



CORNEY &
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



DOMAINE LEFLAIVE

2017 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

*“My recommendation is to open
a bottle at dinner and drink it for
breakfast... if I am really nice to my
friends, I open a bottle in the morning.”*

Brice de La Morandière
On when to drink the Domainé's wines



INTRODUCTION

We arrived at Domaine Leflaive's new barrel cellar in the evening, as dusk was falling on the quiet streets of Puligny-Montrachet. Brice de La Morandière was waiting for us, sitting on a bench in the cellar's small courtyard, which was a picture of tranquility.

It is rather magical tasting in a deserted, dimly lit cellar. We assembled in a loose semi-circle at the end of a row of barrels: Brice, *Régisseur* Pierre Vincent, Adam, Will Monroe and I. This is Pierre Vincent's first full vintage at the helm of the Domaine's winemaking. He is rightly mindful of the weight of history here, but seems refreshingly open to innovation.

The Domaine has made some not-insignificant changes over the past few years, including moving to Diam technical corks, as of the 2014 vintage. The challenge here was to put to bed definitively the spectre of so-called premature oxidation that, as Brice quite openly acknowledges, has for a couple of decades now hung over many producers, most visibly, although not exclusively, of white Burgundy.

In 2015, a new press and new decanting tanks were purchased. Recent cellar innovations include separate handling of the press juice and totally revised racking and bottling processes. As of the 2014 vintage, all shipments have used e-Provenance® technology to record temperature and humidity during transport. As for fraud prevention, since the 2011 vintage, each bottle has contained a unique Prooftag® security code, enabling customers to verify their authenticity on the Domaine's website, www.leflaive.fr.



Anyway, back to the tasting. We started with the Mâcon-Verzé and its two new single-vineyard *cuvées*, offered herein, Le Monté and Les Chênes. This is a forward-looking move by the Domaine – the Mâconnais is already etching itself into the awareness of serious wine buyers and by isolating two top plots, the intricacies of the *terroir* have become fascinatingly visible.

The Domaine's Bourgogne Blanc is, as Adam points out in his tasting note, a Puligny-Montrachet by anyone else's standard, the grapes coming from within the village. The Puligny-Montrachet Villages is, of course, a step up in both concentration and finesse and indeed it is only by comparison that one understands why the Bourgogne Blanc is labelled as such.

The *premiers crus* are where you begin to see the astonishing complexity that is wrought from such a small patch of hillside vineyards. The brain surgeon *Henry Marsh has written that the idea that "thought itself... should consist of jelly, is simply too strange to understand." I find it similarly amazing that this muddy hillside can, by some alchemy, produce the most sublime and varied liquid. Every year, to a greater or lesser extent, the vineyards' personalities emerge phoenix-like from the soil: the flamboyant, strutting Folatières, the depth and majesty of Combettes and the laser-like brilliance of Pucelles.

And then there are the *grands crus*. With a touch of the self-effacing, Brice recently told a group of customers, "I often sit looking at Chevalier-Montrachet, as it's the only thing I do really well..." Here again, the characters are clear to see, never more so, it seems, than in this most transparent of vintages. The earthbound realism of Bienvenues. The rotund, joyful good nature of clay-heavy Bâtard. The electric, nervy tension of limestone-rich Chevalier, sitting high on the slope, above Le Montrachet itself.

After the frost-ravaged 2016, yields are 'correct' in 2017, as they say in Burgundy, without excess. The effects of the warm, dry summer – a little too dry in July – were moderated by gentle August rains, easing the grapes into a tantalisingly perfect maturity. It is tempting to find parallels of the 2014 vintage in the elegance, concentration and precision of these wonderful wines.

More than anything perhaps, 2017 is a vintage in which *terroir* shows itself to the very best effect. That magic ingredient, which Burgundy does better than anyone, is the sense of communion with the earth, light and air from which its wines are wrought. I came away from our evening tasting at the Domaine feeling that it is this aspect of profound immediacy which is particularly visible this year. And if that is not the sign of an exciting vintage, I don't know what is.

