



CLUB MAGNUM

VINS ET EXPÉRIENCES

Burgundy 2021 – Opening Offer
May 2023

EXCLUSIVE TO MEMBERS



CLUB MAGNUM

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INTRODUCTION



**I CANNOT EXPLAIN WHY BUT
FOR SOME REASON I HAVE
ALWAYS SOUGHT OUT TRIVIA
AND SEEMINGLY USELESS
VIGNETTES OF INFORMATION.
HANDY FOR A PUB QUIZ BUT
SADLY NOT REALLY OF MUCH
USE FOR ANYTHING ELSE.**

So when, as a callow youth, my ears first pricked up to the whole topic of wine, particularly at the finer end of the spectrum, the challenge to memorise vintages fell right into the same space as remembering the capital cities of the more obscure African states.

However, it is one thing learning about the reputation of a vintage via the experience and writings of others, to knowing it with your own frames of reference. And yet with 2021, despite all of the discussions, tastings and analysis, when the inevitable question comes as to which other years it might resemble, well I must confess to finding very few, if any obvious parallels.

The headlines- the devastating frost, the exhausting, constant battles of the growing season and the minuscule crop- are not, in themselves, without prior occurrence. However, to have these major challenges and yet still have a year that has turned out some really characterful, distinctively Burgundian wines does seem to me to be something of a first. Conditions such as these falling in any year of the previous century would have spelled certain disaster.

The vintage report that follows will take you through the growing season. The combination of '21 and the black frost- the term used by the Burgundians to denote a frost that freezes from within, rather than leaving the layer of ice on the surface- conjures up the game of BlackJack and just as one can quickly go bust at the card table, so too you can also beat the house. When speaking of quality, many growers have somehow, remarkably, managed to do just that.

Quantity, however is a different matter. This is one of the smallest crops in living memory and the lack of wine brings obvious challenges for all. We have attempted to navigate this as best we can and I can only plead for your understanding. Many growers have simply not produced certain wines; all have produced much less than what they normally put to market; several have sacrificed making any large formats; all have had to look at their pricing in order to begin to make up the financial hit they have taken.

So, strap in for the ride. 2021 is a vintage which is full of intrigue and while there may not be much of it, the few that have triumphed in adversity are winners to the core.

With thanks for your ongoing support,
Best wishes



CLUB MAGNUM

VINS ET EXPÉRIENCES

HOW THIS OFFER WORKS

**ALLOCATIONS OF NEW RELEASES
ARE ONLY AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS
OF CLUB MAGNUM. PRICES CAN BE
FOUND ON THE ACCOMPANYING
ORDER FORM AND ARE EXCLUSIVE
TO MEMBERS.**

Please take a moment to read a little on the vintage and on the wines selected. If you would like help and suggestions, then please do not hesitate to contact Mike in the usual way.

NOT YET A MEMBER?

Applications to join Club Magnum are always welcome.

Please [click here](#) to learn more or email mike@clubmagnum.com to begin a discussion and / or application.



2021 VINTAGE SUMMARY

THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD ‘VINTAGE’ IS AN INTERESTING ONE: THE LATIN FOR ‘WINE’– VINUM– AND THE WORD FOR ‘REMOVE’– DEMERE– ARE COMBINED TO PRODUCE ‘VINDEMI’, WHICH BECAME ‘VENDANGE’ IN OLD FRENCH.

Vendange is of course the word still used in French for the annual wine grape harvest and it is the root of the English word we know and recognise for the produce of one year: vintage.

(I did warn you about the trivia!)

2021 was a year, however, which will forever be remembered by what the frost removed. Nature seemed to be in relentless punishment mode, making for one of the most exhausting and emotionally draining years – and this of course in a year also marked by the continuation of the Covid pandemic.



GROWING CONDITIONS

THE THREE PRECEDING VINTAGES— ALL NOTED FOR WARMTH, DRYNESS AND PLENTY OF SUNLIGHT— ESSENTIALLY SHARED JUST ONE THING IN COMMON WITH 2021: A MILD WINTER.

Pruning in a T-shirt in February is certainly a lot more pleasant than shivering against the biting cold but it carries with it a considerable threat. At the same time, there had been plenty of rainfall over the winter and as we all know, growing plants need water, sunlight and warmth.

The first 20 days of March were much cooler, however- something welcomed by the fearful growers. But when the last 10 days of the month reverted to beautiful, early spring sunshine the vines let rip. Chardonnay, as is habitual, started budding first with Pinot Noir generally following around a week later. Growth was well advanced as April arrived, in a pattern not dissimilar to 2019.



BLACKJACK

Over the course of April 5th, a mass of freezing polar air descended across much of Northern Europe. With buds and tender shoots exposed, worst fears were realised. It was to be a month before the weather patterns properly changed but the damage was done in the first three or four days.

With soils still full of water from the winter rains and temperatures plunging to an average of -7°C , the effect of this black frost was savage, particularly on the more advanced Chardonnay as well as the more precocious sites for Pinot Noir. Defences such as burning candles were largely useless at these temperature levels. At best you might be able to warm the air by a degree or two but it was simply too cold for this to be effective. To make matters worse, snow then arrived from the west on 7th April, coating the buds in moisture which promptly froze. Anybody who had left candles burning only exacerbated the problem.



THE EFFECT OF THE COLUMN OF COLD AIR ALSO MEANT THAT WIND TURBINES AND HELICOPTERS WERE OF LITTLE HELP AS THEY MERELY REPLACED ONE MASS OF COLD AIR WITH ANOTHER.

In previous years, they had been useful when cold air sat at ground level with warm air above it but in 2021, the freeze seemed to cover the entire sky. Temperatures dipped by a further degree or two in places and losses estimated at 80% of the potential crop were not uncommon.

Many chose to battle the elements, doing what they could in the depths of the freezing night for several nights in a row to salvage something but there was an air of futility about it. When the worst of the frost was over, cold conditions remained and growers such as Chisa Bize elected to treat their vines with remedies such as valerien in order to de-stress them.

However, nature was far from done. As April progressed, growers noticed the arrival of mange-bourgeons- bud-eating caterpillars. These hungry pests munched their way through around 15-20% of what had survived the frost.

May was cool and blustery with regular rain and while June finally brought some warmth, it didn't last long- but long enough to bring localised hail, hitting hardest in areas of the Côte de Nuits. Conditions for flowering were complicated: Guillaume d'Angerville was among those reporting significant coulure. Much of July and August saw lower than average temperatures and regular rainfall.

The warmer, moist conditions were of course also perfect for the development of mildew and oidium and with the soils still saturated, getting into the vineyards to treat became an increasingly manual affair, only adding to exhaustion levels. Not for nothing do growers look at years like these as 'l'année du vigneron': essentially a reflection on commitment and work ethic.

Towards the final 10 days of August and especially into September, at long last some better conditions arrived. Véraison was noted during this period and there was finally a chance to dry out the vineyards. Preparations were made for a mid-month harvest but there was one last twist with a significant storm arriving, dousing the vineyards and bringing with it the threat of botrytis.



THE HARVEST

IT HAD BEEN A HELLISH SEASON:
DIFICILE IN VIGNERON-SPEAK.
HOWEVER, WHAT HAD SURVIVED
ON THE VINE SEEMED TO BE IN
PRETTY GOOD CONDITION AND
CERTAINLY, WITH A CAREFUL
SORTING ON THE TABLES
DE TRIE, THERE WAS FRUIT
THERE WITH THE POTENTIAL
TO MAKE FOR SOMETHING
SMALL BUT WORTHWHILE.



One advantage of harvesting in the second half of September is that the conditions are less intense- better for pickers but also giving the opportunity, should you wish it, to delay a day or two without fear of excess accumulation of sugars or loss of acid. After the storm passed, most growers elected to do just that, with the majority in action around 20th September and with all sectors harvesting more or less at the same time. With the small volumes, the Covid restrictions caused fewer problems for management of harvest personnel and most domaines completed harvest by the end of the month, although there were once again a few outliers still picking in the first days of October.

Harvest also revealed some key localised differences. Firstly, Chablis and the Mâconnais, where Chardonnay of course dominates, had been particularly savagely hit with volumes at record lows, not helped by a fierce hailstorm in Pouilly-Fuissé. In the Côte d'Or, the Côte de Beaune definitely fared worse than the Côte de Nuits, again on account of the Chardonnay but also due to its more precocious Pinot Noir by comparison to its immediate northern neighbour. Within the Côte de Beaune, the Hill of Corton was a particularly notable casualty and so too the more exposed southern side of Beaune. Blagny also seemed to have taken both barrels while neighbouring Monthélie somehow stayed largely out of the line of fire.

