



**CORNEY &
BARROW**
INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780

DOMAINE STEPHANE MAGNIEN MOREY-SAINT-DENIS

**2018 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR
EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN SINGAPORE & HONG KONG**



INTRODUCTION

4th June 2019, 8.20am. I was parking the rental car behind the church of Morey-Saint-Denis. The team was still asleep in the back – jet lag plus an early start. Winery visits when you work for Corney & Barrow do not have a holiday feel: you are there to work.

This was the Asia team's first visit to Domaine Stephane Magnien, since we started selling Stephane's wines in Hong Kong and Singapore. There was a feeling of excitement in the air in spite of the early hour.

The cellar's entrance is on the small square to the right of the church. It is unassuming. Then you enter the vaulted underground cellar and see the whole production. Stephane was waiting for us with a big smile on his face. For the first time in three vintages, the cellar was full of barrels: the 2018 harvest had been plentiful.

Fast forward one hour and it was with a big smile on *our* faces that we were saying goodbye to Stephane, our note pads full of comments about what we had tasted from barrel, starting to plan this offer and looking forward to telling you how good these wines are. You must get behind this young producer who is becoming a reference point in Morey-Saint-Denis.

THE DOMAINE

Domaine Stephane Magnien is located in Morey-Saint-Denis. The range is very exciting, with not only Morey-Saint-Denis *villages* and *premier cru* but also some Chambolle-Musigny *villages*, *premier cru*, a Charmes-Chambertin *Grand Cru* and a Clos St Denis *Grand Cru*. There are also some regional appellations. A very complete range with 80% of the vineyards in the commune of Morey-Saint-Denis.

Founded in 1847 by Victor Magnien, the domaine's holdings cover 4.5 hectares, with an average vine age of around 50 years. There is a high proportion of Pinot Tordu, a clone of Pinot Noir producing particularly small berries.

Stephane is the fourth generation to run the estate, the family having started to make wine at the beginning of the 1900s. He is very much a one man band, doing everything. The *chai* is in the family house, dating back from the 18th century.

Jean Paul Magnien, Stephane's father, was the first to bottle the wines under the family name, rather than selling them to *negociants*. Stephane took over in 2008, which was his first solo vintage.

During the *degustation*, Stephane made a very humbling comment; this is his 10th vintage at the domaine, he feels he has a good grasp on the vineyards, yet in a vintage like 2018, he appreciates being able to ask the advice of his father, who has been around for a lot longer.

VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING

The domaine's vineyard work is carried out by hand. Strict green harvesting helps to control yields and maintain concentration. The grapes are sorted in the vineyard at harvest time. Pesticides and herbicides are avoided. Historically all the work of ploughing was done by horse although in the late '80s, small tractors were introduced. A living soil is very much a priority here, as is a deep root network.

Winemaking is traditional and minimal-intervention. All grapes are destemmed with the exception of the Aligoté. Fermentation lasts about two weeks using wild yeast, in stainless steel tanks. This is Stephane's only nod to modernism: after taking over from his father, he replaced the 50 year-old oak tanks with stainless steel ones.

Stephane looks for elegance, a sense of fruit and *terroir* expression. He does not force extraction. The reds are aged in barrel for up to two years, in "new" barrels (by which Stephane actually means one-to-five year-old barrels!) for the first year and in "used" ones afterwards. It can be inferred that new oak use is minimal! The *village* wines see 10% of "new" oak, the *premiers crus* about 20-25% and the *grands crus* about 30-35%. The wines are bottled without filtration or fining.

2018 VINTAGE NOTES

I am conscious that this is not the first vintage report of 2018 in Burgundy that you are reading, so I will stick to the essentials. Stephane explained that it was not an ordinary *millésime*. 2018 had plenty of sun and heat, a lot in fact, which was great for the maturity of the berries and potentially too much.

Because there were enough underground water reserves thanks to the wet preceding months, in the end there was enough of everything during the vintage for the domaine's wines to be balanced and integrated.

Stephane harvested a healthy crop on 6th September, in order to retain freshness and tension, a hallmark of his wines. It was an early harvest. In the cellar, the length of the fermentation will be the signature of this vintage.

Due to the ripeness and therefore the level of sugar, it took several months to finish the fermentations. Indigenous yeast started the job but in the end, Stephane used some carefully selected yeast cultures to consume all the sugar.

TASTING NOTES

COTEAUX BOURGUIGNONS 'TRADITION' PASSETOUTGRAIN 2018

Although not tasted this time, this *cuvée* is an old traditional Burgundy blend of Gamay and Pinot Noir. Typically made to express fruit aromas and freshness, we sell most of our allocation in the restaurants in Singapore and Hong Kong. If you want an easy wine to open with a simple meal, look no further, this is it.