Guy Seddon

GUY SEDDON
NOVEMBER 2018

* Henry Marsh, *Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery*



Brice de La Morandière

“Our family philosophy is to respect the great terroirs, to show humility towards the forces of nature and to be rigorous in our relentless pursuit of excellence in winemaking.”

Brice de La Morandière



VINEYARD HOLDINGS

MÂCONNAIS	Hectares	Years Planted
Mâcon-Verzé (Les Cassons, En Perret, Escolles, Les Muse)	12.05	1930 - 2010
Mâcon-Verzé "les Chênes"	3.43	1935 (0.45 ha); 1973 - 2002 (2.98 ha)
Mâcon-Verzé "le Monté"	0.94	1964 - 1965

VILLAGE & REGIONAL WINES

Bourgogne Blanc (Les Parties, Les Houlières and La Plante des Champs)	4.31	1979 - 2003
Puligny-Montrachet	4.70	1955 - 2003

PREMIER CRU VINEYARDS

Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Clavoillon	4.79	1959 - 1988
Meursault 1er Cru Sous le Dos d'Âne	1.26	1995 - 2004
Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Folatières	1.60	1962 - 1999
Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Combettes	0.73	1963 - 1972
Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Pucelles	2.75	1957 - 1985

GRAND CRU VINEYARDS

Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru	1.15	1958 - 1959
Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru	1.72	1962 - 1989
Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru	1.79	1955 - 1980
Le Montrachet Grand Cru	0.08	1960

Please Note

Please note these wines are sold on the clear understanding that they will be stored and delivered in the UK only. Due to high demand outstripping available quantities, many of these wines are on allocation. We ask for a balanced orders as it is simply not possible nor fair to other customers to give an allocation of just the grands crus for example. For further advice please speak to your usual salesperson or ring our Fine Wine Sales Team on 020 7265 2430.

2017 TASTING NOTES

Tasting notes by
Adam Brett-Smith



MÂCON-VERZÉ

The least expensive fine wine in the world has now gone plural with two of the original five tiny plots, Les Chênes and Le Monté, considered beautiful enough to be offered in their own right (see below). This also gives, curiously perhaps, a greater focus to the original wine which, after fourteen years since the first vintage (2004) still gives me childish excitement when I see it across a restaurant table or on a top hotel wine list. But it is rare and will become more so. Very good in 2017. Golden yellow colour. The nose is creamily ripe, with a hint of butter but zesty perfume as well. The palate is silken cream, with nice weight, never heavy, but gently flattering to the finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2018 – 2021

£255/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£285/Case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

MÂCON-VERZÉ LES CHÊNES

Lying about half a mile north-northwest of Le Monté this is an altogether tauter and tighter expression of Verzé. Slightly reductive (good) at the time of tasting, the fruit here is more clenched, more reserved, suggesting longer keeping perhaps but with an attractive mineral richness and poise to the finish. I suspect my score may be conservative.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2023

£290/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£320/Case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

MÂCON-VERZÉ LE MONTÉ

This is the southernmost plot in Verzé and this is the first time this has been offered as a separate vineyard – a little bit of history therefore. We have just 2,400 bottles for the whole of the UK...

I, you, we, have no terms of reference for this wine – that is part of the excitement – but if it were a Puligny then perhaps a cross between Folatières and Pucelles might help – or not. Anyway, it's a lovely wine, more atmospheric on the nose (Pucelles), refined, mineral tight but with a palate that is silkily flavoured (Folatières), with fine density and a poised, elegant finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2022

£300/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£330/Case of 6 magnums, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE BLANC

For those who know... and for those who are happy to make fools of themselves for the umpteenth time as they compare the quality of this wine with a Puligny-Montrachet itself and/or forget that the Domaine does indeed produce tiny quantities of Bourgogne Blanc. The two little plots from which the wine comes, are in the village of Puligny (see map on p15), Les Houlières, Les Parties, with the third, La Plante des Champs, just over the Chagny/Beaune road.

