core, zesty acids and lovely length and grip on the nascently complex finish. There is a touch of reserve in the profile here that augurs very well for its development in bottle. 2018-2035. **89+.**

2016 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Montmains is very refined from Guillaume Gicqueau-Michel and is going to drink beautifully from the moment of release. The pure and classy bouquet delivers scents of lime, green apple, chalky minerality, a touch of flint and a topnote of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and very precise in its expression of minerality, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, racy and beautifully balanced finish. Fine juice. 2018-2040. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Butteaux”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

Butteaux was one of the Domaine Michel premier crus that was spared from any frost damage and the wine has turned out with a lovely vein of early generosity that is going to make

it very popular from the get-go. The nose wafts from the glass in a wide open blend of pear, chalky soil tones, apple, spring flowers and a touch of straw in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely ample at the core, with lovely framing acids and a long, complex and succulent finish. This does not show quite the same cut and grip as the Montmains out of the blocks, but it is very well-balanced and will have no trouble aging gracefully. 2018-2035. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Forêts”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Forêts from Domaine Michel has turned out beautifully and is an absolute classic in the making. The nose jumps from the glass in a refined blend of apple, pear, spring flowers, a touch of beeswax, complex limestone minerality and a topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent in profile, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and a very long, elegant and snappy finish. This is as racy as the Montmains, but a step up in terms of refinement and ultimate complexity. High class juice. 2020-2040+. **92+.**

2016 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Vaillons *chez* Michel is a touch riper in personality than the lovely Forêts, but has plenty of depth and complexity to go along with its slightly more generous style. The nose offers up a lovely blend of pear, a touch of tangerine, chalky soil tones, a hint of licorice and a floral topnote redolent of citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and crisp, with an excellent core, fine focus and grip and a long, zesty and wide open finish. This is a touch more fruit-driven than the previous premier crus in the lineup, but it still has plenty of Chablis character and will be a lovely drink. 2018-2035. **92.**

2016 Chablis “Vaulorent”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The beautiful Domaine Michel example of Vaulorent continues to be labeled in the US as “Fourchaume”, but it is the same wine. This is a beautiful and very classic bottle in the making, offering up a very refined aromatic constellation of pear, a touch of lime, flinty minerality, dried flowers and a touch of wet stone in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, excellent complexity and truly stunning backend intensity and length on the vibrant and classic finish. Great juice. 2020-2045. **93.**

2016 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Montée de Tonnerre from Domaine Michel was one of the last premier crus to be bottled in the autumn and the wine was still a bit reserved post-bottling. Nevertheless, its ultimate quality is very easy to read, as the wine delivers a fine bouquet of lemon, pear, tart orange, complex, chalky minerality, white flowers and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and very minerally, with a fine core, excellent cut and grip and superb backend mineral drive on the very long and snappy finish. Excellent Montée de Tonnerre! 2021-2050. **93+.**

2016 Chablis “Butteaux” Vieilles Vignes- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

As the Butteaux Vieilles Vignes bottling had not yet been bottled, the precision of the vintage of 2016 was very much on display in this and the following example of Séchet. It augurs very, very well for the premier crus that had already been bottled and were in the midst of their recovery. This wine is pure, very precise and vibrant on the nose, delivering a marvelous mix of green apple, lime, pear, crystalline minerality, a touch of licorice and a pungent topnote of lime blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent, with a superb core, great focus and grip and a long, racy and very minerally finish. Great juice. 2020-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “Séchet”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Séchet from Domaine Michel is a racy and very refined premier cru, without quite the mid-palate amplitude of the last few premier crus, but excellent precision and intensity of flavor. The nose wafts from the glass in a vibrant blend of green apple, tangerine, chalky minerality, beeswax and a topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and snappy, with good, but not great depth at the core, racy acids and excellent focus and grip on the minerally and complex finish. Fine juice with a touch of ethereal that is fairly rare in this vintage. 2018-2040. **93.**



A few “dead soldiers” on display in the tasting room in the cellars at Domaine Louis Michel et Fils.

2016 Chablis “Vaudésir”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Vaudésir chez Michel is no bigger than the Vaalorent or Montée de Tonnerre this year, but finer and more detailed than either of those excellent wines. The complex and very pure nose wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of tart orange, Pear, lime, kaleidoscopic minerality and a topnote of white lilies. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and racy in profile, with a fine core, superb mineral complexity and a long, vibrant and beautifully balanced finish. Fine juice in the making. 2020-2050. **94+.**

2016 Chablis “Grenouilles”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

The 2016 Grenouilles is also outstanding from Domaine Michel, with a bit more power than the Vaudésir, but every bit the same precision and soil signature. The bouquet delivers

scents of pear, lime, a touch of tangerine, flinty soil tones, lime blossoms and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and rock solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, racy acids and excellent lift on the long, powerful and very promising finish. 2022-2050. **94.**

2016 Chablis “Les Clos”- Domaine Louis Michel et Fils

As is often the case *chez* Michel in top flight vintages such as 2016, the les Clos bottling here is the most reserved and structured out of the blocks, but also the wine with the greatest potential. The youthful nose provided a fine constellation of apple, lime zest, a touch of sweet grapefruit, complex wet stone and flinty minerality, dried flowers and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full and racy, with a great core of fruit, superb mineral drive, bright acids and outstanding cut and grip on the very, very long, nascently complex and utterly classic finish. 2022-2055+. **95+.**

Domaine Raveneau (Chablis)

My visit at Domaine Raveneau this year was very quick, as I was trying to fight through the effects of food poisoning from the night before and was not really in shape to be anywhere but bed on that following morning. Happily, my palate was still fine, but my stomach was doing flip-flops and I had to politely decline the offer of Monsieur Raveneau to sample a range of older wines after we had tasted through the 2016s (certainly more than ample evidence that I was seriously under the weather, as I can never recall turning down an invitation to taste further wines in the Raveneaus’ cellars!) and returned to my sick bed soon after our tasting. The frost damage of 2016 chez Raveneau varied from vineyard to vineyard, with all of their parcels hit to some degree and the Chablis AC and Petit Chablis the most severely affected. Monsieur Raveneau noted that the family picked their Petit Chablis last of all their parcels this year, for when everything ripened up nicely at the same moment, it was their top level vineyards that they collected fruit from first. Consequently, their 2016 Petit Chablis is a pretty deep and concentrated wine in this vintage, with natural alcohol of nearly 13.5 percent and the inner core of a much higher appellation. I did not write down which of the family’s premier crus were the most hard hit by the frosts, but I did note that at the grand cru level, yields averaged twenty-eight hectoliters per hectare chez Raveneau in 2016. My details from my tasting at Domaine Raveneau are a bit shorter than customary, due to the circumstances, but I can attest that the wines were showing beautifully and 2016 is yet another outstanding vintage for this great family domaine.

2016 Petit Chablis- Domaine Raveneau

With tiny yields in 2016, this is a broad-shouldered and very serious example of Petit Chablis *chez* Raveneau. The wine offers up a lovely nose of lemon, tangerine, fine minerality and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, deep and nicely round and open on the attack, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, succulent and vibrant finish. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Chablis- Domaine Raveneau

The domaine’s 2016 Chablis *villages* was perhaps the very finest example at this level that I tasted from the vintage. The bouquet is pure and nascently complex, offering up a lovely constellation of lemon, grapefruit, complex minerality, a touch of oyster shell and a topnote of orange peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and racy in personality, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and a beautifully balanced and classic finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2040. **91.**

2016 Chablis “Montmains”- Domaine Raveneau

I love the mineral expression of the 2016 Montmains from the Raveneau family, as there is a very real crystalline expression to the soil tones here this year. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a refined blend of pear, lemon, spring flowers and a complex base of minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely ripe on the attack, with a fine core, excellent focus and grip and superb backend tension on the long, poised and vibrant finish. A fine, fine bottle in the making. 2020-2045. **92.**

2016 Chablis “Forêt”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2016 Forêt *chez* Raveneau is very refined and elegant this year. The wine offers up a nose of lemon, green apple, flinty minerality, a touch of anise and a lovely mix of spring flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and very long, with a lovely synthesis of pure fruit and vibrant minerality adding bounce and lift on the zesty and complex finish. Despite the very early precision in evidence here, there is also a fine sense of structural reserve that augurs very, very well for this wine’s future. A superb vintage of Forêt here this year! 2020-2045. **92+.**

2016 Chablis “Butteaux”- Domaine Raveneau

The Raveneaus’ 2016 Butteaux is a beautiful and quite classic wine in the making. The bouquet is a bit more reserved than any of the other premier crus up to this point in the tasting, but very promising in its mélange of pear, a touch of tangerine, lemon, chalky soil tones, gentle notes of beeswax and a fine topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids and fine length and grip on the very long and very precise finish. A classic. 2023-2045+. **93.**

2016 Chablis “Vaillons”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2016 Vaillons from Domaine Raveneau is a bit more forward and open in personality than the Forêt. The nose delivers a fine constellation of apple, tangerine, beeswax, chalky soil tones, a touch of anise and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite powerful in personality, with a rock solid core, racy acids and outstanding length and grip on the complex finish. I would guess that the frost damage in Vaillons was more severe than in Butteaux and Forêt this year in the Raveneau parcels, as this wine has that more powerful and concentrated feel to it. Qualitatively, the two wines are very close, but stylistically, I have a slight preference for the more classic shape of the Forêt. 2018-2040. **92.**

2016 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2016 Montée de Tonnerre from Domaine Raveneau is a classic in the making. The pure and nascently complex bouquet delivers a lovely blend of lemon, pear, chalky and complex minerality, a hint of licorice and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full and racy in profile, with a superb core, great focus and grip, racy acids and excellent backend mineral drive on the very long, vibrant finish. 2020-2050. **94+.**

2016 Chablis “Blanchot”- Domaine Raveneau

The domaine’s 2016 Blanchot was showing a bit more open and generous out of cask than the racy Montée de Tonnerre. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic blend of lemon, tangerine, pear, complex, chalky soil tones and a touch of anise in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and powerful in profile, with a fine core, very good acidity and lovely focus and grip on the plush, complex and already very tasty finish. I imagine that this wine will close down a bit after the *mise*. 2023-2060. **94.**

2016 Chablis “Valmur”- Domaine Raveneau

The 2016 Domaine Raveneau Valmur is an absolute classic in the making. The wine offers up great purity and nascent complexity in its aromatic constellation of apple, pear, lovely limestone minerality, a hint of the beeswax to come, citrus zest and a pungent topnote of lemon blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and rock solid at the core, with bright, zesty acids, excellent focus and grip and superb backend mineral drive on the very long finish. Great juice. 2024-2060. **95.**

2016 Chablis “Clos”- Domaine Raveneau

As so often seems to be the case *chez* Raveneau, the 2016 Clos is the most reserved and promising wine in the cellars this year. This too is absolutely classic in personality, offering up a youthfully complex bouquet of pear, lemon, flinty, chalky minerality, just a hint of anise and a potpourri of floral tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off stunning mid-palate depth, with laser-like focus, great grip and a very long, precise and energetic finish. All this great wine needs is some patience to allow it to fully blossom with bottle age! 2026-2075. **97.**

Gevrey-Chambertin:

Domaine Denis Bachelet (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Denis Bachelet has crafted beautiful examples of the vintage in 2016. He was fortunate that his hardest hit vines by the frost were in the Bourgogne appellation, which was down thirty percent, but his ancient vines in Charmes-Chambertin were also affected by the April freeze in this vintage and the yields were down in this parcel by twenty-five percent as well. However, given how much worse things were in villages like Marsannay and Chambolle-Musigny, he counted himself amongst the fortunate ones in 2016. The harvest started here on September 24th and was completed by the 28th of the month in 2016 and the wines were showing beautiful potential at the time of my visit in mid-November. Across the board the 2016s chez Bachelet exude a lovely core of sappiness that is very lovely and quite 2010-like, wedded to excellent soil signatures, suave structural elements and a vibrancy that promises really excellent and very refined wines when they have blossomed with a bit of bottle age. Unless they close up considerably after bottling, I suspect that many of these 2016s will not require particularly long periods of aging prior to starting to drink with real generosity, but at the same time, the balances and depth of fruit here is truly admirable and this is a vintage that will also age long and gracefully- if Domaine Bachelet fans can keep their hands off of the bottles! A truly beautiful range of wines from Denis Bachelet in 2016!

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Denis Bachelet

This is one of the recurrent themes of the 2016 vintage- just how good the Bourgogne rouge is in the cellars here. Denis Bachelet always makes excellent and serious Bourgogne, but the 2016 is exceptional, as it offers up a pure and sappy nose of black cherries, dark berries, bitter chocolate, a lovely base of soil tones and a nice touch of Gevrey meatiness. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely sappy at the core, with lovely balance and just a bit of suave, backend tannin adding conviction on the long finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88+.**

2016 Côte de Nuits Villages- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2016 Domaine Bachelet Côte de Nuits Villages is another wine of lovely purity and sappiness to its fruit tones, as the wine wafts from the glass in a lovely mix of sweet dark berries, black cherries, black minerality, espresso, woodsmoke and a topnote of violets. On the palate the

wine is pure, full-bodied and quite elegant in profile out of the blocks, with a superb core of fruit, fine soil signature and a long suavely tannic and very well-balanced finish. This will only need a few years to start to drink very well, but will also age quite nicely over a couple of decades. 2020-2040. **90+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Denis Bachelet

The 2016 Gevrey “Vieilles Vignes” *chez* Bachelet was really showing beautifully in mid-November, with a plush, almost velvety texture on the palate that is going to be very hard to resist in its youth, unless the wine closes down a bit after its *mise*. The bouquet is very black fruity and very expressive, delivering a fine constellation of black cherries, black raspberries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, a nice touch of meatiness and a refined base of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very suave on the attack, with lovely transparency, a sappy core, moderate, but quite silky tannins and excellent focus and grip on the nascently complex and very refined finish. Fine juice. 2020-2050+. **91+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Evocelles” V.V.- Domaine Denis Bachelet

Les Evocelles is the finest vineyard in the village of Brochon and is very often of premier cru quality. Denis Bachelet’s vines here were planted in 1960 and 1961 and have really produced a beautiful wine in the 2016 vintage, offering up a superb and very pure nose of black plums, black cherries, lovely dark soil tones, grilled meats, espresso, a nice foundation of vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure on the attack and very sappy at the core, with excellent focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and quite impressive backend mineral drive on the perfectly balanced finish. This is more elegant than the straight Gevrey old vine bottling and should start to drink with generosity fairly early on in its evolution. Really a lovely bottle of Gevrey in the making. 2021-2050+. **92**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Corbeaux” V.V.- Domaine Denis Bachelet

Les Corbeaux can often be one of the more structured premier crus in Gevrey-Chambertin in its youth, and I often find that this *terroir* really does well in vintages with such inherent elegance as is found in 2016. This is going to be a terrific wine, as the bouquet jumps from the glass in a very classy blend of black cherries, cassis, black plums, bitter chocolate, woodsmoke, grilled meats, black minerality and new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and soil-driven in personality, with a sappy core of black fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, pure and complex finish. Great Corbeaux in the making. 2026-2075. **93+**.

2016 Charmes-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Denis Bachelet

While much of the lineup *chez* Bachelet is noteworthy for its early expressiveness in this vintage, this is not the case with the 2016 Charmes-Chambertin, which is still quite primary on both the nose and palate. But, with time, this is going to be a stellar wine, as the bouquet offers up a deep, vibrant and potentially sappy blend of black raspberries, black cherries, grilled meats, a very complex base of soil tones, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, espresso and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid to its sappy core, with ripe, suave tannins, great focus and grip and a long, potentially voluptuous finish. This wine has outstanding depth, but is so light on its feet out of the blocks that it is easy to imagine just how brilliant it is going to be when it is truly ready for primetime drinking! My gut feeling that this great vintage of Charmes will give the 2015 version all it can handle for the next thirty years, and my instinct suggests that stylistically, I will always have a slight preference for this stunning 2016! 2026-2085+. **97**.



Second generation fruit from the 2015 vintage that was left out on the vines- these were sometimes used in 2016.

Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils (Gevrey-Chambertin)

The Burguet brothers were not as fortunate as some of their neighbors, as their parcels were hit hard by frost in 2016 and the mildew pressures also took a toll on production numbers in this vintage. Consequently, the domaine's production was down by fully seventy percent in 2016, which was one of the hardest hit numbers in all of the village of Gevrey-Chambertin. Part of this reduction also had to do with the handful of cuvées that the family produces from purchased grapes, as with their suppliers also hit hard by frost damage, there simply was not any grapes to buy in 2016 from these suppliers. Amongst the family's own parcels, there is only a single cask of Bourgogne in the cellars this year due to the severity of the frost damage in these parcels, so I did not taste this wine, as the Burguet brothers would understandably like to get as much of it into bottle as possible! There are no Chambolle or Vosne bottlings at all in 2016 in the Burguet cellars, as the growers that the family works with were hit hard and did not have sufficient production to sell anything. Similarly, there is not a Clos de Bèze 2016 in the cellars chez Burguet for similar reasons (perhaps the hardest hit of all!), but happily, the 2017 vintage has filled the cellars with barrels and everything will be back to normal here again next year. So, though the tasting here was far shorter than usual in November, as there were only four wines to taste from 2016, the welcome was every bit as warm and cordial as always and the quality of the 2016s is excellent and it is a very successful vintage chez Burguet. And there will be a return to normal sized allocations with the 2017 vintage!

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cuvée Symphonie”- Domaine Alain Burguet

The 2016 Cuvée Symphonie from Domaine Burguet is a beautiful wine in the making, with all of the inherent elegance and perfume of the vintage very much in evidence. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely, red fruity blend of cherries, strawberries, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a discreet touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, transparent and beautifully sappy at the core, with modest tannins, fine focus and grip and a long, tangy and complex finish. A beautiful AC. 2021-2050+. **91.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Mes Favorites”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2016 Mes Favorites old vine bottling is far more black fruity in personality this year. The superb nose delivers a blend of cassis, black cherries, espresso, grilled meats, woodsmoke, cedar and a complex base of black minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully structured, with a fine core, excellent soil signature and a long, ripely tannic and focused finish. This will need some time in the cellar to blossom, but it is going to be an outstanding wine, and, as always, is clearly of premier cru quality. 2025-2060+. **92+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2016 Champeaux from the Burguet family is excellent. The bouquet is pure and very refined already, offering up a fine mix of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil tones, *pigeon* and a discreet base of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with lovely focus and grip, a sappy core of red fruit, beautiful balance and nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and excellent length and grip on the classy finish. My kind of Champeaux! 2024-2060. **93+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Alain Burguet et Fils

The 2016 Lavaux St. Jacques from the Burguet brothers is also another outstanding wine, with a nicely black fruity personality on both the nose and palate. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a nascently complex blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, lovely spice tones, espresso, incipient notes of grilled meats and a lovely base of Gevrey minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very sappy at the core, with lovely transparency, suave, ripe tannins and a very long, focused and nicely reserved finish. This too is outstanding. 2025-2065. **94.**

Domaine Fourrier (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Domaine Fourrier has a new tasting room constructed up above the entrance to the cuverie and what a pleasure it was to settle in at the spacious table, looking out at a beautiful vista of Gevrey premier crus from the second floor window and work our way through this excellent lineup of 2016s. The domaine's yields in 2016 varied from village to village, with their Chambolle parcels down by an average of fifty percent, as was also the case with the Fourriers' beautiful example of Petits Vougeots and even their Gevrey production was off by thirty percent, with most of this loss from their significant holdings on the Combe de Lavaut on the northern side of the village. The harvest here commenced early, with white grapes being brought in starting on the 13th of September, and the pinot noir starting a handful of days later. The frost damage of late April was not only important for its destruction of a significant percentage of the crop where it struck, but the frosted vineyards also had quite a bit of millerandage, which further affected yields, but, as the superb fin de saison weather allowed all berries to ripen completely, the millerandage also contributed plenty of very small berries with little juice, adding to the depth and sappiness in the resulting wines where it was quite prevalent. The cellar had been racked into tank three weeks prior to my mid-November visit to Domaine Fourrier, which is pretty standard operating procedure here, but with samples drawn and lined up in the tasting

room, it was a far easier and more enjoyable tasting than is normally the case here in November, where one often has to heat each wine up a bit in the hands in the very cool cuverie to get it to stir and start to show its true colors. There is only a single cask of Chambolle “Gruenchers” this year, so we did not taste this wine, nor the Chambolle “Vieilles Vignes” as the domaine logically preferred to keep every last drop of these for bottling. All of the oak used in the cellars these days chez Fourrier hails from the tonnelier of Cadus, which is owned by Louis Jadot, and tends to impart a fairly spicy profile in the young wines. New wood averages twenty percent here and I can understand the logic of using all the same tonnelier for one’s barrels, as it gives a more uniform oak signature to the wines and makes this more of a constant, than a variable in the equation, but the Cadus wood seems to stick out to me a bit more these days than was the case in the late 1990s and early 2000s here. With bottle age, it becomes buried in the other components of the wine, but if I were asked to make a decision in this regard and limited to a single tonnelier, I might opt for something that leans a bit more to the vanillin side of the new oak ledger, like François Frères, rather than the spicier side found in barrels from Cadus or Taransaud. But, that is just my personal taste. Overall, this is an excellent and very elegant range of 2016s.

Domaine Wines

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Fourrier

The domaine’s Bourgogne Blanc is made from a parcel of thirty-five year-old vines in the village of Gilly. The 2016 version was showing nicely, offering up a ripe and generous nose of apple, peach, bee pollen, a nice base of soil and a touch of orange zest in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bright and wide open, with a good core, sound framing acids and sneaky length on the balanced finish. This will drink quite nicely from the outset. 2018-2025. **87.**

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Fourrier

With half the vines for this cuvée in Fixin and half in Gilly, there was a bit of frost damage in the latter village, but all in all, yields were not too bad for this cuvée. The wine is quite black fruity out of the blocks, offering up scents of dark berries, black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of saddle leather and bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, plush and quite ample, with a good core, a bit of backend tannin and good length and grip on the finish. This does not exude the early sex appeal of so many Bourgogne rouge bottlings in 2016, but perhaps this was just a function of the wine having been assembled three weeks prior to my tasting it? 2020-2030+. **87+?**

2016 Morey St. Denis “Clos Solon”- Domaine Fourrier

There was no frost of course in Morey, but we did not taste the premier cru of Clos Sorbés here, as a sample had not been prepared, and had to content ourselves with this very pretty Morey AC bottling. The bouquet of the 2016 Clos Solon is quite sappy, wafting from the glass in a lovely blend of red plums, black cherries, dark soil tones, mustard seed, violets and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic and well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2022-2050. **89+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2016 old vine bottling of Gevrey AC, which hails from parcels on the northern side of the village, was showing very well indeed, offering up a fine bouquet of cherries, black raspberries, raw cocoa, mustard seed, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full, plush and generous, with a good core of fruit, fine soil signature, modest tannins and

a long, poised and sappy finish. This will want a handful of years in the cellar, just to allow its secondary layer of complexity to emerge and the tannins fall away, but it is going to be very tempting to drink right out of the blocks. 2021-2050. **90.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Aux Echézeaux”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Aux Echézeaux” from Domaine Fourrier, which avoided any frost damage at all, is really a lovely wine this year. It is more precise and spicier in personality than the very good Vieilles Vignes bottling, as it wafts from the glass in a fine blend of cherries, mustard seed, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nascently complex, with a fine, sappy core of red fruit, lovely transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and promising finish. 2023-2050. **90+.**

2016 Vougeot “Petits Vougeots”- Domaine Fourrier

With its pure base of limestone, adjacent to Les Amoureuses on the slope, the vineyard of Petits Vougeots is always one of my favorite “well-kept secrets” in the firmament of the Côte de Nuits, and the wine always turns out beautifully *chez* Fourrier. It is too bad yields are down by fifty percent here in 2016, as the wine has turned out beautifully, offering up a fine aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, a beautiful base of chalky soil tones, mustard seed and a bit of spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, soil-driven and sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and quite classy finish. 2025-2065+. **92.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cherbaudes”- Domaine Fourrier

There was no frost damage at all in Cherbaudes and the 2016 from Domaine Fourrier was showing very well at the time of my visit, with a plush and transparent personality that augurs very well for its future development. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine blend of red plums, cherries, chocolate, mustard seed, a complex base of soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely nascent complexity, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, vibrant and classy finish. The vineyard of Cherbaudes can sometimes be a bit *sauvage* in personality out of the blocks, but the inherent elegance of 2016 has ameliorated this character trait and the wine is already very elegant. 2027-2060. **92.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Fourrier

Normally we will taste Goulots ahead of Champeaux in the lineup *chez* Fourrier, but I am guessing that the idea was to show the two Gevrey premier crus that escaped frost damage first, followed by the crus higher up on the Combe de Lavaut, where yields were off by an average of thirty percent. Champeaux lies right below Goulots on the slope and the 2016 here is an outstanding wine in the making, delivering a fine nose of red and black cherries, dark chocolate, grilled meats, a lovely base of soil, a touch of fresh herbs, woodsmoke and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core, excellent soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and nascently complex finish. A beautiful bottle in the making. 2028-2060. **93.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Goulots”- Domaine Fourrier

As is so typical of Goulots in most vintages, this is a very red fruity example of Gevrey in 2016, offering up a fine aromatic constellation of red plums, cherries, a touch of cocoa powder, chalky soil tones, cedar and a beautifully floral topnote redolent of both roses and violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very suave on the attack, with fine mid-palate depth, suave, seamless tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully balanced finish. A beautiful vintage of Goulots *chez* Fourrier. 2026-2060. **93.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Combes aux Moines”- Domaine Fourrier

The 2016 Combes aux Moines from Jean-Marie Fourrier was also down by thirty percent in quantity, but is absolutely stellar in quality. The stunning nose soars from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, grilled meats, raw cocoa, black minerality, woodsmoke and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great purity and soil signature, ripe, perfectly integrated tannins, bright acids and fine focus and grip on the very, very long and very pure finish. This will take a couple more years in the cellar to come around than the Goulots, but it will be every bit as refined and elegant when it has reached its plateau of maturity. Superb juice. 2028-2065. **93+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos St. Jacques”- Domaine Fourrier

With the shortened crop in Clos St. Jacques, there is no Cuvée Centenaire here this year, just a single, truly lovely bottling of this great vineyard. The nose is pure, nascently complex and very precise, offering up scents of red plums, cherries, gamebird, mustard seed, a complex base of soil, roses and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep full-bodied and classically structured, with a sappy core, excellent backend mineral drive, ripe tannins and a very long, vibrant and promising finish. 2030-2070. **94**.

2016 Griotte-Chambertin- Domaine Fourrier

The 2016 Griotte-Chambertin from Domaine Fourrier is a great wine in the making. The bouquet is pure, sappy and quite expressive, but the palate is still on the primary side and the wine will deserve a fully twelve to fourteen years in the cellar to start to properly stir from hibernation. The nose is a superb blend of red and black cherries, gamebird, a very complex base of chalky soil tones, woodsmoke, spicy oak, mustard seed and a pungent topnote of roses. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already quite velvety on the attack, with a sappy core, lovely transparency and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy, refined and laser-like focus. There will be plenty of temptation to drink this on the earlier side, unless it closes up significantly after bottling, but it would be crime to really touch a bottle before at least 2030! 2030-2100. **96**.

Négociant Wines

2016 Vosne-Romanée “aux Réas”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2016 Vosne-Romanée “aux Réas” from Jean-Marie Fourrier is very good, offering up a complex nose of raspberries, cherries, raw cocoa, a good base of soil and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is fullish, tangy and nicely plush on the attack, with a good core, moderate tannins and fine soil drive on the long finish. Good juice. 2023-2050. **90**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “aux Echanges”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

Jean-Marie used fifty percent whole clusters in his 2016 aux Echanges bottling. The wine is quite complex and black fruity this year, offering up scents of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, fresh herbs, espresso and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and a bit chewy at the present time, with a good core, ripe tannins and a long, focused and still fairly primary finish. Good juice, but this will need some time in the cellar to blossom. 2024-2050+. **91**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2016 les Amoureuses from Monsieur Fourrier is the first wine in the lineup of négociant bottlings here that shares the same, overt sappiness found in so many of the domaine bottlings in this vintage. The bouquet is deep, pure and gorgeous, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, a complex base of chalky soil, mustard seed,

roses and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and nascently complexity, with a velvety attack, a fine sappy core, lovely backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and laser-like finish. A fine, fine example of Amoureuses. 2026-2075. **94+**.

2016 Charmes-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The parcel of vines Jean-Marie Fourrier buys fruit from in Charmes-Chambertin lies down towards the RN74, which kept it out of harm's way during the April frosts and this wine has turned out beautifully in 2016. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely blend of cherries, raspberries, chocolate, grilled meats, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, cedar and a topnote of mustard seed. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, suave and quite velvety on the attack, with a sappy core of red fruit, fine soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully balanced finish. Fine, fine Charmes. 2024-2060. **93**.

2016 Mazoyrès-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2016 Mazoyrès from Jean-Marie is flat out stunning and a step up from the beautifully elegant and sappy Charmes this year. The bouquet shows great purity in its constellation of black cherries, sweet dark berries, hung game, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure, with outstanding, sappy mid-palate depth, a very complex, soil-driven backend, fine-grained tannins and a long, refined and supremely elegant finish. Glorious Mazoyrès. 2025-2070. **94+**.

2016 Latricières-Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2016 Latricières-Chambertin from Jean-Marie Fourrier is more reserved in personality than either the Charmes or Mazoyrès, but it too is going to be an excellent wine in the fullness of time. The youthful bouquet offers up a classic blend of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, grilled meat, raw cocoa, woodsmoke and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. This will be superb with sufficient bottle age. 2028-2065+. **93+**.

2016 Chambertin- Jean-Marie Fourrier

The 2016 Chambertin from Jean-Marie is a very fine wine in the making, but it was not showing as well as many of the top domaine wines at the time of my visit and was still a bit hunkered down after its racking three weeks prior to my visit. The bouquet is already showing fine delineation in its complex blend of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite plush on the attack, with a sappy core, ripe, seamless tannins and fine length and grip on the nascently complex finish. There is not the same spark evident here as there is in the Clos St. Jacques or Griotte, but perhaps this is just a bit behind the others in its evolution and will snap more precisely into focus as it sees a bit more time in the cellar? If this proves to be the case, then my score will seem a bit conservative. If this does not end up happening, it will still be a very, very good wine, just a bit more forward than the very top examples in the cellar this year. 2030-2080. **94**.

Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Philippe Harmand gets my vote as one of the most exciting young vigneron in Burgundy today and this is one of the best-kept secrets in all of Gevrey-Chambertin these days. His 2016s are another very, very strong set of wines, with excellent soil signatures, plenty of sappy black fruit and impeccably balanced structures to carry the wine long and gracefully in the cellar. Philippe started picking in 2016 on September 24th and many of the wines in the cellar had been

racked into tanks fifteen days before my visit, in anticipation of bottling soon after the new year. I have only been visiting the Harmand family and tasting sur place here for five or six years now, as my friend Serge Cousin who lives in Gevrey-Chambertin was kind enough to introduce me to the domaine's wines several years ago and easily convinced me that Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy should be on my regular tasting schedule in Burgundy each year. The domaine's American importer ought to cut a check to Monsieur Cousin for promotional services rendered. So, while the depth of my tasting experience chez Harmand does not run as long as it does at several other domaines in Gevrey-Chambertin, I am starting to get a feel for the family's style of wines and have been very impressed from my first full tasting here. It seems to me that perhaps Philippe Harmand's wines are just a bit more structured for the long haul than was the case in his father's time, but this may simply be more a reflection of the various vintages each generation has worked with, as Philippe has certainly taken the reins at the domaine during a golden run of vintages in Burgundy! In any case, the range of 2016s chez Harmand is generally quite black fruity this year, with excellent underlying minerality and suave, seamless structures that promise excellent evolution in the bottle. As is true in many of the most successful cellars in the Côte d'Or in 2016, the range of Harmand-Geoffroy wines deliver plenty of sappiness at the core that recall a bit the 2010 vintage, tied to refined chassiss of tannin and beautiful balance. This is quickly becoming one of the superstar domaines in the village of Gevrey!

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

This is another very strong example of Bourgogne rouge in a vintage that has produced a simply beautiful crop of wines at this level. The bouquet is deep and nicely black fruity, offering up scents of black cherries, cassis, a touch of meatiness and a fine base of dark chocolate. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and quite succulent on the attack, with a good core and just a touch of backend tannin perking up the impressively long finish. Fine juice. 2019-2030. **87+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The domaine has a very strong set of *villages* level bottlings this year and there is not one of these that I would not be very, very happy to have in my cellar. The 2016 straight Gevrey is a fine example, offering up a deep bouquet of cassis, black cherries, espresso, dark soil tones, a touch of meatiness and a very discreet base of cedar. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and nicely soil-driven in profile, with a fine core, modest, well-integrated tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. 2021-2045+. **90.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “en Jouise”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 en Jouise is a touch more precise and mineral than the above, with equal depth at the core and fine nascent complexity in evidence on both the nose and palate. The superb bouquet offers up scents of sappy black cherries, sweet dark berries, meaty overtones, espresso, dark soil and a nice touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with excellent backend mineral drive, lovely focus and grip and a long, suavely tannic and tangy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2050. **91.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 Clos Prieur *chez* Harmand is every bit as pure and potentially sappy at the fine en Jouise, but more reserved and structured out of the blocks. The first class nose delivers a constellation of cassis, venison, espresso, black minerality, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite primary today, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long and very promising finish. 2024-2050+. **91.**



Philippe Harmand and his father outside of their domaine's offices in the center of Gevrey-Chambertin.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes” from Philippe Harmand is absolutely classic in profile on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a fine blend of cassis, dark berries, grilled meats, black minerality, espresso, gentle smokiness and a discreet base of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite sappy at the core, with fine underlying *terroir*, suave, seamless tannins and a very long, precise and tangy finish. This will drink sooner than the very good Clos Prieur here, but should age just as long. Fine, fine juice. 2021-2050+. **91+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Perrière”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 la Perrière is utterly refined and transparent in personality. The bouquet is still fairly primary, but with its future complexity already self-evident in its mix of cassis, black cherries, black minerality, bitter chocolate, woodsmoke and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, very pure on the attack and sappy at the core, with great soil signature, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and balance on the very long and very classy finish. I adore this vineyard these days and this is one of the best examples to be found in the entire commune in 2016! 2025-2060+. **93.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Bousière”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The premier cru of la Bousière was one of the wines in the cellar that had just recently had its SO2 adjusted and the wine was a bit muted on both the nose and the palate as a result. With a bit of coaxing, the wine offers up scents of black cherries, grilled meats, coffee, dark soil tones, cedar and a nice topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely soil-driven in personality, with a good core, moderate, seamless tannins and fine length

and grip on the well-balanced finish. Given that this was just adjusted and not showing at its best, I have scored it in a range, but would fully expect it to eventually land at the top of the range, as the rest of the cellar was showing so well that it is hard to imagine that Philippe Harmand “missed” with this wine in 2016! 2025-2060+. **91-92+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champeaux”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 Champeaux had not yet been assembled in tank and was still in cask, but was due for a racking the week after my visit and was ready to an aeration. The nose was a touch reduced, but with some swirling, it blossomed beautifully to reveal a complex aromatic constellation of sappy cassis and dark berries, roasted meats, espresso, dark soil tones, plenty of smokiness and a nice framing of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and excellent backend energy on the focused and complex finish. A superb example of Champeaux in the making. 2026-2065+. **93**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

The 2016 Lavaux St. Jacques was also still in cask at the time of my visit, but this wine was in a fine mood and showing marvelously at the time of my visit. The great nose jumps from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, black minerality, French roast and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven, with a sappy core of fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, complex and nicely muscular finish. This has broader shoulders than any of the other premier crus in the Harmand cellars this year and is going to be a terrific example with some time in the cellar. 2026-2065+. **93+**.

2016 Mazis-Chambertin- Domaine Harmand-Geoffroy

Along with Domaine Roty, Philippe Harmand makes my favorite example of Mazis-Chambertin these days and his 2016 is going to be a stunning wine in the fullness of time. This was still in barrel as well at the time of my visit and absolutely singing, as it offers up a great, sappy nose of black cherries, sweet dark berries, roasted meats, espresso, a complex base of black minerality, just a touch of Mazis’ medicinal overtones and a nice framing of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and soil-driven, with a sappy core, beautiful balance and great backend mineral drive on the very, very long, suavely tannic and tangy finish. This is great Mazis in the making. 2027-2075+. **95+**.

Domaine Armand Rousseau (Gevrey-Chambertin)

The 2016s at Domaine Rousseau were still in what I anticipate was a transitional phase at the time of my mid-November visit, as they seemed just a tad more easy-going structurally than many of their colleagues’ collections in the village. It was not that there were not a lot of fireworks going off in the glass, as the aromatic and flavor complexity here were every bit as special as is customary chez Rousseau, but the wines seemed all silken elegance without a ton of backbone. Given comments by other vignerons, both before and after my visit here, this seemed to have been a pretty standard stage of evolution for the 2016 reds in cask and was shared at a great many domaines throughout the months of September and October, but as temperatures finally began to descend in the cellars in November, the wines started to routinely show more structural chassis. Given this running commentary throughout my trip, it is hard not to come to the conclusion that the 2016s from the Rousseau family had simply not started that same evolution at the time of my visit and these too will firm up and show more structural conviction as the winter moves on. I had the pleasure on my visit here in the second week of November to be hosted by Cyrielle Rousseau, who has joined her father full-time at the domaine in the last few

years and is poised to take over the direction here in the years to come. It was a delight to taste with Mademoiselle Rousseau and hear her insights on the vintage of 2016, which the domaine began harvesting on September 23rd of that year. As is customary chez Rousseau, the entire cellar had been racked back in March of 2017 and the wines were in a good spot for tasting, albeit, still showing their easy-going style. We did not taste the new Gevrey AC bottling of the Clos du Château on this visit. Like many estates in Gevrey-Chambertin, the frost damage here was most severe in the vineyard of Chambertin itself, and the domaine lost fully two-thirds of a normal crop in this vineyard in 2016. Their rows of vines in Clos St. Jacques were also adversely affected by the frost, but not quite as dramatically as in Chambertin, with twenty-five percent of the crop lost here. Fortunately for the Rousseau family, the remainder of their plots were generally spared serious frost damage and yields were close to correct across the board.

Given how the wines had evolved at other addresses in the Côte in the weeks leading up to my three weeks here in November, I have to assume that the Rousseau wines are going to perform similarly and that my scores may well prove slightly conservative for the finished wines. This seems like the far more logical interpretation that that somehow Eric Rousseau and his team here at the domaine have managed to produce far more forward and structurally laid back wines than anyone else in Gevrey that I visited with on this trip, as this domaine has been at the very pinnacle of quality in all of Burgundy for the last ten to fifteen years, and it simply makes no sense that they would have not captured all of the potential inherent in the 2016 vintage, after having made amongst the very finest set of red wines in all of the Côte d'Or in the last couple of vintages! So I would fully anticipate that each wine here will gain a bit in structural conviction over the last few months in cask and perform even more satisfactorily than they did on the day of my visit. I want to reiterate that the wines did not show badly at all when I was in the cellars here, they just seemed more forward than most other reds that I tasted during my trip, and I am quite confident that they were simply in a more adolescent stage of their evolution and already are firmer today in barrel than they showed on the rainy November morning I was here tasting. My notes below reflect the state of evolution of the wines at the time of my visit, as I do not know any other way to report on the wines, but I would anticipate that the wines are even better today, with their structures already moving to a point of more prominence in the overall composition of each wine.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Gevrey AC was showing very prettily at the time of my visit, offering up a perfumed bouquet of red plums, cherries, chocolate, a nice base of soil, woodsmoke and a spicy topnote. On the palate the wine is fullish, plush and quite long on the finish, with a sappy core, laid back tannins and plenty of early complexity showing. I assume this will firm up a bit as the temperatures in the cellar continue to fall over the course of the coming months and the wine will be lovely. 2021-2050. **90.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaux St. Jacques”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Lavaux *chez* Rousseau was one of the wines that struck me as uncharacteristically easy going at the time of my visit, signaling that the cellars here were a tad behind their neighbors in firming up. The bouquet is bright and sappy, offering up a lovely blend of plummy fruit, raspberries, raw cocoa, gamebird, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full, pure and quite suave on the attack, with a sappy core, seamless, discreet tannins and a long, velvety finish that is starting to develop lovely grip on the backend. There is

already lovely inner mouth perfume here and if a bit more structural chassis emerges with further barrel aging, my score will seem quite conservative. 2021-2055. **91+?**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cazetiers”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Rousseau Cazetiers was showing a tad more reserved than the silky and open Lavaux at the time of my visit, but this was still a wine that would be very tempting to drink in its youth. The nose is a complex and classy blend of cherries, plums, woodsmoke, chocolate, a touch of meatiness and a lovely base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely sappy at the core, with a good soil signature, moderate, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and nascently complex finish. 2023-2055+. **91+.**

2016 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Charmes-Chambertin from Domaine Rousseau is beautifully red fruity this year, which happens to be my favorite iteration of this cuvée. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a blend of strawberries, red plums, lovely soil tones, a touch of mustard seed, gamebird and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full and velvety on the attack, with a good core, fine soil signature and a long, moderately tannic and velvety finish. It is hard not imagining this wine firming up and deepening as the year unfolds and gaining a bit more gravitas prior to bottling. 2024-2065. **92+?**

2016 Mazy-Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Mazy-Chambertin is quite a classic expression of its *terroir*, with a far more black fruity personality than the Charmes. The nose is a fine aromatic mix of black cherries, black plums, grilled meats, dark soil tones, a bit of Mazy’s vegetal undertow (which should not be construed as vegetal *per se*, as probably the best descriptor of this signature element in the vineyard’s *terroir* is Michael Broadbent’s term of seaweed) and a topnote of bonfires. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, young and very pure on the attack, with a good core, ripe, suave tannins and lovely length and grip on the nascently complex finish. 2026-2065. **92+.**

2016 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Clos de la Roche from Domaine Rousseau is again a very red fruity interpretation of this lovely vineyard this year. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex and perfumed blend of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, complex soil tones and just a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a sappy core, lovely transparency, fine-grained tannins and impressive grip and bounce on the long and classy finish. Again, if this adds a bit more structural assertiveness, my score will seem quite conservative. The wine was raised in twenty-five percent new oak in this vintage. 2026-2065+. **93.**

2016 Ruchottes-Chambertin “Clos des Ruchottes”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Clos des Ruchottes was also beautifully perfumed and sappy at the time of my visit. The bouquet is just stunning, offering up a beautiful blend of sappy red and black cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, a gorgeous base of soil tones, a touch of nutskin and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very refined in profile, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, impressive focus and grip and a long, suavely tannic and utterly seamless finish. If this does not firm up with further *elevage*, it will drink like the beautiful 2000 Clos des Ruchottes, but with more depth. If it does firm up a bit more, then it will far outpace that lovely wine! 2026-2070. **94.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos St. Jacques”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

As has been customary in the last several vintages, the 2016 Clos St. Jacques has been raised in seventy percent new oak in this year. The wine was still in the process of integrating its

new wood component at the time of my visit, but has plenty of stuffing to do so without difficulty and will be a gorgeous wine in the fullness of time. The bouquet offers up a lovely and complex blend of red and black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, gamebird, a complex base of soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, very sappy at the core, with lovely soil inflection, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, energetic and nascently complex finish. 2026-2065+. **94+**.



The snow-frosted church in Gevrey-Chambertin, as seen from the courtyard at Domaine Rousseau.

2016 Chambertin- Domaine Armand Rousseau

It is unfortunate that 2016 will be such a short crop for the Rousseau family's Chambertin, as the wine is magnificent. The refined bouquet is properly reserved and introspective out of the blocks, delivering a fine, youthful constellation of red plums, cherries, exotic spice tones, raw cocoa, grilled meats, a stunningly complex base of soil and a very refined framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and focused, with a sappy core, great transparency and grip, fine-grained tannins and stunning energy and lift on the very long, complex finish. While these parcels were heavily-frosted, the wine shows no ill effects from the freeze and is going to be flat out brilliant with sufficient bottle age. 2028-2075+. **96**.

2016 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”- Domaine Armand Rousseau

The 2016 Clos de Bèze is another brilliant wine in the Rousseau cellars this year, and without any frost damage, the wine is able to deliver just a touch more precision and mineral drive than the Chambertin and deserves the moniker of best in cellar this year. The stunning bouquet soars from the glass in a vibrant blend of red plums, cherries, a touch of blood orange, stunningly complex minerality, woodsmoke, gamebird, beautiful spice tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and ripely tannic, with a stunning core, magical transparency and a very long, ripely tannic and tangy finish. 2028-2075+. **97+**.

Domaine Rossignol-Trapet (Gevrey-Chambertin)

The Rossignol brothers seem to be making better and better wine with every passing vintage and this is clearly one of the superstar addresses in Gevrey-Chambertin today. Like many estates based in several different villages, their frost damage varied widely depending on the parcel and the commune, with their lovely Beaune “Theurons” premier cru having been very heavily frost damaged (yields were only nine hectoliters per hectare here!), as was their Bourgogne bottling as well. Within their home commune of Gevrey-Chambertin, everything was pretty much spared except their vines in Latricières-Chambertin and Chambertin itself, with both of these crus having been badly frosted as well at the end of April. The stark contrast between yields in Chambertin in 2016 and 2017 underscore just how capricious Mother Nature can be, as there are fully thirty-two barrels of Chambertin in the cellars here in 2017, but only four casks in the frost-damaged vintage of 2016! As is often the case here in November, some of the wines had been racked a short time before my visit, and others were being racked the day that I tasted here, but samples had been prepared prior to the racking so that these wines would not be upset when tasted. As a consequence of the different stages of evolution, a few of the wines racked at the very start of November were a bit reticent and still in the process of bouncing back fully, but with so many of the other samples absolutely singing, it was very easy to see that the recently racked wines were also very strong in 2016 and just a tad out of sorts from having been moved recently. Overall, the inherent elegance of the best wines of 2016 was very much in evidence across the board in the Rossignols’ cellars this year, with the wines showing great sappiness at the core, refined, polished structures and great fidelity to their underlying terroir. Great wines.

