

Clark Foyster

SPECIALIST WINE IMPORTERS

BURGUNDY 2021 EN PRIMEUR OFFER

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BURGUNDY 2021 EN PRIMEUR

- A classic vintage; very different compared to the preceding trio of ‘années solaires’. Devastatingly reduced volumes; one of Burgundy’s smallest ever vintages.
- Terrific damage in the vineyard caused by back-to-back challenges: severe Spring frost; poor fruit set; and a damp, cool summer with a lack of sunshine. Considerable disease pressure required above-average work and meticulous sorting to ensure the health of the few grapes remaining.
- A later harvest, relative to recent years, with dry, sunny conditions finally enabling ripening from the latter half of August and through the month of September.
- Lower levels of sugar and overall concentration compared to the hot, dry vintages of late. Nevertheless, the small quantity of wine produced appears, for the most part, well-balanced, fresh with vibrant - and ripe - fruit, and full of charm.

It was great to see Burgundy back to a more normal version of itself in November, following the ghost years of the pandemic. The vineyards looked marvellous during the misty mornings, in their beautiful autumn colours. Producers were eager and proud to share recent developments - new wines and vineyards, new wineries built, and, in some cases, to introduce us to the next generation. There was a welcome feeling of positivity in the air too, looking ahead to the future. Whispers of record-breaking prices being fetched at the ongoing Hospices de Beaune Auction surely helped. Also, no doubt, thanks to the abundant 2022 harvest already filling cellars, casting a welcome shadow over the trauma of 2021 and the challenges and historically low volumes that it brought.

If you buy Burgundy, or follow the news, you will know, of course, that 2021 tells a quite different story from recent years: a disastrous cocktail of frost, snow, hail, weeks of uninterrupted rain and a lack of summer sun. Wet weather at flowering and subsequent poor fruit-set, as well as a continuing disease pressure, all took their toll. The result, the same from Fuissé in the South up to Marsannay in the North, a devastating reduction in volumes. Early vine growth, following an unusually mild winter, left young shoots and buds vulnerable to the three successive nights of severe frost to follow come April. Temperatures plummeted to -8°C causing considerable damage. All our growers were impacted, but it was Sophie Cinier, in Pouilly- Fuissé, who was worst hit, suffering an overwhelming loss of 80% compared to a year where volumes are good. In fact Chardonnay everywhere, with its earlier growth cycle, was more susceptible to frost. As a result, 2021 is reported the smallest Chardonnay harvest in 50 years in the area, with further injury caused by hailstorms in June after a precocious flowering.

Those in the Côte d’Or, didn’t fare much better. Cyril Audoin in Marsannay, along with Vincent Ravaut in Ladoix and Philippe Garrey in Mercurey, were unable to produce some, or all, of their whites due to a lack of grapes. Pinot suffered tremendously too. Jean-Marie Fourrier down 70% across the domaine, with snow and frost working together. Sébastien Cathiard too, was unable to prevent serious reductions to volumes, explaining that candles can at times help mitigate the effects of frost where temperatures hover around -2° or -3°C, but not -8°C - the case in 2021. Malconsorts, particularly exposed, was reduced by 70% due to the vineyard’s aspect and earlier bud-break.

The preceding trio of ‘années solaires’ have forced producers to adapt their practices in vineyard and cellar facing the impact of global warming. 2021, clearly unaffected by rising

temperatures, was nevertheless also marked by an unusually warm winter. Consequently, precocious growth in the vineyard left young buds vulnerable to impending episodes of severe frost, which appear more common in the context of increasingly erratic weather patterns. With this in mind, the last few years have seen growers adapt their methods and timing of pruning, in an attempt to delay bud break and protect young shoots. Double pruning is now commonplace, its completion often delayed until the end of March. Interestingly, this is causing a knock-on effect in the winery, for example at Heresztyn-Mazzini, where bottling has been brought forward to early February, leaving extra time for late pruning in March.

After the horrors of the frost, challenges continued with cool, damp conditions at flowering and poor fruit set. With the coolest July in 50 years, combined with below average sun from early July to mid-August, and heavy and sustained summer rainfall, conditions were perfect for downy and powdery mildew, and botrytis. Keeping morale up and not losing faith in the vintage despite the additional work required were key to achieving success. Cyril Audoin commented that at times he had ‘the impression of working like crazy for nothing’, spending more time and working extra hard in vineyards where almost all fruit had been lost to frost and snow in order to preserve the health of the few grapes which remained. Fourrier too, reported extra efforts in the vineyard, particularly with activities around leaf-pulling and keeping the canopy well aerated. At Cathiard it was managing odium that was the priority. Everywhere conditions called for a very careful selection and sorting at harvest.

Thankfully, from the second week of August the weather improved. Fruit ripened and good weather continued well into the latter half of September. Harvesting was late to take place, with picking commencing for most in the last week(s) of September, almost a month later than in 2022. This long grape hang time, alongside the patient wait for the perfect date for phenolic maturity, appear important factors in achieving success this vintage.

The fresher musts of 2021, with their lower levels of sugar and overall concentration relative to recent years, called for fewer whole bunches to soak up surplus tannin and alcohol. Both Florence Heresztyn and Philippe Garrey, great proponents of whole bunches, reduced stems in 2021, down to 30-60% from 65-100% the year previous. Jean-Marie Fourrier choosing also to de-stem all fruit, as until recent years was always the case. Although Joannès Violot kept a largely unchanged proportion of whole bunches in 2020 and 2021.

Although slightly more extraction work was reported by most - compared to the hotter, drier vintages recently - there was a continued preference for gentler practices, such as longer ‘cold soaks’ and more frequent *remontages*, rather than more vigorous *pigeage* techniques, which were used sparingly, if at all.

2021, the kind of vintage that is becoming increasingly rare, has provided producers with an opportunity to shine by proving themselves in vineyard and cellar. Pinot Noir was given the chance to showcase its adaptability and remind us of what it is capable of in the cooler, classic vintages more like those of yesteryear. Conditions in the vineyard were plague-like; and the volumes are painfully small. Yet overall, the quality of wine that we have tasted has been very good. Wines of harmony and finesse, ripe too, and showing great vibrancy and purity of fruit. The best textural and supple, and marked by that elusive ethereal quality so hard to capture, yet so characteristic of Great Burgundy.

In the words of Vincent Ravaut, ‘2021 was a year of the winemaker’. And for those who were motivated and who did not lose faith in the vintage; who, in the vineyard, worked hard

and in the cellar adapted sensitively, exceptional wine was made. We are lucky to work with such producers, and proud to offer these wines. We hope that you enjoy them as much as we do.

