



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



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HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES
WINE MERCHANTS
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LONDON

CORNEY &
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780



BURGUNDY

2012 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

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Bonne Année – Happy New Year!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

It is January and therefore Burgundy season in London. Last year, in this release, we exalted an era which had seen three really good, but totally contrasting, vintages in succession; 2012 makes that four.

Four years ago we had the quasi-exotic 2009, open, accessible, generous and, for some purists, a little too flattering. Then 2010 arrived to make traditionalists smile, with a return to Burgundy's hallmark freshness and purity. 2011 was different again, ripe and rounded, certainly, but with bright acidity too. Whilst the quality has been impressive, quantities have steadily been going down since 2009 - a saving grace for 2011's quality. However, the 2012 takes the quantity versus quality challenge to a totally different level.

There is almost no wine, but what wine there is, in the right hands, is tear-jerkingly good.

When customers are making purchases, it is worth bearing in mind that 2013 also produced very limited quantities and that, sadly, cellars in Burgundy are practically empty.

Every year, as we embark on this exercise, we try to both enlighten and inform our customers, and reflect on the complexity of this fascinating, compelling and often frustrating region.

Initially it looks so easy; two main grape varieties and a series of villages flanking one road, the *Route Nationale 74*. In reality, however, Burgundy is a region of baffling, fiendish complexity, borne out of the combined quirks of geology, topography, history and humankind.

Any given vineyard, no matter how small, might contain a myriad of different parcels, a variety of soils and aspects and a multitude of owners and all that the consumer has to guide them is a place name.

The potential for confusion is rife; therefore the aim of this release is to guide customers through a selection of our wines and producers. We need a large number of suppliers in order to amass sufficient quantities, the individual holdings of one grower generally being very limited. This is very different from the vast holdings on Left Bank Bordeaux.

The Corney & Barrow selection was assembled through successive tastings during a week-long trip in September

and a brief follow-up in November. The wines have been chosen on the basis of quality and come from producers with whom we have been fortunate to enjoy strong, long-term relationships. Such relationships are of particular importance in vintages where quantities are even more limited than usual.

For the sake of simplicity, we have chosen to follow a logical route from north to south, guiding customers from commune to commune.

Within this collection, there are a few producers whose wines sell out almost instantly, every year. We therefore strongly advise customers to delve a little more deeply into unfamiliar territory, where there are some terrific bargains – insiders' wines which will give great pleasure. In particular, we would recommend the highlighted section of wines from Beaune.

SCORING

All of the wines have been critically appraised. Tasting is, as always, conducted in silence and the scores, remarkably consistent in past years, are only discussed later.

Criticism is often levelled at the generally high scoring of the wines we have chosen, which is a fair point, but this is simply due to our only selecting wines which score above a certain level.

There are wines tasted and properties visited which do not feature in the offer, as they have not met our quality criteria.

We do hope that we will be able to introduce customers to some less familiar producers and their wines.

Although we offer this extensive portfolio during the traditional Burgundy season, it does not, by any means, cover our entire range. Domaines such as Bonneau du Martray, Comte George de Vogüé, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Clos de Tart, Domaine François Carillon and Domaine Leflaive are released individually throughout the year and last year we launched our new exclusivity, Domaine Trapet Père et Fils, the 2012 of which will be released later this month.

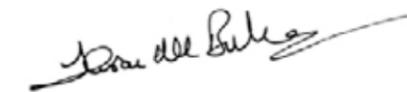
2012 VINTAGE

2012 has produced some remarkable wines, some breathtaking in their balance of texture, intensity and purity. Such levels of perfection cannot have been foreseen during the 2012 growing season. "Challenging" is something of an understatement. 2012 is a year when wine merchants are reminded how fortunate they are not to be growers and to lock away, firmly, any utopian pipe dreams they might hold of living a vinous "Good Life"!

The wines are generally great, the quantities generally miniscule.

Each of our growers has given a personal insight into the vintage detailed in this release, as there has been a great deal of variation.

To summarise, in general terms, the end of 2011 and beginning of the new year were drier and warmer than average. February was cold and some growers were affected by frost. March was mild and at this stage, with early bud-break, an early harvest was anticipated, allied to slight anxiety about hydric stress. Some growers were again exposed to frosts in late April, and May and June were, in the main, pretty dire, cold and wet, although at least alleviating concerns about low water reserves. The conditions were ideal for diseases such as oïdium and mildew and, through much of the summer, growers were fighting a constant battle, treating the vines. The end of May saw a turnaround with almost summer-like conditions but that was followed by storms, some violent and some accompanied by hail, badly affecting flowering. The crop, already reduced through *coulure* (poor fruit set), *millerandage* (aborted nascent berries), disease and sometimes hail, was further impacted upon by sunburn, through uncharacteristic heat spikes. The end of August and the month of September were fair, with long sunny days and an intensifying wind, ideal in fact, allowing a much reduced crop to ripen. Most of our suppliers, having reeled off the barrage of problems they had faced, remain as resilient as they can be – even managing a smile and a shrug, whilst remarking: "at least we did not get rot".



ALISON BUCHANAN
January 2014

BIODYNAMIC VITICULTURE

To precis the art and science of biodynamic viticulture is a challenge, to say the least. Essentially, this is agriculture in tune with the basic forces of nature, both terrestrial and celestial. It embraces cosmic rhythms, philosophy, spirituality and metaphysics as much as agricultural disciplines. The rhythms of light from other planets must be borne in mind, biodynamicists would argue, and a greater comprehension of this then dictates optimal timing for viticultural activity. Labour-saving chemicals are banned and individual vines are only treated with plant-based compounds, administered according to the lunar cycle.

Whilst we lesser mortals struggle with such concepts, three observations are useful in the argument;

1. If a region is fiercely proud of its *terroir*, surely anything which threatens it should be eradicated as artificial treatments clearly upset the natural balance.
2. We do already recognise a link with lunar cycles in the case of sap rising and, of course, tidal movements.
3. The taste test: the resulting wines have a greater intensity and purity.

With all of our suppliers who have adopted this arduous and taxing form of farming, the prime motivator was a concern for sustainability. The improvement in the quality of the wines came to many as something of a bonus.

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, e.g. *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.

BURGUNDY AT A GLANCE

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CHABLIS

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

DOMAINE VINCENT DAMPT

<i>Chablis 1er Cru Les Vaillons</i>	12	£165.00
<i>Chablis 1er Cru Côte de Léchet</i>	12	£165.00
<i>Chablis Grand Cru Bougros</i>	12	£330.00

CÔTE DE NUITS

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

DOMAINE ROSSIGNOL-TRAPET

<i>Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes</i>	12	£260.00
<i>Beaune 1er Cru Les Teurons</i>	12	£295.00
<i>Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Clos-Prieur</i>	12	£495.00
<i>Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Petite Chapelle</i>	12	£495.00
<i>Latricières-Chambertin Grand Cru</i>	6	£440.00
<i>Chapelle-Chambertin Grand Cru</i>	6	£440.00
<i>Chambertin Grand Cru</i>	6	£675.00

DOMAINE DES VAROILLES

<i>Gevrey-Chambertin Clos du Meix des Ouches Monopole</i>	6	£180.00
<i>Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Champonnets</i>	6	£215.00
<i>Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru La Romanée Monopole</i>	6	£265.00
<i>Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Clos de Varoilles Monopole</i>	6	£255.00
<i>Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru</i>	6	£375.00

CHÂTEAU DE LA TOUR

<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Classique Château de la Tour</i>	12	£845.00
<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Classique Château de la Tour Magnum</i>	3	£450.00
<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Vieilles Vignes Château de la Tour</i>	12	£1,395.00
<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Vieilles Vignes Château de la Tour Magnum</i>	3	£725.00
<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Hommage à Jean Morin</i>	6	£1,500.00
<i>Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru Cuvée Hommage à Jean Morin Magnum</i>	1	£500.00

DOMAINE DE L'ARLOT

<i>Côte de Nuits-Villages Clos du Chapeau</i>	6	£107.50
<i>Nuits-St-Georges Le Petit Arlot</i>	6	£142.50
<i>Nuits-St-Georges 1er Cru Les Petits Plets</i>	6	£162.50
<i>Nuits-St-Georges 1er Cru Clos de l'Arlot Monopole</i>	6	£275.00
<i>Nuits-St-Georges 1er Cru Clos des Forêts Saint-Georges Monopole</i>	6	£287.50
<i>Nuits-St-Georges La Gerbotte Blanc</i>	12	£295.00
<i>Nuits-St-Georges 1er Cru Clos de l'Arlot Blanc Monopole</i>	12	£575.00

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CÔTE DE NUITS continued...

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

DOMAINE GILLES JOURDAN

Bourgogne Pinot Noir Vieilles Vignes	12	£110.00
Côte de Nuits-Villages	12	£165.00
Côte de Nuits-Villages La Robignotte Monopole	12	£195.00

CÔTE DE BEAUNE

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

DOMAINE PIERRE LABET

Bourgogne Pinot Noir Vieilles Vignes	12	£175.00
Beaune Clos du dessus des Marconnets Rouge	12	£275.00
Beaune 1er Cru Coucheries	12	£380.00
Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes	12	£395.00
Bourgogne Chardonnay Vieilles Vignes	12	£175.00
Beaune Clos du dessus des Marconnets Blanc	12	£275.00
Savigny 1er Cru Vergelesses Blanc	12	£380.00
Meursault les Tillets	12	£370.00

DOMAINE CYROT-BUTHIAU

Bourgogne Pinot Noir	12	£95.00
Santenay 1er Cru Clos Rousseau	12	£250.00
Maranges 1er Cru Les Clos Roussots	12	£175.00
Pommard	12	£220.00
Volnay	12	£220.00

DOMAINE LAFARGE

Bourgogne Passetoutgrains L'Exception	6	£65.00
Bourgogne Pinot Noir	6	£80.00
Volnay	6	£180.00
Volnay 1er Cru Les Mitans	6	£395.00
Volnay 1er Cru Clos du Château des Ducs	6	£425.00
Volnay 1er Cru Clos des Chênes	6	£450.00
Beaune 1er Cru Les 2 Terroirs	6	£260.00
Bourgogne Aligoté Raisins Dorés	6	£65.00
Meursault	6	£160.00
Beaune 1er Cru Les Aigrots Blanc	6	£225.00

CÔTE DE BEAUNE continued...

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

DOMAINE PATRICK JAVILLIER

Savigny-lès-Beaune 1er Cru Les Serpentières	12	£225.00
Bourgogne Cuvée de Forgets	12	£140.00
Bourgogne Cuvée Oligocène	12	£175.00
Meursault les Clousots	12	£375.00
Meursault Cuvée Tête de Murger	12	£545.00

DOMAINE MATROT

Bourgogne Pinot Noir	12	£140.00
Maranges Vieilles Vignes	12	£170.00
Saint-Aubin 1er Cru en Créots	12	£220.00
Volnay 1er Cru Santenots	12	£395.00
Blagny 1er Cru La Pièce sous le Bois	12	£395.00
Bourgogne Chardonnay	12	£115.00
Saint-Romain	12	£190.00
Saint-Aubin 1er Cru Fleurs de Coteaux	12	£255.00
Meursault Villages	12	£335.00
Meursault 1er Cru Blagny	12	£475.00
Meursault 1er Cru Les Charmes	12	£495.00

DOMAINE HENRI DARNAT

Meursault	12	£250.00
Meursault 1er Cru Clos Richemont Monopole	12	£385.00

CÔTE CHALONNAISE

Case size £/Offer IB price per case

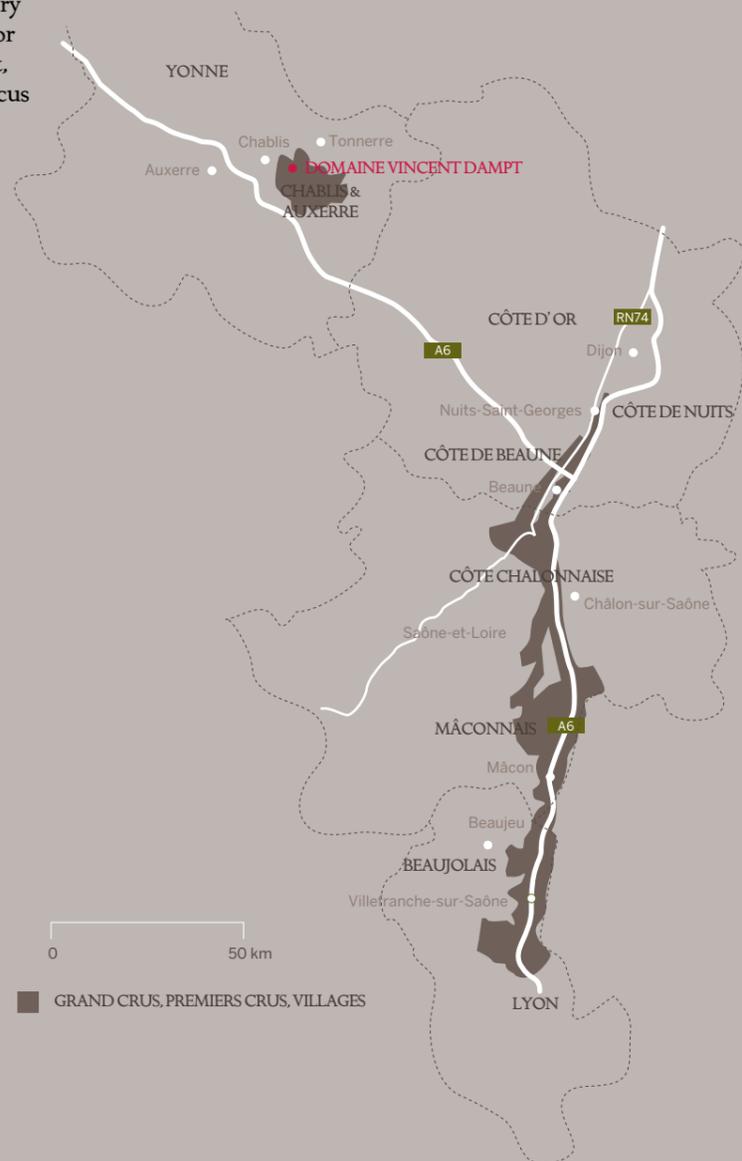
DOMAINE A&P DE VILLAINÉ

Mercurey Les Montots	6	£110.00
Bourgogne Aligoté de Bouzeron	12	£175.00
Rully Les Saint-Jacques	12	£195.00

CHABLIS

Whilst, officially classified as Burgundy, Chablis is in fact set apart, located some 100 miles north of the main core of the region, the Côte d'Or.

