

# Clark Foyster

SPECIALIST WINE IMPORTERS

9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012

## Burgundy 2010

It has been a great delight to make several visits to Burgundy over the last year. As I remember, the idea that 2010 might be a great vintage was in nobody's mind when we visited in November 2010 to taste the 2009s. And yet, little by little, the vintage's reputation has grown. It's been quite the opposite to 2009 which was for all and sundry a Great Vintage before the grapes were even picked. In contrast this year, the wines alone have set the agenda, and they alone have built the vintage's reputation.

Vintage reports abound elsewhere if you like great detail about the conditions. In summary, there was a devastating cold snap in December 2009, cold enough to kill thousands of plants where sap had not yet descended after the mild autumn. Then the fruit set at flowering was very sporadic and the summer, most clearly remembered, was short of sun and heat. And yet the wines have turned out fresh and balanced, ripe and concentrated. It's almost as though the cool summer was just warm enough for the small quantities of fruit in need of ripening. The wines are precise, cool, crunchy and crisp, but frequently with mouth-filling richness too. It sounds too good to be true, but in many cases, this is how it is. It's being said that they combine the best of the ripeness of 2009 with the purity of 2008. Maybe they do but the fact is they are DELICIOUS.

### Terms and Conditions:

The wines are offered lying in bond, UK. Shipments will be made mostly in Autumn 2012, though some wines may be shipped in Spring 2012.

Prices are quoted in Sterling, per case of 12 x 75cl bottles for immediate payment.

Some wines are packed in cases of 6

### **Domaine Heresztyn, Gevrey Chambertin**

There will be changes here over the next years as the succession question is to be resolved, but for now the older generation is still in control: brothers Bernard and Stani with their partners Marie and Chantal. As we observed last year, the proportions of new oak have diminished a little to 30% except on the Grand Cru (40%) and the cold soak before fermentation which was so successful last year on the Perrières and Champonnets has been used on all the wines. They still spend the whole of their time in barrel without racking, developing their creamy soft texture, but all the wines have now been assembled and taken out of oak. The supple, fruit-forward style of the domaine - which makes the Gevrey village and Gevrey Perrières so full of charm at an early age - is obvious in 2010. The tannins are very gentle across the whole range, and the style is ripe and full of spice. Gevrey Corbeaux, as usual has some sappy, faintly chewy and slightly more austere notes, but here too, always a more robust 1er Cru, the tannins are very well managed. Morey Millandes, again is a top wine, a lovely explosion of sweet red fruit. It is a great example - at the end of a range of wines from Gevrey - of just how much of a contrast neighbouring Morey St Denis presents.

Gevrey Chambertin, Les Trois Vieilles Vignes	£240.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Perrières	£384.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Corbeaux	£384.00
Morey St Denis 1er Cru, Les Millandes	£492.00
Clos St Denis, Grand Cru	£648.00

### **Domaine Fourrier, Gevrey Chambertin**

Fourrier's wines are spectacular in 2010. It seems like an ideal vintage to suit his lively crisp, cool style. It's a tiny vintage for him, though. We'll probably have no opportunities to offer these to any new customers, and our allocation has been significantly reduced. One ray of hope on the horizon for the future: Jean-Marie is developing from the 2011 vintage a small *négociant* business making wine from purchased fruit and he's started with some Echezeaux, Chambolle-Echanges and Clos Vougeot. So perhaps a tiny bit more wine next year for some lucky souls!

But the inverse relations of quality and quantity are at their most obvious here this year. Berries are tiny and few in number after lots of *millerandage* from the cool weather during flowering. But these tiny berries nevertheless ripened beautifully as the rest of the growing season, though cool and relatively unsunny, nevertheless found enough to ripen this reduced load. But of course tiny berries don't contain much juice! The results are pure, fresh, tremblingly vibrant wines right through the range. Notes of ripe sweetness and fresh acidity fight for prominence. Unlike 2008, where the wines were back in tank by October/November to homogenise the finish of the malolactic fermentation, or 2009 where they were also back in tank by the same time to preserve freshness after a very early malolactic, the *élevage* of the 2010s returns to a more classic timing and the wines are still in barrel and will not be bottled until March.

