

The vines in fall

IN THE CELLAR

AFTER THE HARVEST, THE START OF AGEING FOR THE 2018S



From 19 September onwards, once all the grapes were in, life in the winery remained very intense for the next month, when we could finally pause for breath.

We had to monitor the **fermentation** of the last of the reds, for which pressing was completed on 5 October. They are now all in casks in the cellar, the last to go into barrels being the Gevrey-Chambertin La Justice, the *grand cru* Clos Vougeot, and the Nuits-Saint-Georges Les Corvées Pagets, finishing with the Bourgogne Terres de Famille.

This year, we are using a **lower proportion of new oak**, and more of the larger 450-liter barrels, even for the reds, which will mean less impact from the wood. This is the first time half of the Bourgogne red will be aged in stainless-steel vats.

The first inkling of the personality of the 2018 reds suggests some tempting aromas of red fruit and wild berries. Our favorite, the Gevrey-Chambertin Premier Cru Bel Air, opens with a bouquet of blackberry of remarkable intensity.

The whites are coming to the end of alcoholic fermentation, exclusively in barrels, and are now being stirred once a month during the last quarter of the moon, then again with the waxing moon, a cycle that will continue for all the wines until the end of December. Their very yellow lees, which we compared to custard, was an initial sign of excellence that we will no doubt appreciate better after their malolactic fermentation. For now, it's too early to know their true nature.

DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE - 7 bis, rue de l'Église - 21700 PREMEAUX-PRISSEY

FRANCE - www.domainedelavougeraie.com - @domainedelavougeraie

TEL : (33) 03 80 62 48 25 - FAX : (33) 03 80 61 25 44

vougeraie@domainedelavougeraie.com



La lettre

du DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE

N°57. 2018 HARVEST SPECIAL



THE SPIRIT OF THE DOMAINE



At the time of writing, this year's harvest ended one month ago. For those who followed our daily harvest bulletins on our website, you will know it lasted 26 days, compared to just 19 days the previous year.

This long run was unlike anything we've had to deal with before, with a calendar for maturity that was quite out-of-the-ordinary. On top of this, nature was exceptionally generous this year, and the influx of grapes was augmented by the arrival of fruit from some of our recently-replanted vineyards which have now entered production. All this meant we had to maintain the pace to keep up with the ripening of the grapes. This required a huge effort in terms of organization, expertly steered by our manager Sylvie, flanked by Camille and François in the winery, and the team of growers and pickers out in the field.

This abundant harvest has quality written all over it, and comes as a welcome relief for Burgundy after the lean year in 2016. It is too early to talk about style, with the last reds only just finishing their time in vats. So let's take a look back on the extraordinary adventure of this vintage, as these future great wines finish their fermentation. *The Boisset family and the whole team at the Domaine de la Vougeraie.*

All Domaine de la Vougeraie wines are grown organically

THIS SEASON'S WINES



Vougeot Premier Cru
LE CLOS BLANC
DE VOUGEOT
MONOPOLE
2014

An aromatic and complex bouquet, meandering through yellow-fleshed fruits like peach and nectarine. Rounded and harmonious in the mouth, a wonderful match for pan-fried scallops with *fleur de sel*.



Volnay
2013

Pureness of fruit and complexity. Aromas of red berries, nice tension in the mouth, underscored by an earthy whiff. Crisp and delicate, with a slightly spicy finish. A wine to accompany roast quail with girolle mushrooms and baby potatoes.



Pommard
LES PETITS NOIZONS
2014

The intensity of this Pinot Noir with nuances of stone and game will stand up well to a selection of matured cheeses.

- ◆ 20TH VINTAGE
AT THE DOMAINE,
AN EXCEPTIONAL
HARVEST
- ◆ YOUNG VINES,
OUR NEW
PLANTATIONS ENTER
PRODUCTION
- ◆ THE VINES
IN FALL
- ◆ IN THE CELLAR:
AFTER THE HARVEST,
THE START OF AGEING
FOR THE 2018S

contents

2018: THE DOMAINE'S 20TH VINTAGE, A SUPERLATIVE HARVEST!



