

DOMAINE BERNARD MOREAU

The Lovely 2017 Burgundies

View From The Cellar – John Gilman

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Alex Moreau has once again made one of the finest lineups of 2017s in the entire Côte d'Or. He began picking early, getting out in the vines with his harvesting team on August 30th and has managed to retain beautiful cut and mineral drive in each and every one of his white wines. There is the racy precision and mineral undertow to the 2017s chez Moreau that recall the brilliant 2014s here, though this more recent vintage may have even a bit more mid-palate generosity.

As is customary when visiting Domaine Moreau in November, the Bourgogne bottlings were already bottled, and the other white wines in various stages of evolution, with some already racked into tank and fined, others assembled, but not yet fined, and a few still in cask. It was great to see the full lineup of wines again in 2017, after the severe frost damage in Chassagne in 2016 had limited the number of premier crus offered by the domaine dramatically. Alex had decided last year that the production from the most severely frost-damaged premier crus last year would be best just used to stretch out the Chassagne AC bottling in 2016, rather than trying to micro-vinify tiny premier cru cuvées, so the range chez Moreau in 2016 was quite a small one. As I mentioned last year, two of the wines that the Moreau brothers had been making for quite some time from purchased grapes, their Volnay “Santenots” and their Bâtard-Montrachet, were replanted by the proprietor in 2016, so these wines are no longer part of the Domaine Moreau lineup from the 2016 vintage forwards. I did not think to ask if the brothers intend to purchase fruit from these parcels once they start to produce again, but it has to be hard to go from purchasing fruit from nice old vines in the two vineyards to buying fruit from young vines, so it will be interesting to see if they make a reappearance in the domaine's lineup sometime down the road.

Getting back to what is in the cellar in 2017, the domaine's wines are strikingly gorgeous examples of their underlying terroir in this vintage, so that one goes from premier cru to premier cru and finds absolutely quintessential examples of each vineyard, so that if one were to do a master class of Chassagne terroir, selecting the range of Alex's premier crus would be a very, very fine way to show of the classical style of each terroir.

Vins Blancs

2017 Bourgogne Blanc

The Moreau family's 2017 Bourgogne blanc is a lovely example, wafting from the glass in a mix of pear, apple, chalky soil tones, white flowers and a nice esthery topnote of bee pollen. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied, and nicely plump at the core, with fine acids and focus and a long, lifted and succulent finish. I like the inner tension here. Good juice. 2018-2030. **89**

2017 St. Aubin “En Remilly”

The consistently excellent en Remilly bottling from Alex Moreau is once again superb in 2017. This wine had already been fined at the time of my visit, but was showing very nicely on both the nose and palate. The bouquet offers up a fine mix of pear, apple, lemon blossoms, chalky minerality, incipient notes of crème patissière and a delicate base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and vibrant, with a good core, excellent soil signature, zesty acids and lovely cut and grip on the long and complex finish. 2018-2035. **91**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet

The domaine's excellent Chassagne villages cuvée was in the same stage of development as the Saint Aubin, having been assembled and already fined prior to my visit. The 2017 vintage is very strong for this excellent village wine, with the nose delivering an elegant and very floral constellation of apple, pear, a pungent note of lemon blossoms, a fine base of chalky soil tones, citrus zest and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, long and seamlessly balanced, with bright acids, excellent focus and grip, lovely nascent complexity and a long, vibrant and classy finish. Fine juice. 2018-2040. **91**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Champgains”

The 2017 Champgains from Domaine Moreau was one of the outliers in the range of premier crus, as this wine was still in cask and had not yet been racked. It was showing very nicely, with impressive complexity for such a young wine in its aromatic constellation of apple, tangerine, crème patissière, stony minerality, floral tones and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, racy and quite mineral in profile, with a full-bodied format, a superb core of fruit, lovely focus and grip and a long, vibrant and classic finish. Excellent juice. 2022-2045+. **92+**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Vergers”

The 2017 Vergers chez Moreau is a beautiful wine in the making, with great elegance on display on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is a lovely blend of apple, pear, spring flowers, a touch of pastry cream, chalky soil tones, vanillin oak and a topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nicely reserved in personality, with a juicy core of fruit, lovely focus and grip, bright acids and impressive backend tension on the long, balanced and zesty finish. Fine juice. 2021-2045+. **92**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Chenevottes”

Chenevottes is never the most complex of premier crus in the constellation of Chassagne, but it is probably my favorite for drinking early on in its evolution, as the wine is often absolutely complete right out of the blocks, and this is certainly the case for Alex Moreau’s 2017 version. The beautiful bouquet jumps from the glass in a complex blend of apple, pear, lemon zest, chalky soil tones, a hint of the butter to come, vanillin oak and plenty of apple blossoms in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and nicely balanced, with just a touch more reserve than the wide open nose suggests. The finish is long, focused and vibrant, with excellent cut and grip and plenty of complexity. A beautiful bottle of Chenevottes.

