



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON



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HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES
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INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS

Established 1780



UK AGENT FOR CLOS DE TART

Since 1996, Sylvain Pitiot has revitalised this great domaine, and now the wines are some of the very best expressions of red Burgundy, up there with DRC and Leroy.

Jamie Goode, wineanorak.com, March 2009



Introduction

The mythical walled vineyard of Clos de Tart is prominently situated at the very heart of Morey-Saint-Denis in the Côte de Nuits, Burgundy, exactly as created, or rather re-created in 1184. One of five grands crus within Morey-Saint-Denis, this is in fact a *monopole*, meaning the entire appellation of Clos de Tart is under the sole ownership of the Clos. There are only seven *grand cru monopoles* across France, five of which are within Burgundy*.

The property, of just 7.5 hectares, is owned by the Mommessin family and is brilliantly managed by Sylvain Pitiot. Sylvain took over the reins in 1996, since which time Clos de Tart has enjoyed a formidable improvement in quality. The potential had always been outstanding but it took the total commitment of the Mommessin family, allied to the extraordinary talent of Sylvain, to realise it. Clos de Tart is now producing one of the very greatest wines in Burgundy.

History

Records of Clos de Tart can be traced back to a parcel of land called Climat-des-Forges which was sold to Cistercian nuns, the Bernardines of Notre Dame de Tart in 1141. They renamed it Clos de Tart, (*clos* referring to land enclosed by a wall.) Since then, astonishingly, there have only been three owners. The vineyard remained in the hands of the church until the Revolution, when, in 1789, it passed to the Marey-Monge family who then held it until the 1930s. During the depression years, many profoundly great properties changed hands and, in 1932, the Mâcon-based Mommessin family acquired Clos de Tart at auction. Clos de Tart was classified as Grand Cru in 1939.

It would be hard to exaggerate the overwhelming sense of history which permeates both the walled vineyard and the cellar. They share a mystical, sometimes almost physical, air reverberating with centuries of tradition. Approaching the Clos from the centre of Morey-Saint-Denis, the entrance is imposing.

The oldest buildings in the courtyard today were constructed using the original 12th Century foundations and a simple, diminutive, wooden statue of the Virgin of Tart sits in a small alcove in the wall as a reminder of the original religious order.

*The other *monopoles* are: Romanée-Conti, La Tâche, La Romanée and La Grande Rue

The Vineyard

The vineyard is wonderfully sited lying, as Andrew Jefford comments “at the centre of the greatest strip of land for Pinot Noir on the planet.” (The Circle of Wine Writers, 2007)

Although the geological pattern of Morey-Saint-Denis in general, and the Clos in particular, does contain elements of its near neighbours Chambertin, Vougeot, Chambolle-Musigny and Vosne-Romanée, it is also very distinctive.

The soils within Clos de Tart are complex but are mainly *argilo-calcaire* (clay-limestone), the proportions of which vary with the slope of the vineyard. Since 2005, Sylvain has been working closely with Claude Bourguignon the agronomist of world renown, analysing the soils and sub-soils of the Clos. This work is continuous, the better to understand the *terroir*. Six specific parcels have been identified, are now vinified separately and are then brought together just one month before bottling.

Standing at the foot of the slope, there are echoes and resonances of a long history. This is due, in part perhaps, to the vineyard being totally surrounded by a wall (a true *clos*) which dates back to the 15th century. Very unusually, the vines are planted in a north/south direction, perpendicular to the slope, which has a threefold benefit; guarding against erosion, allowing good drainage and maximizing sun exposure, (one side of the row benefits from the morning sun, the other side, the evening sun.) The vines are densely planted with 11,000 plants per hectare (12,500 for younger vines) to inhibit growth and thereby increase quality through encouraging the root system to go deeper. The average age of the vines is a very high 60 years with many up to 100 and replanting is effected using stock from the estate’s own nurseries. The Clos exercises the viticultural disciplines of *lutte intégrée*, which here means that they farm organically but have not sought certification, reserving the right to treat the vines, in exceptional circumstances.

The vines are trained and pruned in such a way as to restrict production and enable even growth. This was one of Sylvain’s primary goals. Only the five best bunches per vine are retained during green harvesting in August. Production is very low at between 23 and 30 hectolitres per hectare, although the appellation allows 42. The impact on quality has been profound.

Sylvain also favours harvesting rather late. “*Clos de Tart is Clos de tard*” is a favourite Pitiot quotation, picking generally 10 days or so after his neighbours. He aims for absolute ripeness allied to relatively low acidity. At full maturity, the natural potential alcohol is around 13.5° on average but often more.