In the Côte de Nuits, while the frost had punished less, the hail was definitely a more destructive factor and of course Pinot Noir, a famously fragile variety had once again shown its susceptibility to vineyard infections which lead to further loss of yield throughout the zone.



IN THE CELLAR

AFTER ALL THE EMOTION OF THE GROWING SEASON, IT MUST HAVE BEEN TEMPTING TO FLING HANDS UP IN DESPAIR. HOWEVER, ALL WAS NOT LOST: THERE WAS STILL THE CHANCE TO TURN OUT SOME DECENT WINES THAT WOULD TELL THE STORY OF THE SEASON AND WITH IT PORTRAY ANOTHER FACET OF THE BURGUNDIAN LANDSCAPE.

After a careful sorting, the fruit that made it into the presses and vats largely had potential alcohols in the 12-12.5° range: 'un bon douze' ie perfectly OK. There was then a choice to chaptalise in the search for an extra half or full degree, which also enables a longer fermentation. Yeasts seemed also to be surprisingly active, with very few growers reporting stuck fermentations or other issues and when it came to the malolactic fermentation a little later, this proved to be of significant benefit, taming some of the harsher, under-ripe elements and really transforming the wines.

For the reds, the skins of the berries, in contrast to the trio of '18/'19/'20, were not thick and dark. Plenty of rainfall during the season also meant that the ratio of solids to juice was low, meaning that less fruit was required to fill a barrel.



The small volumes did cause practical problems in having enough juice to fill fermentation vessels and growers coped with this in a number of ways: some chose to reduce the number of small cuvées and make a larger, single volume; others elected to use more whole bunches to fill the space and with the additional benefit of bringing acidity down. Everyone spoke of a lighter extraction, noting not just the fragility of the fruit but with acidity levels higher and skins thinner, there was more natural extraction in any event.

The whites- volumes aside- seemed to be in pretty good shape too. The effects of botrytis can be reduced by a good sorting and/or filtration and many growers took those routes, just as they had done in 2013. I am not averse to a little touch of it; indeed handled carefully it can add an interesting aromatic component. More challenging was what to do about barrels. All indicators pointed towards a light touch with the new barrel component but if you don't order any new ones, then you won't have one-year barrels for the next vintage. Decisions decisions!

WHAT ARE THE WINES LIKE?

JUST AS THE GROWERS MUST HAVE FEARED THE WORST, SO TOO THOSE OF US ARRIVING TO TASTE THE WINES, HAVING HEARD ALL OF THE ACCOUNTS OF THE PROBLEMS FACED.

I started to taste a few wines when in the region in May '22 and I cannot claim that it was love at first sight. By the time I returned in the autumn for the full beauty parade, however, things had changed considerably. Malolactics were largely complete by this stage, which always helps, but the wines also seemed to have found their identity. The more and more that I tasted, the more and more that I started to understand them and like them; and what I found attractive was for what they are, as opposed to what they are not.

Let's start with the reds. My tasting notes, as you will see, are resolutely filled with red fruits: redcurrants, pomegranates, blood oranges, pink grapefruits, soft berries. To many this is the essence of cool climate Pinot Noir, a world away from the cola cubes and coffee aromas found in warmer climes.



There is also a transparency and crystalline feel to the wines which means that terroir is revealed warts and all. As a result, the best wines have that rare, magical sense of weightlessness combined with power and energy that I have spent my life searching for elsewhere but have never truly found other than in Burgundy.

Let's not get too carried away, however: there is enormous variability in this vintage. For all of the obvious reasons above, it was simply not possible for everyone to hit the ball down the middle of the fairway. The conditions were some of the most testing that could be imagined and there were numerous unexpected hazards thrown in. As ever, only the cream rises to the top when it comes to the reckoning.

For the whites, I had feared a repeat of 2016, a vintage that may yet have its day but that I still place as one of my least favourite white vintages of this century. 2016 was another tiny, frost-bitten vintage and a significant amount of the crop was produced by second generation fruit, causing a sweet and sour sensation when combined with the softer, riper surviving first-generation fruit.

In 2021, for whatever reason, the second generation effect is far less in evidence and the sense of harmony in the wines makes them immediately attractive. The fruit character is solidly in the 'white' part of the spectrum - I think of green-white-yellow-orange as the ripeness progression - and this is where we tend to find tension, nerve and minerality alongside fruits and flowers. I don't think that they will be particularly long-keeping: they don't have the raw power and concentration for that but for the medium-term, I think these will be rather lovely and will provide both pleasure and intellectual stimulation.

I've already said that parallels with previous years are not obvious. Plenty of commentators have referred to the vintage as a 'throwback' or 'return to classicism'. Certainly, they do seem to be polar opposites of '18/'19/'20 and the overall levels of rainfall and sunshine were not very different to years we saw in the '80s or '90s. With climate change, it may be likely that we will get fewer and fewer such years in the decades to come. The Burgundy purist will find much to enjoy in 2021 but so too those who simply enjoy lightness, fragrance and refreshment over power, richness and weight.

CONCLUSION

**LAST YEAR, I CONCLUDED
BY STATING THAT 2020 WAS
A ‘GIFT OF A VINTAGE’: WORDS
THAT I STILL RESOLUTELY
STAND BY.**

2021 has almost nothing in common with it. However, precisely because of its individuality, I find it intensely appealing, for completely different reasons. I don't want a cellar full of look-a-likes. The variability in the vintage means that we'll all need to look a little harder and more carefully- and, alas, will have to pay more for it. However, everything that draws us to Burgundy, rain or shine, is present in the 2021s and to have these in the cellar to enjoy alongside the '18s, '19s and '20s makes similar sense to having a record collection that includes the best rock, blues, jazz or classical or bookshelves where romance, horror or thrillers sit alongside poetry and great literary tomes.



CÔTE DE NUITS

ET HAUTES CÔTES DE NUITS

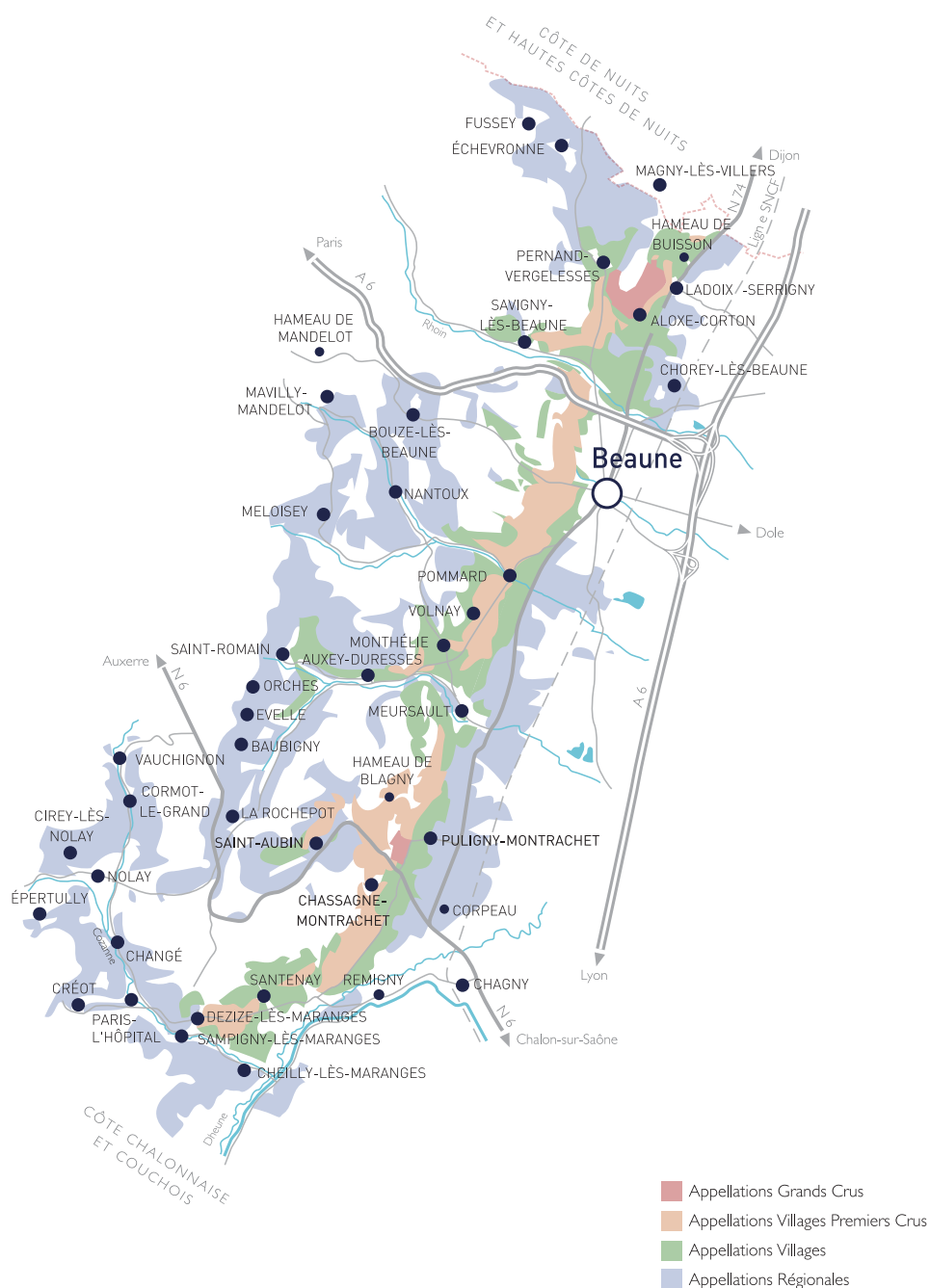


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CÔTE DE BEAUNE

ET HAUTES CÔTES DE BEAUNE



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DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE



