

2012 BURGUNDY REPORT OVERVIEW

GRANDS VINS
DE BOURGOGNE

BURGUNDY'S
CHALLENGES IN
THE NEW
CENTURY

GRAND JOURS
TASTING NOTES

JULY 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Every other year, the marketing association for the Burgundy wine region, the Bureau Interprofessionnel des Vins de Bourgogne (BIVB), organizes one of the most important trade tastings in the wine world. The week-long event, the Grand Jours de Bourgogne, requires tasters to travel from Dijon in Chablis down south to Puligny-Montrachet to sample the latest wines from each village of the Cote d'Or as well as Burgundy's satellite appellations. In a rare case of bureaucratic co-operation, the Grand Jours tastings are held in even years while a similar event focusing on wine from France's Rhone Valley are held during the odd years.

Tasters get the opportunity to examine the wines from each appellation, an array from wines from growers, wineries and negociants. Unlike the en primeur tastings in Bordeaux which focus on a singular vintage, each producer at the Grand Jours usually pours their most recent releases but some take advantage of the occasion to present other vintages as well. Thanks to some luck in scheduling, the vintage currently entering the market are the acclaimed 2012s making attendance at this Grand Jours tastings a must.

This year, we sent Jeff Loo, one of JJ Buckley's senior wine specialists and a Burgundy enthusiast, to take a look at the 2012s. This report features Jeff's overview and top picks for each commune. JJ Buckley's senior editor Chuck Hayward writes about Burgundy's challenges as their wines become increasingly popular.

Enjoy this report and happy reading!!



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BURGUNDY TODAY



Burgundy, the region and its wines, finds itself at an interesting crossroads as the 21st century begins to unfurl. Somewhat hidden in the shadows of the wine world due to the slightly confusing patchwork of vineyards and their isolated location in the center of France, Burgundy today finds increased attention focused on its land and wines with its future uncertain.

BURGUNDY: PRICES AND SUPPLIES

For most of the 20th century, the prices and availability of Burgundy wine was relatively stable. The best vineyards of the region could only produce so much wine so there was little wine to be sold into the market. Given that Burgundy's wines are focused on subtlety and nuance, their wines never had the chance to achieve mass appeal.

The demand for Burgundy was also limited because it was only sold in a few markets. For most of the latter half of the 20th century, Burgundy's main markets have been Europe and America so any growth in Burgundy sales were tied to the slow but steady increase in the popularity of those wines in those markets. There's no reason to expect that interest in Burgundy's traditional markets will decrease.

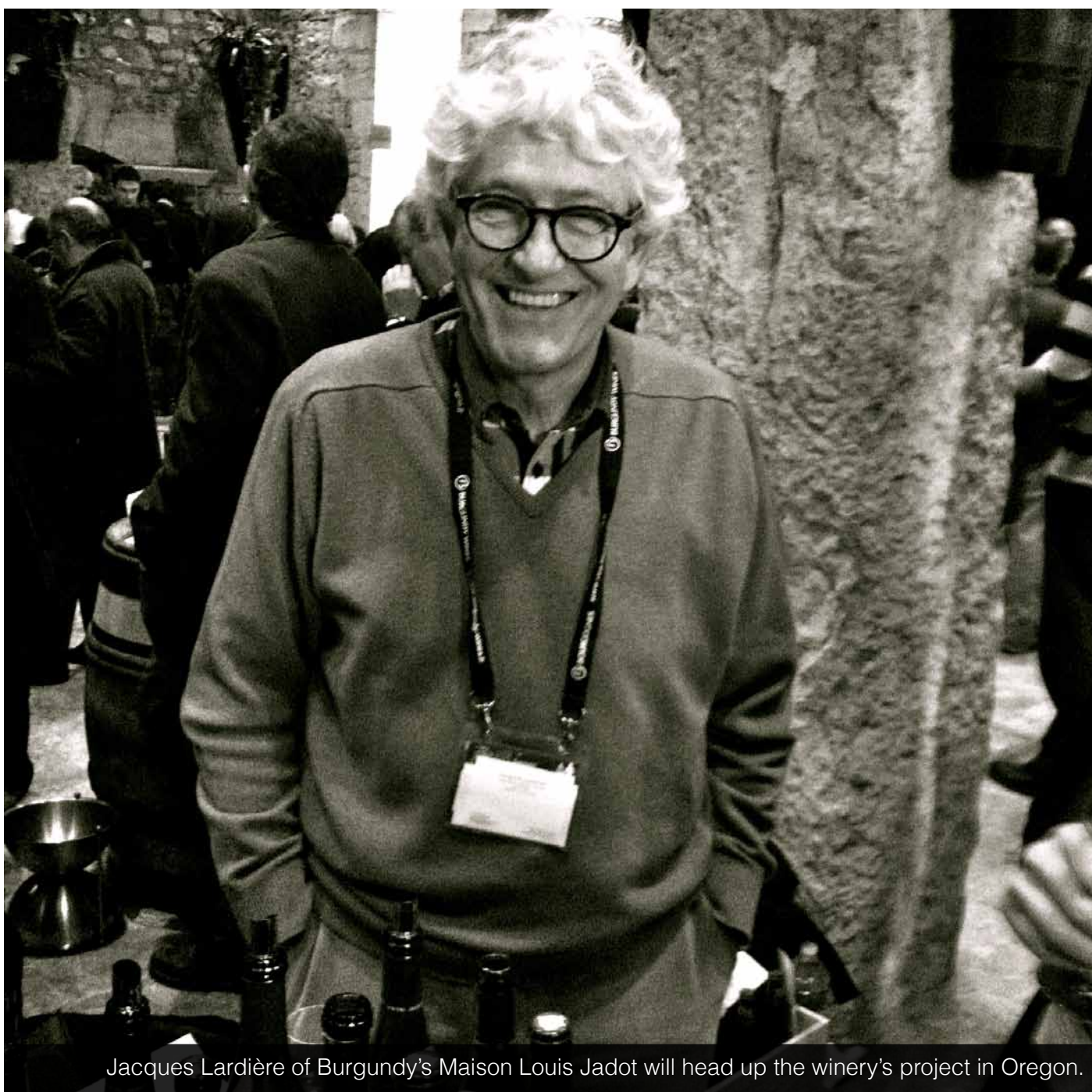
The last 20 years, however, have seen an explosive interest in fine wines thanks to the wine boom in new and emerging markets. Countries in Eastern Europe, the Far East and even in places as diverse as Brazil and India have seen dramatic increases in wine sales. Given their large populations, an even stronger interest in wine can be expected in the near future. The rise of a wealthy consumer base interested in top quality luxury products means that the recent interest in Burgundy's top wines can only be expected to grow.

