

Burgundy 2020 Report

Exceptional and breathtaking

"A vintage like a cheerleader - breathtaking to look at, but I don't know whether I would like to spend a whole evening with her," says Pierre-Antoine Rovani, who previously did tasting for Parker and now heads the fortunes of Remoissenet. I am not completely in agreement with him, as I believe this cheerleader also has an exceptional amount going on in terms of intellect.

2020 was both a very dry and exceptionally warm year, with temperatures reaching over 40 degrees. However, this is no comparison with 2003, for example. This year, there was nothing to stop ripening, as the water supply was somewhat better and there was also a more pronounced difference between day and night. It was also possible to harvest a record-breaking number of grapes early. By way of comparison: Domaine Tolleot-Beaut 2003 Start of grape harvest 3 September, 2020 Start of grape harvest 21 August.

So, what's so special about this vintage? It is quite simply the paradox that lies in the very high level of ripening of the grapes alongside the relatively high alcohol content (14%+ is not unusual) and a great complexity of sweetness accompanied by very high levels of acidity, energy and freshness. The crimson colour and depth of colour of the wines are likewise exceptional and are more reminiscent of a Syrah. Some wines from the 1940s that I have been able to sample, in particular one 1947 vintage, proves that this is not a consequence of modern enology. The explosive fruit is also closer to black or at least dark red and unbelievably charming and fragrant. Black cherries, blueberries, dark raspberries and even cranberries are rarely encountered in such abundance and in this combination in other vintages. The length of finish is also often exceptional. In warm and very mature years, a high pH value is usually recorded, making the wines susceptible to fleeting acidity and other unwanted side effects, however not in 2020. Completely normal values, if anything slightly below average. A great compliment nevertheless goes to all our producers who have mastered this difficult to vinify vintage without excesses and overextraction.

The fact that we have an exceptional vintage ahead of us is also confirmed by the 88-year head of the family at Tolleot-Beaut who is unable to compare it to any other year. Well, perhaps this is all a bit too much for hardcore purists, but we say to that: joy prevails!

But there are still two downsides. As with 2019, the yield is around 30-40% below the long-term average. This is largely due to the fact that the must yield was low in the concentrated grapes, but also due to frost. It's important to keep an eye on the fact that the burgundy

wines have lost more than one harvest in the last three years. 2019 –35%, 2020 –35%, 2021 –50%! We will have to cope with massive price increases accordingly, as the demand is generally still on the rise, in particular in these years.

Cheers!

Mario Aschwanden

Domaine Laurent Perrachon & Fils



A view at the Beaujolais

It's good to see that wines from this winery have been able to keep up well with the insiders' tips and hyped wines from the region. A few lots of Pouilly-Fuissé have now also been procured.

Pouilly-Fuissé	87
Pouilly-Fuissé 1 ^{er} Cru Vers Cras	89
Fleurie	88
Morgon Corcelette	89
Morgon Côte du Py	89+
Juliéna Vignes Centennaires	90–91+

Domaine Hudelot-Noëllat



Charles van Canneyt at the barrel tasting

My first visit to the Côte de Nuits immediately starts with a beat of a drum. The young Charles van Canneyt has an impressive 2020 vintage in his cellar. In my opinion, the best that he has ever vinified. Unbelievably fragrant, charming and with plenty of dark fruit. The tannins are delicate and mellow and underlaid with a great complexity of sweetness. A great show.

Chambolle-Musigny	89–91
Vosne-Romanée	90–92
Nuits-Saint-Georges Les Bas de Combes	91–92
Vougeot 1 ^{er} Cru Les Petits Vougeot	92–94
Nuits-Saint-Georges 1 ^{er} Cru Les Murgers	92–94
Vosne-Romanée 1 ^{er} Cru Les Beaumonts	93–94
Vosne-Romanée 1 ^{er} Cru Les Suchots	95–96
Clos Vougeot Grand Cru	95–96
Romanée-Saint-Vivant Grand Cru	96–98
Richebourg Grand Cru	97–99