The *terroirs* (climate, soils, mesoclimate etc.) are quite different from the rest of Burgundy, more in line with Champagne and the Loire Valley's famous vineyards of Sancerre and Pouilly Fumé. The Loire, Champagne and Chablis vineyards share a geological base, all lying in the Paris basin, a seam of ancient chalk running under northern France, the English Channel and across southeast England. These fossil-rich soils and the marginal climate are key to the steely minerality at the heart of all great Chablis. This is difficult territory to work, vertiginous slopes making life strenuous for vineyard workers, yet the rewards can be truly great, with wines which can be electric in their vitality, focus and poise.



DOMAINE VINCENT DAMPT

We are extremely grateful to one of our customers in Scotland who introduced us to the Dampt family. It had originally been recommended that we should approach Daniel Dampt, Vincent's father. However, despite really liking Daniel's wines, they already had widespread distribution in the UK leaving few to spare and this would in any case, beat odds, with our exclusivity strategy.

Good fortune was nevertheless at hand. Daniel's son, Vincent, attended this introductory tasting, on the cusp of releasing the first commercial vintage from his own property, Domaine Vincent Dampt. We were in the right place at the right time and as so often happens, a new relationship was forged.

Vincent, whilst having a profound respect for his ancestors, is one of a new generation of young Burgundians who, although embracing tradition, nevertheless continues to question past, present and possible future practices. Furthermore, it is also much more likely that the younger winemakers will have seen more of the world before settling down. In Vincent's case, he attended wine school at the age of fourteen and then did various stages, including one at our own Olivier Leflaive's cellar, before taking himself off for an eye-opening period in Marlborough, New Zealand. Combined with the experience gained over the years from his father and grandfather, Vincent has given himself something of a crash course, concentrated into very few years. Forging his own path, he has won accolades from the outset.

His wines have a self-assured confidence which belie his youth and seem to gain finesse year on year, within the context of the vintage.

"The 2012 vintage for me is really the classic style of Chablis wines, with a lot of fruit, a good acidity, but never too much and a great potential for ageing."

Vincent Dampt | October 2013

2012 VINTAGE

2012 was not a great year in terms of yield but, at the time of writing; it was a breeze of a year in comparison with 2013.

The growing season was hard to manage in terms of climate and the attendant pressures of potential disease, but in the end the harvest was a very good one. In April, some parcels suffered frost and this in turn led to mildew later in the season. There was also hail, which hampered bud-burst (*débourrement*) and inclement weather during flowering further reduced the crop and encouraged an attack of oïdium. Many man-hours were necessary to treat the vines between the rains. The weather changed in July and August and hot temperatures facilitated rapid grape maturation. With both heat and dry conditions prevailing, some of the vines started to suffer from sunburn. There was not much in Nature's armoury that was left untouched. As September dawned, all hopes were on a month which is increasingly often key to the final quality. Happily for Vincent, the weather in September was magnificent. A combination of sun and wind was ideal. Harvest started on 25th September with the *premiers crus* and finished on 3rd October, with the *grand cru*. The weather remained excellent throughout the harvest here in Chablis and the grapes arrived in rude health, with very little in the way of rot. The wines are ripe, show complexity and attractive minerality. In Vincent's opinion there is lovely balance, even better than 2010 in some *cuvées*. The yield was about 12% down, but the ultimate quality benefited from Vincent's decision to wait for perfect phenolic ripeness.

CHABLIS 1ER CRU LES VAILLONS

Lustrous, pale yellow-gold, this presents apple and cream notes on the nose, underpinned by crushed shell minerals. A very complete wine, rounded, with no jagged edges, it combines ripe fruit with a taut, mineral frame – lovely, elegant and stylish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17,5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2015+

£165/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CHABLIS 1ER CRU CÔTE DE LÉCHET

Shimmering pale gold, this offers a characterful nose, with quince, star-fruit and Asian pear to the fore. Rich, rounded and luscious on the palate, this nonetheless is full of energy and vitality with a very pure focus and intensity – impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 17,5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2016+

£165/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CHABLIS GRAND CRU BOUGROS, MAISON DAMPT

Perhaps our buying team is somewhat puritanical where Chablis is concerned. There is invariably a ‘frisson of angst’ when oak is mentioned, yet the Dampt family consistently wins awards with this wine and, if we forget our traditional views on oaked Chablis, the wine itself is really good. A shimmering gold, with green tinges, it evokes warm pastry notes, apple tart and vanilla cream. The palate is rather luscious, ripe, creamy-textured and long, the oak adding flesh and texture throughout. The finish is protracted, focused, upbeat and poised, leading to a long and surprisingly precise finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017+

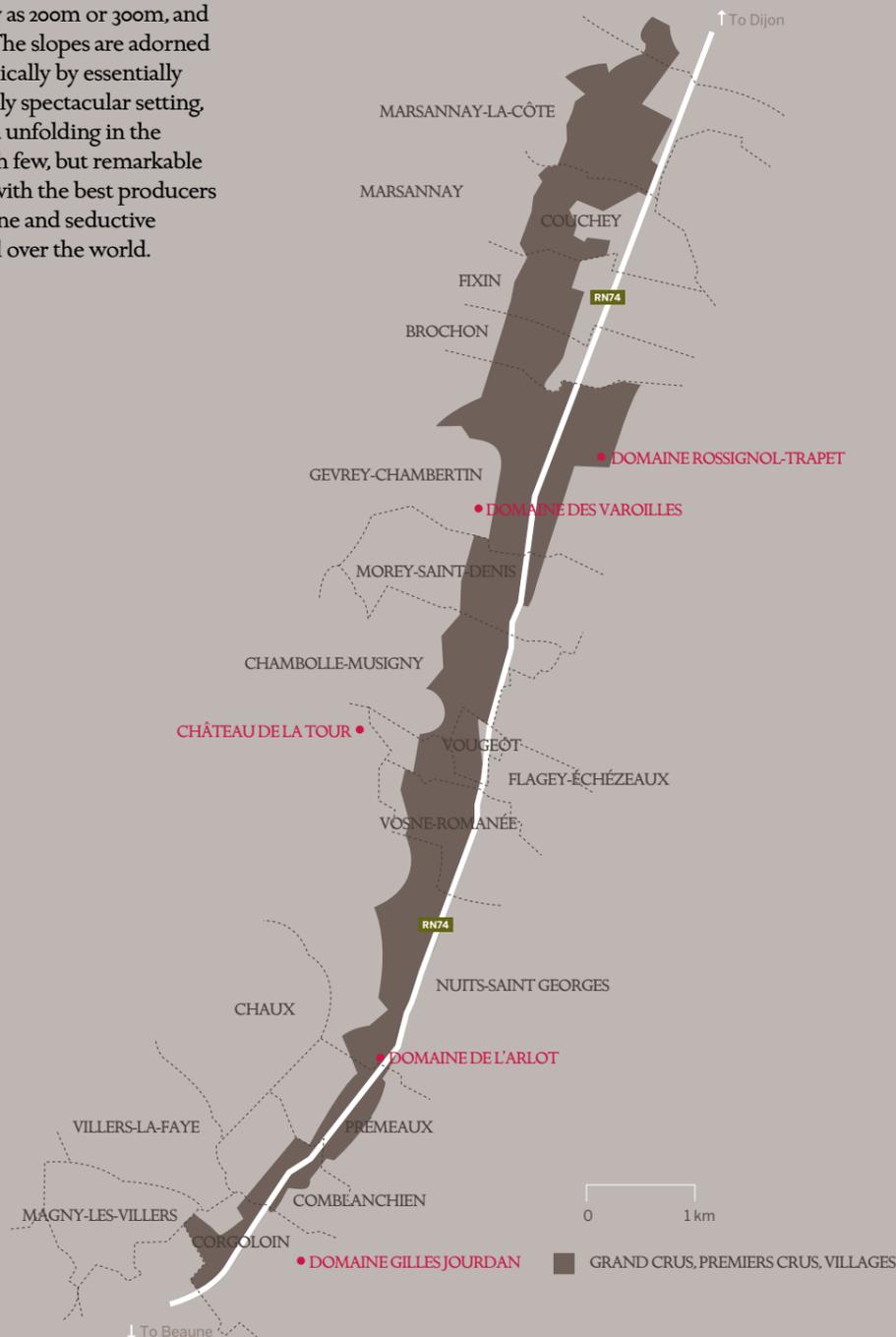
£330/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK



CÔTE DE NUITS

The Côte de Nuits constitutes the northern half of the Côte d'Or, stretching from the southern outskirts of Dijon through seven communes, as far as Prémieux and Corgoloin, south of Nuits-Saint-Georges.

The region is around 20km long and never more than 800m wide, sometimes as narrow as 200m or 300m, and covering around 3,600 hectares. The slopes are adorned with vineyards, broken up periodically by essentially barren, rocky outcrops. It is a really spectacular setting, a worthy backdrop for the drama unfolding in the vineyards. The Côte de Nuits with few, but remarkable exceptions, is red wine country, with the best producers responsible for long-lived, very fine and seductive Burgundy, which is in demand all over the world.



GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN

Gevrey-Chambertin is a very large commune. It covers around 410 hectares which, in context, equates to 661 football fields. The area stretches from Brochon in the north, to Morey-Saint-Denis in the south. The *terroir* is extremely variable geologically, with irregular deposits and fragmented limestone. All of this contributes to the tremendous complexity attributed to the best Gevrey-Chambertin. However, it is sheer folly to generalise here.

Having access to more producers in Gevrey-Chambertin than elsewhere, we obviously have a greater opportunity to taste and compare. We have found differences in terms of style, but the key is the *typicité*, a real sense of place and style within the context of the vintage. Every *Cru* has its own personality.

The appellation Gevrey-Chambertin applies to red wines only.

DOMAINE ROSSIGNOL-TRAPET

The Rossignols, a very old name in Volnay, became linked by marriage to the Trapet family when Jacques Rossignol married Mado Trapet.

Mado's brother Jean Trapet and Jacques Rossignol worked together during the seventies and eighties, but when Jean's son Jean-Louis returned to the family estate in 1987 and was then joined by his cousins, David and Nicolas Rossignol, (Jacques' sons) a decision was made to divide the family holdings. All three of the young men brought with them questioning minds and a freshness which would serve both Domaines well.

1990 therefore saw the establishment of two new estates, Domaine Rossignol-Trapet and Domaine Trapet Père et Fils, as they are known today. The customer bases were also divided, with Corney & Barrow working with the Rossignol-Trapet estate from the beginning.

The Rossignol family's Volnay origins have been linked to winemaking since the 16th Century, but although David and Nicolas have the weight of their ancestry on their shoulders, it is borne lightly. Although their past is important, Nicolas' and David's commitment to their successors is even more assiduous.

High density planting, low yields and strict selection have long been the order of the day at the Domaine, but, in 1997, evolution changed to revolution, really stepping up a

"The wines seem to be beautifully constructed with a silky structure and very fine balance."

Nicolas Rossignol | October 2013

gear when Nicolas and David began trials in biodynamic viticulture.

Even at an experimental level it was a radical move.

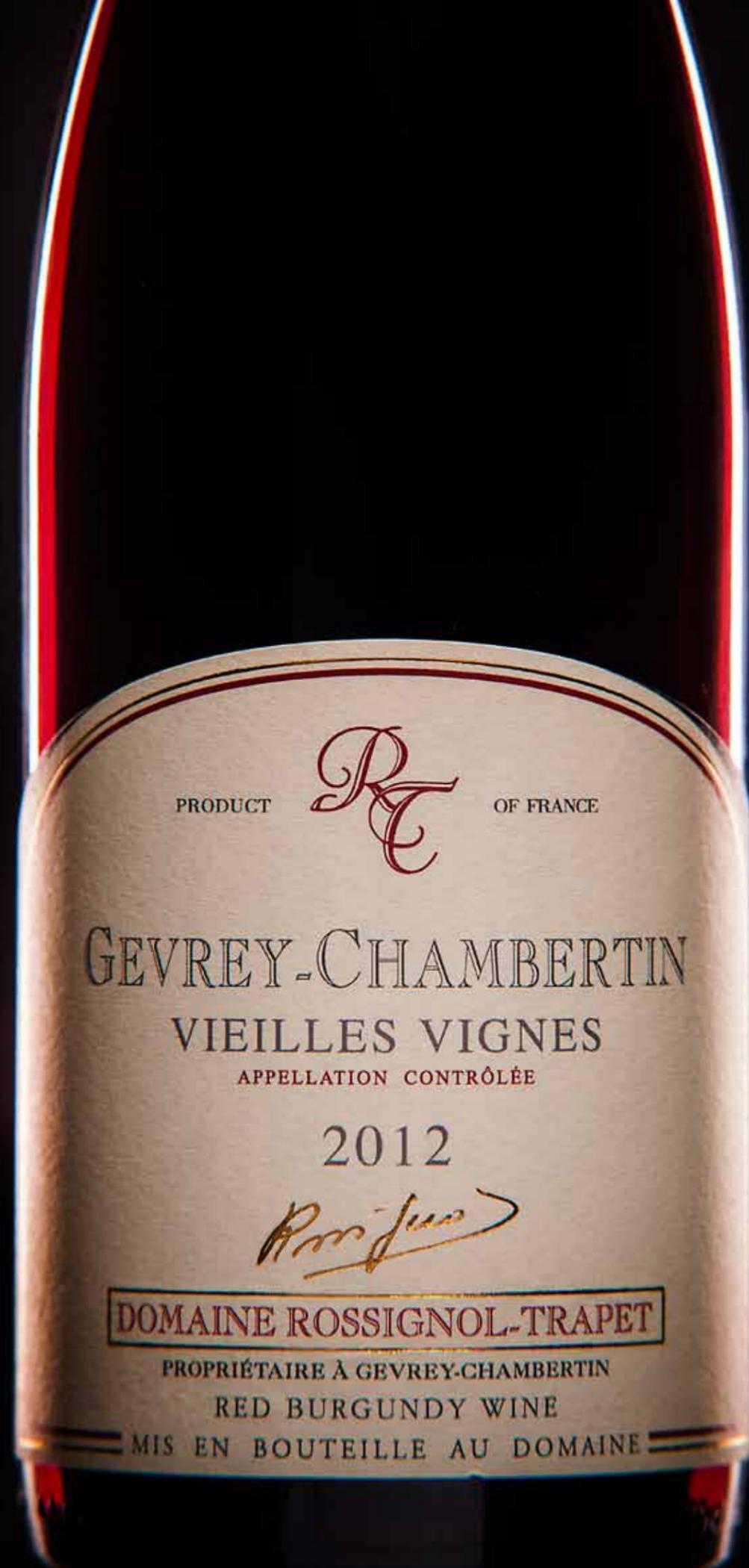
This was in no way a marketing decision, but rather borne of fundamental concerns for the environment, the health of both themselves and their staff and a deeply-rooted sense of duty to past and future generations.

From the outset it became inherently clear that an unintended by-product of the changes, even in the limited trial phase, was the marked and profoundly beneficial effect on the wines. Greater purity and concentration, allied to healthier, stronger vines in the experimental plots was the deciding factor. The die was cast and biodynamic viticulture became fundamental to the Domaine and, indeed, to the family's lifestyle. The vineyards were officially certified organic and biodynamic in 2008, conversion having begun in 2005.

