



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



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON

CORNEY &  
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780



DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI

2012 VINTAGE

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK

*“Il est fort possible que nous n’aurions pas atteint de telles maturité et qualité s’il n’y avait pas eu ces pertes à supporter.”*

*“It is very possible that we would not have achieved such maturity and quality if there had not been such losses to bear.”*

AUBERT DE VILLAINÉ

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012



# DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI

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Vintages at the Domaine are frequently likened to battles or storms. We remember in particular the torrid battle with heat in 2003, the Marengo\* victory of 2004 (“I lost the battle at 5 o’clock and I won it back again at 7...”), the drought of 2005, the anguish of 2006, the capricious malevolence of 2011 and even the broken promise of Palm Sunday of 2010.

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\*Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Marengo, 14<sup>th</sup> June 1800.



# 2012 VINTAGE

2012 was above all a “Pell Mell” battle in which instinct, a quality that the young Nicolas Jacob, *Chef de Culture*, exhibited in particular, counted for as much as experience.

6 He needed to, because the growing season ticked the box of almost every single misfortune known to a vineyard manager – rain, cold, mildew, hail, oidium, frost, storms and heat waves – most of them in the wrong place and at the wrong time. Huge credit should go to Nicolas and his team in particular for finessing the two greatest dangers of the growing season – oidium and mildew – and exploiting the undoubted opportunities that arose with a combination of luck, good judgement and... instinct. The results are quite lovely, not as effortlessly great perhaps as 2009 and 2010, but with a beauty born and tempered by adversity. These 2012s have finesse and purity for sure, a loyalty to and transparency of their individual *terroirs* but above all a concentration, sweetness and balance that do indeed mark out the finest years. Super, super wines.

Fascinatingly the birth of 2012 was precocious, with the first buds visible during a fabulously warm and dry March. This was earlier even than 2007 and an August harvest was more than a possibility. It was on the 26<sup>th</sup> March however that what Aubert referred to as “God’s warning to Nicolas Jacob” occurred in the shape of a massive thunderstorm. Thus marked the first of many turning points for April was very cold and wet, making it almost impossible to treat the vines but allowing the grass between the rows to grow unchecked. Mildew and later oidium formed and the crop was already compromised before it had really had the chance to develop. Flowering was not so much late as painfully slow, beginning around the 9<sup>th</sup> June and lasting, under very cool conditions, for almost a month. This of course led to both *coulure* (failure of grapes to develop) and *millerandage* (when the berries are malformed) and a further swipe at the potential yield was the result.

There were however also some benefits. With the Pinot Noir, *millerandage* always promises good quality – at a price – and the colder conditions slowed the earlier frantic vegetative growth which permitted Nicolas and his team to effect both biodynamic treatments and

pruning. The results were promising with the vines showing both rude health and resilience. Nature then compensated – or rather over-compensated – for its froideur by a canicular heat wave at the end of June. In motoring terms one might describe it as “missing a gear”, with the consequent over-revving scream of the engine, or in this case weather, which succeeded in roasting the young berries most exposed to the sun and savaging the yield still further. As if this was not enough, a second hailstorm hit the Côte de Beaune and the Domaine’s Montrachet, already bruised by oidium and mildew, lost almost half its crop.

And then, reluctantly but progressively, nature relented or as Aubert put it “*L’ennemi fait retraite*” – and gentler, drier, warmer conditions took over. This permitted Nicolas and his team to effect three massive treatments in the vineyards to heal the wounds of the earlier growing season, to work the soil and to steady the crop in anticipation of a benevolent August.

And August was indeed benevolent, hot and dry despite a consistent southerly wind that offered only a few storms around the 15<sup>th</sup>. Miraculously, each time the glorious weather returned, the water reserves from the previous months nourished the vines, photosynthesis was enhanced and sugar levels – and optimism – soared. There was no rot, the skins were thick, the grapes small and intense and Aubert’s final instinctive decision was taken to wait beyond the normal 100 days from mid-flowering to harvest before sending the pickers out.