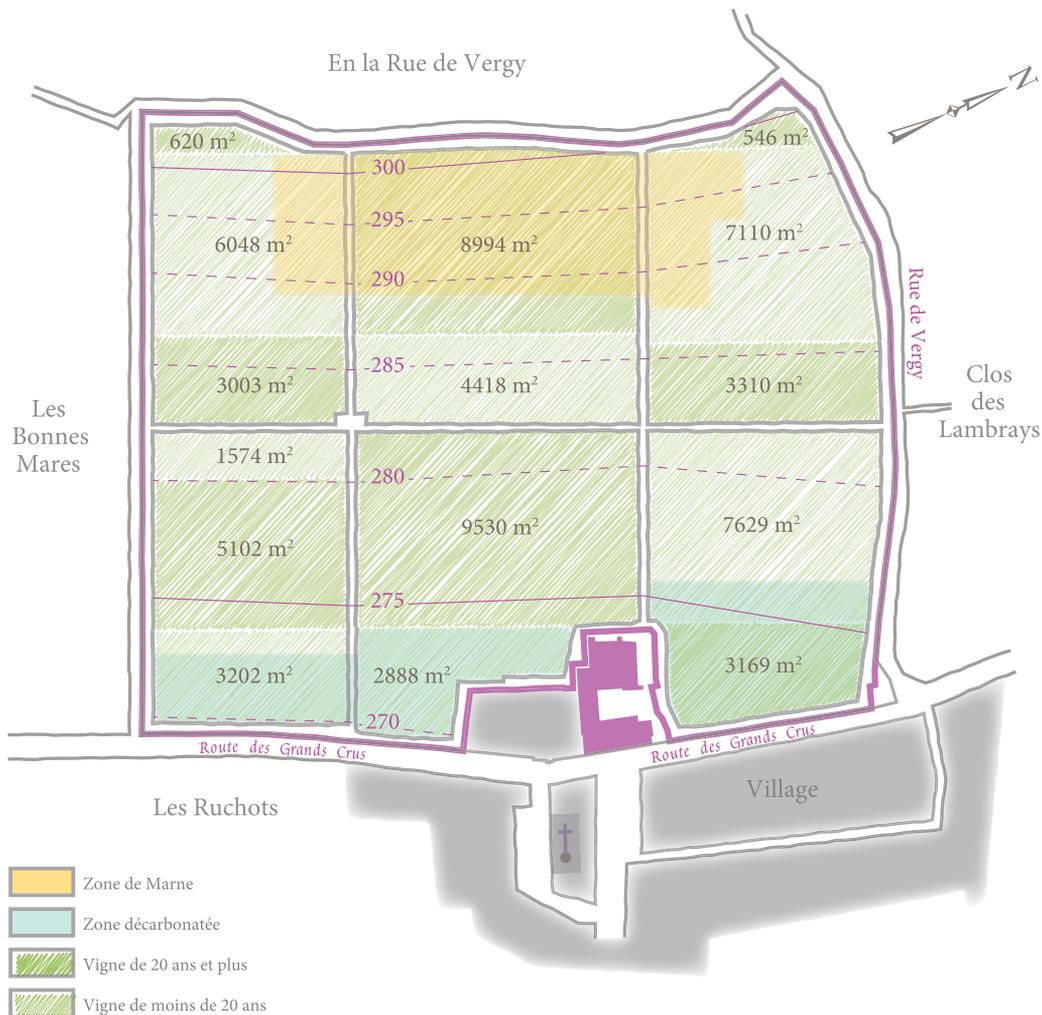
The entrance to Clos de Tart and Sylvain Pitiot

The Winery

A new state-of-the-art *cuvierie* was built in 1999 which allows traditional practices to be exercised with all of the benefits of modern technology and hygiene. The grapes are harvested by hand and placed in small plastic containers to avoid crushing. They are then transported to the *cuvierie* and placed, when necessary, on a sorting table to be selected. Much of the sorting is however achieved in the vineyard. (Only perfectly healthy grapes are then put into stainless steel fermentation tanks, which are all temperature controlled.)

The bunches are transported to a de-stemmer after sorting, using a conveyor to avoid crushing. Sylvain has significantly raised the percentage of the crop which is de-stemmed. Though it varies in keeping with the vintage, this is generally around 85%.