In the cellar, the wines are worked traditionally. The grapes are sorted twice, in both the vineyard and on the sorting table, and mostly destalked, then cooled before a 2-3 week fermentation ensues. The house style is rich and robust, balanced to age over the medium term.

N.B.

We rarely have stock remaining following these offers, so this is the very best time to secure an allocation. With the 2012 vintage, it is probably the ONLY time to secure these wines.



2012 VINTAGE

Consistently in this release we will read of really fine wines which, in the context of the growing season, seem tantamount to miraculous.

We had arrived to taste in September 2013. The weather was fine, although the tribulations of earlier in the year had already been well documented. We reflected that just one year before, on the 10th September, we had, very generously, been invited to David and Nicolas Rossignol's Maman's for lunch. At that time the 2011 harvest was already in and the wines were bubbling away in the cellar. In 2012, they would not even be starting to pick until the end of month. Vintages can indeed be very different.

2012 was certainly a late vintage, keeping growers on tenterhooks throughout the season. The conditions were extraordinary, a rollercoaster of climatic intemperance, sadly largely repeated in 2013. Quantities are savagely reduced but that is one of the reasons for some truly fine quality.

The start of the year was benign, December and January being dry and mild. February was colder but also dry, and March was milder than normal with little rain. April saw a precocious growth spurt with tender shoots potentially being compromised by a severe risk of frost on 19th May. Along with colder days and frost, there was more typically wet weather, reversing the drought conditions, then some summery weather, suggesting an early harvest. All seemed to be going well but precocity was then stalled by an unstable summer. Unpredictable weather became a prominent feature, with a challenging mixture of rain, heat-wave and hailstorms, resulting in *coulture* (poor fruit set), *millerandage* (aborted nascent berries) and both downy and powdery mildew. David and Nicolas and other biodynamic growers are sure that the health of their vines, invigorated now by seven years of biodynamic discipline, were better placed to withstand Nature's onslaught. That notwithstanding, it was clear, mid-season, that 2012 would be a year of greatly reduced production, further diminished when a heat spike, towards the end of July, caused grape sunburn. August was dry, warm and sunny at last, and September, with average conditions, helped in the final days of maturation. Both the vines and their growers had a little respite. The fact that there were fewer grapes and therefore good ventilation, helped the vines to produce totally phenolically ripe and healthy grapes by the beginning of harvest.

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN VIEILLES VIGNES

The age of the vines is important here, as, at between 40 and 80 years and averaging 55 years, such vines are naturally low-yielding. The roots need to dig deeply in order to access nutrients and in so-doing produce greater intensity and complexity. Deeply coloured, this wine offers lovely, sweet, rounded, black and red fruit, cassis and wild blackberry to the fore - rather pretty, stylish and upbeat. With such dense planting and old vine fruit it is perhaps surprising that this remains so bright, aromatic, fragrant and fresh throughout. There is also a slightly darker backdrop, with spiced earthy and savoury notes leaving a Gevrey-Chambertin signature, which will stand the test of time - a lovely ambassador for the appellation.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2015-2020+

£260/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BEAUNE 1ER CRU LES TEURONS

The wines of Beaune, in the main, offer great value and are too often overlooked, which is why we are making a distinct effort to tempt customers to try something new. This is a perennial in-house favourite - a very special parcel of Les Teurons, 1.2 hectares of white limestone soils adjoining Premier Cru Les Cras. Les Teurons tends to bear a distinctly masculine hallmark. The Rossignol's version, however, exhibits an elegance and minerality more akin to its neighbour. Both styles have their merits but we have followed this rather refined interpretation for many, many years; it is definitely an insider's wine. Deeply plum-garnet in 2012, this offers a beguiling nose with a lovely, fragrant array of violet, rose and summer berries - purest Pinot Noir. Bright and vivacious on attack it has great energy and drive, supported by rounded, supple tannins through to a protracted, mocha-rich, yet sprightly finish - lovely wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 to 18
Recommended drinking from 2015-2020+

£295/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU CLOS PRIEUR

The Rossignols have a fine site here, an east facing stony slope just metres from Grand Cru Mazoyères-Chambertin, making for enhanced character. Enticing, jet-shot ruby, this has a wild, savoury nose, a heady blend of game, leather, spice and dried violets, underpinned by crushed stone minerals. The palate is equally expressive, intensely concentrated black fruit, scented with violets and rose, through to a long, rich, layered finish. This is a lovely, silky-textured wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2017–2024+

£495/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU PETITE-CHAPELLE

The Rossignol-Trapet Petite-Chapelle can never be underestimated. Superficially seductive, there is real power here which warrants time. Much of its character is due to the particular vineyard site which has a deeper, clay-rich soil than many other owners' sites. Deep plum-ruby in colour, this initially offers a dark, brooding, serious nose, opening up to suggest kirsch, mocha and vanilla, reminiscent of Black Forest gâteau. The palate is open and welcoming, violet and rose aromatics, woodsmoke and cedar, driven by extraordinary energy. Long and layered, the finish provides an indication of this wine's future potential, given a little patience. Beautifully textured, the tannins are significant but well-rounded and well-integrated – impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+
Recommended drinking from 2018–2030+

£495/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

LATRICIÈRES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

Glittering jet-ruby, this has immediate visual appeal. The nose reveals creamy red and black fruit, summer pudding berries and lovely, almost exotic, fruit definition, attractively focused. The palate presents similar aromatics, richly textured, layered and elegant, adding deeper notes of dark chocolate, cherry liqueur, a briny, savoury element and dried violets. Mocha-rich on the finish, with underlying mineral poise, this has innate power, muscle and considerable potential, all but concealed by its youthful charm – a great wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2019–2030+

£440/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

CHAPELLE-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

Intense jet-ruby, this offers an extraordinary array of candied and fresh fruit, briny minerals and floral notes. Full and generous on the palate, opulently textured, yet still with mineral restraint, it is astonishing in its balance of fresh exuberance and underlying power, its floral, brightly fruited charm and darker savoury allure. Dense, supported by silky tannins, this is beautifully rounded and bears its weight with grace and elegance – really impressive and warranting some patience.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 19
Recommended drinking from 2018–2030+

£440/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

This is a stunning plum-ruby in colour, enticing from the outset. The nose is gorgeous, with no youthful reticence here. Kirsch, black and red fruit and primary berry notes, allied to fresh and dried rose and violet tinged with wood-smoke, make for a heady brew. The palate is powerful, structured and dense, yet so lithe, dark fruit concentration and briny minerals – disciplined and focused throughout, ending in an upbeat, protracted, high-toned finish, which is both very long and so very promising. Once again we may regret the small quantities available but are delighted by the exceptional quality.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 19
Recommended drinking from 2028–2031

£675/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK



Credit : Domaine Rossignol-Trapet



DOMAINE DES VAROILLES

A chance introduction from our great friends from Bordeaux, Marie-Hélène and Pierre-Gilles Gromand d'Evry of Château de Lamarque in the Haut-Médoc was the catalyst in creating our relationship with Domaine des Varoilles. Despite their slightly embarrassed shrug, citing their lack of expertise where Burgundy is concerned, we were intrigued by their recommendation.

The timing could not have been better. The wines produced here had, for many years, been unimpressive and it took the arrival of Gilbert Hammel, the Gromands' friend and our contact, to bring out the excellence from this desirable *terroir*.

The Hammels, a Swiss family, have a long history within the wine world. Gilbert is currently in charge of the Domaine and, since his arrival, there has been a dramatic leap in standards, which is reflected in today's wines. Under his direction the property has enjoyed considerable investment both in the cellar and the vineyards, reinvigorating naturally stunning old vine sites with painstaking attention to detail at every step, from vine to bottle.

Gilbert and his team are now really doing justice to what is an exceptional collection of vineyards.

"Qualitatively, the wines have a beautiful, deep, ruby colour. They have wonderful fruit character and offer a lovely balance of richness and structure. Without any doubt, this is a really fine vintage, calling to mind 2008 and 2010."

Gilbert Hammel | November 2013

2012 VINTAGE

Pleasant conditions in the month of March facilitated an early start to the growing season, with bud-break at the beginning of April. Cold weather resumed at Easter, but fortunately without damaging the vines. A helter-skelter run of heat, cold and rain lasted throughout May until the crucial flowering period during the first fortnight in June. The weather conditions left their mark, causing a considerable amount of *coulture* – poor fruit set – and, consequently, the threat of a reduced harvest. Weather conditions in July and August were something of a grower's nightmare, a mixture of storms and warm weather creating the perfect environment for the onset of disease, particularly *oidium* and mildew. Growers had to be particularly vigilant. Better weather arrived from mid-September and those growers who had been rigorous, were able to wait before harvesting. Harvest at Domaine des Varoilles began on 25th September and finished on 5th October. Happy though he is with the quality, Gilbert is once again faced with reduced quantities, averaging 27 hl/ha for the Domaine.



GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN CLOS DU MEIX DES OUCHES, MONOPOLE

This small parcel of *village* wine is wholly owned by the Domaine and hence a monopole. Stunning, deep ruby in colour, this has a gorgeous nose, rich in berryed fruit with ethereal, raspberry and floral top notes, complemented by a darker, earthy structure – a very accessible Gevrey-Chambertin style. Beautifully-textured, with silky tannins, the palate delivers swathes of layered fruit, fresh and dried, leather and nutty elements, through to a vibrant, bright, fresh finish with good length.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2020+

£180/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU CHAMPONNETS

Intense, jet-plum, this is a much more serious Gevrey, darker in colour, multi-layered and more complex than the upfront Clos du Meix des Ouches. The nose reveals a blend of black cherry compote, bramble, raspberry and dried floral notes, all laced with vanilla and pink pepper spice. The palate is opulently textured, rounded and ripe, the aromatics reflecting those shown on the nose, adding mocha notes and savoury spice. The underlying structure is firm and muscular and there is an earthy minerality throughout – impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2016–2025+

£215/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU LA ROMANÉE MONOPOLE

This parcel, also wholly owned by the Domaine, is stunningly sited, the highest of their vineyards, just above the Clos des Varoilles. It comprises 1 hectare of vines, with an average age of around 40 years, low-yielding and contributing complexity to the finished wine. The vineyard is limestone rich, planted on just 50cm of soil over solid rock. A beautiful jet-shot ruby silk in appearance, the La Romanée 2012, is, as ever, a paragon of finesse and elegance. Red and black berryed fruit, cherries and summer pudding, with a refined, briny mineral persistence, prevail throughout, gracefully heading for an enduring, slightly savoury, precise finish – a quintessential Pinot Noir, beautifully handled.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2022+

£265/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN 1ER CRU CLOS DES VAROILLES MONOPOLE

Just down the slope from La Romanée, this 6-hectare vineyard houses very distinct terroirs, which is unsurprising given the variations in altitude. When we tasted in November, we tried three different *cuvées*, before a blend. Each contributed its own separate personality; one was rich and structured, dark and masculine, another, restrained on the nose, presenting wild blackberry liqueur (*crème de mûre*) and mocha, whilst the third revealed fresh, lifted herbal nuances. Blended together they are raised to a new level. There is a lovely purity and depth with no hard edges, generous, richly fruited and impeccably balanced through to a refined, protracted, coffee finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2016–2026+

£255/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

CHARMES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU

An intense, dark ruby, enticing, this offers a dramatic nose, polished and flamboyant, dark fruit enriched with mocha and vanilla, silk-textured and opulent. The palate picks up on the aromatics presented on the nose, but is more complex, with perfumed red fruit, cherries and floral primary notes refreshing a brooding, earthy base. Rounded, with no hard edges, there is nonetheless power here, as befits its grand cru status and a tannic structure which merits respect, time and patience. Sophisticated and elegant, this will improve during *élevage*, the toasted notes from 60% new oak becoming better integrated and adding further complexity – striking, as are so many wines in this vintage.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5 to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2018–2028

£375/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

CLOS DE VOUGEOT

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The Clos de Vougeot is the largest *grand cru* in the Côte de Nuits, covering 50.59 hectares, with over 100 parcels and around 80 owners.

It is a huge piece of land by Burgundian standards, this considered something of an Achilles heel, in terms of reputation. There is clearly enormous diversity here in terms of *terroir*, with such variety of slopes, aspects, altitudes, drainage and underlying geology. Add to this the differing ages of the vines, methods of cultivation and winemaking and it soon becomes clear why there is such a vast range of styles and qualities, all of which are entitled to the Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru label. Time and time again we emphasise that individual producers are key in Burgundy. This is particularly true of the Clos de Vougeot.



CHÂTEAU DE LA TOUR, CLOS DE VOUGEOT GRAND CRU

Adam Brett-Smith and I met François Labet in 2003 through a chance encounter with a customer from Singapore, as we tasted at Domaine Trapet. Our meeting resulted in an invitation to dinner, co-hosted by Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière, of Bonneau du Martray, and François. Our relationship was therefore borne out of a fortunate coincidence. The wine world is a small one.

During the time we have worked with the Domaine, the wines have continued to improve in quality under François' stewardship. This is a major responsibility and François has kept up to the mark.

Château de la Tour, established in 1890, is the largest proprietor of Clos de Vougeot. The family owns 6 hectares of vines, some 12% of the appellation, well-sited and housing old and ancient vines which are 50 years old, on average.

The property is currently owned by Jeanne Labet and Nicole Déchelette, Jeanne being François' mother, Nicole Déchelette his aunt.

There is a real sense of 'family' at this Domaine and François Labet nurtures a profound sense of obligation to both past and future generations, and takes sustainability very seriously. He has totally converted to organic disciplines in both the vineyard and cellar. Everything is set to preserve and enhance the integrity of the estate *terroir* and he is now working all of the Labet vineyards with the same high standards as those at Clos de Vougeot, focusing on producing healthy, quality grapes. "*Pas de bon vin sans de bons raisins*" - no good wine without good grapes - is fundamental to the Domaine's philosophy.

Within the Clos de Vougeot, Château de La Tour comprises 5 parcels of vines in various parts of the vineyard, some high up the slope towards the renaissance manor, some in the middle and others on the lower slope. The wines, therefore, reflect a comprehensive representation of the Clos de Vougeot, with access to a complex palette of ingredients.

The vines are propagated by *massale* selection, i.e. from Château de la Tour's own, most successful, plants.

In the vineyard, François believes in restricting the crop by very short pruning, rather than green harvesting, convinced that this achieves a better balance for his vineyard. Indeed the green harvesting debate ought to be avoided in polite society, François being a paid up "*sécateuriste*". This is not because he arrogantly believes that this is always the correct way of doing things, but because he is sure that this is right for his vines.

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"For me the qualitative reference remains 2010...but 2012 is incredibly surprising in its power, silkiness, length and minerality. I also think that certain cuvées are better than 2010."

François Labet | June 2013

In the cellar, minimal intervention is the order of the day.