Corton was the first to come in on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. Romanée-Conti itself was picked on the 22<sup>nd</sup> with the other *Grands Crus* as they tripped into full maturity (see table). Harvesting was halted on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> for rain but the potential of rot at this late stage was averted by both the thick skins of the grapes and by mercifully cool temperatures. What de-selection was required consisted only of those remaining roasted grapes from the end of June and any few green, unripened berries.



It was to be one of the healthiest crops of these last few years. “*Une récolte qui, au point de vue sanitaire, est l’une des plus belles de ces dernières années.*”

Fermentations under the careful guidance of *Maître de Chai* Bernard Noblet and his team continued calmly for almost three weeks and the wines were put to cask between October 13<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> with Le Montrachet on the 29<sup>th</sup> September. The malolactic fermentation (where the spiky malic acids turn into creamier lactic acids) was completed by May 2013 for Le Montrachet, in June for the Corton and Romanée-Conti, and July for the remaining *Grands Crus*. Alcoholic levels steadied at a highly satisfactory 13%. Bottling dates are given on the ‘Vineyard Holdings’ table.

My notes are taken from three tastings, the first in barrel, the last just two weeks ago. The scores may be a little conservative but that is never a bad thing. What is certain is that this is the third ‘short’ vintage in a row with average yields of just 20 hectolitres per hectare – some 25% less than normal. May we therefore urge you even more than usual to look at our allocation section where we try to lay out our stall for you as openly and fairly as possible.

One final word. Corney & Barrow has quietly talked about provenance for almost 240 years and rather more passionately these last 25. It is the principal reason why we have worked directly and exclusively with great estates for longer than almost anyone else and it seemed appropriate to publish the Domaine’s own words on provenance taken from their website. Please forgive this exhortation but we live in a world much changed from those calmer days when provenance was a given and counterfeit was not even understood in the world of great wine.

ADAM BRETT-SMITH  
February 2015



## IMPORTANT COUNTERFEIT

7 As reported in the media recently, the Police have conducted a joint operation in several countries of Europe, among them France, which have revealed the existence of an international counterfeiting ring. The counterfeit concerned especially Romanée-Conti in recent vintages. Several people have been arrested, but this operation is not over and new developments are expected.

These events are of course regrettable but they show the will of national and European authorities to strongly oppose and stop any action that may be prejudicial to the image of French fine wines. It is good news. Among the victims are the trade but also Fine Wine collectors.

That is the reason why we would like to take this opportunity to insist on something important that concerns all wine lovers – trade or private customers: it is imperative that, without absolute certainty as to the authenticity and origin of the bottles they are offered they buy wines only through our official Distributor or from the merchant and wine shop that the Distributor has appointed. This is the only way to secure the guarantee of integrity, authenticity and proper storage of our wines.

Exclusive Distributor - Corney & Barrow



# ALLOCATION PROCESS

We have now worked with the Domaine for over 21 years and have seen the combined efforts of Aubert de Villaine and Henry-Frédéric Roch take this great estate to a supreme level of quality and almost unimaginable demand.

We therefore always aim to make our allocation process utterly transparent and fair. This is necessarily painstaking as each order is dealt with in minute detail – as it should be. We ask for your patience as we do this and, once again, thought it would be useful to set out the Domaine's and, by extension, Corney & Barrow's allocation criteria.

1. The Domaine's focus is on the private customer and as a consumer rather than the speculator.
2. The Domaine's 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 prices available elsewhere.
3. Priority will be given to the Domaine's and Corney & Barrow's long-standing and best customers.
4. We will do our best to accommodate newer customers. To help in this, we have a range of older vintages in stock to help begin a collection.
5. May we please have your order by **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015**. Allocations will be completed by **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015**. Confirmation of order will be through receipt of invoice and the wines will be delivered or put into your reserve on payment and once the wines have arrived in the UK. All orders are conditional upon UK storage only. We keep for the Domaine's benefit a record of bottle numberings to help you in this.
6. May we please request that invoices are paid in full by **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015**. In all fairness, we reserve the right to re-allocate your order to other customers on the waiting list if payment is not received by this time.
7. Do please speak to our sales team, who will be delighted to help you further.





