



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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CORNEY & BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS

Established 1780



BONNEAU DU MARTRAY

2010 VINTAGE EN PRIMEUR

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK



Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière

*“I am lucky to be making wine on this small scale
where I can be in touch with everything.
On the other hand there is no one else to blame...”*

JEAN-CHARLES LE BAULT DE LA MORINIÈRE, 2011

INTRODUCTION

To most, Domaine Bonneau du Martray is Corton-Charlemagne – one of the very greatest of all *Grand Cru* white Burgundies, synonymous with a style that combines an aching richness, length and concentration with an incomparable finesse and purity. Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière, whose family is only the third set of owners in over twelve centuries, calls his wine the product of light rather than heat – which is a consequence of the Domaine's unique aspect, facing west and south-west, that formidably increases the influence of light on the vines particularly in the afternoon and early evening without running the risk of excessive heat.

It is also the only other domaine in Burgundy, apart from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, to produce uniquely *Grand Cru* wines with the further advantage of its vineyards being sited in a continuous block stretching between 'En Charlemagne', next to Pernand-Vergelesses, and 'Le Charlemagne', reaching towards Aloxe-Corton.

The estate remains the single largest holding in Corton-Charlemagne at 9.5 hectares, with a tiny 1.5 hectare parcel dedicated to Pinot Noir producing *Grand Cru* Corton of an extraordinary rich minerality. Corton-Charlemagne itself traces its roots back to the Emperor Charlemagne who gifted his vineyard to the Abbey of Saulieu in the year 775, precisely the same plot now owned by the le Bault de la Morinière family.

It is this dauntingly ancient tradition of stewardship that has rested so lightly on Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière since he took over the running of the Domaine in 1994. His engaging charm and languid demeanour mask an almost febrile attention to detail, a restless pursuit of perfection and an acknowledgement that that same tradition relies on change, sometimes broad, sometimes finely tuned but always fluid. Under his direction and profound belief in continuity, Domaine Bonneau du Martray has achieved a fundamental and even majestic quality that is now acknowledged throughout the winemaking world. This is today one of Burgundy's greatest wines.

HISTORY

The Burgundy historian Camille Rodier confirms that the current Bonneau du Martray Corton Charlemagne vineyard is exactly the same as that donated by the Emperor Charlemagne to the Abbey of Saulieu in 775. It is said that the Emperor's wife, mindful of her husband's majesty being compromised by the staining of his beard with red wine, caused white grapes to be planted on the section of the hill between Pernand Vergelesses and Aloxe Corton that now bears his name. It would appear to have been a wise decision, if not made with entirely profound motives. The church owned the property for just over a thousand years until the French Revolution when it was acquired by René Bonneau du Martray's family, direct descendants of Nicolas Rolin who implemented the construction of the Hospice de Beaune, in Beaune in 1443. In the 19th Century, the Bonneau du Martray family held almost 24 hectares of vines including the entirety of the Charlemagne 'climat' in the commune of Pernand.

It was a later René Bonneau du Martray born in 1886 who, childless, bequeathed his estate to his niece, Comtesse Jean le Bault de la Morinière whose husband, Jean, took over in 1969. It was Jean who laid the foundations of the estate's renaissance and restoration of the property. He enlarged the cuverie and cellars, perfected vinification and implemented the use of special small steel tanks for temperature control. Above all, he decided to estate-bottle the wine (hitherto it had been sold to *négociants*) thus giving him absolute control of quality and underwriting the reputation of his wine.

On 2nd January 1994 Jean's son, Jean-Charles, took over the management of the Domaine after the death of his mother and the continuing illness of his father. A successful architect in Paris, specialising in the restoration of old buildings, Jean-Charles decided immediately to move down to Burgundy. With typical swiftness he closed his offices in Paris, set himself up in Pernand-Vergelesses and went back to university to study oenology. Simultaneously, Henri Bruchon the old *Chef Vigneron* retired and his sons Bernard and Jean-Pierre continued with Jean-Charles until their own retirement. Today Fabien Esthou, *Chef de Culture*, works in partnership with Jean-Charles to effect the further significant viticultural changes, notably organic certification.