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Bourgogne from the Rossignols was racked in early October and had recovered very nicely by the time of my visit on November 10th. This is another very, very strong example in this vintage, offering up a pure and very stylish, red fruity nose of cherries, strawberries, woodsmoke, dark soil and a nice touch of Gevrey meatiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and beautifully balanced, with solid depth, lovely detail and a long, gently tannic finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2028. **88**.

2016 Beaune “Theurons”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Theurons had been racked at the end of October, so it was a tad agitated still from its recent movement, but it was still quite clear that this wine has turned out beautifully. The bouquet is deep and quite black fruity in this vintage, offering up a fine blend of black cherries, meaty tones, woodsmoke, dark soil, a lovely touch of fresh thyme and a deft framing of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush at the core, with fine focus and grip and a long, well-balanced and suavely tannic finish. This will drink very well with only a few years in the cellar and also age quite gracefully. 2021-2050+. **90**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Vieilles Vignes bottling was also racked only a week ahead of my visit and had not quite bounced back, but the very high quality here is self-evident despite the recent racking. The nose is deep, pure and refined, offering up scents of plums, red and black cherries, woodsmoke, grilled meats and a lovely base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely sappy at the core, with excellent soil inflection, fine-grained tannins and a very long, nascently complex and promising finish. 2022-2055. **90+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Etelois”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Etelois bottling had not yet been racked and was just a tad reduced in early November, but with a bit of swirling in the glass, the wine blossomed nicely to deliver a fine and red fruity aromatic constellation of cherries, strawberries, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, a touch of spicy wood and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bright and nicely structured, with a fine core of ripe fruit, excellent soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and classy finish. This is going to be very good with a bit of bottle age. 2023-2055+. **91**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Cherbaudes”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Cherbaudes from Domaine Rossignol-Trapet is absolutely textbook and will be a beautiful wine once it has blossomed. The bouquet is all lovely red fruit tones, as scents of cherries, strawberries, a bit of beetroot augment notes of woodsmoke, fresh herbs, cedar and a complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full and very suave already on the attack, with a lovely core, excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and impressive focus and grip on the bright and nascently complex finish. 2024-2060+. **92**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Combottes”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The Rossignols' forty *ares* parcel of vines in Combottes lie up at the very top right hand corner of the vineyard, where there is no clay in the topsoil and the resulting wines tend to be beautifully perfumed and more high-toned than those from parcels down towards the bottom of the slope. Their 2016 Combottes is a superb wine in the making, wafting from the glass in a very refined blend of red plums, cherries, cocoa powder, a complex base of soil tones, gamebird and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a lovely core, fine soil signature, suave tannins and a long, vibrant and soil-driven finish. A lovely example of this great premier cru. 2023-2060. **93**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Corbeaux”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

Corbeaux continues to be one of my absolute favorite premier crus in Gevrey and I find that the reputation of the vineyard is not quite commensurate with its outstanding quality. The Rossignol brothers make a superb example of this *terroir* and their 2016 is going to be dynamite. The bouquet is deep, pure and very refined already, offering up scents of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, grilled meats, woodsmoke, dark chocolate, a touch of mustard seed and a discreet base of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully transparent, with a superb core of fruit, great focus and balance, ripe, suave tannins and a long, energetic and tangy finish. This will need eight to ten years to really blossom and should drink with style and grace for many decades. Fine, fine juice. 2024-2060. **93**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

Clos Prieur is often one of the most black fruity premier crus in Gevrey and I always find when a young example shows a bit of red fruit as well that it augurs very, very well for its eventual elegance and complexity at full maturity. Such is the case with the beautiful 2016 Clos Prieur here this year, which jumps from the glass in a superb mix of red and black cherries,

espresso, venison, black minerality., woodsmoke, cedar and just a touch of fresh herb tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured out of the blocks, with a sappy core of fruit, fine backend mineral drive and a long, ripely tannic and vibrant finish. A very, very promising Clos Prieur. 2025-2060. **93.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Petite Chapelle”- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Petite Chapelle from the Rossignols is outstanding this year. The wine includes one-third whole clusters and offers up a very pure and promising aromatic constellation of red plums, both red and black cherries, a very complex base of soil, gamebird, mustard seed and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is full, pure and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with ripe, fine-grained tannins, superb focus and grip and a very long, complex and energetic finish. Great juice. 2025-2065. **93+.**

2016 Latricières-Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

The 2016 Latricières-Chambertin from Domaine Rossignol-Trapet is a brilliant wine in the making, and despite having lost half its proper yield to frost damage, the wine shows an absolutely classic profile on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is pure, complex and stunning, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, black plums, espresso, dark soil tones, gamebird, 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 sappy core, superb soil signature, fine-grained tannins and outstanding focus and grip on the very long, nascently complex and classy finish. 2027-2075+. **95+.**

2016 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

In contrast to the Latricières and Chambertin in 2016, the Rossignol brothers’ parcels in Chapelle were not touched by the frost and the yields here were correct in 2016. The wine is excellent, offering up a pure and still fairly reserved bouquet of cherries, red plums, a hint of blood orange, venison, dark soil tones, a hint of mustard seed, cocoa powder and a deft base of cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with an excellent structural chassis, fine focus and grip, suave, ripe tannins and a very long, transparent and complex finish. This is an absolutely classic example of young Chapelle and all that need be added is the passage of time. 2026-2075. **95+.**

2016 Chambertin- Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

It is unfortunate that there is so little of this beautiful wine in the cellars this year *chez* Rossignol, as it is a reference point example of this superb vintage! The bouquet is deep, pure and flat out stunning, wafting from the glass in a blaze of red and black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, grilled meats, a complex base of soil, a touch of mustard seed and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a great signature of soil, a sappy core, ripe, seamless tannins and great backend energy and grip on the very, very long and complex finish. Brilliant wine. 2026-2075+. **96+.**

Domaine Joseph Roty (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Pierre-Jean Roty has made superb 2015s, which, at the top end, remind me very strongly of his father’s wines back in 1990- which turned out to be some of the very best wines of this vintage. There is an almost heroic scale to some of the grand crus here in 2015 that really recalls strongly the family’s wines from 1990 when they were first released and which I was so fortunate to get to taste with quite a bit of frequency, due to the generosity of my friend Chet Kern, who went pretty long on the Domaine Roty 1990s and liked to pop them in their exuberant and beautiful youth. Due to the domaine’s customs, it is always enjoyable to visit Domaine Roty

and revisit the finished wines from the vintage that I had written up the previous year, as the family's preference to show the wines in their finished form allows me to make comparisons with their lineup and the various 2015s that I taste at other domaines after my tastings of their 2016s in cask. While one thinks mostly of red wines when discussing the Roty family's lineup, the three white wines here in 2015 were all really strong and tasty and should not be ignored, as they will offer excellent value. But, the 2015 Burgundy vintage is really all about the reds and the lineup here is stunning from the lowly appellations of Coteaux Bourguignons and Bourgogne Rouge all the way up to the grand crus. There is a gorgeous depth of fruit and precision to the lower appellations here that is very rare at these levels and they will be great bargains, and the whole range of Marsannays chez Roty in 2015 may be the strongest lineup of these bottlings I have ever had the pleasure to taste at the domaine! They have the great depth of the 2015 vintage, but are also very elegant, precise and refined in personalities this year (with the exception of the young and still pretty chewy Ouzeloy) that make them excellent cellar candidates and, given how badly the village of Marsannay was hit by frost in 2016, makes them all the more important for value-minded red Burgundy lovers looking to salt away very, very high quality wines at fair prices. The range of Gevrey-Chambertin AC cuvées is also very strong here in 2015, with the ripeness of the vintage giving them really lovely mid-palate dimension, but the wines remaining fresh, pure and elegant in profile. The Fontenys is stellar and the grand crus are all big, powerful and just loaded with fruit, but also very fresh and mineral wines, with the size and grandeur that the 1990s showed from Pierre-Jean's father back in the day, but with spines of minerality and a freshness that exceeds what the 1990s showed at this same point in their evolutions. They are deep, powerful and magnificent wines in the making, but will need extended cellaring to arrive at their plateaus. I did not ask, but I have to imagine that all three grand crus chez Roty are north of fourteen percent alcohol in 2015, but are impeccably balanced and so mineral on their collective finishes that I cannot envision anything but brilliance with extended cellaring. But, despite how good the grand crus are at Domaine Roty in 2015, it is the Marsannays and the lieux à dits from Gevrey here that left me the most impressed as I climbed back in my car after this great tasting, as they are truly exceptional for their levels in this vintage and will offer stunningly good values for those intrepid enough to lay in a few bottles for the cellar!

2015 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Joseph Roty

Pierre-Jean Roty has very old Aligoté vines, which are now more than seventy years of age. The parcel is planted right next door to Evocelles in the village of Brochon. The 2015 version is really good, offering up a bright and refined nose of lime, crab apple, chalky soil tones and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and crisp, with a good core and lovely length and lift on the focused and well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88.**

2015 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Joseph Roty

The Roty family's 2015 version of Bourgogne Blanc is also quite fine, delivering a fine and quite expressive nose of apple, peach, chalky soil, white flowers and an almost Chablis-like touch of straw in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with very good cut and grip and a long, zesty finish. There is a very nice, subtle touch of oak on the backend, which Pierre-Jean attributes to the wine having been raised in used Hospices de Beaune casks. A very fine example of its level. 2019-2030. **89.**

2015 Marsannay Blanc- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Marsannay Blanc chez Roty is a bit more closed today than the Bourgogne Blanc on the nose, but is more generous on the palate and shows lovely potential. The reticent

nose offers up scents of lime, green apple, chalky, salty soil tones and a topnote of lime peel. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and quite soil-driven in personality, with a good core of fruit, bright acids and a long, vibrant and promising finish. 2020-2035. **89+**.

2015 Marsannay Rosé- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Marsannay Rosé from Domaine Joseph Roty is a lovely and quite exuberant example of the vintage. The nose jumps from the glass in a fine blend of melon, tangerine, salty soil tones and a topnote of rose petals. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and wide open in personality, with a juicy core of fruit, fine framing acids and a long, tasty and well-balanced finish. This will probably not be as long-lived in bottle as a vintage like 2013 or 2014, but it will provide a lot of pleasure over the coming five years. 2018-2023. **88**.



Pierre-Jean Roty in the standing amongst the old vines of la Brunelle as the November sun starts to sink.

2015 Coteaux Bourguignons - Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Coteaux Bourguignons from Pierre-Jean Roty is a lovely, ready to go example of pinot noir from this fine vintage. The bouquet delivers a blend of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and succulent at the core, with little tannin, fine focus and grip and a long, delicious finish. This is really good for its level. 2018-2030. **88**.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Joseph Roty

The “straight” 2015 Bourgogne Rouge from Domaine Roty is excellent, with the ripeness of the vintage giving this lovely mid-palate depth and dimension. The nose jumps from the glass in an excellent mix of red and black cherries, grilled meats, raw cocoa, dark soil tones and just a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a nice touch of fine-grained tannins on the long and vibrant finish. This is really good Bourgogne rouge! 2020-2040. **90.**

2015 Bourgogne “Pressoniers”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The *lieu à dit* of Pressoniers has always produced Bourgogne in the hands of the Roty family that transcends its level, and this is certainly the case with the 2015 version. The bouquet is deep and superb, offering up scents of red and black cherries, woodsmoke, dark chocolate, a fine signature of soil, a touch of Gevrey’s mustard seed and a gentle base of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly suave on the attack, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic finish. Fine, fine juice and again, a wine that punches way over its weight. 2020-2040+. **91.**

2015 Marsannay- Domaine Joseph Roty

The Roty family’s range of Marsannay bottlings is truly excellent and this is especially true in the 2015 vintage. The blended bottling is deep and very serious on the nose, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of plums, black cherries, meaty tones, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil and a nice touch of smoky oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a very impressive core, very good focus and grip, suave, seamless tannins and a long, poised and nascently complex finish. Again, this is really, really good for its price and AOC level. 2018-2040. **91.**

2015 Marsannay “Champs Saint Etienne”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The vineyard of Champs Saint Etienne lies just down slope from Champs Salomon in the village of Couchey, though they both are part of the appellation of Marsannay. This is always one of the strongest bottlings in the Roty lineup of excellent Marsannays and the 2015 was showing beautifully at the time of my November visit. The bouquet is deep and very classy in profile, offering up scents of black plums, black cherries, espresso, grilled meats, dark soil tones and a touch of cedary oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely sappy at the core, with an excellent soil signature, modest tannins and a long, focused and complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2020-2045. **91+.**

2015 Marsannay “Ouzeloy”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The Domaine Roty 2015 Ouzeloy is ripe, pure and almost exotic on the nose, but also more hunkered down and bound up in its structural elements than the Champs Sainte Etienne. The bouquet just jumps from the glass in a blaze of plums, black cherries, a touch of lavender, meaty tones, a fine base of new oak and plenty of upper register spice tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plenty chewy right now, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and youthful finish. This will be very good, but it is going to need some bottle age to blossom. 2022-2045. **91.**

2015 Marsannay “Boivin” - Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Boivin from Pierre-Jean Roty is an utterly pure and complete example of the vintage. The nose is a fine, complex blend of black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, dark chocolate, woodsmoke, cedar and an excellent base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and shows off superb mid-palate depth, with ripe, suave tannins, excellent focus

and grip and a long, complex and very classy finish. It is pretty rare to see young Marsannay this elegant and precise! 2022-2050. **91+**.

2015 Marsannay “Clos de Jeu”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Clos de Jeu is the finest of a very strong range of Marsannay bottlings in the Roty cellars this year. The bouquet is deep, vibrant and complex, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of black cherries, black raspberries, grilled meats, black minerality, raw cocoa, cedar and a touch of upper register spice tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full and beautifully plush at the core, with outstanding, seamless structure, suave tannins and a very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. Great Marsannay! 2023-2050. **92+**.

2015 Côte de Nuits Villages “Queue de Hareng”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Côte de Nuits Villages is also a lovely wine here in this vintage. The bouquet is wide open and just lovely, offering up scents of black plums, black cherries, a touch of coffee bean, lovely soil tones, cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, long and very suave on the attack, with gentle tannins and fine focus and grip on the quite classy finish. Fine juice that will drink very well from release. 2018-2030+. **89+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Gevrey *villages* from Domaine Roty is excellent, delivering a pure and complex aromatic constellation of black cherries, cassis, grilled meat, dark chocolate, lovely soil tones and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite wide open already in personality, with a solid core of pure fruit, moderate, suave tannins and a long, poised and already complex finish. Structurally, this is already very tasty, but a bit of patience will allow the secondary layers of complexity to rise up. 2018-2040+. **91**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Champs Chenys”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Champs Chenys is a ripe and very fresh example of the vintage, with more depth and broader shoulders than the “straight” Gevrey AC. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a mix of black cherries, black plums, gentle meatiness, chocolate, smoke, soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush at the core, with ripe, beautifully integrated tannins and surprising backend mineral drive on the focused finish. This is awash today in puppy fat fruit, but the minerality on the finish augurs very well for a long and prosperous life in bottle. 2020-2045+. **91+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “la Brunelle”- Domaine Joseph Roty

Of the three *lieux à dits* bottlings of Gevrey in the Roty cellars, the la Brunelle is almost always the most elegant and this is again the case in 2015. The lovely nose offers up a fine mélange of black cherries, plummy fruit, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, a touch of mustard seed, cedar and plenty of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again shows the vintage’s plushness on the attack, with a fine core, suave, seamless tannins and a long, complex and again, markedly mineral finish. I really like this wine this year for its combination of great fruit and serious soil signature. 2020-2045+. **91+**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The Roty family’s Clos Prieur bottling, from the *villages* section of the vineyard, is simply outstanding in 2015. The bouquet soars from the glass in a fine blaze of red and black cherries, grilled meats, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, mustard seed and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and rock solid at the core, with the best backend minerality of these three cuvées, ripe, buried tannins and a long, tangy and perfectly focused finish. Great juice. 2023-2050+. **92**.

2015 Gevrey-Chambertin “Fontenys”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The premier cru of Fontenys can often be rather bound up in its structural elements early on *chez* Roty, but this emphatically not the case with the stunning 2015 version! The gorgeous nose soars from the glass in a superb blend of sweet dark berries, black cherries, grilled meat, dark chocolate, a very complex base of soil and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with stunning soil signature, fine-grained tannins, lovely acids and outstanding focus and grip on the very, very long, nascently complex and refined finish. Perhaps the greatest young vintage of Fontenys I have ever tasted from the Rotys! 2030-2075. **94.**

2015 Mazy-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

All three of the 2015 grand crus from Pierre-Jean Roty are massive wines, but they are perfectly balanced at the same time and are legends in the making. The 2015 Mazy is deep, sappy and powerful in profile, offering up a superb bouquet of black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, black minerality, espresso, hung game, spicy oak and a very smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and very broad-shouldered, with a plush attack, a rock solid core of fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and a very, very long, complex and stellar finish. This is massive and generous on the attack, but the backend structure here is exemplary and this wine is going to age very long and gracefully. 2033-2090. **95+.**

2015 Griottes-Chambertin- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Griottes from Domaine Roty is simply stunning. The very sappy bouquet soars from the glass in a blend of red and black cherries, grilled meat, complex minerality, chocolate, smoke, lovely spice elements and cedary new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and bottomless at the core, with layer upon layer of very sappy fruit, great mineral undertow and a very, very long, complex and ripely tannic finish. I have had some utterly brilliant examples of the Roty family’s Griottes, but I cannot think of any previous vintage that shares this combination of stunningly sappy and pure fruit and great mineral drive. It is a very powerful wine that will also be very elegant when it is fully mature. Stunning juice. 2035-2100. **96.**

2015 Charmes-Chambertin “Trés Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Joseph Roty

The 2015 Charmes Très Vieilles Vignes is also a magical wine in the making. The superb nose delivers a great blend of cassis, sweet dark berries, grilled meats, a complex base of dark soil tones, espresso, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, powerful and plush on the attack, with a massive structure, a rock solid core, stunning backend minerality and a very, very long, tangy and ripely tannic finish. A great, great vintage of Roty Charmes! 2035-2100. **97+.**

Domaine Trapet Père et Fils (Gevrey-Chambertin)

Jean-Louis Trapet’s 2016s are excellent and cut in a slightly more powerful mold than many of his neighbors’ wines, as he decided to hold off starting to harvest until the 27th of September and the wines seem very 1999-like at this point in their evolution in cask, which is, of course, hardly a bad thing! Jean-Louis had a short crop in his premier crus of Petite Chapelle and Clos Prieur in 2016, which I am guessing had to do with the mildew pressure of the rainy months of May and June, rather than frost, and due to the small yields in each parcel, he has decided to blend them together in 2016 to make a single “Premier Cru” bottling and allow sufficient quantity to make a proper cuvée. His parcel in Chambertin was hit as hard by frosts as his cousins, the Rossignol brothers, and his production in this great grand cru is down seventy-five percent in 2016. I cannot recall if he made a regular bottling of Bourgogne rouge in 2016,

but if he did, I did not get a chance to taste it, and the sample of his low sulfur “Minima” that I tasted seemed slightly off to my palate and I did not take a proper note on the wine as a result (it had been opened the night before). The 2016 Marsannay, which was again made from heavily frost-damaged vineyards, has turned out beautifully and was the point where I began to take notes this year, as it was absolutely singing and the Minima seemed off. Upon reflection, I really should have asked Jean-Louis to open another bottle of the Minima, but once we had moved up the hierarchy of appellation, it did not seem like it would be fair to the Minima to taste it amongst higher appellation wines. The 2016s here are generally quite a black fruity group of wines, with very impressive depth and purity of fruit, excellent soil signature and long, chewy and very well-balanced finishes that augur very well for their future development. They will not be a flattering to taste as some 2016s in their youth, but they will age long, gracefully and be superb wines when they are fully ready to drink.

2016 Marsannay- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2016 Marsannay from Jean-Louis Trapet is an excellent wine, despite coming from very low yields in 2016. The bouquet is lovely, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, a nice touch of meatiness, dark soil tones, espresso and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, fullish and nicely chewy on the backend, with a fine core of fruit and a long, well-balanced finish. Good juice in the making. 2020-2040. **88+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2016 Gevrey *villages* bottling at Domaine Trapet is quite black fruity this year, offering up fine purity and nascent complexity in its mélange of black cherries, dark berries, grilled meats, dark soil tones, just a hint of vanillin oak and plenty of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality, with a fine core, excellent focus and grip and a long, modestly tannic and primary finish. This will need a few years in the cellar to blossom, but should prove to be an excellent village wine. 2021-2045+. **90**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Ostrea”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2016 Ostrea bottling from Jean-Louis Trapet is a fine wine in the making, but it is more structured and reserved at the present time than the straight Gevrey. The bouquet is still quite primary, but with a bit of coaxing offers up scents of black cherries, grilled meats, a fine base of black minerality, espresso, a bit of bonfire and a discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep full-bodied and quite closed at the present time, with a rock solid core, fine soil signature, ripe, well-integrated tannins and impressive length and grip on the well-balanced and youthful finish. This will be an outstanding example, but give it some time! 2022-2055. **91**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Premier Cru”- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

I do not know what the relative proportions are in the blend this year between Petite Chapelle and Clos Prieur, but the 2016 Premier Cru is quite black fruity and seems to have a lot of Clos Prieur personality in its makeup. The bouquet is deep and promising, offering up scents of black cherries, cassis, bitter chocolate, grilled meats, a fine base of dark soil tones and a bit of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and powerful in personality, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long, chewy and very well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065+. **92+**.

2016 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

The 2016 Chapelle-Chambertin *chez* Trapet is another powerful and sappy wine. The bouquet is vibrant and complex, delivering a fine constellation of black plums, black cherries,

espresso, venison, dark soil tones, a hint of cocoa powder, vanillin oak and a quite exotic topnote of eucalyptus. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and primary in profile, with a sappy core, excellent soil signature, excellent focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, primary finish. This is still quite adolescent and will need a good decade of bottle age to start to stir, but it will be excellent in the fullness of time. 2026-2075. **94.**

2016 Latricières-Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

Though the Latricières was frosted in 2016, this wine was showing more precision and nuance at the present time in the Trapet cellars than the very good Chapelle-Chambertin. The bouquet here is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of cassis, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, gamebird, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very refined in profile, with a sappy core of black fruit, lovely backend mineral drive, ripe, suave tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2026-2075. **95.**

2016 Chambertin- Domaine Trapet Père et Fils

Jean-Louis Trapet's 2016 Chambertin is a brilliant wine in the making. The bouquet is pure, complex and utterly refined, as it delivers a stunning blend of red and black cherries, cassis, grilled meats, woodsmoke, bitter chocolate, a very complex base of soil and a fine base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, complex and rock solid at the core, with great focus and grip, impeccable balance and a long, ripely tannic and seamless finish. Great Chamby! 2030-2100. **96.**



Jean-Louis Trapet in the reception area of his family's domaine in Gevrey-Chambertin.

Morey St. Denis

Domaine Dujac (Morey St. Denis)

I had the pleasure to taste with Alec Seysses this year at Domaine Dujac. As there were several other visitors in the cellars at the time of my visit, we did not taste the full range of wines here in 2016 and it was an uncharacteristically short visit to Domaine Dujac. The only Fils et Père bottling we tried was the Chambolle AC, and we did not taste any of the white wines here as well from 2016. So I apologize in advance for the holes in the coverage of this vintage here this year, but as I did not really know the folks who were tasting with us, I did not want to cause any potential complications with allocations or the like for the Seysses family. The 2016 harvest started at Domaine Dujac on September 20th for the white wines and on the 26th for the reds. Despite being based primarily in Morey St. Denis, Gevrey-Chambertin and Vosne-Romanée these days, the domaine could not completely escape the vagaries of frost damage in 2016, with their parcel of Echézeaux having been heavily frosted and production here was down by more than fifty percent. Their parcels in Bonnes-Mares were also rather unlucky and there was some frost damage here as well, so a quarter of a normal crop was lost in this vineyard. The domaine's Chambolle bottlings were decimated by frost, so that the Seysses family was only able to pick ten baskets of grapes in Gruenchers (which were all blended into the domaine's Chambolle AC cuvée). Their parcels of vines for their two bottlings of Chambolle villages were both heavily frosted as well, so even with the addition of the Gruenchers grapes, the domaine bottling was down by fifty percent and the Dujac Fils et Père bottling was down by two-thirds! But, beyond these depredations, the rest of the stellar Domaine Dujac 2016s were largely spared any frost damage and Alec noted that, compared to many of their neighbors up and down the Côte, they were quite lucky in 2016. As is often the case in November in the Dujac cellars, a few of the wines had been racked already, but most had not and were scheduled to have their rackings completed after the circus of November tastings in Burgundy had run its course and the team had some time to work in the cellars.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Dujac Fils et Père

The 2016 Fils et Père bottling of Chambolle had not yet been racked, but was due for this as soon as the crowds in the cellars dissipated. The wine was a touch reduced at the time of my visit, but some gentle swirling revealed a black fruity bouquet of black cherries, dark chocolate, a touch of currant leaf, woodsmoke and dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely velvety on the attack, with a solid core, fine-grained tannins and good length and grip on the balanced finish. This is quite black fruity this year from the frosts. 2021-2050. **89.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Dujac

The domaine bottling of Chambolle AC had already been racked, four weeks before my visit, but was still pretty hunkered down and not all that happy to be tasted. This is a touch less black fruity in personality than the Fils et Père version, but still not the customary red fruity Chambolle it is in most vintages in the cellars here. The very youthful bouquet offers up notes of plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, a good base of soil, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and potentially elegant, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and a long, well-balanced finish. 2022-2050. **90+.**

2016 Morey St. Denis- Domaine Dujac

The domaine bottling of Morey AC was also racked a month prior to my visit to the domaine and was showing nicely. The bouquet is pure and again, quite black fruity this year, offering up scents of dark berries, black cherries, gamebird, woodsmoke, dark chocolate, a bit of

spicy new wood and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite elegant in personality, with a good core, fine transparency and a long, suavely tannic and vibrant finish. A lovely *villages* in the making. 2024-2055. **90+**.

2016 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru”- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Morey “Premier Cru” bottling is also quite black fruity this year, offering up a refined bouquet of black cherries, dark berries, espresso, venison, lovely soil tones, raw cocoa and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and really shows a nice touch of the vintage’s sappiness at the core, with fine-grained tannins and impressive focus and grip on the long, tangy and complex finish. Superb juice. 2026-2065. **92**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “aux Combottes”- Domaine Dujac

In contrast to the Morey and Chambolle bottlings, which were all black fruit tones, the 2016 Combottes from Domaine Dujac is very red fruity and utterly charming. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine combination of cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil tones, woodsmoke, gentle spices and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and nicely sappy at the core, with excellent soil signature, suave, ripe tannins and beautiful focus and grip on the long, tangy and nicely reserved finish. This will be a terrific vintage of Combottes. 2026-2060+. **93**.

2016 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Dujac Charmes-Chambertin is young, pure and utterly classic in profile. The bouquet offers up a refined blend of red and black cherries, grilled meats, a very classy base of soil, raw cocoa, mustard seed and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and has a beautiful core of fruit, with ripe, seamless tannins, excellent balance and a very long, youthful and focused finish. This is still quite primary on the palate, but all of the constituent components are in place and this will be stellar when it is ready for primetime drinking. 2030-2070. **93+**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Beaumonts”- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Domaine Dujac Beaumonts is also very nicely red fruity this year. The bouquet jumps from the glass in an expressive mix of raspberries, cherries, Vosne spice tones, venison, cocoa powder, cedary new wood and a classy base of soil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant out of the blocks, with a lovely core, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Really a lovely Beaumonts in the making. 2024-2060. **92**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Malconsorts”- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Malconsorts from the Seysses family is more reserved on both the nose and palate than the lovely Beaumonts this year, but also more precise and transparent. The bouquet is a youthful and shy blend of raspberries, blood orange, cherries, superb minerality, Vosne spices, gamebird and cedary new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very much defined by its minerality on the backend, with fine-grained tannins, lovely, tangy acids and great length and grip on the energetic and very refined finish. This will be a great bottle of Malconsorts with sufficient bottle age, but it will demand a good decade in the cellar before it starts to stir. 2026-2065. **94**.

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Dujac

There are only five and a half barrels of Echézeaux in the Dujac cellars this year, out of a normal crop load of twelve casks. It is too bad, as the wine has turned out beautifully and I wish there was more to go around for the domaine’s always thirty clientele. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classy blend of raspberries, cherries, lovely spice tones, gamebird, a complex base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke and cedar. There is still a touch of youthful stems in evidence in the upper register here from its whole clusters, but this will turn to cinnamon with bottle age. On

the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and tangy, with a good, solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, balanced and moderately tannic finish. There is not quite the same sense of sappiness in the mid-palate here as in the very top grand crus in the cellar in 2016, which I suspect is a result of the frost damage, but this is a lovely, lovely wine in the making. 2028-2065+. **93.**

2016 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Clos de la Roche from the Seysses family was really singing at the time of my visit. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a refined blend of red plums, cherries, gamebird, a touch of fresh nutmeg, superb soil tones and a deft base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant out of the blocks this year, with a sappy core of fruit, outstanding backend soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and a long, complex and tangy finish. I love the balance and breed this exudes this year. 2030-2075+. **95.**

2016 Clos St. Denis- Domaine Dujac

The 2016 Clos St. Denis from Domaine Dujac is also very elegant, transparent and promising. The nose offers up a fine constellation of raspberries, cherries, cloves, raw cocoa, lovely minerality, gamebird and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very transparent in personality, with a lovely core of red fruit, tangy acids, fine-grained tannins and impeccable balance on the very long, precise and elegant finish. A superb Clos St. Denis in the making. 2028-2075. **95.**

2016 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Dujac

As I mentioned in the introduction, the Seysses family's parcels in Bonnes-Mares had the bad luck to be hit by some frost and yields were down by a quarter in 2016. The remaining wine is stellar and very nicely red fruity this year, delivering a fine nose of cherries, red plums, woodsmoke, gamebird, mustard seed, chalky soil tones and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, lovely focus and nascent complexity, seamless, fine-grained tannins and a very long, poised and vibrant finish. Great juice. 2031-2080. **95+.**

Domaine des Lambrays (Morey St. Denis)

I had the pleasure on my visit to Domaine des Lambrays this November to meet and taste with the new Régisseur here, Boris Champy, who will succeed Thierry Brouin at the helm of this great estate when Thierry retires next April, after thirty-eight years at Domaine des Lambrays. Thierry Brouin has had a storied career at the domaine and it is hard to imagine the future here without him, but Monsieur Champy has a wealth of experience to draw upon and there is no doubt that the Domaine des Lambrays will be in very able hands when Thierry finally steps away next spring. Boris Champy is originally from the Champagne region and worked for many years with the Moueix family of Pomerol fame in Libourne, prior to a decade in Napa Valley at Dominus (1997 to 2007). He arrived in Burgundy in 2007, working from then until this year at Maison Louis Latour. With such a depth of experience, the future of the Domaine des Lambrays looks to be in very secure hands and lovers of this estate's wines can continue to look forward to the same level of excellence that has defined Monsieur Brouin's epoch at the domaine. The domaine was very fortunate to be based in Morey St. Denis in 2016 and there was no frost damage in any of their red wine premier cru or grand cru vineyards in this year, but the Morey AC parcels did suffer a bit of frost and this cuvée is down by twenty-five percent in 2016. All in all, Messieurs Champy and Brouin reported that their red wine yields were quite good in 2016, with the crop the largest here since 1999 in their premier and grand cru parcels in Morey! In

their two excellent premier crus in Puligny-Montrachet, there was some very modest frost damage in Folatières and a bit more in their Clos des Caillerets, but nothing severe, and the gentlemen noted how fortunate they felt in 2016. The two Pulignys here had been bottled three weeks before my visit in mid-November, but were showing very well. Both wines were raised in fifty percent new oak this year. The 2016 Morey villages cuvée was also bottled at the same time, with the domaine's 2016 Morey "Premier Cru" and the Clos des Lambrays still in cask. The "villages" was completely destemmed in 2016, with the premier cru including fifty percent whole clusters and the grand cru eighty-five percent. Harvest 2016 started here on September 24th and everything had been brought in by the 29th of the month. The entire range of 2016s at Domaine des Lambrays was stellar and this was one of the highlights of my three weeks in the region.



Boris Champy and Thierry Brouin in the lovely courtyard of the Domaine des Lambrays.

2016 Puligny-Montrachet "Folatières"- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2016 Folatières from Domaine des Lambrays is a lovely wine in the making, offering up a bright and classy nose of white peach, apple, fresh almond, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely succulent on the attack, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, fine cut and grip and a long, focused and complex finish. Fine juice. 2018-2040. **92.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet "Clos des Caillerets"- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2016 Clos des Caillerets is a bit more closed on the palate than the lovely Folatières (as it should be, as this is really a grand cru *terroir* to my palate!), but equally pure, racy and is

even more promising. The youthful nose shows plenty of precision in its mix of pear, apple, white lilies, limestone minerality, vanillin oak and a discreet touch of beeswax in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tightly-knit, with a superb core, laser-like focus and grip and a very long, refined and nascently complex finish. Superb potential. 2020-2040. **94.**

2016 Morey St. Denis- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2016 Morey *villages* was raised in one-third new wood in this vintage and is an excellent wine. It is still fairly closed after its *mise* on the nose, but already bouncing back and quite expressive on the palate. The bouquet is very red fruity this year, offering up scents of cherries, quince, gamebird, a fine base of soil, a touch of vinesmoke and a bit of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full and focused, with a fine core of fruit, lovely transparency, modest tannins and impressive length and grip on the very well-balanced finish. This will be a very elegant vintage for this bottling. 2022-2050. **90+.**

2016 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru”- Domaine des Lambrays

The 2016 Morey “Premier Cru” from the domaine is a beautiful and nicely spicy wine on the nose, wafting from the glass in a complex constellation of red and black cherries, red plums, cloves, mustard seed, dark soil tones, gamebird and a deft framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with impressive elegance and focus, a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and perfectly balanced finish. Fine, fine juice. 2024-2060+. **92+.**

2016 Clos des Lambrays- Domaine des Lambrays

The grand cru here was raised in fifty percent new oak this year and is one of the stars of the 2016 vintage. The stunning bouquet delivers a complex combination of red and black cherries, black plums, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, raw cocoa, woodsmoke and a touch of nutty oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off beautiful depth at the core, with plenty of sappiness in reserve, a great soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and a very, very long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. I love this wine’s potential! 2030-2085. **96.**

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

Like many domaines in Morey St. Denis, Laurent Lignier counted himself amongst the very fortunate when it came to frost damage in his home village, but with vines spread out throughout the Côte de Nuits these days, as well as parcels in Pommard, his crop losses from frost varied according to village. This was one cellar where the malolactics were fairly late in 2016, as Laurent felt that slow malos would certainly not be a problem with this vintage and kept his cellars purposely cool during the spring and summer months to let the malos take their time finishing up. Monsieur Lignier did not chapitalize any of his wines in 2016, due to fine levels of natural sugars in the grapes. Alcohol levels vary a bit, depending on how much frost damage an individual parcel incurred, so, for example, his Bourgogne rouge came in at 13.6 percent alcohol, but several of the premier crus are just under thirteen percent. The harvest here started on September 28th and was finished up by the fifth of October. Last year was the last for the superb Gevrey premier cru bottling of Les Perrières that Laurent was making from purchased grapes, as the proprietor decided to replant the parcel. It will be missed, as I thought it was a stellar example! The 2016 vintage was the first that the domaine was certified as biodynamic, though Laurent Lignier told me that he has actually been farming this way since 2011, with only the potential pressures of mildew keeping him from certification until this past year. The two Bourgogne bottlings had been bottled at the end of October of 2017, with the remainder of the

lineup still in cask. The villages level wines this year were raised in twenty percent new oak on average, the premier crus around thirty percent and the amount of whole clusters varied a fair bit from cuvée to cuvée, depending on how badly frost damaged the vineyard had been at the end of April. Because of the bad frost damage in Chambolle, there was no Chabiots bottling this year chez Lignier. This is a top to bottom, superb range of wines in 2016, with great elegance and potential longevity in evidence in virtually every single wine.

2016 Bourgogne “Plain Gilbert”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 Plain Gilbert was heavily frosted, as the vines here are in the village of Chambolle. This is another of the lovely Bourgogne bottlings produced up and down the Côte in this vintage, offering up a refined and generous nose of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of raw cocoa and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and nicely structured, with a fine core, just a touch of tannin and impressive length and grip for its level. 2018-2030. **87+**.

2016 Bourgogne “Grand Chailliot”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 Grand Chailliot is one of the ripest wines in the cellar in 2016, but does not seem it at all, as both the nose and palate are beautifully fresh and pure. The bouquet is quite a bit more black fruity in personality than the Plain Gilbert, delivering a complex blend of dark berries, cassis, espresso, a touch of venison and an impressive base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and quite plush at the core, with just a bit of suave tannin, fine focus and a long, very fresh finish that closes with impressive grip and soil fidelity. A top-notch Bourgogne! 2018-2030. **88**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

I did not note how badly frost damages the vines were here, but less than in the la Bussière I seem to recall. The 2016 Chambolle V.V. is an excellent wine in this vintage, offering up a refined and youthful bouquet of black cherries, plums, chalky soil tones, gamebird and a nice, smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully sappy at the core, with good acids, moderate tannins and a long, nascently complex and very well-balanced finish. Charm personified! 2021-2060. **90+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “la Bussière”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

Monsieur Lignier’s parcel in la Bussière was badly frosted and production was down here by sixty percent in 2016. However, the wine has retained a suave structural chassis, rather than showing some of the more overtly chewy tannins of other examples in the village that were made from a badly frosted parcel. The bouquet is deep and primary, offering up scents of black cherries, dark soil tones, plums, woodsmoke, gamebird and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more reserved than the Vieilles Vignes bottling, but with a lovely core of pure fruit, fine-grained tannins and a long, focused and promising finish. 2022-2060. **90+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “La Justice”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The la Justice was the first wine to finish up its malolactic in 2016, finishing up in April of 2017. Consequently, the wine was singing at the time of my visit, offering up a very pure and elegant nose of red and black cherries, a touch of chocolate, *pigeon*, a fine base of soil and a fine topnote of rose petals. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, suave and very refined in profile, with modest tannins, fine focus and grip and a long, velvety and complex finish. This was completely destemmed in 2016. 2020-2060. **90**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Seuvrées”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

In contrast to the la Justice, the 2016 les Seuvrées included seventy-five percent whole clusters this year. The bouquet delivers a fine constellation of red and black cherries, saline minerality, dark chocolate, gamebird and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a good core, suave tannins, good length and a nicely balanced, but more reserved finish. 2022-2060. **90+**.

2016 Morey St. Denis “Trés Girard”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 Trés Girard was completely destemmed by Laurent Lignier and this was one of the later wines to finish up its malo, with it coming to a bubbling conclusion in July of 2017. The wine has turned out beautifully, delivering a superb and sappy bouquet of black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, gamebird, dark soil tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy in personality, with lovely elegance and breed, suave tannin and a long, tangy finish. Fine, fine AC. 2020-2060. **91**.

2016 Morey St. Denis “Trilogie”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The malo for the 2016 Trilogie ended at the same time as the Trés Girard, but the wine was showing a bit reduced at the time of my visit and needed a bit of coaxing to blossom. Once the wine opens up, it shows off great purity in its black fruity blend of black cherries, black plums, *pigeon*, a fine base of soil, dark chocolate and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and broader-shouldered than the Trés Girard, with a very good core, ripe tannins and a long, tangy finish that closes with nascent complexity and fine grip. This will need a few more years of bottle age to blossom, but will be equally fine at its apogee. 2023-2060. **91**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Poisets”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The les Poisets parcel was hit hard by frost in 2016, so seventy-five percent of the crop was lost. Consequently, Monsieur Lignier only had enough grapes to make about a cask and a half of the wine, so this has been raised in a one year-old, three hundred and forty-two liter barrel. The wine has turned out beautifully and shows none of the sturdiness of some heavily frosted wines, as it offers up a beautifully elegant bouquet of black plums, sweet dark berries, espresso, a hint of nuttiness, dark soil tones and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and complex, with a sappy core of black fruit, great backend minerality, fine-grained tannins and impressive length and grip on the classy finish. This will be one very suave Nuits when it is ready to drink! 2023-2060+. **91+**.

2016 Pommard “En Brescul”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The En Brescul *lieu à dit* was also very heavily frost damaged in 2016. The wine is going to be beautiful, but there will not be much of it to go around. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of dark berries, black cherries, espresso, gamebird, fine soil signature and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and properly chewy on the backend (this is young Pommard after all!), with lovely soil signature, a fine core and a long, ripely tannic and very well-balanced finish. 2026-2065+. **91**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Baudes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The les Baudes vineyard was one of the best-situated in 2016, as the frost did not generally affect this vineyard and the Ligniers’ parcel was not touched at all. The wine has turned out very pure and very classic in profile, offering up a superb aromatic constellation of black cherries, dark chocolate, gamebird, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and ripely tannic, with a fine core,

impressive backend minerality and very good grip on the long and focused finish. All this needs is bottle age to blossom. 2026-2075+. **93.**

2016 Morey St. Denis “la Riotte”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 la Riotte was completely destemmed and was showing very nicely at the time of my visit, offering up a classy and beautifully red fruity bouquet of cherries, red plums, woodsmoke, dark soil tones, espresso, mustard seed and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and impressively transparent, with a fine core of fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, poised and nascently complex finish. Lovely juice. 2024-2070. **92.**

2016 Morey St. Denis “les Chaffots”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

There was no frost damage in les Chaffots in 2016 and the wine has turned out beautifully, with Monsieur Lignier using twenty percent whole clusters here in this vintage. The excellent nose jumps from the glass in a fine and black fruity nose of dark berries, black cherries, a touch of venison, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a touch of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, ripe tannins and a very long, beautifully balanced and promising finish. 2026-2075. **92+.**

2016 Morey St. Denis “Premier Cru Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

This wine also saw no frost damage in its parcels and it is going to be a reference point premier cru for the vintage. The bouquet is simply outstanding, delivering a fine constellation of plums, black cherries, a touch of lavender, dark soil tones, raw cocoa and a nice framing of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in structure, with a sappy core, superb soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, very pure finish. Great juice in the making. 2026-2075. **93+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “aux Combottes”- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The Ligniers’ parcel in Combottes was again untouched by the frost and the wine is utterly classic in personality. The bouquet is very pure, nicely reserved and very promising, delivering scents of red and black cherries, black plums, bitter chocolate, a fine base of soil, a touch of mustard seed and a bit of cedar in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a superb core, ripe tannins and a very long, soil-driven and elegant finish. A superb Combottes. 2028-2075+. **93+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Didiers”- Hospices de Nuits (Dom. Hubert Lignier Père et Fils)

The Hospices de Nuits bottling here is always a bit of an outlier stylistically, due to the heavily-toasted new oak that the Hospices raises the wine in, but it is always very well done and the 2016 is no exception. The bouquet offers up a fine aromatic mix of cassis, black plums, espresso, gamebird, dark soil tones and toasty oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and plenty sappy at the core, with ripe, suave tannins and a long, superb finish. Fine, fine juice. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Griotte-Chambertin- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 Griotte-Chambertin from Domaine Lignier is outstanding. The simply beautiful bouquet delivers scents of red and black cherries, a nice touch of grilled meats, chalky soil tones, fresh herbs, dark chocolate and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with fine core, suave structure, excellent focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic and complex finish. 2030-2080+. **94.**

2016 Charmes-Chambertin- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

As much as I like the 2016 Griotte here this year, the Charmes is a step up and this is one of the best young vintages of this bottling I have ever tasted from the domaine. The bouquet is flat out stunning, soaring from the glass in a complex blend of plus, red and black cherries,

grilled meats, a complex base of soil, mustard seed, cedar and a pungent topnote of roses. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very suave on the attack, with lovely soil signature, a sappy core and a very, very long, seamlessly-tannic finish. Great juice. 2028-2080. **95+.**

2016 Clos de la Roche- Domaine Hubert Lignier Père et Fils

The 2016 Clos de la Roche from Laurent Lignier is an absolute classic in the making. The nose delivers a refined and nascently complex constellation of black plums, sweet dark berries, a touch of lavender, gamebird, a very complex base of soil, violets and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a sappy core, ripe tannins, fine backend mineral drive and a very long, complex and utterly complete finish. A brilliant example of Clos de la Roche! 2030-2090. **97.**

Domaine Cécile Tremblay (Morey St. Denis)

Cécile Tremblay has made simply stunning wines in 2016 and these will clearly rival the very best wines (yet) produced in her career. With vineyard holdings scattered over four villages, the frost damage here varied rather dramatically, with her Chambolle AC parcel off by sixty-five percent and her Feusselottes having lost fully ninety percent of production from the late April freeze. In Vosne-Romanée and Flagey, her luck varied from parcel to parcel, with the villages level bottling and both premier crus largely untouched by the frost, but sadly, her plot of vines in Echézeaux was hit pretty hard and here the production is down by fifty percent in 2016. We did not taste the Chambolles for obvious reasons (hoping to save at least a modicum to bottle) and also the Morey “Trés Girard” bottling during my visit, and I cannot recall now what the reason was at the time that we did not try the Morey. Cécile began harvesting on the 22nd of September of 2016 and completed bringing in the bunches by the 28th of the month. The cellar had not yet been racked at the time of my visit and the wines were absolutely singing, with a beautiful synthesis of sappy, pure fruit tones, great underlying soil signatures and suave, velvety textures that were alive with tangy acids and teeming with backend energy. In a vintage where I enjoyed so many stellar tastings of 2016s, Domaine Tremblay may well have been the most exciting stop of the three weeks on the road in the region. These are utterly brilliant wines in the making!