SHORT VINTAGES ARE NOTHING NEW FOR GUILLAUME D'ANGERVILLE BUT HAVING BROADLY GOT BACK ON TRACK SINCE THE DRAMA OF 2016, TO HAVE JUST ONE QUARTER OF A NORMAL CROP IN 2021 WAS A TOUGH HAND TO BE DEALT.

As we walked through his cellar, he showed me the one barrel of Caillerets where he would normally have six, the two of Clos des Angles where he might expect a dozen. It hits home hard. However, despite the losses in volume, Guillaume remains positive and admitted that it was "a bit of mystery as to how good they [the wines] are" when he had, not unreasonably, expected something weak and fragile.

As we tasted through his range, the source of his pride became clear, so vibrant and joyous were the wines. His picking team had started their work on 20th September and with fewer bunches on the vine, quick progress was made.

The coulure that he had noted from the uneven flowering had the beneficial effect of allowing aeration of the bunches in the humid conditions and as a result, there were no rot issues at all. The table de triage was used but more to eliminate unripe bunches, leaves and bugs than anything else.

With his 1er cru all in the range of 12.5-13°, Guillaume finds that nothing is lacking and while he sees some similarity with 2008 for the fluidity of the wines he essentially considers that people won't have seen this style of vintage for at least 20 years. His great accomplishment is in recognising that style and allowing the wines to be true to what they are.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Marquis d'Angerville.



DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE

ROUGE VOLNAY 1ER CRU CHAMPANS

In a year where red fruits predominate, this is one of relatively few wines with a black cherry fruit presence. Tasted from barrel, Champans comes across as fuller, more generous and rounded than many in both this cellar and elsewhere. The wines dances confidently and breezily across the palate, offering charming fragrances of violets and peonies as it goes. There is a sense of crunch to the fruit, firm but ripe cherry flesh sitting around the stone, with a burst of acidity behind. The energy here engages the palate and with good supporting tannins behind, this will benefit from a few years in bottle. Drink from 2028+.

In many ways, Champans is the quintessential Volnay, marrying the prettiness of the fruit with the curviness of the tannins, in contrast to, say, the more angular shapes of Taillepieds further up the hillside. For all that charm, however, this is a wine with substantial keeping potential. It is also worth repeating that the top wines of the Côte de Beaune, of which this most certainly is, are still criminally undervalued versus their counterparts in the Côte de Nuits. Guillaume finished the tasting by showing us the Champans 2020, now in bottle of course and the contrast in styles was striking with the beautiful, dense blackberry and creamy fruit of the older wine pitted against the more lifted cherry scents of the '21.



BOURGOGNE ROUGE

There is a tenderness and delicacy to this wine which gives it immediate charm and appeal. Even at this modest level of appellation, Guillaume and François have crafted a lovely, pure wine with vibrancy and poise. The fruit character recalls early season victoria plums and red cherries. There is every reason to enjoy this young and revel in the simple pleasures of fruit. That said, the domaine has a great record in producing wines that age brilliantly at all levels, so if you wish for more development then by all means keep a few back over the mid-term. Drink from 2024.

BLANC BOURGOGNE ALIGOTÉ

The d'Angervilles have always produced a little Aligoté in addition to their Chardonnay and Guillaume has recently been able to modestly increase the domaine's holdings. The fact that Aligoté buds and ripens later than Chardonnay means that it is far less prone to early-season frosts, something not lost on the pragmatic Guillaume. The variety also retains significant acidity even in late September or early October harvests, making it the perfect apéritif.

In May 2022, after a Club Magnum group had spent a warm afternoon in the vineyards with Guillaume, he refreshed us all with a well-earned magnum of Aligoté in his beautiful garden. With roses in full bloom and the Clos des Ducs behind us, it was pretty near perfect... but even without that unique setting, this wine will be a joy on a warm afternoon or early evening in the garden. Scents of lemon peel combine with fresh cut white flowers and a swirl of garden mint. Drink from 2023.



DOMAINE DE BELLENE



**“WE HAD EVERYTHING” SAID
NICOLAS POTEL IN A TYPICALLY
MATTER-OF-FACT WAY AS HE
RECOUNTED THE TALE OF A SEASON
THAT SAW PUNISHMENT ARRIVE IN
SUCCESSIVE WAVES.**

As someone working the length and breadth of the Côte, Nicolas saw the full picture, noting hailstorms in St Romain and Nuits St Georges and remarking on the long hours in the vineyard throughout the year. His team were in full harvest mode by 25th September and for the first time in many years, the majority of the fruit was destemmed, with just four cuvées keeping some whole bunches.

Despite the challenges, Nicolas finds the vintage surprisingly ripe, with most of his wines achieving 13° and without any of them being chaptalised. Vinification was straight-forward with no volatility noted and Nicolas elected to reduce his vatting time by 5 or 6 days from the normal, aiming for a lighter extraction. With less Suchots available this year, we have added a cuvée in the form of his quite superb Beaune 1er cru which he makes in honour of his late mother, Françoise. En magnum, bien sûr.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine de Bellene.



DOMAINE DE BELLENE

ROUGE



VOSNE-ROMANÉE 1ER CRU SUCHOTS

With just four barrels yielded in 2021, the fruits of these wonderful old vines will be even harder to access than usual. However, Nicolas was so pleased with the quality that he chose to keep 100% as whole bunches. That little savoury edge is unmistakably there but it is the lovely dark cherry and crunchy cassis fruit that really makes you sit up, with a touch of mint sitting on top to provide lift. The beautifully detailed tannins and creamy caress on the palate point to the class of the site. A shorter vatting time and a reduction in the percentage of new oak- only one new barrel in the four- heighten the sense of transparency.

Nicolas' 0.21 ha of Suchots was planted in 1937 and runs from the centre of the vineyard up to its border with Romanée-St. Vivant. In every respect, he treats this as a Grand Cru, only working the vineyard by horse and presenting the wine as the grand finale in his tasting. It has been a core wine in our Club Magnum line-up since our first vintage (2017) and is a wine that offers everything that one would search for in Vosne. In magnum in particular, it is a wine that really needs a minimum of five years in bottle but even better with ten. Drink from 2030.



BEAUNE 1ER CRU HOMMAGE À FRANÇOISE POTEL

Bellene is of course the French translation of Bellenum- the Latin name for Beaune- and when Nicolas started to create his new domaine, he not only physically relocated to the town but invested in a number of the most prominent of its vineyards. This wine, made in homage to his mother, is a blend of five small premier cru parcels- Pertuisots, Montée Rouge, Reversés, Bressandes and Clos du Roi- that are dotted across the slopes both immediately above Beaune as well as to the north and south.

The vines average 55 years of age and you can feel that depth of old vine fruit here with dark, swirling cherries and a sense of backbone and rigour. This is more in a savoury than a floral vein, calling for a juicy piece of boeuf and suggesting a few years of patience in bottle would be appropriate. Beaune remains a great place to go hunting for value and this is a very senior example. Drink from 2028.



DOMAINE SIMON BIZE



THE BLACK FROST OF EARLY APRIL HIT DOMAINE SIMON BIZE PARTICULARLY HARD, WITH CHISA EXPLAINING THAT WITH HER PRODUCTION REDUCED BY 80% SHE HAD DECIDED TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CUVÉES THIS YEAR, BLENDING ALL OF HER PREMIER CRUS TOGETHER, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LES VERGELESSES. SHE HAS ALSO ELECTED NOT TO MAKE ANY LARGE FORMATS, FOR WHICH SHE PLEADS OUR FORGIVENESS.