And finally, looking ahead to 2022, we are excited to offer for the first time the wines of Xavier Thivolle, a young, dynamic Chiroubles-based producer whom we first met in November. Note that his wines are already 2022. Since 2019 Xavier has been producing a small range of wine from his 3.8ha of carefully chosen parcels dotted around the granitic hillsides of the Cru appellations of Chiroubles and Morgon. Early reports put 2022 down to be an outstanding vintage in Burgundy - one of generous volumes of healthy grapes, and of wonderfully balanced, aromatic, and concentrated wines.

We certainly found that to be the case in Xavier's wines. We hope that you enjoy discovering them and that they provide a welcome glimpse into the successes of 2022 and the good news it has in store.

Alma Ledgerwood-Walker

ALLOCATIONS

Quantities are massively down this year, even more than last year. In several cases the reductions are significantly more than the small harvest might have lead us to expect. But we accept what we are offered. There are quite a few wines which are absent from the list this year. In allocating, we prioritise customers who support us through the rest of the range. and we appreciate orders which are balanced.

Please let us now as soon as possible what you would like. The sooner we receive orders, the sooner we can confirm availabilities.

PRICING

Burgundians like to have the current vintage in barrel before they fix pricing for last year's vintage. But the abundance of 2022 has not deterred them from some swingeing price increases this year. But three consecutive small vintages are apparently to blame. So, for as long as demand far outstrips supply, it looks like we are stuck with this annual spiral.

En Primeur prices which follow are quoted in £ Sterling per bottle, ex duty and VAT. We have also shown the price for a standard case of six, though please note that a few wines are packed in three or twelve packs. Please also note that the top wines from the most sought-after domaines will be sold as individual bottles without domaine-labelled outer cases.

Shipment will take place in Autumn 2023 and we will aim to release wines for onward delivery or collection when the final shipment of each customer order has arrived from France. We will avoid despatches in December 2023 when the warehouse is under particular pressure.

Prices include onward In Bond UK delivery. Freight and customs costs are currently very hard to predict; if inward shipping costs increase significantly over our estimates then we reserve the right to make additional charges to cover this.

Domaine Sophie Cinier, Pouilly-Fuissé. 4.5 ha (+ négociant wines).

Now a fully-fledged family operation, we have seen this domaine double in size over the course of the ten years we have been working together, though it remains a small-scale operation at 4.5ha. Sophie was joined full-time by her partner, Alain, two years ago. Their son, Kauri, also now playing an increasing role, when not busy with his studies at Beaune's lycée viticole. White wines are the focus, made with fruit from estate vineyards which Sophie and Alain farm themselves. Some grapes are bought in too from neighbours and friends for the small *négociant* business they also run together.

Moves towards organic viticulture began here in 2018, and although uncertified, Sophie was proud to announce that from 2021 they are now fully organically run. 2022 marks also the first year they have begun experimenting with biodynamic viticulture - Kauri particularly keen, influenced perhaps by Florence and Simon of Domaine Heresztyn-Mazzini and their enthusiasm for its principles and practice.

Out of all our growers this year, Sophie's volumes are down the most, suffering a loss of 80% across the domaine. Chardonnay - with its precocious budding - was left particularly vulnerable when faced with the three consecutive nights of frost which hit in April. To add insult to injury, June brought with it violent hailstorms, with quantities reduced further still by a cool, wet Summer and accompanying challenges of mildew and rot. No surprise then that 2021 is said to be the area's smallest harvest in 50 years. Sophie this year was simply unable to produce many of her usual wines.

With relatively dispersed vineyard holdings, Sophie nevertheless fared better than many in the region. Some of her parcels were spared the worst of the damage, which was often localised. Consolation too comes in knowing that the quality of wine she was able to produce, albeit in tiny quantities, is quite wonderful: harmonious, vibrant, and with concentration and ripeness of fruit. The plague-like conditions of the vintage aside, in many respects 2021 suits very well the style of these wines.

From the third week of August the weather improved; berries ripened in good conditions. Unlike 2020, when harvesting took place three weeks earlier, long hang times offered a more effortless balancing of phenolic and sugar ripeness. This protracted ripening process combined with the warm, dry conditions in the final weeks leading up to harvest, makes for wines with a delightful interplay between ripe fruit, concentration and singing, fresh salinity. Many deliver, too, a charming textural creaminess on the palate. With the challenges behind her, Sophie is very happy with the overall quality achieved. She believes 2021 to be a great vintage, linear and fresh, and that the wines will age well.

All wines this year, given such miniscule quantities, have gone into barrel, with earlier April bottlings for Bourgogne Les Clos and Mâcon Villages Le Clos, a pair of wines made from a single plot of younger vines on chalkier soils. Elegant, bright with a tight lemon core and an attractive mineral undercurrent. Aside from Bourgogne Le Clos, Sophie felt no need to chaptalise. One of the two plots which make up Mâcon-Fuissé was spared the worst of the frost and hail. Also bottled in April, in 2021 it is a wine full of ripe apricot fruit and some spice, with a gentle creaminess and bright saline finish.

Able only to fill six out of her usual twenty-two barrels of Pouilly-Fuissé, in 2021 Sophie decided to blend her two Pouilly-Fuissé wines (normally bottled separately as 'Classic' and 'Collection') to make one wine: Pouilly-Fuissé 'C1/2021'. In November it looked elegant, driven, and beautifully balanced. Excellent harmony between liner freshness and its generous layers of ripe pineapple - mango fruit. A champion of this challenging vintage for Sophie, and real highlight in 2021.

Her two top wines, Pouilly-Fuissé Vers Crâs - since last year labelled Premier Cru - and Pouilly-Vinzelles, Les Longeays, both receive extended barrel maturation and will be bottled in March. Quantities of Vers Crâs, spared from hail, are ‘only’ down by 50%. It sees 25-30% new oak and, compared to Les Longeays, shows a little more finesse and mineral elegance. Les Longeays, of which only two barrels were made this year, comes from vines planted in 1905 and has 50% new oak, which appears wonderfully integrated and not in any way overpowering, absorbed by plenty old-vine weight and concentration. It is a stylish wine, vibrant with great energy; it too will be elevated to Premier Cru for the 2024 vintage. Finally, Bourgogne Rouge Le Clos, a fruity and attractive expression of Pinot Noir, first produced by Sophie in 2018, using 100% whole bunch fruit from her 1.2ha Le Clos vineyard.