Very smooth, subtly creamy and pure fruit on the nose, a sense of tension. The palate is both fresh and succulent, with the lightest touch of minerality, a physical tension this time and an effortless, surprisingly long finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2021

£245/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£260/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET

An intricate mosaic of six plots totalling just 4.6 hectares combine to produce this village Puligny - Les Reuchaux, Les Nosroyes, Les Grand Champs, Les Brelances and my two favourites (don't ask me why), La Rue aux Vaches and Les Tremblots, all positioned like a rather exotic fan around the village itself and planted between 1955 and 2003 – good blood here.

Initially masked on the nose, it opens after a few minutes to offer a very pure, apparently light, intermittently creamy nose. I subsequently wrote 'subliminally biscuity' in the margin which may or may not be helpful. The palate is open, expressive, lush, even succulent but with a kick of acidity to the finish. Very good length as well, very good wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2022

£425/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£440/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

MEURSAULT 1ER CRU SOUS LE DOS D'ÂNE

Sous le Dos d'Âne was replanted to Chardonnay from 1995 so the vines are well over 20 years old and this fine vineyard lying north-northwest of Puligny is producing really beautiful wine. Another great wine to serve blind....

Slightly fuller in colour, green gold. The nose is floral, touched by honey and a hint of creamy oak. The palate is pure Meursault, fuller and sweeter than the Pulignys with broad, generous flavours but with that quintessential Leflaive elegance and lightness of touch to the fresh, clean finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2022

£575/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£590/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU CLAVOILLON

The Domaine owns 85%, almost five hectares, of this *premier cru* vineyard which certainly accounts for its ubiquity and perhaps the lack of comfort of comparison with other growers. This meant that Clavoillon, with its heavier soil and 'apartness' was always considered the lesser relation among the other *premiers crus*. That perception was destroyed by reality many years ago and there is an argument to suggest that this first full vintage of Pierre Vincent has produced the finest Clavoillon to date. Yes, the nose offers that characteristic white fruit and nuts and nougat but the tension even on the perfume is self-evident. Likewise the palate which has beautiful poise, an almost perfect balance of richness and refinement and an almost brilliant, startling acidity on the finish. Very, very good.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2023

£595/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£610/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU FOLATIÈRES

The characteristic flamboyance, exoticism even of this lovely 1.6 hectare vineyard has a calmer interpretation in 2017, as if a voluptuous shape has been cloaked in a more authoritative, less peacock colour. 'Half submerged seduction, I wrote in the margin. The nose is quite lovely, with a walnut, creamy, almost toasted super-ripe fruit perfume and sweetly flavoured, silken indeed on the palate, but with a freshness, a lift, a taut quality that makes that famous flamboyance insinuating rather than overt. Loved this wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2023

£995/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£1,010/Case of 3 magnums, 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. For the benefit of simplicity, wines are scored out of 20. 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.



PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU LES COMBETTES

I have never known a better producer of Combettes and this 2017 merely re-confirms that opinion. Geographically it is apart (see map), stylistically it is apart, in age of vines it is apart and alas in size it is minute. Every year Brice and the Domaine's team agree that the vines are now too old and must be replanted, and every year they taste the new vintage and say 'No, no we can't, we mustn't, this is magnificent.' But soon they must and this just reconfirms for me what I have always thought about this vineyard – an older lady perhaps, but a very, very beautiful one. The first four words in my tasting notes were 'This is *grand cru*' – well it isn't but it might as well be... the nose combines rich old-vined fruit with a super-refined minerality and that peculiar contrast between perfume that suggests austerity and subtly liquorous ripeness at the same time. The palate offers layers of flavour with a lovely lift of calm acidity to this richness and a finish that is beautifully balanced and profound in length. Gorgeous wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5+
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2024

£1,050/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£1,065/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET 1ER CRU LES PUCELLES