After her experience in 2016, she thought that surely it could never be more difficult but confesses that 2021 had pushed her even further. For someone so dedicated to looking after her vines, it was remarkable to see Chisa so philosophical about the situation in the circumstances. From early in the year, however, she realised that there was little that she could do and rather than try to fight nature, she concentrated her efforts on de-stressing the vines with applications of arnica and valerian. I suspect she must have also taken a few doses herself.

Harvest took place over the second half of September, Chisa being happy to go at a steady pace and give every parcel the best chance of being picked at the perfect moment. In the cellar, she elected to keep this zen-like approach, allowing the wines to develop with little intervention. I've recently tasted a few of her 2016 reds and if these '21s turn out anywhere close to those, then we have little to worry about- besides availability, of course. Bize has become one of our most popular producers in the portfolio and in order to ensure that all members can continue to access her wines this year, Chisa has agreed to release a beautiful array of older wines from Domaine reserves. A separate offer on those will be emailed to you.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Simon Bize.



DOMAINE SIMON BIZE

ROUGE



SAVIGNY LES BEAUNE AUX GRANDS LIARDS

Grands Liards has long been bottled on its own, rather than folded into the village blend and even in 2021, Chisa has retained it as a single cuvée. It sits just below the 1er cru Les Lavières and is a well-exposed site with a depth of brown clay soil, laden with pebbles. The holding totals just over a hectare and a half and the vines are in four plantings, with the oldest just before the Second World War. Both the site and the high average vine age bring a sense of refinement and depth here with the fruit character typically in a darker register than for the village blend.

In terms of ageing profile, this offers the best of both worlds with the accessibility of a village wine but the development potential of a premier cru. Chisa stuck to the Domaine's whole cluster philosophy in full and feels that this has made a positive contribution to the smooth textures that we noted. This is an impressive mid-term Savigny and continues to offer fabulous value in today's market. Drink from 2027.

SAVIGNY LES BEAUNE 1ER CRU AUX VERGELESSES

Just six barrels were yielded from a holding of over two hectares making every drop of this prized premier cru all the more treasured. At this early stage, this biggest marker of the step-up in quality is the sense of purity, delineation and focus in the fruits and an additional level of energy sensed on the palate.

Les Vergelesses is always a wine that repays keeping- we have shown multiple examples of it at our Club dinners over the last few years with vintages such as 1993, 1996, 1999 and 2002 the perfect evidence of the scope of this site. While 2021 does not have the same tannic structure as some of those years, the reduced crop has enabled full ripeness in the small volumes that were left on the vine. Chisa recognised this and carried on with a 100% whole cluster vinification and with a full élevage in the classic manner. The perfumes of gentle red fruits and earthy, wild herbs are already enticing and with time, we would anticipate the classic gamey, leathery notes of the site to emerge too. Drink from 2028.



CHÂTEAU DE CHARODON

WE INTRODUCED
THE WINES
OF LOUIS
VALLET IN A
SUPPLEMENTARY
OFFER LATE LAST
YEAR AND IT HAS
BEEN TERRIFIC
TO ALREADY
RECEIVE STRONG
FEEDBACK FROM
THOSE WHO
HAVE TRIED A
BOTTLE OR TWO.



Louis is both an engaging character and a fully committed vigneron and winemaker and while his plans for the growth of Charodon were severely dented by Mother Nature in 2021, he is very happy with the quality of his results. The prospect of 2022 with almost double the volumes doesn't hurt his mood either!

His range continues to develop but already he is active from Marsannay and Fixin in the north all the way south through the Côte as far as Meursault and Puligny.

In 2021, he felt that the period around the last weekend of June and first week of July was crucial as a big oidium pressure was felt in the vineyards and if you missed the window by even 48 hours to do the necessary work, it made a major difference to the health of the crop.

Louis is also a fan of bigger bottles and our 2021s are exclusively in magnum format. In addition to the four cuvées below, we will have a very small offer later in the year with a further dozen or so cuvées available but in quantities of no more than a handful of magnums of each.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Château de Charodon



CHÂTEAU DE CHARODON

ROUGE

BOURGOGNE ROUGE CÔTE D'OR

The appellation of Bourgogne Côte d'Or is becoming more and more adopted since its introduction with the 2017 vintage. It covers all of the villages from the south of Dijon as far as Maranges, just beyond Chassagne-Montrachet. It can be found in both colours and differentiates from Bourgogne produced in others districts, such as Côtes Auxerrois, Chalonais or Mâconnais. Louis uses it to make a benchmark Bourgogne Rouge blend from four small parcels close to Pommard which were historically part of the village appellation. Aromas of summer berries combine with the more lifted tones of pomegranate and rose. This will provide immediate pleasure and drink well over the short-mid term. Drink from 2023.

FIXIN LA CROIX BLANCHE

Fixin is a village on the rise and it is a pleasure to see more and more examples of single-site bottlings coming to market. It is one of the smallest villages on the Côte, sitting higher up the slopes to the north of Gevrey-Chambertin. Louis has a long-term lease on just under a hectare of La Croix Blanche, a well-situated lieu-dit in the centre of the village, just to the north of Les Crais, below the route des Grands Crus. It generally needs a couple of years to calm its tannins and allow the fruit to sing but in 2021, the wine is already expressing itself. Frost was a little less severe up here and Louis' attentiveness in the vineyard has reaped rewards in the health and balance of the fruit. Drink from 2025.

BEAUNE 1ER CRU CHOUACHEUX

Try saying this with a mouth full of wine! While Les Chouacheux may not be the most user-friendly name out there, this small 5ha vineyard is worth getting to know, sitting as it does on the lower southern slopes of the hill in the sector of Clos des Mouches, just below the premier cru Les Vignes Franches. There is real finesse and delicacy here, with Louis explaining that the presence of a strain of Pinot Noir known as Pinot-Rosé helps to ensure that the more chunky, tannic side of Beaune is less apparent than it might be. This is mid-weight, elegant and already very giving but a couple of years in bottle will only give it more time to open out aromatically. Drink from 2025.

CORTON RÉNARDES GRAND CRU

Les Rénardes is the northerly continuation of Clos du Roi, sitting just below Le Corton and above Les Bressandes on the upper slopes on the east side of the hill. The impact of the frost was felt very keenly here, as indeed it was all around the sector and so the handful of magnums that Louis has allocated to us are true rarities. As a rule of thumb, a decade in bottle would normally be anticipated for a Corton to really show its wild, gamey, animal side. Even in 2021, this would still be my advice. Drink from 2033.



DOMAINE COMTE ARMAND

PAUL ZINETTI EXPLAINED THAT THE 2021 IS THE SMALLEST VINTAGE EVER AT COMTE ARMAND, WITH AN AVERAGE YIELD ACROSS THE ESTATE OF JUST 15 HL/HA. HE SPENT THREE HARD NIGHTS BATTLING THE FROST IN EARLY APRIL BUT IN THE END HE COULD NOT REALLY CLAIM TO SEE MUCH EVIDENCE OF A RETURN FOR HIS EFFORTS.

Then in July, there was a huge mildew attack, worse than in 2016, which required enormous work to clean up. As a result, he elected to de-stem everything at harvest and then work carefully on the sorting table to eliminate as much of the shrivelled fruit as he could. Most days during harvest, they were still carefully sorting fruit, berry by berry, until almost midnight.



In the cellar, he tried to keep a light touch, resisting the urge to punch down and replacing it with a pre-fermentation cold soak of the fruit for 4-6 days in the attempt to find a bit more colour without forcing it. He also worked hard on the press wines, feeling that the final blend would benefit from their inclusion but would need to ensure that it was of the highest, purist quality possible.

From first vinification to malolactic fermentation and then into the élevage in barrel, Paul has seen a complete transformation in the vintage. By the time we tasted together in November, his infectious smile was back in its usual place but he confessed that it hadn't been an easy journey. His dedication to detail is clearly shown in the wines with the 2021 sitting proudly alongside the line-up of previous vintages. Paul ventured that it reminded him of a blend of 2012 and 2010. To have that kind of a result after everything experienced is truly impressive.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Comte Armand



DOMAINE COMTE ARMAND

ROUGE

POMMARD 1ER CRU CLOS
DES EPENEAUX MONOPOLE

Tasting with Paul is always instructive and this year, he simply presented the final blend, explaining that he had blended the press wine in earlier than in the past. Harvest dates here were in line with the rest of the Côte (third week of September) but the walls of the Clos ensured that 13.5° were easily reached.

