



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



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HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES
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BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



CLOS DE TART

2016 VINTAGE EN PRIMEUR

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK



*“2016 is all about seduction, lightness and elegance.
There is density, but it does not show.”*

JACQUES DEVAUGES
Régisseur, Clos de Tart

ALL CHANGE...

We are used to Burgundian vineyards being easily accessible. Even the grandest *terroirs* remain alarmingly open-access – you could simply wander onto the hallowed turf of Le Montrachet, Le Musigny, La Romanée-Conti...

Not so with Clos de Tart.

This walled vineyard is like a fortress, both physically and symbolically. You cannot visit it without being cowed by the weight of vinous history here. Even more remarkable, therefore, that it changed hands in 2017, for only the third time since the 12th century.

The new owner of Clos de Tart is François Pinault's Groupe Artémis, owner of Château Latour and Christie's auction house, *inter alia*. We are proud that M. Pinault and his team, overseen by the brilliant partnership of Frédéric Engerer and the Burgundian Jean Garandeau, have decided to retain Corney & Barrow as the exclusive agent for Clos de Tart in the United Kingdom.

Since embarking upon our role with the 2007 vintage, we enter the second decade of this relationship knowing that the Clos is in secure hands. And thanks to the efforts of both Sylvain Pitiot, *Régisseur* from 1996 to 2015, and his successor Jacques Devauges, the wines have never been better...



SPLENDID ISOLATION

The vines of Clos de Tart stand apart from their neighbours.

This fact was illustrated when I arrived a little early for our appointment this year. I drove up into the hills, intending to take a photo or two looking down over the Clos...

The aptly named Rue de la Montagne winds up past Domaine Ponsot, before you take a steep left turn, skirting the uppermost border of Clos des Lambrays. The village of Morey-Saint-Denis lies below, picturesque in the pale early morning light. Just as you approach the north-west corner of Clos de Tart, however, the tarmac gives way to earth and a warning sign announces a particularly steep gradient. Best wait to be allowed in the front door, I thought, opting for a cautious three-point turn.

Back down in the village, the heavy wooden doors from the street open onto a reassuringly solid cobbled courtyard. Above the finely pointed masonry, rows of vines stand like sentinels. To the south is Bonnes-Mares, to the north Clos

des Lambrays, but sloping upwards centre-stage are the 753 hectares of the Clos, imposing and majestic.

The uniqueness of Clos de Tart was recognised early. In 1855, Jules Lavalley published his *Plan Topographique* of the Côte d'Or, which became instrumental to the 1936 classification. It singled out one *Tête de Cuvée* vineyard in Morey-Saint-Denis: Clos de Tart.

Clos de Tart is one of five *grands crus* within Morey-Saint-Denis and, the entirety being in sole ownership, the village's only *grand cru monopole*. Indeed, there are only seven *grands crus monopoles* in France, five of which are in Burgundy. (The others are Romanée-Conti, La Tâche, La Romanée and La Grande Rue.)



HISTORY

Including last year's acquisition, Clos de Tart has seen only three changes of ownership in the past 800 years.

The French Revolution brought about the first and the second took place against the backdrop of the depression of the 1930s. Originally called La Forge, the vineyard we now know as Clos de Tart was acquired in 1141 by the nuns of Nôtre-Dame de Tart. The perimeter wall was likely built in the 15th century.

After six centuries of church ownership, the aftermath of the revolution of 1789 saw the vineyard acquired uncontested in 1791, in what must be one of the most significant auctions in the history of wine. The purchaser was local wine merchant Nicolas-Joseph Marey, who at the same time bought the whole of Romanée-Saint-Vivant. The entire Chambertin vineyard was also sold at the same auction.

Fast-forward 150 years and the Marey-Monge family, as it was called by that time, sold Clos de Tart to the Mommessin family. The sale price, at auction in 1932, was 400,000 francs. The Mommessins had established a successful *négociant* house in Mâcon (which was eventually sold to Boisset in the 1990s).

Following the establishment of the *appellation contrôlée* system in 1936, Clos de Tart received the region's top classification in the *grand cru* decree of 1939, at which point the brick wall was extended to include some adjoining vines. In 1965-6, an additional 0.278 hectares was added to the Domaine from Bonnes-Mares which, despite lying in the neighbouring appellation, fell within the walls of the Clos.



