

DOMAINE DUJAC

2018 Burgundy: Confounded Expectations

Vinous – Neal Martin

January 2020 (with May 2020 updates)

Visiting Domaine Dujac in the heart of Morey-Saint-Denis is always one that I look forward to, not only because of the quality of wines, but for the candid assessment of the growing season courtesy of Alec Seysses. This year, it was nice to see his father Jacques who passed through. I grabbed him for a couple of minutes to glean some information on Clos Saint-Denis - Vinous readers can expect an epic vertical in the future. Back to pressing matters and the 2018 vintage. "We picked the whites on 29/30 August and the reds 4/5 September, finishing 10 days later. It was special: a drawn out harvest. It's the first time we have seen such spread in terms of ripeness. We had to keep stopping and starting. I think [this variegation] was because of localized thunderstorms, which means that average rainfall varied from one village to another. To give you an example, we picked Clos de la Roche at 13.4% and then picked some of the Vosne-Romanées at barely 13.0% around eight days later. There was mildew in Vosne but we didn't really suffer from it, so I don't think it's that. Maybe it was uneven flowering? After a difficult vintage in the vineyards, we were pleased with the quality once we began picking. The yields are all over the place, the whites incredibly generous, near the legal limit for whites and reds. Everyone was calling each other, looking for spare barrels. We used 90% whole cluster on the domaine wines. The 2018 is a vintage where we would normally have used 100% but we found that the bunches at the top of the vat can become damaged, so we now de-stem a little. In terms of maceration, in 2018 we did less punch downs and more pumpovers.

The 2018 Chambertin Grand Cru has a very well-defined bouquet that is a distant cousin of the Bonnes-Mares stylistically, featuring blackberry and wild hedgerow, crushed limestone and a touch of black tea. The palate is medium-bodied and quite austere for a Chambertin, delivering firm tannins, wonderful structure and light white pepper and sage toward the finish, which has just the right amount of bitterness. Superb. When I started in the early 2000s we might have done three in a day, but it's more a question of when you do it. My father is good at keeping data. We found that he had moved from late to early punchdowns. When we experimented with later punchdowns we found there was little difference between the two. The tannins are so ripe that you can easily go beyond what you need. The average alcohol is 13.5% and nothing is above 14%. This will be a vintage that will live in Burgundy folklore."

Vins Rouges

2018 Domaine Dujac Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru

The 2018 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru is blessed with one of my favorite aromatics from Dujac this year, featuring black cherries, raspberry, crushed stone and pressed iris flower, all quite restrained for a Bonnes-Mares but showing outstanding focus. The palate is medium-bodied with chalky tannins, a fine line of acidity and a strict and quite linear finish that lingers long in the mouth. Outstanding.
2022-2050 (95-97)

2018 Domaine Dujac Chambertin Grand Cru

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2018 Domaine Dujac Chambolle-Musigny Les Gruenchers 1er Cru

The 2018 Chambolle-Musigny Les Gruenchers 1er Cru has a very complex bouquet of black cherry and raspberry plus touches of clove and thyme; there is something effortless about these aromatics. The palate is medium-bodied with crunchy tannins, a superb line of acidity and a palpable marine influence on the vivid, energetic finish. Superb.
2023-2050 (93-95)

2018 Domaine Dujac Chambolle Musigny Village

The 2018 Chambolle-Musigny Village offers copious black cherry and bilberry on the very pure nose, along with gorgeous incense aromas. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grained tannins and slightly chalky in texture, with a Morey-Saint-Denis-like structure toward the serious finish. Good potential.
2022-2040 (89-91)

2018 Domaine Dujac Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru

The 2018 Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru was showing a little reduction on the nose but there is plenty of attractive black currant and boysenberry fruit underneath. The palate is medium-bodied with grainy tannins, fine acidity, great mineralité and a precise, edgy finish that is quite Mazoyères in style. Great potential, but it will need some time.

2024-2048 **(92-94)**

2018 Domaine Dujac Clos Saint-Denis Grand Cru

The 2018 Clos Saint-Denis Grand Cru builds on the promise that it showed in bottle. It has a sublime bouquet with blackberry and wild strawberry, ground gravel and orange rind. The palate is medium-bodied with smooth and very supple tannins, a touch of brown spice infusing the fleshy red fruit with a long and tender finish that has shaken off the austerity it showed out of barrel. Superb.

2025-2050 **96** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Clos de la Roche Grand Cru

The 2018 Clos de la Roche Grand Cru is probably now just a step ahead of the Clos Saint-Denis on the nose: stunning violet-infused red fruit with veins of blueberry that unfold exquisitely. The palate is silky smooth in texture, lightly spiced with a cornucopia of mineral-driven red fruit that convey just the right degree of flamboyance. Outstanding.