The resulting wine does not have the exuberance or drama of the preceding vintages. Instead, it presents itself as a very fine, graceful Pommard, full of rich red fruit, a touch of pepper and a noted savoury edge to its aromas. There is a lifted, fresh feel running through it, a wine that holds itself in shape, taut and energetic and built to age in the classic manner. With more time in barrel and a further racking due before bottling, Paul feels that the wine will only continue to gain in volume. It will be fascinating to watch this develop over the coming years, its stylistic contrast to '18/'19/'20 marking it out and showing another fascinating facet of this famous site. Drink from 2031.



DOMAINE MICHEL LAFARGE



THE LAFARGE FAMILY STARTED THEIR HARVEST ON 22ND SEPTEMBER, ALMOST A MONTH LATER THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR DESPITE THE TWO GROWING SEASONS STARTING IN A VERY SIMILAR POSITION. THE DIVERGENT PATHS FROM APRIL TO AUGUST HOWEVER, WITH FROST FOLLOWED BY DISEASE PRESSURE, HAD SEEN THEM CONSTANTLY IN THE VINEYARDS.

Thankfully, from 20th August the more settled environment gave them some welcome respite but also, they feel, brought the crucial period in ultimately ensuring a quality harvest, with the drying wind removing the rot pressure and the warmer days ushering the grapes through to ripeness. All came in at a natural 12-12.5° and there was therefore no need to make any adjustments and with the tannins also ripe, Frédéric was happy to continue to conduct a daily punchdown on each cuvée.



Even with these final four weeks, the total yield across the domaine is down a full 80% on a normal year. As they did in 2012 and 2016, they have elected to reduce the number of cuvées, for the first time blending all of the Volnay premiers crus into one in addition to only producing a single cuvée each of Meursault and Volnay villages.

Frédéric explained that it was certainly not his preferred outcome but with vinifying small volumes such a headache- not to mention the practical issues of allocation to customers- he felt that it made the most sense. They have also foregone the production of any large formats. We will therefore share around our handful of half-magnums as best we can and hope for something closer to normal in twelve months' time!

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Michel Lafarge.

DOMAINE MICHEL LAFARGE

ROUGE BEAUNE 1ER CRU GRÈVES

As regular followers of this great wine will know, the old vines of Beaune Grèves held up their bat to the pavillon this year as they completed a century. It's a remarkable milestone but one wonders whether the final push to three figures weren't some of the most testing conditions yet seen. Yields are naturally low, of course, at such an advanced age but with the family electing to make a special commemorative bottling of only the old vines – the younger vines going into the Bourgogne Pinot Noir-, there were just three barrels produced in 2021: barely 900 bottles to go around the entire world.

The grapes were all destemmed by hand once again. On tasting, the sense of depth with control is striking, with the wine sitting squarely in the middle of the palate, seemingly holding court as you go to it.

Notes of little currants, red berries and a touch of fruit cake mix seamlessly together. Everything seems effortless, without any sense of drama- remarkable really when you consider what went on during the year. Drink from 2031.

ROUGE VOLNAY 1ER CRU

All five premier crus- Mitans, Caillerets, Pitures, Clos des Chênes and Clos du Château des Ducs- were vinified together and to be honest, it's rather hard to find your bearings. The temptation to spot a feature and attribute it to one vineyard or the other is strong but ultimately only time will tell whether there is a harmonious co-existence or something more fractious. Given the skill and experience of the domaine, the safe bet is on the former.

Tasting before bottling, all of the joyous charm of Volnay seemed to be there and with an evident amount of drive and energy too. The finish is long and flowing, the red fruits and flowers dancing together with a little spice thrown into the mix too. There is likely to be a special name for this cuvée: until that's announced, you are invited to send in your own suggestions! Drink from 2031.

EN PLUS

Once again, in order to broaden access to their wines given the tiny amounts of Premier Cru available, the Lafarges have kindly allocated some further wine from their Domaine to Club Magnum members.

BOUTEILLE 75CL

All available as 6 x 75cl.

ROUGE

Bourgogne Pinot Noir
Bourgogne Passetoutgrains L'Exception
Volnay

BLANC

Bourgogne Aligoté Raisins Dorées



DOMAINE LEFLAIVE



IN A STARK REMINDER OF THE PRESENCE OF YIN AND YANG, PIERRE VINCENT DECLARED THAT 2021 HAD BEEN HIS MOST CHALLENGING VINTAGE IN HIS CAREER TO DATE, IN TOTAL CONTRAST TO HIS JOINT DECLARATION, ALONGSIDE BRICE DE LA MORANDIÈRE, THE YEAR BEFORE THAT THE SEASON HAD BEEN REMARKABLY FREE OF STRESS. MOTHER NATURE ALWAYS SEEMS TO HAVE A WAY OF PUTTING US IN OUR PLACE!

Even with the new adventure of a little Pinot Noir in the cellar, Domaine Leflaive is so totally focussed on- and exposed to- Chardonnay, it will take little to work out that the conditions of 2021 hit them extremely hard, both in Puligny and in the Mâconnais.

In many frost years, it's the lower lying vineyards that suffer hardest as that is where cold air will generally sit but in 2021, the polar air was everywhere and losses were as severe in the crus as they were in the village and regional wines.

Harvest began on 22nd September with barely half a normal crop yielded. The good conditions that came at the end of the growing season had proved crucial in keeping botrytis at bay but the constant battle during the year against mildew had left the team exhausted. The final result, however, is far better than could have been reasonably expected. How or why are questions that we cannot really answer.

The quintessential florality of Puligny, as you will read it described in all of the great reference texts, is in greater evidence than in many a year, perhaps heightened by the tension in the wines, the crackle of electricity and the pure, taut bead of minerality that runs through them. There are much less of them, for reasons you will understand but even a single magnum in the cellar is something to treasure and look forward to sharing in the future.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Leflaive.

DOMAINE LEFLAIVE

BLANC

PULIGNY MONTRACHET 1ER CRU PUCELLES

- MAXIMUM 1 MAGNUM PER MEMBER -

The Leflaive holding in Les Pucelles is actually split into three plots and most of the plantings are of vines from the 1950s and '60s although there are also some slightly younger vines from the 1980s.

The long straight rows that you see as you look down the slope towards the village from the foot of Le Cailleret are almost auto-suggestive of the profile of the wine itself. It is unerringly focused, unwavering in its direction and vanishing into the far, far distance.

In 2021, the cool, linear profile also comes from the vintage as well as the terroir. The trademark tension, like a taut piano string, rings out as true as ever but the fragrances seem particularly redolent of lime blossoms and linden. It begins to open out a touch as you work it but with flinty, struck-match aromas also still in evidence, the impression is that time will be required here for the full swish of the skirts. Be patient with this wine, treat it as you would a Grand Cru because when Les Pucelles really sings, the tune can be as pure and divine as any you'd wish to name. Drink from 2029.

PULIGNY MONTRACHET 1ER CRU CLAVOILLON

- MAXIMUM 1 MAGNUM PER MEMBER -

Clavoillon continues on its path from junior ranks to front line attraction. Whereas Pucelles has the unwavering, straight focus, its immediate neighbour to the north offers a little more flesh and warmth, with the beginnings of subtle stone fruit and white nuts in the aromatic mix. In warmer years gone by, this was a wine that tended towards heaviness but now no longer and in 2021, it is positively light on its feet. With time, one would expect this to open out further, the minerality become more overt while the aromatics start to bring in some dried fruits and even a little cream to balance. Drink from 2028.

EN PLUS

Brice has also generously allocated some very small quantities of the following wines:

BLANC

PULIGNY MONTRACHET
MAGNUM / 1X150CL

BIENVENUES-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET
GRAND CRU- BOUTEILLE / 3X75CL

BÂTARD-MONTRACHET GRAND
CRU- BOUTEILLE / 3X75CL



BENJAMIN LEROUX

WITH HIS ACTIVITIES STILL COVERING THE LENGTH OF THE CÔTE, BEN LEROUX HAS MANAGED TO SPREAD HIS RISK A LITTLE BETTER THAN MOST. HE NOTED THAT THE CÔTE DE NUITS HAD SEEN LESS DAMAGE THAN THE CÔTE DE BEAUNE AND WAS UNDERSTANDABLY GUTTED BY THE HARD HAND DEALT IN BLAGNY WHERE HE HAS WORKED SO TIRELESSLY ONLY TO SEE IT RAVAGED BY FROST.



Ben is someone to whom the hard yards are very familiar and while the cellar certainly had a number of gaps in it (overall volumes down by roughly half), the wines presented were in really great shape. He stated the importance of the sorting table in 2021- "it required big work at harvest"- and in the winery, he was another who took things slowly and gently, cutting his vatting time by a week on average and generally using fewer whole bunches in his reds than in recent years.