*“A beauty born and  
tempered by adversity.”*

ADAM BRETT-SMITH  
February 2015



# TASTING NOTES

These tasting notes are the result of three tastings, two in barrel and one in bottle.

## 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 (eg. 14 - 16) that 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.



## CORTON

It is a paradox that such a sensuously formed hill should produce wines of restraint and often "grit in the oyster" grip and quality. The Domaine's Corton comes from tiny plots in arguably the greatest three vineyards: Clos de Roi (0.57 hectares), Bressandes (1.2 hectares) and Renardes (0.5 hectares), leased out in 2008 from Domaine Prince Florent de Mérode. This is therefore their fourth vintage. In some ways it is also the Black Sheep (or perhaps Black Swan!) of the Domaine's *Grands Crus*: geographically of course but also inevitably because of its very different style. Yet in 2012 it offers alongside a limpid, firm ruby colour a sweetly toffeed, almost decadent nose which becomes butterscotched in the glass. The palate is also sweet with an initial ripe silkiness and then that characteristic Corton graininess of structure as quickly followed by an almost glossy generosity to the finish which is well sustained. It is difficult to tell whether the puppy fat will be subsumed by the structure but whichever way it goes it is an attractive wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17.5  
Recommended drinking from 2018 - 2025

£547.50/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£370.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK

## ÉCHÉZEAUX

I think of this wine – probably wrongly – as the much younger brother of Richebourg. It has a flamboyant and flaunting quality in youth that is immensely attractive but becomes profound and rich in maturity. The 2012 is a great effort (interestingly the last vineyard to be harvested) with a very firm, consistent ruby colour but an initially compressed, reductive, almost animal nose. This later becomes meaty and richly perfumed. The palate is wonderfully broad flavoured, with a virile concentration and density but also great purity. The tannins are fine grained which gives this wine real focus, concentration and length.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18  
Recommended drinking from 2020 - 2025+

£732.50/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£490.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK

## GRANDS-ÉCHÉZEAUX

Again, a very firm, rather beautiful consistent ruby colour. Next to Romanée-Conti itself this vineyard has the oldest vines of the Domaine's red wine holdings and perhaps this accounts for its greater reticence in youth. Within a few minutes however a lovely nose emerges with an elegant perfume of red and black fruits and a fresh, almost icing sugar purity. Later still an old vined, rifle oil richness. The palate is dry flavoured initially with fine, concentrated tannins, sappy, intensely juicy fruit underneath and a measured authoritative finish. This will be very good indeed.

Corney & Barrow Score 18  
Recommended drinking from 2022 - 2030+

£1,045.00/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£697.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK

## RICHEBOURG

If this is, as I am fond of thinking, the Porthos of the Three Musketeers with slashed velvet and peacock flamboyance, then in 2012 Richebourg went to a different tailor. The nose certainly is very Richebourg, hugely evolved from just two months ago and now with spicy, dark, thick fruit, creamy and toffeed, but the palate is definitely more macho than seductive. Here we have a chewiness, a dry masculinity and strapping quality that for the moment cloaks the velvet density and subdued silken fruit that lurk underneath. My score may be conservative because I suspect the final fitting – another six months or so – will fill out this wine into something rather splendid.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18.5  
Recommended drinking from 2025 - 2032+

£1,695.00/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£1,135.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK



## ROMANÉE-ST-VIVANT

From Richebourg's grounded, earthy quality we move, with Romanée-St-Vivant into a more atmospheric, occasionally unearthly plane that yearns for and sometimes shadows Romanée-Conti itself. The colour has not the depth of say Grands Échézeaux but shows a lovely firm ruby. The nose has a red fruit purity of perfume that suggests a subtle, curved quality of concentration and density. Powder dry, fine tannins, intricately measured and authoritative with a pure, high tensile finish. Lovely wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18.5  
Recommended drinking from 2025 - 2032+