This – perhaps the greatest of the 1st growths and certainly the one most closely associated with the Domaine – is a blade, not some hulking two-handed broadsword but a rapier, super-strong but fine, power through finesse and inner, high tensile strength. All very fanciful but the fact is, that when Pucelles is on song there is very little to touch it, and it's on song virtually every vintage. 'A real blade, I scribbled in the margin, and 'super-refined without the richness.' The nose is hauntingly perfumed, with impossibly pure fruit, subliminally ripe, layered, mineral, long. The palate – sounds absurd – is tensely-fruited, with nervy acidity, dry-rich flavours, with just a hint of the silken sweetness to come and a delectable dry, taut finish. Lovely wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 - 18+
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2024

£1,175/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£1,190/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK
£875/Case of 1 jeroboam, in bond UK

BIENVENUES-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU

These are the oldest vines of the Domaine, planted in 1958 and 1959 respectively. I often think that this is the reason behind the calm authority of this *grand cru* – always tasted immediately after Pucelles and always a massive contrast. Bienvenues has a planted feel to it, a wine of substance rather than of the atmosphere and so it is in 2017. The nose is weighted in old-vine fruit perfume, creamy, with hints of sweetly perfumed leather. The palate is almost unctuous but crisp and clean at the same time, with fine, fine acidity, profound concentration and perfect tension in the finish. Bullseye.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5+ - 19
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2025

£1,095/Case of 3 bottles, in bond UK
£745/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK
£1,550/Case of 1 jeroboam, in bond UK

BÂTARD-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU

This is the easiest of the grands crus to taste young, for it possesses a 'heart on sleeve' quality that is wonderfully appealing, the sort of instant love affair you get with Folatières in the premiers crus but with a profundity and density that that wine could not hope to match. The nose is peachily ripe in perfume, lush, creamy with a hint of biscuity oak. The palate follows suit spectacularly with big, hard-charging, generously rich flavours, allied to a gusty flare of tension and acidity to the finish which is sustained and powerful. Takes no prisoners this Bâtard, very impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2025

£1,195/Case of 3 bottles, in bond UK
£815/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK
£1,685/Case of 1 jeroboam, in bond UK