Bourgogne Blanc	£108.00
Morey St Denis, Clos Solon	£276.00
Gevrey Chambertin	£288.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Goulots	£468.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Cherbaudes	£468.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Combe aux Moines	£588.00
Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru, Clos St Jacques	£P O A (very limited)
Griotte Chambertin, Grand Cru	£P O A (very limited)

### **Domaine Henri Jouan, Morey St Denis**

This new name to us was a great recommendation. Very traditional outlook from a small estate run by Henri Jouan, his son Philippe and one day perhaps too by grandson. Henri is 70, and has nominally handed over to his son, but it would appear that he has an energy and appetite to retain the final say, at least in winemaking for a few years yet. The estate is tiny, only 3 hectares split over 10 parcels for the 5 crus produced. Vines are between 45 – 70 years old. But there is even less than 3 hectares-worth of wine to sell as Maison Joseph Drouhin have been long-standing customers since Henri first began making wine, fifty years ago. Both father and now son rely on empirical experience in wine making and élevage and claim that nothing has changed in these fifty years. The grapes are destemmed, fermented at temperatures, “controlled” in the French sense of the word by Henri’s hand on the side of the tank! They like a quick *malo* (the cellar was heated on our early November visit to encourage the 2011s through) and they rack off the lees straight after. Philippe sums up the wines modestly saying they make wine “*pour nos clients qui aiment le fruit*”. The wines are delicate, supple, beautifully-perfumed and forward. 2009s already look delicious. Village wines are in 30 % new oak, Clos Sorbe 40% and Clos St Denis 70%. The wines are all bottled, corked and labelled by hand, unfinned and unfiltered.

Morey St Denis	£252.00
Chambolle Musigny	£264.00
Gevrey Chambertin, Aux Echézeaux	£276.00
Morey St Denis 1er Cru, Clos Sorbé	£396.00
Clos St Denis, Grand Cru	£576.00

### **Domaine François Bertheau, Chambolle Musigny**

One could not find a stronger contrast between Guyon and Bertheau. Indeed herein lies the charm and fascination of Burgundy for they are barely three miles apart. For us, Francois the winemaker and his terroir seem in total sympathy with each other. This also seems like a domaine where very little is done to “make” the wine, though the wines exude the sense of a sympathetic and incredibly delicate hand. He practises total de-stemming and fifteen days of extraction with one *remontage* and *pigeage* per day. The wines remain in tank until the previous vintage is liberated from barrel, and then are moved into oak in around January, and only 20-30% is new oak. He is reserved when discussing his wines, he believes they speak for themselves, but he is an enthusiastic and talkative character when warmed up. The wines show at first delicate, pale colours, floral, cool and light flavours and then suddenly on the palate – bang! – The fruit explodes and dances. When Burgundy does this you see a glimpse of the meaning of life! I am absolutely thrilled by the wines in 2010 and delighted to be getting to know better their producer. The wines were in barrel from January, and will be bottled in the next month. On the day we visited the Premier Cru and Amoureuses both looked a million pounds, the Charmes and Bonnes Mares more closed and the village full of pretty charm and substantial weight. Quantities were ok here in 2010, and we are lucky to have a good allocation. Magnums are available here.

Chambolle Musigny	£276.00
Chambolle Musigny 1er Cru	£456.00
Chambolle Musigny 1er Cru, Charmes	£600.00
Chambolle Musigny 1er Cru, Amoureuses	£936.00
Bonnes Mares, Grand Cru	£1,068.00

### **Domaine Sylvain Cathiard et Fils, Vosne Romanée**

This will probably turn out to be Sylvain's final vintage. His son Sébastien vinified in 2011, and the likelihood is that Sylvain will play a slightly smaller part in the domaine's productions. Yields are down here too, but not as dramatically as chez Fourrier. Sylvain took the wine down into barrel a little later in 2010 than he had done in previous vintages, and then the Bourgogne Rouge and Chambolle were back in tank by the end of August, as Sylvain was cautious not to give the wines too much oak. New oak here is 100% for all the premier cru wines.

This hardly shows, but, together with the style of the vintage, it seems to have helped create slightly more lively wines. Even underground in the cellar the colours struck as beautifully brilliant. Nose and palate featured vibrant, crunchy, crisp, fresh flavours throughout for the village wines, until, arriving at the premier crus, power, weight and richness begin to dominate (not that any of the top wines lack freshness, mind!).

There's much more that could be written about this great domaine and its very passionate, sensitive owner. We do sense an imminent change as Sébastien is going to be taking more control, but we are very proud to have been a part of the picture here since 1999.

Bourgogne Rouge	£240.00
Nuits St Georges	£480.00
Vosne Romanée	£480.00
Chambolle Musigny, Clos de l'Orme	£516.00
Nuits St Georges 1er Cru, Aux Thorey	£876.00
Nuits St Georges 1er Cru, Aux Murgers	£1,008.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Aux Reignots	£1,008.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, En Orveaux	£1,008.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Aux Suchots	£1,176.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Aux Malconsorts	£1,440.00
Romanée St Vivant, Grand Cru	£ P O A (very limited)

### **Domaine Confuron-Gindre, Vosne Romanée**

Our second new arrival for 2010 was, once again discovered in God's own backyard – Vosne Romanée. And what a lovely address: Rue de la Tache.