THE VINEYARD

The Domaine's vineyard may be described as a living organism in which every single intricacy has to be taken in consideration. The husbandry, parcel by parcel, must therefore be governed by and respond to this.

Domaine Bonneau du Martray lies in one entire parcel at the heart of the Charlemagne 'climat' and is the largest single holding at 11.09 hectares. The hill of Corton offers a layering of Jurassic soil over limestone and is one of the most famous and familiar landmarks in Burgundy described eloquently by Alexis Lichine as akin to 'a well formed breast.' The Domaine's holdings are categorised by 16 different parcels, each of which gives a particular quality to the wine. Those higher up the hill are of limestone, marl and clay and provide more elegant floral aspects to the wine (see photo). The mid section offers more full-bodied aspects and the lower plains of limestone and iron topsoil give greater sweetness and alcohol. Each parcel is vinified separately.

The average age of the vines is very high – around 45 years – and yields are correspondingly low, as low as 32 hectolitres per hectare for the Corton-Charlemagne in 1995, though the average is 45hl/ha and around 30 hl/ha for the red Corton (see the holdings). Herbicides and fertilisers are banned and yields, whilst naturally controlled by the age of the vines, are further reduced by severe pruning in the early part of the growing season and green pruning (*eclaircissage*) when necessary in the final approach to the harvest itself. The Domaine is now in conversion to organic certification.

The vineyards are unusual in their aspect, facing as they do, west and south-west. This guarantees long, slow maturation of the grapes helped by the heat-reflective and distinctive white colour of the marl soil. The elevated position on the hill gives excellent drainage at the same time as allowing cold humid air to slide to the bottom of the slopes. The wood that circles this hill (see photo) protects the highest parcels from the cold of the plateau. It is these features that perhaps more than any other influence the character of the wines and gives them both richness and supreme elegance.



The entrance to the vineyard and the hill of Corton showing the parcelled nature of the vineyard. Note the wood that circles the hill.

THE WINEMAKING

CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE GRAND CRU

“I am lucky to be making wine on this small scale where I can be in touch with everything. On the other hand there is no one else to blame...”

JEAN-CHARLES LE BAULT DE LA MORINIÈRE

The grapes, harvested by hand, are brought into the *cuvée* in small plastic baskets to preserve maximum freshness and health. The great advantage with the vineyards being in one block is that the interval between picking and pressing is very short, never more than two hours. Grapes are pressed by two pneumatic Bucher presses installed in 1991. Unusually, although not always, fermentation begins in small 15 hectolitre stainless steel vats at low temperatures and slowly for maximum intensity of flavour. The wine is then transferred as soon as possible into oak barrels, only 30% of which are new.

“I don’t trust oak a lot, I want it to provide a gentle frame around the wine, not to interfere with the specificity of the vineyard, its honesty and profundity, what makes it truly special.”

JEAN-CHARLES LE BAULT DE LA MORINIÈRE

Since 1995 Jean-Charles has practiced gentle stirring of the lees in his Corton-Charlemagne to ease out the natural flavours of the wine but refuses to induce early malolactic fermentation by heating the cellars. This fermentation he believes must be allowed to happen naturally so that the wine gains complexity and profundity to match the finesse and elegance for which the estate is so famous.

The wine will spend around 12 months in oak before being transferred back into steel for six months prior to bottling. The ideal remains neither to fine nor filter depending on whether the wine falls bright.