Producing a very finite supply of wine, we can only expect that the prices for premier and grand cru Burgundy will increase markedly over the upcoming years and the limited amount of wine will be spread amongst many more markets. In short, the bad news is that Burgundy will become more expensive and harder to find.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF BUSINESS IN BURGUNDY

As the demand for the best Burgundies has increased, land prices for the top vineyards have risen exponentially. While prices for village-level vineyards have risen slightly over the past few decades, it's the cost for premier and grand cru land where prices have exploded. Today, grand cru vineyards easily command over \$2 million per acre. This is, of course, an extreme example as average prices in Burgundy are \$118,000. To put this in contrast, the top prices in Napa (\$350,000), Champagne (\$600,000) and Bordeaux (\$800,000) pale in comparison. The marked rise in the cost of land is an unfortunate result but should be expected as market forces exert their impact.

One result of the increase in land prices has been a realignment of the expansion strategies of Burgundy's wineries. Having been priced out of the market for land in the Cote d'Or, many negociants and older family-owned domaines looking to expand their holdings are looking at other winegrowing areas. The *crus* of Beaujolais became the initial focus for land buys as larger firms like Jadot and Louis Latour, followed by smaller negociants like Vincent Girardin and Nicolas Potel, began to gobble up properties. The unfortunate result is that prices for the best *crus* (Morgon and Moulin-a-Vent) have begun to creep up to the level of village-level Burgundies!!



Jacques Lardière of Burgundy's Maison Louis Jadot will head up the winery's project in Oregon.

Other winemakers have begun to look outside of Burgundy to expand the business opportunities. Some, like Domaine Verget's Jean-Marie Guffens and Guillaume d'Angerville of Volnay's Marquis d'Angerville, have stayed in France and looked to upcoming areas like the Jura for new business ventures. Other winemakers are looking overseas. Oregon has already had a long interest from Joseph Drouhin to which Louis Jadot has just become a new neighbor. The whole planet, however, is now up for grabs when you consider that members of the Bouchard family have long been involved in South Africa while Pascal Marchand, who has jobs at Domaine Comte Armand and Domaine De La Vougeraie on his resume, is working in the far corners of Western Australia.

Expansion in new directions and regions is nothing of great concern; many wineries outside of Burgundy have looked to other winemaking regions to create new sales opportunities. What has been recently seen in Burgundy are French and multi-national corporations starting to purchase vineyards. (The purchase of the famous Clos des Lambrays by the luxury conglomerate Louis Vuitton for a rumored \$6.5 million per acre is a prime example.) Deep pocketed corporations are often the only buyers with the funds to purchase land so expensive.

As Burgundy becomes more expensive and even scarcer, the twin temptations of a vibrant secondary resale market combined with fraud and counterfeiting leaves wineries with less control over how their product is sold. For the most part, wineries want their wines drunk by their clients and not resold through the grey market but the ever increasing global demand for the best wines ensures that some wines can almost be too expensive to drink.

To combat against these trends, we can expect to see more direct sales from wineries to their mailing lists. Wilson Daniels already handles direct sales to clients of Domaine Romanee-Conti and new logistics firms make it easier to move wine directly from Burgundy to the client's doors. Proof tags and serialized bottles will allow wineries to trace bottles and those who resell wines will be taken off the list of clients. The need to ensure provenance and prevent a growing gray market will also help introduce anti-counterfeiting measures which will ultimately benefit the consumer.

But perhaps the most enduring problem that will be faced by Burgundy's wine industry is the change in the region's social fabric. For centuries, Burgundy's families have operated in relative isolation. The tightly knit community is what makes Burgundy unique but also resistant to changes wrought by social and economic trends. It's a shame but Burgundy must now deal with the effects from the region's increased popularity.

Today, with vineyards so expensive, it's difficult for families to pay the high taxes necessary to inherit land from their parents. In such cases, outsiders who have large financial resources and possess little social or business connections to Burgundy, become land owners. The new arrivals may not know much about the inner workings of Burgundy or have connections with the region's winemaking, political and social communities. The selling of land and grapes, for example, has long been done behind closed doors. The ability of corporations and wealthy individuals to interact with Burgundy's insular social structure could determine their level of commercial success.

In some cases, new arrivals can come from other countries. While Bordeaux has long been a hotbed of foreign investment and indeed welcomes it, Burgundy's insular nature has left many closed doors in the face of outsiders. When American Ted Lemon began making wine at Meursault's Domaine Roulot, it was considered a game changing breakthrough in the world of wine. Yet the recent purchase of the Domaine du Gevrey-Chambertin by a Chinese family raised many eyebrows amongst the locals which provided much fodder to the international press.