THE VINEYARD

Clos de Tart faces east, making it something of an anomaly in the village. The vines are planted north-south, perpendicular to the slope rather than up and down. As well as giving a unique sun exposure, this protects against erosion.

Although this is one contiguous vineyard, the soil composition is sufficiently intricate to warrant vinifying eight separate *cuvées*, from no fewer than 27 different plots. These are blended around a month before bottling. Whilst the short version is that the soils of Clos de Tart are clay-limestone – indeed you could say this about most of the Côte d'Or – the longer version is that there are three distinct geological ages present at the Clos.

The first soil type is *calcaires à entroques*, loose limestone containing fossilised marine animals. Second is white marl, a deep layer of which runs through the mid-slope section. Finally, there is a layer of very hard, compacted Premeaux limestone. The *cuvées* vinified change every year, but there is a degree of correlation with these soil types. The map below shows the origin of each of the 2016 *cuvées*. Number eight (coloured blue) has become La Forge de Tart 2016; the plots here were planted in 1999, 2005 and 2011.

THE 2016 CUVÉES



The average vine age is 60 years, with some plots containing vines of up to 100 years. The Domaine has a nursery which provides new vines when replanting is necessary.

Planting density is high: 11,000 vines per hectare on average, with the younger vines having been planted at 12,500. The ensuing competition for nutrients results in a natural brake on vigour, encouraging the roots to delve

deeper. Only the five best bunches per vine are retained during green harvesting in August.

The Clos has practised organic viticulture since 2015, with organic certification expected to be received this year, ahead of biodynamic certification in 2020. Production tends to be 23 to 30 hectolitres per hectare (hl/ha), although in 2016, it scaled the heady heights of 35 hl/ha, the Domaine's most bountiful crop since 1999.



THE CELLAR

Compared to the Domaine's intricately analytical approach to viticulture, the winemaking process is rather simple. Fermentation is carried out by natural yeasts. Some whole bunches are used, with the proportion varying in accordance with the vintage conditions; in 2016, the proportion was 60%.

Jacques gives the berries one week of pre-fermentation maceration ("but not cold, as this marks the wines..."), with fermentation taking another week, and a further week of post-fermentation maceration. Extraction is very gentle: Jacques uses the word 'infusion' to highlight the delicacy of

this process. Both *pigeage* (punching-down) and *remontage* (pumping-over) are used sparingly to aerate the grape must and extract phenolic content.

The individual *cuvées* are aged separately for 19 months in oak. An average of 80% new oak was used in 2016, with the remaining 20% being one year old. The majority of the wine is aged in 228 litre French oak barrels, although Jacques used two 500 litre vessels in 2016 as an experiment: he found they gave more tannic power and drive. Blending takes place one month before bottling, which is still done by hand.



THE 2016 GROWING SEASON

"To make bad wine from these grapes... you would have to do it on purpose!"

JACQUES DEVAUGES,
Régisseur, Clos de Tart

The frost of late April 2016 hit over 7,000 hectares across the region. It decimated the neighbouring Bonnes-Mares vineyard, with Bruno Clair's holding, just the other side of Clos de Tart's southern wall, losing almost everything. Vineyards which are rarely affected by frost, such as Chambertin, Chambertin Clos de Bèze and Le Montrachet, suffered badly in 2016. Clos de Tart, by contrast, was almost entirely unscathed.*

"So what protected Clos de Tart?", I asked. "No idea!", replied Jacques, noting that the majority of Morey-Saint-Denis had escaped, but conceding that the Clos was indeed spectacularly fortunate. (Happily, the Vosne-Romanée hillside was another lucky escapee...).

