

Burgundy-Report

Bitouzet-Prieur – 2017



Tasted with François Bitouzet, in Volnay, 26 October 2018.

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I'd always assumed that this domaine was more white than red, hence positioned in this report – actually it's more red – so next time in the red report!

François on 2018:

“Both 2018 and 2017 were early years – two premature babies in a row – but both are in good shape, though the 18 is currently more fragile. The sugars have taken a little while to ferment, some malos too – 2017 was much easier and less complicated. There was only about 3 days difference in harvesting dates, and I'm happy with the

choice of dates in both cases. We had small surprises with the degrees in 2018 – 12.8-13.6° – later (3 days) analysis showed a bit more than we had expected. There is less red in 2018 than 2017 but it's the reverse for the whites. Nice big grapes in 2017, less so in 2018. In 2017 was a big rain around harvest time – 31st-1st – I'm not convinced that it was beneficial I think most of it was lost to the clay and the weeds – more of a shower for the vines than anything that physically changed them or the grapes.”

François on 2017:

“2017 – it's easy to forget as we were so focused on the later weather, but we shouldn't forget that there was frost again, we saved a lot with smoke maybe 70% – it's empirical, not scientific. There was an attack of mildew but the higher not lower leaves of the vines – after which a big rain at the end of June/start of July.”

The wines...

For some of the 'lower' wines François is using a technical cork – an amalgam in the middle with layers of cork on either side – *“But I don't like DIAM”* he says.

There's a light austerity to the wines today bodes well but suggests patience, but there is clarity and definition here and no lack of material in the glass – much to wait for! I find the reds engaging, fresh and concentrated – they are definitely worth your time!

2017 Bourgogne Chardonnay

Bottled 24 Aug. Two parcels – moin piorrier et herbes in Meursault

A modest nose with some freshness. Hmm, saline, fresh, full – fine volume. Long – Very fine – you can add it to the list of excellent Bourgognes in 2017.

2017 Meursault Les Corbins

From below Cromin towards Volnay, under Les Plures (Santenots). Racked in August, not fined – that will be in another week. Bottling mid-February.

A little more intensity of fresh ripe yellow fruit, slowly growing with a good ginger spice. Wider, fresher, fine volume and energy, a subtle reduction, this is excellent and mineral long too.

2017 Meursault Clos du Cromin

A real clos of 11 hectares. The parcel in the high section near Gaunoux and Leroy.

A little more aromatic density here – some herb too. Bigger, fresher, again a hint of reduction, faint CO₂ more mineral and herbed. More austere today but with more finishing power. This to wait for but will be very good.

2017 Meursault 1er Santenots

From Santenots Blanc near Volnay Caillerets.

A nose with a little reduction but also an overall volume of freshness too. A little more richness of flavour but volume and very fine texture too. Marked with a little fumé oak – but one new barrel in 3. This is more relaxed and concentrated – very nice lines – also wait 2-3 years.

2017 Puligny-Montrachet Les Levrons

Wide, animatedly fresh, yellow citrus – highly attractive. Mineral, fine scale, modest richness but anyway great texture. Open tasty – really quite delicious without overt sweetness. Fine finish. Excellent.

2017 Meursault 1er Les Charmes

2 parcels one right at the top with old vines just across the road from Perrières. The other from the bottom of the vineyard – both about the same size but vinified separately blending when brought into tank.

Not so wide, freshness of fine citrus above – much more impressive depth of aroma. A hint of reduction, but the shape, the form of this is super – not fat but still concentrated, alive. Love this – bravo!

2017 Meursault 1er Les Perrières

Ooh – a big, vibrant nose – ripeness of lemon, never too much. Volume again, a hint more richness, but there's energy, complexity – more overt complexity – and layers of finishing flavour. The finish is really at another level. Bravo!

Les Rouges...

2017 Bourgogne Pinot Noir

From the commune of Meursault but on the limit with Volnay. Bottled in August

Depth of colour. Wide, a little herb but a very attractive berry fruit below too. Round, layered, fine textured, delicious – not showing the herb of the nose. Composed and weighted. Modest freshness but today delicious.

All the following are still assembled in tank:

201/ Volnay

3 lieu-dits: Echards, Les Aussy, and Petits Gamets – essentially from bottom slopes below Roncerets. This bottled week after Christmas

A tight, clenched, nose. More open in the mouth with vibrant flavour – more depth to the flavour with a touch of associated structure too. Melting in the finish. Very good!

2017 Volnay 1er Les Aussy

Aussy is usually labelled Ronceret today. 0.5 ha here, half planted in 1998, the other half in 1948.

A deep, faintly herbed, nose. A little more volume, more open and airy, there's structure to be patient with, slightly astringent but no grain from the tannin. Delicate, beautiful flavour melting from the core – ooh that's good – also wait at least a couple of years for this. Super finish.

2017 Volnay 1er Mitans

This only sold by the domaine in the US (Rosenthal), it was once vinified with the villages as there's only two barrels worth.

Good depth of colour. A bigger nose, spiced, herbed today. Good, full volume in the mouth, easier to start vs the Aussy, despite more structure, more weighted flavour, more spiced, a drag of tannin in the finish. Fuller, impressive, more powerful, indeed super wine, that also needs a couple of years to mellow... Super!

2017 Volnay 1er Taillepieds

This Taillepieds has 3 ages of vines. One part replanted in 1998. Pruned to a long baguette. Francois' favourite cuvée this year.

The same herby, spice but with more freshness and volume, subtle dark fruit notes too. Hmm, structural but richer depth of texture, finer texture, more depth of flavour – darker fruit of more layers. Clearly the daddy of these wines, but today I'd take the special elegance of the Aussy – probably not in 10 years time though. Super!

2017 Volnay 1er Clos des Chênes

2 parcels, one on a brown soil in the middle, and the other higher and more white. Roughly 0.75 ha.

Depth but plenty of freshness to the dark fruit too. Big, complex, energetic, alive – ooh – the energy is super impressive here. Big, talkative highly impressive wine here – nothing subtle But a wine you cannot ignore with its fireworks. Excellent.

2017 Volnay 1er Caillerets

Dessus, planted in 1983. About 0.25 ha – just one new barrel but 500 litres.

Hmm, there's some colour here. A rounder, silkier, dark-fruited nose. Again very silky, depth, mobile flavour, a touch of tannin. This is luxuriously fruited, and quite complex. I like it a lot. Excellent, certainly more flattering, more seductive wine today. Mineral and interestingly finishing – yes!

2017 Volnay 1er Pitures

Almost 1 ha north after the Clos des Ducs, the only Volnay of the domaine on this side of the village. More grey and white clay here. Had some sulfur this week...

Good colour again. A deep, darker-fruited nose – inviting. Ouf – here is volume and concentration – plenty of energy again too. Modestly tannic, depth, concentration a freshness that is super engaging – ooh – I Like this very much – another excellent win