RWM



TERROIR

The Terroir package of wines is our most premium tier, designed as an educational tool as well as to provide an array of distinguished wines to serve at the table. Each 12-bottle case includes wines that should be considered in context with the other wines. You might decide to conduct your own comparative tasting or perhaps jot down some tasting notes on each of the wines as you drink them. Terroir is a concept that is fundamental to the selection process of which producers and which wines qualify for inclusion in our portfolio. For more on our approach, please refer to the information at this link: https://madrose.com/concept-of-terroir/

SPRING 2020

Join us on an adventure to Burgundy, the most sublime and instructive of viticultural regions for the study of terroir. This collection of a dozen wines presents a classic opportunity to comprehend the basics behind the concept of terroir. We provide three wines from four separate domaines located in a quartet of villages within Burgundy. These range from Chablis in the extreme north to singular growers as we proceed south in each of the Cote de Nuits, Cote de Beaune and Cote Chalonnaise. In each instance, we have selected for your pleasure three wines from different sites within each appellation, all from the same vintage. This grouping thus highlights the unique characteristics of each limited zone as, in a classic science experiment, all conditions are equal except for one ... that is, we have the same producer, using the same techniques, from grapes harvested with-in days of one another, the only difference being that each wine comes from a specially designated site which has different aspects such as position on the hill, exposure to the sun, varying mineral elements in the soil, all of which combine to create a wine with distinct characteristics that reflect its place of origin.

The Defaix family lives in the hamlet of Milly, a locality within the larger confines of Chablis. Vignerons, generation after generation since the 16th century, the domaine is now directed by Daniel-Etienne Defaix, his wife, and two children, both of whom are poised to maintain the domaine into the next generation. The Defaix family owns 26 hectares of vines in Chablis, the vast majority of which are in prized premier and grand cru vineyards. Defaix bottles only his best lots of each vintage and employs vinification practices that are traditional but nearly extinct. He relies exclusively on indigenous yeasts and his fermentations routinely last between 3-6 weeks with malolactic fermentation sometimes requiring 2 years to finish in his frigid cellar. The wines are then left in cuve in contact with the fine lees for several years which enables the wines to develop the complex set of aromas and flavors that mark fine Chablis as one of the truly distinct appellations in the world of wine. After bottling, the wines are held at the domaine and released many years later. The trio of wines presented here from the 2005 are current releases!

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THE TERROIR

Chablis is defined by the Kimmeridgian limestone that dominates its soil composition. This chalky white stone marks the great wines of this appellation with a steely, sometimes austere structure", with gun-metal aromatics, citrus flavors, and racy mouthfeel. Chablis can age gracefully for several decades, ultimately revealing a honeysuckle, beeswax nose, and earthy savory flavors.

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THE WINES

CHABLIS "VAILLON" PREMIER CRU 2005

The soil here is particularly influenced by iron deposits which yields a wine of fruit and spice and great density. The Vaillon shows notes of "soubois" and, although lacking the elegance of its two companion 1^{ER} Crus, it is often the most generous wine of the domaine.

CHABLIS "LES LYS" PREMIER CRU 2005

The Defaix domaine owns 70% of this 5 hectare 1^{ER} Cru. The resulting wine is long-lived and displays remarkable finesse and length, a classic Chablis. One often encounters the flavors and aromas of bergamot, acacia, and honey in Les Lys alongside a compelling freshness; a wine of excellent tension. Daniel Defaix, the enthusiastic gourmand that he is, enjoys this wine particularly with scallops, lobster, line-caught bar, and turbot.

CHABLIS "CÔTE DE LÉCHET » PREMIER CRU 2005

The majority of the Defaix vines are situated within the Clos des Moines parcel, which gives the most emphatic and pure expression of the minerality that is the mark of this unique and compelling appellation. Perhaps the most complex of the trio of 1^{ER} Crus, Defaix promotes the Cote de Lechet as a fine accompaniment to all the white meats, citing specifically rack of veal, farm-raised chicken, or risotto with black or white truffles. The "Cote de Léchet" is a synthesis of the two related wines as it combines the power of the Vaillon with the finesse of Les Lys.