Nothing is added to these wines (with the exception of sulphur) - "*sans levures, sans enzymes, sans rien!*"

In addition to Château de la Tour, François looks after family vineyards around Beaune (see page 35) and has recently added Meursault Les Tillets and a Gevrey-Chambertin to the Labet family portfolio.

2012 VINTAGE

I asked François Labet about the brevity of his vintage report and queried whether they had a miracle vintage... and he replied in the affirmative, barring unavoidable hail in Meursault and the ever-present flowering problems. Most significantly, poor weather during flowering had led to *coulure* and *millerandage*, noticeably reducing the potential crop. Eventually summer arrived around August 10th with blue skies, warm temperatures and a northerly wind, allowing the healthy crop to ripen fully.

CHÂTEAU DE LA TOUR, CLOS DE VOUGEOT, GRAND CRU CUVÉE CLASSIQUE

The Cuvée Classique is something of an anomaly. From vines of 45 years and over, there is an impressive old vine intensity, yet it is differentiated from the property's other *grand cru*, based on the latter's even greater age. Quantities here, at 26hl/ha are 40% less than normal. Limpid, jet-plum, intense and inviting, this has a lovely, sweet nose, wonderfully concentrated, reminiscent of cherry liqueur and fruit compote, pepper-spiced. The palate is beautifully textured, similarly aromatic, dense, rounded and powerful, yet it bears its weight well. Rich, full and intense, supported by supple tannins, this has well pitched balance through to a long, poised finish. François' goal is to produce harmonious, traditionally structured wines, which show at their best shared at table. The 2012 will both show well in youth and have capacity to age.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 to 18.5
Recommended drinking from 2018–2028+

£845/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£450/case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

CHÂTEAU DE LA TOUR, CLOS DE VOUGEOT, GRAND CRU VIEILLES VIGNES

Here the vines are over 100 years' old and yield only 2 – 3 bunches of grapes per vine. The resulting intensity of the wine is immediately apparent in its deep, glittering, jet-plum colour, clinging to the side of the glass. As is often the case, at this embryonic stage, the Vieilles Vignes feigns simplicity on the nose, all brightly perfumed and flirtatious with summer pudding berries, *crème de mûre* and pink pepper spice. Such guile ill-prepares the taster for the enormity of the palate, earthy minerals and dark, spiced, brooding fruit. This is a serious wine, powerful yet harmonious, with rather haunting depths. As ever, François has fashioned an authentic translation of *terroir* and vintage - judiciously handled.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+
Recommended drinking from 2020–2030+

£1,395/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£725/case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

CHÂTEAU DE LA TOUR, CLOS DE VOUGEOT, GRAND CRU VIEILLES VIGNES HOMMAGE À JEAN MORIN

Profound black-plum, this is staggeringly seductive on the nose, a hedonistic, layered blend of heady dark fruit, mocha, vanilla, cream and dark chocolate. The palate is similarly opulent and intense, super-ripe red and black fruit supported by rounded, earthy tannins. This wine balances powerhouse status and elegance, with ease and flair, the texture silken and sumptuous, astonishing through to an upbeat, complex and long finish. This sees 100% new oak but the fruit dominates at present – classic and very impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 19
Recommended drinking from 2024–2032+

£1,500/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£500/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK



NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES

The name alone, “Nuits-Saint-Georges” evokes, for many, a picture of vineyard landscapes, rich in history and promise. Dangerously however, as such images instil an erroneous belief that the name alone guarantees quality.

Nuits-Saint-Georges, in common with all the communes of the Côte de Nuits, cannot be seen as a brand. Here, as always, the hallmark of the individual grower is much more important than a name. Nuits-Saint-Georges enjoys extremely varied *terroirs*, covering a substantial area with 300 hectares of vineyards, 142 of which are *premiers crus*.

N.B. Known predominantly for red wines, there are in fact 7 hectares dedicated to white production, with vineyards which produce very different personalities from those further north or south. To summarise, this is a commune which offers tremendous diversity. The wines can indeed be great, but caution is advised.



DOMAINE DE L'ARLOT

Year after year in the nineties, we would call upon Domaine de l'Arlot, taste the wines, marvel at their quality and depart, despondent and empty-handed, as there was just not enough wine to allow us an allocation. When that situation changed, we forged a relationship which has greatly strengthened over recent years.

Domaine de l'Arlot is a highly-prized 14-hectare property in the commune of Prémieux, just south of the town of Nuits-Saint-Georges.

Last year saw the debut vintage of Jacques Devauges, the latest in the trio of talent which placed the estate on the world map and secured and strengthened its presence there.

The first was a real pioneer, Jean-Pierre de Smet, who, assisted by the investment of the Domaine's owners (the insurance group AXA), brought the Domaine from relative obscurity into the limelight in the eighties.

His successor, Olivier Leriche, had worked with Jean-Pierre for 12 years before becoming technical director, the role which Jacques Devauges took over after the 2010 vintage. All three have played a part in building up and securing the reputation of the Domaine and Jacques has certainly not let the grass grow under his feet. He immediately commissioned extensive geological surveys in order to understand the hugely complex and diverse collection of vineyards and everything he does now is based on that knowledge.

Domaine de l'Arlot is in an extraordinary position, with very varied, highly individual sites, biodynamically farmed since 2003. In addition to the natural attributes of the Domaine, AXA's input has been substantial.

If that sounds less than romantic, it is worth recalling the number of other estates around the world which have enjoyed the benefits of their Midas touch, including Quinta do Noval and Châteaux Suduiraut, Petit-Village and Pichon-Longueville.

In all of these properties the fundamentals had always been present in terms of *terroir*, but investment and the harnessing of talent have been key to the wines attaining higher qualitative levels. The wines of Domaine de l'Arlot perennially display impressive purity, freshness and personality. Attaining such high levels of quality requires meticulous attention in the vineyard and the disciplines of biodynamic viticulture demand even more assiduous care. There are no pesticides or chemicals, just plant infusions and biodynamic preparations, with the aim of producing wines which have a sense of place, whilst protecting and enhancing the land for the future. The wines from younger vines are kept apart in order to maintain the highest quality

“What a year! 2012 will no doubt go down in history as the year when nature, with unsparing generosity, gave us almost every possible worry: frost in winter and spring, mildew pressure, record levels of oïdium, a high rate of flower abortion, not forgetting hail and, to top it all, unsettled weather during harvesting...”

Despite all of these difficulties, the freshly drawn off wines are highly coloured, particularly aromatic, dense and silky.”

Jacques Devauges | October 2012

standards for the first wines.

Since starting at the Domaine, Jacques Devauges has had every opportunity to assess critically biodynamic viticulture in troublesome years. Mother Nature had dealt some pretty feisty blows, yet, when we tasted this year, Jacques was resolute in his assertion that the Domaine's vines had rallied under climatic attack, invigorated and strengthened by the exacting disciplines of biodynamics.

2012 VINTAGE

The year had started well, with a mild and dry start to winter. February brought colder conditions, with temperatures ranging between -11 °C and -14 °C and a significant wind chill factor. The younger plants were particularly at risk. Then, between April and July, rainfall was significantly higher than average, encouraging crop-limiting oïdium and mildew. Flowering, between the 10th and 15th June, was disturbed by the cool, wet conditions and there was consequently both *coulure* and *millerandage*, which further limited the crop (45% down). Jacques and his team worked tirelessly to control disease – thirteen treatments in all - but even they were powerless on July 4th, when hail struck Prémieux, and in particular the Clos de l'Arlot. At last Mother Nature showed her more benign side when from August 10th the sun came out and stable conditions prevailed, accelerating *véraison* (when the grapes change colour) and facilitating the final ripening process.

Harvest began with the young white vines on 20th September and finished with the Clos de l'Arlot Blanc on 28th, with just one day of picking postponed due to rain.

The quality of the grapes at harvest was excellent, aromatic small berries with thick skins. They barely needed sorting – just those damaged by hail which had not dropped off the vines pre-harvest.

CÔTE DE NUITS-VILLAGES CLOS DU CHAPEAU

This comes from an interesting selection of Pinot Noir vines around Comblanchien, by the valley floor, planted in deep gravel. The vines here produce unusually small berries, with tight bunches, and the combination of grape and soil tends to produce a more delicate, soft style of wine. Glittering, limpid ruby, the 2012 offers beautiful, rounded, sweet, ripe fruit on the nose, cherries and summer berries, crème du mûre and heady floral notes of violet and rose. It is so pretty at this stage, a frivolous party animal... 30% whole bunches were incorporated here and a modest percentage of new oak adds complexity and texture. Elegant, fresh and undemanding, this is a fine introduction to the fresh, pure, Arlot style.

Corney & Barrow Score 16 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£107.50/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES LE PETIT ARLOT

30 Le Petit Arlot is, in fact, Clos de l'Arlot Premier Cru, declassified, to Nuits-Saint-Georges Village due to the relative youth of the vines (around 13 years) as the Domaine wishes to thoroughly protect the integrity of the *grand vin*. This parcel is at the top of the Clos, has good light exposure and tends to be the first to be picked. Shimmering limpid ruby, we find red and black berry fruit here, laced with cream. It is both bright and vivacious, with a backdrop of rose and violet perfume – pure Pinot. The palate mirrors the aromatics presented on the nose, beautifully balanced and textured, adding some nuances of dark chocolate and pepper spice to the mix, through to a long, fresh finish which is both upbeat and lively – a really impressive ambassador for young vines.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£142.50/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES LES PETITS PLETS

Here we have the young vines of Clos de Forêts Saint-Georges Premier Cru making a declassified appearance. These lie at the bottom of the slope and, at around 20 years' old, are, by most standards, a very respectable age, but by setting them aside, the *grand vin* retains its air of gravitas. In fact, even Les Petits Plets reflects the geology of the vineyard, producing a much more structured masculine style than that of Clos de l'Arlot. Brilliant, dark plum in colour, this has stunning fruit on the nose, a crunchy cherried, fresh berried vitality allied to *grand terroir* seriousness. The palate strikes a similar tone, earthy minerals and sombre, brooding fruit, at the darker end of the spectrum, but not quite managing to shake off the almost playful accessibility of the younger vines. It is very focused, perfumed and long, supported by rounded, well-integrated tannins – well-handled.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17.5+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2021+

£162.50/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES 1ER CRU, CLOS DE L'ARLOT MONOPOLE

The Clos de l'Arlot is very different, geologically speaking, from Clos de Forêts Saint-Georges. The soil, known as marne, incorporates a multitude of oyster fossils and is less than 50% carbonate, poles apart from hard limestone. The vines here are 60 - 70 years' old and rather sensitive to *coulure*. Production, in 2012, was a staggeringly low 12 hl/ha. What was lost in quantity is rewarded in quality. This is a glittering jet-ruby, offering mocha-rich, dark chocolate seduction on the nose. Unusually, there is less of the purely primary fruit normally associated with this vineyard, but low production has led to greater intensity and concentration and the balance is darker, albeit with complementary, perfumed, feminine notes and well defined crushed shell minerals. Jacques agreed that the wine is much denser in texture than normal, but puts this entirely down to the concentrated grapes, rather than the winemaking. This vintage, with tiny berries and thick skins, has been handled very carefully indeed.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 18+
Recommended drinking from 2016–2026+

£275/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-ST-GEORGES CLOS DES FORÊTS SAINT- GEORGES MONOPOLE

Last year, Jacques explained some of the geological tests he was performing at the Domaine, in order to gain a better understanding of the vineyards. These were especially significant at Clos des Forêts Saint-Georges, as the vineyard is large, at 7.2ha, and traverses the entire vertical slope, providing a unique opportunity for analysis. We were treated to a tasting of separate *cuvées* before a blend that surpassed the sum of those we had just tried. Here we have dark and red fruit – cherry compote, cassis and cream melding with sweet, toasted oak and earthy mineral tones. There is a curious sensation of dark restraint, almost austerity, allied to persistent charm. A beguiling richness dominates the palate, supported by well-integrated, rather punchy tannins. Upbeat, layered and complex, this is orchestral in build-up, rising to a long, layered complex finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 to 18.5
Recommended drinking from 2017–2028+

£287.50/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES LA GERBOTTE BLANC

This is from 18-year-old vines – potential, but declassified Clos de l'Arlot Blanc Premier Cru - attractively sited across from the gardens behind the house. This is 100% barrel-fermented, 10% new oak. Pale golden straw in colour, this offers stone fruit – peach and apricot – refreshed by a flash of citrus, with mineral notes adding focus. The palate develops similar aromatics, orchard fruit adding to the overall complexity. This has lovely balance, taut and precise, whilst the oak adds a little flesh – a lovely food wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018+

£295/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

NUITS-SAINT-GEORGES 1ER CRU CLOS DE L'ARLOT BLANC MONOPOLE

31 There are two origins for the vines, the hill of Clos de l'Arlot, a steeply sloped, east-facing amphitheatre, with a gradient of between 30% and 50%, necessitating that all work be done by hand, and a second plot, which homes the old vines of La Gerbotte which, colder in aspect and with thin soils, produces higher toned wines. The final blend reflects both *terroirs*, with citrus top notes on the nose and palate, allied to richer pastry shop intrigue, tarte tatin opulence and hallmark Côte de Nuits peach and apricot nuances. There is a lovely balance between upbeat freshness, flowers and zesty fruit and more exotic, languid undertones, all layered with vanilla cream and underscored by a mineral tension - plenty of life and energy through to a long, poised, elegant finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018+

£575/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

"After vinification, we have arrived at very well-structured wines, with red fruit aromatics and richness and generosity on the palate. The wines have evolved extremely well and this vintage will be given its place amongst the 'exceptional years'."

Gilles Jourdan | November 2013



2012 VINTAGE

After a long, harsh winter, there was a very wet spring with variable temperatures - poor conditions for flowering. Summer was equally unforgiving, cool and damp, perfect for the development of cryptogamic disease. Consequently, Gilles was kept very busy throughout the season treating the vines against oïdium and mildew, until, fortunately, the end of August and the month of September saw beautiful, sunny days, which enabled the limited crop to ripen fully. A drastically reduced harvest of small, perfectly ripe and healthy grapes was picked in ideal conditions.

DOMAINE GILLES JOURDAN

We are deeply indebted to Clive Coates MW for his introduction to this tiny Domaine. Gilles Jourdan is based in the sleepy village of Corgoloin, well off the beaten track and unchartered territory for us. We would simply never have found it. There are just 5 hectares, including a *monopole*, La Robignotte, which is a very special plot, producing a wine which punches well above its weight. The vines are planted on such a specific blue marl slope that Gilles, recognising similar geology to that of Nuits-Saint-Georges 1er Cru Les Pruliers, keeps it apart.

Gilles adopts a *lutte raisonnée* approach to viticulture, preferring to work as naturally as possible, following organic principles, but reserving the right to treat as a last resort. Only around 2,700 cases were produced across the range in 2011. 2012 is down 50%, even on that low total – a staggeringly small harvest.

BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR VIEILLES VIGNES

A production of a bare 18hl/ha goes some way to explaining the sheer intensity of this wine, an incredible depth of purple-ruby. There is a piercingly focused concentration of fruit on the nose, wild blackberry, summer pudding and a savoury edge, smoky with earthy minerals. The palate is rich, creamy and rather powerful, concentrated yet with a fresh, upbeat acidity giving direction throughout. It is particularly sad so little has been produced, yet this fabulous, stylish, rendition of what is, after all, a generic wine, old vines notwithstanding, owes much to there being so few grapes to ripen. The wine is brought on partly in wood and partly in stainless steel, which produces a refreshing, accessible style – really impressive in 2012!

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018+

£110/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTE DE NUITS-VILLAGES

This was where we first tasted Côte de Nuits 2012 reds and our tasting notes, from the outset, were dominated by surprises in terms of colour, intensity and texture. This, like the Bourgogne Pinot Noir, is a deep, jet-plum in colour. The nose is darker, more complex and serious, with black brooding fruit, some fresh, red berry refreshment, cassis opulence and a sweet sherbet/berried coulis lift – all pepper-spiced. The palate offers similar aromatics, really pretty fruit and a luxuriant consistency, which disguises a firm backbone. It is a very pure, very precise Pinot, beautifully balanced, through to an elegant, floral finish. This, of all Gilles' wines, has a tendency to be overlooked, which is a great pity. The quantities in 2012 suggest that it will all be snapped up quickly.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018+

£165/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTE DE NUITS-VILLAGES LA ROBIGNOTTE, MONOPOLE

Gilles Jourdan is the sole owner of this exceptional little parcel of blue marl. The wine is always attractive in youth but also ages exceptionally well. Glittering jet-shot plum in colour, the depth of 2012 would not normally indicate Pinot Noir – such intensity! The nose provides a hedonistic blend of red and black fruit, cassis, kirsch and cherry compote. Eccles cake opulence prevails on the palate but this is not without grip. There is a very noticeable balance between acidity and ripeness, all set within a velvety texture, headily spiced. There is also a distinctive mineral seam – so refined – which adds focus to a long, fine finish. It is a good wine and a great buy.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 18
Recommended drinking from 2015–2022+

£195/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

CÔTE DE BEAUNE

The Côte de Beaune extends from the commune of Ladoix-Serrigny as far as Cheilly-Lès-Maranges.

With around 6,000 hectares under vine, it is much larger than its counterpart to the north. The slopes generally face to the east, but there are many cut-off valleys with varying aspects, gradients and soils.

The Côte de Beaune makes a dramatic entrance, with a hill of such distinction that perhaps it should not be included in either of the famous Côtes. This is the iconic Hill of Corton. The hill houses two *grands crus*, Le Corton and Corton-Charlemagne, hugely diverse in terms of aspect, altitude and geology. Moving south, the range of the Côte then becomes even more complex, passing through Beaune itself, Pommard, Volnay, Meursault, Puligny and Chassagne, with another *grand cru*, Le Montrachet, then on south to Santenay and the slopes of Maranges. The appellation covers both white and red wines.

The wines of Beaune deserve more than a second glance and can, if carefully selected, be good insiders' wines. They do not have the *caché* of many other appellations but nor do they attain the same prices.

There are many reasons why they are less sought after and, in many cases, quality is not the issue. Beaune simply produces a large quantity of wine and often the wines are linked to large *négociant* houses which, for better or worse, fairly or unfairly, are burdened with reputations established many decades ago. There are, however, some fabulously-sited vineyards and some very fastidious growers. Please see the examples highlighted below.

APPELLATION SCORE

Beaune 1er Cru Les Teurons, Domaine Rossignol-Trapet	17.5 to 18+
Beaune Clos du Dessus des Marconnets Rouge, Domaine Pierre Labet	16.5 to 17+
Beaune 1er Cru Coucheries, Domaine Pierre Labet	17
Beaune Clos du Dessus des Marconnets Blanc, Domaine Pierre Labet	16.5 to 17+
Beaune 1er Cru Les Aigrots Les Grèves Rouge, Domaine Lafarge	16.5 to 17
Beaune 1er Cru Les Aigrots Blanc, Domaine Lafarge	17



DOMAINE PIERRE LABET

In addition to overseeing Château de La Tour, Clos de Vougeot, François Labet looks after his family's holdings around Beaune and, most recently, a Meursault and a Gevrey-Chambertin have been added to the portfolio.

All of the wines bearing the Pierre Labet labels share the same fastidious attention to detail as that exercised at Grand Cru Clos de Vougeot, Château de La Tour. The vineyards are farmed organically and all the wines are produced in the cellars in the Clos de Vougeot.

"Gorgeous, rich, supple, straight, mineral - in a word: GREAT. After a difficult start in the spring and early summer, mid-August with blue skies and warm temperatures allowed the small crop to ripen under extremely satisfying sanitary conditions. As usual, all our reds are vinified in whole bunches, thus giving an extra complexity to the wines."

François Labet | November 2013

BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR VIEILLES VIGNES

Deep plum-ruby, this is immediately intriguing, with the nose offering a whole spectrum of aromatics from primary red berries through to brooding black fruit, refreshed by heady violet and rose. The old vine fruit gives extra concentration, already a hallmark of the vintage, so that the final wine punches well above its weight. This is, to all intents and purposes, a Choresy-lès-Beaune. What is ordinarily an accessible, well-made, rounded wine has been raised to a higher level, by virtue of the tiny quantities produced. Intense and richly-textured, this is a bit of a steal – while it lasts!

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BEAUNE CLOS DU DESSUS DES MARCONNETS ROUGE

The 2012 is a really lovely, brilliant plum-cherry in colour and offers a heady cocktail of summer berries, fresh and exuberant red and black fruit, allied to caramel and mocha notes, toasted oak and vanilla cream. The nose and palate evoke similar aromatic profiles, with the palate providing a supple, plump, generous texture, well-balanced acidity and a refined mineral tension, through to an elegant, prolonged finish – well handled.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2019

£275/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BEAUNE 1ER CRU COUCHERIAS

This is from a steep south-east facing slope of only 1 hectare, planted on this very soil, thus providing a challenge for the vines to dig deeply for nutrients and thereby adding complexity and intensity. This 2012 has a good, strong colour. The nose evokes dark, brooding fruit allied to a smoky, savoury layer, punctuated by mineral nuances. The palate, when tasted, was more gregarious in its advances, presenting really ripe, generous fruit with violet notes, pure and fresh, their vibrancy accentuated by the languid opulence of the texture, once again rounded, sensual and silky – definitely worth considering.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2025+

£380/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN VIEILLES VIGNES

François was extremely fortunate in acquiring this parcel of Gevrey-Chambertin a few years ago. Such parcels rarely come up for sale and red tape abounds. It is particularly fortuitous that these are also very old vines, providing lower yields, and correspondingly greater intensity, even in auspicious years. The 2012, described by François as being "fermé" (closed) certainly revealed a very different character. Impressively coloured, in line with the vintage and yields, this has a sense of purpose and direction throughout. The nose is immediately assertive, presenting spiced potpourri, clove and pepper, complementing dark, earthy, fruit. The palate reflects the aromatics of the nose, set within a luxurious, concentrated structure, scented by dried violets. However, a retiring violet, it is not – it is both focused and decisive through to a sustained, harmonious finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£395/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE CHARDONNAY VIEILLES VIGNES

This, from the Côte de Beaune and Chorey-lès-Beaune has a very attractive golden sheen. François, clearly pleased with it, revealed that it had undergone a very long, alcoholic fermentation. It offers a highly vinous, leesy nose. Ripe and fresh, its vibrant character is accentuated by flashes of citrus and green apple. There are, however, richer elements, macerated peach and pear, particularly on the palate where hints of warm pastry, caramel and mocha cream suggest a modicum of flattering oak. In fact only 20% of the oak is new, contributing texture and complexity - harmonious and rather lovely.

Corney & Barrow Score 16+ to 16.5+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BEAUNE CLOS DU DESSUS DES MARCONNETS BLANC

This is always a dependable standard bearer for the too-often overlooked Beaune. In 2012, we certainly have the quality but the overall crop is 60% down! This is a really lovely golden straw colour. The nose is very particular in 2012, with the emphasis on exotic stone fruit, peach and apricot, warm pastries, vanilla cream and hints of mocha. The palate, not to be outdone, is luscious and layered with flashes of lime and grapefruit zest, thus avoiding becoming too languid. In fact, the balance is attractively pitched with a mineral undercurrent throughout which along with good acidity, drives the palate throughout.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£275/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

SAVIGNY 1ER CRU VERGELESSES BLANC

It is indeed a very sad story that such a lovely wine can be made and for there to be so little of it - 75% down in 2012. This vineyard, replanted in 1979, lies on a mix of white soil and clay. The 2012 is a very attractive pale gold, which is immediately appealing and the nose and palate are just stunning. The drastic limits on production have so favoured the remaining grapes that richness abounds. Lemon drizzle cake, warm from the oven, toast and honey and buttered shortcake all appear to be foils for a blend of ripe orchard and stone fruit, kept in check by fresh acidity and crushed stone minerals – a lovely, characterful wine, which will work particularly well with food.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£380/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT LES TILLETTS

An attractive gold, with green flecks, this was a little restrained on the nose when we tasted, which was unusual, as it is rarely shy. The nose and palate suggest pear compote, warm apple pastries, macadamia nuts and pineapple, the latent richness refreshed by hints of lime and tangerine. There are biscuit notes and briny minerals which add to the intrigue and complexity. Embryonic when we tasted, this has innate balance and energy, suggested on the long precise finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£370/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK



POMMARD DOMAINE CYROT BUTHIAU

Although Domaine Cyrot-Buthiau's story is ultimately an uplifting one, it began with a family tragedy. Marc-Emmanuel Cyrot and his brother, Olivier, are the fourth generation of the Cyrot family to be involved in wine. Sadly, their father died in 1981, leaving his wife as a single mother with young boys to look after and no means with which to run the family's vineyards.

In fact, she chose an inspired path and rented the land out, so that it would still be worked and cared for during the boys' formative years.

By 1989, Olivier had completed his viticulture studies in Beaune, as well as having gained some work experience. With rather touching naivety, borne out of a lack of experience of life, he felt he was ready to take his first shaky steps towards regaining the family vineyards.

In fact, the contractual nature of the lease agreements rather helped Olivier to gain experience gradually as the vineyard parcels returned piecemeal to the Domaine, starting with just 2 or 3 hectares.

The Cyrot brothers chose to start a new company, Domaine Cyrot-Buthiau, from these very humble beginnings, whilst awaiting the end of other rental agreements. Today they have an impressive 8 hectares in total, 6 of which are under vine.

Before his death, Olivier and Marc-Emmanuel's father had begun building suitable premises, a highly functional, bunker-like, building hewn into the side of a rocky outcrop, under a vineyard in Pommard. Having neither heating, nor water, it needed a great deal of work but, being spacious, it allows for very efficient working conditions, as well as possible growth. Thus, one chapter of the Domaine Cyrot-Buthiau story comes to its end.

The rest of their saga initially involves Olivier striving to understand the *terroirs* they had inherited, trying to 'get under the skin' of the vineyard, making the odd mistake, but constantly learning. Essentially, with Marc-Emmanuel's help, Olivier had to teach himself what he would normally have learned at his father's side.

"2012 is definitely a year I will never forget. In quality terms it is a lovely vintage. But what a year: a gloomy spring, difficult flowering, constant threat of disease which, in the end, we managed to contain, hail at the end of June and a heat spike at the end of August. Nevertheless, some good weather, in particular, a lovely month of September, allowed us to make a very high quality vintage. The reverse of the coin is that the climatic conditions had a powerful effect on quantities – which are extremely low, worse even than in 2003. We have produced 20hl/ha on average"

"Vinification started without a problem and working the vines has allowed us to produce very rounded wines with a great deal of finesse. This clearly is a vintage that I adore; my only regret being that I will have no more of it in my cellar."

Olivier Cyrot | November 2013

The brothers, much more experienced by now, made a fresh start in 1999, Olivier on the viticulture and vinification side and Marc-Emmanuel overseeing the commercial aspects of the business. Olivier, whilst still asking questions of himself and of his *terroir*, has, with his brother's help, established his own signature style.

The wines are made very traditionally; harvested by hand, de-stemmed and cold-macerated before fermentation. They see as much wood as the vintage and wine dictates, generally between 10% and 35%.

The intervening years have seen a gradual broadening of their portfolio and additions to their holdings.

BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR

The family's Bourgogne Rouge vineyard lies in an area which had formerly been designated Pommard, prior to a rather contentious re-classification in the 1930s. The result, sensitively handled, aimed at an early-drinking, accessible style, is a Pinot Noir with a slight edge and some muscle. 2012 is a limpid, rather inviting dark plum. The nose offers vibrant, pure, red and black fruit, sweet and ripe, with sherbet refreshment. The palate is richly-textured and similarly perfumed. Olivier's trick here is that this has up-front charm, without losing its robust, earthy, Pommard core.

Corney & Barrow Score 16+ to 16.5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£95/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

SANTENAY 1ER CRU CLOS ROUSSEAU

With vines planted in 1937 comprising 80% of the vineyard, these are the oldest on the estate, producing ridiculously low yields in a normal year but even more limited, though intensely concentrated, in 2012. Limpid jet-plum, this is delectable on the nose and palate, presenting very individual aromatics, with heightened notes of violet, fresh, dried and crystallised, rose petals, crème de mûre and primary summer berries. The palate exudes finesse and elegance, a very pretty wine, generously textured – yet with underlying substance and mineral character.