Burgundy's wines can be expected to go from strength to strength in the future. Better cellar techniques and viticultural practices have raised the standard of quality. The increased use of organic and biodynamic viticulture has led to healthier vineyards. It's unfortunate, however, that increased prices for Burgundy's wine and land will make the best wines rare and expensive while the economic changes can be expected to affect Burgundy's economic and social structures forevermore. How Burgundy handles these changes will determine their place in the fabric of the wine world. It should prove interesting.

TASTING NOTES

CHABLIS



One of the many success stories of the 2012 vintage could be found in the wines from Chablis. Yields were extremely low, giving the wines amazing concentration. The wines showed superb purity of fruit along with some vibrant acidity.

Chatting with the winery representatives, many considered the 2012 as a combination of the richness and acidity from 2010 and the fruit of 2009. Compared to the 2010s, the '12s have an incredible roundness to them as though they possess the fatness that comes from bottle age. There were few poor wines to be found at these tastings, a testimony to the quality of the vintage.

It's not just the wines from *grand cru* or *premier cru* vineyards that were successful in 2012. Classic Chablis and the lesser known satellite appellations also found amazing success. For instance, Sorin Coquard's Bourgogne-Cotes d'Auxerre was absolutely exquisite. This relatively obscure chardonnay has precision and a fascinating character. One of the greatest values to reach the US at about \$19 retail, this drinks far beyond that.

2012 La Chablisienne Chablis “Mont de Milieu”

Very pale yellow color at the core with very little change at the rim. This has an incredible nose that starts off with green apple, pear and a mineral note that surges forth bringing out incredible notes of seashell, crushed rocks and white pepper. On the palate, the flavors match the bouquet. What really makes this stand apart from the other wines of the La Chablisienne portfolio is how the richness and weight on the palate pairs with the amazing amount of acidity. This will drink well now, but little haste is required as this will last easily 15+ years.

95 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Louis Michel Chablis “Montee de Tonnerre”

I have a soft spot for the Montee de Tonnerre vineyard and Louis Michel's 2012 hit that sweet spot perfectly. This is the kind of Chablis that is perfect to drink now but will certainly evolve gracefully in the cellar. Aromas of poached pear, lime and crushed seashells are followed by oyster water and just the lightest kiss of spice. The palate is a melange of flavor and offers amazing structure from start to finish. The depth of acidity and weight kept me going back, leaving a very favorable impression. This is going to be fun to drink over the next 10 years.

94+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Long-Depaquit Chablis “Beugnons”

Beugnons is a more specific *lieu-dit* from within the *premier cru* Vaillons. The nose showcases ripe concentration of fruit and pulverized seashells. This is an amazingly racy wine that has you salivating for more. There's a seamless fruit profile on the nose and palate. Flavors of red delicious apple, banana and truffle are complemented by the weight of the vintage while the integrated acidity keeps this wine from being over the top. Enjoy over the next 10-15 years.

92 points—Jeff Loo

2012 William Fevre Chablis “Les Clos”

Fevre's 2012 Les Clos *grand cru* bottling is as exciting now as it should be 10 years from now. Big aromas of yellow apple, fresh flowers and minerality are followed by spice and even more fruit. There's wonderful power and definition on the palate that pairs well with the wine's acidity and racy nature. This is going the distance as far as I'm concerned. Drink now and over the next 15 years.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Jean-Marc Brocard Chablis “Montee de Tonnerre”

Here's another fantastic wine from the Monte de Tonnerre *premier cru* vineyard. Notes of crushed seashells, green apple and just a hint of smoke linger on the nose while aromas of truffle and white pepper are present as well. The palate is intense, with an incredible amount of structure and acidity that leaves a firm impression on the finish. This is ready for the cellar and will drink well for easily 15 years.

93+ points—Jeff Loo

One of the many success stories of the 2012 vintage could be found in the wines from Chablis. The wines showed superb purity of fruit.

TASTING NOTES

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN



I found the 2012s of Gevrey-Chambertin to be extremely fruit forward and full bodied. Almost modern in style, the wines still exhibited a huge degree of restraint. The best wines showed grippy tannins and mouthwatering acidity that will require a few years before they are integrated. Yet for the most part, 2010 will prove to be the better vintage. The one thing that focused my attention on the 2012's was the overall fruit profile and the concentration that each of the 2012's showed.

Part of the Gevrey-Chambertin Grand Jours tastings included wines from Marsannay and Fixin, two neighboring appellations that can offer some of the best values to be found in all of Burgundy in the best of vintages. While the 2011 wines from Marsannay were delicious and perfect for immediate enjoyment, the 2012's will outlive them and prove to be more interesting as they age. Fixin had a strong showing in 2012, with most producers making wines in the 88-92 point range. Look to Fixin in this vintage for wines with great value.

2012 Faiveley Latricieres-Chambertin

This is one of my top wines for the vintage. Exhibiting absolutely incredible balance on the nose and palate, it leads off with a nose full of strawberry, wild flowers and spice, complemented by turned earth and just a kiss of oak. On the palate, the wine finds a beautiful marriage at this young age between its acidity and tannin. Flavors linger on the palate for at least 60 seconds. This is a wine for the cellar and I have no problem projecting this wine to last up to 30 years.