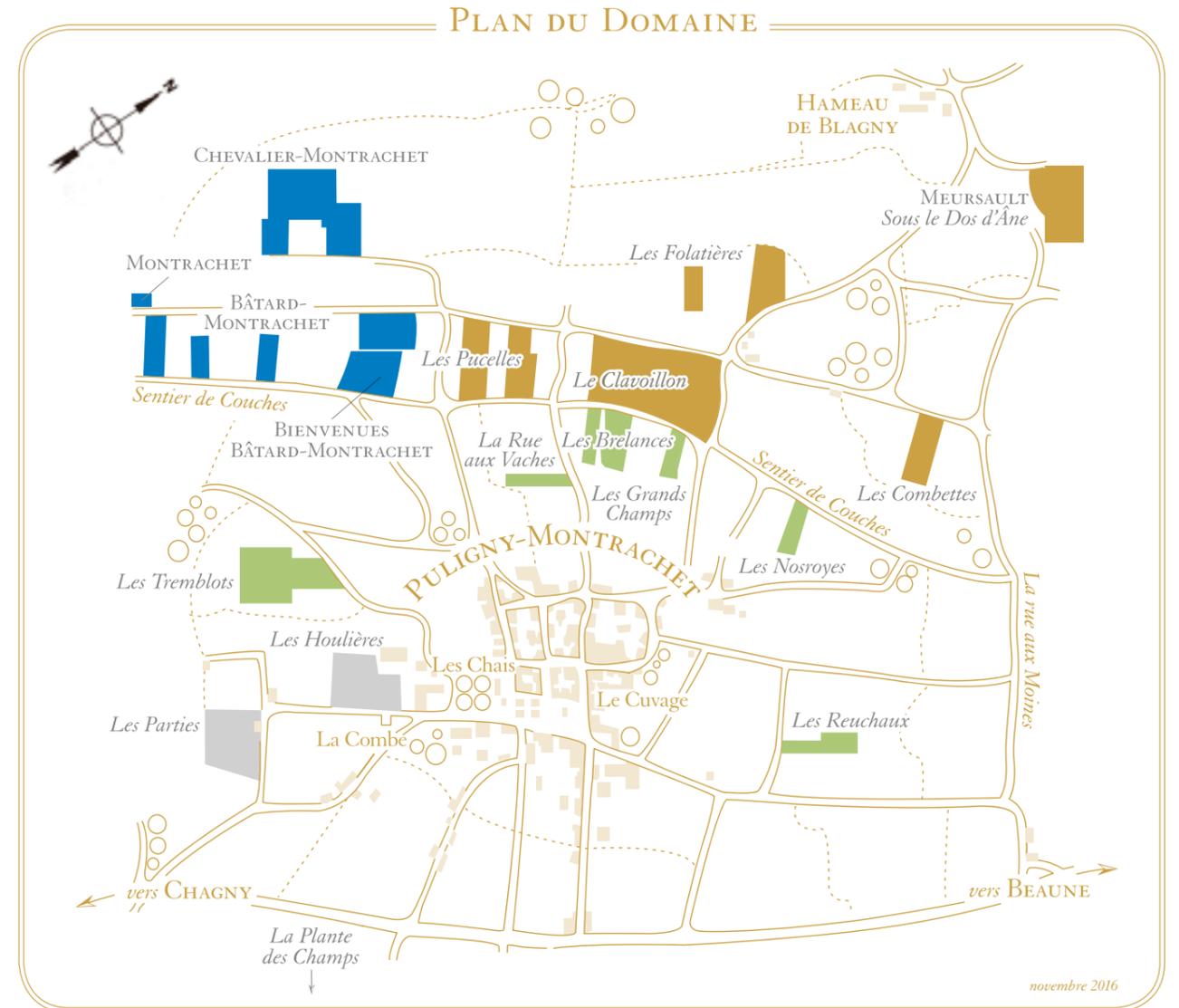
CHEVALIER-MONTRACHET GRAND CRU

One of the beautiful characteristics of 2017 is its expressiveness and ability to delineate each cru very openly. This could not be clearer than with Bâtard and Chevalier, wildly different wines. Chevalier lies west-northwest of Bâtard, further up the slope where the soil is meaner, more mineral and so often this translates into hugely compressed, latent power on both the nose and the palate. So it is in 2017. The nose is mineral tight, so Chevalier, with a cloaked, rich perfume skittering over the surface of the wine. The palate is marginally less compressed, very full, with a lean succulence if that makes any sense, and dry, rich power underneath and a chewy, fresh finish. 'Long, long, long,' I wrote in the margin. Impressive wine, a noble Chevalier.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5 - 19
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2028

£1,475/Case of 3 bottles, in bond UK
£999/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK
£2,060/Case of 1 jeroboam, in bond UK

MAP OF DOMAINE LEFLAIVE VINEYARD HOLDINGS



GRANDS CRUS
4,8 HA
Montrachet
Chevalier-Montrachet
Bâtard-Montrachet
Bienvenues Bâtard-Montrachet

PREMIERS CRUS
10,8 HA
Puligny-Montrachet *Les Pucelles*
Puligny-Montrachet *Les Combettes*
Puligny-Montrachet *Les Folatières*
Puligny-Montrachet *Le Clavoillon*
Meursault *Sous le Dos d'Âne*

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET VILLAGE
4,6 HA
Les Tremblots
La Rue aux Vaches
Les Brelances
Les Grands Champs
Les Nosroyes
Les Reuchaux

BOURGOGNE BLANC
4 HA
Les Parties
Les Houlières
La Plante des Champs

novembre 2016

RECOMMENDED DRINKING DATES

We are regularly asked for more specific drinking dates for white Burgundies, in particular the great Domaines.

Here therefore, are specific recommendations of drinking dates for every recent vintage. Of course taste is an extremely personal thing but having tasted and analysed these wines extensively over the last few years, we absolutely believe that opening these wines at the dates indicated will ensure maximum enjoyment.