CIBOR21B	Bourgogne Rouge, Le Clos	£18.00	£108.00
CIBOB21B	Bourgogne Blanc Le Clos	£15.00	£90.00
CIMLC21B	Mâcon-Villages Le Clos	£15.50	£93.00
CIMAF21B	Mâcon-Fuissé	£18.00	£108.00
CIPOI21B	Pouilly-Fuissé C/1	£28.00	£168.00
CIPVC21B	Pouilly-Fuissé, 1er Cru Vers Crâs	£37.50	£225.00
CIPVL21B	Pouilly-Vinzelles, Les Longeays	£35.00	£210.00

Domaine Charles Audoin, Marsannay-la-Côte. 14 ha.

The 2021 vintage appears to be an outstanding success for this Marsannay estate, whose wines are increasingly in demand year on year. And deservedly so. With each passing vintage seem to come further improvements. The wines hold added excitement, an extra vibrancy and suppleness, which sets them apart from the previous year. We have been working with this domaine since 2010, and from 2015 there has been a string of marvellous vintages. Cyril is a really fine vigneron and winemaker and combines infectious enthusiasm for his job and his wines with precise and thoughtful vineyard and cellar work. His ability to extract and manage tannin is impressive, creating wines that are silky, rounded and balanced, even when faced with the hot, concentration of the three past vintages.

Quality here is achieved with, of course, a great deal of hard work and motivation in vineyard and cellar. Cyril is quick to admit that 2021 - the domaine’s first year to be organically certified by Ecocert - was far from easy and required more time and work in the vineyard compared to years recently. Significant reductions to volumes, down by 70% this vintage, were caused mainly by severe Spring frost, snow too playing its role in exacerbating damage. The growing season was particularly challenging, with early growth and flowering accompanied by wet, cool conditions. There was seemingly constant disease pressure and a lot of time given to carrying out treatments to keep rot and disease at bay. Given the few grapes remaining and the devastatingly small harvest, Cyril reports that at points there was ‘the impression of working like crazy for nothing’ and that it was difficult at times to keep up morale.

Nonetheless, in spite of all this, in an altogether different vintage to the past three ‘*années solaires*’ his 2021s look nothing but elegant and vibrantly fruity. They are charming and seductively supple - more so than ever before.

Given their quality, particularly when considering the tiny quantities of the vintage, these wines represent remarkable value in the context of overheating Burgundy pricing.

As in 2019 and 2020, Cyril de-stemmed all grapes this year. New oak continues to be used modestly, ranging from 10% in Village level Marie Ragonneau up to 25% in the top wines. There is excellent success in the whites, energetic and ripe, though regrettably they are yet to benefit from the same increase in demand as the reds. Quantities are much reduced this year but what we do have to offer is wonderfully vibrant. His Aligoté, linear and juicy, full of ripe lemon notes; while Cuvée Charlie, the only cuvée of Marsannay blanc he made, shows great concentration, a tight citrus core underpinned by a wave of fresh acidity and a light touch of oak.

Cyril’s Bourgogne Rouge, all from demarcated Marsannay vineyards, is charming, full of rounded red fruit; one of the very best. Marie Ragonneau is a village blend from three distinct parcels of fruit. It is vibrant and inviting, packed with layers of ripe red berries. The rest of the wines are all from single vineyards which will one day be designated Premier Cru, and which show so well the variations of terroir from the north to south of the appellation. Clos du Roy and Longeroies from the northern part of the village on sandy, lighter soils produce supple, forward wines. Both, in 2021, full of charm. Clos du Roy with a deeper, richer more textural appeal, and Les Longeroies generously fruity and soft, with a more energetic, mineral character.

Further south, the deeper soils of Clos de Jeu, Champ Salomon and Favières bring more structure and denser characteristics to the wines. Moving south through the village, Clos de Jeu looks rich and deep with a sophisticated coffee bitterness and spice to accompany its ripe fruit concentration. Favières and Champ Salomon, powerful and elegant in equal measure, both impressively pure and seemingly more forward than in previous years. There is a plumper feel to the fruit of Champ Solomon but both incredibly stylish wines with a lot to unveil. An enticing limestone minerality marks Fixin Le Rozier, fresh and cool, a wine a made from the fruit of rockier soils. Here again we find charm and plumpness of fruit, adding a fleshy weight to its firmer structure.

There is great accomplishment here in 2021; all wines magnificent. And of great importance - irresistible deliciousness by the bucket load. Given the quality, and accompanying affordability, we can go as far as proclaiming that these wines represent young Burgundy at its best.

		bottle	case of 6
AUMCB21B	Marsannay Blanc, Cuvée Charlie	£28.00	£168.00
AUBOR21B	Bourgogne Rouge	£18.00	£108.00
AUMAR21B	Marsannay, Cuvée Marie Ragonneau	£26.00	£156.00
AUMLO21B	Marsannay, Les Longeroies	£34.50	£207.00
AUMCR21B	Marsannay, Clos du Roy	£34.50	£207.00
AUMCJ21B	Marsannay, Clos de Jeu	£34.50	£207.00

AUMFA21B	Marsannay, Les Favières	£34.50	£207.00
AUFIX21B	Fixin, Le Rozier	£34.50	£207.00
AUMCS21B	Marsannay, Au Champ Salomon	£34.50	£207.00

Domaine Fourrier, Gevrey-Chambertin. 12 ha.

The cooler conditions of 2021, perhaps provide a more natural fit when it comes to producing this estate's signature style of wine. And true to form, here in 2021 we are presented with wines which are high-toned, lifted, and superbly pure; and which display plenty of that rare, ethereal quality, seemingly so hard to capture yet which has come to mark the wines of this domaine.

Such quality, in vintages such as 2021 with their pressures and challenges in the vineyard, comes with great reductions to volumes, and once again this year we are looking at a loss of 70% across the domaine.

As elsewhere, April frost caused significant damage, exacerbated, for this domaine, by snowfall. Sustained rainfall at the untimely stages of flowering and harvest added further burdens, calling for extra time working in the vineyards leaf pulling and aerating the canopy to manage disease. By ensuring that the few berries left on the vines were well separated, Jean-Marie was able to delay picking and hold out for perfect phenolic ripeness, despite damp conditions. Unlike recent warmer vintages, no stems were included in 2021, as has always been the case here in classic vintages; and there was a little more extraction, with three hand-pigeages carried out per day. Earlier bottling was another reported development this year.

		bottle	case of 6
DFMSD21B	Morey-Saint-Denis, Clos Solon	£48.00	£288.00
DFGCH21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieille Vigne	£51.00	£306.00
DFGCC21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, 1er Cru Cherbaudes	£120.00	£720.00
DFGCG21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, 1er Cru Les Goulots	£120.00	£720.00

Domaine Heresztyn-Mazzini, Gevrey-Chambertin. 5.5 ha.