£1,772.50/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£1,185.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK

## LA TÂCHE

This is a magnificent La Tâche, described by Perrine Fenal as "irreproachable but keeping a slightly mocking distance" (from its peers). Very dark, almost opaque ruby colour. The nose is achingly beautiful with rich, red and black fruits, creamy, dense and ripe but with that characteristic spicy, Asiatic perfume. The palate has an approachability born of perfect balance, is concentrated and measured in structure, silkily dry with a purity and supple density that literally balloon across the palate. The finish is magically extracted, effortlessly long. Great wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 19 to 19.5  
Recommended drinking from 2026 - 2035+

£2,087.50/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£696.00/case of 1 bottle, in bond UK  
£1,395.00/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK



Henry-Frédéric Roch

## ROMANÉE-CONTI

One might think that after the magnificence of La Tâche in 2012 Romanée-Conti's enigmatic, sometimes misted subtlety might be eclipsed. That it is not is merely an illustration of its effortlessly profound beauty and lightness of touch. The colour as always is a very slightly paler, more delicate, glinting ruby. The nose I described in my last set of notes just two weeks ago as "tender" with a subtle, subtle perfume of layered old vine fruit, delicately ripe and of great rose petal purity. The palate has an utterly silken, relaxed, calm quality with powder fine tannins that give a deceptively light but actually very high tensile power and lift. If the other *Grand Crus* show a more or less outer quality then this wine is all about an inner beauty. Subliminal but profound. This is undoubtedly my most subjective tasting note, technically useless but an attempt to paint a picture that struck me at the time.

Corney & Barrow Score 19 to 19.5+  
Recommended drinking from 2027 - 2035+

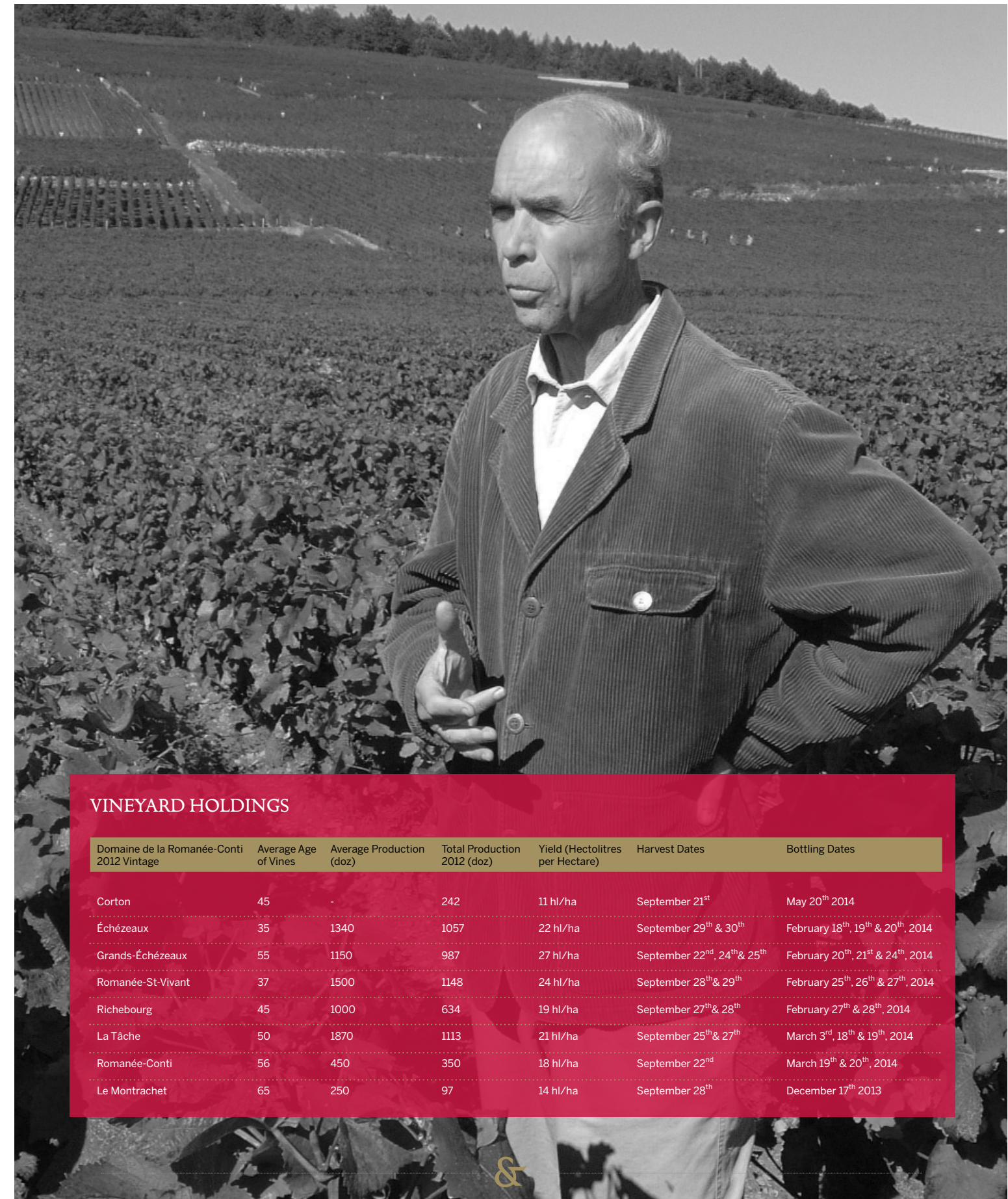
£6,325.00/case of 3 bottles, in bond UK  
£2,110.00/case of 1 bottle, in bond UK

