



Handford Wines Burgundy En Primeur 2017

Christian Clerget, Vougeot

The first time I met Christian he was in a hurry to catch a plane to Nepal and climb the 7th or 8th highest peak in the world. In November he's found another mountain to summit, a bit closer to home I think. Fortunately his wife Isabelle and daughter Justine are equal parts of a wonderful family who strive to express what their vineyards offer. As Christian says, when he's there, 'don't try to cheat the vines'. These are very much in the elegant, feminine and silky style and 2017 is outstanding. Clerget is now a domaine of supreme quality.

Vosne Romanee 'les Violettes' 2017

Aaaaah ... so cool and fresh with its lush and super ripe bramble fruit generosity and a touch of cream on the finish. Fit for a queen and impossible to resist, even before bottling! 2019 to 2026

Chambolle Musigny 2017

What little of these wonderful Chambolles we could get in 2016 have possibly been trumped by the most elegant and energetic duo in 2017. The sheer length of flavour will bowl you over as layers of soft fruit, silky acid and tannin excite the palate. A super supple red with such feminine touch that daughter Justine must have had more than a small hand in this! 2019 to 2025

Chambolle Musigny 2017 1er Cru les Charmes

As in 2016 there is just the perfect ripeness here, no mushy over-ripeness or harsh green character. A little more wild fruit and fine acid on a nervous start that explodes with ripe fruit and energy after a few seconds in the mouth. Charming. 2023 to 2030

Vougeot 1er Cru les Petits Vougeots 2017

Although the Clergets have a little Echezeaux, this is the flagship wine. 5 generations have worked this land which is a stones throw from their house in the village. It lies just north east of the road that comes in from the Chateau du Clos Vougeot. There is more vigour and a savoury note to the 2017. It's a mammoth, mineral red but with underlying delicacy. Long and balanced, despite the contrasting forces at work here. 2025 to 2033

Echezeaux 2017

There are 17 barrels in 2017; more than 5 of the past 6 vintages put together, so another allocation for us. This is a truly memorable and collectable red that sits with the very best in this vintage, or any other. 2028 to 2039



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Georges Lignier, Morey Saint Denis

I met Georges at a village tasting in 1994. His 1993 Bonnes Mares was the best of his extensive range and the star of the day. In good vintages, the Grand Crus are among the best in the region. Fermentation is allowed to run naturally resulting in high extract of both colour and flavour. Georges matures his best reds in 50% new oak. George's nephew from Volnay, Benoit Stehly is usually found in one of the 100 parcels making up 16 hectares of vines. Along with Jean Marc Millot, Lignier has been earmarked by press and collectors as one to grab. There's a new cuvee of blended Morey 1er Cru in 2017.

Morey Saint Denis 2017

Since the last offer we've been lucky enough to try some older versions and happy to report that they are a big success, especially at 3 to 6 years old (2012 and 2014 are particularly good now). There's an inviting mix of loganberry, strawberry and rhubarb with a hint of hops ... not a common descriptor in these, or any parts. Approachable and leaves you wanting more. Lovely. 2020 to 2024

Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru 2017

A new addition in 2017 shows the poise and balance I would expect from a merger of 1er Cru vineyards. Raspberry and rhubarb crumble with in a delicate envelope of fine acid and ripe tannin. Superb. 2020 to 2025

Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru Clos des Ormes 2017

Though one of the larger 1er Cru, this is wonderfully situated on the road out of Gevrey, immediately to the north of the great Grand Crus. This year's offering seems to be a good old fashioned, grainy tannined red with deep colour and flavours. Behind that structured facade are more ethereal, rose hip and cranberry fruits waiting to come to the fore. 2022 to 2029

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru les Combottes 2017

Sandwiched between Grand Crus, this always shows an extraordinary fullness and depth, often the result of smaller berry size and so lower yields. It's a big, black monster of a wine and stands out in a vintage that seems more one of fineness and femininity. Black cherry and chocolate, redcurrant and tea leaf; unusual juxtapositions, but that's what this unique piece of land gives. A wine with a difference. 2024 to 2032

Clos Saint Denis 2017

Being exposed to the drying north winds fruit is often more delicate, but always clean and with mineral notes. So, like the Morey villages, this is more delicate red/plum in colour but star bright. The 2017 was first into the winery; for the moment that has left it with a sappy and reductive attack that makes it tricky to taste from barrel. Underneath all that there are stacks of supple strawberry and raspberry fruit with a stripe of clean vanilla running through the glass. A great en Primeur wine that will need 4 or 5 years to flower. 2025 to 2033

Clos de la Roche 2017

A small reduction in yield due to hail damage has focussed the concentration ripe plum and red berry. There are crunchy, firm acids and truck loads of that tension that so often seems to define a super premium, young wine these days. Hints of vanilla and sweet sandalwood on the finish. Very fine. 2023 to 2033.