Confuron is a well-known name in the village. We asked Francois Confuron about the family and he said there are four of them in the village. "Do you get on with each other?" I asked. "No" he replied with a smile. Nothing so unusual about that, it seems.

This is the least well-known of the domaines with this famous name, and we're excited to be importing their wine to the UK for the first time. Asking around, it sounds as though the quality has improved in the last few years, so our timing looks to be very good. The wines are kept in a very cool cellar where malolactic fermentations happen very slowly. The 2010 *malos* were barely finished by November 2011, but it was easy to see that the style is natural and soft-textured - the real epitome of charming Vosne. The 1er and Grand Crus had a real thickness of old vine texture. Chaumes, for example, is a parcel planted in 1919.

The domaine has 11 hectares in all spread over around fifty different small parcels. That is a decent size for a domaine in this area though a sizeable proportion of this is in Bourgogne Rouge, and the holdings in the top vineyards are very small. Consequently we have only small quantities of 2010s to offer. Taking quality and vineyard locations into account these are really well-priced wines. About 25% of new oak is used on the village wines, up to 100% on the Grand Cru. Wines are unfinned and unfiltered.

Bourgogne Aligoté (n.b. 2011 available May 2012)	£66.00
Bourgogne Rouge	£84.00
Nuits St Georges	£252.00
Vosne Romanée	£264.00

Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Les Chaumes	£396.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Les Brûlées	£396.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Les Beaux Monts	£396.00
Echézeaux, Grand Cru	£588.00

### **Domaine Guyon, Vosne Romanée**

Jean-Pierre Guyon's punchy, confident approach to his winemaking is forthright and he takes no prisoners! He seems utterly clear of the direction he's heading and is thrilled by the results of his organically-grown fruit, best exemplified, to his mind anyway, by the differences he sees in two plots of Aloxe Corton he has vinified this year. One is his own vineyard, farmed organically for the past few years and the other conventional, a plot they only acquired just before harvest. Woe betide anyone who fails to spot the difference! Vinification here is quite extreme. Virtually no destemming and a percentage approaching 100% of new oak for 12 months, followed by 6 months in tank. Their 9 hectares are concentrated mostly around Vosne with parcels in Nuits and Gevrey and then other parcels in Chorey, Savigny and Aloxe Corton, so this is a big range of wines which we buy selectively. All the wines have deep colours, firm tannins and a distinctive vin-de-garde style. "*Vins de garde à boire demain*" says Jean-Pierre. At the top end of the range, VR Orveaux, Brûlées, Echezeaux and Vougeot (their first vintage for this parcel, which previously they looked after for the Moillard estate), the wines are powerful and most impressive.

Bourgogne Rouge	£144.00
Vosne Romane, Charmes de Mazières	£432.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, En Orveaux	£624.00
Vosne Romanée 1er Cru, Aux Brûlées	£624.00
Echézeaux, Grand Cru	£840.00
Clos de Vougeot, Grand Cru	£1,092.00

### **Domaine Henri Delagrange, Volnay**

Didier Delagrange has 15 hectares. Half of this is in the Hautes Cotes, where good red and white are made, and of the rest most is in Volnay, but with a couple of vineyards in Pommard and Aloxe Corton, and tiny bits in Meursault and Puligny. The man has a strong antipathy towards any flavours of new oak, so aims, and succeeds in emphasising the primary red fruit notes of his red wines. He applies intense attention in the vineyard using organic principles with debudding in spring and leaf-plucking in summer. There are many old vines and yields are low. The wines are worked very little during fermentation, just one or two *pigeages* in total and an *arrossage* when required (gentle pumping over to keep the cap moist). The result is that many berries ferment without being broken, even though they are – mostly – destemmed. Large oak is in evidence – 350 litre casks as well as 228. The Volnay is blended from several parcels of 50 year old vines. Pommard Vaumuriens Haut lies above the famous Rugiens vineyard. These are vibrant wines with crisp primary fruit and spice when young, but light, chalky tannins soon give way to more silky textures with a year or so in bottle. Volnay Champans and Santenots are two exceptional new productions from 2010; pricing and availability yet to be confirmed. These are great value wines - as Didier says "unfortunately, this is not the Cote de Nuits!"

Volnay Vieilles Vignes	£198.00
Pommard, Haut Vaumuriens	£228.00
Pommard 1er Cru, Les Bertins	£295.00
Volnay 1er Cru, Clos des Chênes	£295.00