



## **Handford Wines Burgundy En Primeur 2013**

**James Handford MW and Greg Sherwood MW - January 2015**

### **Jean Chauvenet, Nuits Saint Georges**

Jean's cellars are just off the main road. Fork right as you go north out of town and you will be treated to some of the best in town. Vineyard holdings are relatively large here but in Bousselets, Vaucrains and Perrieres, Jean has some of the finest 1er Cru vineyards in the Cotes de Nuits. Truly outstanding in recent years such as 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Son in law Christophe Drag is one of the biggest movers in quality terms. He harvests into very small crates and so cleaner and less damaged fruit can be moved directly into the fermentation vats without the need of auger or pump. Christophe's key notes in 2013 were the value of the well drained sites in shrugging off the early rains and a very gentle pigeage or tapotage at fermentation. (these are the ways of mixing the skins and juice to optimise extraction. Both are very gentle but, in 2013, he went for even more careful maceration). He still got some rich colour for the vintage. Wines are not filtered and rarely fined here; Christophe adds a small amount of pectic enzyme that allows for natural settling prior to the final racking from barrel. Stunning range and the Vaucrains is world beater.

### **Bourgogne Pinot Noir 2013**

Largely from the very carefully tended vines around Jean Chauvenet's house on the northern edge of the village. As is often the case here, the depth of colour is note worthy. There is a great combination of power and harmony of plum and raspberry fruit. A lively wine to introduce a fantastic range. 2015 to 2107

### **Nuits Saint Georges 'les 6 pieces' 2013**

From six well chosen sites, with vines aged no younger than 25 years, this is an exceptional glass of Burgundy. There are redcurrants, raspberry, black cherry and hints of sweet spice all wrapped up in a delicate envelope of fine acid and a hint of ripe tannin. There a touch of cream on the finish too. The level of quality is way above that indicated by the price. 2015 to 2019

### **Nuits Saint Georges 2013**

We would usually offer only one of these two Nuits, but they are so remarkable in 2013 that we couldn't resist buying both! Fruit comes from 3 climats, Allots, Charmottes and St Julien. All are iron rich and with gravel or sand to give good drainage. They come together to yield a deeply coloured, chewy, bramble fruit red with a tense, mineral side. There is more complexity to come. These wines are reminiscent of the great 2010 vintage. 2017 to 2023

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Argillas 2013**

A south facing vineyard which is more expressive and more typical of a wine at this stage. Argillas has power and energy stored in a taught mid palate. The plum and black cherry fruits aren't so evident now as tannins and acids dominate. Great balance and persistence. An ugly duckling. 2020 to 2028

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Bouselots 2013**

Just around the corner from Argillas, and often expressing warm characters, this is more lifted and broad with crunchy tannins, a garnish of honeycomb and creme fraiche to the ripe, but tense, red fruits. Exceptional length of flavour. 2019 to 2028

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Damodes 2013**

One of the best known vineyards and deservedly so. These vines were planted by the young Jean Chauvenet and his father in 1953 and 1954. Super ripe, deep and with rounded blackberry, even a touch of cassis, cinammon and liquorice spice. A lush burgundy that seems to completely defy the vintage character and will be difficult to resist in its youth. 2018 to 2027

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Rue de Chaux 2013**

Moving south of town these wines tend to be a little denser and slightly softer. There are only 2 barrels of this one (normally 4 or 5). Dense and deep in appearance and with great pressure on the palate. At final tasting this was a little too tight and reduced to judge but, strangely, it had been the most open and playful of the 1er Crus here in 2014. A dark horse, likely to age very well. 2021 to 2029

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Poulettes 2013**

So rare it should be called 'Dents de Poulettes'. Like the Damodes it is beautifully rounded, open and easy to drink young. The sheer concentration alone will demand some cellaring but there is both skeleton and stuffing beneath these plump breasted chickens. 2019 to 2028.

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Perrieres 2013**

The final two need little introduction; they are two of the greatest 1er Cru in Burgundy. Again quite different, this emphasizes the more abrasive, stones and mineral aspect of Nuits. It has a little of everything; red and black fruits, soft spice, vibrant acids and crunchy, red apple skin tannin. The length and balance seems the most perfect in the range. It's a smaller version of the great Vaucrains. . Likely to be limited as Christophe has most demand for this one. 2022 to 2031

### **Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Vaucrains 2013**

This should surely be considered for Grand Cru status; the politics though are that there are just a handful of local owners in les Saint Georges, including the Hospices, but, at neighbouring Vaucrains, there are 22, and those owners are more dispersed throughout the region. Christophe has 42 ares that usually produce a healthy 8 barrels. The wine itself is truly exceptional and the closest 1er Cru to 100 points for me ... a blockbuster! Firm tannins and bright acids enshrine a feast of meaty red fruits, hints of yeast and dusty mineral notes. Raw power that will melt together in time. Ten years in the cellar will reap dividends. It's a classic. 2025 to 2036.