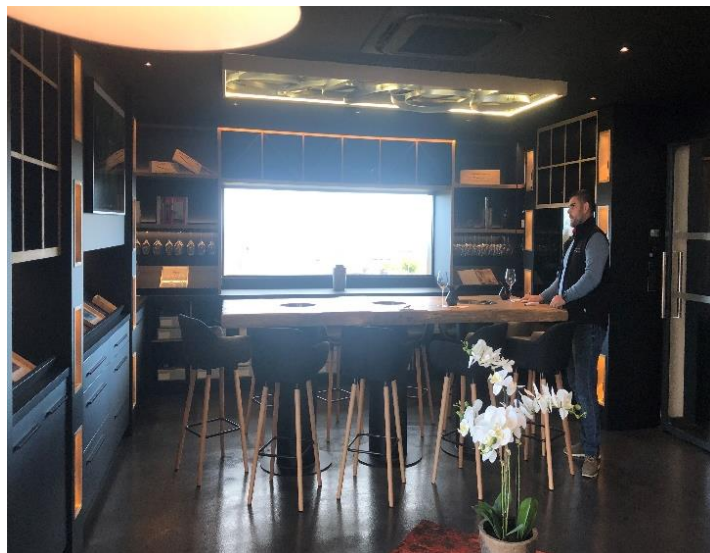
Domaine Bruno Colin

To be honest, I was somewhat sceptical about the whites in these weather conditions. Scepticism, however, disappeared during tasting. Definitely powerful white wines, but also with great minerality and harmony. The ageing in wood was shortened to ten months and the period of time in stainless steel was extended. As already experienced in previous years, these hot and dry weather periods are good for this red in the cool region.

The red wines from Santenay (and Chassagne) are definitely benefitting from the new climactic conditions. Many renowned wine-growers have more recently been purchasing vineyards in this previously neglected municipality. The wines have been developed in the small, sophisticated new winery. Start of grape harvest 18 August!



News cellar of the domaine



New vinothèque of the domaine

Blanc:

Bourgogne Chardonnay	86–88
Saint-Aubin Le Charmois 1 ^{er} Cru	89–90
Chassagne-Montrachet	90–92
Chassagne-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Les Chaumées	91–92+
Chassagne-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Les Vergers	91–92+
Chassagne-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Morgeot	92–93
Chassagne-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru La Boudriotte	92–93
Chassagne-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru En Remilly	92–93+
Puligny-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru La Truffière	93–94+
Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru	92–94
Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru	94–95

Rouge:

Bourgogne Pinot Noir	86–88
Chassagne-Montrachet Vieilles Vignes	88–90
Maranges 1 ^{er} Cru La Fussièrre	89–90
Santenay 1 ^{er} Cru Les Gravières	90–91
Santenay 1 ^{er} Cru La Maltroie	91–92

Domaine d'Eugénie

Michel Maillard is now working organically in all vineyards. Fermentation using the whole clusters is now more or less firm tradition here; this year, the Village is up to 20% and the Grand Echézeaux up to 70%. The Vosne-Romanée Village is an interesting blend of Village locations, young grapes from the whole domaine and the lower part of 1 Cru aus Brûlées.

Vosne-Romanée	88–90
Vosne-Romanée Clos d'Eugénie	91–92
Vosne-Romanée 1 ^{er} Cru Aux Brûlées	92–94
Echézeaux Grand Cru	93–95
Grands Echézeaux Grand Cru	95–96
Clos Vougeot Grand Cru	95–96+

Domaine Comte Georges de Vogüé



Pipette for barrel sample

This domaine is an example of consistency. Year after year, fascinating, magnificent wines are consistently made here. The same applies, of course, this year. This is the last vintage pressed by François Millet. He has had a significant influence on the wines for 35 years and contributed towards the reputation of the classy vineyard. We had the chance to taste the wines with his successor Jean Lupatelli. I'm not concerned about the subsequent vintages reaching this level. On the contrary: my first impression is outstanding and it's perfectly possible that we will soon be reporting back with greater euphoria. Many insiders are of course spreading rumours that the potential has not been fully exploited. Harvest has already taken place from 24 August.

Chambolle-Musigny	90–92
Chambolle-Musigny 1 ^{er} Cru	93–95
Chambolle-Musigny 1 ^{er} Cru Les Amoureuses	96–98
Bonnes Mares Grand Cru	95–96
Musigny Vieilles Vignes Grand Cru	96–98

Domaine Tollot-Beaut



The arched barrique cellar at Tollot-Beaut

The lovely Natalie Tollot has presented us with fantastic 2020 vintages that are among the best that I have ever tasted on this domaine. Despite the sometimes somewhat high alcohol grades (13.5-14.5% ABV), the wines are still harmonious. The appellation Aloxe-Corton (as well as Santenay, Marsannay and Fixin, among others), appears to be particularly benefitting from global warming. Start of grape harvest 21 August.

Bourgogne Rouge	87-88
Chorey-lès-Beaune Pièce du Chapitre	87-88?
Savigny-lès-Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Les Lavières	89-90+
Savigny-lès-Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Champs Gevrey	88-90
Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de Roi	90-91+
Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Grèves	91-92+
Aloxe-Corton	91-93
Aloxe-Corton 1 ^{er} Cru Les Vercots	92-93+?
Corton Les Combes Grand Cru	92-94
Corton-Bressandes Grand Cru	94-95
Bourgogne Blanc	87-88
Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru	92-93

Domaine Bonneau du Martray

Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to taste the wines. The domaine is only showing the wines two years after the harvest. The 2020 vintage is therefore only available for tasting from January 2022.

Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru	-
Corton (rouge) Grand Cru	-

Maison Remoissenet Père et Fils



Branded barrique

It is the first time that we have tried wines with Pierre-Antoine Rovani. The former wine journalist and wine merchant who had also worked for Parker, among others, is an unbelievably driven and interesting personality. We tasted for four and a half hours in one go and the time flew. The exceptional increase in quality which can be followed since the 2007 vintage is breathtaking and, with this vintage, has once again reached a new level. This is above all thanks to the quality fanatic Pierre-Antoine Rovani. It's true, I'm not writing this for the first time: REMOISSENET has now definitively arrived in the premier league of Burgundy producers. Especially compared to the not so well-known and simpler Village locations, some renowned producers have to prepare themselves for the worst. This is also undoubtedly the best setup that I have so far sampled. Remoissenet meanwhile owns a formidable 25 hectares – which corresponds to 50% of the processed harvest volume from approx. 80 lots.

Blanc:

Pernand-Vergelesses	88–90
Pernand-Vergelesses 1 ^{er} Cru Aux Caradeux	90–92
Pernand-Vergelesses 1 ^{er} Cru Sous Frétille	91–93
Savigny-lès-Beaune	89–90
Santenay 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de Tavannes	91–92
Beaune Saint-Désiré	90–91
Meursault	90–91
Meursault-Charmes 1 ^{er} Cru	91–93
Meursault 1 ^{er} Cru Les Cras	92–93
Ladoix 1 ^{er} Cru Les Grêchons	92–93
Puligny-Montrachet	88–89
Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru	92–93+
Montrachet Grand Cru	94–95

Rouge:

Savigny-lès-Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Les Serpentières	91–92
Savigny-lès-Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Les Lavières	89–91
Pernand-Vergelesses 1 ^{er} Cru En Caradeux	91–92
Pommard	89–91
Santenay 1 ^{er} Cru Grand Clos Rousseau	91–92
Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Toussaints	91–93
Beaune 1 ^{er} Cru Les Teurons	91–93
Volnay	89–91
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Les Robardelles	90–92
Aloxe-Corton 1 ^{er} Cru La Toppe au Vert	90–91+
Marsannay Les Echézeaux	90–91+
Vosne-Romanée	92–93
Gevrey-Chambertin	92–93+
Nuits-Saint-Georges	92–93
Chambolle-Musigny 1 ^{er} Cru Aux Echanges	92–94+
Chambolle-Musigny 1 ^{er} Cru Les Combottes	92–94+
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Les Gazetières	92–94
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Poissenot	93–94
Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru	95–96
Clos Vougeot Grand Cru	92–94

Domaine Marquis d'Angerville



Mario Aschwanden and François Duvivier

For more than ten years now, this domaine has belonged to the crème de la crème in Burgundy. Amazing wines, although I myself had hoped for a little something more. This vintage shone somewhat less vibrantly in the glass than usual. The start of the grape harvest was the record-breaking early 19 August and all grapes were harvested by 25 August.

Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru	92–93
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Clos des Angles	90–91
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Fremiet	91–92+
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Caillerets	91–93
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Taillepieds	92–94
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Champans	92–94
Volnay 1 ^{er} Cru Clos des Ducs	93–95

Domaine Armand Rousseau

Wow, what a line up! Of course, I'm a great fan of this domaine - however, I do find that there are a number of other great domaines that hit the same level, but without enjoying the same reputation and hype. This potent Rousseau vintage, however, is definitely breathtaking and the highlight ever since I've been allowed to sample the wines from this barrel here (since 2007). Nevertheless, with hindsight, the hint of somewhat volatile acid rang true - but as the pH is at a healthy 3.5-3.6, this is surely not a problem and just a minor comment.

Gevrey-Chambertin Clos du Château Monopole	88–90
Gevrey-Chambertin	90-92
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Lavaux Saint Jacques	92–94
Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru	93–94
Mazy-Chambertin Grand Cru	94–95
Clos de La Roche Grand Cru (15% Vol.)	95–97
Chambertin Clos des Ruchottes Grand Cru Monopole	95–96
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Clos Saint Jacques	98–99
Chambertin Grand Cru	98–100
Chambertin Clos-de-Bèze Grand Cru	98–100

Domaine Denis Mortet

I mentioned already a few times that Arnaud Mortet is one of the top stars, indeed one of the top 5 in Burgundy. This is also confirmed in the 2020 vintage. He attributes the fact that his wines are not currently being quite so expressive to the fact that the malolactic fermentation has come to an end at the domaine. Uniquely, the wines that are normally more closed were the most approachable. 20-40% of the grapes were not destemmed. The clusters of these grapes had been laboriously and specially trimmed and the inner part sorted. Unfortunately, (as in 2019) the quantities have again turned out to be 40% less than the average year.