## LE MONTRACHET

With just half a normal crop produced as a result of a hailstorm on the 30<sup>th</sup> June it is as if nature compensated for its capricious savagery in offering a quite lovely wine. Golden yellow in colour with white, glinting flashes. Alongside the old vined creaminess and richness is an ethereal citrus-light perfume; insinuating, even delicate, a rather beautiful paradox. The palate is creamy again on entry with silken, supple, rich flavours but before it gets too sensuous there is a kick of acidity, no, actually tension in the finish which lifts the weight with a refinement and purity that will as always make this wine, so approachable now, into a very long liver indeed. I adored it.

Corney & Barrow Score 19  
Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2025+

£1,312.50/case of 1 bottle, in bond UK



### VINEYARD HOLDINGS

Domaine de la Romanée-Conti 2012 Vintage	Average Age of Vines	Average Production (doz)	Total Production 2012 (doz)	Yield (Hectolitres per Hectare)	Harvest Dates	Bottling Dates
Corton	45	-	242	11 hl/ha	September 21 <sup>st</sup>	May 20 <sup>th</sup> 2014
Échézeaux	35	1340	1057	22 hl/ha	September 29 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup>	February 18 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Grands-Échézeaux	55	1150	987	27 hl/ha	September 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> & 25 <sup>th</sup>	February 20 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Romanée-St-Vivant	37	1500	1148	24 hl/ha	September 28 <sup>th</sup> & 29 <sup>th</sup>	February 25 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Richebourg	45	1000	634	19 hl/ha	September 27 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup>	February 27 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
La Tâche	50	1870	1113	21 hl/ha	September 25 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup>	March 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Romanée-Conti	56	450	350	18 hl/ha	September 22 <sup>nd</sup>	March 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Le Montrachet	65	250	97	14 hl/ha	September 28 <sup>th</sup>	December 17 <sup>th</sup> 2013





# RECOMMENDED DRINKING DATES

We are regularly asked for more specific drinking dates for 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. For your interest and reference we have included our original recommendations made at the launch of the new vintages below.

