



## **Domaine Lafarge, Burgundy**

### **2010 Vintage, En Primeur**

It has become something of a tradition for the Corney & Barrow team to taste at Domaine Lafarge at 08:00, a habit favoured by the Lafarge family who suspect that, despite being slotted in post-coffee, we are still likely to be fresher and more alert than later in the day. This year we were warmly greeted by Frédéric Lafarge, rather than *papa* Michel, a rare opportunity as Frédéric is generally tied up in the vineyard, a slave to the rigour demanded by biodynamic viticulture.

Frédéric's calm demeanour and gentle, courteous manner give no hint as to the weight of responsibility required in running a domaine of such acclaim. Similarly, he appears unfazed by the routine arrival of a motley crew from London tasting his life's work in reverential silence before unceremoniously spitting it out. We particular *roast beefs* never speak, far less confer, mid-tasting, which just adds to the incongruity of the whole procedure.

In fact, we consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be numbered amongst the few who are able to taste at Domaine Lafarge at all, when demand for their wines so far outweighs the quantities available – particularly true in 2010.

The reputation of Domaine Lafarge has steadily progressed as it has passed from generation to generation and, in fact, the size of the Domaine has also increased. This is very much a family concern where every incumbent has been as sensitive to their debt as their predecessors and their responsibility to their successors. The estate was founded in the early 19th century and has improved continuously in stature.

First-time visitors look a little unnerved by the mode of descent to the cellar - a juddering electronic platform, rattling its anxious charges down into the darkness below. The cellar is steeped in character and gives a real sense of history; ancient walls, ceiling and bottles all but obscured by a thick sci-fi fungus – like greying, black cotton wool. This mould, known as the angels' share, is caused by evaporation and is entirely natural, though not exactly aesthetically pleasing.

We remind customers and visitors to the Domaine that they should not be fooled by the very traditional feel to this cellar. It would be too easy to make the assumption that this domaine is a very old-fashioned affair – a misconception which is given added weight on witnessing the particularly classical labels. To an extent, Michel and Frédéric do adhere to time-honoured practices – but with a surprisingly youthful outlook. They are always questioning hitherto accepted practices and are constantly seeking improvements.

The family's approach is fresh, enterprising and innovative, as highlighted by the fact that they elected to convert to biodynamic viticulture as far back as 1996 – a decision which would have had huge ramifications in terms of the additional work. As with all of our biodynamic suppliers, the prime motivation for this initiative was the sustainability of the land but it soon became clear that this system, so tuned in to natural rhythms, resulted in wines of even greater intensity and purity – something of an unexpected bonus.

**Alison Buchanan, January 2012**  
**Associate Director, Buying**

## 2010 Tasting Notes

### Red Wines

#### **Bourgogne Passetoutgrain L'Exception**

**Corney & Barrow Score 16+**

Brilliant ruby, this has a spectacular colour which is really inviting. The nose offers attractive, inviting summer berry aromatics and *crème de mûre*, laced with white pepper. The palate reflects the aromatics presented on the nose, violet-scented with an underlying, nervy minerality. A fresh, pretty little wine with lots of charm.

**Recommended drinking from 2012 - 2017**

**£120/case of 12, in bond UK**

#### **Bourgogne Pinot Noir**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 17+**

A pretty, lustrous, limpid ruby in colour, paler than the passetoutgrain, this is 100% Pinot Noir from Volnay. The nose is a beautiful illustration of pure, unadulterated Pinot Noir, swathes of violet and rose, both crystallised and fresh, all of which progress to a bright and breezy palate – very pretty indeed. Beautifully balanced, the palate is set within a playfully fresh frame, tannins are understated though present. Frédéric Lafarge believes that this will not close down and will be at its best in around three years.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2017**

**£145/case of 12, in bond UK**

#### **Volnay**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17**

Jet-ruby, immediately very attractive, this reveals rose and violet aromatics, summer berries and just the vaguest hint of mocha in the background. Perfumed and peppery on attack, the palate gradually reveals so much charm. Rich, fresh red and black fruit is given focus and drive through a clearly defined mineral directive. Very precise and adroit in this embryonic form, this will gain weight in the months prior to bottling – a lovely wine.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2018+**

**£295/case of 12, in bond UK**

#### **Volnay Vendanges Sélectionnées**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+ - 19-**

A very alluring, glittering jet-ruby, this has immediate impact. The nose is gorgeous, tempting and flirtatious, offering sweet Pinot fruit, summer berries and floral notes complemented by minerals, delicate spice and savoury nuances. The palate, whilst reflecting similar aromatics, introduces a darker, more brooding dimension, good fruit intensity supported by evident, gripping tannins, which will serve well for future development. The finish, underwriting future potential, ends with a crescendo of youthful, brightly-perfumed summer berries – most attractive.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2019+**

**£175/case of 6, in bond UK**

#### **Beaune 1er Cru Les Aigrots Rouge**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 18**

A lustrous, limpid, pale ruby this is true to its appellation, offering very different aromatics to those wines from Volnay, much more mineral and earthy. There are still violet and rose nuances but dried potpourri rather than fresh flowers, complementing red and black fruit, all set within a savoury backdrop. The palate is well-rounded and generous, maintaining mineral focus throughout. Burlier than its Volnay counterparts it is nonetheless perfumed and fine – warranting time – an insider's wine and great value.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2020+**