Winter 2015-16 was very warm. The almond tree on the corner of Clos de Tart and Clos des Lambrays was in flower in April. Jacques is a keen student of historical texts and remarked that a certain M. Magnien wrote in 1873 that a very warm winter had been followed by an April frost, with temperatures falling to -6°C. *Plus ça change...*

Mildew, rather than frost, was the main threat to the Clos in 2016. It rained, in Jacques' words, "all the time" during April, May and June. There were 25 days of rain in May and June alone, 40% above average, imposing huge pressure of fungal attack. As Jacques related, "I knew mildew could damage the leaves, but in 2016, it even attacked the branches, snapping off some vine shoots". On the 14th June, the Domaine "almost gave up organics"... Jacques telephoned Didier Mommessin, advising him of the dangers of continuing without recourse to synthetic sprays. M. Mommessin asked him

to call back in 20 minutes, in order to reflect. Happily, he decided to hold firm and to stay true to organics.

As a result, Jacques estimates that 15% of the potential crop was lost to mildew. This must be balanced against the impact of having to reapply for organic certification however, which would have meant restarting the three year clock and, more importantly, would have diverged from the Domaine's aim of minimal intervention.

Jacques related, "I was so concerned by late June, as we had recurrent episodes of rain followed by sun – mildew was taking hold exponentially." The soil was too humid to allow tractors in, so spraying of organic compounds had to be done by hand, with backpacks.

Flowering culminated on the 21st June, the summer solstice. In the first week of July, the sun came out, staying out for three months. "This is really what saved us... the remaining grapes were beautiful." Picking started on the same date as in 2010, the 28th September. As always, harvest took just over four days, starting with the ripest plots from the top-slope. The grapes came in at an average of 13.6% potential alcohol, with thick skins that were rich in tannin and colour. "Like a dream", according to Jacques. The yield was 35 hl/ha, the highest since 1999.

GUY SEDDON
April 2018

* Almost entirely unscathed - a small plot of vines immediately behind the Domaine buildings lost 90% of its crop to frost.

TASTING NOTE

CLOS DE TART, GRAND CRU MONOPOLE 2016

A line of delicate jasmine tea rises from the glass, then bright raspberry fruit, cocktail cherries and *crème de cassis*, with high-notes of violet perfume and crushed black pepper. Both airborne and grounded, a mesmerising nose... The palate is substantial, at once swaggeringly virile and soaringly aromatic, a profusion of succulent, tender red berries offsetting the fine tannic rigour. A wonderful buoyant freshness arcs across the palate, shaping and delineating the sweet, sucrose-laden fruit and working in tandem with the salty minerality and glints of struck iron. Clos de Tart 2016 has an average of 60% whole bunches, with 80% new oak, the remainder being one year old. It was bottled in April 2018, just after Easter.

Corney & Barrow Score 18.5-19
Recommended drinking from 2025 - 2040+

£2,240/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK
£2,250/case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

LA FORGE DE TART, PREMIER CRU, MOREY-SAINT-DENIS 2016

Intensely and invitingly red-fruited on the nose, this is open and welcoming, with cedar and rocky minerality. The palate is firm and assertive, with dark-berried *sous bois* and brambly spice. It is gratifyingly dense, with the nimble-footed elegance and freshness to wear it lightly. This, as in previous vintages, comprises the young vines of the Clos. The three constituent plots for the 2016 Forge de Tart were planted in 1999, 2005 and 2011. As for Clos de Tart 2016 itself, this has 80% new oak and 20% one year-old. It was 100% destemmed in 2016. Fewer than 3,000 bottles have been made.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5+
Recommended drinking from 2021 - 2032

£995/case of 6 bottles, in bond UK



ALLOCATION PROCESS

To order, please use the form provided or call 020 7265 2430 (London) or 01875 321 921 (Edinburgh). Please bear in mind that:

1. Clos de Tart's and Corney & Barrow's focus is on the private customer as a consumer, rather than as a speculator.
2. The wines of Clos de Tart are bought on the clear understanding that they will be stored and delivered in the UK only.
3. Should you wish to sell the wines in the future, do please offer Corney & Barrow first refusal.
4. Priority will be given to Clos de Tart's and Corney & Barrow's best, most loyal and most regular customers.

May we please have your order by 16th May 2018. Confirmation of your order will be through receipt of invoice and the wines will be put into your reserves on payment. All orders are conditional upon UK storage only. Do please speak to our sales team, who will be delighted to help you further.

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.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (eg 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential.

Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.



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