2025-2050 **97** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Echezeaux Grand Cru

The 2018 Echézeaux Grand Cru had been racked the day prior to my visit. That said, the bouquet is very well defined, offering black cherries, raspberry, rosemary and pressed rose petal aromas that blossom with aeration. The palate is medium-bodied with quite firm tannins, good depth and precision, revealing bitter cherry and a touch of balsamic toward the finish. Very good potential.

2024-2045 **(93-95)**

2018 Domaine Dujac Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Aux Combottes

The 2018 Gevrey-Chambertin Aux Combottes 1er Cru is showing a lot of promise. The floral element that I noticed from barrel has become more accentuated now that the wine is in bottle and marries beautifully with the black cherry fruit. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins. Just a little gaminess comes through with a fleshy finish that disguises the structure underneath. There is a pinch of cracked black pepper on the aftertaste. Excellent.

2024-2040 **93** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Morey-Saint-Denis 1er Cru

The 2018 Morey-Saint-Denis 1er Cru comes from Ruchots, Sorbets, Millandes and Charrières. It has a clean, precise bouquet of mineral-rich black fruit that is vivid and bright. The palate is medium-bodied with chalky tannins and a fine bead of acidity. A little compact at the moment; the aftertaste needs more persistence to complete this Premier Cru.

2022-2034 **(90-92)**

2018 Domaine Dujac Morey-Saint-Denis Village

The 2018 Morey-Saint-Denis Village is a cuvée that I tasted just after racking at the domaine so I deferred scoring. Now in bottle, it has a juicy crushed strawberry and cranberry bouquet with light incense aromas. The palate is smooth on the entry. Plenty of brambly red fruit is laced with sage and a pinch of sea salt. The stems impart a pleasant tertiary note on the finish that becomes spicier with time.

2023-2032 **88** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru Aux Malconsorts

The 2018 Vosne-Romanée Aux Malconsorts 1er Cru has an extravagant bouquet with brambly red fruit laced with shucked oyster shell and a touch of seaweed. The palate is medium-bodied with fine-grain tannins, lightly spiced with a subtle ash-like note towards the composed finish. This has great backbone that should guarantee its longevity. A quintessential Dujac/Malconsorts.

2025-2050 **95** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru Les Beaux Monts

The 2018 Vosne-Romanée Les Beaux Monts 1er Cru has a subtle Asian influence on the nose, offering well-defined aromas of hoisin and wet limestone. The palate is medium-bodied with supple tannins and a fine bead of acidity, quite saline in the mouth, with a sense of symmetry on the finish. Simply a class act.

2023-2048 **(94-96)**

2018 Domaine Dujac Romanée Saint-Vivant Grand Cru

The 2018 Romanée-Saint-Vivant Grand Cru has a reserved and tightly wound bouquet of dark berry fruit, sea cave/oyster shell, raspberry preserve and faint touches of fireside ash. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannins, a fine bead of acidity and a classy, almost Richebourg-like, arching structure that possesses enormous length. Fabulous.

2024-2050 **(95-97)**

Vins Blancs

2018 Domaine Dujac Morey-Saint-Denis Blanc 1er Cru Mont Luisants

The 2018 Morey-Saint-Denis Les Mont Luisants Blanc 1er Cru comes from a parcel bought in 1997 that was planted with Pinot Noir, that Jacques Seysses grafted over with Chardonnay in 2000. Matured in 20% new oak, it has much more lift on the nose compared to the Village Cru thanks to its limestone soils. Lemon thyme, honeysuckle and a touch of peach skin. The palate is vibrant on the entry, the acidity and *mineralité* coming through nicely. Good length here.

2022-2030 **90** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Folatières

The 2017 Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 1er Cru has a very taut nose at first, only reluctantly unfurling to reveal green apple. The 2018 Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 1er Cru contains around two-thirds young vines and one-third 20- to 30-year-old vines. It has a pleasant green apple and orange pith bouquet, although it lacks the penetration of the 2017 tasted a year earlier. The palate is taut and fresh, with citrus lemon and a lovely saline note that defines the final half. Not an overly complex Folatières, but it will give pleasure over the next decade, possibly more.

2021-2032 **(89-91)**

2018 Domaine Dujac Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru Les Combettes

The 2018 Puligny-Montrachet Les Combettes 1er Cru has quite an intense bouquet with orange sorbet, mint and green apples, well-defined and powerful. The palate is fresh and vibrant on the entry with a smack of sea salt, good acidity with an almost Meursault-like finish that lingers in the mouth. Maybe not a Les Combettes of immense longevity, but there is breeding here.

2023-2036 **92** (updated May 2020)

2018 Domaine Dujac Morey Saint-Denis Blanc

The 2018 Morey-Saint-Denis Blanc has an attractive bouquet with lime flower, quince and honeysuckle aromas. Fine definition. The palate is fresh on the entry with lemon rind and quite strong ginger notes. Moderate weight, a little waxy in texture, it is probably an early-drinking Morey-Saint-Denis Blanc.

2022-2030 **88** (updated May 2020)