



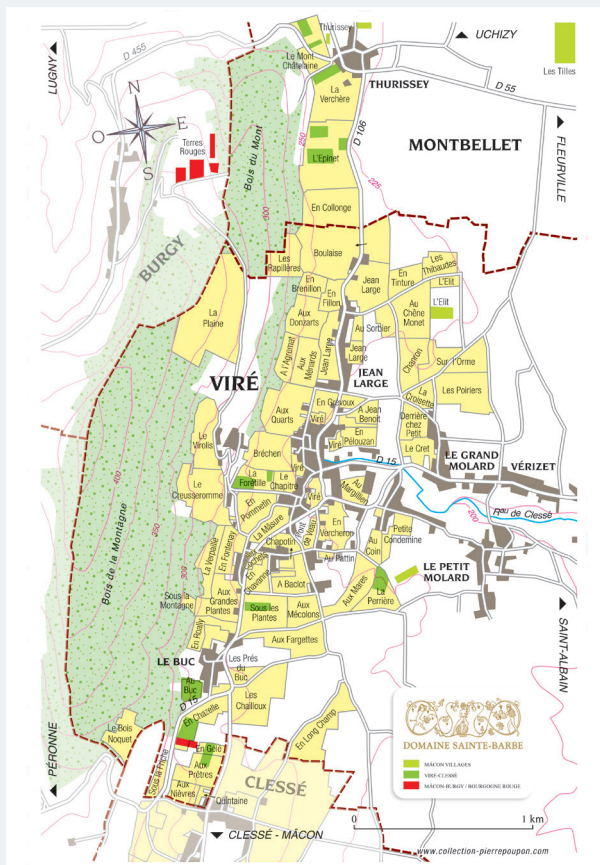
CLUB MAGNUM

VINS ET EXPÉRIENCES

# DOMAINE JEAN-MARIE CHALAND



ALL IN ALL, JEAN-MARIE IS FARMING 23 PARCELS OF VINES ACROSS THREE COMMUNES: VIRÉ, MONTBELLET AND BURGUY.



The energetic Jean-Marie Chaland came back to his home village of Viré in 2000 having spent time learning his craft in Champagne, Australia and the Southern Rhône following the completion of his degree in Viticulture and Oenology. Today he runs an estate of 9.5ha together with his wife, Ewelina. Both his father and grandfather were vigneron, the former using the name Domaine des Chazelles.

When Jean-Marie returned to Viré, he initially farmed 4ha under the name Domaine Sainte Barbe, named after a cross found in one of his vineyards.

One of his first steps was to convert to organic farming, achieving certification in 2003 although he is keen to stress that none of the family's vineyards had ever used herbicides. In 2010, the addition of his father's vineyards brought the domaine up to its present size. Although both Chazelles and Sainte-Barbe still exist, Jean-Marie is increasingly using his own name and therefore so shall we!

The core of the domaine is in Viré and therefore falls under the appellation of Viré-Clessé. All in all, Jean-Marie is farming 23 parcels of vines across three communes: Viré, Montbellet and Burguy.

## DOMAINE JEAN-MARIE CHALAND

Here in the heart of the Mâconnais, there are a large variety of soils to express, differing expositions to work with and many micro-climates to understand. Jean-Marie revels in this, fully committed to revealing the character of each single site where possible and passionate about the husbandry of his family's vines, which average over fifty years old and include some parcels of more than a hundred years of age. Replanting is done using massal selections and harvesting is entirely manual.

In the cellar, only indigenous yeasts are used and élevages are either in stainless steel or oak barrels, with only a tiny proportion of new oak, never more than 5-10%.

The entry level wines are generally bottled before the next harvest while the 'parcellaires' will see a second winter and can spend up to 24 months in barrel before bottling. Currently ten cuvées are produced of which six are from individual sites in Viré-Clessé. Unusually, he also produces a little méthode champenoise in both white and pink and at the other end of the scale, both a Marc and a Fine de Bourgogne, a tradition which he is proud to continue.