The Domaine du Meix Foulot has been in the hands of the de Launay family for multiple generations, with the current proprietor, Agnès Dewé de Launay, at the helm since the mid 1990's. Agnès's father, Paul, was one of the pioneers for greater quality in the region, seeking greater concentration and finesse in his wines by ploughing his vineyards, limiting treatments, and introducing a green harvest. Paul's great-grandfather created the Mercurey appellation in 1923. The domaine sits high on a hill between the village of Mercurey and the ruins of the Château de Montaigu, one of the last strongholds of the Burgundian dukes, and extends over 20 hectares of gently sloping vineyards.

This was one of the first estates to enter our portfolio, when we had the joy of importing the 1979 vintage, and we have not missed a year since. Today, the Domaine du Meix Foulot is also one of the most important domaines in Mercurey in terms of both size and excellence with an imposing collection of vineyards that capture the full range of this underappreciated appellation.

THE TERROIR

The vineyards of Mercurey are planted overwhelmingly to Pinot Noir (90%) rather than Chardonnay (10%). Mercurey is a large appellation with much variety to its soil structure ranging from sandy limestone hillsides to sites with a deep underpinning of clay; the former gives wines of more elegance and lift, the latter yields the classic tenor of Mercurey, wines of more firm tannins and aromatics full of the compost and small fruits of the forest floor. In general, the wines of Mercurey can be broad on the palate, for both reds and whites, and less nuanced and more four-square than its cousins from the Cote de Nuits.

"Wines ferment with native yeasts and see long élevages, which allows the taster a crystalclear prism into the too-oftenundiscovered terroirs of the Côte Chalonnaise."

THE WINES

MERCUREY 1^{ER} CRU "LES SAUMONTS" 2015

The fruit from this vineyard was first bottled as a separate cuvée in the 2000 vintage. The vineyard is at the summit of a small amphitheater with full southern exposure and the red-tinted soil (salmon-colored, thus the name Saumonts) is composed largely of clay and sand. This is a wine of great distinction and restraint with silky tannins and cherry-like fruit plus an intriguing touch of rusticity.

MERCUREY 1^{ER} CRU "LES VELEYS" 2015

For us, the "Veleys" is the most classic representation of the terroir of Mercurey with strength, persistence, and a hint of the "animal". It is certainly one of the longest-lived of the wines of this appellation. It carries substantial tannins, is austere in its youth, and has a sensual aromatic intensity that reminds one of the forest floor ofttimes covered with the brambles of small red and black berries.

MERCUREY 1^{ER} CRU "CLOS DU CHÂTEAU DE MONTAIGU" MONOPOLE 2015

Always the most regal and elegant of the reds from the domaine, the de Launay family owns the Clos du Chateau de Montaigu in its entirety, thus it is a "monopole". Curiously, this "Clos" faces north-northeast, not normally considered the finest exposure, but this setting produces a wine of great finesse with superb aging potential, more gentle than the rustic "Veleys" but ultimately more complex with fine, persistent tannins and silky mouthfeel.

The Buisson family has been present in Saint Romain since the 12th century, but it was only in 1947 that Henri and Marguerite Buisson decided to begin estate bottling and labeling their production. In the 1970's, their son Gilles began moving toward organic viticulture, back when such practices were still rarely encountered in the Côte d'Or. This is the environment that brothers Franck and Frédérick, sons of Gilles, have inherited, and they have continued on the promising course that their father initiated. In a village with only ten resident growers, here is a certified-biodynamic and organic domaine blessed with prime-sited old vines. Sulfur use is limited to the absolute minimum, crafting wine of undisputed purity, weight, and depth at prices a fraction of its peers just a few miles down the road in Puligny and Meursault.

THE TERROIR

Separated from the rest of the Côte de Beaune geographically, historically, and culturally, Saint Romain often stands in the shadow of neighboring Burgundian villages. When the appellation system was created in the 1930's, Saint-Romain chose not to participate—and thus, still today, there are no Premier Cru or Grand Cru vineyards in the appellation. Saint Romain is directly west of Meursault and Puligny Montrachet. It is relatively isolated with its vineyards on steep slopes which offer excellent drainage.

"Its limestone and clay soils produce wines of strong acidity with lift on the palate and vibrant citrus-like flavors to the whites and racy, spicy red fruits to the reds."

