
DOMAINE JOSEPH AND PHILIPPE ROTY

We started harvest early, picking between the 12th and 19th September. The wines, intense and rich, offer lovely balance, with good, fresh acidity. The tannins are silky making for wines with good ageing potential yet there is good up-front fruit which will give pleasure in youth, for the less patient. 2009 is a very, very lovely vintage.

PHILIPPE ROTY NOVEMBER 2011

Corney & Barrow has been fortunate to have worked with Domaine Joseph Roty for a great many years and then for well over a decade with Domaine Philippe Roty. Philippe has overseen both estates for many years now, even before the sudden death of his father Joseph three years ago. Philippe has the support of his younger brother Pierre-Jean in the vineyards and cellar and his sister Patricia and *Maman* on administration duties. One senses that in Madame Roty today, we have the bedrock of this very traditional house, overseeing the logistics, allocations and the considerable, intricate bureaucracy which beleaguers the average Burgundian producer.

Tasting at the Domaine, though a highlight of every trip, is also always a challenge, not least because of the number of wines to taste, ranging from generic, through Marsannay to Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru. Some of the wines bear similar names, some from Domaine Joseph and some from Philippe's independent business, Domaine Philippe Roty. Keeping one's wits together, taking notes and asking the odd question all conducted in French, can be rather taxing. What keeps tasters on track is the sheer quality of the wines, their sense of place and indeed the differences between wines which essentially come from very similar areas. It is a little like stepping back in time. This is a Domaine where all of the wines are handled with a firmly-grounded sense of tradition. With that common keystone taken as read, the family is then free to evaluate any elements of modernity which may add value. Recent changes to that end include a vibrating sorting table, a new pneumatic press and very new last year, a bright, shining new tractor. The latter was presented with a beaming smile worthy of my colleague Tom Bird's three year old son, Cassius – boys' toys.

In all other aspects the Domaines Roty are bastions of tradition with subtle tweakings at the edges in recent years only improving the tried and-tested disciplines exercised in the vineyard and cellar.

Philippe, like his father and grandfather before him, relies on neither rule book nor consultant to determine what needs to be done in the vineyard and when. He has unerring confidence in the vines themselves, which he knows intimately. They dictate when and how to prune, whether or not to remove leaves, when picking should begin and, indeed, what should be done or not done in the cellar. This may be an inexact science, but it works.

In this long line-up of wines it is impressive to discover vintage after vintage that the wines are all very clearly defined, offering an authentic, unadorned translations of place.

DOMAINE JOSEPH ROTY

Marsannay Rouge en Ouzelois

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5+–17

With vines up to 90 years old, this lies on the Chenôve side of Marsannay. It makes a fine ambassador for what is too often overlooked as an appellation. A very pretty, attractive limpid ruby, its delicate colour rather belies the advanced years of the vines. Likewise, a relatively flirtatious, fresh, vibrant nose, sweet and flamboyant surprisingly avoids too much gravitas. In fact this is delightfully perfumed on the nose and palate, both floral and mineral. This is allied to ripe, opulent fruit, supported by beautifully-integrated tannins.

Recommended drinking from 2013 to 2017+

£195/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Gevrey-Chambertin

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5

This is just the third vintage of Gevrey-Chambertin since Philippe successfully acquired it (a huge feat). It is incredibly difficult to buy land here, almost regardless of what one is prepared to pay. A vivid, shimmering jet-ruby, this presents a heady array of fresh flowers, violet and rose, allied to both red and black berried fruit, beautifully rounded, aromatic and laced with white pepper. The palate, similarly effusive, utterly refuses to be slotted into a surly young Gevrey-Chambertin box. Rich and sweet with lots of promise, it reveals beautifully ripe, rich and very primary fruit, offering so much promise, all supported by well-rounded tannins and just hints of a darker, more serious, structure in the back palate – a real charmer, focussed and long.

Recommended drinking from 2014–2020+

£315/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Gevrey-Chambertin Cuvée des Champs Chénys

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5–17.5+

From an enviably-sited parcel next to Charmes and Mazoyères-Chambertin, this is a lovely wine. Seductive and aromatic from the outset, richly coloured, it presents a plethora of ripe summer berries, scented with violet and rose potpourri and delicate hints of spice. The palate, suitably challenged, comes up trumps adding raspberries and cassis to the heady blend, all complemented by very clear, slightly smoky, mineral definition.

Recommended drinking from 2015–2018+

£345/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Gevrey-Chambertin Cuvée de la Brunelle

Corney & Barrow Score 17–18

It is hard not to get a bit soppy about this vineyard as we sit gazing over it throughout the tasting. This year it was slightly easier as it was already dark, such is the buying team's day (the first appointment was in darkness too!) This is essentially the Roty's garden, planted by Philippe's grandfather, not as his own vineyard, but to help out a neighbour. The Roty family were finally able to buy the majority in 1987 but it is not, regrettably, a *monopole*. It is however a very special, walled vineyard in the centre of Gevrey-Chambertin, enjoying a specific, special mesoclimate. I remember in 2003, grapes next to the wall being edible by the end of June – extraordinary—even for that exceptional year. The scale of the scores can be put down to the fact that the wines were VERY reductive (a particular smell associated with a lack of oxygen, remedied by racking) when we tasted. We are very used to a certain amount of reduction. It comes with the territory as Pinot Noir wants as little handling as possible. A second sample was better, revealing a very bright, refreshing character on the palate, in contrast with the still rather truculent nose. Floral notes, violet-rich, allied to warm berry compote make for a very alluring heady brew. Mocha layers, *crème de mûre* and spice make for a long, rather seductive, protracted finish.