This is a domaine which doesn't stand still, and there are new developments to report with each passing vintage. Simon and Florence Heresztyn-Mazzini are an ambitious and determined couple, working very hard to put their domaine right at the top of the Gevrey Premier League. They have tried many experiments since taking over the family domaine in 2012 and are beginning to draw conclusions as to what works best for them. They now operate fully in accordance with biodynamic principles and are organic certified. Since last year, they have increased in size slightly taking them to a total of 6ha.

Tasting with Florence this year, all things considered she seemed positive about the 2021 vintage, very happy with the outcome in her wines, but also giving the impression of not having endured quite as much hardship in the vineyard compared to many of her colleagues.

She reported feeling better equipped to deal with pressures of the vintage, confident to put into practice lessons learnt from previous years, particularly in 2016, when cool, damp conditions taught the couple a lot about how to manage disease. She credited also their recent move towards biodynamic and organic viticulture in supporting the vines against the enduring pressures of mildew and rot this year. Cover crops helped absorb moisture, and organic treatments were successful in controlling mildew.

Nonetheless, like everywhere in 2021, with the month of April came frost, and despite brave faces, here too it resulted in a considerable loss of 50%-60% across the domaine. The vintage required a lot of careful observation in the vineyards, leaf-pulling and controlling the health of the grapes. They chose not to leave the domaine at all during the growing and ripening season. Harvest began relatively late, from 24th September. Whole bunches, a prominent feature here, were brought down to 30-60% this vintage, compared to 50-100% in years recently. Extraction was gentle, taking its time under cool temperatures, and new barrels were used at 25-30%, rising to 50% for Clos St Denis. Particular attention paid to the source of oak and choice of cooper, favouring oak from Fontainebleau for Clos village, and the small cooper Chassin, over the previously used Billon, for Champonnets.

It is easy to see why Florence and Simon are happy with their results this year. For them, 2021 was a 'classic' Burgundian vintage which has given rise to wines that are pure and elegant, and which show great typicity. Compared to previous years, there is a charming delicacy to be found across their range, many of the wines marked by a pretty, almost floral, perfume. Especially true of Clos Village, which looks almost 'Chambolle' in style, helped in part by its unique clay-limestone soils. Old vines are a prominent feature of this Domaine, making up a considerable proportion of the village wines. The vines of Gevrey Vieilles Vignes are all more than 70 years old, while many of those in Les Songes, which comes from two separate vineyards at the Northern edge of the village, are over 100 years. Soils here are richer, and this seems to pass into the wine, which shows a seductive silkiness with riper notes of red fruit coulis.

The berries that make up Perrières tend to be larger and juicier. It is always the lightest and most forward of the Premier Crus and there is an attractive delicacy to it in 2021. This compares to Champonnets, with its smaller berries from chalkier, shallow soils, which produce a firmer, more concentrated style. This wine used to need years to open, but it has changed a lot since Florence and Simon have taken over, offering this year more than ever an inviting approachability and a more forward fruitiness.

Les Goulots, with its cooler, more elevated positioning is true to form, showing deep, broody power behind more of those characteristic notes of red fruit coulis. Morey Millandes, slightly richer, with sweeter, riper red cherry fruit. It includes 60% whole bunch this year and is textural and rounded, with velvety tannins and a fresh, mineral edge. Delicious. Clos St Denis, where the vines are now over 30 years old, continues to show more year on year. In 2021 there is great power on the attack, deep, with layers of dark berried fruit and savoury spice, all sitting upon a formidable mineral backbone.

		bottle	case of 6
DHBOR21B	Bourgogne Rouge	£24.00	£144.00
DHGCH21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, Vieilles Vignes	£49.00	£294.00
DHGCV21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, Clos Village	£55.00	£330.00
DHGCS21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, Les Songes	£57.00	£342.00

DHGCP21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, 1er Cru La Perrière	£82.00	£492.00
DHGG21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, 1er Cru Les Goulots	£82.00	£492.00
DHGCC21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, 1er Cru Les Champonnets	£86.00	£516.00
DHMOM21B	Morey-Saint-Denis, 1er Cru Les Millandes	£82.00	£492.00
DHCSD21B	Clos-Saint-Denis, Grand Cru	£230.00	£1,380.00

Domaine Philippe Jouan, Morey-Saint-Denis. 3 ha.

It is no doubt that 2021 was challenging for Philippe, not only battling the difficult conditions in the vineyards and reductions in quantities, but also suffering the sad loss of his father at the very end of the year after a long illness. It was Henri who first welcomed us to the estate in 2011, showing us the full range of wines, 2010s from barrel and some older vintages from bottle.

The mixed pallet of Clos St Denis 2007 and Gevrey Aux Echézeaux 2008 and 2009 which was offered to us that year made a wonderful trio to introduce to the market. (Clos St Denis cost €30!).

Subsequent visits usually involved friendly bickering between Philippe and Henri as they contradicted and talked over each other. Henri was a friend and colleague of the famous Jacky Truchot who influenced some of his winemaking. In recent years Philippe has made a few changes to the winemaking, but the mantra which Henri explained on that very first visit - 'nous faisons du vin pour nos clients qui aiment le fruit' - still holds good. Last year there was not much wine, this year even less, and we find ourselves writing once again that we have never had so little - Philippe, like everyone, was severely hit by frost. It's still a small domaine of only three hectares, but with each passing year there are new developments and investments. The recently constructed cellar on the other side of the courtyard is now in operation, the new tractor gleaming in its hanger. This year, too, the proud announcement of a new vibrating sorting table, will have proved a crucial addition to the cellar's equipment.

Picking commenced here on 18th September, a few days earlier than most of his peers. Whole bunches, which have been used in lesser proportions by Philippe in recent years, were not used at all this year. There was a small amount of chaptalisation across the range, with final results coming in never much more than 13%, considerably down compared to the warmer years of late, and time on skins was relatively short. Extraction included more punching down compared to last year, with a daily morning pigeage and an evening remontage - 'je pige le matin et j'arrose le soir' was his personal formula which he felt best suited the nature of the musts in 2021. And new barrels continue to be used at 30-50% as we climb the scale.