2016 Bourgogne “la Croix Blanche” Rouge- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

Madame Tremblay’s 2016 Bourgogne is another beautiful example of this level, offering up a pure and vibrant nose of plums, black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a nice touch of gamebird. On the palate the wine is pure, medium-full and very elegant in profile, with an impressive core, fine focus and grip and a long, bouncy finish. Fine juice. 2018-2030+. **89.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2016 Vosne-Romanée “Vieilles Vignes” from Cécile Tremblay is simply outstanding, with a nice sense of early reserve that augurs very, very well for its evolution in bottle. The bouquet is deep and very pure, offering up scents of black cherries, sweet dark berries, dark chocolate, a hint of duck, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a nice touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and still youthfully tight, with a sappy core down deep, great transparency, modest tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully precise finish. A great *Villages* in the making. 2021-2050+. **91.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Beaumonts”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

Happily, Cécile’s very old vines in Beaumonts were untouched by the frost in 2016 and the wine is going to be brilliant. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a stunningly pure and sappy

blend of black cherries, black plums, gamebird, a touch of bonfire, dark soil tones and a fine framing of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a great core, superb soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, very refined and vibrant finish. This wine is going to get black truffle as it ages and is going to be a stunning bottle of Beaumonts when it is fully mature. 2024-2065+. **93+**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Rouges Dessus”- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

The 2016 Rouge Dessus is also a stunning bottle of Vosne premier cru in the making. The nose here is a bit more red fruity than the Beaumonts, but equally pure and refined, as it delivers a fine mix of red and black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, stony soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a gorgeous core of fruit, refined, seamless tannins and a very long, very pure and complex finish. Great juice. 2025-2065+. **94**.

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

Despite losing fifty percent of her production in Echézeaux, Cécile Tremblay has made an absolutely stunning example of this grand cru in 2016. The bouquet is a bit more reserved out of the blocks than the two Vosne premier crus, but shares the same purity and elegance of those wines, as it delivers scents of black plums, sweet dark berries, venison, dark chocolate, a complex base of soil tones and a nice framing of smoky new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great purity on the attack, fine soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and a long, focused and vibrant finish of exceptional nascent complexity. 2027-2075+. **95+**.

2016 Chapelle-Chambertin- Domaine Cécile Tremblay

Happily, Chapelle-Chambertin was not touch by the frost in 2016 and the yields here are correct in this vintage. The wine is simply stunning on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet very expressive in its delivery of a fine constellation of black plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, dark soil tones, nutty new oak and plenty of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with great transparency and focus, fine-grained tannins and simply perfect balance on the very long, very complex and energetic finish. This is seamless in structure, but will age long and very gracefully. The biggest challenge is to leave the wine alone in the cellar and allow it to really reach its apogee, as it is going to be very tempting to drink in its youth! 2026-2075+. **96**.

Chambolle-Musigny

Domaine Ghislaine Barthod (Chambolle-Musigny)

Ghislaine Barthod was hit hard by the frost damage in the village of Chambolle in 2016 and there is a limited lineup of wines in the cellars here this year as a result. She will produce no Châtelots or Combottes in 2016, due to such severe frost damage that the small production in these two premier crus was added to the Chambolle “villages” cuvée. Even with the addition of the scant production from these two premier crus, her Chambolle AC cuvée is still down by fifty percent in this vintage. Frost was equally severe in her parcels of Beaux Bruns, which is down fifty percent, and even harsher in both les Cras (off by seventy percent) and Gruenchers (only one cask this year out of a normal three and a half to four barrels). Even her one wine from outside of Chambolle, the domaine’s fine Bourgogne rouge, which hails from vines in Gilly, was hit by frost and is off by forty percent in 2016, so the generous size of the 2017 crop was most welcome here, after the very limited production of 2016. Of Madame Barthod’s superb roster of premier crus in Chambolle-Musigny, the two that were least affected by frost this year were her

parcels in Veroilles and Charmes. The wines had been racked in August of 2017 and the cellar was showing very well indeed at the time of my visit in mid-November, with gorgeous, sappy and very pure fruit tones, outstanding typicité, and suave, vibrant structures that will carry the wines long and gracefully in bottle. A stellar range of 2016s chez Barthod!



2016 Bourgogne “Bons Batons”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Like so many examples of Bourgogne rouge in 2016, Ghislaine Barthod’s bottling is really superb in this vintage. The bouquet is very pure and has a nice touch of sappiness in its composition of red and black cherries, a touch of nutskin, complex soil tones and a lovely topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and focused, with a fine core of pure fruit, just a whisper of backend tannin and impressive focus and grip on the vibrant and sappy finish. Really a pretty bottle of Bourgogne. 2019-2030+. **88.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

This is really a superb bottle of Chambolle *villages* in the Barthod cellars in 2016. The nose jumps from the glass in a classy blend of black cherries, a touch of red plum, raw cocoa, gamebird, chalky soil tones and again, plenty of upper register violets. On the palate the wine is pure, sappy and full-bodied, with lovely transparency and nascent complexity, suave tannins and impeccable focus and balance on the long and soil-driven finish. Lovely juice. 2023-2060. **91.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Beaux Bruns”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Just to give some idea how extensive the frost damage was in the domaine’s plots of vines in 2016, Madame Barthod noted that “Beaux Bruns was a bit less frosted in 2016, so it is

only down by fifty percent.” The wine is simply gorgeous right now on the nose, offering up scents of cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a lovely base of soil tones and a lovely floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and loaded with red fruit sappiness at the core, with marvelous soil signature as well, fine-grained tannins and a long, energetic and beautifully balanced finish. A marvelous vintage of Beaux Bruns *chez* Barthod. 2025-2065+. **92+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Baudes”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

I really love the synthesis of red and black fruit tones on the 2016 les Baudes from Domaine Barthod. The very complex bouquet hops from the glass in a vibrant mix of red plums, a hint of blood orange, black cherries, bitter chocolate, *pigeon*, a fine base of soil, a whisper of vanillin oak, rose petals and a dollop of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with a fine core, lovely, suave tannins and a long, focused and very classy finish. This is showing more aromatic complexity today than the Beaux Bruns, but is in a similar stage of youthful purity on the palate and will probably need just as much time in the cellar to blossom. 2025-2065. **92+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Gruenchers”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Ghislaine decided to raise her single barrel of 2016 Gruenchers initially in a new cask, which the wine was racked out of into an older barrel in August of 2017. The wine has absorbed its serving of new wood very nicely and today is showing a gorgeously red fruity bouquet of cherries, strawberries, blood orange, raw cocoa, complex, chalky minerality, woodsmoke, roses and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, again with great soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and dancing finish. Great juice. 2024-2065. **93**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Charmes”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The energy in the 2016 les Charmes from Domaine Barthod is palpable. The bouquet soars from the glass in a complex blend of red plums, red and black cherries, complex soil tones, gamebird, a touch of nutskin and the vintage’s signature topnote of violets *chez* Barthod. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with beautiful focus and balance, suave, seamless tannins, tangy acids and a nice touch of blood orange perking up the very long and youthfully complex finish. A lovely Charmes. 2026-2060+. **93**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Fuées” - Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2016 les Fuées from Ghislaine Barthod is quite a bit more black fruity out of the blocks than any of the other premier crus in the cellar this year, but every bit as refined and sappy. The superb nose delivers scents of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, violets, vanillin oak and a marvelous base of soil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows marvelous, sappy mid-palate depth, with excellent focus and mineral drive, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, tangy finish. Fine, fine juice in the making. 2026-2060+. **93+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Veroilles”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

Normally, the les Veroilles is by a pretty wide margin, the most black fruity wine in the Barthod cellars each year, but this is not the case with the 2016, which has an almost exotic, red fruity personality out of the blocks that is very exciting. The bouquet is a marvelous blend of red plums, blood orange, nutskin, quail, a complex base of soil, cocoa powder, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a sappy core of red fruit, fine-grained tannins and impressive focus and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. One of the most beautiful young vintages of Veroilles I have had the pleasure to taste *chez* Barthod. 2027-2060+. **93+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Cras”- Domaine Ghislaine Barthod

The 2016 les Cras from Domaine Barthod is a beautifully complete and compelling young wine. The bouquet delivers a refined aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, blood orange, gamebird, raw cocoa, a great base of minerality, woodsmoke and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and again, very nicely sappy at the core, with lovely backend mineral drive, refined tannins and a long, nascently complex and utterly refined finish. 2026-2060+. **94.**

Domaine François Bertheau (Chambolle-Musigny)

This was my first visit to François Bertheau, whose wines I have admired from a distance for many years. François Bertheau is the fifth generation of his family to have farmed these lovely vineyards in Chambolle, having taken over direction of the estate from his father in the 2004 vintage. Monsieur Bertheau's wines are classic Chambolles, with plenty of perfume, elegant, red fruity personalities and lovely, silken textures. The emphasis here is on good farming of the estate's 6.25 hectares of vines and the wines do not see a lot of makeup in the cellars, with the premier crus being raised in around twenty percent new wood and the Bonnes-Mares in about a third. There are nearly three hectares of vines scattered around various “villages” level parcels, making this the largest cuvée in the cellars and it is always an excellent example. Monsieur Bertheau raises the Chambolle AC entirely in older foudres. There are three premier cru bottlings, with a blended cuvée made from parcels that total up to just over a hectare in the vineyards of les Noirots, les Groseilles, les Baudes and Gruenchers. There are also two-thirds of a hectare of vines in les Charmes, aged forty-plus years and a third of a hectare in Amoureuses that are of the same age. The domaine's rows of vines, in Bonnes-Mares, which total a third of a hectare, run the entire extent of the slope, from top to bottom, so it is a classic blend of both Terres Rouges and Terres Blanches soil types. In the 2016 vintage, Monsieur Bertheau lost about a third of his crop globally, with certain vineyards hit harder than others by the frost, so that for example, his parcel in les Amoureuses was happily passed over and there was not frost damage here, but his superb example of Charmes is down by thirty percent. He began harvesting on October 1st in 2016 and the entire cellar had been racked in February of 2017, so that the wines were absolutely on form in early November. Interestingly, there was no real variation in structural style amongst the Bertheau wines this year, despite some parcels being quite frost damaged and others untouched.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine François Bertheau

The 2016 Chambolle villages from François Bertheau is outstanding, as it offers up a very pretty and perfumed bouquet of red plums, cherries, chalky soil tones, a touch of raw cocoa and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, suave tannins and a long, energetic and nascently complex finish. Having been raised entirely in older foudres, this wine really allows its underlying soil tones to come to the fore. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2050. **90.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Premier Cru”- Domaine François Bertheau

The 2016 Premier Cru bottling chez Bertheau is just lovely. All four parcels are co-fermented here, allowing the wine to integrate from the outset and it is truly a refined and very elegant expression of the village. The bouquet of the 2016 wafts from the glass in a beautiful blend of plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a complex base of soil tones, just a whisper of oak and again, lovely smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-

bodied and sappy at the core, with fine soil inflection, refined, seamless tannins and a very long, vibrant and already silky finish. A lovely bottle in the making. 2024-2060+. **92+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Charmes”- Domaine François Bertheau

François Bertheau’s example of les Charmes is one of the finest in the village in my experience, as this quite large premier cru can vary a bit in terms of absolute quality depending on where one’s vines are located in the vineyard. The 2016 from Domaine Bertheau is an outstanding wine, delivering a great, sappy constellation of black cherries, red plums, cocoa, pungent notes of violets, chalky soil tones and a very deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with plenty of mid-palate sappiness coupled with lovely soil tones. The finish is focused, balanced and suavely-tannic, with lovely lift, complexity and grip. This is a velvety wine that will be tempting to drink on the early side, but I would try to keep my hands off of it for at least eight to ten years and really let it blossom completely! 2024-2060+. **93**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine François Bertheau

The 2016 les Amoureuses from Monsieur Bertheau is the epitome of elegance and shows plenty of the feminine mystique of Chambolle. The perfumed and flat out gorgeous bouquet wafts from the glass in a red fruity blend of cherries, strawberries, raw cocoa, a beautifully complex base of chalky soil tones, violets and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave, with a marvelous core of fruit, stunning transparency and lovey focus and grip on the long, fine-grained and vibrant finish. Just a classic example of les Amoureuses. 2026-2075+. **94+**.

2016 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine François Bertheau

Monsieur Bertheau’s 2016 Bonnes-Mares is equally stunning. The bouquet is deep, pure and nascently complex, delivering scents of plums, black cherries, gamebird, raw cocoa, a great, complex base of soil tones, a touch of vanillin oak and a floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impeccably balanced, with a rock solid core of fruit, ripe tannins and great length and grip on the very long, poised and focused finish. A great example of Bonnes-Mares in the making. 2028-2080. **95**.

Domaine Louis Boillot (Chambolle-Musigny)

Louis Boillot has crafted a beautiful array of 2016s. The yields here were variable, as with so many parcels scattered across so many different communes, the frost damage was far from consistent. For example, within his parcels in Volnay, the “villages” level vineyards were frosted badly and the yields here were down eighty percent, the premier cru of les Brouillards was down sixty percent, but the premier crus of les Angles les Caillerets were barely touched by the frost. In Pommard, his “villages” parcel was down fifty percent and his les Premiers parcel was hit hard and lost eighty percent. Monsieur Boillot’s Beaune “Epenottes” was also heavily frosted in 2016, so there is only one cask out of the customary four in the cellars. His home village of Chambolle-Musigny was of course targeted by the frost and the Monsieur Boillot’s villages level bottling, which is normally a blend of several different plots, is ninety percent from Beaux Bruns in 2016, as the other parcels produced very few bunches due to the frost. Happily, the domaine’s parcels in Gevrey-Chambertin were almost completely spared of frost damage, which compensated a bit for the devastation to yields elsewhere in the Boillot family holdings. The domaine’s very old vines in Nuits “Pruliers” were all badly frosted and this bottling is down by seventy percent in 2016. Fortunately, with the yields generous across the board in the 2017 vintage, Louis Boillot’s cellars were nicely full of casks of the new vintage and he was in a very

good mood, despite having such small quantities of 2016s to allocate in the coming year. He was one of several vigneron who commented that he was very gentle with extractions in 2016, looking to keep the elegance of the wines intact and he has succeeded beautifully in this regard, and the entire range of 2016s here is absolutely refined and perfumed, with lovely sappiness to their fruit components, excellent soil signatures and bright, vibrant palate impressions that will delight fans of this excellent estate. Monsieur Boillot started picking on September 23rd in this vintage and was finished up by the 30th of the month. The entire cellar had been racked in mid-August in anticipation of the harvest of 2017 and the wines of 2016 were showing very well at the time of my visit in mid-November.

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Louis Boillot

Louis Boillot's parcels that make up his Bourgogne bottling were hit by frost and only produced twenty-five hectoliters per hectare in 2016, so it is no surprise that this is a lovely example in this vintage. The bouquet offers up a beautifully sappy blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a nice base of soil and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and juicy on the attack, with a good core of fruit and lovely backend bounce on the well-balanced and open finish. A really lovely Bourgogne that will drink well from the outset. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Côte de Nuits Villages- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2016 Côte de Nuits Villages *chez* Boillot is excellent, with lovely purity and soil signature evident on both the nose and palate. The bouquet delivers a vibrant mix of black raspberries, black cherries, grilled meats, gentle smokiness and an impressive base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a fine core, lovely transparency and a bit of tannin perking up and adding structure to the nicely reserved finish. Another fine example. 2021-2040. **89.**

2016 Fixin- Domaine Louis Boillot

Louis Boillot has seventy year-old vines in Fixin and happily, these were not hit hard by frost and the yields are not too bad for this wine (if my memory serves me correctly). The wine is lovely, offering up more aromatic and palate precision than the very good Côte de Nuits Villages, with the nose wafting from the glass in a black fruity blend of cassis, grilled meats, dark soil tones, espresso and a nice touch of fresh herbs in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, tangy and full-bodied, with a sappy core, very good transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. This is really a superb *villages*. 2021-2045. **89+.**

2016 Pommard- Domaine Louis Boillot

The low yields in Monsieur Boillot's Pommard AC parcels has not affected the quality of this wine at all and this is a very elegant and refined example of young Pommard in 2016. The beautiful nose offers up a sappy blend of dusty rose, red plums, cherries, cocoa powder and a lovely base of soil. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and tangy, with a lovely core, fine-grained tannins and a long, focused and soil-driven finish. This is truly an exceptional Pommard *villages* bottling. 2024-2060. **91.**

2016 Beaune "Epenottes"- Domaine Louis Boillot

The seventy year-old vines in Epenottes have delivered a lovely wine in 2016, albeit in tiny quantities, as there is only a single barrel this year. The bouquet is superb, offering up a complex and sappy blend of sweet dark berries, black cherries, a touch of currant leaf, dark soil tones and bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent, with

a fine core of black fruit, suave tannins and a long, vibrant and nicely structured finish that closes with plenty of old vine sap and mineral drive. Outstanding wine. 2024-2055+. **91.**

2016 Volnay “les Grands Poisots”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2016 les Grands Poisots was one of the hardest frosted parcels in the domaine’s portfolio, but the wine has turned out very well, despite being down fully eighty percent this year. The bouquet is very black fruity in personality, offering up scents of cassis, dark berries, espresso, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a nice touch of gamebird. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, tangy and youthful finish. Good juice, but this will need time to blossom. 2026-2055. **90+.**

2016 Volnay “les Angles”- Domaine Louis Boillot

Les Angles lies just up slope from Brouillards and was hardly touched by the frost, with Monsieur Boillot realizing nine out of ten (or at most, eleven) barrels that he would normally have in a vintage with correct yields. The wine is very beautiful, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, complex soil tones, a hint of cedar and a gentle topnote of currant leaf. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and minerally in personality, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip and a long, fine-grained and perfectly balanced finish. A gorgeous bottle of Volnay in the making. 2028-2060+. **93.**

2016 Volnay “les Brouillards”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2016 Volnay “les Brouillards” from Domaine Louis Boillot is also an outstanding wine, offering up a vibrant and sappy bouquet of black raspberries, black cherries, complex soil tones, dark chocolate, currant leaf, woodsmoke, an exotic touch of eucalyptus and a whisper of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full and rock solid at the core, with a lovely backend mineral drive, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2028-2060. **93.**

2016 Volnay “les Caillerets”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2016 Caillerets *chez* Boillot is an absolute classic in the making. The nose jumps from the glass in a spicy blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, stony minerality, gamebird, sweet dark berries, woodsmoke and plenty of Caillerets spice tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and pure, with a lovely, sappy core of fruit, fine soil inflection, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, focused and minerally finish. Fine, fine juice. 2028-2060. **93+.**

2016 Pommard “les Fremiers”- Domaine Louis Boillot

There is only a single barrel of les Fremiers in the cellars from the 2016 vintage, which borders on a crime, as the wine is stunningly beautiful. Again, this is a very elegant young Pommard, offering up a fine and quite red fruity bouquet of red plums, cherries, cocoa powder, roses, a hint of currant leaf, gamebird and a superbly complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and soil-driven, with excellent mid-palate depth, fine-grained tannins and great length and grip on the vibrant, youthful and nascently complex finish. This is impeccably balanced and will be a great bottle with sufficient bottle age. 2026-2060. **93+.**

2016 Pommard “la Croix Noire”- Domaine Louis Boillot

As I have mentioned in the past, the tiny premier cru of la Croix Noire is one of my very favorite *terroirs* in the Côte de Beaune and the 2016 version from Louis Boillot is a gorgeous wine in the making. The superb nose soars from the glass in a complex mix of black cherries, black raspberries, a touch of red plum, gamebird, dark soil tones, gentle spice elements and a lovely topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with

outstanding balance and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and marvelous backend mineral drive on the long and complex finish. Great juice. 2028-2060+. **94+**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2106 Chambolle AC from Louis Boillot is a lovely wine in the making. The bouquet delivers a lovely blend of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a good core of fruit, fine soil signature and a long, modestly tannic and vibrant finish. The wine was showing a bit of oak at the time of my visit, but this was just a passing phase (as it has seen little new wood) and will be lovely in time. 2023-2055+. **90**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin- Domaine Louis Boillot

The 2016 Gevrey *villages* bottling here is excellent and quite black fruity in personality this year. The nose wafts from the glass in a mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, espresso, dark soil tones, raw cocoa, gamebirds and a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely balanced, with a good core of black fruit, nice soil drive and a long, fine-grained and tangy finish. This is still quite primary and will want a few years in the cellar to blossom, but it will be excellent. 2024-2060. **91**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Evocelles”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The Domaine Boillot 2016 les Evocelles is an outstanding wine, offering up a pure and sappy bouquet of red and black cherries, gentle notes of mustard seed, black minerality, espresso, woodsmoke and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full and transparent in personality, with a sappy core, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and grip on the long, balanced and tangy finish. A very fine example. 2024-2055. **91+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Champonnets”- Domaine Louis Boillot

Monsieur Boillot’s vines in Champonnets are now forty-five years of age, and as Louis observes, “they are just starting now, as they have reached an age where the vines are interesting and produce really good fruit.” The 2016 Champonnets is a very floral and elegant young Gevrey, offering up a lovely aromatic constellation of red plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil, roses, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very pure, very elegant and full-bodied, with a sappy core, lovely soil signature, suave tannins and a very long, very refined and complex finish. Great juice. 2026-2075. **93+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “les Cherbaudes”- Domaine Louis Boillot

The vines in Louis Boillot’s parcel of Cherbaudes are now one hundred and four years of age and they have produced a stunningly pure and elegant rendition of this fine *terroir* in 2016. The absolutely beautiful bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of sappy red and black cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, a very complex base of soil, a discreet touch of vanillin oak, woodsmoke and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a rock solid core of sappy fruit, great focus and balance, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, soil-driven and utterly seamless finish. A great young Gevrey premier cru. 2026-2065. **94+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Pruliers”- Domaine Louis Boillot

With seventy percent of the crop lost to frost in the spring, there will not be a lot of Monsieur Boillot’s 2016 Pruliers, but it will be worth the search, as the wine is outstanding. The nose delivers a deep, concentrated and refined blend of red and black cherries, a touch of dark berry, *pigeon*, espresso, dark soil tones, currant leaf and a deft framing of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and chewy, with a rock solid core, great soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a very long, ripely tannic and classic finish. Fine juice. 2029-2065+. **94**.

Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier (Chambolle-Musigny)

Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier is quite content with the quality of his 2016s, though the quantities of certain cuvées will be quite limited because of the frost at the end of April. As I went into in some detail in the introduction, the village of Chambolle-Musigny was one of the hardest hit by the frost, and even the domaine's superb Nuits St. Georges premier cru of Clos de la Maréchale lost half of its potential crop to the April freeze as well. Monsieur Mugnier was lucky that his section of vines in Bonnes-Mares was spared from frost damage (he is located in the middle of the vineyard), so that was a bit of good news, but the domaine's les Fuées is off by forty to fifty percent, les Amoureuses was down by fifty percent and there are only six barrels out of a customary sixteen of the glorious Musigny here in 2016. Frédéric mentioned that his younger vines resisted the frost better than his older vines in this eventful April, as they are trained Cordon Royat style, whereas the older vines are trained by the Guyot method and were more vulnerable to the frosts. The wines here in 2016 show beautiful purity of terroir expression and sappy vibrancy, but they are fairly ripe wines, with most alcohols falling between 13.5 and fourteen percent, depending on the wine, with the vineyards that were more heavily frosted ending up a bit riper. That said, they still seem fresher than the powerful and precise 2015s here, and Monsieur Mugnier is of the opinion that for the next twenty years or so, the 2016s will be the more attractive wines to drink. However, he feels that over the long haul, the 2015 vintage here is likely to produce the greater wines, but they are going to need a lot of time in the cellar before they start to blossom and fulfill their promise. It will be very interesting to follow the evolution of these two very, very successful vintages chez Mugnier as the years unfold, but my gut instinct is that the 2016 vintage is going to give the 2015s here a run for their money, as they are truly a brilliant and very seductive set of wines.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The Chambolle AC in 2016 is a lovely village wine, offering up excellent purity and sappiness in its bouquet of plums, black cherries, chalky soil tones, raw cocoa and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, long, and full-bodied, with a svelte profile, a lovely core of fruit, fine soil signature and a long, modestly tannic and tangy finish. This will need six or seven years in the cellar to truly blossom and should drink with great style for several decades hence. 2023-2060. **91.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Fuées”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2016 les Fuées from Monsieur Mugnier is a simply beautiful wine in the making. The nose jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of sappy red and black cherries, gamebird, complex, limestone soil tones, raw cocoa, woodsmoke and a lovely framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, elegant and full-bodied, with lovely sappiness in the mid-palate, excellent soil signature and a very long, vibrant and seamless finish of fine-grained tannins and riveting purity. While this will be accessible earlier, due to its very suave balance, I would try to give it a full decade in the cellar before starting to drink it in earnest. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

Though portions of Bonnes-Mares were very heavily hit by frost damage in late April of 2016, not all of the vineyard was affected and the Domaine Mugnier parcel saw no frosting at all. The result is a supremely elegant and very high quality example of Bonnes-Mares, delivering fine aromatic complexity in its nose of plums, black cherries, *pigeon*, a hint of mustard seed, a complex base of soil tones, vanillin oak and a fine topnote of rose petals. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and tangy, with a rock solid core of fruit, fine-grained tannins and

lovely backend tension on the very long and nascently complex finish. A beautiful wine in the making! 2028-2075+. **94.**



Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier in his cellars at the Château de Chambolle-Musigny.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The les Amoureuses from Frédéric Mugnier is one of the most beautifully perfumed and elegant wines in the entire vintage of 2016. The bouquet is still young and will be far more complex with extended bottle age, but it is already irresistible, offering up scents of red and black cherries, violets, roses, raw cocoa, a marvelously complex base of soil tones, vanillin oak and hints of the smokiness which will come with cellaring. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and velvety on the attack, with lovely sappiness at the core, laser-like focus, gorgeous complexity and a very long, suavely tannic and dancing finish. 2028-2065+. **96.**

2016 Musigny- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2016 Musigny from Monsieur Mugnier is destined to be a legendary wine in the fullness of time, but it is a beautifully structured example of the vintage and will need a good decade's worth of bottle age before it really starts to blossom. The very complex nose offers up a stunning and sappy aromatic constellation of red plums, red and black cherries, beautiful floral tones, raw cocoa, a very complex base of soil, gamebird, woodsmoke, a hint of mustard seed and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full, deep, pure and sappy at the core, with a complex, fabulously balanced and very long backend. The tannins here are suave and

seamless, the acids bright and vibrant and the wine goes on forever on the magical finish. At this early stage, this reminds me very strongly of the brilliant 2010 Musigny *chez* Mugnier. 2030-100. **98+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale”- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The yield for Clos de la Maréchale from Domaine Mugnier was down by about fifty percent due to the frosts of 2016, but the wine has turned out beautifully and is very suave structurally. The bouquet is pure and very classy, offering up scents of black cherries, plums, gamebird, a touch of nutskin, raw cocoa, vanillin oak and a complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, fine soil signature, ripe tannins and a long, complex and beautifully balanced finish. 2026-2055. **93+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Clos de la Maréchale” Blanc- Domaine Jacques-Frédéric Mugnier

The 2016 Clos de la Maréchale Blanc has also turned out beautifully in this vintage. The wine offers up a bright and vibrant bouquet of pear, crab apple, chalky soil tones, a touch of bee pollen, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with zesty acids, fine focus and balance and excellent backend energy and grip on the poised and refined finish. This is pretty close to the 2015 Clos de la Maréchale Blanc in terms of ripeness (both pretty close to fourteen percent alcohol), but seems cooler in the mouth and fresher. Fine juice. 2018-2035. **93**.

Domaine Georges Roumier (Chambolle-Musigny)

With Chambolle-Musigny getting pummeled by the frost damage in April, there will be no Bourgogne rouge from Domaine Roumier this year, and this also the case with the domaine's Corton-Charlemagne, as there were simply too few bunches to pick and even make a micro-cuvée in 2016. Amongst the other wines, some vineyards were less hard hit by frost damage than others, and, as I mentioned in the introduction, Christophe Roumier is of the opinion that he essentially has two vintages in the cellars, with the wines from the most severely frost-damaged parcels showing a bit chewier profile than those that were generally spared. His thinking at the time of my visit on the 13th of the month was that he would probably give the wines from the most frost-damaged parcels a bit more time in cask to round into form than he would for the wines from the vineyards that were less touched by the chill, as the former seemed a little chewier and could do with a bit more time in barrel, while the latter cuvées were evolving beautifully and nearing the point where they would be ready for bottling. The two wines that showed the most adverse effect from the frost- not so much in terms of potential quality, but rather, in terms of their structural evolution at the time of my visit- were the Chambolle AC bottling and the premier cru les Cras. Both of these wines were produced from tiny yields (9.5 hectoliters per hectare for the villages and 10.8 hectoliters per hectare for the les Cras) and included all the secondary bunches that ripened in the vineyards as well. In terms of their evolution in cask, both wines seemed a bit behind the other cuvées and it seemed to be quite logical to earmark them for a bit more aging in the cellars prior to preparation for bottling. All of the fruit from the premier cru of Combottes was included in the Chambolle villages bottling this year. The other Chambolle wines that were quite badly frosted were the Amoureuses and Musigny, both of which were down at least fifty percent, but neither of these wines seemed as chewy as the AC and les Cras at the time of my visit.

There were a couple of changes in the cellars chez Roumier in 2016, as there is a new bottling of Echézeaux debuting in this vintage. This is a parcel of fifty-five to sixty year-old vines

in the lieu à dit of en Ormeaux, which sadly, was heavily frosted in 2016. Consequently, there is only a half barrel of this wine this year, but there will be more starting in 2017. Christophe has also been able to add another half hectare of vines in Bonnes-Mares through a metayage agreement, with all of the vines in the “Terres Blanches” section of the vineyard, bringing his total now in this great grand cru up to 1.89 hectares. Christophe’s vines up above the Comte de Vogüé parcel of Bonnes-Mares were modestly-frosted in 2016, but with the new parcel addition, he was still able to average 28 hectoliters per hectare in the vineyard, which was not a bad yield at all in 2016 in Chambolle! The new plot also tilts the balance of soil in his Bonnes-Mares cuvée now slightly in the favor of Terres Blanches over Terres Rouges, and there did seem to be an added, chalky and floral element to the cuvée this year as a result. Given the variations of frost damage, Christophe used a varying percentage of whole clusters in his wines in this vintage, with the Musigny one hundred percent, the Bonnes-Mares and les Cras slightly over half whole clusters and others at different percentages. The 2016 malos were finished up in July of 2017. All in all, 2016 is a very strong vintage chez Roumier, but it remains to be seen how the Chambolle “villages” and les Cras will eventually sort themselves out with further time in casks. It may prove that they will stay stylistic outliers here because of their extensive frost damage, or it may just be that they were in need of more elevage to catch up with the wines from less severely-frosted parcels.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2016 Chambolle AC was only racked three weeks before my visit and may have been still a bit out of sorts on the palate, but the nose was singing. The bouquet is a lovely blend of red and black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, chalky soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and fairly chewy at the present time, with a good core and soil signature, ripe tannins, but a bit of overtly chocolaty overtones on the finish that seem a touch out of place with the purity of the nose. My guess is that this is just still a bit grumpy from its racking and will eventually vault higher as it settles in with further barrel aging. 2021-2045+. **88+?**

2016 Morey St. Denis “Clos de la Bussière”- Domaine Georges Roumier

The Clos de la Bussière was also hit by the frost, but in the context of frost damage in Chambolle, the one-third that was lost here in this vineyard was not particularly crippling to quantity. The wine is excellent in 2016, with the inherent elegance of the vintage already very much in evidence, as the refined nose wafts from the glass in a blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, lovely soil tones, bitter chocolate, woodsmoke and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, ripe tannins and impressive backend energy and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065. **91.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Cras”- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2016 les Cras was also a bit cantankerous at the time of my visit, but it seems likely to eventually turn into a very good wine. The bouquet is sappy and quite enticing, offering up scents of red and black cherries, red plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full and quite chewy right now, with a good core, fine balance and a long, structured, but promising finish. The refined elegance of most of the 2016 Roumier wines is not yet evident in the les Cras, but it is hard not to suppose that this will arrive in due course. 2026-2065. **92.**

2016 Echézeaux- Christophe Roumier

As Christophe Roumier notes, en Orveaux is not the top *lieu à dit* in Echézeaux, but these vines are a good age here and this is going to be a very nice addition to the lineup in the years to come. As there is only a half barrel here in the frost-shortened crop of 2016, it was raised in a new half and is a bit more new oaky than Christophe would optimally prefer, but I liked the wine quite well. The bouquet is quite fine, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, plums, violets, raw cocoa, dark soil tones, gamebird and a fair bit of smoky new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite soil-driven in personality, with lovely purity on the attack, a fine core and a long, elegant and fine-grained finish. Fine juice. 2024-2065. **93+**.

2016 Charmes-Chambertin- Christophe Roumier

Christophe has been able to buy this parcel that he sharecropped for a long time, with the paperwork being finished up after the 2017 harvest, so beginning in 2018, there will be significantly more Charmes available here. The 2016 version was not touched by the frost and is outstanding, offering up a pure and vibrant bouquet of red and black cherries, a nice touch of blood orange, raw cocoa, a beautiful base of soil, *pigeon* and a lovely topnote of dusty rose. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and refined, with a sappy core of fruit, fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and lovely focus and grip on the long, complex and energetic finish. This is really, really good this year! 2026-2075. **94**.

2016 Ruchottes-Chambertin- Christophe Roumier

There was some frost damage in Ruchottes in 2016 and Christophe lost thirty percent of the crop here as a result. The wine has turned out just fine though, delivering a refined aromatic constellation of plums, black cherries, cocoa powder, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with a sappy core, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, pure and vibrant finish. This reminds me quite strongly of the beautiful 1991 Ruchottes *chez* Roumier. 2027-2075. **93+**.

2016 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2016 Bonnes-Mares from Christophe Roumier is a legend in the making, as this wine has turned out brilliantly in this vintage. The bouquet soars from the glass in a blaze of sappy red and black cherries, gamebird, limestone soil tones, woodsmoke, violets and raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and displays stunning, sappy depth at the core, with magical transparency, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, pure and classic finish. A great Bonnes-Mares in the making! 2029-2080+. **96**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Georges Roumier

The 2016 les Amoureuses was showing quite nicely at the time of my visit, but my gut instinct is that this will not be a legendary vintage for this great bottling. The nose is deep, pure and nicely reserved, offering up scents of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil, gamebird and a lovely topnote again of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite closed at the present time, with a superb core, fine soil inflection, ripe, gently chewy tannins and a very long, vibrant and promising finish. This seems likely to take every bit as long as the Bonnes-Mares to start to come around in 2016. 2029-2065+. **94+**.

2016 Musigny- Domaine Georges Roumier

There is only a single, one hundred and eighty liter, specially-made barrel for the 2016 Musigny in the Roumier cellars this year. Normally, Christophe will have twice this volume, but the frosts were not gracious in his parcel in Musigny. I mentioned to Christophe that I liked the idea of the one hundred and eighty liter barrel for this wine, as two of these would handle his typical production from this tiny parcel very nicely and would allow him to not have to use more

new oak for this cuvée than he does for his other wines. I suspect that we may see future vintages of Roumier Musigny raised in a pair of these specially-made barrels in the future. The 2016 Musigny here is a beautiful wine in the making, as I adore the purity and sappiness it is already displaying on the nose in its blend of red and black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, marvelously complex soil tones, vanillin oak and a floral tapestry that hints at both violets and peonies. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and flat out stunning, with a sappy core, marvelous transparency and an impressive sense of reserve on the suavely-tannic and energetic finish. Great juice in the making. 2032-2100. 97+.



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

Of the producers I visited in Chambolle-Musigny on this November trip, the Domaine de Comte de Vogüé was probably the worst hit by frost, as the estate lost fully seventy percent of its crop in 2016. True to his character, Chef de Cave François Millet was philosophical about the frost damage, observing that “this is nature and when you work with nature each year, there are going to be vintages like 2016 and there is nothing that we can do about this.” As he continued, “happily, the wines are really very good and classic this year.” Monsieur Millet and his team started picking on September 24th in 2016 and finished up fairly quickly, as there were simply not a lot of bunches of grapes out there in their most heavily-frosted parcels. Their least-affected vineyard was les Amoureuses, which was “only” down thirty percent in 2016, but the others were hit more severely and yields are down a minimum of fifty percent for every other cuvée and

often quite a bit more. As I mentioned in the introduction, the domaine even had bad luck with their parcel in Bonnes-Mares, as much of the vineyard was spared the severest frost damage in 2016, but the southeastern corner, at the bottom of the slope, where Comte de Vogüé has their superb plot of vines, was the hardest hit and yields here were miniscule for the domaine. The wines had been racked several weeks before my mid-November visit and were showing very well indeed. The only real outlier stylistically in the lineup was the Bonnes-Mares, which was showing fairly reserved in profile and perhaps a bit “coarser” in its tannic structure than the other wines in the portfolio this year, but this could also just be a reflection of the wine being a bit behind the others in its evolution in cask and my score may end up seeming a bit conservative down the road. There were no question marks with any of the other 2016s here, which were really lovely, sappy and soil-driven examples of the vintage and classics in the making.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The 2016 Chambolle AC from Domaine de Comte de Vogüé is really a strong *villages*, with the sappy bouquet wafting from the glass in a fine blend of red plums, black cherries, chalky soil tones, violets, raw cocoa and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite sappy at the core, with lovely focus and grip, suave tannins and a long, perfectly balanced and classy finish. Fine juice. 20122-2050. **91.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Premier Cru”- Domaine de Georges de Comte de Vogüé

The Domaine de Comte de Vogüé Premier Cru bottling is excellent in 2016. The wine again shares the beautiful sappy fruit tones of the best wines of the vintage, offering up a superb aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, plums, a touch of lavender, raw cocoa, a marvelous base of soil tones and a fine base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very pure on the attack, with a beautiful core of fruit, outstanding transparency and a long, elegantly structured and focused finish. The complexity here is already quite evident and the tannins are fine-grained and seamless. Superb this year and one of the best young vintages of the young vine Musigny I have tasted from the domaine. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Domaine Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The domaine’s 2016 les Amoureuses is simply beautiful this year. The bouquet is perfumed, sappy and very precise, delivering scents of black cherries, plums, blood orange, dark chocolate, a gorgeous base of chalky soil tones, vanillin oak, incipient notes of gamebird and a pungent topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a great core of sappy fruit, superb soil signature, suave, ripe tannins and outstanding focus and grip on the complex and vibrant finish. A great example. 2028-2070+. **95.**

2016 Bonnes-Mares- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

The 2016 Bonnes-Mares was a bit hunkered down at the time of my visit and not really in the mood for visitors. The bouquet is certainly deep and shows a nice spice element to its blend of black cherries, a fine base of soil, gamebird, woodsmoke, black plums and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite closed down today, but with a good core, firm, slightly coarse tannins and a long, primary finish. With all the other 2016s here showing such purity and sappy beauty out of the blocks, the more reticent showing of the Bonnes-Mares is a bit out of place, but the domaine’s parcel of vines was undoubtedly the most heavily hit by frost of any in Bonnes-Mares this year and the wine may simply need more time in barrel to start to blossom. 2030-2070+. **92-93+?**

2016 Musigny “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine de Comte de Georges de Vogüé

If the Bonnes-Mares was a reluctant host in November, the 2016 Musigny “Vieilles Vignes” was delighted to have visitors! This is a great wine in the making, with the bouquet wafting from the glass in a very promising blend of black cherries, black raspberries, raw cocoa, complex minerality, a touch of blood orange, woodsmoke, incipient notes of gamebird and a deft base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and sappy at the core, with gorgeous focus and balance, outstanding backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and ripely tannic finish. This will be a great wine in the fullness of time. 2032-2100. **97.**

Vougeot

Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat (Vougeot)

Charles van Canneyt has made outstanding wines in 2016. Like so many of his neighbors spread amongst several different villages in the Côte de Nuits, his luck with the frost varied from commune to commune. With his Bourgogne vines in Chambolle, this cuvée was down by sixty percent and his Chambolle AC was off by half as well in this vintage. He was a bit luckier in the premier cru of Charmes, as here the frost only claimed twenty-five percent of the crop from his parcel of vines. Next door in his lovely (and totally underrated) Petits Vougeots, the frost damage took forty percent of the crop in 2016. His superbly situated parcel in Clos Vougeot was also frosted badly in 2016 and again, forty percent was lost here. However, he was spared frost damage in his vines in both Nuits St. Georges and Vosne-Romanée, so there was a silver lining. The malos for the 2106s here were on the later side to finish, as Charles keeps his cellars cool and prefers to allow the malos to work slowly, with the Malconsorts and the Romanée-St.-Vivant the last two cuvées to complete their malolactic fermentations in this vintage. Many of the wines went into September 2017 still finishing up their malos. Nothing in the cellar had been racked at the time of my visit, but this process was just getting underway and everything was to be completed with its racking within that week. Many of the wines this year are quite black fruity in personality, with outstanding transparency, fine-grained tannins and excellent potential for long-term evolution. The 2016 vintage is a ringing success at Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat, but this has been the case for many vintages in a row now and Charles van Canneyt is currently at the top of his game! A great range of wines.

2016 Bourgogne- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

There is not much quantity of 2016 Bourgogne from Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat, but the wine will be a very good example. This wine was clearly ready for its racking, but with a bit of swirling offered up scents of black cherries, cassis, dark chocolate and a nice base of soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, long and nicely ample for its level, with a touch of backend tannin and good focus and grip. Good juice. 2018-2030. **87+.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Chambolle *villages* is quite black fruity this year, offering up a complex bouquet of dark berries, black cherries, chocolate, a touch of nutskin and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and quite solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, suave tannins and very good length and grip on the finish. The energy on the backend here seemed a tad lower than on the other two AC bottlings, which I would attribute to the frost damage, but the wine is complex and balanced and will be very tasty. 2021-2045+. **89.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Vosne *villages* is really pretty and stylish in this vintage. The excellent nose jumps from the glass in a mix of black raspberries, lovely minerality, gamebird, espresso and a stylish topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a lovely core of black fruit, fine soil signature, modest tannins and impressive length and grip on the poised and classy finish. A fine AC. 2021-2045. **90.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Au Bas de Combe”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

Charles van Canneyt was fortunate that his two lovely Nuits bottlings hail from vines on the unfrosted, Vosne side of the village, and the 2016 Bas de Combe is going to be excellent. The bouquet is pure and nascently complex, delivering scents of black cherries, dark berries, gamebird, dark soil tones, raw cocoa, just a whisper of fresh herb tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a sappy core of black fruit, ripe, chewy tannins and fine length and grip on the beautifully balanced and youthful finish. All this needs is a bit of time in the cellar. 2023-2050. **90+.**

2016 Vougeot “Petits Vougeots”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

Monsieur van Canneyt’s example of Petits Vougeots is often one of the most red fruity wines in the cellar, but this year, it follows the lead of its brethren and is quite black fruity in personality. The bouquet is pure and precise, wafting from the glass in a superb blend of black cherries, dark chocolate, a beautiful base of chalky soil tones, gamebird and just a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and impressively sappy at the core, with great transparency and balance, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and energetic finish. This is going to be a lovely wine. 2023-2060. **91+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Murgers”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Murgers *chez* Hudelot is an outstanding wine in the making, with the energy and sappy purity that is emblematic of the best 2016s that were untouched by the frost. The bouquet soars from the glass in a superb blend of black plums, black cherries, a touch of nutskin, a complex base of soil, *pigeon*, woodsmoke and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant for a young Nuits, with a sappy core, excellent transparency, suave, seamless tannins and a very long, poised and classy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2025-2065+. **92+.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Charmes”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Chambolle “Charmes” is very, very fine, with lovely soil signature evident already on both the nose and palate. Again, this is quite black fruity in personality this year, offering up scents of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, chalky soil tones, woodsmoke, vanillin oak and a lovely topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and precise, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. 2025-2065. **92.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Beaumonts”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Beaumonts from Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat is a fine wine in the making. The bouquet delivers a fine, youthful constellation of dark berries, black cherries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, venison, woodsmoke and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already nicely velvety on the attack, with a fine core, lovely soil inflection and a long, ripely tannic and seamless finish. This will be lovely, as it starts to show some fine upper register Vosne spice tones with air. 2024-2065. **92.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Suchots”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Suchots was showing really well at the time of my visit. This is an utterly classic example of its *terroir*, offering up a pure and vibrant bouquet of black raspberries, black cherries, duck, espresso, dark soil tones, Vosne spices and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very sappy at the core, with marvelous mineral drive, fine focus and grip, silky tannins and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Just a gorgeous example of Suchots. 2023-2065. **93.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Malconsorts”- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

As the Malconsorts was one of the last wines in the cellar to finish up its malo, I may be underrating this wine just a touch. The bouquet is perfumed and very lovely, wafting from the glass in a blend of black raspberries, black cherries, dark chocolate, duck, woodsmoke, a lovely base of soil tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already very seductive on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, fine-grained tannins, lovely acids and fine focus and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. This was showing very well at the time of my visit, but my gut instinct is that there is even more here than meets the eye today and my score will ultimately prove a tad conservative. 2026-2065. **93+.**

2016 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

It is unfortunate that the yields are so far down here this year, as this is a simply brilliant bottle of young Clos Vougeot! The complex bouquet is deep, pure, sappy and almost musky in its constellation of cherries, red and black raspberries, violets, raw cocoa, gorgeous soil tones, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile this year, with a sappy core, fine transparency, marvelous complexity and focus, fine-grained tannins and a very, very long, very elegant and promising finish. There is a real Vosne-Romanée personality to the Hudelot Clos Vougeot in 2016 that I find immensely promising. 2026-2085. **95.**

2016 Romanée-St.-Vivant- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

The 2016 Romanée-St.-Vivant from Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat is quite black fruity this year, but perfumed, elegant and soil-driven at the same time and this is going to be a superb example of the vintage. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of black raspberries, sweet dark berries, a lovely base of minerality, dark chocolate, a touch of fresh nutmeg, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and velvety, with a superb core, lovely focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant and very elegant finish. Fine, fine juice. 2030-2100. **96.**

2016 Richebourg- Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat

Charles van Canneyt’s stunning 2016 Richebourg shares some sappy exoticism with the Clos Vougeot in the cellars this year, though it is a tad more reserved out of the blocks than the flamboyant Clos Vougeot at the present time. The bouquet is pure, sappy and stunningly transparent in personality, offering up a beautiful blend of red plums, black cherries, gamebird, nutskin, a gorgeous base of soil tones, raw cocoa and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a superb core of pure fruit, lovely soil signature, suave, seamless tannins and a very, very long, complex and utterly refined finish. This is a great Richebourg in the making! 2030-2100. **97.**



Looking across the Clos Vougeot to the village center of Vosne-Romanée in the hazy distance.