THE WINES

SAINT ROMAIN BLANC "LA PERRIÈRE" 2016

The Buissons own a small parcel of 20-year-old Chardonnay in this east-facing vineyard situated near the southern end of the valley. The leanest and most focused of the three whites, La Perrière sports ringing acidity, a powerful, almost flinty minerality, and a sense of real poise and elegance. As with all the whites, a modest 10% new oak allows the deep limestone core of this cuvee to sing through.

SAINT ROMAIN BLANC "LE JARRON" 2016

This plot lies high up on the slope, where the topsoil is poor and the gradient quite severe, which helps the Buisson brothers produce their raciest and most linear white wine. The weight that accompanies warmer vintages fleshes this out nicely, but the main event here is always a sizzling interplay of brisk acidity and driving minerality. Salty yellow fruits frame the clinging, intensely kinetic palate, and the wine finishes long and lively.

SAINT ROMAIN BLANC "SOUS LE CHÂTEAU" 2016

This is the domaine's warmest, best-exposed parcel, which usually gives a quinine-drenched nose that combines the limestone power of La Perrière with the soil imprint of Sous la Velle. The broad, almost viscous palate still delivers ringing acidity—a testament both to the Buisson brothers' sensitivity and to the advantage Saint-Romain possesses in an ever-warming climate.

Rosenthal Wine Merchant began working with the Domaine Jean Chauvenet way back in 1982, and we have never been more thrilled with the wines issuing from their cellar. Headed currently by Christophe Drag – Jean's son-in-law – the domaine encompasses just over 9 ha of vines, nearly all of which are in Nuits-Saint-Georges. Their enviable and mostly old-vine holdings in seven distinct premier crus throughout the north-south spread of the appellation allow the Burgundy lover to take a deep dive into the distinctive terroirs of Nuits. We maintain that there is no better way to gain an immersive appreciation of Burgundian terroir and love for these characterful sites than by studying and comparing these wines.

THE TERROIR

"The wines of Nuits-Saint-Georges are not soft in their youth, but that is the true character of the terroir: robust tannins, dark fruit, and a mineral infusion from the ironinflected soils that, taken together, can only come from this singular district."



THE WINES

NUITS ST. GEORGES 1ER CRU " DAMODES" 2013

Positioned on a brown-colored mix of limestone and marl, the "Damodes" speaks with more finesse, a suppleness that makes this cuvee the most precocious of the premier crus of the domaine; there is lots of punch to the wine but it is enrobed by the "velvet glove" of more gentle and silky tannins.

NUITS ST. GEORGES 1ER CRU "BOUSSELOTS" 2013

If the cru of "Aux Argillas" is a meditation on floral subtlety, "Les Bousselots" – located underneath Aux Argillas on the slope in northern Nuits – is a full-throated oration on minerality. This is a wine of almost intimidating intensity, with subtle notes of bright red fruits, warm leather, and dark dust orbiting a core of iron-like mineral enormity—a wine whose tightly wound, sinewy, densely concentrated palate insists upon a bit of patience.

NUITS ST. GEROGES 1ER CRU « RUE DE CHAUX » 2013

Perhaps the "truest" of the Nuits appellations with its central location and gravelly soil structure; vines here of 30 or so years of age yield a wine that is severe in its youth but with substantial depth ... lots of "matière" married to a mix of fruit and minerals that permit this wine to age gracefully. Elegant and somewhat austere, the "Rue de Chaux" has impeccable balance and breed.

ABOUT US

It is our essential task to provide our clients with complex, joyous and satisfying wines that celebrate the artisan, respect nature and inspire the imagination. Wine, when crafted with these objectives, is a social tool, one that assists in the formation of relationships and stimulates emotion and memory. Our offers are designed to broaden your vistas, enhance your appreciation of traditional European wines and bring memorable experiences to your table, all to be enjoyed with friends.

Justine A. Rosenthal, Neal's daughter, spent many childhood weekends and school holidays "helping" in the store, riding the conveyor belt, being wheeled around on a hand truck and manning the register. Now a foreign-policy specialist and award-winning filmmaker, she could only resist the lure of the wine world for so long, and is delighted to once again be back amongst the vines, bouquets and bottles.





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