When we taste wines from Santenay, we are looking for good quality wines, which offer value for money. Unfortunately, we normally return empty-handed, which is unfortunate and, if this wine is anything to go by, quite unnecessary. This delivers style, personality and a sense of both vintage and place.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5+ to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017+

£250/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MARANGES 1ER CRU CLOS ROUSSOTS

A relatively little-known appellation, classified in 1997, the slopes of Maranges represent the southern limit of the Côte de Beaune, just south-east of Santenay. This is the product of very old vines, planted in 1937, which tend to deliver greater intensity of sweet, rich fruit on the nose. Roll on the 2012 effect! Impressive from the outset in terms of both colour and texture, this presents a melange of concentrated red and black fruit – neither being dominant at the time we tasted. Gregarious violet-scented and cherry-rich, with kirsch nuances, both the nose and palate are beautifully balanced. Supple and generous, exuberant and lithe, this is pretty and elegant, yet with good depth and weight – well-handled and very limited.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017+

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

POMMARD

This comes from 10 to 12 different parcels - of which we tasted a few, marvelling at their contrasting and complementary characters. They will eventually be blended together, there being insufficient wine to make individual *cuvées*. One was particularly spicy on the nose, star anise to the fore, followed by a very savoury, smoky sample, with briny minerals – this from the Volnay side. The palate, after dark fruit, spice, leather and cedar on the nose, is, in fact, ripe, brightly-fruited and vibrant on attack, before more serious oak and spice kicks in on the finish – pretty much true to Pommard style, real earthy classicism, with backbone.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2018

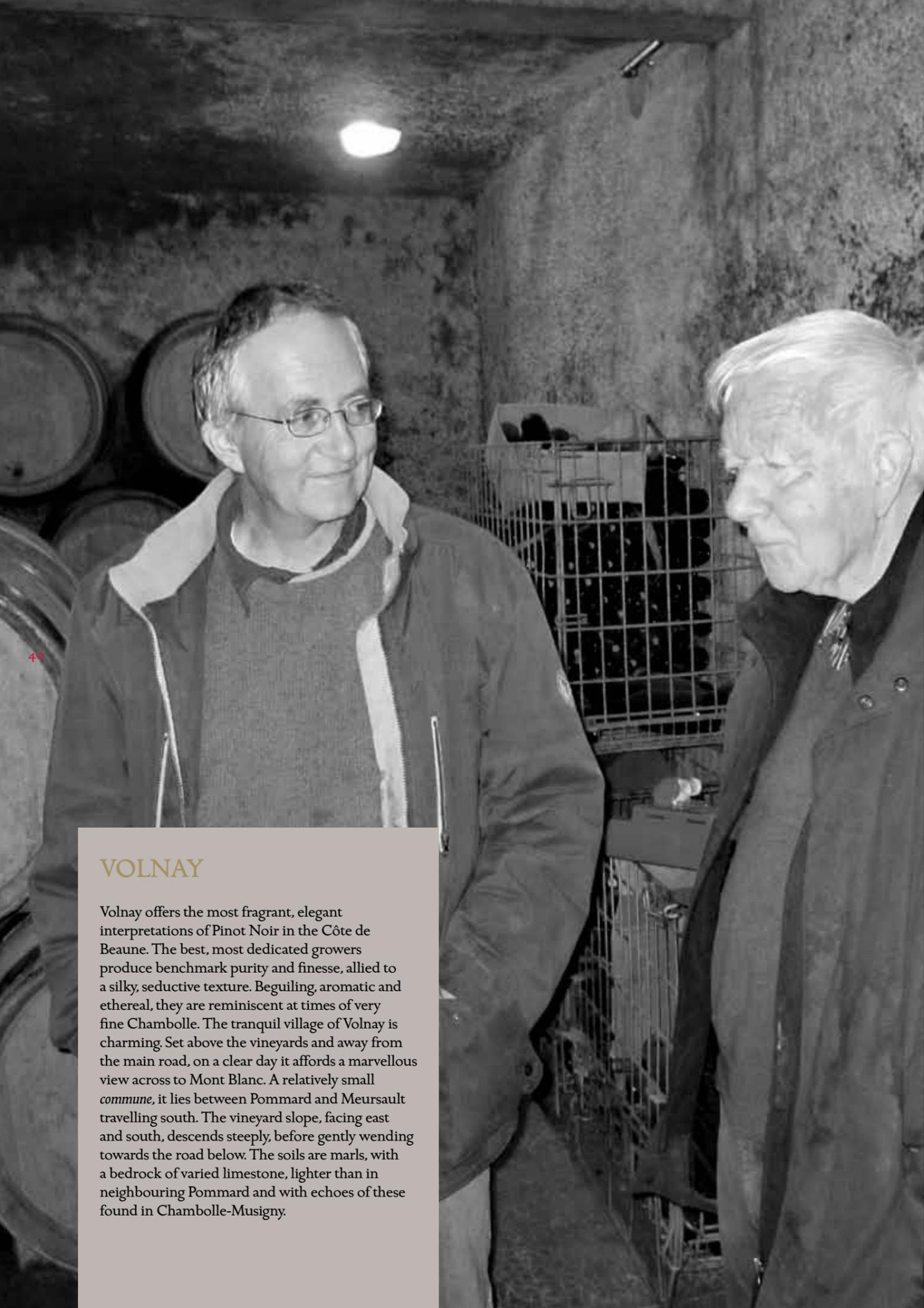
£220/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

VOLNAY

Inky plum, this presents violet-scented black fruit and earthy minerals on the nose, whilst the palate, echoing the aromatics on the nose, is highly perfumed, the fruit more candied, very pure, retaining a fresh composure through to an attenuated finish. This is essentially an accessible, fresh, easy-going Volnay with plenty of charm, but there is some grip here too, which steers the palate through to a prolonged, bright, high-toned finish – a pretty wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2018

£220/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK



DOMAINE MICHEL LAFARGE

It took some time for us to secure an appointment at Domaine Lafarge as they had so little wine to sell and so many 'would-be' customers at their door. However, lucky coincidence found Domaines Leflaive and Lafarge on adjoining tables at a biodynamic tasting in Bordeaux of all places, and an introduction from Anne-Claude helped enormously. We have now been fortunate to work with the family for a number of years.

The established practice is that the Corney & Barrow team arrive to taste at Domaine Lafarge at 8am sharp, a habit favoured by the Lafarge family who suspect that, despite being slotted in post-coffee, we are likely to be fresher and more alert than later in the day!

This year we tasted with Frédéric Lafarge, Michel's son, a great friend of fellow biodynamic apologist, Jean-Louis Trapet. We were tasting in testing times, a tiny harvest in the barrels with yet another small crop, 2013, now fermenting.

The Lafarge cellar, steeped in character, resonates with a sense of history; ancient walls, ceiling and bottles all but obscured by a thick 'sci-fi' fungus resembling greying, black, cotton wool. This mould, known prosaically as the angels' share, is caused by evaporation and is entirely natural, although not exactly aesthetically pleasing.

Visitors do well to reflect that, despite the very traditional feel to this cellar and the labelling of the bottles, Michel and Frédéric have a surprisingly youthful outlook. They are always questioning accepted practices and are constantly seeking to make improvements.

The family's approach is fresh, enterprising and innovative, which is highlighted by the fact that they chose to convert to biodynamic viticulture as early as 1996, a decision which would have meant 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, although 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.

"The quality of 2012 is superb, the wines are rich, balanced and with so much promise...BUT the harvest is tiny, 80% down against a normal year."

Frédéric Lafarge | October 2013

VOLNAY

Volnay offers the most fragrant, elegant interpretations of Pinot Noir in the Côte de Beaune. The best, most dedicated growers produce benchmark purity and finesse, allied to a silky, seductive texture. Beguiling, aromatic and ethereal, they are reminiscent at times of very fine Chambolle. The tranquil village of Volnay is charming. Set above the vineyards and away from the main road, on a clear day it affords a marvellous view across to Mont Blanc. A relatively small *commune*, it lies between Pommard and Meursault travelling south. The vineyard slope, facing east and south, descends steeply, before gently wending towards the road below. The soils are marls, with a bedrock of varied limestone, lighter than in neighbouring Pommard and with echoes of these found in Chambolle-Musigny.

2012 VINTAGE

2012 was a year of extremes. February had been very cold, with several weeks of temperatures of -15 °C. The second fortnight in March was warm and dry, so bud-break began at the end of March. April was cold and wet, confusing the vines. In May and at the beginning of June, growth was normal. Then, half way through June, right in the middle of flowering, a new cold front swept in, causing substantial *coulure*.

On the 30th June a hailstorm, a veritable tornado, devastated all of their vineyards, so that they sustained between 50% and 90% damage.

The vines recovered in July, only to suffer another hail attack on the 1st August

The month of September was lovely and the few grapes which remained were able to ripen perfectly...and so to Frédéric's quote...

Looking around the almost empty cellar, Frédéric told us that 1950 was his father, Michel's, first vintage, and in all that time he had not seen such a devastatingly small crop.

BOURGOGNE PASSETOUTGRAIN L'EXCEPTION

These are very old vines, 85 years' old and co-planted 50% Pinot Noir, 50% Gamay. An attractive, brilliant plum-ruby, this presents stunningly fresh, red berry fruit, strawberry, raspberry, violet and rose, highly perfumed and delicately spiced. The palate reflects the aromatics offered on the nose, vibrant and flirtatious, supple, with underlying intensity and mineral refinement – lovely wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2019

£65/case of 6, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR

Lustrous, limpid ruby, slightly paler than the Passetoutgrain, this comes from low-lying plots between Volnay and the road. More restrained than the Passetoutgrains, on the nose, at this stage, the palate is harmonious and generous, exuberant with pure red and black fruit, super fresh, bright and perfumed. This is a beautiful translation of the vintage, richly-textured and supported by rounded, silky tannins. As Frédéric put it: "Tasting is a compensation for all of that stress." Beautifully balanced, this is an exceptional rendition of a generic Pinot Noir – charm, poise and purity throughout.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2019

£80/case of 6, in bond UK

VOLNAY

The generic wines are so good in relation to their peers, but there is a clear step-up in quality as we move to Volnay village wine. There is only one *cuvée* in 2012, no Vendanges Sélectionnées, so what normally would have been selected as extra special, is in the *village* blend. Jet-ruby in colour, very attractive, initially this is rather more serious on the nose, with dark fruit and mocha to the fore, though lightly perfumed too. The aromatic element becomes more apparent initially on the palate, with rich, resonant red fruit advancing - cherries laced with pepper. The tannins are more present here than in the preceding wines, but are rounded and already well-integrated. As yet embryonic, this has considerable, innate, Volnay charm, as well as that particular vintage-specific richness and harmony – a lovely wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£180/case of 6, in bond UK

VOLNAY 1ER CRU LES MITANS

Tasting most vintages, as we retrace our steps towards Volnay, post-Beaune, the aromatics reverting to summer berries, perfumed with rose and violet, very pure and primary, we are amazed, our sense of familiarity questioned - if not abandoned. Les Mitans ticks so many of the 'charm boxes' here, presenting raspberry, strawberry, bramble and crème de mûre in an almost sprightly fashion, before revealing darker, much more brooding nuances on both the nose and palate. There is impressive depth and concentration here, some savoury characters, potpourri and liquorice notes, it displays intriguing light and shade, whilst remaining firmly Volnay based.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2016–2020+

£395/case of 6, in bond UK

VOLNAY 1ER CRU CLOS DU CHÂTEAU DES DUCS

This 2012 was picked, along with Les Mitans, on 20th September, in just one day. A gorgeous colour, this is very fresh and aromatic, with violet, rose, and red and black berried aromatics on the nose and palate. A mocha element advances, adding richness. There is opulence here, yet the wine dances, full of energy, vitality and focus. There is a powerful structure here, but enmeshed in the fruit, totally integrated. Concentrated, in line with the vintage conditions, this nonetheless retains a sophisticated elegance – stylish, poised and long.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+
Recommended drinking 2016–2021+

£425/case of 6, in bond UK

VOLNAY 1ER CRU CLOS DES CHÊNES

An intense jet-ruby in colour, this presents a rather sultry, dark, brooding nose, chocolate cherry liqueur, cedar and tobacco allied to predominantly black fruit. Savoury in its advances, the palate emulates the tone set by the nose, as it should at this embryonic stage. Much more structured, to the point of austerity, one can sense a powerhouse of fruit being held back, ready to emerge, given time. There is something rather ethereal about this wine, a sense of its having authority and character, as yet undefined at this stage. It is helped in its drive and focus by a refined, briny, minerality throughout. It warrants a little patience.

Corney & Barrow Score 19
Recommended drinking 2017–2023+

£450/case of 6, in bond UK

BEAUNE 1ER CRU LES 2 TERROIRS

In another unusual blending, borne of there being so little wine, this is a blend of Beaune *premiers crus* Les Aigrots and Grèves. Moving away from Volnay, so known for its charm and finesse, it is perhaps surprising that this, a first-time blend of these two vineyards, more than holds its own in the charm stakes. It is lovely, harmonious and appetising, presenting a plethora of stunning, violet-scented red and black fruit on both the nose and palate. Les Grèves, with its old vine fruit (90 years), heady and concentrated, introduces gravitas and serenity. Rounded, generous, with silky fruit-coated tannins whilst in support, this delivers a sense of place and vintage, but still displaying trace elements reminiscent of Volnay. It is long, focused and perfumed on the finish – very attractive.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5+ to 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£260/case of 6, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE ALIGOTÉ RAISINS DORÉS

This is a very special parcel of 75 year-old-vines between Meursault and Volnay – Aligoté Doré, rather than the common Aligoté Vert. We also find this rarity at Domaine A & P de Villaine (see page 55). Unusually, the small, golden grapes are harvested after everything else is in. In the dim and distant past, when we had managed to secure a visit but no allocation, I would ask if we might have even a few cases of this alone... Patience comes to those who wait.

The 2012 presents very bright, orchard fruit, rounded and ripe, pure and rather lovely, intensely mineral, with a citric edge adding a sense of energy. There are floral notes as well as hints of nuts, allied to warming notes of pastry and brioche – rather complex really. This is something of an insider's wine and well worth seeking out.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£65/case of 6, in bond UK

N.B.

We have given a very conservative drinking window here, but it should 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.

MEURSAULT

Once again we are rewarded with a delectable wine – but very little of it. Meursault was nigh on annihilated by all of the climate challenges, particularly the hail. Pale gold, this presents upbeat white flowers, orchard and stone fruit, white-fleshed peach and almond notes, complemented by flashes of citrus – very attractive. Latterly, the nose and subsequently the palate, suggest innate richness, warm pastry and tarte tatin breaking through. Stylistically, this is a rather adroit Meursault though the 2012 is more flamboyant than usual at this stage. This is not only because of the tiny volumes produced, but also the fact that the usual Meursault Vendanges Sélectionnées – the pick of the crop – has not been produced and, instead, that fruit is included in the village wine. This concludes with an attenuated, layered and rich finish – a promise of things to come.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2015–2019

£160/case of 6, in bond UK

BEAUNE 1ER CRU LES AIGROTS BLANC

The vines here are 40 years' old, on average. The vineyard lies towards Pommard and offers a variety of terroirs, part-predisposed to favour Chardonnay, part Pinot Noir. This reveals refined, heightened, orchard fruit, melon notes and white flowers. It is very pure and embellished by heady, lemon sherbet. The palate reflects the aromatics presented on the nose, a similarly lovely, focused style, set within a richer frame, 10% new oak, adding flesh, texture and just a little opulence, reminiscent of warm toasted brioche. This is a beautifully rounded wine, generous yet disciplined, with a mineral seam throughout – perfect food wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2019

£225/case of 6, in bond UK



MEURSAULT

Generally Meursault evokes memories of a shimmering, golden white wine, richly textured and layered with toasted notes, complemented by vanilla cream. The appellation equally applies to a much smaller quantity of red Meursault however; wines which combine delicacy with an appealing personality.