CORTON GRAND CRU

The Corton-Charlemagne is in a class of its own but it is perhaps Bonneau du Martray’s other, tinier *Grand Cru*, the red Corton, which remains the insider’s secret, particularly in the last five years, a fact now acknowledged by other authorities. The two small parcels of Pinot Noir are very old – around 45 years – and lie towards the bottom of the Le Charlemagne vineyard (see map) where the soil offers a heavier, richer, more alcoholic style. Yields are very low, at an average of 30 hectolitres per hectare, selection is savage, and the grapes are entirely de-stemmed before being cold soaked for a few days. The vatting is conducted in order to obtain maximum fruit, develop the right amount of glycerol and extract the best tannins. Such *cuvaisons* require permanent observation and care, a 100% hand-on approach as nothing is automated or regulated. The wine is then put in cask for 12–18 months, depending on the nature of the vintage. It is rare for production to exceed 600 cases. This is a wine to watch.

2010 VINTAGE

Burgundy lies at the crossroads of three contrasting climatic influences, coastal to the west, continental to the north-east and Mediterranean to the south and thus enjoys a very special, unique, mild climate. 2010, in contrast to many recent vintages, sought to remind us of that fact. The 2010 season began with the vines shedding their leaves, following the 2009 harvest, between the 8th October and the 9th November. Weather conditions then alternated between mild and damp, cold and dry and snowy at the end of the year. January was both cold (ideal for ridding the vineyard of pests and diseases) and dry. Grey and dreary weather prevailed until the 18th February when there were hints of milder conditions but in general it remained cold but with a new brilliance in the light tone. This plays a crucial role in Domaine Bonneau du Martray's particular *terroir* as, facing west and south-west, light is as important as sun in finessing the purity which is the hallmark of the Domaine's style.

March offered ideal conditions for resuming work in the vineyard, hoeing and finishing off pruning. April was then warm, sunny and particularly dry and the mood was upbeat, only a little dampened by May and June which were damp, cool and grey, slowing growth a little.

A rise in temperature on the 21st May also brought potential storms but in June it once again became cold and flowering took place between the 7th and 25th, largely under rain. This accounts for the dropping off of nascent berries (*coulure*) and *millerandage* which together pre-determined a small crop but also hinted at potential great quality.

Suddenly then the temperatures rose, accompanied by a spurt in vegetative growth. July, warm and dry apart from two storms, allowed the steady rhythm in the vineyard to continue, tying up branches, ensuring the vines were best placed for the bunches to ripen. August was fresh, rainy and windy, delaying *veraison* (colour change) to between 10th August and 3rd September.

September was beautiful, generally fresh and sunny. Initial tests on the grapes revealed a crop in perfect condition, with impressive concentration thanks, in large part, to the crop being so small. The weather forecasts sadly did not bode well for the end of September – specifically the 24th. The Domaine elected to act swiftly and to summon their team, beginning picking on the 23rd – Pinot Noir from the Corton being the higher priority before the rain. The weather that day was perfect. Chardonnay was then harvested between the 24th and the 29th, with a few interruptions due to rain, dealt with by four consecutive passes over the vines with a helicopter, a trick used to brilliant effect as far back as 1993. Overall, the Chardonnay was in fine condition producing small bunches of golden and concentrated fruit. Yields, allied to strict selection, are savagely down. In addition there are areas which have been recently re-planted (2007) and are hardly yielding at all. Production is therefore down by 20 to 25% – and are the lowest recorded at the Domaine, with the exception of 2003. Corton-Charlemagne production was just 30.5 hectolitres per hectare with Corton a tiny 22 hectolitres per hectare.

The benefits of this are clear because it is precisely for this reason that the crop was able to become fully ripe, intense and concentrated.

Vinification proceeded as normal for the whites, fermentation in barrel taking place without incident, the sugars consumed by the end of November. Malolactic fermentations were however very slow to start, yet Jean-Charles believes in allowing the wines to take their course naturally. The wines are now resting on their lees with bottling planned for spring 2012. The fermentation of the red lasted 22 days, though the malolactic fermentation has only just finished. Corton will also be bottled in spring 2012.



CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE

GRAND CRU

APPELLATION CONTRÔLÉE

Bonneau du Martray

PROPRIÉTAIRE À PERNAND-VERGELESSES & ALOXE-CORTON (CÔTE D'OR) FRANCE

Mis en bouteille
au Domaine

2010

PRODUIT DE FRANCE

CORTON

GRAND CRU

Bonneau du Martray

2010

ALLOCATION PROCESS

It is now almost 18 years since Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière took over full time management of the Domaine. It is the story of maintenance of great tradition through a reliance on change and a restless pursuit of perfection in the vineyard, now culminating in the official adoption of biodynamics after many years of rigorous, intricate trials*. It is therefore not altogether surprising that official, third party confirmation of the Domaine's supreme reputation should follow and that the UK customers, with our privileged position as the Domaine's representative, should be the principal beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the quantities available are miniscule compared to the great growths of Bordeaux and our allocation is, monotonously perhaps, always oversold. 2010 is a rather extreme example with production so reduced – yet the wines are so good... We endeavour to ensure the wines are offered as evenly and fairly as we know how. In the interest of speed of response we will allocate on a daily basis as the orders come in. Do please speak to your usual salesperson or any member of the sales team for further help and advice. The contact numbers are detailed on the back of this brochure. Please note that these wines are for UK storage and delivery only.



Adam Brett-Smith
November 2011

** After a number of years of trials and detailed agronomic studies, the Domaine confirmed on the 18th June 2008 its formal commitment to Ecocert certification. This is the official body that governs and authenticates organic cultivation. Full authentication will take further time to be confirmed.*

TASTING NOTES

Corton-Charlemagne 2010 Grand Cru

100% Chardonnay

Corney & Barrow Score 18–19

This is an outstanding achievement in 2010, greater even than 2009, tasted immediately before. Slightly fuller colour than the 2009, this has a beautifully ripe nose of peachy, white fruit, rich but zesty and mineral. Rich again on the palate, there is terrific focus and attack which offer that eery and impeccable balance between concentration, silky sweetness and absolute purity. The finish is extended and of great intensity – great wine.

Recommended drinking from 2017–2020

£870/case of 12, in bond UK

Corton 2010 Grand Cru

100% Pinot Noir

Corney & Barrow Score 18–

Deep coloured ruby with a very dark heart. Arterial, primary red and dark fruits of the nose, rich and briary. Sweet on the palate with generous concentrated flavour and a full structure cloaked with succulent gamey fruit. Weirdly there seems a relationship with the 2003 in its generosity, with Jean-Charles adding that this 2010 is a “more complete and richer wine than 2009”. We shall see, it's pretty good already!

Recommended drinking from 2018–2025

£440/case of 6, in bond UK

TO ORDER, PLEASE USE THE FORM PROVIDED OR CALL 020 7265 2430 (LONDON) OR 01875 321 921 (EDINBURGH)



These wines are released en primeur. Delivery dates to be confirmed. All prices are quoted in bond UK

THE HOLDINGS



Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru

Grape Variety – Chardonnay

Vineyard Holding

9.5 Hectares (23.47 Acres)

Average Age of Vines

45 Years

Average Production

4,150 cases



Corton Grand Cru

Grape Variety – Pinot Noir

Vineyard Holding

1.5 Hectares (3.71 Acres)

Average Age of Vines

45 Years

Average Production

590 cases



Map showing 'En Charlemagne' and 'Le Charlemeagne' vineyards

CORNEY & BARROW 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.

14–16 A very good to excellent wine

16–18 An excellent to outstanding wine

18–20 An outstanding to legendary wine

- *Wines are judged within their peer group, eg. Villages, Premier Cru, Grand Cru.*
- *A definitive score of a young wine is almost impossible. We usually offer a spread (e.g. 14–16) which relates to a potential to achieve a higher mark. A ‘+’ adds further to that potential.*
- *A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.*

OUR WINES ARE NOW AVAILABLE
TO BUY EN PRIMEUR AT
WWW.CORNEYANDBARROW.COM

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