The resulting wines, as always, show suppleness and generosity of fruit, underpinned this year by an elegant, almost mineral, freshness. Despite the tiny size of the domaine and the under-the-radar vibes, these are beautiful wines which inspire great devotion with many faithful customers. There is a clear house style - marked by a certain simplicity and an explosive fruitiness - however there is impressive terroir expression too. They are delicious in the first few years, but the 2007 Clos St Denis (of which we still have a couple of bottles) is still glorious.

Vines are impressively old, adding no doubt to the plump charm, 'la belle concentration', which oozes out of all of Philippe's wines, even in cooler vintages such as 2021. Morey comes

from two parcels: Pertuisées and Corvée Creunille (60 year old vines). Chambolle from three parcels: Derrière le Four, Herbues and Chardanes (80, 70 and 50 years old respectively). The Gevrey has vines aged from 70 to 100 years, including a small part which, Philippe claims, should be reclassified in Charmes Chambertin. All three village wines, very much true to style in their individual terroir expression, are forward and charming and come this year with great energy and vibrancy.

Morey Clos Sorbé, thick and concentrated, comes from two parcels, 60 and 70 years old, while Clos St Denis, with its weighty succulence and enchanting layers of redcurrant, cassis and pepper spice, comes from a parcel that is 85 years old. Here you have to search for the tannins, quietly working their magic in the background.

		bottle	case of 6
DJMSD21B	Morey-Saint-Denis	£52.00	£312.00
DJCHM21B	Chambolle-Musigny	£61.00	£366.00
DJGCH21B	Gevrey-Chambertin, Aux Echézeaux	£60.00	£360.00
DJMCS21B	Morey-Saint-Denis, 1er Cru Clos Sorbé	£115.00	£690.00
DJCSD21B	Clos-Saint-Denis, Grand Cru	£195.00	£1,170.00

Domaine Confuron-Gindre, Vosne-Romanée. 13 ha.

Stonemasons, excavators, crane-suppliers and all the rest continue to make money in Vosne-Romanée. They have moved on now from this domaine, but have left behind a magnificent new workspace for Edouard and his parents. Their new barrel cellar and ‘chais’ are now complete and this year, for the first time, full use was made of the considerably enlarged space. The old cellar was cramped (and small and cold). Winemaking took place on the other side of the village and tasting somewhere else again. During November’s visit, François acknowledged how much hard work producing wine here used to involve and talked proudly of the distance the domaine has come since he started out in 1989, filling 3,000 bottles for the French market. He seems almost unable to believe the developments himself.

It is without doubt a massively-changed work environment: winemaking, maturation and bottling now all take place under one roof. Hugely impressive and fuelled in no small way by the family’s strong work ethic and a shared enthusiasm for what they do. It is a significant investment too, which says a lot about their confidence in the future. We’ve worked with the estate since the 2009 vintage and with each passing vintage we have seen the wines become less rustic, more polished, and more complex. They were always powerful but recent years have revealed a new direction and now they come with an added charm, a slim elegance, and suppleness.

Edouard joined his parents at the domaine six years ago now, and released this year some new wines under his newly created ‘négociant’ company. He remains, nonetheless, fully involved in the family estate which, it is planned, he will eventually take over. It was Edouard who introduced whole bunch fermentation to the winemaking practices of his father, used again this year across the range.

Like everywhere else, 2021 was a challenging vintage, and here they suffered the double-edged sword of April frost and snowfall. Volumes evidently took a hit, with many of their wines reduced to 50% of normal production.

The three village wines, from Vosne, Nuits and Gevrey, are all made from several blended parcels. This year they include around 15% whole bunch, and new oak remains at 25%, rising to 50% for the 'grander' crus. Vosne, elegant and supple, displays charming notes of red fruit coulis, while Nuits, forward and open, has a darker fruit profile, ripe blackberry, and sweet notes of spice. The Gevrey, a more savoury style, firm and mineral, with an attractive steeliness.

2021 marks the fifth vintage of La Colombière, a well-located single vineyard, which, from barrel in November looked very promising - deliciously textural and creamy, with a fresh saline undertone. Chaumes, with its 100-year-old vines, is true to style - concentrated and densely packed, interlaid with ripe black and red fruit - and Brûlées, with its north-facing aspect, is tightly-coiled, streamlined, and sinewy. Beaumonts, in part due to its sun-drenched, iron-rich soils, is always the ripest and most voluptuous; in 2021 it is thick and powerful with a rich, fig- like character held in check by a cool streak of minerality. Suchots comes from Suchots du Bas and vines are aged 90 years. The vineyard has long been in the family but 2021 marks only its third year of production from this domaine. It is a wine which exudes class and sophistication: tightly structured and impressively composed, giving the impression of much more to be uncoiled in years to come. Echézeaux, from the Treux and Rouges du Bas subsections of this large Grand Cru, sees 40% new oak. This year it looked wonderfully approachable and harmonious, powerful and thick as always, but showing an attractive freshness and vibrancy to accompany layers of plush, ripe fruit.

		bottle	case of 6
CGBOR21B	Bourgogne Rouge	£14.50	£87.00
CGGCH21B	Gevrey-Chambertin	£39.00	£234.00
CGNSG21B	Nuits-Saint-Georges	£39.00	£234.00
CGVOR21B	Vosne-Romanée	£39.00	£234.00
CGVOC21B	Vosne-Romanée, La Colombière	£49.00	£294.00
CGVRC21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Les Chaumes	£59.00	£354.00
CGVBR21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Les Brûlées	£59.00	£354.00
CGVBE21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Les Beaumonts	£59.00	£354.00
CGVRS21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Les Suchots	£70.00	£420.00
CGECH21B	Echézeaux, Grand Cru	£110.00	£660.00

Domaine Sylvain Cathiard et Fils, Vosne-Romanée. 12.4 ha.

Last year's visit saw this domaine as a busy construction site, cranes towering overhead amongst piles of rubble as they prepared the new winery for a dramatic increase in size. And this year, the work was largely complete. The finished cuverie and cellar are impressive; they bring a new, more majestic quality to the domaine. The cuverie feels almost cathedral-like from within. The domaine's recent growth and development from 3.5ha just three years ago, to 12.5ha today, is equally impressive. Like the newly constructed cellar, it shows the ambition and progress of this highly-regarded Vosne-based domaine over recent years. This is down to Sébastien Cathiard's hard work over recent years. He is obviously meticulous in his approach, both in winemaking and in his vision of how to develop the domaine, and there is an assured confidence and determination to his way of working. But there is also an endearing humble quality which comes across, and such expansion, when set against his modest and well-considered nature, seems fitting, and in no way excessive or assuming.