THE 2018 VINTAGE, A LUNAR MONTH

Despite having anticipated a start date for harvesting in August, with the growth cycle of the vines once again short, the daily samples threw us completely off our usual schedule. We always start with our cherished plot of Le Clos Blanc de Vougeot, but this year, sampling in mid-August revealed **very uneven phenolic maturity** with low pH, giving us an early warning that things might be different. As it turned out, the younger red vines on the Côte de Beaune were ripe first, whereas it is usually the Côte de Nuits. The first grapes were cut on the 23rd of the month.

A year of 13 moons resulted in a year of chaotic weather! There were some major **disparities** during the shortened growth cycle, which meant work in the vines had to be done at breakneck speed. But overall, the year was very sunny, and the localized outbreaks of hail barely impacted us. A mild winter was followed by a rainy spring, ideal for flowering, alternating between storms and warm spells in May and June, with a high risk of disease. Summer saw heatwave temperatures, but weekly rainfall in July gave the vines some much needed sustenance. But

the continued heat in August combined with drought led to photosynthesis becoming stagnated, with leaves falling prematurely. We were preparing to harvest vines that were suffocating, the analyses of maturity raising alarm bells about the tempo. Fortunately, a smattering of rain and the odd storm at the end of the month was enough to kick-start the ripening process.

The first grapes picked were those of our young plants in **Volnay**, the ripest of our 44 hectares. And we were delighted that we had decided, for once, to have carried out a “green harvest” on many of our younger vines, reducing the number of bunches in high summer to encourage the development of the remaining ones and avoid overloading the plant.

The health of the grapes was remarkable, with no trace of disease or rot early on, and the little that was detected towards the end was quickly eliminated. There was less *millerandage* than usual, and the grapes were plump with **very thick skins** for the Pinot Noirs – their natural protection against a hot sun which ensures good color in the wine.

This year, harvesting the Clos Blanc spread over eight days, and was done in five stages as maturity progressed. It was similar for the **Corton-Charlemagne**, for which the east and west plots were harvested two weeks apart, when the gap is usually a matter of five-to-seven days.

Maceration lasted on average 21 days, which is about normal, with all the wines being kept cold for a period before fermentation. The fermentation itself was on average a little longer than last year – ten days for



the reds, and two weeks for the whites, followed by **stirring twice a month** with a rising moon until the end of the year.

After 23 days, picking finished first on the Côte de Beaune, then three days later, on 18 September, the last white grapes of the Hautes-Côtes de Nuits were brought into the winery, following six days of picking on the higher slopes for the finale at the end of almost a full lunar cycle.

It was a sunny and mostly warm harvest period, despite a sudden drop in temperature for a few days. The occasional storm quenched the thirst of the parched vines, without turning the ground to mud.

Another first this year in the history of the Domaine; while the first whites had been fermenting in the cellar for four days, we were still filling vats with reds. We will remember this **outstanding vintage** for years to come, and there is no shortage of superlatives to describe it. Well done to the team in the winery, the crack squad known as “the Expendables” (see harvest bulletin N°20) who dealt with an uninterrupted influx of crates. This year, they really were heroes! As a sign of the drought, the vines were already losing their leaves in early September, and by mid-October the golden colors on the Côte were sublime, although this delicate autumnal hue is fading with each passing day.

Fresh plantations: The young vines

As part of the ongoing improvement of our estate, we have in recent years been pulling up and replanting certain areas of vine, either because the plants are too old, or because they are not ideal.

These young vines – known in Burgundy as “plantes” – have great vigor in their youth, and this year provided a great deal of fruit. Here's an update on the newcomers in 2018:

- Volnay: Replanted in 2015
- Nuits-Saint-Georges Premier Cru Clos de Thorey: Replanted in 2013
- Vougeot Premier Cru Les Cras: Replanted in 2012
- Le Clos Blanc de Vougeot: Partially replanted in 2012
- Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet: Replanted in 2018
- Chambolle-Musigny: Partially replanted in 2018

For more information:
www.domainedelavougeraie.com/lettres/lettre-des-vendanges