I tasted twice with him, in May and again in November at greater length and comparing the two sets of notes is instructive. Six months further down the road, the wines had really come on leaps and bounds, finding their place, showing the personalities and no longer appearing somewhat apologetic.

We have a few changes in the line-up this year. On a beautiful day in May last year, a group of Club Magnum members spent a terrific morning up in Blagny with Ben who walked us through the vineyard, explaining its features and then letting us taste in situ.



To say that the experience made an impact would be to understate...and many of those attending have been insisting that we add the Blagny rouge to our line-up alongside the white version, which we have now been able to do.

Alongside it, we have two further cuvées in Meursault, a village where Ben has consistently been making some fantastic wine. Lastly, and by contrast rather less happily, the Mazis-Chambertin is no more, the vineyard contract not being available to Ben any longer. We have however re selected the Grand Crus of Griotte-Chambertin and Bonnes-Mares alongside the fabulous Gevrey Cazetiers, which remains a standout.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Benjamin Leroux.

BENJAMIN LEROUX

BLANC

MEURSAULT VIREUILS

Les Vireuils is a prominent hillside lieu-dit, up on the slopes just below the wood and running up to the border with Auxey-Duresses. It has a northeasterly aspect and its position under the wood is one of the reasons that Ben feels it was more protected against the frost. His 2021 shows subtle notes of white flowers and gentle limey fruit but it is the salty, mineral tang that sticks most prominently in the mind and that carries the wine forward onto an impressive, straight and driven finish. This is fresh, invigorating and a real success in the vintage.

Drink from 2024.



MEURSAULT BLAGNY 1ER CRU LA PIÈCE SOUS LE BOIS

Early-budding vineyards were definitely not an advantage in 2021. With so little fruit yielded, Ben has decided to just make one cuvée this year, blending in the old vines from the upper section of the vineyard and this seems to have added more flesh and creaminess to the resulting cuvée. Tasted after Les Vireuils, there was a gentle, calm flow to the wine in contrast to the more thrusting, assertive Vireuils with the extra weight and depth on the mid-palate allowing it to spread out and metaphorically let down its hair a little. Working this in the glass, the wine gracefully charmed us and this would be a sophisticated glass to serve over dinner, perhaps with a fresh trout or salmon or even some juicy langoustines. Drink from 2024.

MEURSAULT 1ER CRU GENEVRIÈRES

Habitually, Ben has kept the wines made from the upper (Dessus) part of the vineyards separate from those in the lower (Dessous) section but once again in 2021, there was really no alternative but to join forces. Genevrières is one of the traditional 'big three' in Meursault and that sense of scale and grandeur immediately comes across, so too the extra tension and general stylishness. There is no lack of confidence here either; indeed one might go as far to say that this wine elbows the others to the side, calls for the spotlight and takes centre stage without waiting for invitation. It's a little hard not to be mesmerised. Drink from 2025.



BENJAMIN LEROUX

ROUGE

GRIOTTE CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

This was another standout in the Leroux cellar. We tasted it as the middle of a trio between Charmes-Chambertin and Chambertin and it was the finesse and elegance that really elevated it. Ben offered the word 'aérien' to describe it- never an easy word to accurately translate in English- but it is again that elusive sense of weightlessness combined with purpose and direction that we were experiencing. We were both really taken with it. As for thoughts on development, because of that feeling of delicacy, drinking in its youth seems to make perfect sense. However, there is more than enough material here for those liked a more evolved style to be able to keep it back, if so desired. Drink from 2028.

BONNES MARES GRAND CRU

Ben's Bonnes Mares is from the white soil section of the vineyard where there is normally a concern of water shortage in dry vintages. Clearly not so much of a problem in 2021! What the white soils do offer, of course, is excellent drainage and so the humid conditions were dealt with better here, resulting in some of the healthiest grapes harvested. This young Bonnes-Mares was simply gorgeous, offering the fragrance of roses and violets before turning towards cherries and ripe red berries. On the palate, you feel some more scale and muscle than the nose sets you up for, reminding you of the structure and mineral component that sustains such a wine for the long term. This was simply excellent- no hesitation to snap up a few magnums of an unquestionably great wine in the making. Drink from 2033.

GEVREY CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU CAZETIERS

Cazetiers has been in our selection every year so far and with such consistency of quality, even in such contrasting vintages, it is set to remain for as long as we can access it. In 2021, this shows its powerful, assertive side but never with a loss of control. The energy of the wine is channelled through its utterly beautiful mix of ripe summer fruits. In warmer years, there is a risk of over ripeness but in 2021, the closest we get is a little touch of fruit coulis around the edge before the wine powers ahead to a grandstand finish. Once again, this is one of the standouts in Ben's cellar and very much a leading candidate to be considered among the top premier crus of the Côte de Nuits. Drink from 2029.

BLAGNY 1ER CRU LA PIÈCE SOUS LE BOIS

Curiously, the Blagny rouge was one of the slowest wines to complete malolactic fermentation, with some barrels carrying through until September. By the time I tasted it for the second time in November, therefore, it had completely transformed, showing a mid-palate richness hitherto absent. On the nose, the wine offers beautiful tender redcurrant and raspberry-scented fruit, framed by gentle spices and a savoury whiff of leather and pepper, making for a captivating mix. On the palate, the tannins are supporting but certainly not domineering and while the acidic profile suggests that the wine will keep well, this is almost certainly going to offer much pleasure in the short to mid-term also. Drink from 2025.



DOMAINE THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR

THIBAUT SEEMED RATHER MORE SANGUINE THAN MANY WHEN TALKING ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES OF 2021. IN THE CÔTE D'OR, HIS HOLDINGS ARE FAR MORE WEIGHTED TOWARDS THE CÔTE DE NUITS, WHICH FARED BETTER AND SECONDLY, HIS BEAUJOLAIS ESTATE IN MOULIN À VENT HAD LOST FULLY 85% OF ITS CROP, SO BY COMPARISON HIS NUITS-ST. GEORGES CELLAR SEEMED ALMOST REplete.



He felt that pruning as late as possible had helped to defend his vineyards and was impressed by how the ripeness levels had evened out across his holdings by the time harvest arrived. His team began picking on 21st September and were all done a week later, with all of the wines coming in between 12.5 and 13.5°.

Thibault loves talking through the details of his work and he was particularly interesting when discussing stems, where he used the sorting table not only to ensure the removal of any under-ripe or shrivelled berries but also so that the stems themselves could receive a good sort out and clean up.

Even with this laborious work, he still ended up reducing his overall percentage of whole clusters and also extracted more lightly, trying to avoid some of the underripe pips being crushed.

Thinking about the style of the wines, he describes them as “pure and transparent”, referring to 2021 as “an identity vintage” by which he means that the individual sites really come through strongly. He loves the intense aromas and energy of the wines and does not miss the more bombastic side of the warmer years.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Thibault Liger-Belair.

DOMAINE THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR

ROUGE

NUITS-ST. GEORGES 1ER CRU LES ST. GEORGES

Les St Georges really shows its class in this vintage, the great site showing evident strength and taut, athletic muscularity but also control and sophistication. It doesn't rush at you out of the glass but rather it encourages you to spend some time with it, look a little more carefully and carefully peel back the layers. Thibault agreed that this wine will require some time but he seems very happy and rather taken with it.

In April of this year, Thibault showed four vintages of Les St. Georges, all out of magnum, to our members and guests over dinner in central London, choosing 2004, 2010, 2016 and 2017 to tell the tale of his work in the site since establishing his domaine in 2001. Inevitably, the question of elevation to Grand Cru was raised, a long process that has been started. If the inspectors ever wanted the evidence, it was there in the glasses in front of us. Les St Georges belongs in the top ranks and Thibault's example is surely the finest expression of it.

Drink from 2033.

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN EN CRÉOT

Having taken over the farming of this 1.4ha plot, Thibault is delighted at the progress made and loves the open, juicy accessible side of Gevrey that has come through here in 2021. He decided to destem completely, working on the freshness of the fruit which at this stage is dominating the more earthy, structural elements and will lend the wine appeal in the first few years. As the vigour of youth starts to reduce, there is plenty of material to carry this forward, meaning that here again one has the choice to drink or to wait- or indeed to buy a few and effectively do both by following it over time. Drink from 2028.