Most of the recent growth has come from new vineyards in the Hautes Côtes. They lie on the edge of the Nuits-Saint-Georges appellation and, like all vineyards in the domaine, are organically farmed. Such sites are becoming increasingly sought after in light of increasing temperatures: they offer later ripening with lower levels of sugar and also great potential of terroir - plenty of limestone and some clay.

Unfortunately, hard work and determination alone cannot save the grapes in vintages like 2021, and Sébastien, like everyone, remained in many respects at the mercy of Mother Nature. Many of the Premier Cru vineyards, due to their more exposed sites, were badly impacted by frost: Reignots, Orveaux and Malconsorts all down by at least 70%. And then came the challenges of odium, causing problems on the more limestone soils of the Hautes Côtes and losses of 50-60%. Some sites fared better, such as the relatively new Champ Franc vineyard in Gevrey, where the harvest was reduced only by 20%.

Produced for the first time this year is another Hautes Côtes de Nuits, 85% of which comes from the large Dame Marie vineyard. Firm and rounded in equal measure, it is deep, spicy and a touch smoky. Aux Chaumes and Les Dames Huguette, also from the Hautes Côtes, both show beautifully the freshness and vibrancy of the vintage. Chaumes offering great energy and purity, layered with crunchy red fruit. Les Dames Huguette seeming richer and softer in texture, with a charming ripeness and fine, creamy tannins. Harvest takes place a little later in the Hautes Côtes, beginning this year on the 27th September, four days later than down on the Côtes. Less sugar accumulation in the grapes up here translates in wines slightly lower in alcohol: 12.5% as opposed to 13% and 13.5% in the Villages and Premiers Crus from the Côtes.

As with everything that comes out of the cellar, these wines are vinified following Sébastien's strategy to delay 'malo' so that the wines can spend two winters in barrel. All fruit is de-stemmed, and the wines are bottled in the Spring, unfinned and unfiltered, with a little CO₂ to maintain freshness.

2021 is a vintage which seems to have given rise to magnificent wines for Sébastien. The village wines are layered, rich and densely packed, yet come accompanied with a beautiful freshness and cool vibrancy making them so harmonious and exciting. The top wines are weighty and concentrated, and very impressive. Firm in structure and beautifully poised with enchanting perfumes; texture, and depth a-plenty! The tiny quantities perhaps concentrating fruit even further.

SCBOA22B	Bourgogne Aligoté (NB 2022)	£21.00	£126.00
SCCOB21B	Côteaux Bourguignons, Les Croix Blanches	£25.00	£150.00
SCBOR21B	Bourgogne Rouge	£41.00	£246.00
SCHNC21B	Hautes Côtes de Nuits, Aux Chaumes	£47.00	£282.00
SCHND21B	Hautes Côtes de Nuits, Les Dames Huguette	£48.00	£288.00
SCGCH21B	Gevrey-Chambertin	£80.00	£480.00
SCNSG21B	Nuits-Saint-Georges	£80.00	£480.00
SCVOR21B	Vosne-Romanée	£90.00	£540.00
SCCHM21B	Chambolle-Musigny, Les Clos de l'Orme	£95.00	£570.00
SCNUT21B	Nuits-Saint-Georges, 1er Cru Aux Thorey	£175.00	£1,050.00
SCNUM21B	Nuits-Saint-Georges, 1er Cru Aux Murgers	£190.00	£1,140.00
SCVRR21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Aux Reignots	£310.00	n/a
SCVRO21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru En Orveaux	£310.00	n/a
SCVRS21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Les Suchots	£395.00	n/a
SCVRM21B	Vosne-Romanée, 1er Cru Aux Malconsorts	£505.00	n/a
SCRSV21B	Romanée Saint Vivant, Grand Cru	£1,300.00	n/a

Domaine Gaston et Pierre Ravaut, Ladoix/Corton. 12 ha.

This is our eighth vintage working with Vincent and his wife Céline. Vincent represents the sixth generation of a domaine which has been bottling wine since the 1920s. This is really noteworthy. Vincent's father Gaston is still a presence around the estate, but with typical Burgundian complexity, it still retains the original name of Gaston et Pierre, rather than Vincent who is now in sole control.

2021 marks here the first year of organic conversion. It is also the first year that son, Jules, having recently completed an internship at Domaine Heresztyn-Mazzini, joined his father in the vineyard and cellar. His help and hard work, welcomed and admired by his parents, especially in light of the vintage and its challenges. In Burgundy, where family successions are all too often the source of grief and complexity, it was heart-warming to hear Vincent and Céline speak about their son's contribution with such appreciation and respect.

2019 and 2020 were great successes for this domaine, and Vincent, who spoke always very enthusiastically about both, this year admits that he was sceptical about what 2021 would bring. For him, '2021 was a year of the winemaker'. A different vintage to those of late; a vintage which provided the best producers with an opportunity to shine and make excellent wine provided they had the time, motivation, and the sensitive touch in the cellar which it required.

It appears to be a triumph for Vincent - elegance and charm shine throughout the range. There is concentration and ripeness of fruit, underpinned always by a fresh stream of saline minerality. In the reds, tannins remain firm, though well-judged, and provide a sensitive frame to the layers of ripe berried fruit. There is an added friendliness to the wines this year too, an appealing warmth and suppleness despite the cooler conditions of the vintage. Tasting here in November, it was apparent the effort that had gone into the making of these wines, and despite initial reservations, Vincent is now very happy with the vintage. The hard work now done; he can relax into the idea that 2021 has turned out to be for him a great vintage to make a classic style of Burgundy: fresh and pure.

The vintage conditions brought here a 45% reduction in volumes, due to frost and a meticulous sorting process at harvest. Chardonnay again suffered particularly badly and many of the domaine's usual whites were not produced. Ladoix Blanc, from its unique limestone-marly soils, is aged for one year in 400l barrels (30% new). It is vibrant and energetic, with an appealing exotic fruit quality. For the second year from this domaine we also have a very classic Aligoté -ripe but tart.

For the reds, as always here, no whole bunches are used; and the process of alcoholic fermentation is slow with a gentle extraction involving only one remontage every other day. New oak remains modest at 15% across all wines.

