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The ultimate Burgundy reference

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Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur (Volnay)

2015 Beaune “Cents Vignes” 1er red 92

2015 Bourgogne red 87

2015 Bourgogne – Passe Tout Grains “La Grange du Duc” red 86

2015 Volnay red 89

2015 Volnay “Les Aussy” 1er red 90

2015 Volnay “Les Caillerets” 1er red 89

2015 Volnay “Les Champans” 1er red 90

2015 Volnay “Les Mitans” 1er red 91

2015 Volnay “Les Pitures” 1er red 91

2015 Volnay “Les Taillepieds” 1er red 89

François Bitouzet said that 2015 gave him “some of the cleanest fruit that I have ever seen; in fact I used very little sulfur as the lees were super clean. Aside from some really strong early season oidium pressure, the growing season was relatively straight forward. I began picking on the 2nd of September with my chardonnay and then moved to harvest the Taillepieds as it’s always the most precocious of my pinot vineyards. The potential alcohols came in between 12 and 13.5% and thus nothing was chaptalized. Yields though were another story and particularly so in pinot. As to the wines, they’re clearly unusually ripe and they present another style compared to what we produced in 2012, 2013 and 2014.” Bitouzet noted that he bottled his reds in December 2016. I found that the quality of these 2015s to be very good overall though a few of them displayed some *surmaturité*. While not a fault per se, some may find a few of the wines to lack the freshness of a more classically styled vintage. (Rosenthal Wine Merchant, www.madrose.com, NY, USA; Direct Wine, www.directwine.co.uk and McKinley Vintners, www.mckinleyvintners.co.uk, both UK). **Burghound.com April 2017 29**

2015 Bourgogne – Passe Tout Grains “La Grange du Duc”: (30% gamay). A ripe, fresh and pepper-inflected nose displays primarily dark currant and earth scents. There is fine richness to the unusually full-bodied flavors that manage to avoid overt rusticity on the delicious finale. This could easily be enjoyed upon release yet it has enough stuffing to reward a year or so of bottle age. 86/2018+

2015 Bourgogne: A very mild trace of reduction is not enough to completely mask the brooding and notably ripe aromas of plum, dark berries and earth. The middle weight flavors possess a slightly finer mouth feel that extends to the delicious and lingering finish that exhibits hints of bitter cherry and warmth. This is a fine example of the *appellation* and would make a good choice for an inexpensive house red. 87/2019+

2015 Volnay: (from several parcels that include Ez Echards, Les Aussy and Les Petits Gamets). This also displays just enough reduction to warrant a thorough aeration because in this case it’s enough to mute the fruit. Otherwise there is excellent volume to the rich and velvet-textured flavors that possess a rounded, even lush mouth feel, all wrapped in a sappy and lightly mineral-inflected finish. This is not as precise as it usually is and there is a touch of warmth but the fine depth and persistence compensate for this. Worth considering. 89/2021+

2015 Volnay “Les Aussy”: There is a trace of prune character to the liqueur-like aromas of plum, spice and earth. This is fresher in the mouth as the flavors offer good energy and detail that continues onto the balanced, persistent and relatively fine finale. This is one of those wines where the message sent by the nose isn’t confirmed by the palate in the sense that it’s riper than the refined palate impression would suggest. 90/2022+

2015 Volnay “Les Mitans”: (this will be commercialized exclusively in the US). The pretty, layered and ripe aromas of various red berries, spice and violets are slightly fresher. There is an even finer mouth feel to the lacy and discreetly mineral-inflected flavors that deliver fine length on the moderately structured finale where once again a hint of bitter cherry can be found. This is lovely and while it’s certainly ripe, it remains refreshing. 91/2023+

2015 Beaune “Cents Vignes”: This is fresher still with its pretty nose that blends red currant and cherry aromas with those of anise and violet. There is a lovely sense of energy to the beautifully well-detailed medium weight flavors that possess a caressing feel to the mid-palate that tightens up materially on the firm, serious and mildly austere finish. This beauty should amply reward up to a decade of cellaring. Recommended. 92/2023+

2015 Volnay “Les Taillepieds”: A pungent nose consists mostly of reduction and whiffs of prune. The wonderfully refined and precise middle weight flavors possess first-rate complexity and I very much like the sense of class on the balanced finish. Like several of the wines in the range, this isn't easy to assess as the nose is *surmature* yet there are other attributes that may, depending on your preferences, make up for that. Note that this is built-to-age though be aware that the nose will likely always display a mild lack of freshness. 89/2027+

2015 Volnay “Les Caillerets”: Here too there is a hint of prune on the spicy and very ripe aromas that include hints of mocha and smoke. Like the Taillepieds there is much better freshness and vibrancy in the mouth where the abundant dry extract buffers the very firm tannins on the austere and very serious finale. Once again, the nose is the weak point here yet the palate impression is quite attractive. 89/2027+

2015 Volnay “Les Champans”: Once again there is just enough prune character to detract mildly from the overtly ripe nose that consists of liqueur-like red berry fruit, game and earth scents. The sleek, intense and lightly mineral-inflected middle weight flavors culminate in a firm, powerful and very structured and beautifully persistent finish. I would repeat here what I suggest for the Taillepieds and Caillerets in that I can't get excited about the nose yet there is quite simply terrific underlying material on the palate and this should live for a very long time. How fresh this will be when it gets there though is an open question that you should consider. 90/2030+

2015 Volnay “Les Pitures”: (from 35+ year old vines). In the same fashion as the several of the prior wines there is a touch of prune present though in this case it is quite subtle and doesn't fight with the aromas of violet, earth, licorice and dark berries. There is excellent size, weight, richness and power to the big-bodied and concentrated flavors that for all the punch manage to remain refined on the balanced and hugely long finish. Like the Champans this is a big and very structured wine that, because of the slightly fresher nose, gives me a bit more confidence for its longer-term prospects. 91/2030+