£55/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

COTEAUX BOURGUIGNONS 'PURE PINOT' 2018

This is a 0.5 hectare holding, producing a pleasantly juicy, herbaceous-inflected early drinking style. The plot is in the Morey Village appellation and used to be blended in the Passetoutgrain cuvee. But 2016 frost ravaged so much the Gamay vineyards that Stephane decided to bottle the Pinot Noir on its own. He successfully repeated the experiment in 2017 and now again in 2018. Half is in old oak, half in stainless steel. This is crunchy and bright, red cherry, with firm honest tannins.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16+
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021–2025)

£70/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MOREY-SAINT-DENIS GRAINS FINS 2018

Made from two gravelly parcels in the *lieu-dit* Les Crais Gillon, both located towards the bottom of the slope near the road. Supple, bright red cherry fruit, with breadth and ripeness, but also with great fresh acidity. Lovely heart-on-sleeve wine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16.5
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021–2028)

£160/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MOREY-SAINT-DENIS VIEILLES VIGNES 2018

The vines here are more than 55 years old, growing on clay-heavy soils. This comes from two parcels, on either side of the *Route Nationale*. Darker fruited, with firm muscular tannins, this is a forceful wine but with more than enough finesse to pass it off. Finishes upbeat and with red berry perfume, good wine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 16.5-17
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022–2030)

£170/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY VIEILLES VIGNES 2018

This 0.26 ha holding was planted in 1902 by Stephane's grandfather, before the creation of the appellation system. Around 15% of the original plantings remain: these are ungrafted, on their own roots. It is the oldest parcel (Les Athées) in the domaine. Dense red berries, candied but in the best way, with rose petal perfume. This has a sucrosity and a flair, but it is strictly defined also, with fine, grippy tannins.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022–2030)

£205/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MOREY-SAINT-DENIS 1ER CRU AUX PETITES NOIX 2018

This is named after the walnut trees which must have grown nearby. A blend of two *premier cru* plots in the centre of the village, Les Gruenchers and Clos Baulet, both of which have a high clay content, making for a powerful style of wine, albeit with good approachability and lovely bright red berry fruit. It was 15-20% whole bunch vinified in 2018, the only wine which gets this treatment, which Stephane commented gives a strawberry-fruited character and tempers the natural muscle. Last year, I called this a crowd pleaser; it is more serious than that in 2018, recommended.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022–2030+)

£275/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MOREY-SAINT-DENIS 1ER CRU LES FACONNIERES 2018

This is a 0.6 hectare plot situated below Clos de la Roche. The “grandfather of the Morey Grains Fins”, according to Stephane. There are poor, dusty soils here, on which are planted vines with an average of 45 years. Aromatic – dark rocky perfume – and with a lovely elegance to the palate, this is a supremely elegant wine. Fine, grippy tannins lend definition.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5-18
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023–2030+)

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

MOREY-SAINT-DENIS PREMIER CRU 'LES MONTS-LUISANTS' 2018

Situated above Clos de la Roche Grand Cru, almost at the forest’s edge, with sandier soils, giving small *millerand* berries and consequently more body and structure. From a plot of 13 acres, Stephane made 1.5 barrel in 2018. In difficult year, the harvest goes into the Petites Noix. You feel some similarities with the *premier cru* Faconnieres, but being from a cooler site, the wine is naturally shyer. The palate is lean, nervy and linear. 15% of whole bunch in 2018 softens the masculine side. A hard wine to catch.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17-17.5
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023–2030+)

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY 1ER CRU LES SENTIERS 2018

This is a 0.4 hectare holding, situated on the *Route des Grands Crus*, beneath Bonnes Mares. The vines have an average of 65 years. Rich, dense redcurrant and raspberry fruit, with fruit-coated grippy tannins. This is a big wine, muscular and powerful, finishing with a grapefruited lift. “This is the most floral wine of the domaine”, words from the winemaker himself!

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022–2032)

£310/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CLOS SAINT-DENIS GRAND CRU 2018

The vineyard from which the village of Morey-Saint-Denis takes its name, Clos-Saint-Denis has a subsoil of friable limestone. The domaine has 0.3ha. The red-fruited finesse really comes to the fore this vintage, with a touch of salinity and that trademark pretty red berry perfume. In Stephane’s words, “The *grand cru* that looks most like Chambolle – aristocratic, class.” This receives 36 months of oak ageing, as does the Charmes-Chambertin.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2025–2038)

£620/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CHARMES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU 2018

The tiny 0.19 hectare holdings here are in fact located in Mazoyeres-Chambertin, although this has always been labelled as a Charmes, as is permitted. The average vine age here is 35 years old. Planted on clay-limestone subsoil. Dark and pleasantly plush on the mid-palate, this has a stunning mineral focus and a texture which is sustained through to a long, perfumed finish. Stephane commented that it is an especially “grand” *grand cru* wine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5++
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2025–2038)

£620/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

TO ORDER

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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 (e.g. 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.