**£215/case of 6, in bond UK**

### **Beaune-Grèves 1er Cru**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 18**

This is shimmering jet-ruby, a lovely colour. The nose is heady and intense, reflecting its origins. At ninety years, this parcel is the oldest of the Lafarge vines. Red and black fruit, underpinned by minerals, are evident on both the nose and palate with tantalising pastry shop elements to the fore, cherry tart, with a fresh raspberry lift. There is a serious backdrop, giving a slightly avuncular edge. Beautifully perfumed, elegant and sedate, this is altogether rather noble. Very attractive.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2020+**

**£235/case of 6, in bond UK**

### **Volnay 1er Cru Les Mitans**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18 - 19**

A lovely, limpid ruby, this is reminiscent of the Volnay *village* wine on the nose, very pure and fresh, a blend of primary fruit and flowers – though rather restrained. The palate, in contrast, is anything but shy, delivering an explosion of fragrant, slightly spiced fruit with mocha notes, set within a luxurious, silken frame. Very elegant, beautifully perfumed, this retains its composure throughout a long, poised finish – lovely wine.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2020+**

**£325/case of 6, in bond UK**

### **Volnay 1er Cru Clos du Château des Ducs**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+ - 19**

A deep, lustrous ruby, this presents a rather gorgeous nose, very expressive, inviting and indeed appetising with seductive, red and black fruit to the fore, lifted by minerals and spice. The palate echoes the aromatics offered on the nose, just as complex, set within a luscious yet controlled frame. Delicious, supple and ripe, this is energised by rounded, well-integrated tannins and minerals. Very, very fine, it concludes with a long, poised, savoury and layered finish. Impressive really.

**Recommended drinking 2016 - 2020+**

**£350/case of 6, in bond UK**

### **Volnay 1er Cru Clos des Chênes**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18 - 19**

A beautiful, limpid, pretty ruby in colour this reveals much more blatant primary fruit character than the Clos du Château des Ducs, tasted just before. There is much more fragranced *crème de fruits* character, lifted and fresh. The palate then reflects the beguiling aromatics presented on the nose but adds some dark fruit complexity and delicate spice. There is a fine mineral layer which energises the palate and gives focus, leading to an upbeat, breezy finish – a very fine translation of the vintage.

**Recommended drinking 2016 - 2020+**

**£350/case of 6, in bond UK**

## **White Wines**

### **Bourgogne Aligoté Raisins Dorés**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17 - 17+**

This is an exceptional wine, produced from a tiny parcel of old vines (around 75 years old) between Meursault and Volnay. Aligoté Doré is a very special varietal, markedly more characterful than its more prominent cousin Aligoté Vert. It is something of an insider's wine and well worth seeking out. As with other vines, the Aligoté Doré suffered *millerandage* and a small harvest was pre-ordained, which is such a pity as the wine is lovely – and great value. The nose provides a lovely combination of pure stone fruit and minerals. The minerality is also dominant on the palate, nutty and persistent, complemented by slightly honeyed notes and white flowers, fresh and lightly spiced on the finish. We give a very conservative drinking window here but it ought to be noted that there are two schools of thought as to when to drink Aligoté Doré, many people favouring more bottle age. Our drinking dates are here to advise customers at least to try the wine within the restricted time frame and assess its progress.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2015**

**£120/case of 12, in bond UK**

## **Meursault**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17- - 17**

Glittering pale gold, this is extremely alluring. The nose, a little restrained, presents a rather lovely style of Meursault, citrus fresh, with a very attractive tension and verbosity. This febrile intensity is echoed on the palate, also very controlled and adroit, with clear focus and direction. This will gain weight given a little time and, behind the very mineral precision, there are already delicate hints of future richness with pastry notes emerging on a long, poised finish.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2018+**

**£275/case of 12, in bond UK**

## **Beaune 1er Cru Les Aigrots Blanc**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17+ - 17.5**

These vines lie towards Pommard, planted at the same height as Clos des Mouches, a vineyard which gave the wine world a bit of a shakeup when some producers started to produce white wine there – and very good wines at that. Here, there is a section of vines, within a larger parcel, planted in soils which favour Chardonnay, Pinot Noir does well lower down the slope, on gravel. The vines here are 40 years old on average. This is a truly brilliant, shimmering pale gold in colour which offers instant appeal. The nose is lovely, suggesting opulence with pastry shop richness, white flower freshness, citrus verve and a ripple of heady white pepper to the fore. The palate is similarly exuberant and tantalising, playing hedonism against a more adroit, mineral focus – lots of future charm, an insider's wine.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2018+**

**£195/case of 6, 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.

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.
- A definitive score of a young wine is almost always impossible. We usually offer a 'spread' (e.g. 14 - 16) which relates to the potential to achieve a higher mark. A 'plus' adds further to that potential.
- A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.

**To order, please call 020 7265 2430 (London), 01638 600 000 (East Anglia)  
01875 321 921 (Edinburgh) or 01748 828 640 (North of England)**

**For more information about this producer, visit our website [www.corneyandbarrow.com](http://www.corneyandbarrow.com)**