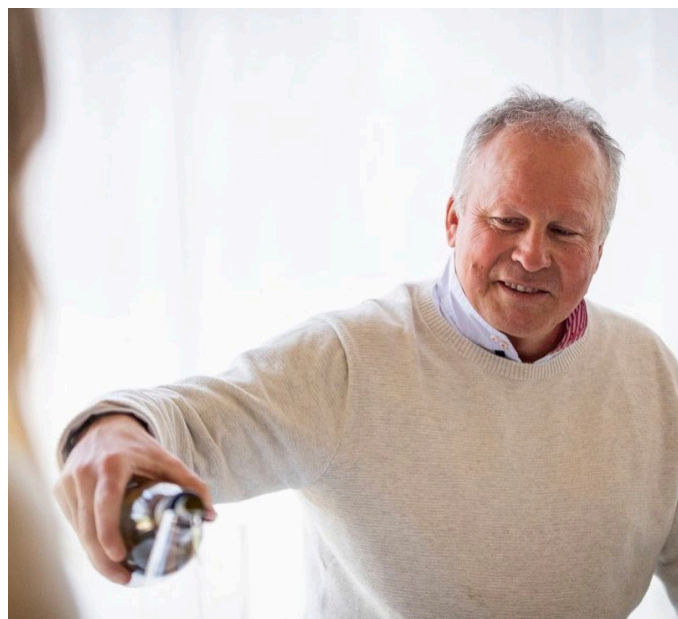
DOMAINE DE MONTILLE

ETIENNE DE MONTILLE AND BRIAN SIEVE PRESENTED THEIR 2021S EXPRESSING THEIR FRANK SURPRISE AT HOW GOOD THE WINES WERE CONSIDERING THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED, NOT JUST WITH THE FROSTS BUT THE WAVES OF ATTACK FROM CRYPTOGRAMIC DISEASES IN THE VINEYARD.

It was a year that required an enormous effort from the team but the rewards arrived in the final four weeks where fine weather boosted the quality, with all of the wines reaching the 12-13° range. The policy here for many years now has been to steadily increase the amount of whole bunches used for the reds but in 2021, the decision was made to rein this in, with most cuvées having 50-60% and none having 100%.

There were inevitably some adjustments required to allocation and bottling decisions. For the first time, we do not have either of the Cortons this year, the hill having been hit particularly hard. To make up for this, Etienne has proposed a few magnums of neighbouring Beaune's top vineyard, Les Grèves and then a particular treat, the great premier cru of Aux Malconsorts in Vosne-Romanée which very much has Grand Cru status in the de Montille cellar. On the whites, he has found a handful of precious magnums of his most coveted wine, Chevalier-Montrachet, to accompany the wonderful Puligny Le Cailleret. Etienne has been spending plenty of time in Southern California with his Racines project in recent years but I hadn't anticipated that 'Go big or go home' would become his allocation strategy. Grand merci, mon ami!

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine de Montille.



DOMAINE DE MONTILLE

ROUGE

BEAUNE 1ER CRU GRÈVES

Les Grèves is a large vineyard of some 30ha right in the heartland of Beaune's middle slopes. Its reddish soil comes from the iron oxide component and the structured, rich and dense style of the wines owes much to this. Etienne's holding is 1.26ha and sits immediately to the south of the prime piece, the *Enfant Jésus* of Bouchard.

The 2021 version shows the earthy, sappy style expected of a young Grèves, the spicy, plummy fruit sitting behind a smoky layer. There is impressive depth and persistence here already, always a good indicator for the future. 50% of the fruit was retained as whole bunches and Etienne advises that a decade in bottle would be his usual rule of thumb. Drink from 2031.

VOLNAY 1ER CRU TAILLEPIEDS

If you are looking for a wine that seems to fit perfectly with the style of 2021, then look no further. The gorgeous perfumes of this Taillepieds lift effortlessly from the glass, bringing crunchy ripe red berries, redcurrants and blood orange in fragrant waves. On the palate, you immediately sense the mineral grip, the dry, rocky vineyard contributing finely powdered tannins which ensure an upright posture and a serious side to counterbalance the joyful fruit. With vines of over 80 years of age, there is plenty of depth of character to enjoy here but once again, pleasure can also be found early, if so desired. Drink from 2029.

CLOS VOUGEOT GRAND CRU

Domaine de Montille has a tiny 0.29ha slither of the Clos, running from the centre of the vineyard up to the northern wall. In the hands of a Volnaysien, perhaps there is already a tendency away from brute power but this example did seem particularly fragrant, showing wild herbs and flowers alongside bright red fruits and a little sour cherry. On the palate, we feel the density of the wine, a strong core sitting central and rooting it firmly in a rather serene and stately manner. There is no doubt that we have an excellent example here, more playful aromatically at this stage than it can be but again with plenty of material with which to go the distance. Drink from 2033.

VOSNE-ROMANÉE 1ER CRU AUX MALCONSORTS

In 2005, Etienne joined forces with his friends the Seysses family, of Domaine Dujac, to buy Domaine Thomas Moillard. Double-teaming was an innovative approach and allowed both families to divide up a well-appointed estate that deserved better. Domaine de Montille had been exclusively a Côte de Beaune estate up to that point but as a well-travelled man, Etienne soon got used to life on the north side of Beaune and undoubtedly it was the parcels of Clos Vougeot and Vosne-Romanée Aux Malconsorts that most excited his customers when the news broke.

Malconsorts sits to the immediate south of La Tâche. It shares many of the same silky characteristics and the compacted layers of blueberry and cassis fruit intermingle quite beautifully with the classic violets of Vosne. Behind it all, the driving mineral of the limestone carries it forward, tightening the wine in the mouth and giving it sharp, crystalline focus. It's a beautiful wine, rightly highly regarded and with a long ageing profile. Drink from 2031.



DOMAINE DE MONTILLE

BLANC

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU LE CAILLERET

While it now shares the cellar with some grander names, Le Cailleret very much remains the flagship white wine of the Domaine as the first meaningful white appellation added by Etienne's father, Hubert de Montille, back in 1993. I often go up to this hallowed corner of Puligny and try to work out how it all fits together. With Montrachet itself a matter of a few yards away, it does seem peculiar that Le Cailleret plays in the second tier, particularly as there are still so many mediocre versions of the former. All the more sense therefore to buy a top example of the premier cru than an average version of a grand cru.

The 2021 Le Cailleret is all about finesse, seemingly sculpted by the limestone with the most delicate, blemish-free profile. Notes of white nuts and pebbles adorn the initial nose before a little white peach and pear start to appear alongside. On the palate, there is considerable dry extract, pointing to the concentration of grapes in a vintage of small yields but also the lack of excess flesh. The finish is floating and elegant, extremely persistent and indeed almost dreamy.

Drink from 2027.

CHEVALIER-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU

Etienne's second major transaction was the purchase of the Château de Puligny in 2012, another remarkable coup that included over 20ha of prime vineyards. Going from an estate with just one white in the stable in 1993 to being one of the major players was a substantial change and now with all of the vineyards under the de Montille name, the prominence of the family is fully restored.

This is the first time we have been able to access some Chevalier-Montrachet but I must warn you that there really is not a lot of it, so allocation will have to reflect support for the domaine. Chevalier of course sits just above Montrachet on the hill with notably whiter soils, owing to less iron oxide and manganese than its neighbour. With these power elements absent, what is left is all about purity, ethereal aromas and elegance. Not for nothing is it considered the noblest. It is a true treat to experience wines like these.

Drink from 2029.



DOMAINE GUY ROULOT



TASTING WITH JEAN-MARC ROULOT CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF THE HIGH POINTS OF ANY VISIT TO BURGUNDY. HIS SKILL AS A COMMUNICATOR AND HIS STRAIGHT-TALKING APPROACH MEAN THAT YOU GET THE FULLEST OF PICTURES OF WHAT THE CONDITIONS OF THE YEAR WERE LIKE AND HE ALWAYS SEEMS TO ENJOY TASTING WITH OTHERS, SHARING INSIGHTS AND GAUGING REACTIONS.

In 2021, nature dealt him a heavy blow, removing 80% of his potential crop in the April frosts. The message was clear to him as to who was in charge and so when it came to harvest and vinification, his aim was to faithfully show the year by presenting the fruit in the best health that he could and with no adjustments.

The acidity levels and pHs were like something from the 1970s yet with all of the wines bar one at 12-13°, he was confident that a good malolactic fermentation and a long élevage would bring the desired result.

He finds the wines incisive, full of energy with lots of keeping potential and has made the decision to bottle as much as he can in magnum. My kind of guy!

For our selection this year, Jean-Marc has offered us a precious few magnums of his call-sign wine, Les Luchets and a small parcel of Bourgogne Blanc. However, knowing full well that this will not be enough to go round, in an attempt to make up for the shortfall in wine from 2021, he has agreed to release some very small, additional volumes of some older wines. Details on these will be sent in separate email offers in due course.

Please [click here](#) for background information on Domaine Guy Roulot.