Vosne-Romanée

Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair (Vosne-Romanée)

I find my visits to Domaine Liger-Belair some of the more difficult of my schedule during my annual November trips, as the tremendous popularity of these wines always ensures that there is a big crowd in the cellars when I am scheduled to visit and it is harder to get background information from Louis-Michel as a result of the number of tasters prowling around the cellars when I am here each year. On the other hand, I have had the pleasure to meet some really great people from around the globe during my visits to the cellars (and this was again the case this year), so it is often a fair trade. The domaine began harvesting on September 24th in 2016, and none of the wines in the cellars had been racked at the time of my visit, with the exception of the Clos du Château, which had been racked in mid-September of 2017. All of the wines were singing, with the exception of the consistently fine Petits Monts here, which had finished up its malolactic fermentation quite late and was still a bit cranky about being tasted in mid-November. As Louis-Michel's parcels in Vosne-Romanée, for the most part, avoided serious frost damage, these wines are absolutely classic examples of the 2016 vintage at its finest, with great purity of fruit, great typicité and vibrant, suave structural chassis that will carry the wines far into the future, but often allow them fairly early accessibility as well. He was far less fortunate with his holdings in Nuits St. Georges, which felt the wrath of the April frost directly and his yields in these vineyards are down dramatically in 2016. The Nuits bottlings here have

turned out beautifully, but there will not be many bottles to go around. All in all, 2016 is another tremendous success for Louis-Michel Liger-Belair.

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 Vosne AC *chez* Liger-Belair is a very classic expression of the vintage, offering up a silky texture and lovely, perfume aromatics that will delight fans from very early on in its evolution. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a fine blend of black raspberries, black cherries, dark soil tones, Vosne spices, dark soil tones and cedary, spicy oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, ripe and focused, with a good core, modest tannins and a long, tangy finish. Good juice. 2022-2045. **89.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “la Colombière”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 la Colombière was really singing at the time of my visit and this is clearly a terrific vintage for this cuvée. The bouquet is deep, pure and precise, delivering a fine blend of black raspberries, sweet dark berries, a fine base of soil, Vosne spices, chocolate, a touch of fresh nutmeg and a lovely base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very pure on the attack, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip, bright acids and a long, suavely tannic and complex finish. Most impressive. 2024-2050. **91.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Clos du Château”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 Clos du Château was in a different stage of evolution than any of the other wines in the cellar, due to already having been racked, but it was showing very well at the time of my visit. The quite red fruity nose offers up a refined and perfumed mix of red plums, cherries, chocolate, a lovely base of soil, gamebird and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and nicely plush on the attack, with a good core, moderate tannins and lovely focus and grip on the nascently complex finish. 2022-2045+. **90+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

Like many of the 2016s *chez* Liger-Belair, the Chaumes is quite black fruity in personality this year. The lovely bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex blend of black raspberries, black cherries, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, a good base of soil, gamebird, new oak and a touch of upper register nuttiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, vibrant and sappy, with a fine core, ripe, well-integrated tannins and excellent focus and grip on the long and very Henri Mayer-like finish. The domaine's Chaumes does not usually show quite this much flamboyance out of the blocks and augurs extremely well for its future! 2025-2065. **92+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Suchots”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 les Suchots is equally expressive and sappy on both the nose and palate and will be a splendid bottle with sufficient bottle age. The bouquet delivers an aromatic constellation of red and black raspberries, dark soil tones, duck, Vosne spices, raw cocoa and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and vibrant, with a sappy core, superb soil signature, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and grip on the very long, poised and well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2025-2065. **92+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

Louis-Michel's Petits Monts is usually one of my very favorite wines in his cellar, but the 2016 was grumpy from its late finish to its malo and not as expressive as the other 2016s this year. I am sure that this was simply a stage the wine was in at the time of my visit and it will be stellar in the fullness of time, but given its grumpiness, I have scored the wine in a range. The bouquet is deep and complex, but quite a bit more reticent than everything else on display, as it offers up scents of black plums, dark berries, Vosne spices, chocolate, duck and plenty of spicy

new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure on the attack and quite solid at the core, with firm, suave tannins, good acids and fine length and grip on the balanced and very youthful finish. I am sure this will be excellent, but it was hard to get a real read on it in mid-November- particularly when everything else in the lineup of 2016s was so expressive and showy! 2026-2065. **92-94?**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “aux Brûlées”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

In contrast to the youthful Petits Monts, the 2016 Brûlées from Domaine Liger-Belair was absolutely in perfect form for tasting and was stunning! The bouquet is deep, pure and flamboyant, soaring from the glass in a classic blend of plums, red and black raspberries, duck, woodsmoke, a great base of dark soil tones and plenty of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, sappy and soil-driven, with great mid-palate depth, suave, fine-grained tannins, laser-like focus and a very, very long, complex and stunning finish. 2026-2075. **94+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “aux Cras”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 aux Cras is a gorgeous bottle of Nuits in the making *chez* Liger-Belair. The bouquet is both sappy and nicely reserved, offering up a very promising combination of black raspberries, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine core, ripe, well-integrated tannins, tangy acids and lovely backend mineral drive on the long and nascently complex finish. This will be stellar in the fullness of time. 2027-2065. **93+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Clos des Grandes Vignes”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The Clos des Grandes Vignes, being situated in Prémieux, was far more affected by the April frosts than the Cras, which is on the Vosne side of the village. So, there will very little of this wine to go around in 2016, but for those fortunate enough to find a few bottles, it is going to be stellar. The bouquet is very plummy, offering up notes of red and black cherries to go along with the plums, as well as scents of venison, soil, nutskin, woodsmoke and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and suavely structured, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip, ripe tannins and a long, nascently complex finish. Fine juice. 2027-2065. **93+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “aux Reignots”- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 Reignots from Louis-Michel Liger-Belair is a breathtakingly beautiful wine in the making. The bouquet is deep, pure and very precise, offering up scents of black raspberries, black plums, raw cocoa, duck, a very complex base of minerality, gentle notes of fresh nutmeg and a generous base of nutty new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and sappy at the core, with great purity and balance, outstanding backend mineral drive and a very long, fine-grained and vibrant finish. This will be enormously complex when it has blossomed. 2026-2075. **95+.**

2016 Clos Vougeot- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 Clos Vougeot from Domaine Liger-Belair is an outstanding wine in the making. The bouquet is deep and already very expressive, jumping from the glass in a fine blend of black cherries, red and black plums, raw cocoa, gamebird, woodsmoke, nutmeg, marvelous soil tones and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a sappy core, great focus and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and outstanding purity on the very long and perfectly balanced finish. Louis-Michel is really getting to know these vines with a few years under his belt and the results are stellar in 2016. 2028-2075. **95.**

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The 2016 Echézeaux from Liger-Belair is a stunning wine in the making and Louis-Michel really seems to have been channeling the spirit of Henri Jay with this wine. The

glorious nose delivers a magical constellation of black raspberries, sweet dark berries, roasted duck, dark soil tones, plenty of Echézeaux smokiness and a generous coating of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied and flamboyantly sappy at the core, with great complex and mineral drive, suave, fine-grained tannins, outstanding focus and grip and a very long, vibrant and utterly refined finish. A great bottle of Echézeaux. 2026-2080. **95+**.

2016 La Romanée- Domaine du Comte Liger-Belair

The old vines in La Romanée have excelled in 2016 and this is one of the top wines of the vintage (yet again!) in this fine year. The bouquet is deep, pure and utterly brilliant, delivering a blend of black plums, black cherries, duck, raw cocoa, a stunningly complex base of soil, woodsmoke, Vosne spices and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved on the attack, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, complex and tangy finish. A brilliant, brilliant young wine. 2030-2100. **98**.

Domaine Méo-Camuzet (Vosne-Romanée)

Jean-Nicolas Méo was another vigneron in Vosne-Romanée that felt the sting of the April freeze quite a bit in 2017, as his vineyard holdings extend well beyond his home village and several of his parcels were hit quite hard by the frosts. For example, there is only a Chambolle “Premier Cru” bottling in the cellars in 2016, as the domaine’s bottlings of Feusselottes and les Cras were blended together to make a viable-sized cuvée, as both vineyards were down fully seventy percent because of frost damage. The domaine’s fine Marsannay bottling, which has become very popular with its clients in the last decade, was also quite reduced by frost in the vineyards Jean-Nicolas customarily works with in this village (sixty percent was lost), and he had to augment this production by buying some additional juice to make a proper-sized cuvée. In Corton-Charlemagne, the domaine usually buys from two growers to make their bottling, but in 2016, one of these two, located in Pernand-Vergelesses, was frosted badly and had no grapes to sell, so Jean-Nicolas Méo had to buy grapes from a different source in this vintage to augment the production from the grower he has worked with for several years (and who was not luckily spared significant frost damage). But, all in all, the domaine was able to escape the worst brunt of the frost devastation. The estate was fortunate in certain vineyards, such as Perrières in Nuits St. Georges, which was heavily frost-damaged in the lower section of the slope, but which escaped frost in the top of the vineyard, where the Domaine Méo-Camuzet happens to find their vines. So, their Perrières was virtually untouched by the frost and has quite a normal-sized crop in 2016, which was far from the norm in this vineyard in this vintage. The domaine started picking on September 24th in 2016, getting out into some vineyards that were perfectly ripe, with the teams out in all their parcels by the 26th. The use of whole clusters at Domaine Méo-Camuzet was a bit less in 2016 than had been the case in the last few vintages here, as all of the reds in our tasting lineup had been destemmed up to the point of the Nuits St. Georges “Boudots”, which included ten percent whole clusters. The wines were in varying stages of evolution in the cellars at the time of my visit, with a handful having been racked already, but the majority had not yet been racked and were still on their fine lees. Despite the vagaries caused by the frost, the vintage has turned out beautifully chez Méo in 2016 and this is, once again, a very, very successful vintage here.

Vins Rouges

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Méo Bourgogne rouge had been racked already and was really showing well at the time of my visit. The bouquet offers up a fine blend of red and black cherries, a touch of chocolate, a good base of soil and a whisper of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and nicely plump in the mid-palate, with ephemeral tannins and lovely focus and grip on the wide open and stylish finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **87.**

2016 Marsannay- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The frost damage in this village can be sensed a bit in the 2016 Marsannay from the domaine, as the wine seemed just a touch rustic structurally *vis à vis* virtually everything else in the cellars this year, and this is usually a very elegant rendition of Marsannay. The nose delivers scents of red and black cherries, spice tones, a bit of bonfire, roasted venison and soil. On the palate the wine is fullish, modestly tannic and a bit less refined structurally, with solid depth and pretty good length on the modestly tannic finish. This too had been racked, but was still a bit grumpier than the Bourgogne. 2018-2030. **87.**

2016 Fixin “Clos Chapitre”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Clos Chapitre *chez* Méo was showing very well at the time of my visit, with a bit more overt ripeness in personality than the Marsannay *villages*. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of black raspberries, cassis, dark soil tones, espresso and a nice touch of violet in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely forward in style, with a good core, soft tannins and fine length and grip on the really quite complex finish. This is showing very user-friendly right now, but may firm up a bit after its *mise*. A lovely wine. 2018-2035+. **89.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The domaine’s 2016 Nuits AC is really a refined and classy example of the vintage, offering up a fine aromatic constellation of plums, black cherries, nutskin, a lovely base of soil, gamebird, a hint of new oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very pure, with fine focus and grip, suave tannins and a long, focused and nascently complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2050. **90+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Vosne-Romanée from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is also an outstanding example of its level, offering up a very refined and vibrant bouquet of black raspberries, plums, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil, vanillin oak and a lovely topnote of fresh nutmeg. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely transparent in personality, with a fine core of fruit, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. Lovely. 2021-2050. **91.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “Premier Cru”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Chambolle “Premier Cru”, which hails from a blend of two of my favorite *terroirs* in the village, is really going to be outstanding. The bouquet is quite black fruity, offering up scents of dark berries, black cherries, bitter chocolate, a fine base of soil tones, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, lovey soil inflection, silky tannins and impressive length and grip on the vibrant finish. 2024-2060+. **92.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Perrières”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 20126 Nuits “Perrières” was really showing beautifully at the time of my visit to the domaine, offering up a pure and elegant bouquet of plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, nutskin, a lovely base of complex soil tones and a base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-

bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine core, lovely backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a long, balanced and nascently complex finish. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “aux Murgers”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Murgers *chez* Méo is going to be excellent as well, but it is a bit behind in its evolution right now and was still in the process of absorbing its new oak at the time of my visit. But, the depth of fruit here is exemplary and this was only a momentary phase. The bouquet is lovely and quite precise, delivering a fine blend of black cherries, black plums, dark chocolate, a complex base of soil, *pigeon* and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and tangy, with a lovely core, fine transparency, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, energetic and very promising finish. 2026-2065. **93.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “aux Boudots”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The Domaine Méo-Camuzet Boudots is flat out stunning in 2016 and this is one of the top premier crus in the cellar here this year. The bouquet is pure, complex and vibrant, soaring from the glass in a blend of sweet black cherries and plums, raw cocoa, a very complex base of soil, gamebird, violets and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with great soil signature, fine-grained tannins and outstanding focus and grip on the very long, complex and energetic finish. Really class Nuits. 2025-2075. **94.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Vosne “les Chaumes” is nicely black fruity in personality this year. The nose wafts from the glass in a youthful mix of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is fullish, focused and ripely tannic, with a good core, a tightly-knit personality and good length and grip on the well-balanced and youthful finish. This will be quite good with eight to ten years’ worth of bottle age. 2025-2060. **91+.**

2016 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

While my notes do not indicate whether or not the Méo Clos Vougeot parcels were frosted, they are beautifully located up near the château and this is the area which was hit, so I have to imagine that yields for this cuvée were down by at least half in 2016. The wine was in a similar stage to the Murgers at the time of my visit and still absorbing its new wood, of which eighty-five percent was new in 2016, but there was clearly a fine wine waiting to emerge once the wood had been integrated. The wine is quite black fruity in personality and reminded me stylistically quite a bit of the lovely 1993 version, offering up scents of black cherries, sweet dark berries, a fine base of soil, gamebird, a touch of Vosne spice and a generous serving of cedary new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and will be quite elegant at maturity, with a very good core and soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex and tangy finish. A fine example in the making. 2028-2065+. **92+.**

2016 Corton “Clos Rognet”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

There are six barrels of Clos Rognet this year in the Méo cellars, with one of the casks having been used previously. This was one of the first parcels picked by the harvesting team in 2016 and the wine has turned out beautifully, offering up lovely purity and precision on the nose of black plums, black cherries, venison, dark soil tones, chocolate, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite primary, with a rock solid core, beautiful focus and balance, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, vibrant and promising finish. These old vines can sometimes produce very broad-shouldered and powerful wines, but this year, the power is tailored Savile Row style and the wine will be a very elegant rendition- once it has had a chance to blossom from behind its fine structural chassis. 2029-2075+. **93+.**

2016 Corton “Perrière”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The parcel of vines in Perrière that Jean-Nicolas Méo works with here were planted in the late 1950s and are now really starting to get into a nice point in their productive lives. The 2016 version here is a classic Corton in the making, offering up a fine nose of black cherries, stony soil tones, venison, espresso, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite primary, with a rock solid core, beautiful structural elements, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, soil-driven and youthful finish. This too will be excellent Corton with sufficient bottle age. 2031-2075+. **93.**

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Echézeaux from Domaine Méo-Camuzet is outstanding and a very elegant example in the making. The bouquet is pure, refined and very precise, wafting from the glass in a blend of black raspberries, black cherries, dark soil tones, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, plenty of smokiness and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full and elegant, with a sappy core, a long, poised and seamless finish and lovely balance and grip on the focused, suavely tannic finish. Fine, fine juice. 2028-2075. **93+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Brûlées”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The two top Vosne premier crus are stunning *chez* Méo in 2016. The Brûlées is pure, complex and almost exotic in its aromatic constellation of black plums, black raspberries, a touch of mocha, beautiful soil nuances, Vosne spice and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with superb, nascent complexity, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus on the very long and vibrant finish. Great juice. 2026-2075. **94+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Cros Parantoux”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

Domaine Méo-Camuzet’s 2016 Cros Parantoux is going to be a reference point vintage for this great cuvée. The bouquet is pure, complex and already beautifully expressive and spicy, wafting from the glass in a refined mix of black raspberries, red plums, cinnamon, cloves, duck, lovely and quite complex minerality and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and vibrant, with a sappy core of fruit, stunning mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a very long, complete and vibrant finish. A great Cros Parantoux in the making. 2027-2075. **96.**

2016 Richebourg- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Richebourg *chez* Méo was a bit behind in its evolution from the two preceding wines and was still in the process of absorbing its new wood, but it is clear that this wine too is going to be stunning. The bouquet is superb, delivering a fine blend of red and black plums, raw cocoa, duck, a very refined base of soil, fresh nutmeg and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a fine core, tangy acids and impressive length and grip on the suavely-tannic, impeccably balanced finish. 2030-2080. **96+.**

Vins Blancs

2016 Bourgogne Haute Côte de Nuits Blanc “Clos St. Philibert”- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

The 2016 Clos St. Philibert was showing very well at the time of my visit, offering up a vibrant nose of lime, crab apple, chalky soil tones, dried flowers and a touch of fresh almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and zesty, with good backend mineral drive and fine length and grip. Good juice. 2018-2030. **89.**

2016 Saint Romain- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

This was one of the few examples I tasted from Saint Romain on my trip, and the parcels behind this cuvée were frosted in the spring of 2016. The wine has turned out very well despite

this, offering up a fine nose of tart orange, apple, wet stone minerality, a touch of straw and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and zesty, with good focus and grip and a long, well-balanced finish. A very good value. 2020-2030+. **89+**.

2016 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Méo-Camuzet

I do not know how to compare the quality of the two growers that Jean-Nicolas Méo had to exchange in this wine, as the customary supplier did not have grapes in 2016 because of the frost and the a new one was brought it, but the quality of the wine in 2016 suggests that the new producer is also doing very good farming here, as the wine has turned out beautifully. The bouquet offers up a superb mélange of pear, apple, hazelnuts, salty soil tones, a hint of the honeycomb to come and a deft framing of buttery oak. On the palate the wine is deep,. full-bodied, long and complex, with an excellent core of fruit, bright acids and excellent grip on the long and classy finish. 2020-2045. **94+**.



Autumn colors in the vines of Clos Vougeot, as seen from the entrance to the Château.

Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret (Vosne-Romanée)

I visited this domaine first in my swing of tasting trips to Burgundy, as I had a small tour group with me in the region at the end of October and after they had headed back to the US, I was able to visit and taste a significant portion of the 2016 lineup chez Mongeard on my last day of my October trip. The Mongeard family was hit very hard with frost damage in several of their vineyards, but fortunately, with vines spread from Beaune all the way to Fixin, in other of their

holdings, the yields were pretty close to a normal crop in 2016. The worst hit of all the Mongeard holdings were, of course, in Savigny-lès-Beaune and Pernand-Vergelesses, where they lost fully ninety percent of their potential crop to the frosts of late April. Their parcel in Beaune was also hard hit, and there was also extensive frost damage in their parcels in Grands Echézeaux, with seventy percent of the crop lost in this vineyard, as well as Echézeaux, which was also badly affected. Of the wines I tasted from the affected villages during my late October visit to the domaine, the Savignys seemed the most evidently traumatized by the frost damage, with the Echézeaux and Grands Echézeaux bottlings showing beautiful potential and clearly the biggest problem for the Mongeards with these two wines will be allocating their very short quantities to their regular clientele. Fortunately, other holdings were not affected anywhere near as badly, so for example, the domaine's superb example of Clos de Vougeot was only off by ten percent of a normal crop in 2016. I tasted at the domaine at the end of my October trip, rather than during my regular November stay in the region, as I was able to benefit from a larger range of samples having been prepared for their American importer, Danny Haas, the morning of my visit and it made hosting the tasting easier for the Mongeards and they were able to show several of their shortest-cropped wines as a result of our both being there on the same day. The style of several of the 2016 Mongeards reminded me quite strongly of their 1993s when I first tasted them back in the spring of 1995 at the domaine, with beautiful depth of black fruit, excellent soil signatures, a lovely structural chassis for each wine and excellent potential for the cellar. It will be interesting to see if the wines close up a bit behind their structures after bottling, as occurred with the 1993s, or if they will be a bit more flatteur out of the blocks than that earlier vintage. All in all, this is a very successful vintage at Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret and the only thing that is disappointing here is the short quantities of some of the crus.

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

The 2016 Savigny villages bottling from the Mongeards is usually a really fine example of the commune, but in this vintage, one can sense a bit of lost energy in the wine from the very extensive frost damage. It is still a very nice wine, but without the customary mid-palate depth and backend bounce one finds here in most vintages. The bouquet is a pretty and quite red fruity blend of cherries, quince, iron-like soil tones, venison and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is medium-full and nicely soil-driven, with modest tannins, okay depth in the mid-palate and a gentle, balanced finish. It will need a few years to blossom, and will be a pleasant dining companion during its couple of decades of productive life. 2020-2045. **87.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Narbantons”- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

Not surprisingly, the premier cru of Narbantons chez Mongeard shows quite a bit more depth at the core and better structure. The bouquet offers up a youthful blend of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, espresso, *pigeon* and a bit of cedary new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and still quite primary in profile, with a good core, moderate tannins and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This will be tasty with a bit of bottle age. 2025-2065. **90+.**

2016 Fixin- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

With the 2016 Fixin, one can clearly see the difference between villages affected by frost and those that were spared damage. This is really a very, very good example, jumping from the glass in a fine blend of cassis, black cherries, grilled meats, dark soil tones and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and quite suave on the attack, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, gently tannic and very tasty finish. This will drink very well

right out of the blocks and is a wine to keep an eye out for on well-stocked restaurant lists. A lovely AC. 2017-2035+. **89.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Plateau”- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

The *villages* bottlings of Nuits in the Mongeard-Mugneret cellars if very tasty this year. The nose wafts from the glass in a bright and classic blend of dark berries, black cherries, gamebird, dark soil tones and plenty of early smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely suave on the attack, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and very good length and grip on the focused finish. Good juice. 2021-2050+. **90+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

As I noted in the introduction, one of the anomalies of the 2016 frosts was that they hit the vineyards up on the slopes, rather than those down on the flats, so several *villages* level parcels were completely spared, while the premier and grand crus above them were decimated. As a result, the Mongeards’ Vosne AC is a lovely wine in 2016, offering up a fine bouquet of black cherries, cassis, espresso, Vosne spice tones, gamebirds, dark soil and a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite black fruity in personality, with a very good core, suave tannins and impressive length and grip on the well-balanced finish. A very fine example in the making. 2020-2045+. **90.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée “en Orveaux”- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

The premier cru of en Orveaux is one of the few wines in the Mongeard collections of 2016s that is quite red fruity in personality this year. The bouquet is quite a bit more reserved than in the wines that preceded it in our tasting, offering up a youthful aromatic blend of cherries, raspberries, a touch of orange peel, iron-like soil tones, bonfire, cedar and venison. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, closed and elegant in profile, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and very good focus and grip on the long and primary finish. This will need some time in the cellar to properly blossom, but it should prove to be excellent. 2026-2060+. **92.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Boudots”- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

In contrast to the youthfully reticent en Orveaux bottling, the 2016 Boudots was absolutely singing at the time of my visit and this is very clearly an outstanding vintage for this cru *chez* Mongeard. The bouquet is deep, pure and nascently complex, wafting from the glass in a mix of black plums, sweet dark berries, a touch of toasted almond, bitter chocolate, gamebird, lovely soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and complex, with a lovely core of black fruit, impressive focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a very long, vibrant finish. *Chapeau!* 2023-2075. **93.**

2016 Clos de Vougeot- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

This will be the easiest of the 2016 grand crus from the Mongeards to find in the market this year and it will be a fine addition to any well-stocked Burgundy cellar. The bouquet is pure, youthfully complex and focused, offering up a lovely mélange of black cherries, black plums, venison, complex soil tones, espresso, bonfires and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off excellent mid-palate depth, with ripe, well-integrated tannins, excellent focus and balance and a long, pure and nicely structured finish. Fine, fine juice in the making. 2029-2075+. **93+.**

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

The 2016 Echézeaux from Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret is another superb bottle in the making. The excellent nose wafts from the glass in a constellation of cassis, dark berries, espresso, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a fine core, ripe, well-integrated tannins and

impressive length and grip on the well-balanced and very promising finish. This is very 1993-like in personality. 2030-2080. **94+**.

2016 Grands Echézeaux- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

The 2016 Grands Echézeaux from the Mongeard family was a bit behind its siblings in terms of development, with the new oak component here not yet as well integrated into the body of the wine as some of these other grand crus, but its overall potential was self-evident. The bouquet will be outstanding in the fullness of time, as today it offers up scents of dark berries, black plums, duck, a complex base of soil, dark chocolate and smoky new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full and rock solid at the core, with impressive complexity, fine-grained tannins, bright acids and outstanding length and grip on the pure and elegant finish. All this excellent wine needs is bottle age, but it will be a tough wine to find in the market, with seventy percent of the crop having been lost to frost damage. 2030-2080. **95+**.

2016 Richebourg- Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret

This too is very, very 1993-like out of the blocks this year and will be one of the very best examples of this *terroir* to be found in the vintage. The bouquet is very black fruity and outstanding, delivering a superb constellation of black plums, cassis, bitter chocolate, venison, gorgeously complex soil tones, woodsmoke and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and focused, with outstanding mid-palate depth, suave, ripe tannins, exceptional focus and grip and a very, very long, nascently complex and compelling finish. Great juice. 2030-2085+. **96+**.

Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg (Vosne-Romanée)

The Mugneret sisters have made absolutely beautiful wines in 2016, but of course, this is nothing new here, as Domaine Mugneret-Gibourg has been one of the most consistently excellent estates in all of the Côte d'Or in the new millennium. The domaine was hit quite hard by the frosts of 2016 and their overall production was down by fifty percent in this vintage, but as their parcels are spread out over four villages, not every vineyard was affected to the same degree and in fact, a couple pretty much avoided frost damage at all in this vintage. For example in Nuits St. Georges, their parcel in the premier cru of Vignes Rondes was barely touched, and their superb holdings in Ruchottes-Chambertin saw no frost whatsoever. However, they were not that lucky in some of their other holdings, as their parcel of Feusselottes was devastated and there will only be a single cask of the wine produced in 2016, which may or may not ever be made commercially available. Their Bourgogne was also decimated, so there will only be three casks of this wine in this vintage, and vineyards such as Chaignots, Echézeaux and Clos Vougeot (all down anywhere from thirty-five to fifty percent) will be hard to find in 2016. However, the wines have turned out beautifully and very much in their customary character in this vintage, with the possible exception of the Chaignots, which was down nearly forty percent and seemed a bit atypically powerful in personality than in most vintages, where it is always the more elegant of the two Nuits premier crus out of the blocks here. The wine is more flamboyant in its sappy beauty this year, rather than the suave, understated gentleman of Nuits that it is in most vintages, but still excellent in quality. The remainder of the 2016s chez Mugneret are flat out stunning and this is another great vintage for the Mugneret sisters! The cellar of 2016s was racked in July of 2017 and the wines were showing beautifully in mid-November. The domaine had some good news for 2017 as well, beyond the return to normal crop levels, as the long-standing mettayage agreement with Fabrice Vigot expired after the harvest of 2016, so the domaine will get back a

bit more production in Bourgogne, Nuits “Vieilles Vignes”, Vosne-Romanée AC and Echézeaux starting in the 2017 vintage, which will make fans of the domaine very happy indeed!

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The frost damage in their Bourgogne parcels was so extensive that the Mugnerets have only produced three barrels of Bourgogne this year, as the yields were twelve hectoliters per hectare! The wine is truly a beautiful example, as it jumps from the glass in a very classy blend of red and black cherries, plums, dark chocolate, a nice base of soil and just a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is medium-full, pure and juicy, with a good core and a nice touch of tannin on the long and well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2018-2030+. **88.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

There was only a bit of frost damage in the Vosne *villages* parcels from the Mugnerets, so their crop was only reduced by about twenty percent in 2016. The wine has turned out beautifully offering up a pure and refined bouquet of red plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a beautiful base of soil, a touch of fresh nutmeg and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and elegant, with a fine core of fruit, vibrant acids and lovely focus and grip on the suavely-tannic and classy finish. 2021-2050+. **90+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Chaignots”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

As the vineyard of Chaignots lies on the Vosne side of Nuits St. Georges, it was spared the worst of the frost, but the crop here was still down thirty-five to forty percent in 2016. The wine is outstanding, with the nose wafting from the glass in a complex blend of cherries, pomegranate, a touch of nutskin, gamebird, lovely soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely plush on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, ripe tannins and a long, fairly powerful and potentially flamboyant finish. This will need eight to ten years of bottle age to really blossom and should age long and gracefully. 2024-2065. **91+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Vignes Rondes”- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The 2016 Vignes Rondes from Domaine Mugneret-Gibourg has really taken nicely to the inherent elegance of the vintage and this may well be the finest young vintage of this cuvée that I have ever tasted here. Normally, Vignes Rondes can be a tad rustic out of the blocks, but not so in 2016, where the wine offers up a beautiful bouquet of cherries, red plums, a touch of nutskin, gamebird, a dollop of Vosne-like spices, beautiful soil tones and a deft framing of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and soil-driven in personality, with a lovely core of fruit, fine-grained tannins and a long, complex and tangy finish. There was virtually no frost here in 2016. Really a suave and polished bottle of Nuits! 2026-2065. **92.**

2016 Ruchottes-Chambertin- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

There was no frost damage at all in the vineyard of Ruchottes-Chambertin in 2016. The wine is beautiful and will be a classic in the fullness of time, as it offers up a perfumed bouquet of red and black cherries, a nice touch of blood orange, gamebird, complex soil tones, a whisper of mustard seed, cedar and a topnote of gentle spiciness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully transparent, with a sappy core of fruit, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and ripely tannic finish that delivers beautiful purity and elegance. 2028-2075. **95+.**

2016 Clos Vougeot- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The Mugnerets have parcels in Clos Vougeot right up at the top of the vineyard, close to the château, which is usually considered the best location in the vineyard, but in 2016, this is where the frost damage was the most extensive. Consequently, their production here was down

thirty-five to forty percent from a normal crop. The wine is outstanding and very red fruity in profile this year, delivering a fine nose of red plums, red and black cherries, gamebird, a touch of nutskin, cocoa powder, a very complex base of soil tones, roses and a bit of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a great core of fruit, impeccable balance and a very long, very complex and ripely tannic finish. 2030-2075. **96.**

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Mugneret-Gibourg

The Mugneret sisters lost fully half of their crop in Echézeaux in 2016. The wine itself is absolutely stunning, soaring from the glass in a great aromatic constellation of plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, beautiful spice tones, gentle smokiness, duck, dark soil elements, violets and cedary wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and concentrated, with ripe, seamless tannins, great focus and balance and a very long, refined and complex finish. A great bottle of Echézeaux in the making. 2030-2080. **96.**



Whose that knocking at the door? Christine and Marie-Andrée Mugneret.

Domaine Georges Noëllat (Vosne-Romanée)

Maxime Cheurlin's range of 2016s were some of the slowest with their malos in the entire Côte d'Or, so for example, the Nuits AC and Vosne "Chaumes" had just finished their malos, the Echézeaux was just about complete, the Nuits "Boudots" was only halfway through and the Gevrey "Fontenys" was just starting at the time of my visit in mid-November! Needless to say, the wines that were still in malolactic or just finishing up were difficult to taste, but the

wines that had finished their malos over the summer were showing so beautifully that it is impossible not to come to a conclusion that Monsieur Cheurlin has made outstanding wines in 2016 and one simply needs to wait for their elevage to take its course. Given how “all over the place” the wines were showing here at the time of my tasting, depending on when they had finished or started their malos, I have scored wines that had just finished up their malolactic fermentations in a range and not scored those that were still in malo, though I am sure that everything here is going to prove to be outstanding. In terms of the frost damage of 2016, Maxime Cheurlin counted himself pretty fortunate, for though he was down significantly in Echézeaux (there will only be a single cask in this vintage) and was frosted a bit in Grands Echézeaux, he was pretty much untouched in his Vosne and Nuits premier crus. The Chambolle “Feusselottes” cuvée that he produced for the first time in 2015 was not made in 2016, as this parcel was very heavily frosted, but otherwise, quantities of most cuvées here were close to correct. As I mentioned last year, there are a couple more new wines in the cellars in 2016, as Monsieur Cheurlin has contracted to buy grapes from a couple of plots of vines in Gevrey-Chambertin, as well as a Beaune “Premier Cru” bottling that is also new this year. The wines made from purchased grapes are to be labeled under “Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat”. The small parcel of Feusselottes that Maxime produced wine from in 2015 was wiped out by frost in 2016, so it will not be back in the lineup until 2017. Last year, I tasted a Gevrey-Chambertin “en Champs” bottling that was to be blended in 2016 with a parcel in the lieu à dit of en Echézeaux to bring the Gevrey AC bottling up to ten casks. However, I am not sure if the en Champs parcel was hit by frost or not in 2016, but I only tasted the Gevrey “en Echézeaux” villages on this visit and do not know if they will still be blended, or if only the latter will be produced in 2016. If my time during the spring trip, and Monsieur Cheurlin, allow, I will try to drop around the domaine again and taste the 2016s again in the spring and get proper notes on the wines for part two of the 2016 Burgundy vintage report.

2016 Bourgogne- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The malo was finished fairly early on the Bourgogne rouge 2016 and the wine was showing very well at the time of my visit. The nose is nicely red fruity, offering up scents of cherries, raspberries, woodsmoke, a nice base of soil and just a touch of oak. On the palate the wine is medium-full, suave and quite elegant for its level, with a solid core and good length and grip on the wide open and tasty finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Côte de Nuits Villages- Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat

The vines for the Côte de Nuits Villages bottling here are in Comblanchien and this wine was not quite as on form as the Bourgogne rouge, which made me think that its malo was a bit later to complete. The wine is pretty, but currently showing just a touch gentle in structure, offering up a very pretty nose of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird and dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, long and fairly complex, with fine transparency, modest tannins and good length on the finish. If this starts to show a bit more structure as it evolves in cask, it will merit a score at the top of the range. 2018-2030+? **88-89+?**

2016 Nuits St. Georges- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Nuits AC had just completed its malo at the time of my visit on the 10th of November, so the wine was not all that happy about being tasted. There is plenty of depth and nascent complexity evident on the nose, which offers up scents of black cherries, dark berries, venison, a fine base of soil, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, long and potentially quite refined, with a good core, moderate tannins and good grip on the

finish. This should settle in nicely over the coming weeks and prove to be very good. 2020-2040. **89-90+**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Vosne *villages* had finished up malo earlier and was absolutely singing at the time of my visit. The bouquet is pure, sappy and elegant, delivering a fine blend of raspberries, red plums, duck, Vosne spice tones, a lovely base of soil and cedar. On the palate the wine is fullish, suave on the attack and sappy at the core, with beautiful balance and grip, fine backend mineral drive, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. This is a lovely village wine. 2020-2040. **90+**.

2016 Beaune “Premier Cru”- Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat

I did not note which premier cru or crus this bottling hails from, but it is going to be quite good and a welcome addition to the lineup *chez* Cheurlin. This wine was showing fairly well at the time of my visit, but to my palate, it still seemed to be making the transition from its easy-going point of evolution to one with a bit more structure and bounce, as it was still a bit soft-centered. The nose here is really lovely, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, gamebird, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and well-balanced, with a sappy core, good soil signature and suave tannins on the velvety and laid back finish. This is not showing a ton of backend energy right now, but my gut instinct is that this is simply the phase it is going through right now and the wine will be excellent. 2002-2045+. **89-91+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “en Echézeaux”- Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat

This new addition to the lineup here was still finishing up its malo and not very easy to taste, but there is good material here and I suspect this is going to be very good. The nose shows notes of red and black cherries, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil, a touch of meatiness and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full, long and ripely tannic, with a good core and fine length and grip. There is still a bit of backend coarseness here from the malo, but this should be very good. 2022-2050. **89-90+**.

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin “Fontenys”- Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat

The Fontenys 2016 was just starting its malolactic fermentation and it was not possible for me to take a proper note on the wine. I look forward to trying it in the future.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Chaumes”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

Like the Gevrey “en Echézeaux”, the malo for the les Chaumes 2016 was just finishing up at the time of my visit. The nose offers up lovely depth in its blend of red plums, black cherries, a fine base of soil, gamebird, gentle smokiness and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a good core, moderate tannins and fine length and grip on the balanced and nicely focused finish. I am sure this will be lovely. 2024-2055+. **90-92**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Petits Monts from Maxime Cheurlin was also just at the tail end of its malo or had just finished up, but it was tasting pretty well and easy to see that this is going to be superb. The nose offers up a refined blend of black cherries, black raspberries, a fine base of minerality, duck, dark soil tones and nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and sappy at the core, with excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. This will be excellent. 2024-2060. **92-94**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “aux Cras”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Nuits “aux Cras” from Domaine Noëllat was really showing well at the time of my visit and I assume this was one of the first to finish up its malo this year. The bouquet is very pure and sappy, offering up a refined constellation of plums, black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and a nice touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a superb core, lovely soil signature, fine-grained tannin and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Fine juice. 2026-2060+. **93.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Boudots”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Boudots was only halfway through its malolactic fermentation at the time of my visit and so, impossible for me to take a precise note. The wine has lovely fruit and soil tones, plenty of sappiness at the core and good balance, so I am sure it will be excellent.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “les Beaux Monts”- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Beaux Monts was one of the first wines to finish its malo in the cellars this year, having completed this in July, and the wine was in beautiful form at the time of my visit. The bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, offering up a fine blend of black cherries, black raspberries, dark chocolate, venison, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and loaded with pure fruit at the core, with excellent transparency, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, complex and vibrant finish. A beautiful example in the making. 2026-2060+. **93.**

2016 Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Echézeaux from Monsieur Cheurlin had just about finished its malo and was clearly going to be a superb example. The nose jumps from the glass in a fine blend of raspberries, black cherries, *pigeon*, a complex signature of dark soil, Vosne spices, raw cocoa and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, rock solid and soil-driven, with fine-grained tannins, excellent focus and grip and outstanding backend mineral drive on the long and complex finish. This will be outstanding. 2026-2075. **94-95.**

2016 Grands Echézeaux- Domaine Georges Noëllat

The 2016 Grands Echézeaux was a bit behind the Echézeaux in terms of evolution in cask and a bit harder to take a proper note on, but this too is close to settling in and will be very good. The nose is already quite refined, offering up scents of red and black raspberries, roasted game, chocolate, a complex base of soil, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and sappy at the core, with fine soil signature, ripe tannins and a long, promising finish. This has fine potential, but was still several weeks away from settling in post-malo and showing its true colors. 2026-2075. **94-95+.**

2016 Meursault “les Cras”- Maxime Cheurlin-Noëllat

The new Meursault bottling from Maxime Cheurlin had also just completed its malo at the time of my visit, but showed good promise. The nose is a fine blend of peach, crab apple, chalky soil tones, hazelnut, beeswax and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, long and juicy, with good underlying acids and fine length and grip, though the balance was still a bit cranky from the recently completed malo. I am sure this will be very tasty, but it was too grumpy to get a precise read on at the time of my visit. 2018-2030+? **89-92.**

Nuits St. Georges

Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils (Nuits St. Georges)

Bertrand Chevillon was very happy to have a full cellar of 2017s in cask at the time of my visit to taste the 2016s in mid-November, as the domaine was hit very hard by the frosts of April and there is simply not a lot of wine here in the 2016 vintage. The wines have turned out brilliantly, which Monsieur Chevillon chuckled about when we were tasting them together, commenting that “they have really turned into good wines- too bad we have so little this year!” The malolactic fermentations for the 2016s chez Chevillon were “normal” according to Bertrand, with the earliest finishing up in late February of 2017 and the majority of the premier crus wrapping up their secondary fermentations in late May and early June. The quantities are not pretty in 2016, with, for example, the cuvées of Chaignots and Boussselots both down sixty percent, and most other premier crus here affected similarly. If you will recall from the introduction, the band of premier cru vineyards to the south of Nuits St. Georges were very heavily frosted, while those to the north of the center of town were barely touched. Unfortunately for the Chevillon family, their great lineup of premier crus is from that band just to the south of the village center. However, all of the wines are really, really refined this year, with plenty of sappy and very pure fruit, beautiful typicité and suave, velvety structures that will allow them to probably drink fairly well from an early age. The possibility exists that the wines will firm up and close down for a while once they are bottled, but they were really hard to spit at the time of my visit, as they were already showing so beautifully! Many of the wines were quite black fruity in profile this year, but all pure and just loaded with perfectly ripe fruit tones, and the underlying soil signature of each wine is a very classic expression of its respective terroir. The inherent elegance of the 2016 vintage is very much on display in this superb range of wines chez Chevillon and it is quite clear that this is a top, top vintage for the domaine. To echo Monsieur Chevillon, it is just too bad there will not be more bottles to go around for a thirsty world!

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 Vieilles Vignes is a beautiful wine and very black fruity in personality this year. The nose jumps from the glass in a classy blend of black cherries, dark berries, bitter chocolate, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and sappy at the core, with lovely soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and fine length and grip on the focused and complex finish. Lovely villages. 2023-2060. **90+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Chaignots”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 Chaignots chez Chevillon has turned out brilliantly this year and is one of the best young vintages of this cuvée that I have tasted in several years. The bouquet is pure and simply stunning, delivering a marvelous blend of sappy plums and black cherries, raw cocoa, a superb base of soil tones, *pigeon* and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core, great backend mineral drive, suave tannins and a long, focused and perfectly balanced finish. A stunning young Nuits. 2024-2065. **93**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Boussselots”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The Boussselots 2016 is again, quite black fruity this year, as well as very sappy and pure. The bouquet delivers a superb blend of cherries, dark berries, dark chocolate, woodsmoke, violets, complex soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant on the attack, with a sappy core, ripe tannins and excellent length and grip on the very well-balanced finish. Fine, fine juice. 2023-2065. **92+**.



Bertrand Chevillon at the domaine in Nuits St. Georges.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Roncières”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 Roncières from Domaine Chevillon is every bit as brilliant as the Chaignots this year, but it is a tad more reserved in personality and will need a bit more time in the cellar to blossom fully. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a stellar blend of red and black raspberries, black cherries, bitter chocolate, a fine base of soil, vanillin oak and an exotic topnote of eucalyptus. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with great focus and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, very, very promising finish. Great juice. 2025-2065. **93.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Perrières”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 Perrières from Bertrand Chevillon is another outstanding wine in the making. This is utterly classic, offering up a beautiful aromatic synthesis of red and black fruit tones, stony soil elements, raw cocoa, gamebird, nutskin and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core of fruit, fine-grained tannins and a very long, vibrant and soil-driven finish. Gorgeous wine in the making. 2026-2065+. **93+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Pruliers”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The inherent elegance of the 2016 vintage is very much in evidence in this stunning young Pruliers. This is a *terroir* that can often take a decade or two in bottle for the elegance here to arrive, but the 2016 version from Domaine Chevillon already shows extraordinary refinement. The bouquet delivers a superb constellation of sappy black plums and black cherries, gamebird, dark chocolate, violets, dark soil tones and vanillin oak. This will get very black truffley as it

ages. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, excellent acids and focus, ripe tannins and a very long, complex and soil-driven finish. A great vintage of Pruliers. 2026-2070+. **94+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Cailles”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 les Cailles from the Chevillon family is another superb wine in the making. This is a bit more reserved on the nose than most of these other premier crus, but deep down, it shares the same sappy expression of fruit wedded to great soil signature. The nose offers up a very pure blend of black cherries, plums, a whisper of blood orange, gamebird, complex soil tones, woodsmoke, raw cocoa, violets and vanillin oak. With air, an overt topnote of hazelnuts also emerges from the glass. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully soil-driven in personality, with great depth at the core, ripe, fine-grained tannins and beautiful focus and grip on the very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. A *tour de force*. 2028-2075+. **94+**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Les St. Georges”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

Bertrand Chevillon’s 2016 Les St. Georges has to be one of the wines of the vintage this year! The stunningly pure and sappy nose jumps from the glass in a blaze of black cherries, plums, sweet dark berries, a complex base of minerality, bitter chocolate, *pigeon*, woodsmoke, violets and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure and silky already on the attack, with a sappy core, great backend mineral drive, suave tannins and great length and grip on the complex and utterly refined finish. Brilliant juice. 2029-2080+. **96**.

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Vaucrains”- Domaine Robert Chevillon et Fils

The 2016 Vaucrains is surprisingly red fruity this year- particularly given how black fruity several of the other crus here that often show a lot of red fruit have turned out in this vintage. The wine is stellar, offering up a very precise and promising bouquet of cherries, red plums, gamebird, a great base of soil, lavender, woodsmoke and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a sappy core of fruit, stunning backend mineral drive, ripe, fine-grained tannins and a very long, properly reserved finish. This will be a great vintage of Vaucrains. 2030-2085+. **95**.

