

# • Antonio Galloni vinOUS

## Domaine Bitouzet-Prieur

A comedy of errors resulted in yours truly waiting in Bitouzet-Prieur's deserted reception, wondering why I could walk in off the street and download all the secret files. People's coats were still there. Somebody must surely come back for them? Fortunately, I loitered around and tapped some tasting notes before a perplexed François Bitouzet-Prieur materialized. He had been waiting for the doorbell to ring out in the warehouse. Though I had time to taste through all their wines, I had to do it with military timing, lest I be late for Coche-Dury, knowing full well that Raphael Coche-Dury is always fashionably late. Once settled, we could get down to business. "All our vines are on the slopes, and we did not observe any stress in the Chardonnay," he informs. "Beaune Les Aussy was the only vineyard that showed some signs of stress because the soils are so free-draining. We picked from August 25 until 31 August. It was a normal length of harvest, even though the volume was higher. You didn't have to look out for bunches that were not ripe. I find the 2022s fresher than the 2020s, with slightly lower alcohol. The 2020 vintage was precocious, and I think those wines will drink younger." This is another domaine where the Volnay Clos des Chênes forms a high point, closely followed by the Caillerets. Amongst the whites, I particularly like the superb Meursault Santenots, which had the audacity to outshine the Les Perrières and Les Charmes.

*From Now, For My Latest Trick: Burgundy 2022 (Jan 2024) by Neal Martin*

## RED WINES

### **2022 Bourgogne Passetoutgrain (82-84)**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2025**

The 2022 Bourgogne Passetoutgrain has a simple but pleasant raspberry and redcurrant-scented nose. The palate is medium-bodied and quite simple, with slightly dry tannins. It needs a little more flesh on the finish.

### **2022 Bourgogne Pinot Noir (84-86)**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2027**

The 2022 Bourgogne Pinot Noir is more enticing than the Passetoutgrain this year with raspberry, wild strawberry and light floral aromas. The palate still shows a bit of gas, but there is an attractive succulence here and a nice twist of sour cherry on the finish.

### **2022 Volnay Village (89-90)**

Drinking Window: **2026 - 2036**

The 2022 Volnay Village has a floral bouquet with rose petals and iris infusing the brambly red fruit. Much better than the 2021. The well-balanced palate is medium-bodied with pliant tannins, fleshy red fruit and an approachable, quite peppery finish that lingers in the mouth. Worth seeking out.

### **2022 Beaune Les Cents-Vignes 1er Cru (86-88)**

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2033**

The 2022 Beaune Les Cents-Vignes 1er Cru has a primal, almost pastille-like bouquet, lacking the complexity I discern in the preceding Volnay Village. The palate is chewy on the entry and a bit rustic on the mid-palate with a slightly angular finish. This needs a bit of work during the remainder of its élevage.

### **2022 Volnay Les Aussy 1er Cru (89-91)**

Drinking Window: **2026 - 2038**

The 2022 Volnay Les Aussy 1er Cru has a lovely bouquet, just a touch of reduction, brambly red fruit intermixed with iodine and iris flower scents. Good lift and more focus than the Volnay Village. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins that feel quite saturated, imparting an enticing fleshiness towards the finish. Not the most complex Volnay, but quite delicious.

### **2022 Volnay Les Mitans 1er Cru (90-92)**

Drinking Window: **2027 - 2042**

The 2022 Volnay Les Mitans 1er Cru has one of the most floral bouquets from the Domaine, maybe occluding the terroir profile at the moment. The medium-bodied palate has fine structure with slightly chalky tannins, dark cherries, raspberry coulis and orange peel, leading to quite a structured, slightly Pommard-like finish. Give this three years in bottle. NB Only distributed in the US market.

## **2022 Volnay Les Taillepieds 1er Cru**

**(90-92)**

Drinking Window: **2027 - 2043**

The 2022 Volnay Les Taillepieds 1er Cru has a far superior nose to the 2021: raspberry, wild strawberry, oyster shell and marine elements coming through with time. Quite mercurial in the glass. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy red fruit. Fleshy and enveloping in the mouth, this is quintessential Volnay has a slight metallic note on the finish that should dissipate by the time of bottling.