The vinification process is very traditional though far from formulaic, being adapted every year according to the character of the vintage. There are normally three phases, each lasting around one week; a cold maceration pre-fermentation, fermentation itself and finally a maceration post-fermentation. During the fermentation process there are two *pigeages* per day (punching down the cap.) In order to avoid compromising the action of natural yeasts, no artificial yeasts are added. Once fermentation has finished, the free-run wine is drawn off and then the residue of pips and skins is passed through a pneumatic press, producing the *vin de presse*. The two wines are kept and aged separately.



The Cellars

The cellar is a magnificent space; dark, naturally cool and impeccably maintained. Air-conditioning has been installed to maintain this low temperature and to help in controlling malolactic fermentation, which tends to occur during the summer after the harvest. The wine is matured in 100% new oak casks, mainly from the Tronçais, for around 18 months. Fining is rarely required and there is never any filtering.

The ageing cellars are equally magnificent. They are on two levels, hewn out of the rock by the local villagers in 1850. Good aeration, a constant temperature of 12°C and 75% humidity all make for a gentle, unhurried maturation of the wines. Both racking (transfer to a new cask off the lees) and bottling are done by gravity, never with any pumping, as this is considered to be harmful to the finished wine. Bottling is by hand, in the traditional way and in the deepest cellar.

The Future

Over the past ten years and in a near vertical ascent, Sylvain Pitiot and the Mommessin family have returned Clos de Tart to the very highest level in Burgundy. From the outset Sylvain introduced dramatic and significant improvements in both the vineyard and cellar. It is a story of infinite detail in which the effect on the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Sylvain's objective is to translate this very great *terroir* as accurately and sensitively as is humanly possible and to produce therefore a wine which is entirely faithful to its origins.

The Wines

La Forge de Tart

In some years, part of the production is reclassified as Morey-Saint-Denis Premier Cru, La Forge de Tart. A great wine in its own right, its name reflects the former name of the vineyard. When La Forge is produced, it tends to be from the younger vines, of less than 25 years old.

Clos de Tart

There has been something almost Arthurian about the transformation of this great vineyard since the middle 1990s. Its latent power has been seen only fitfully "through a glass darkly". Now, once more, is revealed the wonderful, aromatic purity of this wine, a palate of density and liquid silkiness allied to a profundity that is awesome in its ability to combine power with finesse and elegance. Clos de Tart has risen again.

Clos de Tart 2008

Undeterred by the vagaries of nature presented during the 2008 growing season, Sylvain Pitiot and his team have excelled themselves, producing a stunning translation of the vintage. These are wines of consummate charm, effortless balance and profound purity.

2008 is the thirteenth vintage of Clos de Tart to have been produced under Sylvain's guidance and, once again, he has overseen an extraordinary *tour de force*.

Both the *grand vin* and La Forge de Tart, the second wine, are exceptional ambassadors for what could have been a difficult vintage. The truly great *terroir* of Clos de Tart however, nurtured by Sylvain and his team, defied the challenges set by the climate.

An enormous investment in terms of man hours in the vineyard is thus vindicated, by both very fine quality and, against the odds, reasonable quantities.

There is a hallmark, unearthly purity here allied to an innate richness. Beautifully balanced, exhibiting a marked intensity and complexity throughout – very impressive indeed.

We think that 2008 Clos de Tart and 2008 La Forge de Tart are among the most balanced wines we have produced over the last ten years. Pure and powerful, they will be a very pleasant surprise for grand cru lovers.

Sylvain Pitiot, March 2010

2008 Vintage Notes

Despite the well-documented challenges of the growing season, the 2008 vintage of Clos de Tart and La Forge de Tart will silence the harbingers of doom who had been so negative about the vintage generally, even before picking had started. Even in this, their infancy, these wines present quintessential Clos de Tart finesse, elegance and understated richness.

The most remarkable point about the 2008 vintage at Clos de Tart was the very late harvest. Picking did not commence until the beginning of October, whereas in 2007, harvesting started early in September.

Logically enough, this reflected the prevailing conditions during the growing cycle. Flowering had begun on the 14th June, around five weeks later than in 2007 and a cold, humid summer further impeded progress. Happily, September brought in bright, dry weather, ideal for the ripening process. The advantageous changes in climate would not have been sufficient, in isolation, however, if Clos de Tart were to maximise its potential quality. Sylvain Pitiot and his team took up the gauntlet, adopting very strict disciplines in the vineyard.

Leaf thinning:

The leaves were thinned out twice manually to allow better aeration of the grapes as well as to maximise exposure to sunlight. This was carried out just after flowering and again during green harvest, at the beginning of *véraison* – when the grapes begin to change colour.

Green harvest:

The green harvest was severe, with the team electing only to preserve small bunches with smaller grapes, these being much less susceptible to botrytis.