Bourgogne Rouge Cuvée de Noble Souche	88–90
Fixin Vieilles Vignes	91–92
Marsannay Les Longeroies	89–91
Gevrey-Chambertin Mes Cinq Terroirs	92–93+
Chambolle-Musigny 1 ^{er} Cru Aux Beaux Bruns	92–94
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru	92–94
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Les Champonnets	93–94
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Les Champeaux	93–95
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Lavaux-Saint-Jacques	95–96

Mazis-Chambertin Grand Cru	95–97+
Clos-de-Vougeot Grand Cru	95–96+
Échézeaux Grand Cru	96–97
Bonnes Mares Grand Cru	95–96
Chambertin Grand Cru	98–99

Domaine Claude Dugat



Bertrand Dugat with Mario Aschwanden in the cellar vault

I have also marked this domaine with a * - this means it's as good as the best setup that I've ever tasted on this domaine. Even if I had expected Griottes to have achieved closer to perfection. The harvest time was, as always, one of the first of our red wine vineyards (from 21 August). Also when it comes to extraction, with "pigeage" twice a day, there has been a relatively strong effort. This produces powerful and potent wines with an amazing density which, despite the extract sweetness, never come across as heavy. These are long-distance runners who, thanks to their fruit, never run the risk of drying out. 13.7% ABV was the highest alcohol content.

Bourgogne Rouge	88–90
Gevrey-Chambertin	91–92+
Gevrey-Chambertin Marie	92–93
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru	92–94
Gevrey-Chambertin 1 ^{er} Cru Lavaux Saint-Jacques	94–95+
Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru	95–97
Griottes-Chambertin Grand Cru	95-96+
Chapelle-Chambertin Grand Cru	94–95

Domaine Clos de la Commaraine

Around two years ago, an American couple bought this castle with its adjoining 3.7 hectare monopole vineyard under the same name. Among all their acquisitions, they want to combine a high-end hotel with wine. Château de Commaraine, which is currently a building site, will no doubt soon become an illustrious hotel. They are being supported by the driven Jean-Luc Vitoux. The demands on quality are high - the grapes are being grown biodynamically, and Comte Louis-Michel Liger-Belair is responsible for producing the wine. The lot was set up in eight different sectors (based on the soil samples). Only the best sectors will make it into the final blend, and everything else will be sold. We had the opportunity to sample some of these sectors separately. As commented on in the last report, the Clos de la Commaraine is an exceptionally well-polished, lively and elegant Pommard.

Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de la Commaraine Sektor No. 2	91–93+
Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de la Commaraine Sektor No. 6	90–92+
Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de la Commaraine Sektor No. 3	91–93+
Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de la Commaraine Sektor No. 4	93–94+
Pommard 1 ^{er} Cru Clos de la Commaraine expected Blend	93–94



Clos Commaraine at dusk with a hint of an imposing building site

2019 Domaine Leflaive

It's now the case that wines on the domaine can only be sampled after their second year. This means that the 2020 vintage is therefore only approved for tasting from January 2022. So... nonetheless, we were allowed to try the 2019 vintages. And they were quite simply world-class! Surely white burgundy can't get any better than this. As already reported on last year, Pierre Vincent has been taking the domaine from one high-point to another since he has held the reins as new director of the domaine in 2017 under Brice de la Morandière. Every detail is meticulously improved and, a green harvest has been carried out regularly since 2017. Another piece of news is that the grapes are harvested by a big team (100 harvest workers) within just three days after D-Day (this is what they call the chosen harvest day). This has already been the sixth harvest out of the last eleven years that started in August - they are meanwhile best setup for this scenario. The wines are unbelievably precise, fine-textured, structured and tight. Despite their weightiness, all the legendary pHs are around 3.1. Wow!

Macôn-Igé	87/88
Macôn-Vérezé	89/90
Pouilly-Fuissé	90+
Pouilly-Fuissé 1 ^{er} Cru En Vigneraie	91+
Bourgogne	91+
Puligny-Montrachet	92/93+
Puligny-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Le Clavoillon	94+
Puligny-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Les Folatières	94/95+
Puligny-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Les Combettes	95+
Puligny-Montrachet 1 ^{er} Cru Les Pucelles	96+

Meursault 1 ^{er} Cru Sous le Dos d'Âne	93+
Bienvenues Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru	96/97+
Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru	97+
Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru	99+

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