REVISED DRINKING DATES	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*	2010*	2011*	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Chevalier-Montrachet	2010	2009	2012	2013	2012	2014	2017	2017	2018 - 2020	See below						
Bâtard-Montrachet	2010	2009	2012	2011	2012	2013	2016	2017	2018 - 2020	See below						
Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet	2010	2009	2012	2012	2012	2013	2016	2017	2018 - 2020	See below						
Pucelles	2009	2009	2010	2011	2010	2012	2015	2016	2015 - 2020	See below						
Folatières	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2011	2015	2012-2016	2018	2018	2018	See below				
Combettes	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2012	2015	2015	See below	2018	See below					
Clavoillon	2009	2007	2010	2009	2010	2011	2015	2015	2018	2017	2017	See below				
Puligny-Montrachet	2009	2006	2009	2009	2009	2010	2013	2013	See below	2017	2017	See below				
Meursault Sous Le Dos d'Âne	2009	2009	2010	2009	2009	2011	2013	2013	See below	2017	2018	See below				
Bourgogne Blanc	2007	2006	2009	2008	2008	2010	2013	2011	See below	2016	2017	2018	See below	See below	See below	See below

For your interest and reference we have included our original recommendations made at the launch of the new vintages below.

ORIGINAL DRINKING DATES	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Chevalier-Montrachet	From 2008	From 2008	From 2011	2013-2019	2012-2016	2014-2017	2015-2018	2013-2017	2017-2020	2018-2022	2017-2021	2019-2023	2018-2022	2019-2029	2020-2029	2021-2028
Bâtard-Montrachet	From 2008	From 2007	From 2010	2012-2018	2012-2015	2013-2016	2013-2016	2013-2018	2016-2019	2017-2021	2017-2020	2018-2022	2016-2022	2017-2023	2018-2024	2019-2025
Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet	From 2008	From 2008	From 2010	2012-2017	2012-2014	2012-2016	2013-2016	2013-2018	2016-2019	2017-2021	2017-2020	2018-2022	2018-2022	2019-2023	2020-2024	2020-2025
Pucelles	From 2007	From 2007	From 2009	2010-2015	2011-2013	2011-2015	2012-2015	2013-2017	2015-2020	2016-2020	2016-2019	2017-2021	2017-2022	2018-2023	2019-2023	2021-2024
Folatières	From 2005	From 2006	From 2008	2008-2013	2010-2011	2010-2013	2011-2013	2012-2015	2015-2017	2014-2017	2016-2018	2016-2020	2017-2021	2017-2022	2018-2022	2019-2023
Combettes	From 2006	From 2006	From 2008	2010-2015	2010-2012	2011-2014	2012-2014	2013-2016	2013-2019	2015-2018	2016-2019	2017-2020	2017-2020+	2018-2023	2019-2023	2020-2024
Clavoillon	From 2005	From 2006	From 2007	2008-2012	2010-2011	2010-2012	2011-2014	2012-2016	2013-2017	2014-2016	2015-2017	2015-2019	2016-2021	2017-2022	2018-2022	2019-2023
Puligny-Montrachet	From 2005	From 2005	From 2007	2009-2012	2009-2010	2009-2012	2011-2013	2012-2016	2013-2017	2014-2016	2014-2017	2016-2019	2016-2021	2017-2022	2018-2022	2019-2022
Meursault Sous Le Dos d'Âne	From 2005	From 2005	From 2007	2009-2012	2009-2011	2010-2012	2011-2013	2012-2016	2013-2016	2014-2016	2015-2018	2015-2019	2016-2021	2017-2022	2018-2022	2019-2022
Bourgogne Blanc	From 2004	From 2005	From 2006	2007-2010	2008-2009	2009-2011	2010-2013	2011-2014	2012-2015	2013-2015	2014-2017	2015-2018	2016-2020	2017-2021	2018-2020	2019-2021

* Too early for revision



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