The village of Meursault, between Volnay and Puligny-Montrachet, is a rather sprawling village, dominated by the 57m high, 15th Century church spire, which can be seen for miles around. The town divides the vineyard commune. Meursault hosts an extraordinary and unwieldy list of growers. There are no *grands crus*, but the very best of the *premiers crus* consistently produce wines of *grand cru* calibre.

DOMAINE PATRICK JAVILLIER

Patrick Javillier ranks as one of Meursault's most gifted producers. An engaging, very quietly-spoken man, with a disarmingly wicked smile, Patrick took over his father Raymond's small Meursault estate in the mid-seventies, having completed his oenological studies in Dijon.

Patrick's first harvest was in 1974. Since then, he has expanded the Domaine's holdings, which now represent some 10 hectares. The vineyard parcels are planted on contrasting and complementary *terroirs*, which Patrick works to his advantage, vinifying different plots separately before blending, playing to their respective characters.

He combines meticulous attention to detail with an inquiring mind. Originally trained as an electrical engineer, he is a thoughtful man, always questioning and continuously learning. He presents his portfolio of wines with refreshing honesty and humility. His assiduousness is worthy of a research scientist. Indeed, he is something of an alchemist, coaxing forth really lovely wines, luscious and elegant, from, on the whole, quite ordinary appellations – albeit some very special parcels. His particular style comes from a long *élevage* with attendant lees contact and he presses with this in mind, retaining more solids, then, after a year in barrel, the wines are kept for an extra period on fine lees. Each parcel is vinified separately before Patrick works his magic by blending.

Tasting with Patrick is a fascinating, challenging and hugely informative experience. His cellar walls form impromptu whiteboards covered in graphs and outlines of wine trajectories. He would have made a wonderful teacher but, fortunately, he chose a different path. Nonetheless, we can learn a great deal from his detailed studies of his wines.

However, this is not, by any means, a one-man band. This is *Team Javillier*. Patrick has relied enormously, over the years, on the support of Catherine, his wife. Now Marion, one of two daughters, has also become increasingly involved in the cellar, and is responsible for vinifying the reds.

This is an exemplary family Domaine, which is producing wines which punch well above their weight, regularly outshining more exalted appellations in blind tastings.

"For the 2012, the whites combine density with impressive energy. Each wine provides an excellent expression of its original terroir. The reds are, thanks to their reduced production, equally dense, whilst avoiding being heavy."

Patrick Javillier | November 2013

SAVIGNY-LÈS-BEAUNE 1ER CRU LES SERPENTIÈRES

A very pretty, jet-ruby, this lies very much at the red side of the fruit spectrum, vivid and bright, summer berries to the fore. The palate also displays high-toned, fresh notes, a marked portion of limestone in the soils here, resulting in refreshing levels of acidity. The palate is a little more serious in this vintage, a product of a much reduced harvest. Focused and taut, this needs time, but has so much potential elegance - well-handled by Marion; it has both the purity of good honest fruit and a refined mineral profile, whilst avoiding rusticity.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5
Recommended drinking from 2015–2017+

£225/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE BLANC CUVÉE DES FORGETS

Bourgogne Blanc is not that helpful a guide to a wine's style and quality, as the name covers so many differing styles of wine from vineyards stretching from Chablis to Mâcon – a vast territory. Here, however, Patrick's Bourgogne Blancs, Les Forgets and Oligocène come from vines just outside the Meursault boundary. In the case of Les Forgets, the vines are planted towards the Volnay side, where there is more clay. It is here that we find a very clear, Meursault-esque opulence produced, by this born and bred Meursault man. The 2012 is a beautiful colour, a lustrous pale gold. The nose does not dally around, it wears its heart firmly on its sleeve, but showcases a seductive mélange of orchard fruit and lemon shortcake, brioche and vanilla cream. The opulence in 2012 is part *élevage*, part vintage, and only 20% new oak, to provide texture and complexity. The palate is just slightly less indulgent at this embryonic stage, more reticent, though retaining the same rounded profile, with delicate hints of brisk freshness, of grapefruit and green apple, which give the wine a bit of a spark – lovely overall.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£140/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE BLANC CUVÉE OLIGOCÈNE

Patrick's Bourgogne Blanc Oligocène flanks the commune's vineyards, on the Puligny side, with considerably more limestone in the soil makeup. In fact the vineyard lies just below Meursault 1er Cru Les Charmes – a fabulous site. Lustrous green-gold, this has a more adroit, upbeat, floral feel, pure orchard fruit, with flashes of citrus, beautifully focused. The palate is less composed, much more flamboyant, giving way to pastry elements and brioche, albeit retaining steely mineral tension, through to a long, high-toned finish, with a very attractive balance.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT LES CLOUSOTS

The name here, other than subliminally ensuring that the Pink Panther tune is hummed all day (works every time) reflects the vines' origins. There are two separate parcels; one very high up the slope, Les Clous, east-facing and planted on clay soil; the second parcel, Les Crotots, also faces east and lies just below 1er Cru Les Poruzots and is planted on clay-limestone. Both, individually, are very good sites but, together, the finished wine is definitely greater than the sum of its parts. Les Clous alone tends to produce impressive, weighty wines which can lack energy. This is where Les Crotots comes in, adding both spark and finesse. Usually there is more Les Clous in the blend, but the concentration borne of 2012 suggests 50:50 parity. Attractive and shimmering from the outset, this has a lovely, lovely nose, gorgeous orchard fruit, purity, focus and precision. The palate, essentially in line with the aromatics on the nose, brings richness to the table, with hints of caramel and warm pastry. The elements are all exciting including the texture, but it will take every iota of Patrick's skill to produce an ensemble from the current group of soloists – very promising indeed.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 to 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020

£375/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT CUVÉE TÊTE DE MURGER

Like Les Clousots, this is a blend of two separate *climats*, vinified separately. Les Murgers de Monthélie is west-facing, on a clay-limestone Volnay slope. This provides body, balance and texture. Les Casse-Têtes, classically-sited, east-facing and planted on poor, thin soils over rock, makes for a more mineral style, which contributes finesse to the blend. Peachy-gold in colour, this is pretty, feminine and pure on the nose, floral, with a blend of orchard fruit and, specifically, green apple. The palate is similarly disciplined. Patrick has the knack of reining back his house-style opulence, when the vintage dictates that to be the norm. His 2003's were fresh and balanced, as were his 2012's. At this stage, this has something of a Puligny-esque steely finesse, but there are still months of *élevage* remaining. This is a good sign, as it shows Patrick to be in tune with the *terroir* – really lovely balance and with potential to gain some flesh – extremely well-handled.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020

£545/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK





DOMAINE MATROT

Thierry Matrot descends from generations of winemakers, so his understanding of the various and varied *terroirs* at his disposal is born out of decades of experience gleaned from both his grandfather and father. The range here is extremely diverse and Thierry has added to the portfolio during his tenure, particularly so in recent years. Every one of these wines, in every vintage, presents a unique set of challenges.

Thierry has, in his armoury, *terroir*, deeply-engrained knowledge, the unfailing support of his wife, Pascale, and the help, now full-time, of two of his daughters, Adèle and Elsa.

He has, moreover, completed all of the conventional oenological training, ticking the entire gamut of academic boxes; viticulture, vinification and commercial. Having done this, he has essentially cast the rule book aside, in order to forge his own path. Experience and gut feeling underpin Thierry's attitude to winemaking. He does what he believes is right for his vines and his wines, dependent on what each particular vintage deals him and, goodness, it is effective.

He addresses each wine's personality by envisaging how it would work in the context of food, as, for Thierry, food and wine are undeniably inseparable. He has clearly passed this on in his genes, as his other daughter, Eléonore, and her husband Tiago, now run a restaurant/hotel in *Centre Ville*. Thierry's mind-set allows every individual wine, in his varied portfolio, to remain true to its origins. Throughout tastings, we analyse and deconstruct his wines, seeking out nuances of flavour which will match and complement potential dishes. This all makes for a fascinating and imaginative tasting, from which we emerge absolutely ravenous.

It is perhaps this original, creative flair, which makes Thierry one of a very rare breed of producers who are as adept at producing both top quality red and white wines.

The vineyard had been worked by a system known as *lutte raisonnée* for two decades, where by the viticulture and vinification were essentially organic but Thierry and Pascale reserved the right to treat the vines should a specific problem arise. The Domaine has been totally organic since 2000.

"The whites are rich and classic, with good acidity. The reds were more difficult, but have arrived at a very attractive fruit-driven style."

Thierry Matrot | September 2012

Production is controlled by strict pruning, de-budding in spring and, if Thierry deems it necessary, green harvesting before *véraison*. Winemaking is gentle and long. Thierry infers that his role as translator of *terroir* and vintage, is straightforward and simple, however, he cannot really hide his light under a bushel, as the wines bear testimony to his meticulous care - particularly when Mother Nature exercises her more cussed side, as in 2012!

This is a wonderful portfolio, offering something for everyone.

2012 VINTAGE

2012 was a very difficult year climatically. It was cold and wet during flowering, which led to *coulure* and *millerandage*; and the emergent grapes were tiny, only about 2-3mm in diameter, as opposed to 5-7mm. It was already a devastatingly small harvest, but worse was to come. Summer was damp and there were two hailstorms. Matrot lost 70% of their crop. At the beginning of August, the weather was more temperate and the sun shone on what little crop remained until harvest, which began on the 19th September.

BOURGOGNE PINOT NOIR

This is rather lovely on the nose, providing violet and rose-scented, red fruits, appetising and refreshingly straightforward, though with an underlying richness consistent with the vintage. The palate is also perfumed its intensity supported by silky, ripe tannins, with a lovely balance and a bright, breezy, mineral finish – a pretty wine!

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£140/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MARANGES VIEILLES VIGNES

A little-known appellation, though only created in 1989, can be considered something of an insider's choice for upfront, honest Pinot Noir. Although hail was rife in 2012, this vineyard was let off relatively lightly. The nose is pretty, red berries refreshed by pink, pepper spice. Ripe and sensual on the palate, yet lithe, the fruit profile turns a little darker with wild blackberry liqueur – slightly smoky. This would make a great food wine with its fruit-acid balance and savoury nuances. Well worth a try!

Corney & Barrow Score 16 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£395/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

SAINT-AUBIN 1ER CRU EN CRÉOTS

Once again this vineyard was not so badly affected by hail, losing only about a third of a normal crop (which is indeed good for 2012 here). Limpid ruby, with rose and violet notes, this is high-toned and yet sweet, with strawberry sherbet coulis coming to the fore. The palate is fresh and bright, rather tantalising in its balance of ripe, bright fruit and sparky acidity. Very pure, fresh and vivacious on the mid-palate, it shows some pepper spice throughout to a long finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 16 to 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2017+

£220/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BLAGNY 1ER CRU LA PIÈCE SOUS LE BOIS

This is white wine territory, planted with Chardonnay. Thierry could probably earn more from that, but Pinot Noir thrives in this particular spot and we have followed the wines for many, many years, so it is less of an insider's wine than of old – the secret is out! A perennial Corney & Barrow favourite, we are sorry that only tiny quantities are available. Unusually, the 2012 is very upfront on the nose, offering pure, red fruits suffused with violet and rose. Normally, at this stage, there is a darker edge and a very classical structure. This, on the other hand, is a flighty piece, with its heart on its sleeve, tasting as if it will hit the ground running on release – a product of the vintage. The palate is similarly advanced and accessible, with little in the structure to suggest it is going to hit those teenage-type years of truculence – very easy-going and a lovely food wine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 17+
Recommended drinking from 2017–2027+

£395/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE CHARDONNAY

Green-gold in colour, this has been sourced more widely afield this year, given the devastation in Meursault – good sourcing! There is very obvious, fresh orchard fruit on the nose initially, progressing through apple compote to Danish pastries, refreshed by citrus overtones. Rounded and ripe, with suggestions of buttered shortcake, there is underlying mineral definition which, with a touch of acidity, helps to provide focus. 10% new oak adds both texture and complexity, whilst bringing the various elements together in a finely-tuned blend.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5
Recommended drinking from 2013–2016

£115/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

SAINT-ROMAIN

We have followed Thierry's Saint-Romain for a number of years. For us, it has always represented something of an insider's advantage over some of the competition in Meursault, although the thinner soil here may offer a challenge even to some lesser Puligny *villages*. An attractive pale gold, this presents a very pure nose, a citrus and orchard fruit blend, though, in 2012, the general consensus is that this is a more rounded, generous style, richer than normal, less mineral, much to do with the limited production. The palate, enriched by 20% new oak, develops a richer, apple pastry character, albeit with lemon-zest refreshment. We usually advise customers, at this stage, that richness will develop, given time. The vintage conditions have already developed that heady, opulent, yet refreshed style, allied to mineral refinement, through to a prolonged finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2015–2018

£190/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

SAINT-AUBIN 1ER CRU FLEURS DE COTEAUX

Pale golden straw coloured, with green flecks, this is something out of the ordinary for Thierry, in the proportion of new oak – some 30%. The nose evokes apple and pear pastries, laced with vanilla cream. This is echoed on the palate, which is sensual, caramel-rich with hints of warm brioche. Thierry has only recently flirted with oak, mostly for the American market, but he uses it well here, with the fruit though dominant, achieving a lovely balance. This is a great buy.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2013–2017+

£255/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT VILLAGES

This is really a child born of a vintage which, so reduced in production, has permitted what remaining grapes there were to enjoy maximum exposure in the run up to harvest – exceptional. Lustrous gold, this presents a very intriguing nose, almost barley sugar in its intensity, allied to orchard fruit compote. On attack, it is quintessential Meursault, ripe and rich and sensual, then, suddenly, *terroir* kicks in mid-palate, with a citric, grapefruit, zesty twist, before a languid, relaxed return to warm *brioche*, tarte tatin and a mocha, caramel finish, long and inviting – gorgeous.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2015–2019

£335/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT 1ER CRU BLAGNY

This was, mercifully, less damaged by hail than Thierry's other vineyards. The vines here are up to 50 years' old, which always adds intensity, but in a vintage which is marked by concentration, Thierry's Meursault Blagny soars beyond recent feats. The nose, initially, is rather reserved, just hinting at orchard fruit. Proust would love the palate, reminiscent of warm madeleines and slightly almondy, warm cake. Opulent, with a lovely texture and old, vine fruit concentration, this has a good structure – silky through to a long finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£475/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT 1ER CRU LES CHARMES

This vineyard is just 100m from Puligny Les Chalumeaux sadly unavailable this year. Meursault Charrmes experienced hail storms in June, Chalumeaux in August. Hail is extraordinarily focused – and deadly. Yet, looking on the bright side, as Pollyanna would have said, we can be “glad” that the hail was in June, so that Les Charmes had time to recover, with all the goodness going into fewer grapes. Les Charmes lost 60% of an already reduced potential crop, but what was left received all of nature's bounty – ultimately benevolent. Glittering gold, this presents apple and pear compote, cream and warm pastry on the nose and palate. Rich and languid, unctuous, this, nonetheless preserves a sense of direction throughout, an exemplary balance between opulence and taut, disciplined, mineral refinement.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2015–2020+

£495/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK



DOMAINE HENRI DARNAT

Henri Darnat is an extremely engaging man who refuses to take himself too seriously. He has a disarming smile, which demands a smile in return, but behind a very genuine sense of *bonhomie*, Henri is deadly earnest when it comes to his wine, continuously questioning his role and his progress in producing the very best wines he can.