Bonnes Mares 2017

A little under one third of a hectare produces 4 barrels (1200 bottles). As well as the one new cask there is as much as 30% of whole bunch fermentation here; a small increase on a change that brought Benoit great success in the previous vintage. Very serious, with brooding red fruits and, though the iron rich soils have more in common with the softer Morey reds, there is classic, Gevrey style lift and energy. 2025 to 2035



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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 Boussselots, 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, 2011, 2015 and 2016. 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. Almost all the fruit was destemmed and there is a cool pre-fermentation maceration for 5 to 6 days. There are two 1er Cru vineyards north of town and two south. As the village wine incorporates some of the 1er Cru and finer village vineyards it is a very good buy for drinking in 2 or 3 years. The 2016 is magical now.

Nuits Saint Georges 2017

A great red for the medium term. We've been trying the 2016 which is delicious; fine now and for a few years yet. Fruit comes from 4 climats: Alliotics, Charmottes, St Jacques and St Julien. All but St Jacques are iron rich and with gravel or sand to give good drainage. The St Jacques is chalky and with mean soils. Bright and dense in appearance with just the perfect ripeness and balance of cranberry and rose petal. As well as such beauty, there is a certain fragility but plenty of richness on the finish. An outstanding village wine. 2020 to 2024

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Argillas 2017

A south facing vineyard with rows planted east to west to reduce mid day sun burn. So there are weighty and chewy layers of red fruit with a touch of savoury too. More lifted, refined acids and silky tannin than in 2016, but equally inviting. 2024 to 2030.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Damodes 2017

From high up on the north side of the village the Damodes 2017, like Argillas, shows chiselled, red fruits with perky acidity and attractive aromatics. These two from north of the village are distinctive and desirable, the fingerprint of their vineyard qualities trumping the generic Nuits style. 2024 to 2031.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Bouselots 2017

Still north of the villages but sheltered, and a little lower down the hill. Soils are more clay and, in hot, dry summers, berries tend to be smaller and more concentrated. So here is something else very different; blacker, brooding fruits with a hint of coolness on the finish. 2025 to 2032.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Perrieres 2017

It's great to see the southern Nuits sites back on form after such devastating frosts in 2016. The super gentle maceration and pigeage minds me of the delicacy of operations in places such as le Pin and Haut Brion. The result is the softest, most enticing of fruit compote balanced by the most breathtaking tension and energy. 2024 to 2024

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Vaucrains 2017

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 produce a healthy 8 barrels. Despite very low yields the 2016 may prove to be the best Vaucrains ever; 2017 is not far behind with plenty of fruit layers, rich damson and jellied, black fruit compote. It's a little on the wild side with its myrtle and blueberry notes. Exceptional. 2026 to 2035



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Philippe Cheron, Nuits Saint Georges

Philippe Cheron lost his long time management role at Domaine Belland following the sale of the business. He must have been chuffed to learn that his grandfather, Paul Misset, purchased vineyard land in Clos Vougeot, Vosne Romanee and Chambolle Musigny in the 1930s and 1950s and the leases had finally expired. There are 1.4 hectares in Clos Vougeot, split 50/50 between the high and low part; a stunning lieu dit above Richebourg in Vosne and 12 tiny parcels in Chambolle. With gentle handling, only a little de-stemming, cool settling, no fining and rarely any filtration, Philippe is going for a simple and natural style. It's wonderful to watch the development of a grower so determined to express wonderful fruit. He is now fully organic.

Vosne Romanee les Barreaux 2017

This is the most heavenly situation. Just under the trees and looking down over Richebourg and Romanee Saint Vivant to the right and, to the left, over the great 1er Crus of Beaumonts and Suchots towards Echezeaux and Clos Vougeot. There are only 3 growers to share a little over 3 hectares (one other being Anne Gros); quite a picnic spot! The wine feels homely, cuddly, warming but with plenty of Philippe's hallmark purity and clarity. 2020 to 2026.

Chambolle Musigny '40 Ouvrees' 2017

A great comeback following the 2016 catastrophe that saw these Chambolle vineyards almost completely devastated by the April frost. This will need 3 or 4 years to develop its natural Chambolle charm. It oozes purity, tension and a clean, ripe fruit finish. 2022 to 2026

Chambolle Musigny 'Clos de l'Orme' 2017

Bordering the 1er Cru les Charmes, this sits on a gentle, well drained slope, made up of a thick layer of limestone scree from the Chambolle valley. It's a dry and mean patch of land that yields a ripe but sturdy and gripping red. These edges do round off to mature into a perfectly formed Chambolle with a few years in the cellar. This has all the qualities of its neighbouring 1er Cru. 2024 to 2029.