

JASPER MORRIS Inside Burgundy

2021 Côte de Beaune

Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur

I tasted with François Bitouzet-Prieur in his smart new premises below Meursault, though the official address of the domaine remains in Volnay. The whites were all racked in mid-August, but neither fined nor filtered, and were due for bottling just before Christmas. The reds had just been racked. No new wood was used for either colour, nor even one year old barrels in the red wines.

François was going to start on 21st September but it rained so he pushed back a day. The rain kicked off a little rot, the icing on the cake of mildew and oidium! The eventual crop was around one third of normal overall, with the hillside vineyards the worst hit. The usual Croupin and Corbins cuvées were blended, and there is no Meursault Santenots, the half barrel of which also went into the village wine. Degrees were adequate so there was no need to chaptalize



White

2021, Bourgogne Aligoté, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 86-87

Fullish lemon yellow. Rather a pretty if quite a discreet nose. This has good body for Aligoté, fleshing out nicely behind, with the fruit and acidity properly in balance. A good example. Drink from 2023-2025. Tasted: November 2022

2021, Bourgogne Chardonnay, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 84-86

Only 4 barrels made instead of 20. A typical pale lemon colour. The nose is quite discreet but it is clean. There is some weight of white fruit on the palate, but with a slightly strange finish, leaving an acrid feel. Not sure what to make of this.. Tasted: November 2022

2021, Meursault, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 87-89

Just 14 barrels of Meursault instead of 60. All plots were blended together in 2021. Mid lemon yellow. A pretty nose with some plum and fresh quince notes, quite perfumed. Spicy finish then pears and peaches, rather exotic. This will be rather enjoyable to drink but is not especially classic. Fortunately, there is enough acidity behind. Drink from 2024-2027. Tasted: November 2022

2021, Puligny-Montrachet Les Levrans, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 89-91

Mid yellow colour. The bouquet persists, showing some ripeness (this was 13% natural.) Very lovely on the palate and though the acidity is not yet fully integrated with the white fruit, I have no qualms about it. Good tension at the back alongside ripe apples and a pear note. But less exotic than the Meursault. Drink from 2024-2029. Tasted: November 2022

2021, Meursault Charmes 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 91-93

Pale lemon and lime. A slight whiff of sulphur on the nose. A sense of opulence and a feeling of oak too, albeit no new barrels were used. Clean and pure with the weight at the front of the palate, and easily enough fruit to cover the acid backbone. Still in its infancy but with promise. Drink from 2025-2031. Tasted: November 2022

2021, Meursault Perrières 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 91-94

A very pretty glowing pale primrose. A touch of oak but lots of fruit energy. Clearly more weight than the Charmes but evolving in the glass. Good acidity here at the back, and a richer fruit with just an orange rind note or two. Drink from 2025-2032. Tasted: November 2022

Red

2021, Bourgogne Pinot Noir, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 87-88

Pretty ruby crimson colour. Floral cherry notes, very typical of the year, the right acidity, a little more weight than some though with a fractional firmness of tannins. Good length behind. Delicious in 18 months. Drink from 2024-2026. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 87-89

The pretty ruby colour of the vintage. Less bouquet up front than the Bourgogne. More fruit concentration on the palate with a little crunch behind. Nice persistence. Drink from 2025-2028. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Beaune Cent Vignes 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 89-91

More crimson than ruby. Lightly perfumed on the nose, floral with some raspberry notes. Perhaps hits the cherry register more in the mouth. A relatively lean style of wine but with no aggressive tannins to speak of, so when the acidity calms this will make an attractive bottling of a lighter style of Burgundy. Drink from 2026-2029. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay Les Aussey 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 88-90

Mid red to crimson. A discreet bouquet at this stage, less perfumed than some. Medium weight of red fruit, not massive, nor silky either, a slight firmness of structure but the fruit maintains all the way through. Lower acidity than some wines this year. Drink from 2026-2029. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay Taillepieds 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 90-92

A little more depth of colour at the centre of a fresh ruby purple. The nose gives a suggestion that there will be an additional depth of fruit here, fine cherry and raspberry fruit, very promising. There are additional layers here over the other wines tasted so far, a slight nuttiness, a little more structure but everything nicely folded into the fruit. Drink from 2027-2031. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay Caillerets 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 90-92

Bright ruby in colour. There is quite a weight of fruit on the nose, a slightly darker raspberry, this time the structure imposes a little more but the decision not to use new oak is paying off, because the fruit comes back behind in a very pleasing fashion. Drink from 2027-2032. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay Clos des Chênes 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 90-93

A darker crimson colour. The nose is rather backward, a little firm and unyielding. Then a relatively full mouthful with firm tannins and some acidity at the back. This will take a little while to resolve but will deliver a medium-bodied, balanced, Clos des Chênes at the end. This was racked a week later than the others and that could explain the slightly more dour character on today's tasting. Drink from 2028-2033. Tasted: October 2022

2021, Volnay Pitures 1er Cru, Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur - 90-93

More the purple side of crimson. A wealth of cherry-raspberry red fruit. More structure and less delicacy than most in Volnay, explained by the vineyard's proximity to Pommard. However, the fruit is both pure and fills the palate nicely, through to a crunchy finish. Drink from 2028-2033. Tasted: October 2022