



DOMAINE JOSEPH ROTY

2015 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

CORNEY & BARROW UK EXCLUSIVITY

Domaine Joseph Roty is based in the heart of Gevrey-Chambertin but remains off the beaten track, in all senses of the phrase.

The Domaine is functional rather than grand, based around a simple courtyard lying behind a sliding metal gate. The wines, however, are anything but simple. The vinous plethora here takes in red, white and rosé, ranging from generic Bourgogne, via Marsannay, to Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru.

Domaine Joseph Roty is one of the few producers who choose to release bottled wines, rather than wines still in barrel. Waiting an extra year to be paid is not something most small family producers would contemplate. In the case of the Roty family, it demonstrates an admirably stubborn drive for quality and authenticity.

Recent changes

The beneficent figure of the late Joseph Roty hangs over the Domaine. Joseph was a large personality, renowned for chain-smoking through tastings. Nearly a decade after his death, his influence (and name) still looms large at the Domaine.

Joseph was succeeded officially by his son Philippe in 2008. In his late thirties at the time, Philippe had in fact run the Domaine for several years previously. Tragically, Philippe himself died in 2015, aged 46.

The baton has now passed to Philippe's younger brother Pierre-Jean, with whom we have tasted for the past two years. Madame Roty, mother to Philippe and Pierre-Jean, is a constant presence before and after tastings. It feels like she is the glue which holds this resilient family unit together.

Until the 2014 vintage, some *cuvées* had been bottled as Domaine Joseph Roty and others as Domaine Philippe Roty. All wines are now labelled Domaine Joseph Roty.

Vineyard

Pruning at the Domaine is staunchly practical. Whilst others hedge their bets against frost by leaving longer canes than are actually needed when pruning, Domaine Roty leaves only around six buds per cane. The Domaine has a high proportion of smaller *millerand* berries, due in part to the age of the vines. Vineyard practices are best described as *lutte raisonnée*, as non-interventionist as possible, whilst retaining the right to use conventional products if needed.

Cellar

Pierre-Jean is no fan of whole-bunch fermentation, trusting to the Domaine's traditional practice of 100% destemming. A cold pre-fermentation maceration lasts one week, following which fermentation starts naturally at 11-12°C. The proportion of new oak varies depending on the year: in 2015, it averaged 5-10% for Bourgogne-level wines, 30-50% for village wines and up to 100% for the *premiers* and *grands crus*. There is no filtration.

2015 VINTAGE NOTES

"Sorting was done as always, but the grapes were so healthy, next to nothing was rejected."

PIERRE-JEAN ROTY

October 2017

Last year, Pierre-Jean Roty told us that 2015 was a small harvest for them, so we arrived prepared. Nonetheless, the loss of 30-35% versus a normal vintage is significant. This was principally due to the heat, which resulted in very small berries. No green harvest was needed in 2015, with one leaf thinning pass through the vines, on the sunny side of the canopy.

The 2015 growing season was a meeting of extremes. The summer heat left its stamp on the fruit, with succulent, ripe flavours pervading the wines. There are substantial tannins in the reds thanks to thick grape skins, although they are supple, almost without exception. There is freshness and poise too, due in part to the water reserves built up over a wet winter. This allowed the vines to hold out until the August rains.

The icing on the cake was a clear blue sky for harvest, allowing the grapes to be picked in optimal conditions. Harvest at Domaine Joseph Roty started on the 10th September. The potential alcohol averaged a very healthy 13.5%. The only negative is the yield, which as noted above, is a third less than average in 2015. Reasons for this include damage to dormant buds during the previous season and some uneven fruit set caused by a warm June.



GUY SEDDON

February 2018

TASTING NOTES

REDS

COTEAUX BOURGUIGNONS

The Coteaux Bourguignons appellation was created in 2011, replacing Bourgogne Grand Ordinaire, the previous name of this wine. The Roty version was never “*ordinaire*” in any case. The appellation allowed for Gamay in the blend, but the Rotys’ wine has always been 100% Pinot Noir. It is from vines over three decades old, a parcel just below the Gevrey-Chambertin boundary, planted by Pierre-Jean’s father Joseph. Strident red berries on the nose, with excellent ripe fruit. The palate is supple, bright and will drink beautifully upon arrival.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2021

£145/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

BOURGOGNE CUVÉE DE PRESSONNIER

A Gevrey-Chambertin in all but name, the parcel having been within the appellation boundary until 1964. The oldest vines here date from 1925. Spicy on the nose, with dark berries and a sweet fruit weight. On the palate, a little undergrowth and fine but nicely melding tannic grip add weight to the dark berry fruit.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16.5-17
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2023+

£185/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MARSANNAY ROUGE

When Pierre-Jean’s parents started to make wine in Marsannay, they were seen as outsiders. Although a *premier cru* Marsannay designation seems as far off as ever, the village is certainly enjoying a renaissance. This is a blend of several parcels: a snapshot of the appellation. It is spicy and darkly-fruited on the nose, with blackberry and a fine earthiness. Characterful and textured.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16.5+
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2023

£255/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MARSANNAY CHAMPS SAINT-ETIENNE

The Domaine has 18 *ouvrées* (around $\frac{3}{4}$ of a hectare) of Marsannay, four *ouvrées* of which are Marsannay Blanc. The vines here are over 50 years old. More red-fruited than the previous *cuvée*, this is beautifully ripe and expressive, rose petals veritably soaring from the glass. Supple and giving on the palate, with a fresh balancing acidity. “Strawberries seem to be the signature of this wine”, I jotted down – make of that what you will...