Les Dames Huguettes from the Hautes Côtes draws you in with its soft redberry fruit and violet, floral perfume. Charming, rounded, and silky with delicious red-plum compote. Ladoix Les Carrieres presents a vibrant, more streamlined expression, with great limestone minerality and a dancing line of redcurrant fruit. It is set to be promoted to Premier Cru in two years. True to style, Le Bois Rousot, from its crumbly red, ironstone soils, appears the most 'gourmand' of the Premier Crus, forward and supple; while Les Basses Mourottes, from rockier soils with a higher limestone content, looks in 2021 marvellous, deep and layered with attractive spice and more savoury notes. For Vincent this wine represents one of the best terroirs of Ladoix and an excellent reference point for Burgundian Pinot Noir.

There is power and finesse in equal measure when it comes to both Aloxe Cortons. Firm shoulders carry deep notes of bramble fruit and chocolate. Classic in their expression, they are weighty, layered, and tightly coiled. 80% of the fruit comes from the highly regarded Les Valozieres site, with a higher proportion of grapes from limestone making it into the Premier Cru. Bressandes, in 2021, is rich and charming, and very inviting, with plenty of plush red fruit to fill out its formidable structure. Excellent soon or in ten years. Exceptional wines across the board from this domaine in 2021.

		bottle	case of 6
DRBOA21B	Bourgogne Aligoté	£12.50	£75.00
DRLAB21B	Ladoix Blanc	£28.00	£168.00
DRHND21B	Hautes Côtes de Nuits, Les Dames Huguettes	£19.00	£114.00
DRLAD21B	Ladoix	£22.50	£135.00
DRLAC21B	Ladoix Les Carrieres	£25.00	£150.00
DRLBR21B	Ladoix, 1er Cru Le Bois Rousot	£29.00	£174.00
DRLBM21B	Ladoix, 1er Cru Les Basses Mourottes	£29.00	£174.00

DRACO21B	Aloxe-Corton	£34.00	£204.00
DRACP21B	Aloxe-Corton, 1er Cru	£39.50	£237.00
DRCBR21B	Corton Bressandes, Grand Cru	£58.50	£351.00

Domaine Thierry Violot-Guillemard, Pommard. 8 ha

2021 is Joannès' third vintage in full control of this organically run, 8 ha domaine, and a vintage he describes as being very different in both the vineyard and cellar compared to his first two years in charge. The cool, wet conditions and accompanying problems of rot and mildew put extra pressure on the estate's organic ways of working, and combined with damage caused by severe frosts, this year we are looking at a 60-80% reduction in volume, depending on the wine. Just as in the hotter, drier conditions of last two years, in 2021 Joannès continues to come out with wines which are supple, harmonious and which offer great freshness. He picked from 12th September, and explained the wine making practice of the house, continued through several generations, to be one of minimal 'working' of the must. Again in 2021, this meant a very gentle extraction with only one pigeage throughout alcoholic fermentation, and the wines - particularly the lighter styles - look pale. Despite the lightness of colour there is great generosity of fruit, vibrancy, and perfume. Whole bunches and new oak both feature prominently in the winemaking, but in neither case is their use overly apparent or obtrusive in the final wines. Despite the high proportion of whole bunches now used (up to 100% in certain wines) tannins remain meltingly light, impressively fine and polished, and in no way 'stemmy'. Rather, he credits their use for the lifted, perfumed character they bring, as well as the attractive 'fraise de bois' note which many display. Similarly, new oak, which sits at 20-50%, appears to sink seamlessly into the wines, bringing perhaps an added weight and class where used in higher proportions, but never an overt oakiness. Amongst all our enthusiasts for whole-bunch fermentations, Joannès has practised more of this in 2021 than the others.

There is a wonderful elegance and delicacy here again this vintage, and the wines are impressively pure and supple, with an understated sophistication which belies the Pommard stereotype. A glorious red fruit vibrancy and an enchanting perfume run through the range, giving an impression of delightful lightness. Bourgogne Maisons Dieu and Pommard Brescul, both lighter in style, show a lifted, almost floral, prettiness. Pommard Premier Crus Platière, Epenots and Rugiens all share a silkiness of texture, a seductive creaminess carried by their beautifully fine tannins. Although vibrant and fresh, they have a deeper, denser profile. The two top wines of the estate, Epenots and Rugiens, complement each other very well. In both there is more weight, structure, and spice; the former, fabulously perfumed and showing a higher-toned red fruit purity, while the later appears more savoury and robust, in some ways a more serious creation. TINY quantities here.

		bottle	case of 6
VGMEU21B	Meursault, Les Meix-Chavaux	£60.00	£360.00
VGBMD21B	Bourgogne, Les Maisons-Dieu	£25.00	£150.00
VGBLU21B	Beaune, En Lulune	£38.00	£228.00
VGPEB21B	Pommard, En Brescul	£57.00	£342.00

VGPLP21B	Pommard, 1er Cru La Platière	£71.00	£426.00
VGPEP21B	Pommard, 1er Cru Les Epenots	£91.00	£546.00
VGPLR21B	Pommard, 1er Cru Les Rugiens	£91.00	£546.00

Domaine Philippe Garrey, Saint-Martin-sous-Montaigu, Mercurey. 5 ha.

2021 marks our second vintage working with Philippe Garrey, a sixth generation ‘vigneron’ who has developed his family domaine from 3 to 5ha since taking it over in 2005. Finding a new source of great wine, especially in Burgundy where almost everyone good has been snapped up by prospecting importers, is a great challenge. New growers have come to us in the past through lucky accident having stumbled upon them, been tipped off, or occasionally coming across their wines in restaurants, so to be able to credit an internet search with the initial contact with Philippe Garrey is a new one!

Philippe farms everything himself, biodynamically since 2007, and certified by Demeter since 2010. His aim is to make wines which reflect the terroir. He is not looking for power or extraction; for him, balance is crucial, often picking early favouring freshness over too much concentration.

Philippe is a calm, considered guy. He speaks carefully and articulately in good English. His wines follow a similar line of character - precise, well-crafted, and elegant.

Although when the weather conditions allow, he makes some Aligoté and has a half hectare of Chardonnay for a Mercurey Blanc, the estate is primarily focused on red wines. Grapes are hand-picked in small 7kg boxes and receive a 4-5 day cold maceration before 20-23 days on the skins during and after fermentation, with natural yeasts only. Whole bunches are used regularly, depending on the vintage and cuvée, and a small amount of sulphur added when required, usually after malolactic fermentation. The reds age in barrel for 12 months, and new oak (lightly toasted) is used sensitively at 10% - 50%, depending on the cuvée. Vines are old.