Domaine Henri Gouges (Nuits St. Georges)

Grégory Gouges was in good spirits at the time of my mid-November visit, despite the domaine having lost fully seventy percent of its production to the frost damage and the mildew pressure in 2016. The good solid quantity provided by the 2017 vintage certainly helped in this regard. As Grégory mentioned about his 2016s, “these days, we want to be very strict with what we put into our cuvées, so despite the already very short crop, we were careful with selection at the time of harvest and sorted pretty aggressively to make sure only pristine fruit went into the fermenters.” Not surprisingly, the southern premier crus here were the worst hit by the frost, with the whole band averaging only sixteen hectoliters per hectare and Les St. Georges the shortest crop of all, with only twelve hectoliters per hectare realized in 2016. Both Clos des Porrets and Pruliers were down by fifty percent from normal yields, and the domaine decided to not produce any Chaignots or Chaines Carteaux this year, opting to use the small number of bunches in these two premier cru vineyards to flesh out the size of their Nuits AC bottling, which has become a workhorse wine for Domaine Gouges in the last five to ten years and is now an important item on many well-stocked wine lists in the France. As has been the case chez Gouges for many years now, the 2016 range here is amongst the finest to be found anywhere in the Côte d’Or in this vintage and the wines will be outstanding with sufficient bottle age.

2016 Bourgogne- Domaine Henri Gouges

The Domaine Gouges 2016 Bourgogne *rouge* is another excellent example of this level in this vintage. The wine offers up a lovely nose of black cherries, cassis, dark chocolate, a fine base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and well-balanced, with lovely length and grip and impressive backend tension between the fruit, soil and acidity. Fine Bourgogne. 2019-2030+. **88.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2016 Nuits AC had just been racked the day before my visit and had its SO2 adjusted a touch as well, and yet the wine was in good form and easy to taste! The bouquet is deep and quite sappy this year (perhaps from the addition of some Chaignots?), jumping from the glass in a lovely mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, woodsmoke, venison, dark soil tones and raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fine focus and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and a long, vibrant and tangy finish. Fine, fine AC. 2024-2060+. **91.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Clos des Porrets”- Domaine Henri Gouges

Clos des Porrets is always the most red fruity of the Gouges family’s premier crus when it is ready to drink, but in many vintages, it can start out life quite black fruity and this is certainly the case with this very promising 2016. The nose wafts from the glass in a lovely mix of cassis, dark berries, bitter chocolate, gamebird, a fine base of soil and a nice touch of violets in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and still quite primary in profile, with a rock solid core of sappy fruit, superb backend mineral drive and outstanding focus and grip on the ripely tannic and very well-balanced finish. This will be superb with a decade’s worth of bottle age. 2026-2075. **93.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Pruliers”- Domaine Henri Gouges

As was the case with the superb 2016 Pruliers that I tasted with Bertrand Chevillon, Grégory Gouges’ example is going to be a very, very elegant interpretation of this superb premier cru vineyard. The bouquet here is pure and classy, offering up scents of sweet dark berries, black plums, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, dark soil tones and a hint of cola in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully sappy at the core, with fine transparency, suave, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and outstanding focus and grip on the very long and nascently complex finish. Great juice. 2026-2075. **93+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “les Vaucrains”- Domaine Henri Gouges

In most vintages, there is a very nice row of barrels of Vaucrains in the Gouges cellars, but with the microscopic yields of 2016, there are only five casks here this year. This is a shame, as this wine is stunning, soaring from the glass in a complex mélange of red and black cherries, cassis, woodsmoke, bitter chocolate, lovely minerality and a gently floral topnote redolent of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with a very soil-driven in personality, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a very long, very pure and promising finish. Just add time! 2030-2080+. **94+.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges “Les St. Georges”- Domaine Henri Gouges

The 2016 Les St. Georges from the Gouges family was a bit more hunkered down at the time of my visit, but seemed to be a bit richer and more powerful in personality this year than the classically styled Vaucrains. The bouquet is all black fruit and soil, offering up scents of dark berries, black cherries, roasted *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, a hint of chicory and a nice dollop of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent, with a rock solid core, ripe tannins and a very long, primary and well-balanced finish. It may just be the stage that the Les St. Georges is in at the present time, but this seems

likely to be a bit more muscular and broad-shouldered in 2016 than any of these other premier crus *chez* Gouges, and I am not sure it will be able to quite match the stunning precision of the Vaucrains in the long run. Time will tell. 2032-2080+. **94.**



Savigny-lès-Beaune

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

The crop at Domaine Simon Bize et Fils was also very, very small in 2016, so that I did not taste the entire range of what is normally produced here. Chisa Bize was not able to make several of the customary cuvées in the domaine's lineup because of the catastrophic frost damage of 2016. There is no Bourgogne "Perrières" of either color in 2016 and the Savigny "les Bourgeots" bottling was down by fully eighty percent. Amongst the Savigny premier crus, Chisa did not produce any Serpentières, Guettes or les Talmettes, as I assume the very small quantities of bunches that the picking teams could glean from these heavily-frosted vineyards went into the Savigny villages bottling. There is also no commercial release of Corton-Charlemagne this year as well, due to the lack of enough bunches to make a proper cuvée. While I did not write down the actual percentage of a normal crop that was lost here in 2016, I have to assume that this is another top Savigny producer whose crop level is down at least seventy-five to eighty percent in 2016. In a cruel twist of fate, the only Côte de Nuits bottling produced by the domaine, their excellent Latricières-Chambertin, was one of the few vineyards in Gevrey-Chambertin that was also heavily frosted, so the quantity here is down dramatically as well and I

did not ask to taste the wine at the time of my visit. As is customary at the time of my November visit, the 2016s chez Bize had been assembled in tank for bottling in the spring. The range was very high in quality, which does not take the sting out of the domaine having so little wine to sell in this vintage, but at least the 2017 crop was generous and the cellars will be full next year.

Vins Blancs de Simon Bize et Fils

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2016 Savigny Blanc was showing beautifully on the palate at the time of my visit, but the nose was still a bit grumpy from its racking into tank a few weeks prior to my tasting the wine. The bouquet reluctantly offers up scents of apple, pear, fresh almond, chalky soil tones and a topnote of gentle smokiness. On the palate the wine was absolutely singing, with its full-bodied format showing great cut and focus, a lovely core and impressive length and grip on the transparent and vibrant finish. I am sure this will be excellent. 2018-2028. **90.**

Vins Rouges de Simon Bize et Fils

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Bourgeots”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The production level for the Savigny *villages* bottling of les Bourgeots from Domaine Simon Bize was off by eighty percent due to frost damage, but the wine that has resulted is flat out stunning. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic blend of black cherries, cassis, venison, Savigny spice elements, espresso and a fine base of stony soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and sappy at the core, with fine-grained tannins and a very long, focused and vibrant finish. Great *villages*! 2022-2055+. **91+.**

2016 Aloxe-Corton- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The Domaine Bize 2016 Aloxe *villages* is also a very good example of the vintage, offering up a very suave bouquet of red and black cherries, gamebird, chocolate, lovely soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and already generous on the attack, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic and very nicely balanced finish. 2021-2045. **90.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Grands Liards”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The Simon Bize 2016 Grand Liards is a bit more reserved in profile than the les Bourgeots, but every bit as promising. The nose wafts from the glass in a youthful blend of cassis, bitter chocolate, roasted game, Savigny spices, stony soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, chewy, soil-driven and well-balanced finish. This will need some time, but will be excellent once it has blossomed properly. 2024-2060. **91+.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Fournaux”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

There are not going to be large quantities of the Domaine Bize Fournaux in 2016, but the wine is going to be excellent and will be worth a special search to locate. The bouquet is pure, young and classic in profile, offering up scents of red and black currants, *pigeon*, a fine base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke, espresso and lovely touch of Savigny spices in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and potentially very elegant in profile, with a lovely core, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, focused and very promising finish. 2025-2065. **93.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Vergelesses”- Domaine Simon Bize et Fils

The 2016 les Vergelesses is another simply outstanding wine in the making *chez Bize*. The excellent bouquet is still quite properly youthful in profile, but shows off lovely purity and

depth in its aromatic constellation of sweet dark berries, currants, roasted game, espresso, dark soil tones and a nice touch of bonfire. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with outstanding soil signature, fine focus and grip, ripe, seamless tannins and a very long, tangy and nascently complex finish. This is always the longest-lived of the premier crus here and the 2016 les Vergelesses is going to be a very special bottle of Savigny in the fullness of time. 2027-2070. **94.**

Domaine Camus-Bruchon (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

Guillaume Camus' production was down eighty percent in 2016, as the frost hit his vineyards as hard as anyone in Savigny. There is no Savigny Blanc at all in this vintage, as the vineyard was completely wiped out by frost damage, and there is no Gravaains or Pommard Arvelets as well in 2016. For the wines that Guillaume was able to produce, there are some very small quantities, as for example, there is only a single cask of les Lavières (normally there are eight barrels here) and only one barrel of Beaune "Clos du Roi" as well. Seventy percent of his crop in Narbantons was lost and his two, old vine, villages level bottlings of Pimentiers and Grands Liards were both off by fifty percent, though Guillaume noted that with both parcels over ninety years of age, the yields are always fairly short, but more consistent from year to year than is the case with younger vines. The only parcels that were relatively free of frost damage for the estate were their Bourgogne plots of vines. Given the very small sizes of several of the cuvées here, Monsieur Camus decided to use no new oak in 2016, preferring to substitute "one wine barrels" where he might have used a bit of new oak in a regular year. Despite the very short crop in 2016, the wines are very, very fine and quite classically balanced in profile, with excellent depth of fruit and soil signatures, coupled to suave, seamless structures that promise outstanding evolution in bottle. Unlike some domaines, where the most severely frost-damaged parcels produced wines without the same structural elegance as wines from parcels less hard hit by frost, the entire range at Domaine Camus-Bruchon is suave, refined and utterly classical in personality. These are great wines in the making. Guillaume Camus is one of the most talented young vignerons in all of the Côte d'Or and his 2016s will be a very worthy addition to any well-stocked Burgundy collection, if you can find some bottles!

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2016 vintage has really produced a strong set of Bourgogne rouge bottlings and the 2016 version *chez* Camus is an excellent example. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely and red fruity blend of cherries, currants, a fine base of soil, gentle smokiness and a nice touch of Savigny spice tones. On the palate the wine is fullish, focused and nicely soil-driven in personality, with just a touch of backend tannin and lovely length and grip on the well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2018-2030. **89.**

2016 Chorey-lès-Beaune- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2016 Chorey-lès-Beaune was also off by fifty percent *chez* Camus, but the wine shows no ill effects from the frost damage and is really a superb example. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of cherries, red currants, a nice touch of gamebird, lovely soil tones and a touch of orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impressively transparent in personality, with a fine core, modest tannins and a long, juicy and quite complex finish. A lovely Chorey! 2019-2040+. **90.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Cuvée Reine Joly”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2016 Cuvée Reine Joly is very strong this year, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird, Savigny spices and a nice topnote of red currant. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows excellent mid-palate depth, with lovely focus and nascent complexity, ripe, suave tannins and a long, tangy and very promising finish. Fine juice in the making. 2023-2060. **90+**.

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Pimentiers” Vieilles Vignes- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The old vines in Pimentiers have turned out a very red fruity and mineral example in 2016 and the wine is going to be simply outstanding. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of red currants, cherries, violets, stony minerality, *pigeon* and a smoky topnote redolent of bonfires. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very transparent in profile, with an excellent core of fruit, fine-grained tannins and excellent bounce and backend energy on the long and very well-balanced finish. 2023-2060. **92+**.

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Grands Liards” V. V.- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The old vines in Grands Liards were also down fifty percent in 2016, but like the Pimentiers, they have turned out a very, very strong example of the vintage. The wine offers up a lovely bouquet of black raspberries, cherries, bitter chocolate, a fine base of minerality and a topnote of Savigny spices. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with excellent complexity, a fine core, ripe tannins and very impressive backend mineral drive on the long, poised and balanced finish. 2023-2060. **92+**.

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Lavières”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

Guillaume Camus used one third whole clusters in his 2016 les Lavières and the wine was raised in a one wine barrel this year. The wine is really very classic and elegant on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet delivering scents of cherries, red plums, violets, raw cocoa, gamebird and a complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and elegant, with lovely interplay of soil, fruit and acidity on the long, suavely tannic and focused finish. This is a beautiful bottle in the making. 2025-2065. **93+**.

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “Narbantons” Vieilles Vignes- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

The 2016 Narbantons *chez* Camus is an absolute classic in the making. The first class bouquet offers up scents of cherries, red currants, spice tones, a touch of orange zest, roasted gamebird, cocoa, gentle smokiness and an exotic touch of eucalyptus in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and more reserved in profile than the les Lavières, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins and a very long, focused and nascently complex finish. Just add a bit of patience and *voilà!* 2025-2065. **93+**.

2016 Beaune “Clos du Roi”- Domaine Camus-Bruchon

Despite there only being a single cask of Clos du Roi in the Camus-Bruchon cellars this year, the wine has turned out absolutely classical in personality and shows no adverse influence from the severe frost damage in 2016. The bouquet is beautifully expressive, jumping from the glass in a blaze of red plums, cherries, raw cocoa, a fine base of soil, violets and a touch of gamebird. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully soil-driven in profile, with a sappy core of fruit, suave, refined tannins, lovely acids and a long, focused and complex finish that closes with lovely bounce and grip. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2060. **93**.



Guillaume Camus in front of the entrance to the domaine's tasting room.

Domaine Chandon de Briailles (Savigny-lès-Beaune)

With the severe frost damage in Savigny and Pernand, as well as mildew pressure, Claude and François de Nicolay lost ninety percent of their production in 2016. The one silver lining in this was that the damage was far greater in their premier cru and villages level parcels and their grand cru bottlings were a bit closer to normal in terms of yields, so for example, they were able to average between twenty-five and twenty-eight hectoliters per hectare for their three red Cortons. In contrast, one or two hectoliters per hectare were the norm in their frost-devastated vineyards, and this included the small, secondary bunches that they also harvested and included in the vats, as with so little left on the vines, there was no problem ripening these bunches up as well. As a result, my tasting of the 2016s here was pretty quick, as the family has decided to blend together all of their production from the most severely affected vineyards to make a single cuvée of Bourgogne rouge, which is a combination of Savigny premier crus of les Lavières and Fourneaux, Pernand premier crus les Vergelesses and Île de Vergelesses, as well as all of their parcels of Savigny AC. There is not a lot of this blended Bourgogne either (only two hundred cases will be produced), but it is truly exceptional and at the quality of a premier cru in any normal vintage! As I mentioned in the introduction, Claude de Nicolay compares the quality of their 2016s to their superb 2010s, with the same sense of elegance, depth and concentration of fruit and fidelity to the underlying terroir in each cru. The big difference of course is that there is very, very little wine to be had from 2016, so these wines are not going to be easy to find in the market. The only premier cru here that was bottled on its own was the Aloxe-Corton “les Valozières”, which was affected less by frost damage and produced enough grapes to make a proper cuvée. Most of the harvesting here took place at the start of October of

2016, with the red wines from the vintage having been racked during the harvest of 2017, as there was a one week break between gathering of the white and red grapes this past September and it was a good time to rack the 2016 reds. The white 2016s had been racked into tank prior to the start of the harvest of 2017. As the notes below will attest, all of the 2016s were showing beautifully at the time of my visit.

Vins Blancs

2016 Corton Blanc- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

In a normal year, the domaine's Corton Blanc bottling will be one-third from Chaumes and two-thirds from Bressandes, but in 2016, there was very, very little fruit in Chaumes after the frost and the wine is ninety percent from Bressandes. This is going to be a very fine bottle and it is going to drink very well from an early age, as the bouquet jumps from the glass in a blaze of apple, peach, fresh almond, a great base of soil and a lovely topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a touch honeyed in personality, with a superb core, lovely framing acids and a very long, vibrant and complex finish. Lovely juice. 2019-2030+. **93.**

2016 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2016 Corton-Charlemagne from Chandon de Briailles is outstanding, and though it is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the excellent Corton Blanc, this too is going to be very user-friendly from a young age! The nose delivers a fine aromatic constellation of pear, chalky minerality, iodine, spring flowers, orange zest and a discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids and excellent length and grip on the very precise and energetic finish. 2002-2050. **94+.**

Vins Rouges

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

There are only eight barrels of this combined Bourgogne rouge, but the quality of the *terroirs* that make up this cuvée this year is very much in evidence in the excellence of this wine. The bouquet is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a complex blend of red and black cherries, gamebird, superb minerality, a touch of bonfire, Savigny spice tones and a nice dollop of coffee in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a fine core, impressive focus and complexity and a long, moderately tannic and vibrant finish. A superb wine, no matter what the appellation on the label this year! 2020-2050. **92+.**

2016 Aloxe-Corton "les Valozières"- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2016 les Valozières from the de Nicolay family is outstanding, as this was one of the few vineyards that had a normal crop load this year and the fruit was brought in earliest in the domaine's roster of vineyards, with picking starting here on September 22nd. The bouquet here is pure and nascently complex, offering up scents of black cherries, iron-infused soil tones, woodsmoke, venison and just a touch of upper register spice. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely reserved in profile, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and promising finish. Lovely juice. 2021-2050. **92.**

2016 Corton "Maréchaudes"- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2016 Maréchaudes is an excellent wine in the making, with the nose offering up a superb blend of sappy red and black cherries, venison, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil, coffee, roses and gentle spice tones up high. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully

balanced, with a rock solid core, ripe, suave tannins and fine length and grip on the nascently complex and very promising finish. A fine, fine bottle of Corton in the making. 2025-2075. **93.**

2016 Corton “Bressandes”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

The 2016 Bressandes from Chandon de Briailles was raised in twenty percent new oak in this vintage and, like all of the Maréchaudes, included eighty percent whole clusters in 2016. The wine is a stunning bottle, delivering a pure and classic constellation of red and black cherries, *pigeon*, coffee, complex, stony soil tones, lovely spice elements and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a sappy core, great transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and beautifully focused finish. A great Corton! 2026-2080+. **94+.**

2016 Corton “Clos du Roi”- Domaine Chandon de Briailles

There are only three casks of Clos du Roi at the domaine in 2016, so this wine saw one barrel that was used for one wine previously, with the other two barrels five to seven years old. This wine is entirely whole cluster in this vintage and delivers a stunning bouquet of red and black cherries, a touch of red currant, orange peel, iron, lavender and a touch of cinnamon from the stems. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off gorgeous mid-palate depth, with great focus and grip, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, poised and vibrant finish. Stunning juice! 2026-2080+. **95+.**

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

Hugues Pavelot was in a philosophical mood at the time of my visit in November, as the bountiful crop of 2017 had helped assuage some of the sting of the very reduced crop here in 2016, where the Pavelot family lost fully eighty percent of their normal crop due to the frosts of late April. Monsieur Pavelot went out and bought a bit of production elsewhere to flesh out his lineup a bit, so there is a Bourgogne Blanc bottling (from the Mâconnais) and a Pernand-Vergelesses Blanc to expand the portfolio a bit in this very short year. The Pavelot holdings in Savigny-lès-Beaune were the most severely damaged by the frosts, so for example, they were able to get almost thirty hectoliters per hectare in their fine Beaune premier cru of Bressandes, which seemed like a huge yield in comparison to the decimated crop load in Savigny. The yields were so small in Savigny for the Pavelots that there are no 2016 bottlings from the premier crus of les Lavières or les Serpentières, as well as no Pernand-Vergelesses “les Vergelesses” in the cellars this year, with the tiny number of bunches of the former two blended into the Savigny AC and the les Vergelesses wiped out completely by frost. Despite the tiny quantities of so many of the cuvées, Hugues Pavelot likes the style of the wines here in 2016, which he feels will drink well fairly early on in their development, but also offer the potential to age gracefully as well. They have a plushness to their black fruity personalities that is very attractive, and with nicely ripe and suave tannins, the top premier crus should have no trouble aging twenty-five or thirty years. On the white wine side of the ledger, there will be no Chassagne “Morgeots” this year. The wines had been racked into tanks in October in preparation for bottling in December and early in the new year.

Vins Rouges

2016 Chorey-lès-Beaune- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 Chorey AC is a very tasty from Hugues Pavelot, offering up a ripe and juicy nose of plums, black cherries, spice tones, soil, gentle smokiness and a touch of chocolate in the

upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, succulent and wide open, with good focus and grip, just a touch of backend tannin and a long, velvety finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88.**

2016 Chorey-lès-Beaune “les Beaumonts”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 Beaumonts shows a bit more structure out of the blocks than the straight *villages* Chorey, but also shares the same lovely fruit tones. The bouquet is a fine blend of black cherries, plums, *sous bois*, gamebird, coffee and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and displays fine depth at the core, with moderate, ripe tannins, fine focus and a long, promising finish. This needs a year or two to blossom, but will be lovely. 2019-2035. **89.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 Savigny AC *chez* Pavelot is excellent, offering up a pure and complex nose of black cherries, cassis, Savigny spice tones, gamebird, stony soil and bitter chocolate. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very nicely balanced, with moderate tannins, fine focus and grip, a good core and a long, nascently complex and promising finish. The very low yields have given this plenty of concentration, but the wine remains elegant in profile. 2020-2045+. **90+.**

2016 Aloxe-Corton- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The *villages* parcel of vines owned by the Pavelots in Aloxe-Corton was less severely frosted than their vines in Savigny, so there will be a bit more of this fine bottling to go around in the short crop of 2016. The wine is an excellent AC, delivering a complex and black fruity bouquet of black cherries, black plums, woodsmoke, venison, coffee, dark soil tones and a touch of upper register spiciness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and potentially quite complex, with a plush core, fine soil signature, suave tannins and a long, well-balanced finish that closes with fine bounce and grip. Good juice here. 2021-2045+. **90+.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “les Peuillets”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 les Peuillets this year is quite forward from Domaine Pavelot and will drink beautifully with only a handful of years in the cellar. The first class bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of dark berries, black cherries, Savigny spices, espresso, *pigeon*, dark soil tones and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and nicely balanced, with modest tannins and fine length and grip on the focused finish. This is a touch lower energy than a few of the other bottlings in the cellar this year, which is a reflection of the severe frost damage. 2021-2050+. **90+.**

2016 Beaune “Bressandes”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

This was the least affected by frost of all the Pavelot holdings and the wine has turned out beautifully. The nose delivers a fine, black fruity blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, woodsmoke, bitter chocolate, a whisper of spice tones and a lovely base of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and vibrant, with lovely generosity on the attack, a lovely core, moderate tannins and a long, complex and beautifully balanced finish. Fine juice in the making. 2020-2050. **91+.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Guettes” - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

In a normal crop year, Hugues Pavelot will have twenty-eight casks of Guettes in the cellar. This year there are only six barrels! The wine has turned out very well, so it is too bad that there is not a bit more to go around to clients of the domaine, as it offers up a pure and black fruity bouquet of dark berries, espresso, bonfire, dark soil tones, roasted *pigeon* and a nice touch of spices in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely round on the attack, with a plush core, fine-grained tannins and lovely focus and grip on the complex finish.

This is very tasty and will not take too many years to really start to drink with generosity. 2022-2055. **92.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “aux Gravains”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The aux Gravains was equally hard hit by frost, so there are only five casks out of a normal twenty-three in the Pavelot cellars in 2016. The wine is the most red fruity of the lineup this year, as the bouquet delivers a fine constellation of red and black cherries, a touch of orange peel, dark chocolate, gamebird, woodsmoke and a lovely, complex base of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine core, ripe, suave tannins and a long, poised and classy finish. Lovely juice. 2022-2055. **92.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune “la Dominode”- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 la Dominode *chez* Pavelot is a touch more reserved out of the blocks than the other premier crus in the cellar, but it shares the same precision and lovely fruit of all the wines here this year. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a blend of black cherries, cassis, a touch of eucalyptus, gentle spice tones, venison, a complex base of soil and just a touch of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a rock solid core, lovely transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy finish that closes with excellent mineral drive. A lovely wine in the making. 2023-2055+. **93.**

Vins Blancs

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The 2016 Bourgogne Blanc from Monsieur Pavelot is a good, solid example of the vintage. The bouquet delivers scents of apple, peach, toast and a nice base of soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and has good mid-palate stuffing, with sound acids and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This is not overly complex, but hits all the right notes. 2018-2025. **88.**

2016 Saint Romain Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

I have liked Hugues Pavelot's Saint Romain Blanc for several years now and the 2016 is no exception, as this has turned out very well indeed. The nose is bright and juicy, offering up scents of apple, pear, chalky soil tones, citrus peel and a touch of fresh almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and well-balanced, with a fine soil signature, lovely acids and fine cut and grip on the long and complex finish. A fine bottle. 2018-2025+. **90.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc- Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The Pavelots have long made one of the finest examples of Savigny-lès-Beaune Blanc in the village and the 2016 is again a lovely wine. The bouquet offers up a classic and youthful blend of lime, crab apple, chalky minerality, white flowers, a touch of beeswax and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, vibrant and beautifully balanced finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2030+. **91.**

2016 Pernand-Vergelesses Blanc - Domaine Jean-Marc et Hugues Pavelot

The Pernand Blanc was made from purchased grapes in 2016, and the wine has turned out very nicely. The bouquet offer sup a ripe and succulent blend of apple, white peach, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is crisp, deep and full-bodied, with good focus and grip, a plump core and good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This is a very tasty bottle that will drink well from the outset, but it is not quite as precise as the Saint Romain or Savigny Blanc this year. 2018-2027. **89+.**

2016 Corton Blanc- Jean-Marc et Hugues Domaine Pavelot

The Pavelots' parcel of chardonnay for their Corton Blanc was up above the frost line in 2016, so this is the only cuvée in the cellars that had a normal crop load in this vintage! The wine has turned out brilliantly, offering up a superb aromatic constellation of pear, a touch of tangerine, fresh almond, chalky minerality, spring flowers, just a whisper of honeycomb and a judicious framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with lovely complexity and grip, just impeccable balance and a very long, poised and racy finish. Great juice. 2020-2045. **94+**.



A little afternoon sunshine lighting up the November vineyards in Savigny-lès-Beaune.

Beaune

Maison Joseph Drouhin (Beaune)

As might be expected, the Drouhin family's yields vary rather dramatically depending on which village is in question, but what is consistent here is the exemplary quality of each and every wine that I tasted during my November trip. As the growing season did not really settle in until the start of July in 2016, it is pretty remarkable that by August the lagging vines had caught up fully and the beautiful Indian Summer of September brought in a super crop of excellent bunches, with the major caveat being that in certain parcels, there were simply very few grapes. Chambolle-Musigny, Chassagne-Montrachet and Savigny-lès-Beaune were the most hard hit villages for the Drouhin family, but their luck was not entirely better in villages less affected by

the spring frosts. In Meursault, their AC level plots of vines were pretty hard hit by frost, so yields were down fully fifty percent for this cuvée (though the quality of the 2016 version may be the finest I have tasted of this bottling chez Drouhin!) and the domaine will make no Genevrières at all this year. In Chassagne, the family was fairly lucky with their Marquis de Laguiche bottling of Morgeot, as this was “only” down forty percent, which in the context of some of the other premier crus in the village, was actually a fairly generous result in 2016! In Puligny, the family was very lucky that the most severe frost damage in Montrachet was on the Chassagne side of the vineyard, where the crop was nearly wiped out, but in the Marquis de Laguiche parcels on the northern side of the vineyard, frost damage cost half of the crop in 2016. Maison Drouhin also fared better in Corton-Charlemagne than many of their neighbors, as their parcels are right in the middle of the appellation, which was less hard hit by frost than on either side, so the damage to the potential crop was relatively minor and the wine has turned out beautifully and classically.

On the red wine side of the ledger, Savigny was decimated and eighty percent of the domaine’s crop in the villages level parcels was wiped out and there will be no Clos des Godeaux bottling in 2016. In neighboring Beaune, the family was spared major frost damage in their parcels, with the Clos des Mouches barely frosted, and the Grèves only moderately so. There is also a new Beaune premier cru bottling debuting in 2016 from the domaine, a Beaune “Cras” that is a fine new addition to the lineup. Chambolle was hit hard and the Drouhins’ vines in Clos Vougeot were also badly frosted in 2016 and yields are way down in both villages chez Drouhin. Vosne-Romanée was mostly spared any significant frost damage and the family was able to unveil another new bottling from this village as well in 2016, a blended Vosne “Premier Cru” cuvée that is simply outstanding. Due to the variations caused by the frost damage of 2016, the domaine decided to de-stem most of their red wines in this vintage and several of them reminded me of what the great 1971s here must have tasted like in their youths. Malolactic fermentations generally took place in the spring following the harvest and were not particularly early or late. Overall, 2016 is an outstanding vintage chez Drouhin, with both red and white wines succeeding in very fine fashion. There is a plushness and sappiness to the fruit here that recalls the 2010s for the red wines, but with a more generous early appeal than found in the 2010s, and it will be interesting to see if the wines firm up after they are bottled and start to close down a bit (which would be my guess), or if they will always deliver this velvety, seductive appeal. Signatures of terroir are outstanding for both reds and whites here in 2016, with the wines having good acids to provide precision, lift and energy to the finished wines. All in all, 2016 is a great, great vintage for Maison Joseph Drouhin. I should note that in addition to the wines listed below, I also tasted the 2016 Cru Beaujolais releases from the Hospices de Bellevue that Maison Drouhin has been farming since 2014. These notes will appear in the next issue, along with several other recently-tasted examples of Beaujolais, but I should mention that they are absolutely stellar and by a good margin, the most successful group of wines yet released from this collaboration!

Vins Blancs de Maison Drouhin

2016 Mâcon-Bussière “les Clos”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Mâcon-Bussière “les Clos” from Maison Drouhin was two-thirds barrel-fermented this year. Happily, there was no frost or hail damage here in 2016 and the yields are correct and the wine is quite classic. The fine nose jumps from the glass in a bright blend of pear,

lemon, spring flowers, chalky soil tones and a touch of Mâconnais “toastiness” in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and juicy at the core, with lovely acids, fine focus and grip and a long, tasty finish. Lovely wine. 2018-2025. **89.**

2016 Saint-Véran- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Saint-Véran managed to escape frost damage in 2016, but it received some hail in the massive storm that swept through sectors of Beaujolais and the Mâconnais on April 13th. Perhaps this had a bit of an effect on the structure of the 2016 Saint-Véran this year, as it is a tad softer on the palate than the Mâcon-Bussière, though still pure and succulent. The nose offers up scents of pear, apple, toast, fruit blossoms, a nice touch of chalky soil and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and ripe in personality, with a good core, gentle framing acids and good length on the bouncy and wide open finish. This will drink well in its early days. 2018-2023. **89.**

2016 Pouilly-Vinzelles- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Pouilly-Vinzelles from Maison Drouhin is very pretty this year, with a more forward style that echoes the Saint-Véran a bit more than the Côte Chalonnaise wines this year. The bouquet is pure and bright, offering up scents of apple, peach, chalky soil tones, a lovely potpourri of floral tones and a deft touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bright and nicely delineated, with a plush core, good soil undertow and fine framing acids on the long and wide open finish. Very easy to drink. 2018-2025. **89+.**

2016 Rully Blanc- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Rully Blanc from the Drouhins was entirely barrel-fermented this year and was raised in fifteen percent new wood. The wine is lovely, offering up a bright and precise bouquet of apple, lemon, stony minerality, citrus peel, a dollop of dried flowers and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is long, full and zesty, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and impressive backend mineral drive on the long, vibrant and well-balanced finish. This is really good this year! 2018-2030. **90+.**

2016 Montagny- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The lovely Montagny “Premier Cru” bottling was not in our tasting lineup this year, but the Montagny AC bottling was included and was really singing. The bouquet is pure and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a lovely mix of apple, lemon, chalky soil tones, fruit blossoms and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and wide open, with a good core, lovely cut and grip and a long, nascently complex finish. This is a tad more reserved out of the blocks than the already generous Rully Blanc, but it should be drinking with great style by the time it is released in the spring. 2018-2030. **90.**

2016 Meursault- Maison Joseph Drouhin

This is a great village wine and my favorite of the three top Côte de Beaune white ACs in 2016. The very pretty and complex nose delivers fine purity in its classic blend of apple, pear, almond, bee pollen, chalky soil tones and a discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and beautifully balanced, with a lovely core and a very elegant, long and zesty finish. A beautiful bottle of Meursault. 2018-2035+. **91.**

2016 Meursault “Perrières”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Perrières from Maison Drouhin was a bit shy at the time of my visit and did not show the same inherent energy and vivacity found in several of these other white Burgundies in the tasting. Perhaps it was just the stage that the wine was going through? The bouquet is very pretty, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of apple, pear, hazelnuts, a lovely base of limestone soil and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a

good core, but a rather laid back structural chassis. There are good supporting acids here, but not the customary cut and grip of this cuvée in most years. Given that Perrières was not badly frosted in 2016, I have to just assume that this wine was not showing well on this particular day. 2018-2030+? **90-92?**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Puligny *villages* from Maison Drouhin is lovely, offering up a very classic aromatic profile of pear, white peach, chalky soil tones, a touch of butter, vanillin oak and a lovely floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely complex, with a plump core of very pure fruit, fine soil signature, bright, zesty acids and fine length and grip on the exuberant finish. This is going to drink beautifully from the moment that it is released. 2018-2030. **90+**.

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

I really like the reserved profile of the Folatières from the Drouhin family in 2016, which augurs very well indeed for its future development. The bouquet is pure and precise, offering up scents of apple, white peach, hints of the *crème patissière* to come, a fine base of limestone soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely racy in personality, with a lovely core, fine transparency and a long, snappy and energetic finish. Fine, fine juice. 2019-2035+. **92+**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet- Maison Joseph Drouhin

I did not write down how much of the crop was lost in the Chassagne AC due to the frosts in 2016, but I am sure it was substantial. The wine is just lovely out of the blocks this year, offering up a pure and vibrant bouquet of lemon, pear, chalky soil, vanillin oak and a lovely topnote of orange and lemon zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very long, with a fine core of fruit, good soil signature and a bright, succulent finish. At this stage, this does not quite show the early complexity found in both the Meursault and Puligny *villages* bottlings, but it hits all the right spots on the palate. 2018-2030. **90**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Embazées”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The les Embazées premier cru has been a very welcome addition to the Drouhin lineup in recent years and the 2016 has really turned out beautifully. The bouquet is complex, focused and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, lemon, chalky minerality, a nice touch of vanillin oak and a very beguiling topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite racy in profile, with a lovely core, fine soil signature and impressive backend energy on the focused and beautifully balanced finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2035+. **92+**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeot” Marquis de Laguiche- Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 vintage of Marquis de Laguiche Morgeot has turned out utterly classical in profile and purity. The bouquet is a fine, elegant blend of pear, lemon zest, pastry cream, chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a rock solid core, impeccably soil signature, bright, zesty acids, and marvelous focus and grip on the very long, crisp and well-balanced finish. This will drink with great style from the moment it is released, but also has the depth and balance to age long and gracefully. 2018-2035. **93**.

2016 Beaune “Clos des Mouches” Blanc- Maison Joseph Drouhin

After getting pummeled by hail so often in recent vintages, I was very happy to hear that the Clos des Mouches missed most of the frost damage of 2016 and had a normal-sized and very high quality crop in this vintage. The Clos des Mouches Blanc is often of grand cru quality in my book and this is emphatically the case with the stunning 2016 version. The wine delivers a very

refined aromatic constellation of lemon, apple, pear, chalky minerality, vanillin oak and a lovely, esthery topnote of bee pollen. On the palate the wine is pure, full and nascently complex, with marvelous mid-palate depth, laser-like focus and a very long, refined and vibrant finish. This is a stunning vintage of Clos des Mouches Blanc! 2020-2045+. **94+**.

2016 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Joseph Drouhin (Estate)

Maison Drouhin continues to produce two different versions of Corton-Charlemagne, with this one hailing from the domaine's own vines in the center of the appellation. As I noted in the introduction, this sector of the vineyard was not hit badly by frost and the crop level here is close to correct in 2016. The wine is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a sophisticated blend of apple, pear, hints of the *crème patissière* to come with further bottle age, lovely, limestone minerality, white flowers and a very judicious framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impeccably balanced, with a rock solid core, lovely transparency and grip and a very long, classically reserved finish. This will need a few years in the cellar to blossom, but it will be outstanding. 2020-2050+. **95**.

2016 Montrachet “Marquis de Laguiche”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

With twenty-five percent of the ownership of the vineyard of Montrachet, the Marquis de Laguiche family was very fortunate to have the frost damage more modest on their end of the vineyard in 2016. Still, a fifty percent crop loss is far from insignificant, but happily, it has allowed the Drouhins to produce a proper cuvée of the wine in this vintage and the results are absolutely stunning! The bouquet here is pure, vibrant and bottomless, with aromas of apple, pear, lemon blossoms, gorgeously complex, chalky minerality, *crème patissière* and vanillin oak jumping from the glass. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full, with a seamless sense of structural beauty that is quite extraordinary. There is plenty of soil signature, a great core of fruit, bright, zesty acids and a very long, racy and complex finish that is every bit as worthy as the loft reputation of Montrachet at its finest. A brilliant vintage of Laguiche! 2023-2060. **97**.

Vins Rouges de Maison Drouhin

2016 Rully Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Côte Chalonnaise was not spared from frost damage in 2016, but the Drouhins' Rully rouge bottling has turned out beautifully and shows no ill effects from the cold temperatures and restricted yields. The bouquet is very pretty and quite red fruity in profile, offering up scents of strawberries, cherries, a good base of soil, a touch of spice and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is full, complex and nicely soil-driven in profile, with a good core, a touch of backend tannin and a long, tangy finish. Good juice and a fine value. 2018-2035. **89**.

2016 Chorey-lès-Beaune- Maison Joseph Drouhin

I first really started to pay attention to the Chorey-lès-Beaune from Maison Joseph Drouhin in the 1999 vintage (of which I bought a case) and I have been a big fan of this cuvée here ever since. In terms of value for money, this is one of the best red wines in the domaine's portfolio and the 2016 version has again turned out beautifully. The bouquet is bright and sappy, offering up scents of red and black cherries, a touch of chocolate, woodsmoke, gamebird, dark soil and a nice dollop of fresh herbs in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and very nicely balanced, with a lovely core, fine transparency and just a whisper of backend tannin on the long and vibrant finish. This will be easy to drink in its youth, but will also keep very nicely over the middle term. 2018-2030+. **90+**.



Maison Drouhin's Christophe Thomas and Véronique Drouhin Boss in the domaine's tasting room.

2016 Côte de Beaune Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Côte de Beaune Rouge bottling from Maison Drouhin is another consistently fine value and their 2016 version has turned out very well indeed. The quite black fruity bouquet offers up a fine mix of black cherries, dark chocolate, gamebird, a fine base of soil and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and nicely juicy on the attack, with a good core, a bit of tannin and good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. This is not quite as elegant in profile as the Chorey this year, but it too is a lovely wine and a fine value. 2019-2035+. **90.**

2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Savigny-lès-Beaune cuvée is one of the smallest in the cellars this year, as fully eighty percent of the crop was lost here, and this with the addition of all of the fruit in the Clos des Godeaux added to the blend! The wine has turned out very well, offering up a fine, black fruity blend of black cherries, dark berries, espresso, gamebird, dark soil tones, just a touch of Savigny spices and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full and very elegant in profile, with a solid core, lovely focus and balance and a touch of backend tannin perking up the long and complex finish. Good juice. 2018-2035. **90.**

2016 Beaune "Cras"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The premier cru vineyard of aux Cras lies up on the slope, just above Theurons, and is one of the finest premier crus in the firmament of Beaune. The Drouhins' new bottling hails from a parcel of forty-five year-old vines that lie at the top of the vineyard's slope and it was not hit hard by the frost in 2016. The wine is gorgeous on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet

delivering a blend of dark berries, black cherries, gamebird, lovely floral tones, dark soil nuances and a nice touch of spice in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very suave on the attack, with a lovely core, impressive focus and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and perfectly balanced finish. This will be an excellent bottle, but will need six or seven years in the cellar to blossom and really come into its own. 2023-2060. **92.**

2016 Beaune “Grèves”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

I did not know until this year that the Drouhins’ parcel of vines here lie in the very upper section of the vineyard in the area known as Sur les Grèves. This is the top of the vineyard, where an outcropping of yellow limestone gives the wine a unique sense of mineral drive. The 2016 Grèves *chez* Drouhin has turned out beautifully, offering up a superb and wide open nose of plums, black cherries, dark chocolate, chalky soil tones, a bit of upper register spice and a deft framing of new wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, superb backend structure and grip and a long, suavely tannic and perfectly balanced finish. A classic. 2026-2075. **93.**

2016 Beaune “Clos des Mouches” Rouge- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Clos des Mouches rouge was one of the few wines in the cellars this year to include ten percent whole clusters. The wine was a touch reduced at the time of my visit, but with a little coaxing in the glass, its quality became very easy to read. The nose eventually offers up a lovely and nicely black fruity blend of sweet dark berries, black cherries, fresh thyme, a superb signature of soil, gamebird, espresso and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and very refined in profile, with a sappy core of black fruit, lovely transparency, suave tannins and great length and grip on the nascently complex finish. This wine reminds me aromatically and in terms of flavors very much of the superb 1993 Clos des Mouches, but the structural elements here are more refined and the wine will be more elegant when it is fully mature. Needless to say, that is a very good combination! 2026-2075. **93+.**

2016 Côte de Nuits-Villages- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Côte de Nuits-Villages from Maison Joseph Drouhin is a lovely wine this year. It will drink well from the moment it is released and would make a marvelous addition to a well-stocked wine list, as it offers up a fine nose of red and black cherries, espresso, a touch of meatiness, dark soil tones and plenty of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, wide open and easy-going structurally, with a plush core, little backend tannin, but fine focus and balance on the long and succulent finish. A very fine example. 2018-2028. **89.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Despite the very short crop in this village in 2016, the Drouhins’ example of Chambolle AC has retained plenty of charm and is not overtly structured, as can be the case with some examples. The bouquet is pure and refined, offering up scents of red and black cherries, woodsmoke, mustard seed, coffee, a touch of *pigeon* and a lovely base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full and nicely energetic, with a very good core, moderate tannins and lovely length and grip on the well balanced finish. Good juice. 2021-2050. **90+.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Vosne *villages* bottling here has been getting better and better with each passing vintage and the 2016 is excellent. The nose is pure and nascently complex, offering up scents of black cherries, black raspberries, bitter chocolate, Vosne spices, dark soil tones, duck and a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already nicely open on the attack, with a good core, modest tannins and a long, tangy and focused finish. This does not have quite the

mid-palate stuffing of the lower-cropped Chambolle this year, but it is a tad more precise and complex. 2018-2045+. **91.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Maison Drouhin's 2016 Gevrey AC bottling is also excellent, offering up that superb combination of sappy fruit and great minerality that are the hallmarks of the best wines of the vintage. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine blend of red and black cherries, grilled meats, mustard seed, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a deft framing of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very transparent in personality, with a good core of fruit, modest tannins and lovely length and grip on the poised and well-balanced finish. A classy *villages*. 2020-2050. **91.**

2016 Nuits St. Georges "les Procès"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The vineyard of les Procès lies just north of Pruliers on the slope, on the southern tier of premier crus in Nuits, and this was the section that was hit very hard by frost in 2016. Nevertheless, the Drouhins' Procès is going to be an excellent wine and it is too bad that there will not be more of it to go around this year. The nose jumps from the glass in a very refined blend of dark berries, cassis, espresso, *pigeon*, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a touch of spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, quite elegant on the attack, with a rock solid core, impressive transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and nascently complex finish. A superb example. 2026-2075. **92+.**

2016 Chambolle-Musigny "Premier Cru"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The very low yields in Chambolle this year have given the Premier Cru bottling *chez* Drouhin quite a black fruity personality, which recalls stylistically this cuvée back in the 1993 vintage. The bouquet is a youthful blend of black cherries, dark berries, woodsmoke, gamebird, mustard seed, chalky soil tones and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and quite solid at the core, with firm, well-integrated tannins, fine focus and grip and a long, tangy and youthful finish. This will need some bottle age before it starts to stir, but it will be very good once it has blossomed. 2022-2060. **92.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin "Clos Prieur"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

To the best of my recollection, I cannot ever recall tasting a bottling of premier cru Clos Prieur from Maison Drouhin, and this is yet another excellent new addition to their lineup in 2016. Like the Clos des Mouches rouge, this bottling included ten percent whole clusters in 2016 and offers up a superb, sappy bouquet of cassis, black cherries, dark soil tones, incipient meatiness, mustard seed and a deft framing of cedary new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure, with a sappy core, excellent soil signature, refined tannins and a long, beautifully balanced and complex finish that closes with superb bounce and grip. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2065+. **92+.**

2016 Gevrey-Chambertin "Cazetiers"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

I have very much liked the Cazetiers bottling here since the family began producing this a few vintages back and the 2016 will be another very strong wine. It was a touch reduced at the time of my visit, but blossomed to offer a classy bouquet of red and black cherries, mustard seed, gamebird, fine black minerality, cedar and a touch of spice in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent in personality, with a very good core of fruit, suave tannins and a very long, complex and refined finish. Lovely juice. 2026-2070. **92.**

2016 Vosne-Romanée "Premier Cru"- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The new Vosne "Premier Cru" bottling is outstanding and a very welcome new addition to the lineup *chez* Drouhin in 2016. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a very refined blend of

black raspberries, black cherries, loads of Vosne spice elements, raw cocoa, dark soil tones and a discreet framing of spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, elegant and tangy, with a lovely core of fruit, fine soil inflection, lovely focus and grip and a long, suavely-tannic and vibrant finish. This is very good juice! 2024-2065+. **92+**.

2016 Vosne-Romanée “Petits Monts”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Petits Monts is a legend in the making. Stylistically, it reminds me a little bit of a cross of the 1991 and 2010 versions, just to give some idea of how beautiful this wine is in 2016. The beautifully refined and perfumed nose delivers a constellation of black cherries, black plums, espresso, a complex base of soil, fresh nutmeg, duck, a touch of nutty new oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, deep and full-bodied, with a velvety attack, lovely sappiness at the core, great soil signature and grip and a long, suavely-tannic and very, very refined finish. The team at Maison Drouhin included thirty percent whole clusters in the Petits Monts this year. A great wine. 2026-2075. **95**.