96 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Bouchard Pere et Fils Chambertin “Clos de Beze”

This is one of the more powerful 2012s from Gevrey-Chambertin this year and it's absolutely delicious from start to finish. I imagine that this wine will provide fantastic drinking over the next quarter century. Rich aromas on the nose emerge in the form of black tea, forest floor and cherry, followed by black pepper and cardamom. The palate has wonderful length and great texture providing the weight and body that sets this wine apart from its neighbors.

95 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Domaine Tortochot Mazis-Chambertin

I've always enjoyed the wines from Tortochot and their Mazis-Chambertin bottling stole the show at the Grand Jours tastings. It is clearly a wine of better class than the remainder of wines in their portfolio. Suave and beautiful, the bouquet exhibits bright red fruit mixed with sage and spice, followed by damp earth and truffles. The palate features similar notes and possesses an incredible finish that just lasts and lasts. This should be enjoyed over the next 20 years.

94+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Jean-Michel Guillon Mazis-Chambertin

This is an absolutely delightful wine. The nose starts off with fresh strawberry and fruit compote, followed by spice and earth notes that prime your palate for an adventure. The palate shows off amazing purity and striking levels of tannins and acidity. This wine will easily keep for 20 years, but let it rest for 2-4 years prior to enjoying it at the table.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Humbert Freres Gevrey-Chambertin “Craipillot”

This humdinger of a wine was a complete surprise. With intense aromas of red fruit and just a touch of smoke, the wine's underlying oak notes add an exciting dimension. The wine explodes on the palate with flavor and an incredible sense of flair. If you can find this wine, get your hands on it and enjoy over the next 20 years. This premier cru is just south of the acclaimed Clos St. Jacques vineyard.

93+ points—Jeff Loo

TASTING NOTES

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY



I must confess that the wines of Chambolle-Muisgny left me a bit bewildered. This is not to say that there were only charmless wines to be found. To be completely honest, the wines did not show the classic Chambolle terroir flavors that bring to mind beef blood and other animalistic characters. These are qualities that can often be charming in some years, here it was too much. **Were there were any good wines? The answer is yes.** Take the Les Cras bottling from the queen of Chambolle, Ghislaine Barthod or the Bonnes Mares from Pierre Naigeon. Overall, the wines from Chambolle-Musigny just missed the mark, making solid wines, but nothing that excited the senses.

2012 Ghislaine Barthod Chambolle-Musigny “Les Cras”

This was an exceptional bottling from this little known premier cru vineyard located not far from the famous grand cru of Bonnes Mares. Crazy amounts of fruit paired with an animalistic quality and leather notes. The palate reveals considerable power and concentration though some time will be required to loosen things up. This was the best wine at the Chambolle-Musigny tasting.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Pierre Nageon Bonnes Mares

This is a strange wine, but in a good sense. It resembles a wine from the grand cru Musigny as it possesses the raw animal power and decidedly firm tannin structure that typifies wines from that cru. But what ensures that this wine maintains its Bonnes Mares pedigree are the wonderful layers of fruit that just seem to keep coming in wave after wave. Make sure to put this on your short list of 2012s.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Chambolle-Musigny “La Combe d’Orveau”

Initially, this premier cru bottling from Faiveley exhibits a very tight aromatic expression that takes some coaxing to open up, but the wine finally opens up to stake its claim as one of the vintage’s stand outs. This is a complete wine from start to finish that’s quite approachable even at this point. Give this a few years to meld and enjoy over the following 15.

92 points—Jeff Loo



TASTING NOTES

VOUGEOT



The Château du Clos de Vougeot

Expectations were high as it relates to the wines from this exalted commune, especially given the famous grand cru that is produced here. While the wines from Vougeot were technically sound, they lacked the charm and character that I have encountered in recent vintages like 2005 and 2009. Even though the village was not as successful as I had hoped, overall, there were a few standouts that will merit your attention.

2012 Jacques Prieur Clos de Vougeot

This wine proved to be a rare exception of the appellation. Jacques Prieur hit the Clos de Vougeot style on the button and made a classic wine. A vast array of ripe fruits are laced with tobacco, sweet spices and scents of earth. The palate has a wonderful depth to it making this wine worth searching for. Give it another 2-3 years in bottle, and enjoy over the next 20 years.

93+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Chateau de la Tour Clos de Vougeot “Vieilles Vignes”

58% cabernet sauvignon, 27% merlot, 12% cabernet franc
The Vieilles Vignes cuvee is one of the standouts from this somewhat disappointing cru in 2012. The raw quality of the vintage is quite evident and displays a wonderful, classic Vougeot character. The exceptional fruit on the palate shines through with brisk acidity adding some freshness. This finishes with good length and will be a wine to enjoy over the next 15 years.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Jean Grivot Clos de Vougeot

Like many of the wines from this grand cru in 2012, this could use a bit more charm but there are indications that this could turn into something quite appealing down the road. Red and black fruits emerge from the glass with a touch of leather and strawberry cream. Medium to full-bodied on the palate with a good display of grip, the acids are subsumed by the fruit at this point. Perhaps in a couple of years this will put on the weight that it needs to become a superb wine.

92+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Hudelot-Noellat Clos de Vougeot

Hudelot-Noellat has made some stunning wines in this vintage but even they had difficulties with this grand cru. One of the better Clos de Vougeots, this may not be on par with their Richebourg or Romanee-St.-Vivant. Nevertheless, this wine offers ripe, concentrated fruit with easygoing earth tones that gradually pick up spice and subtle coffee notes. The palate is one of the best from Clos de Vougeot this vintage with solid grip and great acidity. In a few years, this may merit an even higher score.

