

Burghound.com 88 October 2012, Allen Meadow's

Agnes Dewé-de-Launay describes 2010 as a “vintage that produced tender and fruity wines of concentration and depth. We had very tiny yields due to the poor flowering and a lousy summer didn't help matters any. By contrast it would be hard to imagine a better September. We began picking on the 23rd of September and it was necessary to do a moderate amount of sorting though mainly for under ripe rather than damaged fruit. Potential alcohols surprised me somewhat as they were strong at between 12.5 and 13%. I did a full 4 week *cuvaison* and both fermentations went off with no issues to speak of. I like the 2010s a lot and while they are very different than the riper '09s, I actually think that they're more typical.” The bottled '09s and '08s are terrific and well worth your attention. In particular the '08s have turned out exceptionally well, in part because de-Launay decided against adding in press wine. (Rosenthal Wine Merchant, www.madrose.com, Shekomeko, NY; Direct Wine, www.directwine.co.uk, Berkmann Wine Cellars, www.berkmann.co.uk, McKinley Vintners, www.mckinleyvintners.co.uk, all UK).

Reds:

2010 Mercurey “Les Saumonts”: (the vineyard sits high on the hill and is the most northerly of all the Mercurey 1ers). This is compositionally similar to the Mercurey 1er except that in this case there is a bit more refinement. The rich, round and relatively accessible flavors are utterly delicious while displaying a discreet hint of the *sauvage* on the balanced and solidly persistent finish. Lovely and understated. (89-91)/2016+

2010 Mercurey “Les Veleys”: Here the nose is much more restrained compared to that of the Saumonts with a brooding and intensely earthy nose of otherwise fresh, cool and elegant red pinot fruit aromas. There is good punch to the relatively round, supple and delicious flavors that don't possess the mineral-drive of the Clos du Château but it's both longer and a bit more complex, at least at this very early stage. (90-92)/2017+

2010 Mercurey “Clos du Château de Montaigu”: This is also quite reserved and only aggressive swirling coaxes the nose to reveal notes of wild raspberry and cherries. The serious, concentrated and intensely mineral-driven medium weight flavors possess a refined mouth feel on the tension-infused and solidly persistent finish. I like the sense of harmony and this very much feels like a complete wine. (90-92)/2017+

2009 Mercurey “Clos du Château de Montaigu”: In contrast to the aromatic expressiveness of the prior wines this is quite reserved though there is lovely complexity to the pure and ripe red berry fruit liqueur, spice and warm earth nuances. The lush yet firm middle weight flavors possess fine detail and punch on the wonderfully long finish that is notably firm. I should mention that this also has more acidity than most '09s which imparts a sense of freshness and vibrancy. 92/2017+

2008 Mercurey “Les Veleys”: This is also quite ripe but the aromatic profile is, not surprisingly, very different from that presented by its '09 counterpart with its pure, cool and airy red pinot fruit, plum, earth and violet aromas. The attractively textured, precise and solidly mineral-driven flavors culminate in a mouth coating, detailed and impressively persistent finish. This needs a few years but should be excellent once it sheds some of its tannic shell. 91/2016+

2008 Mercurey “Clos du Château de Montaigu”: Despite the presence of a hint of the *sauvage* this is also quite aromatically elegant as the very fresh red pinot fruit, earth and stone notes are pure and appealingly complex. There is fine detail to the racy, intense and linear middle weight flavors that display good focus and persistence on the solidly powerful, moderately firm and mildly austere finish. This beautifully well-balanced effort will also require a few more years in the cellar. 91/2016+