2016 Chambolle-Musigny “les Amoureuses”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The low yields in the village have not adversely affected the Amoureuses *chez* Drouhin in 2016. The bouquet is lovely and fairly reserved at the present time, offering up scents of plums, black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, a complex base of soil tones, fresh herbs and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows off lovely purity in the core, with fine focus and grip, suave, seamless tannins and a very long, complex and elegant finish. This is already velvety on the attack and should start to drink with great style by its tenth birthday. 2026-2075. **94+**.

2016 Clos de Vougeot- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The Drouhins’ vines in Clos Vougeot were hit hard by the frost in 2016 and the wine is a bit more sturdy in its structural elements as a result. The bouquet is very black fruity this year and again, recalls the 1993 version, as it wafts from the glass in a mix of black cherries, espresso, dark berries, a fine base of soil, *pigeon*, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and fairly reticent on the attack, with a deep, sappy core, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, tangy and very well-balanced finish. This will be a long-distance runner, but will need a good dozen years or more in the cellar to really start to blossom. 2028-2085. **94**.

2016 Grands Echézeaux- Maison Joseph Drouhin

There was some frost damage here as well, but less than in the Clos Vougeot from the Drouhin vines and this wine was showing very well indeed in November. The superb bouquet is again quite black fruity in profile, delivering scents of cassis, black cherries, gamebird, Vosne spices, a lovely base of dark soil tones, a bit of bonfire and a lovely base of nutty oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a good core, fine soil complexity and a very long, ripely tannic and tangy finish. A fine bottle in the making. 2028-2085. **94+**.

2016 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze”- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Chambertin “Clos de Bèze” from Maison Joseph Drouhin is an outstanding wine in the making. The superb nose wafts from the glass in a complex blend of red and black cherries, mustard seed, a bit of roasted meat, espresso, a fine base of soil tones, woodsmoke and cedar. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very transparent, with excellent mid-palate depth, fine-grained tannins and outstanding focus and grip on the very, very long, complex and utterly classic finish. A stellar bottle that will always be light on its feet, but loaded with intensity and complex minerality. 2026-2080+. **94+**.

2016 Griotte-Chambertin- Maison Joseph Drouhin

The 2016 Drouhin Griotte-Chambertin is a very interesting follow-up to the Clos de Bèze, as the wine is every bit as high quality, but quite different in its presentation of the vintage. The Griotte is deeper at the core and sappier than the Bèze, but it is less defined by its underlying minerality and does not share the future ethereal beauty that the Bèze will deliver in spades. The complex bouquet of the Griotte is a beautiful blend of black cherries, plums, raw cocoa, grilled meats, herb tones, a nice dollop of soil, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a sappy core, ripe, suave tannins and lovely length and grip on the nascently complex finish. 2024-2075+. **94.**

2016 Musigny- Maison Joseph Drouhin

Despite the very low yields in Musigny this year, the Drouhin team has fashioned an absolute reference point bottling from this hallowed *terroir* in 2016. There is a sappy inner beauty there that is remarkable, but the wine will be every much defined by its great expression of soil and its classic structural chassis, and it is really a glorious synthesis of the three elements that makes this wine so special. The stunning bouquet is deep, pure and sappy, offering up scents of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, gamebird, lovely spice tones, a magical base of iron-infused soil tones, incipient notes of mustard seed and a suave base of nutty new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and plush on the attack, with a fine core, impeccable focus and balance, seamless tannins, outstanding focus and grip and a very, very long, poised and dancing finish. This wine included thirty percent whole clusters in 2016. Having been fortunate enough to drink many mature vintages of the Drouhin family's Musigny over the years, this seems likely to end up very much along the lines of the magical 1971 vintage of this wine. 2028-2090. **96.**



The late autumn sun starting to sink low over the vineyards of Pommard.

Pommard

Domaine Michel Gaunoux (Pommard)

As is always the case, I had a lovely visit with the Gaunoux family on my recent trip to Burgundy, with the family serving a superb range of wines from a variety of vintages that remain part of their current portfolio of available wines on their sales list. As I have noted in the past, the Gaunoux family prefers to sell their wines in the old-fashioned style of offering a variety of different crus and vintages, so that their clients can buy certain wines that are more ready to drink than the newest vintage available globally in the market. As Anne Gaunoux commented about the family's approach to marketing of their wines, "we like to have some older bottles to offer clients, if they ask about a certain vintage, but we do not necessarily advertise the fact on our list and prefer to have people just enquire about specific vintages and their possible availability." So, let that be a lesson to clients of this fine domaine, as it pays to be inquisitive about what older wines might be available for purchase! Alexandre Gaunoux was happy to reflect about a couple of the recent vintages that are just now starting to become available from the estate, as he noted that "many people are excited about the potential of the 2015 vintage, which is very good, but to my palate, the 2014s will be the superior year in due time and this is the great recent vintage in Burgundy." He compared the market perceptions surrounding 2014 and 2015 to the impressions at the time that the Burgundy trade had about 2002 and 2001, with 2002 getting all of the early hype, but with the 2001s proving themselves to be the superior of the two vintages to his palate with sufficient bottle age. He also had very positive things to say about the 2013s as well, which he noted "took a few years after bottling to start to open up, but which are now starting to really show their true potential and will be excellent wines when they are fully mature." I was surprised to see a few 2015s in our tasting lineup on this visit, as this would usually be a bit on the early side for the domaine to show this vintage, but Alexandre noted that their clients in Japan are very strong supporters of the domaine's wines and have already gone through their allocations of previous vintages, so they are making a couple of their 2015s available in Japan ahead of their customary schedule, just so their Japanese customers will have some wines from the domaine to sell. In general, the Gaunoux family's list is now starting to show the first of their top 2014s and more of their fine 2013s, with of course, some older vintages still available for customers who enquire politely.

2015 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

The 2015 Bourgogne rouge from the Gaunoux family will be a very good example and atypically forward by the properly structured standards of this traditional domaine. The bouquet is pure and vibrant, offering up scents of cherries, Corton-like spice tones, quince, gamebird and a fine base of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full and nicely balanced, with good mid-palate depth, just a touch of backend tannin and fine length and grip on the focused finish. This will need a couple of years to blossom, but will be a very good example. 2002-2040. **88.**

2015 Pommard "Grands Épenots"- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

The 2015 Grands Épenots is going to be an excellent wine with sufficient bottle age, but my gut feeling is that twenty years down the road, the equally fine 2014 version will show more elegance and complexity. The bouquet here is young and promising, delivering scents of cherries, red currants, a touch of blood orange, fine soil tones, woodsmoke, spice and just a bit of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows a nice base of soil, with a plump core of fruit, ripe tannins and very good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. 2025-2065+.

93.

2014 Pommard “Grands Épenots”- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

Out of the blocks, the difference between the 2014 and 2015 versions of Grands Épenots *chez* Gaunoux is quite small, but I would not be surprised to see the distance widen a bit with several decades of cellaring. The 2014 Grands Épenots is still properly reserved on the palate, but the nose is already beautifully expressive, wafting from the glass in a mix of plums, cherries, woodsmoke, gamebird, complex soil tones and a lovely touch of cocoa in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off beautiful depth in the core, with fine-grained tannins, impeccable focus and grip and a very long, very pure and promising finish. This is still a puppy and will need plenty of bottle age, but it will be outstanding when it is ready to drink. 2030-2075+. **94.**

2013 Pommard “Premier Cru”- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

This wine continues to show very nicely since I last tasted it in the spring of 2016, but it is still a youthful wine and in need of some extended bottle age to really start to blossom. The bouquet is a fine, red fruity blend of quince, cherries, a touch of apple, woodsmoke, a fine base of soil and a touch of youthful pepperiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely transparent, with a good core, lovely focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic and still quite youthfully bouncy finish. Give this wine time. 2023-2060. **91+.**

2008 Pommard “Rugiens Bas”- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

It had been two and a half years since I last tasted the 2008 Rugiens Bas bottling from Domaine Gaunoux and the wine has continued to gather momentum as it blossoms in the cellar and was really singing at the time of our visit in October. The bouquet is deep, pure and beautifully developed, wafting from the glass in a refined mix of cherries, red currants, a touch of eucalyptus, gorgeous soil tones, incipient autumnal notes, orange zest and a delicate topnote of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and gorgeously transparent, with a rock solid core, fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and outstanding length and grip on the poised and perfectly balanced finish. This is really showing all its potential today and I clearly underrated it just a touch of couple of years ago! This will be a very long-lived wine and will delight folks for decades and decades to come. I suspect one could probably still buy some bottles of this from the domaine, if one asked nicely! 2023-2100. **95.**

2007 Corton “Renardes”- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

I really like drinking the 2007 vintage wines right now and the Gaunoux family’s ’07 Renardes is a very strong example of this high quality vintage. The bouquet is starting to show some lovely secondary layers of complexity, offering up scents of cherries, spiced meats, stony soil tones, incipient notes of coffee and *sous bois*, a touch of iron, bonfires and lovely Corton spice elements in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and blossoming beautifully, with a good core, fine-grained tannins and excellent balance and grip on the complex and focused finish. This is just starting to drink with generosity and still has a long life ahead of it, but it is now offering up a lot of pleasure in the glass. 2017-2050. **93+.**

2001 Corton “Renardes”- Domaine Michel Gaunoux

The 2001 Corton “Renardes” from Domaine Gaunoux is now into a lovely, autumnal point in its evolution and beginning to show its ultimate shape and style. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a complex mélange of forest floor, cherries, venison, coffee, woodsmoke, lovely soil tones and a topnote of fresh herbs. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a good core, moderate tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and soil-driven finish. In my experience, this wine is now into its phase where it is defined very strongly by its more autumnal soil elements, and with another five years or so of bottle age, the red fruit will

start to rise up again and vie with the soil elements for the guiding role in the wine. It is an outstanding bottle of Corton with years and years of life still ahead of it, but which is already drinking very well indeed. 2017-2060. **93+**.

Volnay

Domaine Marquis d'Angerville (Volnay)

I had not tasted at Domaine d'Angerville since the 2009 vintage and was happy to have a quick look at the domaine's 2016s. Guillaume d'Angerville noted that in many of their top premier crus, the frost hit the lower twenty percent of their rows, but the upper sections were all luckily untouched, so yields were not off as much here as in many estates in Volnay. The wines are raised in twenty percent new oak these days, with the barrels essentially on a five year rotation in the cellars, so there are no casks that are more than four years old in use at the present time and this gives the wines a bit more new oak influence than was the case back in Jacques d'Angerville's era. The malos on the 2016s all finished up in the spring or early summer of 2017, with the exception of eight casks of Clos des Ducs, which for some reason wanted to take their time finishing up their malolactics and lagged behind the rest of the Clos des Ducs barrels in the cellar. All the wines had been racked between July and September of 2017, with the slow malo barrels of Clos des Ducs the last to be racked. The 2016s are quite strong across the board, with a bit more polish and "luxe" personalities than was the case in Guillaume's father's day, but very well made. It seems likely that they will not take anywhere near as long to blossom in the cellar than was the case a generation ago, but it remains to be seen if they will age as long and gracefully. A good range of 2016s chez d'Angerville.

2016 Volnay "Premier Cru"- Domaine Marquis d'Angerville

The Premier Cru bottling *chez d'Angerville* is a blend of Clos des Angles and Mitans. The 2016 offers up a lovely and suave nose of black cherries, dark berries, dark soil tones, gamebird, smoke and a deft framing of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite concentrated in personality, with fine-grained tannins and good length and grip on the still quite primary finish. 2024-2060. **90+**.

2016 Volnay "Fremiets"- Domaine Marquis d'Angerville

The 2016 Fremiets has a nice sense of black fruity sappiness to it on both the nose and palate. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of cassis, black cherries, venison, espresso, dark soil tones, a dollop of spicy new oak and a topnote of fresh herbs. On the palate the wine is deep, full, pure and sappy, with good focus and grip and a long, ripely tannic finish. This will be very good in the fullness of time. 2025-2060. **91+**.

2016 Volnay "Caillerets"- Domaine Marquis d'Angerville

This had always been fairly young vines in recent times, as the domaine's parcel was replanted in the early 2000s. However, in 2013, Guillaume d'Angerville was able to buy another parcel in Caillerets planted to very old vines, so now one-third of the cuvée hails from this old vine parcel and the wine has jumped up in quality as a result. The 2016 offers up a fine bouquet of red and black cherries, gamebird, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, dark chocolate and spicy oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with fine length and grip, ripe tannins and fine focus on the nascently complex and promising finish. 2025-2075. **92+**.

2016 Volnay "Taillepieds"- Domaine Marquis d'Angerville

The 2016 Taillepieds from Domaine d'Angerville is a lovely and quite black fruity wine in the making. The bouquet offers up a blend of black cherries, dark berries, vinesmoke, a good

base of soil, espresso and cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again, nicely sappy at the core, with a good soil signature, fine-grained tannins and a long, poised and still quite primary finish. Good juice. 2026-2075. **93.**

2016 Volnay “Champans”- Domaine Marquis d’Angerville

The domaine’s holdings in Champans were one of the vineyards where only the lower twenty percent of the rows were frosted and Guillaume d’Angerville felt he was very lucky in this regard. The wine is very black fruity in personality this year, offering up scents of cassis, dark berries, venison, dark soil tones, coffee bean and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and ripely structured, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, promising finish. This will need a good decade to start to blossom, but will be long-lived. 2027-2075. **93.**

2016 Volnay “Clos des Ducs- Domaine Marquis d’Angerville

With eight of the casks here lagging with their malos, the wine is a bit behind the others in the cellars in terms of evolution, but its promise is very easy to appreciate. The bouquet is superb, offering up a fine constellation of black cherries, black plums, raw cocoa, complex soil tones, woodsmoke and spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with ripe tannins, tangy acids and fine length and grip on the nascently complex finish. This will need time, but will be excellent. 2028-2080. **94+.**

Domaine Huber-Verdereau (Volnay)

This was my first visit to Domaine Huber-Verdereau. Oregon winemaker Kelley Fox had recommended that I visit Thiébault Huber if I had a chance on my next trip to Burgundy, as she thought I might like the style of Monsieur Huber’s wines. How right she was! Thiébault Huber owns four hectares of vines in the villages of Volnay, Pommard and Meursault, and contracts to farm an additional two and a half hectares in these same villages, as well as a few parcels in Monthélie, Puligny-Montrachet and in the Haute Côte as well. He only founded the present domaine in 1994, though his grandfather, Raoul Verdereau, was a successful vigneron in Volnay during the nearly fifty year span of his career from 1928 to his retirement in 1976. Monsieur Verdereau had two daughters who eventually inherited his estate, but as both sisters married and lived outside of Burgundy (Thiébault’s mother married Monsieur Huber and lives with him in Alsace), the vines were rented out for a generation. Thiébault originally studied to be a sommelier in Strasbourg, but in 1990 he decided that he would like to move to Burgundy and resuscitate the family estate in Volnay. He spent the next three years in preparation, studying oenology in Beaune and then working with his cousin in Volnay, Jean-Marc Bouley, prior to his first harvest at the newly christened Domaine Huber-Verdereau in 1994. Thiébault converted over his vineyards to organic farming in 2001 and to biodynamic farming in 2005, and is now certified by Ecocert. The domaine is now located on the Route Nationale in Meursault, arriving in the new, spacious and very commodious accommodations just in time for the harvest of 2016, which now gives Monsieur Huber plenty of cellar space. Given the severe frost damage of 2016, not to mention the short crops in preceding years in Volnay and Pommard, I suggested to Monsieur Huber that we just hop around a bit in terms of what we tasted on this visit. As it was my first time here, I was very happy to see the wines across the 2016, 2015 and 2014 vintages, depending on what was still available to taste, and was able to glean a good sense of the style of the estate’s wines. Thiébault Huber is very much a champion of terroir, so the new oak here for even the premier crus never goes above twenty or twenty-five percent in a given vintage, and the villages level wines often see no new wood at all.

In a normal year, the range of wines here includes a Volnay premier cru bottling from the vineyard of Fremiets, as well as a blended Volnay villages bottling and an old vine Volnay from the “villages” section of les Robardelles, which is produced from vines planted in 1943. In Pommard, there is a premier cru bottling from the vineyard of les Bertins (which lies near the Volnay border, just below Fremiers on the slope), a blended Pommard AC and a tiny monopole bottling called Clos du Colombière, which is large enough to produce nine barrels in a normal crop year. The Clos du Colombière lies along the dividing line of premier cru and villages level parcels, so one-third is premier cru and two-thirds AC, but Thiébault Huber reasons that it is more interesting to blend the two together and produce a fine monopole villages level wine, rather than have two different, smaller cuvées from the vineyard. There is also a fine Monthélie rouge that is made from the lieu à dit of la Combe Danay, as well as Bourgogne rouge, Coteaux Bourguignons and a Haute Côte de Beaune bottling from vines planted in 1962 in the village of Bouze-lès-Beaune. For white wines, there are a Mercurey Blanc, a Puligny-Montrachet villages level bottling from the lieu à dit of les Levrons, which lies just below les Referts on the slope, a Meursault AC from the vineyard of En Dressolles (planted in 1957) and up through the 2015 vintage, there was a Meursault premier cru of “la Pièce Sous le Bois” made from purchased grapes. Given the frost damage of 2016, which hit several of Monsieur Huber’s parcels quite severely, he had to blend several of his parcels to make a single cuvée of Volnay or Pommard in this vintage, so the lineup is a bit out of the ordinary in this very short crop year. He also decided to de-stem all of his reds in 2016 and the cellar had been racked in mid-October, so a few of the wines were still in recovery mode at the time of my visit here on the morning of November 8th. Nevertheless, it was very easy to appreciate that Thiébault Huber is making some very, very good wines from his six and a half hectares of vines right now and I am already looking forward to my visit here next year to taste his full spectrum of wines from the 2017 vintage!

Vins Rouges

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The short crop of 2016 saw Monsieur Huber blend together his production in Bourgogne and his Haute Côte de Beaune vineyards to make a single cuvée of Bourgogne. The wine is pretty and red fruity, offering up a bright bouquet of cherries, strawberries, woodsmoke and a nice touch of soil. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and nicely balanced, with just a touch of backend tannin on the focused finish. A good example. 2018-2028. **87.**

2014 Haute Côte de Beaune Rouge- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

Thiébault Huber raises his Haute Côte de Beaune in a combination of tank and *demi-muids*. The 2014 version is a stylish example, with a pale color and a lovely, vibrant nose of cherries, quince, woodsmoke, fresh herbs and a nice touch of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is fullish, long and very well-balanced, with gentle tannins, tangy acids and fine focus on the fairly complex finish. 2019-2035. **87+.**

2015 Coteaux Bourguignons “les Chanterelles”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The domaine’s Coteaux Bourguignons is a blend of ninety percent gamay and ten percent pinot noir, with the vines having been planted right after World War II. The 2015 version is very good, offering up a fine nose of black cherries, dark soil tones, a bit of gamebird and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is full-bodied and really shows good mid-palate depth in this vintage, with fine focus and balance, little tannin and impressive grip on the bouncy and very tasty finish. Good juice. 2018-2023. **88.**

2016 Monthélie “la Combe Danay”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

Monsieur Huber’s parcel in Monthélie was the least affected by frost damage in 2016, so the yields here were only down about twenty-five percent. The vines here are thirty-two years of age and the wine is going to be very good, as it offers up a vibrant bouquet of red and black cherries, woodsmoke, gamebird and a complex base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and gently tannic, with a sappy core, lovely soil signature and fine focus and grip on the suave and nascently complex finish. This is a very good bottle of Monthélie *villages* in the making. 2021-2045+. **90.**

2016 Volnay “des Fremiets aux Robardelles”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

Due to the very, very short crop in his parcels in Volnay, Thiébault has had to blend everything together to make a single cuvée in 2016. The resulting wine is going to be excellent, as the nose jumps from the glass in a mix of black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of currant leaf, espresso and *pigeon*. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with lovely, ripe tannins, a fine core and impressive focus and complexity on the long and elegant finish. This is premier cru quality without a doubt in 2016! 2023-2055. **91.**

2015 Volnay “les Robardelles”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The 2015 les Robardelles is an excellent wine, with quite a red fruity blend in the bouquet of cherries, quince, woodsmoke, gamebird, a fine base of soil and a touch of currant leaf in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, tangy and impressively transparent for 2015, with a lovely core, impressive focus and balance, fine-grained tannins and a long, complex finish. Fine juice. 2021-2055+. **91+.**

2016 Pommard “des Bertins aux Vaumuriens Hauts”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

As is the case in Volnay in 2016, the frost damage was so severe in Monsieur Huber’s parcels in Pommard that he has had to make a single, blended cuvée from all of his holdings. The wine is going to be excellent, as the bouquet wafts from the glass in a classy blend of red plums, cherries, venison, a complex base of soil, woodsmoke, raw cocoa and a fine topnote of fresh thyme. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a sappy core, fine transparency, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, complex and well-balanced finish. This is really finesseful for a young Pommard! 2026-2060+. **92.**

2015 Pommard “Clos du Colombière”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The domaine’s monopole of Clos du Colombière was planted in 1990, so the vines are just now starting to get into their prime. The one-third of the vineyard that is classified as premier cru is on limestone soils, where the lower two-thirds have more clay underfoot. The wine is excellent in 2015, with the bouquet delivering a fine, red fruity mélange of cherries, red plums, *pigeon*, coffee, woodsmoke and a delicate touch of new oak (two casks out of nine are new). On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, elegant and soil-driven in personality, with fine-grained tannins, tangy acids and impressive focus and grip on the long and classy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2021-2060. **92.**

Vins Blancs

2015 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The 2015 Bourgogne Aligoté from Domaine Huber-Verdereau is a good solid example, offering up scents of crab apple, wet stones, dried flowers and orange peel. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, juicy and nicely mineral on the backend, with good balance and a long finish. Made from twenty year old vines. 2018-2023. **87.**

2015 Bourgogne Blanc “Pré aux Dames”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

These vines are planted in Puligny and date back to 1966. Ten percent of the vines are Chardonnay Musqué, which gives the wine a very floral signature. The 2015 version offers up a ripe and vibrant nose of peach, fresh apricot, chalky soil tones and a musky floral topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, juicy and surprisingly zesty on the backend, with good focus and grip and impressive length. 2018-2025. **87.**

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The regular bottling of Bourgogne Blanc from Thiébault Huber hails from vines in Meursault, rather than Puligny, and the wine will be a very tasty example in 2016. The bouquet offers up scents of peach, pear, a touch of hazelnut, orange blossoms and a nice base of chalky soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bright and nicely balanced, with good length and grip on the zesty finish. 2018-2025. **88.**

2016 Mercurey “les Combines”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

I really liked this wine, which was spared any frost damage in 2016. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a blaze of white peach, crab apple, chalky minerality, a touch of honeycomb and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and loads of personality on the long and focused finish. Fine juice. 2018-2030. **89+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “les Levrons”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

This parcel in Puligny was frosted badly in 2016, with eighty percent of the production lost. These are old vines and the one remaining cask of wine has turned out beautifully, delivering a classy bouquet of pear, peach, a touch of fresh almond, complex soil tones and a gently floral topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty, with a lovely core, fine focus and complexity and a long, vibrant finish. Good juice. 2018-2035. **91+.**

2016 Meursault “en Dressolles”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

This too was frosted badly in 2016 and there is one cask, rather than the customary five barrels in the cellars this year. Half of the vines here were planted in 1957 and Monsieur Huber decided to raise the wine in a one year-old barrel this year. The wine delivers a fine nose of pear, apple, hazelnuts, a lovely base of soil and a touch of honeycomb in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured out of the blocks, with more of a sense of reserve than the les Levrons, with good cut and grip, a fine core and lovely vibrancy on the long finish. Another fine *villages*. 2019-2035. **91+.**

2014 Meursault “la Pièce Sous le Bois”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

Thiébault Huber is no longer producing an example of la Pièce Sous le Bois, and I found both the 2014 and 2015 versions to be quite good, but not a big step up from his old vine *villages* bottlings he is producing from his own vineyards. The 2014 la Pièce Sous le Bois offers up a complex nose of apple, bee pollen spring flowers, hazelnuts, chalky soil and a bit of new oak. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and racy, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, nicely reserved finish. This could do with another year in the cellar to really blossom and is quite good. 2019-2035+. **92.**

2015 Meursault “la Pièce Sous le Bois”- Domaine Huber-Verdereau

The 2015 la Pièce Sous le Bois was raised in twenty percent new oak in this vintage. It is a lovely wine that is already a bit more open than the 2014 version, delivering a fine aromatic blend of pear, apple, hazelnuts, chalky soil, incipient notes of *crème patissière* and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and pure on the attack, with a good core and a long, bright and wide open finish. Good juice for drinking over the next decade. 2018-2028. **91.**

Domaine Michel Lafarge (Volnay)

It is always a great pleasure to visit the Lafarge family in Volnay and taste here, for not only are the wines utterly classical in style, not to mention invariably exceptional in quality, but one also often gets to chat with Michel Lafarge, who probably has more experience than any living vigneron today in all of Burgundy. I did not see Michel on this visit, but as always, his spirit was pervasive in the cellars. The family's frost damage here varied rather dramatically from parcel to parcel and village to village, with the global production of the domaine down by sixty-five percent in 2016. But, the frost was hard on some plots of vines and missed others completely, so some cuvées have yields that are quite correct, whereas others are absolutely microscopic. The vineyards that were completely untouched by the frost at Domaine Lafarge in 2016 included their parcels in les Aigrots and Grèves in Beaune, Pézerolles in Pommard and the Clos du Château des Ducs and Clos des Chênes in Volnay. So, there were some of the very best bottlings here that were not damaged by frost, which is the good news. However, this being Volnay in the twenty-first century, there was also some offsetting bad news, with the "villages" level parcels in both Meursault and Volnay hit very hard by frost, so that there is only a single cuvée of each in the cellars in 2016 and the Vendanges Sélectionnées bottlings will not be produced. One of the most severely frosted parcels were the old vines of gamay and pinot noir that make the superb Passetoutgrains "Exception" bottling here, so there will be a tiny, tiny amount of this lovely wine in 2016. Amongst the premier crus in Volnay that are farmed by the Lafarge family, the Pitures was not too badly hit by the frost, but the Mitans was down by sixty percent in their parcel in this vineyard. As Frédéric related, in the experience of Michel Lafarge, this was the first time the family's vines in Mitans had ever been frosted, so that is going all the way back to the 1946 vintage, which was the first that he ever worked alongside of his father, Henri Lafarge at the family domaine. The domaine got started picking on the 21st of September in 2016, and due to the very small yields in several of their parcels, they were all finished by the 26th of the month. The 2016 wines were showing beautifully at the time of my visit in mid-November and will be absolute classics chez Lafarge in the fullness of time. Happily, some of their most popular cuvées have pretty good yields and will be fairly easy to secure in 2016 (at least in the context of the rather rough and tumble world of today's Burgundy market), but everything in the cellars from this vintage is excellent and I would strongly suggest that any Domaine Lafarge wine that is available is worth adding to one's cellar! I also tasted the fine range of 2016 Cru Beaujolais made by Chantal Lafarge during my November visit, but will include those notes in the next issue's piece on the Beaujolais region.

Vins Blancs de Domaine Lafarge

2016 Bourgogne Aligoté "Raisin d'Orée"- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Bourgogne Aligoté "Raisin d'Orée" from the Lafarges is a fine example, offering up a bright and classic nose of apple, lime zest, a fine base of soil and a topnote of white flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, fullish and quite long, with a good core, bright acids and good length and grip on the wide open finish. 2018-2026. 87+.

2016 Meursault- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Meursault AC bottling was made from very small yields, as there are only three barrels of this wine from a full hectare of vines in this vintage! The wine is going to be very good, as the bouquet wafts from the glass in a bright blend of pineapple, peach, chalky soil tones, almond and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is fullish, long and very nicely balanced, with good complexity and focus, good depth at the core and a long, vibrant and well-

balanced finish. Despite the very low yields here, this wine is not overly concentrated and is quite stylish. 2018-2030+. **90.**

2016 Beaune “Clos des Aigrots” Blanc- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Clos des Aigrots Blanc *chez* Lafarge has really turned out beautifully, with depth, purity and fine soil signature evident in both the nose and palate. The nose delivers a fine combination of white peach, pear, chalky minerality, bee pollen, orange blossoms and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and focused, with lovely mineral drive, a fine core, bright, zesty acids and excellent balance on the long, complex and very refined finish. Fine, fine juice. 2020-2040. **92+.**



Two of the most experienced and talented winegrowers in Burgundy: Frédéric and Michel Lafarge.

Vins Rouges de Domaine Lafarge

2016 Bourgogne Passetoutgrains “Cuvée Exception”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Cuvée Exception is quite deep and sappy at the core this year, which is no doubt a reflection of the frost. The wine is really lovely on the black fruity nose, offering up a fine blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, a touch of pepper, dark soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with lovely focus and balance and a tangy, intensely flavored finish. A lovely example. 2018-2030+. **89.**

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Michel Lafarge

Year after year, Domaine Lafarge makes one of the very finest examples of Bourgogne rouge in all the Côte, so it is hard to cite it as yet another example of how well the 2016 vintage is at this level, but this is another superb Bourgogne to add to the roster of exceptional bottlings. The bouquet is lovely, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of plums, black cherries, a touch of *pigeon*, dark soil tones and a touch of nuttiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, focused and long, with a sappy core, good transparency and fine backend tension and grip on the long and vibrant finish. Good juice. 2018-2035+. **90.**

2016 Volnay- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Volnay *villages* from the Lafarges is outstanding this year. The bouquet is pure, nascently complex and quite expressive, delivering a blend of red plums, red and black cherries, raw cocoa, a complex base of soil, gamebird and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and gently sappy at the core, with excellent transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and perfectly focused finish. Lovely and classic Volnay. 2024-2060. **91+.**

2016 Beaune “Clos des Aigrots”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Clos des Aigrots is very pure and very classic, with a fine core of sappy fruit, exceptional soil signature and a seamless and elegant structural chassis that will carry the wine beautifully for many decades. There was no frost here and the wine is really emblematic of the elegant and sappy style of the 2016s that were equally unaffected, with the bouquet jumping from the glass in a fine blend of cherries, red plums, gamebird, a touch of nutskin, sweet herb tones, a great base of soil and a gentle floral topnote redolent of lavender. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with good sappiness at the core, fine-grained tannins, bright acids and excellent focus and grip on the long, tangy and complex finish. Lovely wine. 2024-2060. **92.**

2016 Beaune “Grèves”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

I am very happy that I had my original information incorrect about this parcel of old vines when I wrote about the 2014 vintage, when I reported that the whole parcel was being replanted, when in fact, only a quarter of the parcel succumbed to the consistent barrage of hail here between 2010 and 2014 and had to be replanted. Consequently, three-quarters of this old parcel remains and celebrated its ninety-fifty birthday in 2016 with a simply superb bottle in the making. The nose offers up a pure and black fruity blend of black cherries, dark berries, gamebird, a superb base of minerality, bitter chocolate and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a lovely core, great focus and grip, suave, seamless tannins, bright acids and a very long, energetic and nascently complex finish. This is going to be lovely juice. 2026-2060. **93.**

2016 Pommard “Pézerolles”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

There have not been two consecutive vintages of Pommard “Pézerolles” produced at Domaine Lafarge since 2010 and 2011, due to the hail in Pommard, so it was nice to see another fine vintage of this lovely cru waiting in the cellars here in 2016, after an exceptional version of this in 2015. The bouquet on the 2016 offers up lovely red fruit tones in its constellation of red plums, quince, *pigeon*, cocoa powder, a very complex base of soil and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a sappy core, fine soil signature, lovely focus and balance and a long, ripely tannic and vibrant finish. Another excellent Pézerolles in the making. 2027-2065. **93.**

2016 Volnay “Pitures”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

Pitures is very often a black fruity example of Volnay and this is definitely the case with this lovely 2016 from the Lafarge family. The bouquet is pure, complex and quite elegant, wafting from the glass in a mix of cassis, currant leaf, dark soil tones, espresso, woodsmoke and a nice touch of upper register spice tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very transparent, with a fine core, lovely, seamless structure, moderate tannins and impressive length and grip on the nascently complex finish. Fine juice. 2027-2065. **92+**.

2016 Volnay “Mitans”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

With the very short crop in Mitans in 2016, it is likely that this wine will all be bottled in magnums this year. The wine is really gorgeous this year, with a vibrant and red fruity bouquet of cherries, red plums, gamebird, raw cocoa, a fine, complex base of soil tones and a touch of bonfire up high. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely sappy at the core, with great minerality, ripe, suave tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. Despite the short crop from the frost, the wine has turned out absolutely classic in profile and will be a superb bottle of Mitans in the fullness of time. 2026-2065. **93**.

2016 Volnay “Caillerets”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Caillerets *chez* Lafarge is supremely elegant out of the blocks this year, which I always take as a very good sign for its future evolution, as Caillerets can sometimes be a bit *sauvage* in its very early days. The 2016 here is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a complex aromatic blend of cherries, a touch of strawberries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, a beautiful, complex base of soil tones and plenty of Caillerets spice tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very suave on the attack, with a fine core of pure fruit, outstanding soil signature and a very, very long, ripely tannic and impeccably balanced finish. 2028-2065. **94**.

2016 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

The 2016 Clos des Chênes from Domaine Lafarge is already showing enormous complexity on both the nose and palate and is a great, great wine in the making. The bouquet delivers a magical mélange of cassis, black plums, dark chocolate, gamebird, woodsmoke, violets and a gloriously complex base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very refined, with a sappy core, lovely transparency, fine-grained tannins and a very long, tangy and elegant finish. This will be stunning when it is fully mature! 2028-2070. **95+**.

2016 Volnay “Clos du Château des Ducs”- Domaine Michel Lafarge

Frédéric Lafarge noted that their “very best yields of 2016 were in the Clos du Château des Ducs and the wine has turned out brilliantly this year. This has all the inherent elegance of the best, non-frosted wines of 2016, as the nose soars from the glass in a refined constellation of red and black cherries, red plums, cocoa powder, gamebird, lovely minerality, sweet herbs and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality, with a sappy core of stunning fruit, ripe, seamless tannins and great focus and grip on the very long, very elegant and vibrant finish. A great vintage of Clos du Château des Ducs. 2028-2065+. **95**.

Auxey-Duresses

Domaine Gilles Lafouge (Auxey-Duresses)

Gilles Lafouge has made outstanding wines in 2016. His yields were down universally by thirty percent due to frost damage, but this was spread around differently in each parcel, so that some vineyards were hit quite hard and others were completely untouched. For example, with his 2016 Meursault AC bottling, it all hails from the lieu à dit of les Clous this year, as his parcel in

Grands Charrons (which usually constitutes fifty percent of the blend) was completely wiped out by frost. Monsieur Lafouge also lost sixty percent of his crop in Meix Chavaux, but his vines in Casse Têtes were completely untouched, and so it went in the frost vagaries here in the spring of 2016. Gilles Lafouge adopted his new barrel regimen a bit to the circumstances of each vineyard this year (it is never one for a large percentage of new oak in any case), so for example, his Meix Chavaux was raised entirely in one or two wine casks in 2016 and saw no new wood. As is customary here in November, the wines had been assembled in tank in preparation for bottling early in the new year, with the whites having been racked right after the harvest of 2017 and the reds at the start of October. Consequently, everything was showing beautifully and one can clearly see that this is a very, very fine vintage for Domaine Lafouge. The 2016 red wines from Auxey-Duresses from the domaine are quite black fruity in personality and show lovely structure for medium to long-term aging, with classic balances and plenty of aromatic complexity already in evidence. The two Pommards are outstanding, with the inherent elegance of the 2016 vintage very much in evidence in both wines out of the blocks. Gilles Lafouge is at the top of his game today and this is now one of the most consistently satisfying stops on my Burgundy tour each trip.

2016 Vins Blancs

2016 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

Gilles Lafouge makes really good Aligoté and his 2016 is another very strong wine. This wine is made from sixty year-old vines and Monsieur Lafouge barrel ferments half the cuvée. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic blend of apple, lime, stony minerality and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and zesty, with a quite ample core and fine focus and grip. Good juice. 22018-2025. **88.**

2016 Auxey-Duresses Blanc “les Hautés”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 les Hautés Blanc has turned out beautiful *chez* Lafouge, offering up a bright and very refined nose of apple, pear, a touch of fresh almond, pungent floral tones and a lovely base of chalky minerality. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and deep at the core, with bright, zesty acids, fine focus and grip and impressive lift on the long and beautifully balanced finish. Lovely Auxey Blanc! 2018-2035+. **91+**.

2016 Auxey-Duresses Blanc “les Boutonniers”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 Domaine Lafouge les Boutonniers Blanc is a tad more closed today than the les Hautés, but every bit as precise and complex. The bouquet wafts from the glass in an excellent blend of apple, pear, a touch of Meursault-like hazelnut, chalky minerality and a topnote of lime zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nicely reserved in profile, with a fine core, excellent mineral drive and a long, vibrant and harmonious finish. 2019-2030+. **92.**

2016 Meursault- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The straight Meursault bottling in 2016 is lovely here, offering up a bright and complex nose of lime, pear, a hint of iodine, complex minerality, a gentle touch of vanillin oak and a topnote of citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely racy, with a good core, fine backend intensity and grip and a long, nascently complex and bouncy finish. Fine juice. 2020-240. **91+**.

2016 Meursault “Meix Chavaux”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

Despite only forty percent of a normal crop in the Meix Chavaux this year, the wine was showing very well at the time of my visit, but this was one of those heavily frost-damaged whites that seemed to have sacrificed just a touch of backend energy from the freeze. The bouquet is

lovely, offering up a deep and youthful blend of pear, apple, hazelnut, a fine base of soil and a touch of lime peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and complex, with a fine core and very nice focus and grip on the long and easy-going finish. I like this quite well, but the frost damage does show just a bit in the slightly softer structural chassis of the wine *vis à vis* the other Lafouge whites in 2016. 2020-2040. **91+**.

2016 Meursault “Casse Têtes”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 Meursault “Casse Têtes” from Gilles Lafouge is outstanding and by a whisker, my favorite white in the cellar this year. The wine delivers excellent purity and nascent complexity in its aromatic constellation of pear, apple, a touch of iodine, a complex base of minerality, fresh almond, apple blossoms and discreet vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and beautifully balanced, with zesty acids, fine focus and grip and a long, youthful and racy finish. A classic in the making. 2020-2040. **92+**.

2016 Vins Rouges

2016 Auxey-Duresses Rouge- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 Auxey *villages* is a fine bottle in the making, offering up a black fruity nose of cassis, black cherries, woodsmoke, a touch of espresso and a fine base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is round, full-bodied and quite suave on the attack, with a good core, modest tannins and fine length and grip on the complex and classy finish. This will want just a few years in the cellar to blossom and will drink well from early on in its evolution, but will also age very nicely. 2020-2045. **90**.

2016 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “Climat du Valle”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 Climat du Valle is a bit more structured than the Auxey AC bottling, but every bit as refined and elegant. The bouquet jumps from the glass in an excellent blend of dark berries, black cherries, gamebird, a hint of bonfire, fresh thyme and a fine base of dark soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely structured on the backend, with a very good core, gently chewy tannins and impressive length and grip on the balanced finish. Fine potential here, but this will need some time in the cellar. 2023-2050+. **91+**.

2016 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “la Chapelle”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 la Chapelle is outstanding and will be a bit earlier in its accessibility than the Climat du Valle this year. The bouquet is pure and black fruity, offering up scents of cassis, dark berries, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird, a touch of espresso and a nice touch of fresh herbs in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very well-balanced, with a fine core, impressive transparency, fine-grained tannins and a long, vibrant finish. Very impressive potential. 2021-2050+. **92+**.

2016 Auxey-Duresses Rouge “les Duresses”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The 2016 les Duresses is outstanding and will age long and gracefully. The bright and very precise nose delivers a fine mix of cassis, black cherries, chalky minerality, *pigeon*, fresh thyme and raw cocoa. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and complex, with a fine core, excellent soil signature, seamless balance and a long, suavely tannic and tangy finish. This is still early days for this excellent wine, but give it three or four years to start to blossom and it will be an absolute delight. This and the la Chapelle have to be two of the very finest red wine values of the entire vintage! 2021-2055. **93**.

2016 Pommard “les Noizons”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

Monsieur Lafouge notes that his parcel in Noizons was untouched by the April frost in 2016 and the wine has turned out beautifully. The superb nose wafts from the glass in a mix of

red and black cherries, a fine base of soil, woodsmoke, gamebird, raw cocoa and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a rock solid core, beautiful balance, fine-grained tannins and a long, youthful and promising finish. While this will need a good decade to blossom properly, it will be a very elegant example of Pommard once it has opened up. 2026-2060. **92+**.

2016 Pommard “les Chanlins”- Domaine Gilles Lafouge

The Lafouge family’s plot of vines in Chanlins were only modestly touched by the frost, so yields are down by fifteen percent in 2016. In the context of frost damage elsewhere, this was quite minimal. The resulting wine is going to be outstanding, as the bouquet is complex and very pure in its constellation of black cherries, a touch of plum, bonfire, espresso, *pigeon*, a gorgeous base of soil and a topnote of currant leaf. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a sappy core, great transparency and a very long, focused and suavely tannic finish. Great juice. 2026-2060. **94**.



The lovely village of Monthélie, as seen from the road from Auxey-Duresses back into Meursault.

Meursault

Domaine Arnaud Ente (Meursault)

Arnaud Ente was philosophical about his frost damage in 2016, as his plots were affected to varying degrees in late April and some were not particularly frosted, whereas others were devastated by the early morning freeze. For example, as his vines for his Bourgogne Blanc bottling are mostly located in the neighboring village of Puligny-Montrachet, there was virtually no frost damage in these parcels, whereas his Meursault AC plots were down from thirty to forty percent and his premier cru Goutte d’Or vines were hit hard by frost and seventy percent of the

crop was lost. The crop in Petits Charrons was even lower, as yields here were only eight hectoliters per hectare in 2016, due to the frost. In contrast, the centenarian vines that make up the La Sève du Clos bottling were only down about thirty percent, as these very old vines always yield very low crops, so the nineteen hectoliters per hectare here was not all that dramatically below what Monsieur Ente sees from these old vines each year. Happily, his parcel in the Puligny premier cru of Referts was not frosted at all and he also had good yields in his plot of Champgains as well. So, like many in Meursault, the frost damage varied considerably from plot to plot and the short crop was nowhere near as debilitating as it was in villages like Savigny-lès-Beaune. The overall quality of the 2016s here is simply outstanding, but this should come as no surprise, as Arnaud Ente has been making some of the most refined, complex, racy and mineral-infused examples of white Burgundy for many years now and one is hard-pressed to find a more successful white Burgundy producer anywhere in the Côte d'Or today. The red wines here have also been exemplary for the last decade or more and the 2016s here have also turned out beautifully, with lovely sappy fruit tones, great soil transparency and the suave balances of wines that will age long and gracefully, but provide fine drinking from a relatively early age.

2016 Bourgogne Aligoté- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The domaine's parcels of Aligoté were spared most of the heavy frost damage, so yields here were only down twenty percent for this lovely cuvée. The wine was showing beautifully in the first week in November, offering up a vibrant nose of lemon, apple, esthery floral tones and a lovely base of wet stone minerality. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and focused, with lovely mid-palate concentration, racy acids and excellent length and grip on the balanced finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2030. **90.**

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2016 Bourgogne Blanc from Arnaud Ente is also a beautiful wine in the making, offering plenty of early complexity tied to a medium weight format of great vibrancy and charm. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a lovely blend of pear, apple, a touch of nuttiness, lemon blossoms and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and intensely flavored, with vibrant acids, fine focus and a long, zesty finish that closes with excellent cut and grip. A very charged middleweight in the making. 2018-2030. **90.**

2016 Meursault- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2016 Meursault *villages* bottling *chez* Ente was showing marvelously at the time of my visit, with a promising sense of reserve that is not always evident in every 2016 white Burgundy. The bouquet delivers a complex and zesty blend of pear, tangerine, complex minerality, a touch of iodine, hazelnuts and a very discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and primary, with a good core, lovely cut and grip and a long, energetic and nascently complex finish. High class village wine that will want a year or two in the cellar to start to blossom, but which should delight from a fairly early age. 2019-2040. **91+.**

2016 Meursault "Clos des Ambres"- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2016 Clos des Ambres shows all of the refinement and elegance that is inherent in this vintage range from Monsieur Ente. The nose jumps from the glass in a very floral and esthery mix of pear, apple, hazelnuts, chalky soil tones, fruit blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very mineral in personality, with a lovely core of fruit, fine focus and grip, bright acids and a very long, complex and electric finish. This is not a powerful wine by any means, but a wine of complexity, precision and purity that is lithe and intense, rather than muscular. A gorgeous wine. 2021-2045. **92.**

2016 Meursault “la Goutte d’Or”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

With seventy percent of the potential crop lost to frost at the end of April, this is going to be a hard wine to find in the market, but the quality here is excellent in 2016. The wine offers up a very pure and classy bouquet of pear, apple, hazelnuts, complex soil tones, bee pollen, orange zest and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very transparent in personality, with a fine core, impressive focus and grip and a long, racy and beautifully balanced finish. *Tout en finesse!* 2020-2045. **94.**

2016 Meursault “Petits Charrons”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Monsieur Ente already has a very small parcel of vines in Petits Charrons, but when you couple this with the microscopic yields of only eight hectoliters per hectare, the amount of wine produced here in 2016 is virtually nothing. In fact, there are all of ninety-three liters of wine in the cellars here from Petits Charrons and it is most likely that Monsieur Ente will just bottle the entire production off in magnums this year. The wine is excellent, wafting from the glass in a beautiful blend of pear, tangerine, almond, iodine, a lovely base of soil and a very gentle touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely zesty, with a lovely core, fine balance and a long, complex and utterly refined finish. At the time of my visit, the Goutte d’Or was a tad more precise and laser-like, but it is hard to pick a favorite between these two beautiful examples of Meursault. 2021-2045+. **93+.**

2016 Meursault “la Sève du Clos”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2016 la Sève du Clos bottling is simply outstanding. The nose delivers a complex and refined aromatic constellation of pear, apple, iodine, fresh almond, kaleidoscopic minerality, orange zest and a discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and racy, with a rock solid core, great nascent complexity and superb backend energy and grip on the very long, seamless and vibrant finish. A beautiful wine. 2021-2050. **95.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Referts”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Given that Monsieur Ente’s parcels in Referts were spared from frost damage in 2016, this is going to be one of the easier wines to find from the domaine in this vintage. And, it is guaranteed to delight those who secure a few bottles, as the wine delivers a beautiful bouquet of pear, tangerine, fresh almond, chalky minerality, vanillin oak and a very vibrant topnote of citrus zest. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off beautiful mid-palate depth, with crisp, zesty acids, stunning focus and grip and a very, very long, dancing finish. There is a very nice sense of reserve here that will demand at least a few years of cellaring to allow the wine’s secondary layers to start to emerge. 2021-2045+. **94+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Champ Gains”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The aromatic and flavor profile of the 2016 Champ Gains is far more mineral than the beautiful fruit tones displayed by the Referts in this vintage, though the overall quality of the two wines is very much the same. The 2016 Champgains offers up a deep and transparent bouquet of apple, yellow fruit, very complex, stony minerality, bee pollen and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and again fairly reserved in profile, with rock solid core, excellent focus and balance and vibrant backend mineral drive on the very long finish that augurs beautifully for this wine’s evolution in bottle. Great juice in the making. 2022-2045+. **94+.**

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Arnaud Ente

Three-quarters of the vines for this bottling are located in Meursault, with the other quarter over the border in Puligny. The wine has turned out beautifully in 2016 and is yet another really exceptional Bourgogne example in this vintage, as it offers up a bright and red fruity

bouquet of cherries, strawberries, coffee, vinesmoke, fresh herb tones and a superb base of soil. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and intensely flavored, with fine focus and grip, a touch of backend tannin and a long, soil-driven and surprisingly complex finish. Lovely juice in the making. 2020-2040. **89+**.