92+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Mugneret-Gibourg Clos de Vougeot

Here is another 2012 Clos de Vougeot that has the components to become something special in the future, but the jury is still out for now. The sweet fruit is in balance with the oak and spice notes that hold together the bouquet's

racy nature. The palate is medium bodied and is all together solid, but it could use a bit more complexity.

91 points—Jeff Loo



Lollipops at Clos de Vougeot

TASTING NOTES

FLAGEY ECHEZEAUX



Considering that there were no wines from Grands Echezeaux that poured at the Grand Jours tastings, the tasting notes here are slightly incomplete. Nevertheless, it was clear that in 2012, growers and wineries producing Echezeaux made some top quality wines. Each successive tasting revealed gorgeous wines that developed in the glass, showing a depth of fruit along with a wild thread of acidity that keeps you wanting more. These are without question much better wines than the 2010s and 2011s that were showcased next to them.

2012 Jacques Prieur Echezeaux

This is exactly what I look for when tasting wines from this appellation. Forceful notes of earth mix effortlessly with blackberries and a kiss of spice, leading into a voluptuous array of complex aromas. The palate is extremely well framed with lingering tannins that balance the wine's acidity. This is a wine all Burgundy fans must have in their cellar.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Echezeaux

Faiveley's Echezeaux is a true delight. The bouquet leaps from the glass from the moment the wine is poured. Red and black fruits emerge with a whisper of minerality and smoked meats providing some additional intrigue. The palate is deceptively medium to full-bodied and has a line of acidity that adds some drive to the finish. This is going to need bottle age, but with some time it will be close to the quality of Faiveley's excellent Latricieres-Chambertin.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Francois Lamarche Echezeaux

There is a fantastic intensity of flavors to be found here that is not present in many other wines from Echezeaux. The fruit on the palate has a sense of intensity yet still provides an overall sense of. This will be hard to resist at an early stage, but a bit of patience will give you a wine that will blow your mind over the next 20 years.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Comte Liger-Belair Echezeaux

A fantastic showing for a wine that should prove to be exciting for many years. The 2012 offers amazing purity and has awesome length. The power and concentration shown here is testament to the ability of the Liger-Belair family to coax everything they can from their parcel to make this a brilliant offering.

93 points—Jeff Loo

It was clear that in 2012, growers and wineries producing Echezeaux made some top quality wines.

TASTING NOTES

VOSNE-ROMANEE



Ancient Steps Leading to Romanee Conti

As a whole, the Vosne-Romanee appellation turned out the most successful wines in 2012. The number of stunning wines, whether basic village wines or *grand crus*, was simply incredible. These will be the wines that will most benefit from some long term cellaring.

With respect to the *grand crus* from this commune, Richebourg was among the best in 2012. There were brilliant wines to be found showing power and balance at the same time. Romanee-St.-Vivant also produced some of my favorite wines this year. The unique qualities of wines from this site, candied fruit flavors combined with radiant acidity, were found in abundance. And the weight of the wines here was close to perfect.

2012 Hudelot-Noellat Richebourg

This is incredible wine and undoubtedly one of the top wines of the vintage. Amazing aromas are found here - a mélange of red and black fruits with extra spice and a tall order of sexy earth tones. The palate is medium to full-bodied and has a wonderful richness to it that just seems to grab on and never let go. This is without a doubt one of the greatest wines from Hudelot-Noellat I've tasted. GET THIS. It will thrive for 30 years.

96 points—Jeff Loo

2010 Hudelot-Noellat Romanee-St.-Vivant

With quality that is not that far off from Hudelot-Noellat's Richebourg bottling, this cuvee is absolutely worth your consideration as well. Complex aromas of quince, strawberry and dried tobacco leaves are followed up with turned earth along with some incredibly youthful vigor. The palate is firm and full bodied with concentrated fruit flavors that go on for an eternity. Give this one five years and watch it go for 30+ years.

95 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Francois Lamarche Vosne-Romanee "Malconsorts"

The best Malconsorts at the Grand Jours tasting, this is one of the most compact wines I tasted. I found this better than any of the grand crus from Lamarche. Rich and full bodied, this wine will do nothing but get better over the next 10 years and should be enjoyable for 15+ years after that. If you can find this, I highly suggest securing some.

94+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Meo-Camuzet Vosne-Romanee "Les Chaumes"

This Les Chaumes premier cru cuvee from Jean-Nicholas Meo is incredible. Aromatically stunning, the intensity of this wine is amazing and the raw power that it possesses ensures that it will mature into a beauty of balance and structure. If I could, I'd try to secure every bottle I could get my hands on! This will provide excellent drinking over the next 20 years.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Sylvain Cathiard Vosne-Romanee "Malconsorts"

This exciting wine has the potential to be one of the greatest from this site and vintage. This is simply a stunning wine. There's wonderful complexity to be found here amongst the silky tannins and integrated acidity. Flavors of the old world mix with a more modern interpretation of red fruits that explode on the palate. This will go down as one of the best that has been made by the Cathiard family.

94 points—Jeff Loo

The Vosne-Romanee appellation turned out the most successful wines in 2012. The number of stunning wines that I tasted... was simply incredible.

TASTING NOTES

CORTON/CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE



Jean-Charles le de la Morinière at Domaine Bonneau du Martray

The reds and whites of Corton were among the most successful wines of 2012. Just about every single producer presenting their wines at the Grand Jours tasting expressed happiness with this vintage and it is easy to see why.

The whites of Corton-Charlemagne showcased amazing levels of acidity, great precision and balance with good weight and firm structure, some of my favorite wines of this whole trip are found here. This is really a fantastic vintage for the white wines. And I can say without doubt that the greatest Corton-Charlemagnes from 2012 will easily last 25 years.