2021-2045+. **92+**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Maltroie”

The 2017 Maltroie from Domaine Moreau is also a classic example of its respective terroir. The bouquet is deep, pure and very refined, offering up scents of pear, tangerine, stony soil tones, bee pollen, vanillin oak and a nice touch of citrus blossoms up high. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very pure on the attack, with excellent mineral drive, a fine core, racy acids and a long, perfectly balanced and nascently complex finish. High class juice.

2022-2045+. **93**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Morgeot”

For many years, the premier cru of Morgeot was the one in Chassagne that I was most familiar with, as this was the wine from Domaine Ramonet that was most available in the New York market in my early years in the wine trade and I would drink it whenever I had the opportunity. So, tasting Alex Moreau’s archetypical 2017 Morgeot brought back a wealth of memories of those early days, as this wine is as great and classic a young Morgeot as one could hope to find in the vintage. The nose soars from the glass in a great blend of apple, lemon, chalky soil tones, spring flowers, vanillin oak, lemon zest and just a whisper of the buttery elements that will come with bottle age. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, bright and seamlessly balanced, with a rock solid core, great soil signature, vibrant acids and outstanding focus and grip on the long and very promising finish. Great juice. 2024-2055. **94**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet “Grandes Ruchottes”

The 2017 Grands Ruchottes chez Moreau was still in barrel at the time of my visit and consequently, absolutely singing on both the nose and palate. The stunning bouquet wafts from the glass in a brilliant blend of apple, lemon, pear, very complex, limestone minerality, white lilies, a hint of butter and a discreet framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, fullbodied, pure and very refined in profile, with tremendous depth at the core, superb balance and grip and marvelous intensity of flavor on the lifted, complex and snappy finish. A beautiful wine in the making.

2025-2070. **95**

2017 Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru

Alex Moreau’s 2017 Chevalier-Montrachet is one of the most stunning white wines to be found in the vintage in the Côte de Beaune. The bouquet is pure, complete and absolutely a quintessential expression of this magical terroir, delivering a magical constellation of pear, lemon blossoms, tangerine, a touch of crème patissière, orange zest, kaleidoscopic limestone minerality and a very classy base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure, racy and supremely elegant, with a full-bodied and flawless format, a great core of fruit, snappy acids and a long, laser-like and beautifully complex finish. Pure magic. 2027-2070. **98**

Vins Rouges

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet Rouge “Vieilles Vignes”

The 2017 old vine Chassagne rouge from Alex Moreau is a terrific wine in the making and will be a fine value. The bouquet is pure and nicely black fruity in personality, offering up scents of sweet dark berries, black cherries, raw cocoa, woodsmoke, pigeon and just a touch of new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and quite suave on the attack, with a good core of fruit, fine soil signature, ripe, moderate tannins and a long, complex and classy finish. 2022-2050. **91**

2017 Chassagne-Montrachet Rouge “La Cardeuse”

The 2017 la Cardeuse is a bit more structured wine out of the blocks than the fine Vieilles Vignes, but will be simply outstanding when it is ready to drink. The deep and pure bouquet delivers scents of black cherries, dark berries, espresso, a fine base of dark soil tones, woodsmoke, gamebird and a deft framing of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and has a lovely sense of sappiness at the core, with ripe, fine-grained tannins, excellent focus and grip and a long, pure and nascently complex finish. This will be outstanding. 2025-2065. **92+**

2017 Volnay “Clos de Chenes”

The 2017 Clos des Chênes from Domaine Moreau is another outstanding bottle in the making. This wine is properly still youthful on both the nose and palate, but shows plenty of promise in its aromatic constellation of cassis, sweet blackberries, bitter chocolate, a complex base of soil tones, gamebird and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, focused and sappy at the core, with excellent soil signature, fine focus and grip, silky tannins and a long, beautifully balanced and still quite primary finish. All this needs is time to blossom! 2027-2065+. **93+**