2016 Volnay “Santenots”- Domaine Arnaud Ente

The 2016 Volnay “Santenots” from Arnaud Ente has also turned out beautifully, with this vintage showing a nice touch of red fruit in its aromatic constellation of cherries, plums, fresh herb tones, gamebird, dark soil, woodsmoke and a touch of exotica in its topnote of juniper berries. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, young and very transparent, with a superb core, fine-grained tannins and excellent focus and balance on the very long, nascently complex and vibrant finish. There is lovely backend lift here that promises a great bottle with a bit of cellaring. 2022-2060. **93**.

Domaine François et Antoine Jobard (Meursault)

As I mentioned in the introduction, François Jobard decided that with the very short crop in several of his vineyard parcels, coupled with the inherent elegance of the 2016 vintage, the terroir here might best be presented by the use of zero new oak in his cellars in this vintage, and most of the wines were raised in a range of one to five wine barrels. The results are absolutely stunning, as a “one wine barrel” will still impart a bit of vanillin oakiness to support the fruit and mineral components in a wine, while dutifully remaining in the background in a supporting role. The yields here at Domaine Jobard varied enormously, depending upon the frost damage in April, with the two worst hit cuvées in the cellar being the Bourgogne Blanc and the Meursault “En la Barre”, both of which were heavily frosted and down by fully seventy percent in 2016. The lieu à dit of les Tillets was also hit by the frost and was down thirty percent, and the St. Aubin premier crus that were added to the Monsieur Jobard’s roster a couple of years ago were also badly frosted and off from forty to fifty percent in this vintage as well. However, other vineyard parcels were spared the full brunt of the frost damage, so for example, in most of François Jobard’s top premier crus, frost damage was twenty percent or less and the vineyards of Meursault “Blagny” and Puligny “Champs Gains” were completely untouched. So the quantities varied dramatically from cuvée to cuvée here in 2016, but the only wine that seemed to not be singing at the time of my visite was one of the two St. Aubin premier crus, which seemed a little lackluster in terms of energy and which may well be a side effect of the frost damage. Monsieur Jobard began harvesting on September 22nd and had brought in everything within the course of a week. A super range of 2016s.

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

Despite being hammered by the April frosts, the Bourgogne Blanc 2016 here is really a lovely wine and an excellent example for its level. The bouquet is pure and stylish, offering up a bright blend of apple, hazelnut, a lovely base of soil and hints of the honeycomb to come with a touch of bottle age. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and nicely racy in profile, with a good core and a long, fairly complex and zesty finish. Fine juice. 2018-2030. **89**.

2016 Meursault- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

François Jobard has three parcels of vines that contribute to the Meursault AC cuvée here, but ninety percent of the blend comes from the single lieu à dit of Chaumes de Perrières in 2016, as the other two parcels were heavily frosted. The wine is really quite refined, offering up a vibrant bouquet of apple, pear, hazelnuts, a lovely base of chalky soil tones and a nice touch of

citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and complex, with a lovely core of fruit, fine transparency and a long, zesty finish. A classy *villages*. 2018-2040. **90+**.

2016 Meursault “Tillets”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2016 Meursault “Tillets” *chez* Jobard is more reserved on the nose today than the straight *villages*, offering up a pure and promising bouquet of apple, white flowers, fresh almond, salty minerality and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full, long and classy, with a very good core, bright acids and fine focus and grip on the long, nascently complex and beautifully balanced finish. A lovely wine in the making. 2020-2040. **91**.

2016 Meursault “En la Barre”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

It is too bad that the Jobard’s parcel of En la Barre was so heavily frosted in 2016, as the wine that remains is absolutely beautiful in its elegance and charm. The nose wafts from the glass in a fine blend of pear, apple, bee pollen, spring flowers, a gentle touch of hazelnut and a nice touch of iodine. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, complex and far more open than the Tillets, with a good core, fine backend tension and a long, bouncy and succulent finish. A very pretty wine. 2018-2035+. **91**.

2016 St. Aubin “Perrières”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

Monsieur Jobard’s Perrières parcel in St. Aubin was hit hard by frost and is down by fully fifty percent in 2016, so there is only a single cask of this wine in the cellars this year. The wine is a bit 2012-like in its concentration on both the nose and palate as a result of the frost, offering up scents of peach, tangerine, acacia blossoms, chalky soil and a bit of upper register nuttiness. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, wide open and zesty, with a good core and fine length and grip on the finish, but not with the same complexity and backend energy as the Meursault *lieux à dits*. This is quite tasty for the nearer-term, but it shows a bit of the effects from the frost and will not be long-lived. 2018-2030. **89**.

2016 St. Aubin “Sur le Sentier du Clou”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The Jobard rows of vines in Sentier du Clou were a touch less hard hit by frost and this shows in a touch more completeness in the wine. The bouquet is pure and bright, offering up scents of pear, apple, a touch of hazelnut, chalky soil tones and a gentle floral topnote. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and deeper at the core than the Perrières, with good focus and grip and a long, complex and classy finish. This probably still will not be able to match the Tillets for longevity, but it is more classical in personality this year than the Perrières. 2019-2035+. **90+**.

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Trézin”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Trézin” from Domaine Jobard has turned out beautifully, having been untouched by any frost and very classical in proportion and personality. The lovely and vibrant bouquet jumps from the glass in a mix of apple, white peach, chalky minerality, a touch of fresh almond, spring flowers and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and focused, with a super core of fruit, fine soil signature, bright acids and a long, balanced and vibrant finish. A very strong vintage for the Jobard family’s Trézin. 2020-2040. **91+**.

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Champs Gains”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2016 Champs Gains from François Jobard is excellent. The nose delivers a fine aromatic constellation of tangerine, white peach, chalky soil tones, apple blossoms, vanillin oak and a hint of almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, crisp and nicely reserved in personality, with a good core, fine focus and grip, zesty acids and a long,

nascently complex and poised finish. This is fine, fine juice, but the over-achieving Trézin can give it a run for its money in 2016. 2022-2045+. **92+**.

2016 Meursault “Blagny”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

In my experience, the quality of *terroir* of this premier cru sometimes lags just a bit behind the others here in the Jobard cellars, but in 2016, for whatever reason, the Meursault “Blagny” has really turned in a stellar performance and this is one of the best young vintages of this bottling that I have tasted. The bouquet is beautifully expressive and very precise, offering up a blend of pear, orange zest, hazelnuts, a lovely base of soil, a hint of iodine and a gentle topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure this year, with a fine core, bright, racy acids and great balance and cut on the long, focused and complex finish. The inherent elegance of 2016s untouched by frost is very much in evidence here and this is a terrific wine in the making! 2021-2045+. **93+**.



François Jobard at the family domaine in Meursault.

2016 Meursault “Poruzots”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2016 Poruzots from Domaine Jobard is utterly classic in profile and equally refined. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a fine blend of apple, passion fruit, hazelnut, iodine, salty minerality and a topnote of white flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and properly reserved out of the blocks, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and enormous backend mineral drive and energy. A superb bottle of Poruzots. 2020-2045+. **93+**.

2016 Meursault “Genevrières”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

I always love François Jobard’s expression of Genevrières and the supremely elegant 2016 is no exception. The gorgeous bouquet offers up a fine combination of passion fruit, pear, a

hint of fresh coconut, salty minerality, spring flowers, just a whisper of hazelnut and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and utterly refined in personality, with a fine core of fruit, excellent cut and grip and a long, vibrant finish that closes with impressive mineral drive and bounce. Perhaps the elegant *terroir* of Genevrières reaches its apogee when raised in one wine casks? 2020-2045+. **95.**

2016 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine François et Antoine Jobard

The 2016 Meursault “Charmes” from Monsieur Jobard is no slouch either, as it delivers a classic and pure bouquet of apple, pear, hazelnuts, just a hint of the butteriness to come with bottle age, chalky minerality, iodine and apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and zesty, with excellent mid-palate depth, bright acids and a very long, properly reserved and complex finish. This will take a year or two longer in bottle to fully blossom than the celestial Genevrières, but should end up every bit as compelling. 2021-2045+. **94+.**

Domaine des Comtes Lafon (Meursault)

Like everyone else in Meursault, Domaine des Comtes Lafon lost a varying amount of crop, depending on which vineyards were hit harder by frost at the end of April. As mentioned in the introduction, their Montrachet holdings are in the Chassagne-Montrachet side of the vineyard and were absolutely devastated, so the very few grapes that they were able to glean from the vineyard went into the blended cuvée being produced from six different domaines' parcels at Domaine Leflaive this year. It is somewhat ironic that when one walks into the new tasting room at Comtes Lafon, there is a beautiful artist's rendition hanging on the wall there of a bottle of the domaine's wine, and of course, the artist chose to paint a bottle of 2016 Comtes Lafon Montrachet! So, as the team at the domaine likes to joke, that is the only bottle of 2016 Lafon Montrachet that will ever be produced. Dominique Lafon was away on the day I wished to visit the domaine and I was hosted by his second in command, Stéphane Thibodaux to taste the 2016s here. Amongst the beautiful red wines produced at Domaine Lafon in 2016 (and they are truly stunning!), the yields for the Monthélie “les Duresses” were down by two-thirds, the Clos des Chênes and Champans also hit quite a bit by frost and in the Santenots du Milieu the domaine lost fully seventy-five percent of its normal crop load! Needless to say, it was heartwarming to see the cellar full of casks of 2017 red wines, after the very small yields here over the last several years! On the white wine side of the ledger, the frost damage in Meursault varied considerably, so that eighty percent of the Meursault villages bottling was lost, the Clos de la Barre just a bit less so, while the Lafon parcels in the premier crus of Genevrières, Charmes and Perrières received little or no frost damage in 2016. So, in Meursault, location was key to how bad the damage was on that frozen April morning. As is my custom when visiting the domaine in November, I tasted the full range of Côte de Beaune wines, as well as the Mâconnais wines from Dominique Lafon, but I will send out the notes from the Héritiers de Lafon Mâconnais wines in the next issue or two as part of coverage on that lovely region, rather than print them here. The 2016 wines here showed very well indeed, with only the Poruzots and Bouchères a wee bit out of line with the great purity and vivacious personalities of the other Côte de Beaune whites. It may have just been the moment I caught up with those two wines, or perhaps they do not have quite the vibrancy of the remainder of the Meursault lineup here in 2016. In any case, the rest of the lineup is about as fine a set of white Burgundies as one could taste in this vintage, as there are some truly beautiful young Meursault bottlings awaiting release in the Lafon cellars for later this year!

Côte de Beaune Rouges

2016 Monthélie “les Duresses” Rouge- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

It is really too bad that the 2016 les Duresses will be produced in such small quantities this year, as the wine is really, really good and will be a great value for those lucky enough to come across bottles. The wine had been assembled into tank ten days before my visit and was scheduled to be bottled before Christmas, as it had reached a beautiful point of evolution. The nose jumps from the glass in a vibrant blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and an exotic topnote of currant leaf. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and very nicely balanced, with a sappy core, fine focus and grip and a long, suavely-tannic finish. A very seductive vintage for this underrated red *chez Lafon*. 2020-2050. **91**.

2016 Volnay “Clos des Chênes”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

In 2016 Dominique Lafon’s production in Clos des Chênes was down by fifty percent, so there are only two and a half casks here, rather than the customary five barrels. The wine is really a stunner, offering up a very pure and nascently complex bouquet of cassis, black cherries, *pigeon*, bitter chocolate, a superb base of soil and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very refined on the attack, with its full-bodied and seamless format offering excellent depth at the core, fine-grained tannins, lovely focus and grip and a very long, very elegant and nascently complex finish. This is going to be a beautifully sappy and classically soil-driven example of Clos des Chênes at its apogee. 2023-2065. **93+**.

2016 Volnay “Champans”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2016 Champagne *chez Lafon* is again, a very pure and sappy example of this vineyard. The preponderance of more than ninety-five year-old vines here always gives this wine an extra degree of depth, and with the vintage’s predilection to deliver very sappy and pure fruit, the results are very exciting in 2016. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a gorgeous blend of black cherries, dark berries, gamebird, a lovely base of stony soil tones, woodsmoke, a touch of nutskin and a very discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and beautifully transparent, with a sappy core, refined, suave tannins and a very, very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. Fine, fine juice in the making. 2024-2065. **93+**.

2016 Volnay “Santenots du Milieu”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2016 Santenots du Milieu from Comtes Lafon is another outstanding young Volnay. The wine is very pure and very refined on the nose, which offers up a fine blend of black currants, black cherries, a touch of eucalyptus, espresso, *pigeon*, dark soil tones, woodsmoke and a gentle base of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully structured, with suave, seamless tannins, a great core, fine soil signature, tangy acids and a very long, very pure and classy finish. This could end up similarly to the beautiful 1978 version in the fullness of time. 2024-2065. **93+**.

Côte de Beaune Blancs

2016 Meursault- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

Given how short the crop is for this wine, and the Désirée production went into this cuvée as well, I am not sure that the team at Domaine Lafon is going to thank me when I say it is perhaps the finest rendition of the straight Meursault here I have ever tasted. There is a depth at the core and a backend dimension in the 2016 that this wine does not consistently deliver, so the very low yields here were at least positive in one respect. The bouquet is flat out stunning, offering up a gorgeous mélange of pear, passion fruit, fresh almond, a touch of coconut, chalky

soil and a very discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and racy, with a lovely core, fine complexity and impressive cut and grip on the perfectly balanced and zesty finish. High class AC! 2018-2035+. **92.**

2016 Meursault “Clos de la Barre”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

I also loved how the 2016 Clos de la Barre was showing at the time of my visit in the first week of November. This wine is very, very refined on both the nose and palate this year, with the bouquet wafting from the glass in a complex blend of delicious apple, pear, almond, *crème patissière*, musky floral tones, chalky soil and a touch of new wood. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with fine complexity, a good core and excellent grip on the long, vibrant and racy finish. A fine, fine vintage of Clos de la Barre. 2019-2035+. **92+.**

2016 Meursault “Bouchères”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The 2016 Bouchères had already been racked into tank and was just a touch reductive at the time of my visit, so perhaps I am underestimating this wine just a tad. With some swirling, the bouquet opens up nicely to offer scents of apple, tangerine, iodine, chalky soil tones, hazelnuts and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and complex, with good, but not great depth at the core, fine purity and nascent complexity, but not quite the precision of the outstanding Clos de la Barre. As I said, perhaps this was just a tad grumpy from its fairly recent racking? 2020-2040. **91-92?**

2016 Meursault “Poruzots”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The Poruzots parcel of Domaine Lafon was pretty heavily frosted and, as a result, it is a bit deeper-pitched than any of these other 2016 Comtes Lafon wines. However, I love its rock solid core and impressive cut and grip on the long finish. The bouquet delivers a complex mix of apple, peach, nutskin, a fine base of soil, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impressively concentrated at the core, with bright acids, fine focus and grip and a long, well-balanced and still quite youthful finish. This will be very, very good right out of the blocks, but should also age nicely. It is not quite as pure and aromatically refined as the Clos de la Barre, but in terms of absolute quality, it is very close. 2019-2040. **92.**

2016 Meursault “Goutte d’Or”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

In contrast to the Lafons’ parcel in Poruzots, their vines in Goutte d’Or were less frost damaged and the wine has turned out with more vibrant purity on both the nose and palate. In fact, this is one of the best vintages of Goutte d’Or I have tasted *chez* Lafon since the parcel was replanted back in 1991. The bouquet is very elegant, offering up scents of apple, pear, almond, a touch of iodine, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and shows off lovely mid-palate core, with impressive focus and grip, lovely balance and a long, pure and vibrant finish of excellent complexity. 2020-2040+. **93.**

2016 Meursault “Genevrières”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

The domaine’s parcels in Genevrières were barely touched by the frost according to Stéphane Thibodaux and this shows in the great purity and elegance that this vibrant wine exudes on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is gently reserved in personality, but at the same time, flat out gorgeous, as it delivers scents of pear, passion fruit, hazelnuts, salty soil tones, a touch of *crème patissière* and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full and very refined, with a superb core, great soil inflection, bright, zesty acids and lovely cut and grip on the very long, very classic finish. A beautiful example of Genevrières! 2021-2050. **94.**

2016 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

Presumably, the Lafon holdings in Charmes were also not badly affected by the frost of April, as this is a great bottle of Charmes in the making in 2016. The bouquet jumps from the

glass in a very precise and stylish mix of apple, passion fruit, complex, chalky soil tones, almonds, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty, with a fine core and lovely inner tension. The finish is very long, nicely reserved in profile and racy, with impressive mineral drive and plenty of complexity. Lovely juice. 2020-2045+. **94.**

2016 Meursault “Perrières”- Domaine des Comtes Lafon

With no frost issues in Perrières in 2016, the Comtes Lafon version is a stunningly beautiful wine in the making. The classic nose delivers a fine constellation of pear, apple, pink grapefruit, a touch of fresh coconut, chalky minerality, iodine, vanillin oak and incipient almond tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, laser-like and racy, with a rock solid core, impeccable focus and balance, zesty acids and outstanding backend amplitude on the very, very long and complex finish. Just brilliant. 2022-2055. **96+.**

Domaine Guy Roulot (Meursault)

Domaine Roulot was one of the unlucky estates in the village of Meursault, as many of their parcels were hit hard by the frost in 2016 and production was down fully seventy-five percent here in this vintage. Their parcels in Bourgogne Blanc were so badly frosted that they had to go out and buy some grapes to augment their production for this bottling, with only one-third of the blend hailing from the domaine’s own frosted vines. There is no Meursault AC bottling at all in 2016. Amongst the domaine’s outstanding roster of lieux à dits bottlings, there is no Tillets or Meix Chavaux either this year and the Vireuils is down fully two-thirds. Some of their premier crus were also heavily frost-damaged in 2016, so for example, there are only six hundred liters of the Charmes, though in contrast, there was almost no frost damage at all in the domaine’s parcel of Perrières. This was one of the cellars that I visited on the trip where the wines were not showing to their best advantage, which I attributed simply to the stage that they were in at the time of my visit, rather than any uncharacteristic dip in quality at this consistently excellent property. A handful of the wines showed very laid back structurally and already seemed wide open and ready for early drinking, whereas others had the customary cut and grip so emblematic of the Domaine Roulot style. As is customary here, the 2016s had been assembled in tank in advance of the 2017 harvest and were resting comfortably in tank at the time of my visit, but they were not all pleased at being disturbed and some were a bit grumpy during our tasting. However, I cannot imagine that the domaine “missed” in 2016, given that they have never done so in my more than twenty years of visiting here, so I am sure that some of the wines were simply not in a happy phase in very early November when I was tasting in the cellars and the overall quality in 2016 chez Roulot will be as we have come to expect- outstanding.

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Jean-Marc Roulot

This is the one wine in the Roulot cellars that seems to me to not be completely up to its customary exceptional level of quality, as the purchased fruit does not seem to have quite the depth and dimension as in vintages where this is all comprised of estate fruit. The bouquet offers up a nice and pleasant blend of apple, pear, beeswax, spring flowers and a distinct topnote of nutskin. On the palate the wine is medium-full and a touch *fluide* in personality today, with pretty good length on the backend, but not its customary grip. Not a bad wine by any stretch, but this is usually one of the very best examples of Bourgogne Blanc in the entire Côte and I do not get the sense that this will be the case in 2016. 2017-2022. **87.**

2016 Meursault “Vireuils”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2016 Vireuils is a very pretty wine, but this is one of the bottlings that seemed very forward in personality at this point in its evolution. The nose offers up a stylish blend of pear, apple, hazelnuts, chalky soil tones, a touch of vanillin oak and a gentle topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and complex, with a good core, fine focus and balance, sound, framing acids and a sneaky long, wide open finish. 2018-2030+. **90.**

2016 Meursault “Luchets”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2016 Luchets *chez* Roulot is also showing a bit forward in style right now, but there seems to be a bit more core here than in the Vireuils. The nose wafts from the glass in a lovely mix of apple, blood orange, almond, chalky soil tones, white lilies and a gentle framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a fine core, lovely focus and grip and a long, zesty and already very, very tasty finish. This will not make old bones, but it may add a bit more mid-palate weight and show more structure after it is bottled, in which case, my score will be a touch on the conservative side. 2018-2030+. **91.**

2016 Meursault “Tessons” Cuvée Mon Plaisir- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2016 Tessons was more on form at the time of my visit and showed a sense of reserve that were not found in the previous two *lieux à dits* bottlings. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a very classic blend of tangerine, pear, fresh almond, chalky minerality, vanillin oak, orange zest and a beautifully floral topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full, crisp and very well-balanced, with a lovely core, bright, zesty acids and lovely focus and grip on the long and nascently complex finish. I really like this wine in 2016. 2020-2040. **92.**

2016 Meursault “Poruzots”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2016 Poruzots was showing very nicely at the time of my visit, with a bit more mid-palate stuffing than any of the previous wines, as well as sharing a fine sense of reserve with the Tessons. The bouquet offers up a classic blend of apple, pear, a hint of iodine, lovely minerality, almonds and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and focused, with a lovely core, bright, vibrant acids and lovely backend energy on the long, balanced and nascently complex finish. 2002-2045. **92+.**

2016 Meursault “Clos des Bouchères”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The Clos des Bouchères in 2016 *chez* Roulot has turned out very well indeed and will be prove to be one of the most elegant premier crus in the lineup this year. The bouquet is very refined in profile, delivering scents of pear, a touch of tangerine, fresh almond, chalky soil tones, bee pollen, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and youthful in personality, with a fine core, lovely cut and grip and a long, nascently complex and zesty finish. Fine, fine juice. 2020-2045. **92+.**

2016 Meursault “Charmes”- Domaine Guy Roulot

There is very little quantity of the 2016 Meursault “Charmes” from Domaine Roulot (less than three barrels), but the wine is going to be lovely and well worth a special search of the marketplace to find a few bottles. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a classic blend of apple, pear, hazelnut, iodine, chalky minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full, long and structured, with an excellent core, fine focus and grip and a very long, properly reserved and racy finish. A lovely bottle in the making. 2021-2045+. **93.**

2016 Meursault “Perrières”- Domaine Guy Roulot

The 2016 Perrières from Domaine Roulot has very close to normal yields in this vintage and the wine is outstanding. The complex nose jumps from the glass in a blaze of apple, pear, fresh almond, complex, limestone minerality, iodine, citrus blossoms and vanillin oak. On the

palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, racy and rock solid at the core, with fine cut and grip, great length and a very precise, energetic and promising finish. This will demand some time in the cellar to blossom, but will be outstanding in the fullness of time. 2022-2050+. **95.**



October in the vineyards of the Côte de Beaune- no need to ask where the name the “Golden Slope” comes from!

Puligny-Montrachet

Domaine Jacques Carillon (Puligny-Montrachet)

Jacques Carillon has once again made simply lovely examples of the vintage in 2016. His Puligny vineyards were pretty much spared major frost damage at the end of April, with the exception of his small slice of Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet, which was badly frosted and where there is only a single barrel, rather than the customary two and a half. However, in the neighboring village, his fine Chassagne “les Macherelles” bottling was down sixty percent because of the freeze. All of the 2016s here were showing very well at the time of my visit, though, as my tasting was fairly early in my trip this year (November 9th), Monsieur Carillon had not yet finalized his blend for his Puligny-Montrachet AC bottling and I tasted the three constituent components that will make the final blend. All three were currently in tank and would be blended in the coming week to ten days after my visit. The 2016 premier crus and BBM were already racked out of cask and into tank as well in preparation for their bottling soon in the new year. The three premier crus here in 2016 were amongst the most beautiful examples that I tasted at their level from any domaine I visited in Puligny-Montrachet this year, as Jacques

Carillon seems to have brought in the fruit at the perfect moment and the wines all show a beautiful synthesis of ripe and very pure fruit tones and inner tension from lovely acidity and classic Carillon mineral drive. They will be classics, though as Monsieur Carillon observes, “the 2016s will be better to drink early on while waiting for the 2014s to fully mature.” Jacques Carillon has been making great wines year in and year out for almost as long as I have been visiting Burgundy to taste sur place and it is always a great pleasure to taste his newest vintage each November. These 2016s are guaranteed to delight.

2016 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Jacques Carillon

I really like the stylistic variations of the three different cuvées of the 2016 Puligny AC that will eventually make up the final blend here, as each brings a different element to the compilation. The first tank is tight, long and very soil-driven, with lovely acids and impressive backend energy. The second cuvée is more expressive aromatically than the first, with loads of youthful yellow fruit tones to augment the apple and pear tones and tremendous depth at the core. The third part of the blend is the most powerful of the three, with fine shoulders and impressive cut and grip on the long finish. An approximation of the final blend shows lovely, ripe fruit tones, a fine base of chalky soil tones, spring flowers and just a bit of new oak. On the palate the blend is full, primary and rock solid at the core, with fine cut and grip and backend mineral signature. The wine should ultimately land in the **90-91+** range.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Macherelles”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

Despite Monsieur Carillon’s very short crop in les Macherelles in 2016, the wine has turned out quite classically in profile and is not overly concentrated or uncharacteristic in any manner. The lovely nose offers up a pure blend of apple, lemon, a lovely base of soil, hints of the honeycomb to come and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still nicely primary in personality, with a rock solid core, fine focus and grip and a very long, nascently complex and zesty finish. This will need a few years of bottle age to really start to blossom, but it will be lovely. 2020-2040. **91.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Champs Canet”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2016 Champs Canet *chez* Carillon is a beautiful wine in the making, offering up a gorgeous nose of lemon oil, apple, pear, chalky soil tones, a touch of beeswax, vanillin oak and a topnote of citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine, plush core of fruit, lovely focus and grip and a very long, vibrant and racy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2021-2045+. **93.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Perrières” - Domaine Jacques Carillon

The 2016 Perrières from Domaine Carillon is a touch more reserved on the nose than the Champs Canet, but quite similarly structured on the palate. The youthful bouquet wafts from the glass in a promising blend of white peach, a hint of grapefruit, apple, lovely minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and still fairly primary, with a fine core, excellent backend cut and grip and a very long, soil-driven finish that closes with a youthful note of grapefruit. Another very strong wine in the making. 2012-2050. **93+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Referts”- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The old vines in Monsieur Carillon’s parcel of Referts have produced a supremely elegant wine in 2016. The simply stunning bouquet offers up a fine constellation of apple, white peach, lemon, white lilies, chalky soil tones, citrus oil and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely reserved out of the blocks, with excellent mid-

palate depth, impressive transparency, bright acids and great mineral drive on the very long, very pure and refined finish. Stellar juice. 2022-2050. **94.**

2016 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Jacques Carillon

The very low yields in Bienvenues this year have translated into a fairly powerful vintage of this fine bottling *chez* Carillon, but without sacrificing any of the inherent elegance and breed this wine typically exudes. The bouquet is very beautiful, offering up scents of lemon, delicious apples, pear, beeswax, a touch of citrus peel, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite closed at the present time, with a rock solid core, pretty broad shoulders for this cuvée, great grip and a very long, racy and intense finish. The balance here is just lovely and this wine will be outstanding when it fully blossoms. 2023-2065. **96.**

Domaine Jean Chartron (Puligny-Montrachet)

I managed to visit Domaine Jean Chartron twice on my recent trips to the region, as I brought my small tour group here in late October, and then returned to make my customary visit again in early November. Both times, I somehow managed to miss seeing Jean-Michel Chartron, who was in New York for the Wine Experience on one occasion and travelling again in early November when I was back in Puligny. While I was very sorry to miss Jean-Michel, on both visits I had the pleasure to taste with his sister, Marie-Laure Chartron, who is in charge of the viticulture for the domaine's fine vineyard holdings and is a gracious and knowledgeable hostess. The frost damage here in 2016 varied considerably by village and parcel, with some vineyards losing as much as eighty percent of their production, while others were virtually untouched by the frost and had healthy and normal crop levels. There is no Montrachet at all in 2016. Of the 2016s I tasted in November, only the grand crus here remained in barrel at the time of my visit, with the villages level and premier cru wines having all been racked into tank ahead of my arrival and several having been filtered in preparation for bottling only the day before my tasting. For this reason, I have scored those wines that had been racked within a range, but would fully expect all of the wines to eventually place at the upper limit of their ranges, as the wines were showing very well for their state of evolution and it is very clear that the 2016 vintage is a ringing success at Domaine Jean Chartron. As is customary at Domaine Chartron, the Bourgogne, Haute Côtes de Beaune and Rully were bottled right before the harvest of 2017, and so were not scored in a range, as they were finished wines and showing properly. As the 2016 grand crus were still in cask and on form, they too have been given a single numerical score, and I might mention, were all showing brilliantly.

2016 Bourgogne Blanc “Clos de la Combe”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2016 Bourgogne Blanc “Clos de la Combe” from Domaine Jean Chartron is a very pretty example, offering up a bright bouquet of lemon, apple, chalky soil tones and a floral topnote. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and wide open, with solid depth and good length and grip on the tasty finish. 2018-2023. **88.**

2016 Haute Côtes de Beaune Blanc “En Bois Guilleman”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The domaine's parcels that comprise the Haute Côtes de Beaune Blanc were badly frosted in 2016 and production here was down eighty percent. The wine was showing very nicely at the time of my visit, offering up a fine bouquet of lime, pear, dusty limestone soil, dried flowers and just a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, long and zesty m with a solid core, sound acids and sneaky length and grip on the well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88+.**

2016 Rully “Montmain”- Domaine Jean Chartron

Happily, the domaine’s parcels in Rully were spared from the frost in 2016. The wine has turned out very well indeed, offering up a classically stony bouquet of lemon, apple, citrus peel, vanillin oak and plenty of wet stone minerality. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and nicely reserved out of the blocks, with a good core and fine focus and grip on the long and youthful finish. This could use a year in the cellar to start to stir and should age very nicely for its level. 2019-2030. **89.**

2016 Santenay “Champs Perrier”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2016 Santenay “Champs Perrier” has turned out beautifully from Domaine Chartron and this will be a fine value. The bouquet is pure and refined, offering up scents of pear, delicious apple, pastry cream, chalky soil, a touch of new oak and spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and very pure, with a good core, fine focus and balance, bright acids and a long, complex finish. Lovely juice. 2018-2030+. **90-91.**

2016 Meursault “les Pierres”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The Chartrons were unlucky with their Meursault *villages* bottling in 2016, as several of their parcels were hit hard by the frost and this cuvée is down sixty percent from normal. The wine is likely to be very good, but this was one bottling that seemed a bit timid after its filtration and it was hard to get a good read on it. The nose offers up scents of apple, pear, almond, limestone soil and a floral topnote. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and long, with good depth at the core and good grip on the finish, but the wine is not entirely on form after its recent filtration. I am sure it will be quite good, but it is hard to be precise on the wine in its current state. 2018-2035. **88-91.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “les Benoites”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2016 Chassagne “les Benoites” was more severely affected by the frost than the Murgers. The wine is very elegant in profile, offering up a complex bouquet of pear, apple, lemon blossoms, chalky soil tones and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bright and well-balanced, with a good core of fruit, fine soil signature and a long, classy finish. Good juice. 2018-2035. **90-91.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Jean Chartron

The *villages* level bottling of Puligny-Montrachet from the Chartron family is one of the finest in the village and the wine has turned out beautifully in 2016. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a very stylish blend of pear, white peach, *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with bright, zesty acids, fine focus and grip and a long, classy and very well-balanced finish. I would try to give this at least a year’s worth of bottle age to allow it to really blossom. 2019-2035. **91-92.**

2016 St. Aubin “Murgers des Dents de Chien”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The vineyard of Murgers was one of the fortunate ones in the village of St. Aubin, as the frost damage here was minimal and the yields were only down twenty percent here in 2016. The wine is lovely, offering up a bright and complex bouquet of pear, lemon, chalky soil tones, a hint of pastry cream and a delicate framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and shows lovely mid-palate depth, with vibrant acids, lovely focus and grip and a long, beautifully balanced finish. 2019-2035. **90-91.**

2016 St. Aubin “Perrières”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The premier cru of Perrières was more heavily frosted than Murgers in 2016 and the production here was down by about half in this vintage. The wine has turned out very nicely *chez* Chartron, offering up lovely precision on both the nose and palate and even a bit more core than

the very good Murgers. The nose is a fine blend of apple, pear, chalky minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid, with lovely balance, bright acids and fine cut and grip on the long, complex and zesty finish. Fine juice. 2019-2035. **91-92.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Caillerets”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2016 will be the last vintage of the Chassagne “Caillerets” bottling until 2021, as after this vintage, the domaine had to replant their parcel. I did not note what percentage of Caillerets the Chartron family lost due to the frost damage in the spring, but it was substantial. The wine has turned out beautiful, as it offers up a classic and very pure bouquet of apple, pear, a touch of orange zest, complex, limestone minerality and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and more reserved in profile than the Puligny premier crus, with a rock solid core, lovely focus and balance and a very long, vibrant and complex finish. A beautiful bottle in the making. 2022-2045+. **92-93+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Folatières”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The Folatières was outside of the frost zone in 2016 and the yields here were pretty close to normal in 2016. The wine is very pretty and fairly forward in personality, delivering a blend of white peach, pear, chalky soil tones, a touch of fresh almond, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and racy in profile, with a fine core, lovely focus and balance and a long, classic and energetic finish. 2020-2040+. **91-92+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos de la Pucelle”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The vineyard of Pucelle had very little frost damage at all in 2016 and the Chartron’s example has turned out beautifully. The bouquet is pure, elegant and vibrant, wafting from the glass in a blend of apple, white peach, blossoming notes of pastry cream, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full, long and vibrant, with a superb core of fruit, lovely soil inflection, bright acids and excellent cut and grip on the long and zesty finish. Pucelles is known as the most elegant of Puligny’s premier cru vineyards and the 2016 Chartron version is emblematic of this quality. 2020-2050. **93-94.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Clos des Caillerets”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The Clos des Caillerets lies adjacent to Chevalier-Montrachet on the slope and consequently, it was hit by a bit of frost damage in 2016 and the Chartrons’ crop was down by thirty percent in this vintage. The wine has turned out brilliantly, delivering a pure and complex bouquet of apple, pear, limestone minerality, apple blossoms, lime zest, incipient notes of *crème patissière* and a deft touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, deep and full-bodied, with a great core, racy acids and laser-like focus on the very long, very refined and energetic finish. 2021-2050. **93-95.**

2016 Corton-Charlemagne- Domaine Jean Chartron

The Chartrons lost forty percent of their production in Corton-Charlemagne in 2016. The wine has turned out beautifully, offering up a complex nose of pear, apple, hazelnuts, a touch of iodine, a fine base of chalky soil tones, a touch of honeycomb and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a rock solid core, impressive cut and grip and a long, nascently complex and focused finish. This is nicely round on the attack and snappy on the backend, which augurs very well for its future development. 2023-2060. **94+.**

2016 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Jean Chartron

The Chartrons’ parcel in Bâtard-Montrachet was devastated by frost damage and the crop was off by fully seventy percent in 2016. It is too bad there is so little wine here in this vintage, as the wine has turned out very well indeed. The bouquet is very pure and still very primary in

personality, offering up scents of apple, peach, fresh almond, a hint of the honey to come, lovely minerality and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep and powerful in personality, with full body, a rock solid core of fruit, racy acids and a very long, broad-shouldered and nascently complex finish. This is very early days for this wine still, but it will prove to be outstanding. 2023-2050. **94+**.

2016 Chevalier-Montrachet “Clos des Chevaliers”- Domaine Jean Chartron

The 2016 Clos des Chevaliers is an absolutely stunning wine and has to be one of the finest white Burgundies produced in the vintage! The bouquet soars from the glass in a complex and vibrant constellation of delicious apples, pears, lemon blossoms, complex, limestone minerality, hints of the *crème patissière* to come and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very refined in profile, with a rock solid core, brilliant focus and grip and a very, very long, very young and promising finish. 2023-2060. **96+**.

Domaine Leflaive (Puligny-Montrachet)

Domaine Leflaive has expanded their cuverie to add additional aging capacity and one no longer tastes the new vintage in the cellars under the domaine's offices, but rather in their winemaking facility just around the corner from the village's church. The new chais is beautifully designed and one has the sense that the wines will only benefit from not having to be moved during their élevage. While the village of Puligny-Montrachet was generally spared from the worst of the frost damage at the end of April, the great grand cru holdings of Domaine Leflaive were a bit of a hazard this year, as their parcels in their grand crus were hammered by frost, so that they were only able to harvest ten hectoliters per hectare from Chevalier, Bâtard and Bienvenues, and only five hectoliters per hectare from their tiny slice of Montrachet. As I noted in the vintage's introduction, they pooled their tiny quantity of bunches in Montrachet with five other neighbors to make a blended cuvée of sufficient size to make a small quantity, which is being vinified and raised at Domaine Leflaive, but what will ultimately be done with this blend has not yet been decided by the vignerons who have contributed to it. The domaine's parcels of Bourgogne were also badly damaged this year, with mildew pressure as destructive as the frost, and yields here were only twenty hectoliters per hectare. On the other side of the ledger, many of the domaine's premier crus were relatively or completely untouched by the frost, so yields were far more reasonable for these bottlings, and their fine Puligny AC cuvée also avoided frost damage. The domaine's vines in Combettes currently suffer from leaf roll virus these days, so yields here are always small and this year saw about thirty hectoliters per hectare for this cuvée chez Leflaive. The domaine has a new Cellar Master, Pierre Vincent, who graciously received us at the cuverie on the Rue de l'Église to taste through the 2016s. He noted that natural alcohols came in around 12.8 to 13.2 percent, so ripeness was ideal in 2016, and acidity levels were also excellent for the wines. Despite the very low yields in some of the parcels this year, none of the 2016s chez Leflaive showed any of the dramatic concentration that was evident in some white Burgundies from another recent vintage with extremely low yields- 2012. Here, the 2016 wines were all classically proportioned and variations seemed to be more along structural lines from cuvée to cuvée. This was one of my earlier visits on my trip, and some of the wines were not showing at their best at the time of my tasting, with a few seeming a bit easy-going, while others were bright and nicely tensile. As several vignerons whom I visited with over the course of my three weeks in Burgundy noted that the structures of the wines were showing more prominently as the temperatures began to fall in November, after an unseasonably warm October of 2017 (when the wines reportedly all seemed very open and easy), I suspect that the variations on

structures evident in some of the domaine's wines in 2016 were simply a function of the very warm October weather and that they will all share the racier profiles that some of the wines in the cellar were already showing in early November, once winter has had a chance to settle into the cellars here in proper fashion.

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Leflaive

The tiny crop in the Leflaive parcels of Bourgogne Blanc have not adversely affected the quality of this consistently fine wine, and the 2016 version is one of the finest I have ever tasted here. The bouquet is superb, offering up scents of apple, lemon, chalky soil tones, spring flowers and a lovely topnote of lemon zest. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and racy, with a lovely soil signature, fine focus and great backend cut and grip on the impressively long and classy finish. Fine, fine juice. 2018-2035. **90.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

Monsieur Vincent noted that the yields here were quite correct in 2016 and the wine was showing quite nicely at the time of my visit, offering up a bright bouquet of apple, touches of tangerine and pink grapefruit, chalky soil tones, spring flowers, fresh almond and a whisper of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and zesty, with a fine core, very good cut and grip and a long, nascently complex and energetic finish. Good juice. 2020-2040+. **91+.**

2016 Meursault "Sous la d'Ane"- Domaine Leflaive

The 2016 Meursault "Sous la d'Ane" from Domaine Leflaive was one of the wines that was a bit grumpy at the time of my visit, and the energy level here seemed a bit lower than in the fine Bourgogne and Puligny *villages* bottlings. The bouquet is very pretty, gently wafting from the glass in a mix of apple, hazelnuts, a touch of incipient honey, chalky and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is fullish, complex and nicely suave on the attack, with a solid core, sound framing acids and a long, juicy and easy-going finish. There was no frost here, so I am not really sure why the wine was showing as it was in early November. 2018-2035. **89+?**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet "Clavoillon"- Domaine Leflaive

The 2016 Clavoillon was another wine that really was not singing at the time of my visit, sharing an apparent lack of energy in comparison to some of these other wines in the cellar. The nose is very pretty and quite wide open, delivering scents of white peach, apple, almond, chalk, white flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and complex, with good, but not great depth at the core, sound acids and a long, elegant and laid back finish. It will be interesting to see if this wine gains more backend cut and grip with further *elevage*. 2020-2040. **90+?**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet "Folatières"- Domaine Leflaive

Continuing the roller coaster showings in the Leflaive cellars this year, the 2016 Folatières was much more in line with the Puligny *villages* showing, with far more vibrancy and palate raciness than in the preceding two wines. The bouquet is really lovely this year, jumping out of the glass in a blend of pear, white peach, orange zest, limestone soil tones, hints of the pastry cream to come and a lovely base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still properly primary in profile, with a lovely core of fruit, fine soil signature, bright, snappy acids and classic cut and grip on the long and complex finish. A lovely showing. 2021-2050. **92+.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet "Combettes"- Domaine Leflaive

The 2016 Combettes was untouched by frost and the wine is very fine in this vintage. The elegant and focused nose offers up scents of apple, pear, chalky minerality, vanillin oak, fresh

almond, orange zest and a nice esthery touch of bee pollen in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nicely defined by its backend mineral drive, with a lovely core, an appropriately reserved and youthful personality and a long, vibrant finish. This is not a really intensely flavored wine this year (due to the leaf roll virus perhaps?), but will be supremely elegant at its apogee and I like it very much in 2016. 2022-2050. **92.**

2016 Puligny-Montrachet “Pucelles”- Domaine Leflaive

The 2016 Domaine Leflaive Pucelles is also showing properly reserved at the present time, with fine depth and nascent complexity underneath. The bouquet delivers scents of apple, white peach, fresh almond a fine base of limestone soil tones, delicate flora tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and very primary still, with a good core, fine focus and grip and a long, perfectly balanced and promising finish. Just add a bit of patience to allow this lovely wine to fully blossom. 2023-2050. **93.**

2016 Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

There are only seven barrels of the 2016 Bienvenues in the Leflaive cellars this year, which is one-third of normal. The wine was spot on at the time of my visit, delivering a fine aromatic constellation of apple, pear, a touch of honeycomb, complex, chalky soil, a dollop of orange oil, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and classically solid at the core, with fine soil inflection, lovely, snappy acids and excellent complexity on the long, balanced and very classy finish. 2023-2060. **94.**

2016 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

The frost damage in the Bâtard this year was similar to that in Bienvenues, and the wine is equally classic in profile and potential. The 2016 Bâtard-Montrachet offers up a fine, quite youthful and very precise nose of apple, lemon oil, chalky minerality, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, crisp and full-bodied, with a rock solid core, excellent transparency, bright, zesty acids and a very long, nascently complex and energetic finish. This is very adolescent today, but its promise is manifest. 2025-2060+. **94+.**

2016 Chevalier-Montrachet- Domaine Leflaive

The 2016 Chevalier from Domaine Leflaive was really singing at the time of my visit. The bouquet is excellent, wafting from the glass in a complex blaze of pear, apple, lemon oil, chalky soil tones, fresh almond, a hint of bee pollen and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is very pure, full-bodied and snappy, with a lovely core, a very refined profile, excellent focus and grip and superb backend energy on the very long finish. A classic in the making. 2024-2065+. **95+.**

Chassagne-Montrachet

Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard (Chassagne-Montrachet)

Céline Fontaine has been on quite a roll in the last several vintages and she is surely one of the most talented young vigneronnes in all of Burgundy today. As I outlined in the introduction, the village of Chassagne-Montrachet was one of the hardest hit communes in the Côte d’Or by the late April frosts and Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard was not spared from the brutally short yields. While the frost was severe in the white wine vineyards here, other than Montrachet itself, it was the red wine vineyards farmed by the Fontaines that were even harder hit, as fully ninety percent of the production was lost in the domaine’s truly exceptional (and vastly underrated) lineup of red wines. To give just some idea how extensive the frost damage was, in the domaine’s Bourgogne rouge parcels, yields were nine hectoliters per hectare (for Bourgogne!) and they produced four casks, out of a usual twenty-five barrels with “normal”

yields. Normally, there are both a red Clos St. Jean and Morgeots in the Fontaines' cellars, but this year, the two had to be blended together to make a single cuvée of Premier Cru, as the production of pinot noir from the two vineyards only produced three barrels, when combined, out of what would normally be fourteen casks. It was the first time since Céline's grandfather's day when the two premier crus had to be bottled together. The outstanding example of Clos des Chênes here was a touch less damaged by frosts than the Chassagne pinot vines, and the Rugiens was also a bit less affected, but as the family's vines in this Pommard site now suffer from leaf roll virus, the yields are always small in Rugiens now. The reds had not yet been racked at the time of my visit on the ninth of November, but were scheduled for their racking the following week. The lineup of white wine vineyards in Chassagne were a bit better off for the Fontaines this year, but only marginally so, as for example, in Maltroie, they lost two-thirds of their crop to the frosts. While their pinot noir in Morgeots was badly frosted, they got lucky with their chardonnay vines in this vineyard, as they were not hit in 2016, so that is one premier cru that has a fairly normal yield in this vintage. There is so little Montrachet this year that I did not taste the wine during my visit. While the yields are tiny in many of the parcels here, the overall quality is outstanding and this was one of the highlight cellars of my entire three weeks spent in Burgundy tasting the 2016s, as the wines up and down the quality hierarchy, and both red and white, are simply superb and utterly classic examples of their respective terroirs. A few are a bit more forward stylistically than others, but all are pure, plush with perfectly ripe fruit and beautifully defined by their underlying soil signatures.



