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Domaine Vincent & François Jouard, Chassagne-Montrachet

You should always appreciate Burgundy winemakers who agree to meet pesky writers like me at 9.00am on a Saturday meeting, when they ought to be lying in bed with a flaky croissant and “Le Monde”. Still, Francois Jouard was there at his winery opposite the church in Chassagne, not far from Pierre-Yves Colin, ready to show me through his 2012. These were picked from 22 September and delivered a decent 30 hectoliters per hectare – still below average but not as bad as some other producers. These were a very respectable set of Chassagne wines that deliver plenty of craftsmanship for the price. I look forward to tasting further vintages.

Chassagne-Montrachet Villages 2012. (87-89 pts)

The 2012 Chassagne-Montrachet Village comes from three parcels of 40 to 50-year old vines totaling around 3.5-hectares that is raised in 33% new oak. The nose is quite pure, unfurling to reveal pure lime flower and Granny Smith apple scents. That oak is nicely assimilated here. The palate is very spicy on the entry with appreciable dry extract for a village cru, rendering this a feisty wine with plenty of depth on the long sour lemon-tinged finish.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru “Les Champs Gain” 2012. (88-90 pts)

The 2012 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Champs-Gain comes from a single parcel of 0.54-hectares planted in 1983 and 1959. Quite deep in color, the nose comes at you with ripe Cornice pear and dewy green apples, lemon thyme emerging from underneath. The palate is well balanced with a spicy entry. There is plenty of dry extract here lending this weight and persistency in the mouth, hints of ginger interlacing the vibrant finish. Very fine.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru “La Maltroie” 2012. (89-91 pts)

The 2012 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Maltroie comes from three plantings of vine in 1952, 1959 and 1960 totaling 0.49-hectares. It displays more roundness on the nose compared to the Les Champs-Gain, with an attractive sea spray element. The palate is crisp and taut with a fine line of acidity and good mineralite towards the finish. Again, this is a feisty, spicy Chassagne with a subtle Asian influence. I can imagine pouring this at a Thai or Japanese restaurant. Excellent.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Morgeot “Les Fairendes” 2012. (92-94 pts)

The 2012 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Morgeot “Les Fairendes” comes from the single lieu-dit: around 0.97-hectares planted in the 1930s. It has fine delineation on the nose: crisp lemon peel and orange scents intermingling with dried yellow flowers – delicate, dainty. The palate is very well balanced with a great sense of tension and poise, struck through with great nervosité that builds towards a refined, lightly spice-tinged finish. One of the best from the domaine this year.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Chaumées “Clos de la Truffière” 2012. (92-94 pts)

The 2012 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Chaumées “Clos de la Truffière” comes from a 0.71-hectare parcel on shallow soils, the oldest vines planted in the 1950s. It has a fragrant, rocky bouquet with scents of citrus peel, dried honey and a dash of spice, all gradually unfolding in the glass (indeed, this needs more coaxing than the other crus.) The palate is very harmonious on the entry, smooth with just a hint of viscosity. It builds in the mouth with orange zest and dried mango towards a delicately spiced finish: lemongrass and a touch of fish oil, before fanning out on the persistent finish. This is very composed and just brimming over with flavor.

Batard-Montrachet Grand Cru 2012. (90-92 pts)

The 2012 Batard-Montrachet Grand Cru comes from two parcels totaling just 0.12-hectares planted in the 1940s and 1960s on the Chassagne side. The 1½ barrels are both new. It has a delicate, refined bouquet that like so many Batard-Montrachets in their youth, is reticent and coy. The palate is crisp and citrus driven: green lemon, a touch of dried quince and lemongrass, a fine seam of acidity and very good weight on the finish. Whilst I am not totally convinced that I would choose this over the excellent premier crus from Jouard, this is a very fine, flavor-packed Batard-Montrachet that deserves two or three years in bottle.