The reds of Corton were the most successful wines of the Cote de Beaune with the best wines producing age worthy wines that have the length and structure to outlast many of Cote de Nuits pinots. If you intend to purchase any 2012 Burgundies, this will be a smart place to put your money.

2012 Maldant-Pauvelot Corton Renardes

This is one of the top reds from Corton in 2012. A very rich texture and layers of flavor make up the foundation of the palate. There is a level of intensity here that firmly presents itself, yet also a sense of restraint that keeps things balanced. With a finish that lasts more than a minute, this is a very enticing wine.

94+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Corton “Clos des Corton Faiveley”

From the Clos des Marechaudes lieu-dit located on the south side of the hill of Corton, this is a very sexy wine. The aromatics are quite exciting showing intense red and black fruits with suave notes of fresh cut flowers and crushed spices. The full-bodied palate is supported by textured tannins and it possesses a fine balance between alcohol and acidity. This is a wine to have for the future as it will only get better.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Domaine du Pavillon (Albert Bichot) Corton

The best Malconsorts at the Grand Jours tasting, this is one of the most compact wines I tasted. I found this better than any of the grand crus from Lamarche. Rich and full bodied, this wine will do nothing but get better over the next 10 years and should be enjoyable for 15+ years after that. If you can find this, I highly suggest securing some.

94+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Marius Delarche Corton Renardes

This shows amazing power and complexity without being over the top. Red fruit and sweet spices dominate the nose, but notes of forest floor and damp earth lurk underneath. The palate is full bodied while the sweet tannins and acidity are in harmony on the lengthy finish. This is a serious wine and should be considered as one of the top 2012 reds from Burgundy.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Domaine Pavelot Corton

I can't say this enough, but the red wines from the hill of Corton are extremely successful in 2012. Pavelot's Corton is stunning, almost brilliant in this vintage. The color is a gorgeous red that bleeds all the way to the rim. The bouquet is dense and concentrated, building even more complexity with some air. The aromas jump from the glass and transition seamlessly as flavors on the palate. While a big wine at this stage now, with just a few years of bottle age, this will morph into a more subtle, structured wine that will compete with the best. A fantastic showing here.

94 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Corton-Charlemagne

This is the most pure example of Corton-Charlemagne that I encountered at this year's Grand Jours tastings. There is purity and richness on the palate along with very concentrated notes of fruit and spice. I can't imagine a better example of Corton-Charlemagne, even from leading producers like Coche-Dury. This is the type of wine that I put in my cellar to age and enjoy for decades.

97 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Domaine Denis Pere et Fils Corton-Charlemagne

Wonderful aromas of fresh apple, flowers and just a hint of sautéed mushrooms, mixed with damp forest and truffle make up the bouquet. The palate here is nicely packed and concentrated, exhibiting amazing weight that's balanced by focused acidity. Flavors of melon and orange peel along with a bacon fat note continue on to a finish that lasts for over a minute. This is well done. No rush to enjoy this at all.

95+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Bonneau du Martray Corton-Charlemagne

Always considered to be one of the top Corton-Charlemagne producers, this is one impressive wine. The aromatics are extremely intense with very pure fruit, spice and truffle. The palate is absolutely amazing with great length and very long depth. I may go out on a limb and say that this is the best Bonneau du Martray has produced. Well done.

95+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Poisot Pere et Fils Corton-Charlemagne

This has an incredible level of concentration and richness that compares favorably with the best examples from the hill of Corton. The fruit just leaps from the glass and lands on the palate effortlessly. This wine has a long and bright future ahead. I recommend cellaring this for 5 years and enjoying it over the following 15 years.

95 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Bouchard Pere et Fils Corton-Charlemagnen