The premier cru vineyard of Maltroie, with the village of Chassagne in the background.

Vins Blancs

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Bourgogne Blanc from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard is a fine example of its level, with its bouquet delivering scents of apple, a touch of tangerine, a nice base of minerality, spring flowers and a touch of almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full, crisp and nicely complex, with bright acids and good length and grip on the finish. Good juice. 2018-2030. **88+**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Chassagne AC from Céline Fontaine is really pretty and very easy to enjoy right out of the blocks. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a bright blend of pear, apple, spring flowers, butter, a good base of soil and a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, juicy and focused, with a good core, fine balance and a long, wide open and bouncy finish. This is just a lovely example. 2018-2035. **90**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Maltroie”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

With only one-third of a normal yield in Maltroie in 2016, there is not a lot of this wine in the cellar, but what is here is excellent! The Maltroie delivers a fine nose of apple, orange, almond, wet stone minerality, citrus zest and a lovely topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with racy acids, a fine core and impressive length and grip on the soil-driven and very pure finish. Lovely juice. 2021-2045+. **92**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Clos St. Jean”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Clos St. Jean *chez* Fontaine is another very nice wine, but it is a tad deeper-pitched than the Maltroie and shows a bit more early nuttiness than the above wine. The bouquet is a complex blend of apple, pear, a good base of soil, vanillin oak and a topnote of nutskin. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely plush at the attack, with good focus and balance, but a touch softer backend than the Maltroie. There is still good length and complexity on the finish here, but this wine is going to be a bit more forward than the lovely Maltroie and will want drinking a bit earlier. 2018-2035+. **91**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet- “Clos des Murées”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

2016 is going to be a very, very strong vintage for the Fontaines’ Clos des Murées, as this wine has a nice sense of reserve out of the blocks that augurs very well for its future evolution. The nose delivers a fine constellation of apple, pear, a touch of fresh almond, lovely minerality, just a whisper of the pastry cream to come with bottle age and a deft framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and classically balanced, with a fine core, impressive mineral drive and a long, racy and energetic finish. This will need a few years to blossom, but will be excellent in the fullness of time. 2020-2045. **92+**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Chenevottes”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

For drinking in its youth, Chenevottes may well be my favorite premier cru in Chassagne, particularly when someone as talented as Céline Fontaine is making the wine. The 2016 version is an absolute charmer, jumping from the glass in a vibrant mix of pear, a touch of tangerine, complex, chalky soil tones, apple blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full and very pure on the attack, with a superb core, impeccable balance and a long, complex, tightly-knit and racy finish. This is already a great drink and will only improve as it blossoms more fully with a bit of bottle age. 2018-2035+. **92**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet Vergers”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Vergers from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard is another tightly-knit and racy young Chassagne, with excellent potential for the cellar. The bouquet delivers a classic blend of

apple, pear, a touch of almond, chalky soil, orange blossoms and a discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty in personality, with fine mid-palate depth, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex and well-balanced finish. Fine juice. 2019-2035+. **92.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeots”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

There was no frost damage in any of the Fontaine family’s holdings in Morgeots in this year, which will make this one of the easiest of their premier crus to find in the market. The wine is outstanding in 2016, with a very transparent personality out of the blocks. The youthful bouquet is a fine mix of lemon, apple, complex minerality, citrus zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a very good core, very good cut and grip and a long, dancing and very nicely balanced finish. This does not have quite the concentration in the mid-palate of the Chenevottes or Vergers this year, but the wine is every bit as good! 2018-2035. **92.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Grande Montagne”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Grande Montagne is one of the more forward and easy-going wines in the lineup here in this vintage. The charming nose jumps from the glass in a very pretty blend of apple, pear, spring flowers, chalky soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and already very stylish, with a good core, sound framing acids and lovely length on the complex and juicy finish. There will be no reason to defer gratification here! 2018-2035. **91+.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Boudriotte”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Boudriotte from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard has turned out quite classically in this vintage. The bouquet offers up a fine constellation of apple, pear, spring flowers, a lovely base of limestone minerality and a discreet framing of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with a fine core, impressive transparency, bright, zesty acids and fine length and grip on the beautifully balanced finish. High class juice. 2018-2040. **92.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Caillerets”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Caillerets from Céline Fontaine is an outstanding young bottle in the making, with all of the purity and precision of the vintage synthesized with the great signature of minerality of this great vineyard. The nose wafts from the glass in a youthful mix of pear, apple, lemon zest, limestone minerality, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with outstanding focus and grip, nascent complexity and great balance on the long and racy finish. Great juice in the making, but give this at least three or four years in the cellar to really start to blossom. 2021-2045. **94.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Romanée”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Fontaines’ 2016 la Romanée is another absolutely reference point example of this magical *terroir*. The bouquet is a very pure and classy blend of apple, pear, orange zest, kaleidoscopic minerality, fruit blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and properly reserved out of the blocks, with a super core, great mineral drive and outstanding cut and grip on the focused and nascently complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2022-2045+. **94.**

2016 Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet from the Fontaine family is a great grand cru, but it is often overlooked with both Bâtard and le Montrachet also in the cellar here. The 2016 Criots is going to be stunning, as the wine soars from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, chalky, salty minerality, lime blossoms, a hint of the almond paste to come with bottle age and a refined

base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with excellent depth at the core, impeccable balance and great cut and grip on the very long, very energetic finish. This was 12.2 percent natural alcohol in 2016 and Céline capitalized it up about a half point. 2023-2045+. **95.**

2016 Bâtard-Montrachet- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Bâtard-Montrachet from Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard is equally superb, with the same sense of reserve and inherent purity as the Criots. The wine is pure and rock solid on the palate and delivers lovely aromatic potential in its still fairly primary bouquet of apple, pear, a touch of tangerine, superb soil tones and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, deep and focused, with a rock solid core, superb balance and a very, very long, poised and vibrant finish. All this wine needs is time! 2023-2050. **95.**

Vins Rouges

2016 Bourgogne Passetoutgrains- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

This was the first time I had ever tasted the domaine's example of Passetoutgrains, which is composed of a fifty-fifty blend of gamay and pinot noir. This is a very pretty example, offering up a bouquet of cherries, strawberries, a nice touch of soil, woodsmoke and a topnote of orange peel. On the palate the wine is medium-full, long and beautifully balanced, with little tannin and fine grip on the long finish. Good juice. 2018-2026. **87.**

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Yes, there is virtually no wine to go around for this bottling in 2016, but it is clearly one of the best examples of Bourgogne rouge that I tasted on my trip, and this is a vintage where this level of bottlings is particularly strong! The bouquet is pure and impressively deep, delivering a fine blend of red and black cherries, dark soil tones, a hint of gamebird and plenty of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and impressively elegant for its level, with a sappy core, good soil signature and just a bit of backend, suave tannin perking up the long and classy finish. A superb Bourgogne! 2018-2030+. **89.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

Amongst the Fontaines' red wine parcels in Chassagne, their *villages* level vines were the least damaged by frost, as they train these vines differently than their premier cru parcels and the vines withstood the frost better as a result. The 2016 is going to be a very good and very refined example of Chassagne rouge, as the wine delivers a very refined and sappy nose of red and black cherries, a touch of raw cocoa, woodsmoke, dark soil tones and a floral topnote that reminds me of lavender. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with fine focus and grip, a lovely core of fruit, fine soil signature and a long, suavely tannic finish. Lovely juice. 2020-2045+. **90+.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet "Premier Cru" Rouge- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The blended Premier Cru rouge bottling *chez* Fontaine is quite black fruity in profile in 2016. The bouquet delivers a fine constellation of dark berries, cassis, a fine base of soil, gamebird, bitter chocolate and a bit of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and potentially very elegant in profile, with a sappy core of black fruit, fine soil signature and a long, ripely tannic and very well-balanced finish. This is going to be excellent in the fullness of time, but it will need some bottle age to start to blossom. 2023-2060. **92.**

2016 Volnay "Clos des Chênes"- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

To my palate, after Domaine Lafarge, the Fontaine family's example of Clos des Chênes is the very finest to be found in all of Burgundy these days. The 2016 here is going to be a

stunning wine, as it offers up a fine bouquet of sweet cassis, dark berries, currant leaf, bitter chocolate, a complex base of soil, woodsmoke and a topnote of violets. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a superb core of fruit, great transparency, ripe, seamless tannins and a very, very long, complex, very precise and tangy finish. A classic in the making. 2026-2075. **94.**

2016 Pommard “Rugiens”- Domaine Fontaine-Gagnard

The 2016 Rugiens from Céline Fontaine is a beautiful wine in the making as well, but I get the sense that there is just not quite the same energy here as in the stunning Clos des Chênes this year, which I would attribute this to the vines struggling to ripen the fruit perfectly as they strive against the leaf roll virus. So, one does not get quite the same sense of gorgeous sappiness in the 2016 Rugiens as in the Clos des Chênes, but the wine is pure, complex and beautifully balanced in all other respects. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine, red fruity blend of cherries, quince, woodsmoke, complex soil tones, a touch of currant leaf and a topnote of rose petals. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, transparent and deep at the core, with ripe tannins, good acids and fine focus and grip on the long, complex and classy finish. 2026-2065. **92+.**

Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils (Chassagne-Montrachet)

Alex Moreau was both stoic at his crop losses due to frost in 2016 and very happy with the quality and style of the wines in the cellars here this year, as he was very vigilant to try and keep the house style of minerality and elegant purity in the wines, despite the draconian yields of this vintage. The domaine lost fully seventy percent of its crop to frost damage in 2016, as Chassagne-Montrachet was one of the hardest hit communes in the entire Côte d’Or, and there were not enough grapes in the Moreau family’s parcels in Chenevottes, Vergers or Champgains to produce viable cuvées of these premier crus, so the grapes that were gathered here went into the Chassagne “villages” bottling. Alex noted that “one of the biggest challenges of 2016 was to not produce overly concentrated wines- perhaps in the style of some 2012s- which is very difficult when making wines from such tiny yields, but to retain the house style here of elegant and mineral wines.” Monsieur Moreau has succeeded in this aspiration beautifully in 2016 and the wines are fresh, vibrant, light on their feet and quite crystalline in their underlying expressions of soil tones in this vintage. The sad thing is there is so little wine to go around, but at least 2017 is a generous crop and this is only a single vintage aberration of allocation shortfalls. The Moreau brothers began picking on September 21st in 2016 and had the whole crop collected in less than a week. Two of the wines that have been in the cellars for several years now will no longer be produced here, as both the Bâtard-Montrachet and Volnay “Santenots” that Alex was making from purchased grapes were replanted in 2016, as the proprietors of each parcel felt the old vines were in need of being grubbed up. With the other two Volnays that the domaine has produced in recent years, Caillerets and Clos des Chênes, the frost damage in the two parcels necessitated that they be blended in 2016 into a Volnay “Premier Cru” cuvée (which has turned out excellently). The Moreau family’s red wines in Chassagne were not spared from the frost, as the Vieilles Vignes bottling was produced from yields of only seventeen hectoliters per hectare in this vintage! Amongst the top white wines in the cellar, there are only single casks of Chassagne “Grandes Ruchottes” and “Caillerets” this year, as well as Chevalier-Montrachet. However, a couple of the premier crus were spared the worst of the frost, so that Alex was able to realize forty hectoliters per hectare in his parcel of En Remilly in St. Aubin and he also noted that the forty to forty-five percent of the crop he lost in Morgeot “was not too bad by the standards of 2016.” Happily, though there is not a lot of wine here for most

cuvées, the quality is stellar and those who are lucky enough to hunt down bottles of Domaine Moreau's 2016s will be thrilled with their excellence!

Vins Blancs

2016 Bourgogne Blanc- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

Half the crop was lost in the domaine's Bourgogne parcels in 2016, but the wine has turned out really well. This was already bottled at the time of my visit and showing beautifully, offering up a fine bouquet of apple, a touch of peach, a lovely base of soil, citrus zest and hints of the honeycomb to come with a bit of bottle age. On the palate the wine is crisp, pure and full-bodied, with a wide open and succulent personality, bright acids and a long, classy finish. Delicious Bourgogne. 2018-2030. **89.**

2016 St. Aubin "en Remilly"- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

In the context of 2016, Alex Moreau's parcel in en Remilly was one of the most prolific and the wine is absolutely pure and classic in aromatic profile, though a bit more powerful at the core than customary. The lovely nose offers up a beautiful blend of pear, apple, a touch of *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones, spring flowers, a dollop of fresh almond and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine focus and grip, broad shoulders, but marvelous cut and a long, precise and classy finish. Fine juice. 2018-2035+. **90+.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

Even with the addition of the small production from the three premier crus mentioned above, quantities of this superb bottling are down by fully sixty percent in 2016. The bouquet here is beautiful, delivering a combination of apple, pear, a hint of fresh pineapple, a fine base of soil, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and concentrated at the core (though not quite as much as the Remilly), with lovely energy and focus, bright acids and excellent cut and grip on the long and complex finish. This is an excellent village wine. 2018-2040+. **91.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet "Maltroie"- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2016 Maltroie *chez* Moreau had been assembled in tank four or five weeks ahead of my visit, but not yet fined. The wine was showing beautifully, offering up a pure and expressive bouquet of apple, peach, hint of honeycomb, a gorgeous base of soil, fresh almond and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a lovely core, excellent focus and backend energy and a long, complex and snappy finish. Lovely juice in the making. 2020-2045+. **92+.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet "Morgeot"- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

I always love Alex Moreau's example of Morgeot, which I find more elegant and minerally than many from this large appellation. The 2016 is outstanding here, offering up a stunning bouquet of pear, apple, a touch of pastry cream, chalky minerality, apple blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and utterly classic in profile, with a very good core (but not overly concentrated by any stretch of the imagination), bright, snappy acids and a very, very long, pure and complex finish of nearly unbounded energy and class. Exceptional Morgeot! 2020-2050. **94.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet "Caillerets"- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The single, lonely barrel of 2016 Caillerets in the Moreau cellars had not yet been racked and was absolutely singing at the time of my visit. The bouquet is pure and beautiful, delivering scents of lemon, pear, apple, complex, chalky minerality, spring flowers and a hint of vanillin

oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and complex, with a great core of fruit, laser-like focus, seamless balance and a very, very long, complex and zesty finish. Another beautiful wine in the making. 2022-2050. **94+**.

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Grandes Ruchottes”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The single cask of Grandes Ruchottes 2016 was in a similar stage to the Caillerets and every bit as breathtaking. The bouquet is beautiful, but more reserved today than the Caillerets, offering up a fine constellation of apple, pear, lemon zest, chalky minerality, fruit blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and vibrant, with a great core, brilliant backend mineral drive and a very, very long, racy and perfectly balanced finish. Great juice. 2023-2055. **95+**.

2016 Chevalier-Montrachet- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2016 Chevalier-Montrachet from Alex Moreau is another great wine. The bouquet is pure and properly reserved at the present time, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, fresh almond, delicious apple, hints of *crème patissière*, a gorgeous base of chalky minerality, orange and lemon blossoms and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is precise, full-bodied, pure and supremely elegant in profile, with outstanding mid-palate depth, great inner tension and breed and a long, racy finish. A stunning young Chevalier. 2025-2060. **97+**.



Vins Rouges

2016 Bourgogne Rouge- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2016 Bourgogne rouge had been bottled a few months prior to my visit and was showing beautifully. The bouquet wafts from the glass in a quite classy blend of red and black cherries, a touch of gamebird, dark soil tones, dark chocolate and a bit of nutskin in the upper

register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, juicy and nicely soil-driven, with a good core and just a touch of backend tannin. Another outstanding 2016 Bourgogne Rouge! 2018-2030+. **88.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “Vieilles Vignes” Rouge- Dom. Bernard Moreau et Fils

I really like the 2016 Chassagne old vine bottling *chez* Moreau this year, as the elegance of the vintage is very much on display already in this cuvée. The bouquet is pure and precise, offering up a lovely blend of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, *pigeon*, woodsmoke, a hint of violet and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full and quite sappy at the core, with superb purity and focus, fine-grained tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully balanced finish. Great juice and one of the great red wine values to be found in the vintage! 2024-2060. **91.**

2016 Chassagne-Montrachet “la Cardeuse” Rouge- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2016 la Cardeuse is more structured and reserved than the Vieilles Vignes, but it too shares the great elegance inherent in this vintage. The bouquet offers up a youthful constellation of sweet dark berries, black cherries, a complex base of soil, espresso, woodsmoke and a lovely topnote of currant leaf. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine-grained, seamless tannins, tangy acids and great focus and grip on the very long, nascently complex and promising finish. Just add a bit of patience and *voilà!* 2026-2065. **93+.**

2016 Volnay “Premier Cru”- Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

The 2016 blend on the Premier Cru Volnay is seventy percent Clos des Chênes and thirty percent Caillerets. Alex Moreau raised this wine in a single, used, three hundred and fifty liter cask in 2016. The wine shows outstanding aromatic promise, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, a dollop of blood orange, gamebird, a complex base of soil, gamebird, a touch of Caillerets spice tones, raw cocoa and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full and nascently complex, with a sappy core of fruit, excellent soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and fine backend mineral drive on the long and tangy finish. This will be lovely. 2026-2065+. **94.**

A BIT OF YEAR END CHAMPAGNE TASTING



I had expected this report to be a bit longer, but my scheduled tasting of new releases from the fine Champagne importer, Transatlantic Bubbles, which was supposed to take place between Christmas and New Year's, was postponed due to my after-Christmas cold and has been rescheduled for a bit later this month. As this importer has an absolutely stellar lineup of small, Grower Champagne, I may write up my notes from this tasting and send them out on their own in the middle of January, so that readers who fancy their small production, very high quality producers, can latch onto a few bottles in the marketplace before they disappear into collectors' cellars. In the meantime, here are my recent notes on current releases and a few older bottles out of my cellar to round out Issue 72. I hope to get back to the Champagne region in the spring to taste *sur place* again, as I missed that trip last year with knee surgery. Hopefully, the other knee will hold up long enough for me to make my customary spring swing through Germany, Champagne and round two of the 2016 Burgundy vintage without any issues, so that I can craft a proper cellar report from Champagne later in the spring. In the meantime, here is a nice roster of very good bubbly that I had the pleasure to taste or share over the last couple of months. The wines are organized in their customary fashion, with non-vintage wines first, separated by category, and then vintage-dated bottlings following. All of the vintage-dated wines are list chronologically first, and then alphabetically within each vintage subset.

Non-Vintage Non-Dosé

Champagne Doyard “Révolution” Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru Brut Nature (Vertus)

Champagne Doyard’s *non-dosé* Blanc de Blancs bottling is made entirely from grand cru fruit from the villages of Oger, Mesnil, Avize and Cramant. The vines average forty years of age and the *vins clairs* are barrel-fermented and the malo is blocked for this cuvée. The wine hails entirely from the 2009 vintage and aged seven years *sur latte* prior to disgorgement in October of 2017. The wine delivers an excellent bouquet of pear, apple, warm biscuits, almond, plenty of smokiness and a beautiful base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is crisp, complex and full-bodied, with beautiful balance and focus, pinpoint bubbles, crisp acids and excellent length and grip on the snappy finish. This handles its lack of *dosage* beautifully, as it has been softening gently in the cellars here for the last seven years! 2018-2030+. **93.**

Franck Pascal “Fluence” Brut Nature NV (Baslieux-sur-Châtillon)

Franck Pascal farms his four hectares under biodynamics, crops at very moderate levels and uses only indigenous yeasts for his fermentations. His current release of “Fluence” Brut Nature is from the base year of 2013, with thirty percent of the blend from 2012. The *cépages* is sixty percent pinot meunier, thirty-four percent pinot noir and six percent of chardonnay rounding out the blend. The new release offers up a beautiful nose of white peach, beautiful and delicate floral tones, *patissière*, a complex base of soil and a discreetly saline topnote. On the palate the wine is bright, full-bodied and racy, with lovely balance, frothy *mousse*, well-integrated acids and impressive length and grip on the complex finish. This is a very good bottle of Brut Nature. *Disgorged July 2016*. 2018-2030+. **92.**

Franck Pascal “Reliance” Brut Nature NV (Baslieux-sur-Châtillon)

Franck Pascal’s cuvée “Reliance” is composed of a blend of seventy percent pinot meunier, twenty-five percent pinot noir and five percent chardonnay. The current release is from the base year of 2010, with thirty percent of the cuvée hailing from 2011 and the wine was disgorged at the end of September of 2016. The wine delivers lovely vibrancy in the bouquet, wafting from the glass in a blend of apple, white peach, plenty of meunier floral tones, brioche, chalky soil tones and a very delicate topnote of nuttiness. On the palate the wine is bright, full-bodied and racy, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, pinpoint bubbles and very good balance and grip on the long and complex finish. It is interesting that though this has seen a longer time on its fine lees than the Fluence bottling, it is an equally young wine and at about the same point in its evolution. Another lovely Brut Nature. 2018-2030+. **92.**

Blanc de Blancs Brut and Extra Brut Non-Vintage

Agrapart Fils Blanc de Blancs “Terroirs” Extra Brut (Avize)

Pascal Agrapart’s bottling of Terroirs is made entirely from grand cru villages in the Côte des Blancs, with the current release produced from fruit hailing from Avize, Cramant, Oger and Oiry. This bottling is from the base year of 2011 and was finished with a *dosage* of five grams per liter. The wine offers up a fine, youthful nose of pear, apple, a bit of tart orange, warm bread, almond, chalky soil tones and plenty of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with elegant *mousse*, fine focus and grip and a long, complex and well-balanced finish. *Disgorged May 2017*. 2018-2030+. **91.**

La Caravelle Blanc de Blancs Brut NV

The new release of La Caravelle’s non-vintage Blanc de Blancs Brut is quite a classic example, offering up a bright and youthful nose of pear, almond pastry cream, chalky soil tones, a touch of smokiness and a delicate floral topnote. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied

and nicely balanced, with a good level of *dosage* balancing the youthful acidity, fine focus and grip, pinpoint bubbles and quite good length and grip on the youthful finish. There is no background information on the back label about vineyard sourcing, base year, date of disgorgement or time on the fine lees, but I would guess that this wine spends two years *sur latte* and is probably from the 2014 base year. It is young, but already quite tasty, and will be even better with a bit of bottle age. Really quite well done. 2018-2030+. **89+**.

Champagne Doyard “Cuvée Vendémiaire” Brut NV (Vertus)

The current release of Cuvée Vendémiaire is an excellent young wine and should age as long and gracefully as the older bottle reviewed below. The wine is now aged fifty-six months *sur latte* and is finished with a *dosage* of four grams per liter. This is a blend of fifty percent base year 2012, combined with thirty percent of 2011 and twenty percent of 2010. Forty percent of the *vins clairs* were aged in cask. The wine is a bit youthfully tight when first opened, but with only a couple of minutes in the glass blossoms very nicely to offer up scents of lemon, pear, chalky minerality, brioche and a nice touch of upper register nuttiness. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a fine core, elegant *mousse* and impressive length and grip on the focused and classy finish. This is certainly quite approachable today, but given how nicely this bottling ages, I would be tempted to bury it in the cellar for five years and let time work its magic. 2018-2035+. **92**.

Champagne Doyard “Cuvée Vendémiaire” Brut NV (Vertus) 2010-2012 Release?

Champagne Doyard’s “Cuvée Vendémiaire” is a Blanc de Blancs, though it does not state this on the front label. The wine is a slightly lower pressure bottling from the house, with the *vins clairs* only going through partial malo and the wine is aged five years *sur latte* prior to disgorgement. This bottle hailed from a recent auction purchase and was probably already five years old prior to its resale (based on its lovely development), so I would guess this is from somewhere in the range of base years from 2005 to 2007- but this is only speculative, as the date of disgorgement was not included on the back label. The wine is drinking very well indeed, offering up a mature and gently smoky blend of pear, almond, brioche, chalky soil tones and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and wide open in personality, with a lovely core, fine *mousse* and a long, complex and *à point* finish. There is still lovely backend energy and grip here and the wine has plenty of life still ahead of it, but it is drinking at its peak right now. 2018-2030. **92**.

Henriot Blanc de Blancs Brut NV (Reims)

The non-vintage Blanc de Blancs from Champagne Henriot is always a fine cuvée for cellaring, as this wine has an excellent track record to add dimension with some extended bottle age. The new release is another superb example, wafting from the glass in a youthful aromatic constellation of pear, apple, lemon blossoms, chalky minerality, incipient *crème patissière* and a touch of fresh almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tightly-knit, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip, elegant *mousse* and a zesty girdle of acidity that will carry the wine very nicely over the next twenty years. Fine juice. 2020-2040. **92**.

Brut and Extra Brut Non-Vintage

Herbert Beaufort Carte d’Or “Brut Tradition” NV (Bouzy)

The Herbert Beaufort Carte d’Or “Brut Tradition” is composed of a blend of ninety percent pinot noir and ten percent chardonnay. This wine is from the base year of 2015, with thirty percent of the blend from the previous year and aged in barrel. Like all of the Beaufort wines, the malo is blocked for the *vins clairs* and this bottling is composed of ten percent of their

reserve wines that are kept in six hundred liter casks for five to ten years. The wine offers up a fine and classically pinot noir-dominated nose of peach, lovely soil tones, *patissière*, gentle smokiness, a touch of almond and a whisper of oak from the reserve wines and the thirty percent portion of *vins clairs* that spend a year in oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a good core, pinpoint bubbles and fine focus and grip on the long, complex and fairly vinous finish. This is a Champagne built to work at the table and is a classic example of Bouzy. *Disgorged October 2017*. 2018-2030. **91**.

Bérêche et Fils “Brut Réserve” NV (Ludes)

This is the newest example of the Brut Réserve from Bérêche et Fils available, with this wine all hailing from the base year of 2014. The *dosage* is just a touch higher than the previous iteration, coming in at seven grams per liter. The wine offers up a fine, youthful nose of apple, white peach, gentle nuttiness, brioche, a lovely base of soil and a touch of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and complex, with elegant *mousse*, fine focus and balance and a long, classy and youthful finish. 2018-2035. **91+**.

Bérêche et Fils “Brut Réserve” NV (Ludes)

One of the current releases in the market of Bérêche et Fils Brut Réserve, this wine is a blend of seventy percent from the base year of 2013 and thirty percent from the previous year of 2012. The wine is a blend of one-third each of the big three varietals and was finished with a *dosage* of 6.5 grams per liter. The bouquet offers up a fine blend of apple, fresh-baked bread, chalky soil tones and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with a very good core, elegant *mousse* and fine soil signature on the long, balanced and vibrant finish. This is drinking very nicely out of the blocks and will age gracefully as well. 2018-2030+. **91+**.

Alfred Gratien Brut NV (Épernay)

The new release of Alfred Gratien non-vintage Brut offers up lovely aromatic complexity already, wafting from the glass in a classy blend of apple, white peach, fresh-baked bread, a fine base of soil and a touch of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nicely balanced, with a good core, frothy *mousse*, fine focus and grip and a long, youthful finish. I wish the house would relent and put a bit of technical detail on the back label of their bottlings, but there is not even a snippet of information on their website about the wine! In any case, it is quite tasty and a very good value. 2018-2030+. **91**.

Henriot “Brut Souverain” NV (Reims)

The new release of Henriot’s “Brut Souverain” is a fine young wine, offering up a deep and complex nose of apple, pear, fresh-baked bread, a fine base of soil and touch of nuttiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full and very nicely balanced, with a good core, refined *mousse*, lovely focus and grip and a long, nascently complex finish. This is already very tasty, but it has lovely acidity and will age very nicely, so I would not hesitate to tuck a few bottles away for three to five years down the road. 2018-2033. **91+**.

Marie-Noëlle Ledru Brut NV (Ambonnay)

2017 Release

This is the newest bottling of the non-vintage Brut from Madame Ledru, and I noted that the shop I usually buy this wine at in Burgundy now has a one bottle limit on all of Madame Ledru’s cuvées, which is a sure sign that everyone is preparing for her eventual retirement. The wine is every bit as refined and structured for the long haul as last year’s release, offering up that signature Ambonnay aromatic blend of white peach, apple, stony minerality, lemon, a touch of youthful quinine, bread dough and white flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with elegant *mousse*, bright acids and a very long,

nascently complex and youthfully racy finish. This needs some time in the cellar to start to blossom. 2020-2040+. **92.**

Tarlant Brut NV (Oeuilly)

The current release of non-vintage Brut from Benoit Tarlant is from the base year of 2009 and was aged *sur latte* nearly six years prior to its disgorgement. The finishing *dosage* here was a modest 5.8 grams per liter and the wine is a lovely, and still quite youthful bottle on both the nose and palate. The bouquet offers up a fine blend of lemon, apple, bread dough, stony minerality and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very well-balanced, with lovely *mousse*, bright acids and very good length and grip on the focused finish. There is none of the exuberance of the warm 2009 vintage in evidence here, which is just fine with my palate. *Disgorged February 2016*. 2018-2035. **91+**.

Non-Vintage Brut and Extra Brut Rosé

Herbert Beaufort “Cuvée Yllen” Brut Rosé NV (Bouzy)

The Herbert Beaufort “Cuvée Yllen” Brut Rosé is made entirely from pinot noir and is a nice, dark rosé color, indicating that a substantial percentage of the blend is made up of Bouzy rouge. The current release is from the base year of 2014 and was disgorged at the end of August of 2017. The wine offers up a fine and vinous nose of cherries, rhubarb, rye bread, a fine base of soil and a touch of orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and frothy, with bright acids, a good core, fine focus and balance and a long, nascently complex finish. The *dosage* here is on the more generous side, but there is plenty of acidity to balance this and the wine is already drinking nicely in its youth, though it will be even better with a few years in the cellar. 2018-2030. **90.**

Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé NV (Épernay)

The new release of Alfred Gratien non-vintage Brut Rosé is a lovely pale salmon color and offers up a bright, youthful and refined bouquet of tart cherries, orange peel, a touch of spice, chalky minerality and wheat bread. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and still fairly primary, with a good core, elegant *mousse*, brisk acids and fine length and grip on the well-balanced and youthful finish. This is certainly approachable today, but it will really start to blossom with a year or two in the cellar. 2018-2030. **90+**.

Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut Rosé NV (Épernay)

The current release of Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut Rosé was disgorged in January of 2014, giving this wine now nearly four years out from its disgorgement date and allowing it to really come into its own. The wine is drinking splendidly today, offering up a pure and complex nose of strawberries, a touch of tangerine, chalky soil tones, rose petals, gentle spice tones and a nice topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and refined in profile, with a full-bodied format, elegant *mousse*, excellent focus and grip and a long, complex and very well-balanced finish. I suspect this is the same disgorgement of this wine that I tasted two years ago, but which has now blossomed beautifully. Fine, fine juice. 2018-2040+. **94.**

Henriot Brut Rosé NV (Reims)

Autumn 2017 Release

The new release of Henriot Brut Rosé is a very pretty wine, with the classic high-toned house style for this bottling. The vibrant bouquet offers up scents of raspberries, a touch of tangerine, chalky soil tones, a bit of rye toast, dried rose petals and a gently smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and nicely understated in style, with a good core, elegant *mousse*, fine balance and a long, still youthfully snappy finish. Good juice that will blossom very nicely with a few years in the cellar. 2018-2030. **90+**.

Henriot Brut Rosé NV (Reims)**Spring 2012 Release**

As this bottle had been in my cellar since the spring of 2012, I really did not know what to expect from it. The wine had been very good upon release, but with the balance and spine of acidity to also seemingly age well, so I tucked one away to see how it evolved. Five and a half years later, the wine remains fresh as a daisy and drinking well, but it has not really developed any additional complexity with its time in the cellar. The bouquet offers up a lovely nose of blood orange, rye bread, a touch of clove, chalky soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and focused, with a good core, still very sound *mousse* and good length and grip on the well-balanced finish. The aromatic and flavor profile have changed a bit with bottle age, but there has not really been any additional complexity emerging with the passage of time, which kind of surprises me. There remains plenty of life still ahead of this wine, but I was hoping for a bit more with cellaring. 2018-2028. **90.**

**Krug Brut Rosé “21ème Édition” NV (Reims)****ID #216015**

The Krug Brut Rosé “21ème Édition” is from the beautiful base year of 2008, with the oldest reserve wine in the blend going back to 2000. The wine was disgorged in the spring of 2015 and is a blend of fifty-one percent pinot noir, forty-one percent chardonnay and eight percent pinot meunier. Ten percent of the pinot noir in the blend is still red wine from Krug’s own parcels of vines in the village of Aÿ. The blend is a slight departure from many releases of Krug Rosé, as hail in the village of Ste. Ghemme in 2008 dramatically cut back the quality of

pinot meunier from this vintage, so that *Chef de Caves* Eric Lebel opted to use all reserve wines for the pinot meunier portion of the blend. The very complex wine offers up the characteristically refined and gently exotic bouquet that this cuvée is cherished for, wafting from the glass in a blend of cherries, a touch of pomegranate, orange peel, beautiful, savory spice elements, rye bread, a complex base of soil tones, dried rose petals and incipient smokiness. On the palate the wine is full, complex and still quite youthful in terms of structure, with vibrant acids, a lovely core, elegant *mousse* and a very long, perfectly balanced and seamless finish. This is already beautifully complex, but I would love to revisit it five to ten years down the road and see what the passage of time does to this beautiful constellation of aromas and flavors. 2018-2050. **95+**.

Bruno Paillard Brut Rosé NV (Reims)

July 2013 Release

This bottle of Bruno Paillard Brut Rosé had been in my cellar for four and half years and is still on the youthful side and will continue to develop with further bottle age. The wine is very refined and minerally in personality, offering up a delicate bouquet of tangerine, white cherries, bread dough, caraway seed, citrus peel and a fine base of chalky soil tones. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and complex, with elegant *mousse*, fine focus and grip, blossoming complexity and a long, poised and still quite racy finish. This is aging at a very relaxed pace and has decades more life ahead of it. 2018-2040. **92+**.

Vintage-Dated Brut and Extra Brut

2012 Herbert Beaufort “Cuvée l’Âge d’Or” Extra Brut Millésime (Bouzy)

The 2012 Herbert Beaufort “Cuvée l’Âge d’Or” is composed entirely of pinot noir and is the top of the line bottling from this fine Bouzy *maison*. The wine was disgorged in April of 2017, giving it four years aging *sur latte* and the malo was blocked here for the *vins clairs*, as is the case for most of the other bottlings from Monsieur Beaufort. It was also given an additional six months aging in bottle in the cellars to recover from its disgorgement prior to release. The bouquet is deep and very classy, offering up scents of peach, apple, *patissière*, gentle smokiness, a fine base of soil and incipient notes of nutskin in the upper register. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, complex and very nicely balanced with fine backend mineral drive, elegant *mousse*, quite modest *dosage* (if any) and a long, focused and superb finish. This wine has the lovely weight of Bouzy pinot noir, but is quite defined by its minerality on the palate and has excellent backend cut and grip. A very impressive example of the superb 2012 vintage. 2018-2035+. **93**.

2011 Champagne Doyard “Clos de l’Abbaye” Extra Brut Millésime (Vertus)

The “Clos de l’Abbaye” from Champagne Doyard is produced from a parcel of sixty year-old chardonnay vines in a small, walled-in vineyard just behind the domaine, which the Doyard family farm biodynamically. The *vins clairs* here are entirely barrel-fermented and do not go through malo. The finishing *dosage* for the 2011 was three grams per liter and the wine offers up a lovely, youthful bouquet of pear, hazelnut, gentle notes of *crème patissière*, chalky soil tones and a touch of buttery oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and really shows excellent depth for the vintage, with elegant *mousse*, crisp acids and excellent focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This is very tasty out of the blocks, but has the balance to also age very nicely over the next couple of decades. *Disgorged January 2016*. High class juice. 2018-2040. **92+**.

2010 Yann Alexandre Blanc de Blancs Brut Millésime (Courmas)

This was the first wine I had tasted from Yann Alexandre, who is located in the village of Courmas, just east of Écueil. The wine sees some *vins clairs* barrel fermented and the malo is partially blocked on this wine as well. The bouquet offers up a youthful blend of pear, lemon, bread dough, chalky soil tones and a gently floral topnote. On the palate the wine is fullish, crisp and youthfully frothy, with good length and grip on the well-balanced finish, but not a whole lot of complexity in evidence at this point in its evolution. Perhaps more will come with bottle age? 2018-2033+. **89.**

2010 Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne “le Creux d’Enfer” Rosé (Celles-sur-Ource)

This is Cédric Bouchard’s most limited bottling, as he only has seven *ares* of pinot noir vines in the *lieu à dit* of le Creux d’Enfer. This Rosé is made by the saignée method and the 2010 version offers up a fine, quite youthful bouquet of desiccated cherries, tangerine,. Smoke, flinty minerality and rye bread. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite youthful, with a good core, discreet *mousse* and a slightly sharp, angular feel to the snappy acidity of youth. The wine has very good length and grip on the backend, and though it is yet to blossom from behind its girdle of acidity and show any real complexity, my gut feeling that this will arrive with sufficient bottle age. This is definitely a wine to keep in the cellar for several more years, for given its extreme rarity, it is crazy to be drinking it now in its rather grumpy adolescence! 2021-2040. **91-93+?**

2009 Champagne Doyard “Grand Cru” Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut Millésime (Vertus)

The 2009 Grand Cru bottling of Blanc de Blancs from Charles Doyard is produced from fruit in the family’s parcels in the villages of le Mesnil, Oger, Cramant and Oger, with the *vins clairs* not going through malo and everything barrel-fermented. The wine aged seven years *sur latte* prior to its disgorgement in July of 2017 and was finished with a very minimal *dosage* of .6 grams per liter. The wine offers up a beautiful nose of pear, delicious apple, a beautiful base of chalky soil tones, brioche and topnote of almond. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and racy, with a fine core, elegant *mousse* and fine cut and grip on the long, complex and minerally finish. With its very low *dosage*, blocked malo and mineral undertow, it is really hard to spot this wine as from the ripe 2009 vintage, but there is nothing wrong with that! Fine juice that is beautifully balanced today, thanks to its long time aging on its fine lees. 2018-2040. **92+.**

2009 Philipponnat Blanc de Noirs Brut Millésime (Mareuil-sur-Aÿ)

The 2009 Philipponnat Blanc de Noirs Brut Millésime shows a bit of the ripeness of personality of the vintage in both its bouquet and palate, but also is long on personality and is drinking very well at the present time. The wine is made entirely from pinot noir, from vineyards on the Montagne de Reims and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, with the *vins clairs* that are barrel-fermented not undergoing malolactic fermentation. The wine was finished with a *dosage* of 4.25 grams per liter. The bouquet is a ripe and classy blend of peach, apple, refined minerality, sourdough bread and plenty of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nicely balanced, with a plush core, very elegant *mousse*, sound acids and lovely length and grip on the slightly exuberant finish. This is a lovely example of 2009 which is drinking very nicely out of the blocks, but like most wines from the vintage, will probably not make particularly old bones. 2018-2030+. **91.**

2008 Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut NV (Épernay)

The 2008 Alfred Gratien “Cuvée Paradis” Brut has opened up beautifully over the course of the year that has elapsed since I last had the pleasure to drink this wine and it is now really nicely into its plateau of peak maturity. The bouquet is deep, pure and focused, offering up a complex constellation of apple, a touch of white peach, chalky soil tones, incipient *crème patissière*, delicate floral tones and a whisper of vanillin oak from the portion of the *vins clairs* that were raised in cask. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, elegant *mousse* and a long, complex and beautifully balanced finish. This is a very high class bottle of bubbly that is drinking with style and grace, but has decades of life still ahead of it. 2018-2045. **94.**

2008 Camille Savès “Anaïs Jolie Coeur” Brut Millésime (Bouzy)

As readers may recall, the Cuvées Anaïs Jolie Coeur is a slightly different blend than the regular 2008 Vintage Brut here, as the *cépages* is only ten percent chardonnay (rather than twenty percent) and fully ninety percent pinot noir. The *vins clairs* here are all barrel-fermented. It had been a bit over a year since I last tasted this bottling and it continues to unfold slowly and confidently. The 2008 Camille Savès “Anaïs Jolie Coeur” is a fine example of the vintage, offering up a bright and still fairly youthful bouquet of white peach, apple, refined soil tones, bread dough and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and quite elegant in profile, with fine depth in the mid-palate, frothy *mousse* and fine focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This is quite drinkable today, but will be even better with another three to five years in the cellar. 2018-2035. **93.**

2000 Alfred Gratien Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The 2000 vintage from Alfred Gratien is drinking very well indeed, but this seems a good five years behind the 1999 in terms of its evolution today and is still climbing in quality. The blossoming bouquet shows lovely secondary layers emerging, as it offers up scents of apple, a touch of peach, warm biscuits, a fine base of soil and a topnote of smoke. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, complex and very well-balanced, with refined *mousse*, a lovely girdle of acidity and impressive backend mineral drive and grip on the long and classy finish. This has plenty of life still ahead of it and will probably be even a better drink four or five years down the road, but it is wide open and ready for business at the present time. 2018-2035. **92+.**

1999 Alfred Gratien Brut Millésime (Épernay)

The 1999 Alfred Gratien Brut Millésime is a lovely wine that is now fully into its peak of maturity and drinking with fine complexity and resolution. The complex bouquet wafts from the glass in a fine blend of baked apples, toasted almond, complex soil tones, fresh-baked bread and a gentle topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and wide open in profile, with lovely focus and grip, elegant *mousse* and impressive length and grip on the beautifully balanced finish. At nineteen years of age, this wine is drinking with plenty of style and grace and will continue to cruise along at its plateau for at least the next decade. A classy glass of bubbly! 2018-2028. **92.**

1993 Moët et Chandon Cuvée Dom Pérignon (Épernay) Served from Magnum

I had never previously tasted the 1993 Dom Pérignon and was quite delighted to see it waiting at attention to start a very memorable white truffle dinner here in New York in late November. The wine is now drinking very well out of magnum, offering up a lovely and *à point*

nose of apple, orange zest, sourdough bread, lovely minerality and a topnote of overt smokiness. On the palate the wine is crisp, deep and full-bodied, with a good core, elegant *mousse*, bright acids and fine focus and grip on the long and still youthfully lean finish. Many vintages of Dom Pérignon will often start to become defined by their lovely chardonnay tones with extended bottle age, but my gut feeling that the 1993 vintage is never going to get quite to that opulent side of the Dom Pérignon mature character, as the vintage's profile seems likely to always keep this lovely wine a bit racier in profile. 2018-2035+. **93.**

Vintage-Date Rosé

2013 Champagne Doyard “Oeil de Perdrix” Extra Brut Millésime (Vertus)

The 2013 Champagne Doyard “Oeil de Perdrix” is composed of a blend of seventy-five percent pinot noir and twenty-five percent chardonnay. The pinot noir is pressed very lightly to give the wine its delicate tangerine color, and the pinot *vin clair* is aged in cask prior to blending. The chardonnay is raised in tank and the wine is finished off with a *dosage* of three grams per liter. Neither varietal went through malolactic fermentation in 2013. The wine offers up a fine and youthfully complex bouquet of nectarine, a touch of strawberry, lovely spice tones, stony minerality, brioche, orange zest and just a touch of oak influence. On the palate the wine is snappy, focused and full-bodied, with a fine core, very refined *mousse*, excellent focus and grip and a long, vibrant and tightly-knit finish. This is still very early days for this excellent wine, and I would opt for tucking it away in the cellar for another three or four years and really let it come into its own. 2021-2040+. **92+.**

2006 Bollinger Brut Rosé Millésime (Aÿ)

The 2006 vintage in Champagne is quite a forward year and the wines are generally drinking at or close to their apogees today, and this is certainly true of the 2006 Bollinger Rosé. The wine offers up a wide open and complex nose of desiccated cherries, tangerine, a complex base of soil, a touch of clove, rye bread and a gentle topnote of smokiness. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and ready, with a good core, fine focus and balance, elegant *mousse* and a long, classy finish. I like this wine very much for current drinking, but I kept wondering if it were just a bit too easy-going for an eleven year-old vintage-dated bottling of Rosé from a top flight *Grande Marque* such as Bollinger. Should I have been hoping for just a bit more structural integrity at this point in the wine's evolution? This is mostly of academic interest, as the wine is drinking very well right now and delivers all one could ask for, but part of me would love to have the option of tucking this away for another decade or so in the cellar and see where it might lead, but the structural chassis here is not built for such exploration. That said, it is very, very tasty at the present time! 2018-2026. **92.**