REVISED DRINKING DATES	Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru Cuvée Duvault Blochet	Échézeaux	Grands-Échézeaux	Richebourg	Romanée-St-Vivant	La Tâche	Romanée-Conti	Le Montrachet
1995	N/A	Now-2016	Now-2019	Now-2020	Now-2018	Now-2020+	Now-2025+	Now-2016
1996	N/A	Now-2016	Now-2017	Now-2017	Now-2020	Now-2021+	Now-2025+	Now-2018
1997	N/A	Now-2017+	Now-2018+	Now-2018+	Now-2020+	Now-2021+	Now-2024	Now-2015
1998	N/A	Now-2019+	Now-2020+	Now-2022+	Now-2023+	2012-2022+	2015-2030+	Now-2016
1999	Now-2017	Now-2019+	Now-2020+	Now-2022+	Now-2023+	2012-2024+	2015-2030+	Now-2016
2000	N/A	Now-2018+	Now-2019+	Now-2020+	Now-2020+	Now-2023+	Now-2027+	Now-2018
2001	N/A	Now-2020+	Now-2021+	Now-2022+	Now-2023+	Now-2023+	Now-2029+	Now-2019
2002	Now-2016	Now-2020+	Now-2022+	Now-2023+	Now-2023+	2012-2023+	2015-2028+	Now-2020
2003	N/A	Now-2016+	Now-2017+	Now-2020+	Now-2019+	Now-2023+	Now-2025+	Now-2016
2004	N/A	As below	As below	As below	As below	As below	As below	As below
2005	N/A	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2006	Now-2019	Now-2019+	Now-2020+	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2007	N/A	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2008	As below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2009	As below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2010	N/A	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below
2011	N/A	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below	See below

ORIGINAL DRINKING DATES	Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru Cuvée Duvault Blochet	Échézeaux	Grands-Échézeaux	Richebourg	Romanée-St-Vivant	La Tâche	Romanée-Conti	Le Montrachet
1995	N/A	From 2003	From 2005	From 2006	From 2005	From 2006	From 2008	From 2007
1996	N/A	From 1999	From 2000	From 2003	From 2001	From 2004	From 2006	From 2004
1997	N/A	From 2002	From 2003	From 2005	From 2005	From 2005	From 2007	From 2004
1998	N/A	From 2004	From 2005	From 2006	From 2005	From 2008	From 2008	From 2003
1999	From 2003	From 2006	From 2008	From 2010	From 2009	From 2012	From 2015	From 2006
2000	N/A	From 2004	From 2006	From 2009	From 2007	From 2009	From 2009	From 2007
2001	N/A	From 2005	From 2006	From 2007	From 2007	From 2008	From 2010	From 2008
2002	From 2006	From 2008	From 2009	From 2009	From 2009	From 2012	From 2015	From 2010
2003	N/A	From 2008	From 2009	From 2011	From 2010	From 2011	From 2012	From 2009
2004	N/A	From 2013	From 2015	From 2017	From 2016	From 2018	From 2020	From 2012
2005	N/A	From 2015	From 2020	From 2020	From 2020	From 2020	From 2025	From 2014
2006	From 2010-2015	From 2011-2016	From 2012-2017	From 2015-2020	From 2013-2020	From 2016-2022	From 2017-2025	From 2015-2020
2007	N/A	From 2012-2017	From 2015-2018	From 2016-2021	From 2016-2020	From 2017-2022	From 2020-2025	From 2012-2020
2008	From 2015-2020	From 2016-2020+	From 2018-2025+	From 2016-2021	From 2017-2022	From 2018-2026+	From 2020-2030	From 2018-2020+
2009	From 2015-2020	From 2018-2025+	From 2020-2030	From 2022-2030	From 2020-2028	From 2025-2035	From 2025-2035	From 2015-2025
2010	N/A	From 2019-2025+	From 2021-2030+	From 2023-2030+	From 2022-2029+	From 2025-2035	From 2026-2035+	From 2016-2025+
2011	N/A	From 2018-2024	From 2020-2028	From 2022-2030	From 2021-2020	From 2020-2030	From 2025-2035	From 2017-2022



# TO ORDER

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