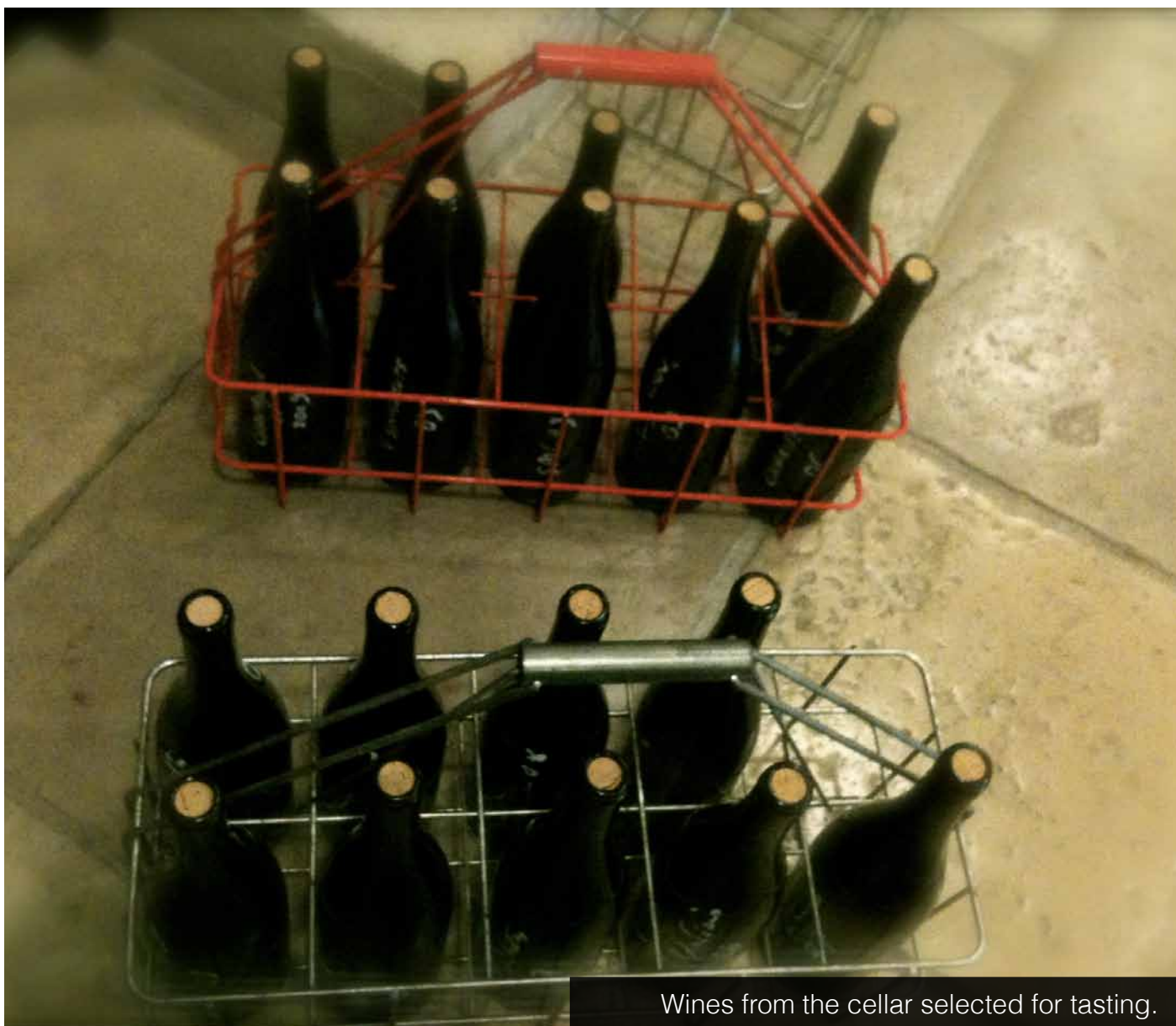
Forward and direct fruit aromas dominate the bouquet, but as the wine sits in the glass clean notes of damp forest, mushroom and a sweet kiss of oak emerge to complete this aromatic marvel. The palate is long and very pleasing as the weight brought in completes the acid profile. This is one of the best Corton-Charlemagnes from Bouchard, one of the most consistent producers from this famous vineyard.

94 points—Jeff Loo

The whites of Corton-Charlemagne showcased amazing levels of acidity, great precision and balance with good weight and firm structure, some of my favorite wines of this whole trip are found here.

TASTING NOTES

MEURSAULT



Wines from the cellar selected for tasting.

Our heart belongs to Meursault. The wines from this chardonnay focused commune showed a purity of fruit expression that was not found in other appellations. The complex subtleties found in Meursault are paired with vibrant acidity along with balanced levels of alcohol. Over 50 producers were present at the Grand Jours event and all of them showed well with the best knocking it out of the park. The wines were complete and amazing set of wines from this vintage. If you haven't fallen in love with Meursault, you will with this vintage.

2012 Antoine Jobard Meursault “Les Genevrières”

This is a fantastic example of Meursault in 2012. There's some richness on the nose while the palate is layered with gobs of fruit and texture. The creamy mouthfeel adds to the complexity, showcasing great weight and lift all at the same time. This is extremely enjoyable right now and will prove difficult to put in your cellar, yet it should have no problems lasting 10-15 years.

93+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Remi Jobard Meursault “Les Narvaux”

A very aromatic Meursault, this premier cru bottling displays a fantastic array of fresh lime and lemon aromas mixed with pear and hints of quince. There's a streak of wild acidity that keeps this wine interesting and lively on the palate. I would be very happy drinking this now, but would like to see what happens in another couple of years.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Jean-Marc Roulot Meursault “Poruzot”

Possessing a very steely palate with ripe fruit and acidity, this is a very pleasing effort, with good texture and a very ripe finish. This is a wine to enjoy now and over the next 5-8 years. Poruzot is located next to the more famous premier cru site Les Genevrières.

92 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Francois Mikulski Meursault “Les Genevrières”

This is dense and lovely. The attractive nose of granny smith apple, poached pear and spice has a lingering presence and is rounded out with notes of vanilla and touches of oak. The beguiling palate shares amazing acidity and density. This has all the makings of a fantastic wine some 10 years hence.

92 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Meursault “Blagny”

Another great showing for Faiveley! Honeycomb, lime and green apple aromas get the bouquet going, and then it kicks up another notch to reveal sweet spices and a splash of oak. The palate has the right level of acidity to keep things fresh while there is good fruit weight to keep everything in balance. This is another delicious wine that can be drunk now yet will easily age for 10 years.

92 points—Jeff Loo

Our heart belongs to Meursault. The wines from this chardonnay focused commune showed a purity of fruit expression that was not found in other appellations.

TASTING NOTES

CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET
PULIGNY-MONTRACHET



A gate at the Montrachet vineyard

I must confess that at first I was enthralled by the sensational aromas and minerality and aromas of the Puligny-Montrachets that I encountered at the Grand Jours tastings of Cote de Beaune chardonnays. However, as the tastings progressed, the subtleness of Chassagne-Montrachets resonated more strongly. In 2012, Chassagne turned out to be the most successful village for chardonnay, and I would also mention that brilliant value-oriented pinots can also be found here.

The intense and precise fruit flavors complement the focused minerality that strikes through the core of these wines. The *premier cru* wines are top notch and when tasted next to some of the grand crus from 2011, the 2012 Chassagnes take the cake. The neighboring areas of St. Aubin and Santenay, beautiful wines where produced where you will find friendly, fruit forward and easy on the palate wines. I would not push these away at all.