Although demanding expensive, time-consuming work in the vineyard, nature nonetheless offered a conciliatory hand in causing considerable *millerandage* – poor fruit set.

This, far from being a problem, produces small, seedless berries which enhanced quality, whilst also restricting yield.

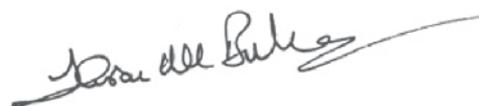
As always, Sylvain and his team at Clos de Tart, held out in order to pick the grapes when they reached absolutely optimum ripeness. Hence the decision to wait, eventually harvesting between the 3rd to 6th October.

Having undergone such stringent selection in the vineyard, the final results at harvest were really exciting, with extremely healthy, well-ripened grapes being transferred to the *cuves*. The yield, due to the severity of pruning and selection, was 29.2 hl/ha. The Clos elected, with 2008, to declassify some of the wine for the second wine, La Forge de Tart, Morey-Saint-Denis Premier Cru.

The wines were matured for 17 months in new oak. Still in cask at the time of writing, La Forge de Tart will be bottled at the end of March and Clos de Tart at the beginning of April 2010.

As always, the wines will be hand bottled, by natural gravity and without fining or filtration, the better to preserve the quintessential purity of Pinot Noir.

These are wines which will make people smile.



Alison Buchanan
March 2010

Tasting notes

La Forge de Tart, Morey-Saint-Denis Premier Cru

Corney & Barrow Score 17+ to 18

Deep plum-bramble in colour, this presents a really inviting, warm, richly-fruited nose, with spiced berries and mocha notes, refreshed by dried violets. The palate, echoing the aromatics on the nose, is supple, luscious and very fine, though playful throughout, with hints of ripe summer berries, violets and roses, all layered with cream and complemented by minerals and delicate spice. La Forge de Tart is a very great wine in its own right and this 2008 is extremely pure and fine with an attenuated rich finish – very elegant.

Recommended drinking from 2011 to 2017+

£495/case of 6, in bond UK

Clos de Tart, Grand Cru Monopole

Corney & Barrow Score 17+ to 18+

Intense jet-plum in colour, with a firm, bramble rim this presents an intriguing, complex nose. Initially a little shy, it gradually opens up to reveal a heady array of summer berries, pink peppercorn spice, violets, roses and crushed stone minerals. Upbeat and wonderfully fresh, this is deceptively open and inviting, pretty and vivacious fruit distracting from innate power and a firm, determined structure. Rich, dense, succulent and velvet-textured, this is a wonderful translation of the 2008 vintage. Perfectly pitched acidity and well-integrated, ripe tannins direct a flourish on a prolonged, uplifting finish.

Recommended drinking from 2016 to 2028+

£1050/case of 6, in bond UK

£1080/case of 3 Magnums, in bond UK

£850/ case of 1 Jeroboam, in bond UK

2008 Vintage	Average age of vines	Average Production (doz)	Total Production 2008 (doz)	Yield Hectolitres per hectare
Clos de Tart	60 years old	1750	1525	29.2 hl/ha for the whole vineyard
La Forge de Tart	less than 25	320	575	-

Allocation Process

We are really proud to have been appointed to represent this renowned Burgundy estate exclusively in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

It fits quite perfectly with our desire to bring to you, our customers, the wines which, we believe, are the best in their category, with no intermediaries. We were particularly grateful for the support and encouragement shown by our other Burgundy friends and principals.

Clos de Tart enjoys a position amongst the true icons of Burgundy. Despite our privileged position as exclusive agents, demand will inevitably exceed supply and the wine will therefore need to be allocated. In response to your requests we “lay out our stall” as to how this allocation process will work.

1. The Clos’ focus is on private customers rather than speculators.
2. The wines are bought on the clear understanding that they will be stored and delivered in the UK only. Should you wish to sell the wine in the future, do please offer Corney & Barrow first refusal as this will ensure the integrity of secondary market distribution. We will match or better total available price elsewhere.
3. Priority will be given to Corney & Barrow’s long-standing and best customers.
4. We will however do our best to accommodate newer customers.

Do please call your salesperson or call 020 7265 2430. We are here to help.

Please ensure you place all your orders by the 23rd April 2010.

Allocations will be completed by the 28th April 2010 and invoices will be sent out shortly afterwards. May we please request that invoices are paid in full by the 21st May 2010.

Confirmation of your order will, as usual, be given by receipt of invoice or do please speak to our team for earliest notification.

In all fairness we reserve the right to re-allocate your order to customers on the waiting list if payment is not received by the due date. Thank you for all your help in this.