Recommended drinking from 2015–2022+

£350/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Gevrey-Chambertin Clos Prieur Bas

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5–18+

Limpid jet-ruby in colour, the nose here presents both candied and fresh cherries, sweet, ripe, very aromatic and appetising. The palate echoes the aromatics though adds summer pudding berries and delicate hints of spice, all set within a fine, mineral structure, supported by well-rounded tannins. Not for the first time in the tasting were we struck by the heightened, fresh, pure aromatics – rather reminiscent of the 2010s we had tasted elsewhere. There is perhaps method in tasting later, the wines having had a chance to settle into their own balance. This is harmonious and well-structured through to a protracted finish.

Recommended drinking from 2017–2024+

£375/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

DOMAINE JOSEPH ROTY 2009 VINTAGE

Marsannay Rosé

Corney & Barrow score 17

Domaine Joseph Roty's rosé has a loyal following amongst customers who have discovered that it is a rather serious wine, at its best with food – not really the stuff for quaffing around a swimming pool.

A very pale pink, its colour belies the rather self-assured style presented on the nose. Bright fruit, berries and cream make a bid for dominance but offer a harmonious whole. The palate, refreshing and upbeat, echoes the aromatics of the nose whilst maintaining a certain serenity and composure, hinting at darker fruit, underlying minerality and the most delicate spice – well worth trying.

Recommended drinking from 2012–2013

£99/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Bourgogne Blanc

Corney & Barrow Score 16–17

A shimmering, pale, straw-gold in colour, the nose here presents sweet, candied fruit, ripe stone fruit elements and hints of fondant icing with rich aromatics, consistent with the vintage. The palate offers a more classical frame, orchard fruit now getting a look in, innate opulence balanced by very fine mineral definition and flashes of citrus. Well-handled, this has time to grow into its own skin and will do well for another year or so in bottle.

Recommended drinking from 2012–2014

£125/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Marsannay Blanc

Corney & Barrow Score 16+–17

The Marsannay white is from a parcel of 13-years-old vines high on the top of the slope – very different from Bourgogne Blanc and treated accordingly. Pale white-gold, it presents clearly defined, very ripe stone fruit with shades of the exotic, white-fleshed peach and underlying warmed apples and pears on both the nose and palate, the latter adding an intriguing mineral dimension. A refreshing change and good value for a white Burgundy with this level of provenance.

Recommended drinking from 2012–2014

£195/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

DOMAINE PHILIPPE ROTY 2009 VINTAGE

Côte de Nuits-Villages

Corney & Barrow Score 17–18

This comes from a vineyard just outside Philippe Roty's home in Brochon, just beyond the Gevrey boundary, between Fixin 1er Cru La Perrière and Gevrey Les Evocelles – well-sited. A relatively recent addition to the Domaine Philippe Roty portfolio, the first vintage was in 2005. The vines here are a very impressive 47 years old and they get more than their share of Philippe's attention as he can assess their progress on a daily basis, just by looking out from his kitchen window. He was therefore fast-tracked towards gaining a level of understanding of his property, a knowledge of its foibles and idiosyncrasies which ordinarily would take years.

Philippe produced supremely-balanced wines from the outset. This is a very pure, limpid ruby, relatively pale in colour, it nonetheless packs a punch on the nose, which is simply gorgeous, a supremely well-balanced medley of primary black and red fruit, cherries and crushed stone minerals. Accessible aromatics tend to delude the taster, readying themselves for a perfumed, playful little number on the palate. ...but that is not what they'll get. These vines are planted where there is essentially no soil, on pure rock, and the resulting combination of minerals and tannins make for a much more adroit style than perhaps anticipated and is very impressive for all that, a good, well handled wine.

Recommended drinking from 2014–2019+

£215/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

Marsannay Rouge Champs St-Etienne

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5

Finding land available to buy almost anywhere in Burgundy is extremely difficult—and it's not all about money – though that too is a challenge. There are all manners of protocols, written and unwritten, all done by smoke and mirrors. The Roty family were therefore delighted when Philippe was successful in a bid for this parcel of old vines, between 45 and 50 years of age. A radiant, deep jet-ruby this is somewhat comely and reveals lively, fresh, vibrant fruit on the nose, sustained by minerals. The palate seizes on the aromatic profile, adding complementary dark fruit notes and savoury elements, all set within a robust, firm structure. This is really attractive with good intensity, excellent balance and a certain capacity to age... great value in fact.

Recommended drinking from 2014–2018+

£215/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

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