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2020 – 2025+

£285/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CÔTE DE NUITS-VILLAGES

This well-sited vineyard, in Brochon, lies just beyond the Gevrey boundary, between Fixin 1er Cru La Perrière and Gevrey-Chambertin Les Evocelles. The vines are around 50 years old. More dark-fruited here, a bright sweetness of blackcurrant and a little black pepper on the nose. The palate is similarly spiced, with characterful earthy minerality and beautifully lifted acidity giving wings to the fruit. It finishes precise, coming to a fine point and leaving a trace of violet perfume.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2020 – 2024

£300/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN

A blend of four parcels, accounting for 0.75 hectares in total. The Gevrey Villages has dark berries on the nose, with a pronounced spiciness. The palate starts fine and streamlined, with filigree tannins fragmenting the liquid like a fine-toothed comb. Wonderfully complete, this does not bear the stamp of a warm vintage – other than a gentle, persistent weight of fruit – made really sensitively. I jotted down a note-to-self: “I would like some of this and the CdN Villages, please!”

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2020 – 2026

£425/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN CHAMPS CHENYS

These are very old vines, bordering Charmes-Chambertin and replanted in 1935. A number of different parcels throughout the *lieu-dit* go into this wine, some adjacent to Charmes-Chambertin. The vine age is between 30 and 80 years. Tea leaf and dried herbs on the nose, leading into a palate of juicy blackcurrant, kirsch, bitter cherry and a herbal, herbaceous, nettly aspect. Firm tannins exert a grip on the finish – give this one some cellar time – but are beautifully extracted.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5-18
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021 – 2028

£240/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN CUVÉE DE LA BRUNELLE

Planted by Pierre-Jean’s father and grandfather, La Brunelle is essentially the Rotys’ back garden, a walled vineyard in the centre of the town of Gevrey-Chambertin. We tasted this looking out onto the vineyard (seated on plastic garden chairs, as is customary here). Violets and dark spices on the nose, blackberry and then rose petals. The palate is supremely elegant, a persistent buzz of energy and ripe dark cherry running through it, the whole lifted by poised acidity.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021 – 2029+

£265/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN CUVÉE CLOS PRIEUR BAS

Clos Prieur Bas is planted on similar soil to Charmes-Chambertin – clay and Bajocian limestone. The higher part of this vineyard, Clos Prieur Haut, is a *premier cru*. This lower part has deeper soils – the Rotys' plot is at the southern side of the vineyard, next to the *premier cru*. This is more powerful on the nose than the preceding wines, with strident blackberries. The palate has very pure dark berries on the entry, with fine but powerful tannins channelling the fruit. Perfume seeps from the liquid in the most lovely way – violets and rose petals.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5+

RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021 – 2031

£250/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU LES FONTENYS

This comes from a parcel within a warm hollow, giving it a special character. The name Fontenys is a Burgundian moniker for 'little fountain'. Pierre-Jean confessed to having a particular fondness for this wine in 2015. What a lovely nose – sweet spices, tea leaf, fine, fine earthy minerality, and above it all soar violets. The fruit is chiffon-like on the entry, with fine tannins providing rigour and definition. Very complete, everything in its right place. If people ask how good Pinot Noir can be, this is not a bad starting point!

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18.5

RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022 – 2035

£500/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CHARMES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU TRÈS VIEILLES VIGNES

This is the oldest of the Roty holdings, originally planted in 1881, surely warranting the 'very' old vines of its title. Effusive and beautifully perfumed on the nose, this is very much a charming Charmes. The palate is supple and sweetly-fruited on the entry, bright red berries and wonderfully fruit-coated tannins, which are fine and effortlessly assertive. Acidity runs through this like a rapier, lifting the finish. Power and breeding. It works so seamlessly, it is rather hard to find any fault at all (hence my score)!

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19

RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2035+

£1295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MAZY-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

Sometime spelt 'Mazis', the Rotys' Mazy is so small, it is "confidential", in Pierre-Jean's words. Just two barrels were made in 2015. Sweet spices and pure red berries on the nose, with a gently animalistic side. The palate is ultra-refined on the entry, suave and silky, with nuance and texture building on the mid-palate, the volume ramping up, whilst maintaining crystalline definition. Fruit weight and perfume linger in tandem on the finish.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18.5

RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2034+

£1400/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

WHITE

BOURGOGNE BLANC

This is a Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc blend, the latter planted in 1990. It comes from a number of parcels in Gevrey and Marsannay. It is, as always, ripe and made in the most non-interventionist manner, in old oak 500 litre *tonneaux*. Bright stone-fruit, with an excellent seated texture, comfortable in its own skin. Great food wine, a boost of fruit ripeness on the finish underscoring its quality.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16.5
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2021

£140/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MARSANNAY BLANC

This Marsannay comes from a three parcels, two of which are *premiers crus*. There is more fruit ripeness here, with a nod to the tropical – grapefruit and pineapple top notes over a peachy core. The palate has nicely lifted acidity, with a touch of roasted corn on the finish, gently honeyed and toasty, rounded. This is vinified in old oak barrels, giving it a pleasant roundness.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2021

£240/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

ROSÉ

MARSANNAY ROSÉ

A pale salmon hue, a little lighter in intensity than I remember in the past, but nonetheless this is 'proper' rosé, made with food pairing in mind. The Rotys prefer to make a more corpulent style of rosé with a few years' ageing potential. The nose has lovely bright strawberries, with a touch of creamy density on the palate. This is made using direct pressing, rather than the *saignée* method.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16
RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2021

£135/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

TO ORDER

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