Moving around the cellar with Jean-Marie, you can feel a bounce in his step, an infectious enthusiasm that points towards someone with a genuine passion and love for his work.



I first discovered him at one of those big tastings where thirty or forty producers are showing their wares under one roof. While others were far flashier and noisier, there was something about both Jean-Marie and his wines that immediately encourage more detailed inspection. As the saying goes, the first glass invites the second.

Of his 9.5 hectares, 1.5 are planted in red, putting him well above the average for the region and these are split half and half between Gamay and Pinot Noir. He is particularly proud of his parcel of 100+ year-old Gamay from the **Terres Rouges** in Burgy which gives a terrific spicy, peppery wine that complements the local game and charcuterie.

His Pinot Noir, presented as **Bourgogne Rouge La Chapelle**, comes from 45 year-old vines and we mused that it could certainly be considered as 'vieilles vignes' elsewhere. The vines sit on a plateau at 350m, facing east-northeast and the result is a fine, detailed lighter-style wine that is a delight and could easily be served lightly chilled. It is usually completely destemmed and given a gentle extraction. There are just 4ha left of red in this village, tucked away in a valley behind Viré and when you taste wines of this quality, you rather wonder why things have become so lop-sided.

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In the whites, the **Mâcon-Villages** is the junior cuvée, designed for drinking young and a blend from across the communes. With the range of Viré-Clessé, however, we have the chance to really explore the village of Viré. Before moving on to the 'parcellaires', however, Jean-Marie explains that there is also one wine, simply called '**Vieilles Vignes**' which is a blend across the parcels.

We swiftly move to the first single site wine, **Chazelles**, which comes from 65 year-old vines on a hill at the warmer, southern end of the village towards Clessé with noted white limestone at the top and richer, salmon-pink marls towards the middle and bottom. He elects to vinify 70% in stainless steel, the balance in barrel in an attempt to accentuate the tension of a site than can tend towards richer, riper notes.

## WITH THE RANGE OF VIRÉ— CLESSÉ, HOWEVER, WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO REALLY EXPLORE THE VILLAGE OF VIRÉ.

Next comes **L'Épinet**, which actually falls under the commune of Montbellet despite being labelled Viré-Clessé. The slope is steeper here, with a darker, stonier soil. Jean-Marie feels that this wine can support a little more framework and generally encourages a little more patience before opening, perhaps reaching its peak 5-10 years after harvest.

**La Perrière** is on the south-eastern side of Viré, with more clay and limestone in the mix. The vines are a little younger here (around 35 years old) and he thinks of the wine as open and expressive, offering natural roundness and immediacy of fruit but with a little correcting salinity owing to the limestone.



In the centre of the village, around 300m of altitude, there is a beautifully-sited south-east facing parcel called **Forétille**. Here Jean-Marie has just a little more than half a hectare of vines grown on darker soils with more clay and stones, low-yielding and producing a straight, pure driven and tense style. There is a little Chardonnay-Muscaté in the vineyard which he rather likes as it gives an aromatic counterpoint, offering a little touch of exoticism and fragrance.

Presented next is a real highlight of the range, **Thurissey**. Here there is a half-hectare parcel of 100 year-old vines, planted south-southeast at the north of the appellation on a very clay-rich soil. There is an intense minerality here but so too a beautiful scent of pêche de vigne. As we worked the wine, it started to shift towards menthol and aniseed and had the most pure, crystalline feel on the palate. This is undoubtedly serious territory.

Presented last in the line-up is the most recent addition, the monopole of **Clos du Buc**. Le Buc is a little hamlet in the south-west of the appellation high on the hill towards Quintaine, a village famous for its richer, later-harvest styles. This more exuberant side is in evidence with this wine too. The vines are now 85 years old but with the purchase only completed in 2017, Jean-Marie explains that he has still some work to do in the vineyard, not least in getting to know its character. He is obviously excited about the potential, however and points towards an aromatic profile that contrasts with the purity of Thurissey, offering a degree of richness and decadence that could take on grander, richer dishes such as turbot.

