

DOMAINE BITOUZET-PRIEUR (VOLNAY)

2017 Volnay "Les Aussy" 1er red 89
2017 Volnay "Les Caillerets" 1er red 92
2017 Volnay "Clos des Chênes" 1er red 93
2017 Volnay "Les Mitans" 1er red 91
2017 Volnay "Les Pitures" 1er red 91
2017 Volnay "Les Taillepieds" 1er red 90

When I tasted the Bitouzet 2017s in February I found aromas that resembled barnyard and/or Brett-like aromas primarily in the unbottled wines. François Bitouzet was kind enough to invite me to retaste the now bottled reds and I'm glad that he did because they basically all showed markedly better. Such is the difficulties sometimes in tasting wines that have not completely finished their *élevage* because it's impossible to know whether they're just going through a phase. (Rosenthal Wine Merchant, www.madrose.com, NY, USA; Berry Brothers & Rudd, www.bbr.com, UK; SAQ, www.saq.com, Canada; Jebesen Beverage Co., www.jebesen.com, China/Hong Kong, Grand Millésime Wine, www.grandmillesime.com.au, Australia).

2017 Volnay "Les Aussy": A pretty and moderately deeply pitched nose of various red berries, plum, violet and spice slides into attractively energetic, detailed and mineral-inflected flavors that terminate in a firm and youthfully austere finale. This ever-so-mildly warm effort is sufficiently firm that it will require at least a few years of cellaring first. 89/2025+

2017 Volnay "Les Mitans": (from Mitans proper). A background whiff of reduction can be found on the otherwise fresh and airy red and dark cherry-scented nose. The finer medium-bodied flavors exude evident minerality that carries over to the well-detailed and firm yet seductively refined finish. This isn't quite as rich as the Les Aussy but it's *lacier* and flashes a bit more minerality as well. Worth checking out. 91/2027+

2017 Volnay "Les Taillepieds": More restrained though attractively perfumed aromas feature primarily notes of poached plum and violet along with hints of spice and mineral reduction. The sleeker if not finer middle weight flavors are even more mineral-driven and agreeably energetic, all wrapped in a youthfully austere, firm and ever-so-mildly drying finale. My sense is that the dryness will progressively dissipate as the tannic spine resolves. 90/2029+

2017 Volnay "Les Caillerets": Like the Mitans, there is enough reduction present to push the spicy dark berry fruit and soft wood nuances to the background and I would suggest a thorough aeration if you're tempted to crack a bottle young. The supple and delicious if slightly less mineral-driven medium-bodied flavors possess a sleek mouth feel before concluding in a dusty, sappy and youthfully austere finale that is lovely if not quite as tightly wound. 92/2027+ **Burghound.com October 2019** 16 2

2017 Volnay "Clos des Chênes": A restrained though very spicy nose combines notes of violet, raspberry and cherry with those of earth and a hint of underbrush. There is a sophisticated mid-palate mouth feel to the broad-shouldered flavors that display excellent power and plenty of salinity on the impressively long finish where the only nit is a hint of warmth. As classic examples of Clos des Chênes always are, this is very much ageworthy and a wine that's going to need it. In a word, excellent. 93/2029+

2017 Volnay "Les Pitures": (from 35+ year old vines). A relatively high-toned nose flashes notes of various red berries, rose petal and earth hints though once again there is a background touch of reduction that should dissipate with age. The mouth feel of the medium-bodied and muscular flavors is again nicely sleek with good detail and power both present on the stony, long and balanced youthfully austere finale where a touch of wood appears. 91/2029+