The cellar of Domaine Henri Darnat from the outside, is not exactly romantic. Far from the traditional old cellars in the centre of town, this is built in what I imagine passes for Meursault's *zone industrielle*, comprising warehouses and beehive factories, off the beaten track.

Inside, however, it is immaculate, easy to maintain and serving a purpose, extremely efficiently. Housed therein are, what would be expected in a largely white wine Domaine, stainless steel *cuvées* and a barrel cellar. An attractive, bright salon alongside is normally adorned with children's drawings, and classical music is often playing in the background to "soothe the wines". Modern but serene and, in 2013, sadly almost empty.

The modern nature of this current set-up belies a long winemaking history which extends some 180 years, with Henri Darnat being the fifth generation in a long family history. Henri now runs all aspects of this modest, but thriving business. Finding himself freed up from other family members, Henri took the courageous decision to make changes. Foremost in his ambition, over six years' ago, was a conversion to organic viticulture, which made something of a rod for his own back. If that were not enough, he then turned his back on his main market, the USA. What could have prompted such a seemingly rash decision?

In 2003, Henri had something of a Damascene conversion, when he suddenly realised that he was producing wines which he did not actually like. To meet the demands of the American market he had been using 100% new oak, a style which he had never enjoyed and which would certainly have closed the door to Corney & Barrow long since, not that he would have had any wine to sell us.

Life had been straightforward, with a guaranteed market, yet what had made sense financially, was upsetting Henri, philosophically. Opting for the "road less travelled", he began by eliminating new oak from his wines and turned to organic disciplines to produce the purest possible translation of his inherited *terroir*, preserving it for future generations.

There has, however, been a minor development in recent years, in that Henri has found a new cooper, named Cavin, with a very fresh approach.

When a representative arrived, asking what he, Henri,

the producer, would like from his cooper, rather than simply presenting a *fait accompli*, Henri was intrigued, and is now experimenting a little (he started with 4% and now, occasionally, 20% new wood). Although casting a sheepish, slightly guilty, look at the Corney & Barrow buying team who had been so pro-Henri's anti-oak status, so far the trials have worked, enriching, rather than bludgeoning his wines. We are sure that it will remain so. Although people go to Henri because they admire his attitude to oak, in blind tastings apparently around 90% have gone for the new blend. In the vineyard, in common with many of our suppliers, Henri is totally committed to organic principles, but does not seek certification. He continues to ask questions, always striving to learn more from a variety of mentors, including Pierry Morey, the recently retired *régisseur* at Domaine Leflaive. It is good to work with such people, who are still inquisitive, rather than those who assume they have all of the answers.

Henri Darnat's wines are very pure in style, the goal being that they should both drink well from the outset and also age well.

MEURSAULT

Richly-textured, green-gold, this has immediate appeal. The nose combines tropical and orchard fruit, all set within a sensual, silken texture, complemented by caramel and toasted notes, vanilla cream and tarte tatin. Virtual wipe-out by hail means that quantities are savagely reduced. It is a really lovely translation of the vintage, avoiding over-the-top hedonism and being attractively focused.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018

£250/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

MEURSAULT CLOS DE RICHEMONT MONOPOLE

From a vineyard just above Volnay Santenots, this was also ravaged by hail, with 50% of the crop lost. The small production has made for extra concentration, a plethora of tropical, orchard and stone fruits dominating the nose and palate, the latter having lovely, linear precision which cuts through the opulence. Rounded and generous, this has a long, driven focused finish. Bravo Henri!

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£385/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

2012 VINTAGE

Henri started harvesting on the 24th September. The quality of what little was there, was lovely, with very regular ripening and pleasant balance, alcohol levels naturally above 12°C, and perfectly harmonious acidity. In short, for Henri, this is a really lovely vintage. The only bad thing about it being the quantity. The irregular climatic conditions throughout the year reduced production to 25hl/ha. We had to work hard not to quote Pollyanna again, and point out that, with his production, albeit derisory, he had to be "glad" not to be in the position of some neighbouring communes. In fact the position Henri is in, practically excluded him from this release. He has virtually no stock. That is reality for Burgundy, with precious little for next year either. We are offering just one wine, and that is at the expense of other markets around the world.

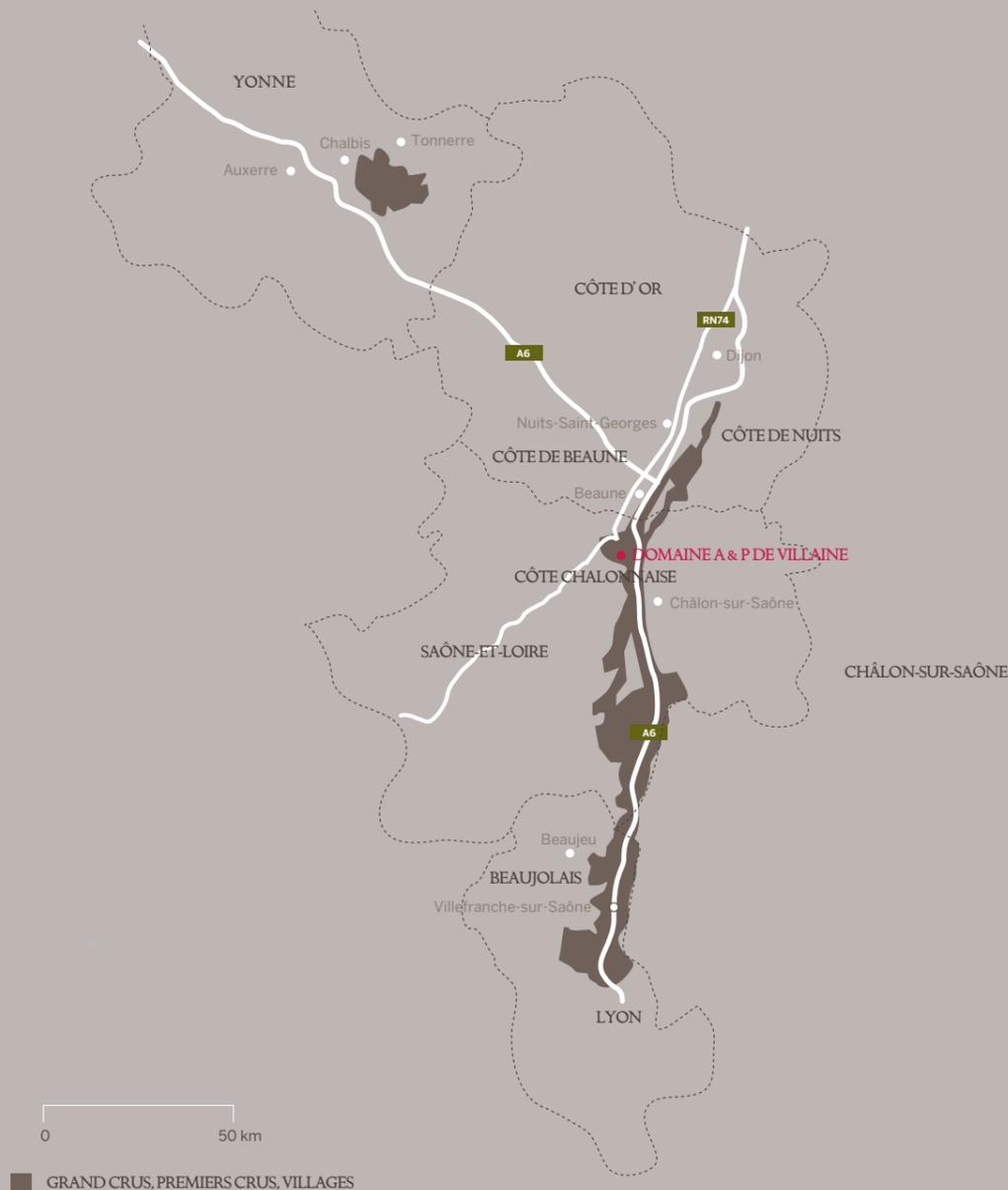
"I would say, as always, this 2012 vintage has given me a great deal of pleasure during vinification and élevage. The wines express ripe fruit, lightly sun-scorched, which gives a really good depth of finish, along with our Darnat hallmark finesse."

Henry Darnat | November 2013

CÔTE CHALONNAISE

The Côte Chalonnaise is not really a continuation of the Côte de Beaune.

It is, in fact, a separate range of hillocks, which winds its way from Bouzeron to Montagny, offering a great variety of sites and aspects. The soils are, principally, similar to the Côte de Beaune – a mixture of limestone, gravel and clay. Despite being further south, however, the microclimate is, in fact, cooler than the Côte d'Or, being more exposed.



DOMAINE A & P DE VILLAINES

Aubert de Villaine may be better known around the world for his inspirational role as co-owner of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, but here, in the sleepy village of Bouzeron, is where he chose to set up home with his wife Pamela, creating their own, totally independent, Domaine. This is an absolute jewel of a property, and a veritable sanctuary for us, following a week of hurling ourselves up and down the Côte d'Or.

Bouzeron is the first appellation of the Côte Chalonnaise, situated between Chassagne-Montrachet and Santenay to the north, and Rully and Mercurey to the south – illustrious neighbours!

The potential for growing vines here was recognized in the Middle Ages by the monks of Cluny, who were clearly rather adept at identifying great vineyards sites, including those of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti itself. In Bouzeron, Aligoté Doré vines are planted on the slopes of what is a warm, sunny valley. The soils are nutrient-poor and rich in limestone, ideal for this particular strain of Aligoté, specifically selected by Aubert and Pamela de Villaine for its naturally low-yielding properties and heightened aromatics, superior to the more common Aligoté Vert. Further intensity and concentration come from restricted yields and organic viticulture. The Bouzeron Aligoté produced here is far removed from the often caustic and neutral wines of old. These wines had such searing acidity, that a drop of cassis liqueur was deemed essential just to render the wine remotely drinkable!

This has a unique character and wonderful, natural balance. It was this character that won widespread recognition and was ultimately responsible for putting Bouzeron on the map in 1979, when it was awarded its own appellation.

In addition to Aligoté, the Domaine also produces two wines from neighbouring *villages*. There is a really fine white, Rully Les Saint-Jacques, from Chardonnay, and a red Mercurey Les Montots, from Pinot Noir vines; both are exclusive to Corney & Barrow.

Domaine A & P de Villaine has been farmed organically since 1986, and became certified in 1997. In 2000, Aubert handed over the day-to-day management of the Domaine to Pierre de Benoist, his nephew. Pierre's name may sound familiar to Corney & Barrow customers; he hardly arrived as an *ingénu*. Wine runs in his blood, as he is the son of Philippe and Marie-Hélène de Benoist (Aubert's sister) of our Sancerre Domaine de Nozay fame, a property with which we have been working for decades.

"We are really happy and proud to present the wines we have produced in 2012, which are, for us, without doubt, amongst the most successful we have produced over the past ten years."

Aubert de Villaine and Pierre de Benoist | November 2013

Pierre arrived with a deep-rooted motivation to produce wines which reflect their origins. Added to his own values, are those which he has gained, almost by osmosis, from Uncle Aubert.

Pierre is enormously dedicated to the property and the underlying philosophy which underpins both vineyard and vinification strategies. Here, in the Côte Chalonnaise, he has discovered his perfect *métier*. He is passionate about the region and strives both to preserve and to reinvigorate its reputation. The same applies, though even more focused, to Bouzeron. Pierre, like Aubert, is an ardent conservationist, and he has set up a project to ensure the preservation of Aligoté Doré as a varietal, establishing a nursery to that end. The Domaine is clearly in very capable hands. Pierre has a questioning mind, rather like his Uncle Aubert, in fact.

2012 VINTAGE

After the 2011 harvest, a harsh winter set in, with a particularly cold February. March, the opposite of February, saw spring-like temperatures and, consequently, premature bud-break around the 23rd of the month. Then rain arrived and pretty well settled in for the duration, raining as often as one day in three, causing anxiety and creating extra work for the grower, battling against disease, and severely affecting flowering. The potential crop was dramatically reduced. On a more positive note, those grapes which did survive had a dramatically better chance of achieving full ripeness. Then July arrived. Chaotic as it was, with substantial challenges in controlling disease, the organic viticulture practised at the Domaine for so many years really helped. The vines are healthy, the grapes thick-skinned, and more resistant. August was hot and beautiful, with a heat spike on the 15th – though no damage was sustained. The summer light facilitated full and rapid ripening. Finally, as always, September held the power to make or break the vintage. Normal temperatures, allied to a north wind, concentrated the grapes.

Harvest started on the 24th September. The volumes are 30% to 40% down against 2011, but the quality of the harvest was exceptional.

MERCUREY LES MONTOTS

A very pretty, limpid jet-ruby, this had just been racked, when we tasted, and was a little surly and restrained on the nose. The palate, however, showed berried fruit and cherries, laced with heady, pepper spice. As ever, this has a beguiling delicacy about it which belies innate strength and character. Feigning high-toned fragility it is, to the contrary, persistent and focused, supported throughout by a clearly defined ferruginous minerality.

This is a good food wine, even served slightly chilled.

Corney & Barrow Score 17,5+
Recommended drinking from 2014–2019+

£110/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

BOURGOGNE ALIGOTÉ DE BOUZERON

Brilliant green-gold, this presents a very attractive nose, with hints of exotic, peach, melon and grapefruit, underscored by briny minerals. The palate is fresh and bright, open and well-rounded, a refreshing change from Chardonnay and, in 2012, beautifully textured. This Aligoté works equally well with, or without, food and is well worth trying with lightly spiced Asian cuisine.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2018

£175/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

N.B.

We would like to remind customers that this is a wine which has had a following from the outset. Many customers will favour its precocious fresh fruit. Others, however, would prefer far more bottle age than our drinking window suggests. There is no correct answer and the contradicting apologists will rarely come to an agreement. Wines deemed “too young” for some, are already “over the hill” for others; it is very subjective. Our window is a conservative guide, to avoid disappointment.

RULLY LES SAINT-JACQUES

This had been racked a few days before we tasted, so the wine was, initially, just a little reticent opening up on the palate. This is a real insider's wine, a lovely blend of orchard fruit, both stone and tropical, refreshed with citrus and possessing a disciplined, mineral seam throughout. Sensual in texture, it avoids languor, its acidity impeccably pitched. It is a really lovely translation of this vintage.

Corney & Barrow Score 16,5–17
Recommended drinking from 2014–2017

£195/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

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