Like everywhere, quantities are drastically down in 2021, with a 60% reduction across the domaine. No whites were produced at all this year due to frost, another example of how Chardonnay’s precocious bud-break leaves it even more vulnerable to drops in temperature. Although spared hail, Philippe had to contend with a cool, damp Summer, spending a great deal more time in the vineyard than in years previous, managing the threat of mildew and rot. As elsewhere, harvest was pushed back, here by almost a month compared to this past year, 2022. Feeling less of a need to use stems to add freshness or balance to the wines, whole bunches were brought down to 25-35% this vintage, from 50-60% in warmer years. And although Philippe extracted a bit more in 2021, compared to recent vintages, he chose to extend the cold soak and overall maceration time, rather than resort to any pigeage punch downs. All wines sit naturally at 12.5% - 13%; no chaptalisation was performed.

Bourgogne Rouge Clos des Boilles is a blend of parcels 50, 23 and 8 years old. It is deep and richly perfumed, with attractive layers of fresh crunchy fruit. Clos des Montaigu is made from vines planted in 1959, along an east-facing slope of limestone. There is a linear drive to it in 2021, tightly coiled with an attractive spiciness and a stony minerality. La Chassière is a south-east facing vineyard of limestone over clay with vines aged 60, 40 and 35 years. It appears ripe and supple, perfumed with vibrant red cherry fruit. Clos du Paradis, made from 60-year-old vines on marl and clay, looks textural and weighty, with great charm to its firmer, deeper structure. It has no whole bunches in 2021 and new barrels are used at 50%.

New in the 2021 vintage is Beaune 1er Cru Les Sizies, which comes from 50-year-old vines planted on marl and clay, with a higher proportion of stones. Vines ripen early, it is the first of Philippe's vineyard to be harvested. This year it includes 30% whole bunch, and looks deep and layered, with great energy.

Wonderful purity and vibrancy across the range in 2021, and an exciting linear freshness to accompany the beautifully supple, ripe fruit.

		bottle	case of 6
PGBOR21B	Bourgogne, Clos des Boilles	£20.50	£123.00
PGMCM21B	Mercurey, 1er Cru Clos de Montaigu	£31.00	£186.00
PGMLC21B	Mercurey, 1er Cru La Chassière	£31.00	£186.00
PGMCP21B	Mercurey, 1er Cru Clos du Paradis	£37.00	£222.00
PGBLS21B	Beaune 1er Cru, Les Sizies	£61.00	£366.00

Domaine Thivolle, Chiroubles. 3.8ha (GAMAY ALERT !!)

We are excited to unveil to the UK for the first time the wines of Xavier Thivolle. His small range of 2022s offer, we hope, a welcome glimpse ahead to the considerably more positive story of next year's vintage- a tale of generous volumes of healthy grapes and, as reports suggest, of highly aromatic wines, impressively balanced, concentrated, and fresh.

2022 brought with it warm, dry conditions. The lack of rain meant low disease pressure, however the drought-like conditions of the summer months brought their challenges, and Xavier reports grape development was slow. Nevertheless, it is a vintage reported by many to be outstanding. Xavier is certainly very happy with the results, and we could see why when tasting these wines on a cold, rainy November afternoon.

Originally from Normandy, Xavier Thivolle spent 10 years in the corporate world before deciding to turn to winemaking. Since 2019 he has been working from his small winery in Fêtre, at the top of the Chiroubles appellation, with a mission to make classic Beaujolais wines, authentic and true to their individual terroirs. His carefully chosen parcels, which are dotted around the granitic hillsides of the Cru appellations of Chiroubles and Morgon, total 5ha - 3.8ha of which currently in production. Many of his vines are old, some as old as 90 years. Vineyards are planted on sandy granitic soils, the Chiroubles at elevations of up to 600m: high for the area, and where he can harvest late. Xavier works all his vines himself, biodynamically, and he will be organically certified as of 2022. Focused on capturing and fully expressing the character of the different terroirs, vinification is very much a 'natural' process and the philosophy one of interfering as little as possible in the cellar, with only a small amount of SO2 added at bottling.

All three wines receive the traditional Beaujolais treatment of semi-carbonic maceration using natural yeasts and whole bunches. Temperatures are kept low during alcoholic fermentation, with just a sprinkling of juice from the bottom of the tank each day to keep the bunches at the top of the cap moist. Chiroubles rests 10 -15 days like this and, Morgon up to 23 days before pressing and the fermentation of the last few sugars. Malolactic fermentation follows in autumn. Interestingly, Xavier keeps the wines in two separate cellars during alcoholic fermentation and malolactic fermentation. This keeps the bacteria needed for the latter process away from the must during the alcoholic fermentation .

All wines undergo ten-months maturation and will be bottled in May. Stainless steel is used for Chiroubles Tradition, while Chiroubles Amphora goes into 600L sandstone amphorae. Xavier prefers sandstone, over clay or ceramic models, due to the high temperature at which sandstone is baked during production (1,350+ °C). This enables less oxygen transfer during maturation, a feature he believes to suit Gamay especially well. A combination of concrete and old, rather ugly fiberglass tanks are used for Morgon Le Charmeur. Xavier loves the effect these old tanks have on his Morgon.

The result is three excellent wines: serious, expressive, and true to terroir, but nevertheless unmistakably Beaujolais in style. There is great regional typicity - vibrant, crunchy red fruit layered upon a cool stream of volcanic acidity. And plenty of that forward charm and drinkability for which the region is known. But there is an added dimension to be found here too: finesse, elegance, and purity; and great energy.

The Chiroubles ‘Cuvée Tradition’ is delicious - beautifully fresh and crunchy, ripe cherries and raspberries, perfumed too. It is elegant and lively, and there is a delicate, streamlined lightness. Next to it, ‘Cuvée Amphora’ appears a little more concentrated and powerful, with lovely ripe blackberry fruit and a driven mineral undertone. Tannins are fine, and soft. Morgon ‘Le Charmeur’, deeper still, a more structured expression of Gamay, but again displaying vibrancy and energy common to all the wines here.

The three wines shown represent the entire range produced. Xavier hopes soon to add a Beaujolais Village to his offering when the right plot becomes available. Looking ahead to warmer years, he is also experimenting with Clairette, Vermentino, and Sciacarello - varieties yet unknown to the region but which, given their ability to retain good levels of acidity and accumulate less sugar when ripening, Xavier believes well-placed to withstand future challenges associated with global warming. **N.B. These are 2022 vintage.**

		bottle	case of 6
XTCHI22B	Chiroubles Tradition 2022	£13.50	£81.00
XTCHA22B	Chiroubles Amphora 2022	£16.00	£96.00
XTMOR22B	Morgon Le Charmeur 2022	£14.50	£87.00