2012 Faiveley Bienvenues-Batard-Montrachet

This shows a brilliant color of pale yellow with just a touch of gold. The bouquet opens with notes of golden yellow apple, caramel and white truffle, followed by white pepper and lime curd scents. The palate is intensely concentrated with wonderful tension and structure. Acidity plays a key role on the midpalate and the weight is just incredible. To sum up, this is a wine possessing insane levels of quality and one of the best Bienvenues-Batard-Montrachet I've had a chance to taste. Simply an incredible experience.

97 Points—Jeff Loo

2012 Faiveley Batard-Montrachet

Here is another winning wine from the Erwin Faiveley/Bernard Hervet team at Domaine Faiveley. Exhibiting laser like focus, there are incredible aromas of apple, pear, spice and mushroom, leading into a palate that has a rich and creamy texture that simply goes on forever. This is attractive as hell, if slightly behind Faiveley's Bienvenues bottling.

95+ Points—Jeff Loo

2012 Marc Colin Chassagne-Montrachet “Cailleret”

The premier cru Cailleret vineyard was extremely successful in 2012. Densely packed with amazing purity and wonderful fruit, this wine has the style and class to go the distance. This will be a fun wine to watch over the next 10 years.

93 Points—Jeff Loo

2012 Vincent & Sophie Morey Chassagne-Montrachet “Les Embazees”

Having been impressed with previous vintages of this wine, I was looking forward to trying the 2012 and it did not disappoint. This is so good it would be hard to put this away in the cellar and one could be forgiven for drinking it now. This shows incredible balance of weight and acid and I can easily see this aging 10 years with no problem. Rest assured that if I get my hands on some, it won't last that long in my cellar.

93 Points—Jeff Loo

2012 Jean-Louis Chavy Puligny-Montrachet “Les Folatieres”

This Folatieres bottling is a fantastic success for the vintage offering wine enthusiasts an in-depth look at profound precision and texture. Green apple, lemon and lime aromas are paired with crushed stones and kisses of oak, giving this bouquet some exciting complexity. The mouthfeel is firm and with elegant structure coating the palate leaving a very rich impression, yet possessing a sense of elegance thanks to some integrated acidity. This will be a wine to enjoy over the next 10 years.

93 Points—Jeff Loo

In 2012, Chassagne turned out to be the most successful village for chardonnay.

TASTING NOTES

MACON



At the Maconnais Grand Jours Tasting

Within the département of Saone-et-Loire, you will find a plethora of appellations and terroirs devoted to the love of chardonnay. The wines of Pouilly-Fuisse, Macon, St. Veran and Vire-Clesse are just a few of the communes that speak to this variety. Perhaps not as noble as the wines of the Cote d'Or or Chablis, but maybe that's because they want to keep it that way. As I tasted my way through, there were plenty of commercial wines to be found, but there are also stunning discoveries that would give some wines in Chablis and Beaune a run for their money.

2012 is a super vintage here. The wines are expressive with great fruit profiles and balanced with respect to weight and acidity. The very best will have no problem aging for a decade. But the quality is so good and the wines so approachable that it will be hard to keep my hands off now. Meeting the producers, it was clear they all have a sense of pride in making thought provoking wines that will please even the most stubborn of palates. To be clear, these are incredible values that should not be missed. St. Veran gets my nod as the best of the Maconnais appellations in 2012.

2012 Domaine de la Denante St. Veran

I have to admit, I almost missed this one at the Grand Jours Macon tasting but I'm sure glad I didn't! The nose is simply incredible, with complex aromas of dense apple, peach and truffle paired with seashells and a kiss of oak. The medium-full bodied palate has incredible length and goes on forever. The tension on the finish is tight at this point, yet I imagine that this will reveal more nuance with time. However, my experience tells me this will need another 3-5 years to get there.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Marcel Couturier St. Veran “Le Vallon”

This is one of the most aromatically attractive wines from the Macon, exhibiting superb tension and great density. The flavors hit the palate with just the right amount of well-appointed acidity to leave you wanting more. Make the effort to find this one if you can.

93 points—Jeff Loo

2012 David Fagot Pouilly-Fuisse “Les Vigneraiis”

The tart fruit on the palate shows incredible balance with its acidity and pleasant natured style. I was extremely pleased with the whole range from David Fagot though his Les Vigneraiis bottling is the best wine in his portfolio. It's easy to see the quality of this cuvee when giving the wine some aeration; just let it sit in the glass and you will be mesmerized. This is for drinking over the next 5 years

92 points—Jeff Loo

2012 Heritiers du Comte Lafon Macon “Clos de la Crochette”

65% sauvignon blanc and 35% semillon. Open and forward This spicy concoction is a delight. Fresh and light, aromas of green apple, pear and lime jump out of the glass, followed closely by white pepper and oak. This has good definition on the palate and even better weight. I can see this wine aging for at least 10 years. This is from Dominique Lafon, producer of sublime Meursault.

91+ points—Jeff Loo

2012 Bouchard Pere et Fils Pouilly-Fuisse “Vignes Romanes”

Made from a combination of Bouchard's best plots and barrels, the Vignes Romanes showcases amazing fruit purity and striking character. Minerals and ripe fruit come through on the nose and translate onto the palate. Possessing mouthwatering acidity, this is a wine to enjoy over the next 4-7 years.

91 points—Jeff Loo

As I tasted my way through... there are also stunning discoveries that would give some wines in Chablis and Beaune a run for their money.