## **2022 Volnay Les Caillerets 1er Cru**

**(91-93)**

Drinking Window: **2026 - 2045**

The 2022 Volnay Les Caillerets 1er Cru is well-defined on the nose, again, with plenty of ripe red brambly fruit, commingling with sous-bois, orange rind and crushed stone aromas - one of my favorite aromatics amongst the reds. The medium-bodied palate is quite saline, with gentle grip, finer tannins than the Taillepieds, and quite a succulent, lightly spiced finish. I can see this aging well in bottle.

## **2022 Volnay Clos des Chênes 1er Cru**

**(92-94)**

Drinking Window: **2026 - 2045**

The 2022 Volnay Clos des Chênes 1er Cru is very expressive on the nose. Redcurrant, wild strawberry and light rose petal scents unfold in the glass, less immediate than the Caillerets but ultimately offering more complexity. The palate is medium-bodied with pliant tannins. This is harmonious, taut, fresh, and well-defined, with a composed but persistent finish. Excellent.

## **2022 Volnay Les Pitures 1er Cru**

**(87-89)**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

The 2022 Volnay Les Pitures 1er Cru has the most tertiary bouquet amongst the Domaine's red wine, with touches of mocha coming through with time. The palate is medium-bodied with slightly dry tannins, the preceding Clos des Chênes showing more depth and freshness by comparison. Jury's out on this one.

## **WHITE WINES**

### **2022 Bourgogne Aligoté**

**(86-88)**

Drinking Window: **2023 - 2027**

The 2022 Bourgogne Aligoté was fined one week before my visit. It has a straightforward bouquet, clean and fresh with orange zest, citrus fruit and a touch of menthol. The palate is well-balanced, again, not the most complex that I have tasted, but I like the almost Rhône-like pithiness on the finish.

### **2022 Bourgogne Chardonnay**

**(85-87)**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2028**

The 2022 Bourgogne Chardonnay has a light bouquet with cooking apple and touches of Earl Grey (not often I find this on a regional white.) The palate is fresh on the entry with fine acidity, quite citric on the finish if missing a little length.

### **2022 Meursault Les Corbins**

**(88-90)**

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2038**

The 2022 Meursault Les Corbins has a well-defined, quite minerally bouquet that opens nicely in the glass, even though it is not the definition of complexity. The palate is well-balanced with a texturally waxy opening. Quite a pithy Meursault with good extract, though it just needs a little more persistence on the finish. Fine.

### **2022 Meursault Clos du Cromin**

**(89-91)**

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2040**

The 2022 Meursault Clos du Cromin has a refined bouquet, more nuanced than the Les Corbins with wilted white flowers emerging with time. The palate is well-balanced with notes of tangerine and peach. Not complex, but pure and fresh with satisfying length on the finish.

### **2022 Meursault Santenots 1er Cru**

**(92-94)**

Drinking Window: **2026 - 2045**

The 2022 Meursault Santenots 1er Cru has a complex nose: yellow fruit, spice box, touches of fennel and crushed stone, all coming through with aeration. The palate is very well-balanced with good weight - a lovely creamy texture whilst retaining tension. More open than other cuvées and persistent in the mouth, this is a well-crafted and delicious Meursault.

## **2022 Puligny-Montrachet Les Levrons**

**(87-89)**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2034**

The 2022 Puligny-Montrachet Les Levrons is a little austere on the nose, much more backward than the Meursault Santenots. The palate is well-balanced with a keen thread of acidity, malic in style with cooking apple and pear towards a somewhat conservative finish. Fine.

## **2022 Meursault Les Charmes 1er Cru**

**(91-93)**

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2045**

The 2022 Meursault Les Charmes 1er Cru has a very attractive nose with yellow fruit, peach skin, touches of beeswax and crushed stone. The oak is very nicely integrated. The palate is well-balanced, the 20% new oak well-judged, and the crisp acidity imparts freshness and tension. It delivers the concentration you expect from a Charmes, with the orange peel and tangerine finish lingering nicely in the mouth.

## **2022 Meursault Les Perrières 1er Cru**

**(90-92)**

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2042**

The 2022 Meursault Les Perrières 1er Cru has a more complex bouquet than the Meursault Charmes: dried honey, frangipane, cockle shells and light white chocolate flecks. The new oak (20%) is neatly integrated. The palate is very well-balanced with a silver bead of acidity. It does not quite match the aromatics in the mouth, perhaps needing a little more *mineralité* on the finish that would define it as a Perrières and nothing else. Also, it just needs a little more persistence. But overall, it is a fine Meursault that should give 12-18 years of drinking pleasure.