BLANC
MEURSAULT LUCHETS

Les Luchets sits below Les Vireuils on the northeastern slopes of the village. It's a small vineyard of just under 3.5ha and often one of the earliest at Roulot to be picked. Jean-Marc tends to show it relatively early in his tasting, liking the accessible, open nature of the wine. As a result, the mistake is to think of it as lacking in depth and something to be drunk young and while it is generally an absolute pleasure early on, older examples that I have drunk with Jean-Marc have been fabulous too. This vintage shows plenty of promise, refined, sculpted and precise as one would expect chez Roulot and with sweet perfumes already there to enjoy. The length is again the clue to the quality and in magnum these will be still drinking beautifully in their second decade and likely beyond. Drink from 2025.

BLANC
BOURGOGNE BLANC

I was joined at the Roulot tasting table by an eminent wine writer and we had great fun with this Bourgogne Blanc, finding enchanting aromas of lime blossoms and little oranges and agreeing that it had the most attractive profile that spoke nothing of the drama of the vintage. Jean-Marc smiled and asked us to guess its level of alcohol. "12.5?", I ventured, "perhaps nudging 13°?", countered the scribe. "Onze neuf" came the reply. 11.9°?!

Jean-Marc knew that this was likely to stun us but he had done so as a way to explain the character of the vintage. This wasn't a year that was all about a rush to ripeness and a rapid harvest but rather a slow accumulation over a full-length growing season. With less fruit on the vine, the plant was able to ensure that what was left was fully phenologically ready when it came to be picked. Roulot's Bourgogne has long been considered a benchmark: those who came to our dinner with Jean-Marc in Paris back in 2020 will remember him showing magnums of the 2014 to start us off, so don't worry that this is something that you need to set an alarm on to drink up early.

Drink from 2024.



DOMAINE TAUPENOT-MERME



ROMAIN TAUPENOT HAD BEEN VERY EXCITED ABOUT 2021 AS IT WOULD BE THE FIRST YEAR THAT HE WAS ABLE TO ACCESS 6HA OF FAMILY VINEYARDS IN THE CÔTE DE BEAUNE THAT HAD NOW COME BACK INTO THE DOMAINE.

The only issue was that they had been farmed conventionally and of course he would need to convert them to organic, a process which normally takes three years. Suffice to say, 2021 was a tricky year to begin that task. He remarked that the mildew pressure was the worst he had ever seen it and in the end, the new vineyards contributed a mere 6 hl/ha. A tough start- only upwards from here.

Back in the Côte de Nuits, meanwhile, things were rather better for him. They started to harvest on 23rd September and while the crop was small, something around 20 hl/ha was far more workable. With potential alcohols all in the 13° range, there was no need to adjust the musts either and Romain felt sufficiently confident in the quality that he was happy to continue with punchdowns. Tasting the wines together, Romain considers that 2021 has given “more classical wines”, which he explains as “refreshing, nice, juicy and balanced” and likes the dominant red fruit character, something that had been seen less and less in recent years.



Please [click here](#) for background information on
Domaine Taupenot-Merme

DOMAINE TAUPENOT-MERME

ROUGE MAZOYÈRES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

Once again, I found the Mazoyères quite notably in front of the rest in the cellar this year. It greets you with waves of mulberry, plum and sour cherry fruit, with a touch of spice, tobacco and pepper alongside, adding a sense of lifted fragrance. On the palate, the tannins are beautifully rounded already but there is plenty of strength within, making this definitely a good middleweight or light-heavyweight, easily able to dance around the ring but still with plenty of punching power.

On the subject of when to drink, Romain ventured that the low solids to juice ratio had meant that tannins were not a major hurdle this year and thus waiting for them to melt away was unlikely to require much patience. However, the fresh acidity will preserve these wines well, permitting them to take the time needed for full aromatic development. Once again, a decade in bottle would really be the minimum requirement. We recently showed a magnum of the 2017 at a Club dinner and delicious as it was, the closing remark was that it would have been even better the next day. Drink from 2033.

BLANC ST ROMAIN BLANC

The Taupenot's St Romain has built its own little fan club among Club Magnum members in recent months, ticking the box for quality at more everyday levels but also showing its versatility as both an aperitif and as a wine to enjoy with a variety of dishes at table. The 2021 will clearly be in contrast to the fuller 2020 that we have been enjoying but Romain's careful, laser-like approach has crafted a whistle-clean example that will bring that smack of zesty lemon freshness that wakes us all after a punishing day. Drink from 2024.



SUMMARY OF WINES

NORTH TO SOUTH EN MAGNUM

● ROUGE

● BLANC

FIXIN LA CROIX BLANCHE, CHÂTEAU DE CHARODON
GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN EN CRÉOT, DOMAINE THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR
GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU CAZETIERS, BENJAMIN LEROUX
GRIOTTE-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU, BENJAMIN LEROUX
MAZOYÈRES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU, DOMAINE TAUPENOT MERME
BONNES-MARES GRAND CRU, BENJAMIN LEROUX
CLOS VOUGEOT GRAND CRU, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE
VOSNE-ROMANÉE 1ER CRU SUCHOTS, DOMAINE DE BELLENE
VOSNE-ROMANÉE 1ER CRU AUX MALCONSORTS, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE
NUITS-ST. GEORGES 1ER CRU LES ST. GEORGES, DOMAINE THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR
CORTON-RÉNARDES GRAND CRU, CHÂTEAU DE CHARODON
BEAUNE 1ER CRU HOMMAGE À FRANÇOISE POTEL, DOMAINE DE BELLENE
BEAUNE 1ER CRU GRÈVES, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE
BEAUNE 1ER CRU CHOUACHEUX, CHÂTEAU DE CHARODON
POMMARD 1ER CRU CLOS DES EPENEUX MONOPOLE, DOMAINE COMTE ARMAND
BOURGOGNE ROUGE, DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE
VOLNAY 1ER CRU CHAMPANS, DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE
VOLNAY 1ER CRU TAILLEPIEDS, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE
BOURGOGNE ALIGOTÉ, DOMAINE MARQUIS D'ANGERVILLE
MEURSAULT LES VIREUILS, BENJAMIN LEROUX
MEURSAULT LES LUCHETS, DOMAINE ROULOT
MEURSAULT 1ER CRU GENEVRIÈRES, BENJAMIN LEROUX
BLAGNY 1ER CRU LA PIÈCE SOUS LA BOIS, BENJAMIN LEROUX
MEURSAULT-BLAGNY 1ER CRU LA PIÈCE SOUS LA BOIS, BENJAMIN LEROUX
PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU LE CAILLERET, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE
PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU CLAVOILLON, DOMAINE LEFLAIVE
PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU PUCELLES, DOMAINE LEFLAIVE
CHEVALIER-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU, DOMAINE DE MONTILLE

For the full list of wines, including in 75cl, please consult the order form.

Further releases will follow in the months ahead, including Domaine des Comtes Lafon and some selected older vintages.





CLUB MAGNUM

VINS ET EXPÉRIENCES

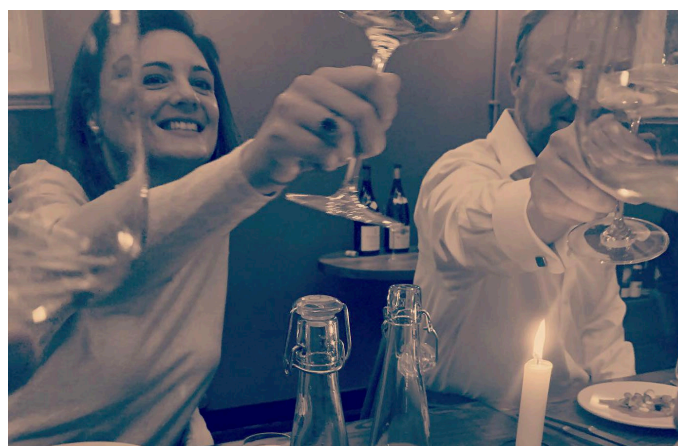


CLUB MAGNUM'S EVENTS ENABLE OUR MEMBERS TO MEET, TO LEARN AND TO HAVE FUN TOGETHER.

Members are encouraged to bring guests and every effort is made to ensure convivial surrounds, fantastic food and wonderful wine.

Members all receive two complimentary places at Club dinners per membership year. In addition, to the Club dinners, trips to wine regions and dinners with growers all form part of our programme.

Come and join in the fun!





CLUB MAGNUM

VINS ET EXPÉRIENCES

WWW.CLUBMAGNUM.COM INFO@CLUBMAGNUM.COM

+33 (0)785 144968

PHOTO CREDITS

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