

DOMAINE DUJAC

Reviews of 2018 Vintage Wines

Burghound – Allen Meadows

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3rd Quarter 2020 Issue 79 (Whites)

Jeremy Seysses described the 2018 growing season by posing a philosophical question that is becoming ever more pertinent in Burgundy and elsewhere: “Are hot vintages such as 2018 the new normal? If it is then we in Burgundy are going to have to adapt and adapt quickly. For example, it used to be that we needed small crops, if for no other reason than they had the best chance to achieve adequate levels of ripeness. In 2018 we had a very generous crop and thank goodness because if not we probably would have made another 2003, which, like those wines, are not they are not the style which made the reputation of Burgundy. Our yields were between 40 and 48 hl/ha and even Gruenchers produced 35 hl/ha when 20 hl/ha for this vineyard is already a lot. The deeper soil vineyards seem to generally do better than those with thinner soils thanks to the better water retention properties. We chose to begin picking on the 27th of August with the whites and then attacked the reds on the 30th. However, we did several ‘start-stop’ periods and finally finished the harvest on the 12th of September with the Gevrey vines for our Fils et Père label. Potential alcohols were really pretty moderate considering just how hot and dry it was. Most wines were in the 13+% range and only two broke 14% coming in exactly at 14.1%. We used between 85 and 90% whole clusters and did a very light vinification as it would have been easy to extract too much tannin and imbalance the wines. However even as softly as we tried to vinify, the reds are still quite firmly structured and should make for old bones.” I agree with Seysses’ comments regarding the firm structure of the domaine’s 2018s reds and some of them struck me as very grippy and it’s not clear how well they will age out. The 2017s, revisited below, were bottled between January and March 2019 without fining or filtration. Note further that the 2018 Dujac Fils et Père wines are reviewed immediately below as well.

Vins Rouges

2018 Morey St. Denis Rouge

(from Porroux, Le Village, Clos Solon and Les Herbuottes). A ripe array of various red berries and floral nuances gives way to supple, round and attractively textured middle weight flavors that terminate in a dusty and youthfully austere finish that is pretty if a bit short.
(87-89) / 2026+

2018 Chambolle-Musigny

(from Les Drazeyes, Les Argillières and Les Fremières). An attractively layered nose combines notes of red currant, raspberry and soft floral and spice wisps. The almost painfully-intense medium weight flavors display good detail on the somewhat rustic and robust finish that is overtly tannic and borderline tough.
(86-89) / 2028+

2018 Morey St. Denis “1er”

(the blend is ~70% Ruchots with the balance in Clos Sorbé, Millandes and Charrières). A deft touch of wood sets off a blend of floral and earth-inflected dark berry fruit-suffused nose. The supple yet nicely detailed medium weight flavors also culminate in a grippy, firm and austere finish that isn’t short but neither is it especially persistent. It’s possible that the somewhat coarse tannins may well harmonize in time but my sense is that they’re likely to remain prominent and not completely integrated.
(87-90) / 2030+

2018 Gevrey-Chambertin “Aux Combottes”

(from a 1.16 ha parcel). An admirably discreet application of wood frames the very pretty and equally perfumed nose that flashes ripe notes of cassis, red currant and an impressive range of spice elements. The medium weight flavors are not especially dense though the mid-palate texture is refined and lilted, all wrapped in a dusty, youthfully austere and mildly short finish. With that said, the tannins seem riper and this will probably unwind and harmonize in time.
(89-91) / 2030+

2018 Chambolle-Musigny “Les Gruenchers”

(from a .33 ha parcel of 50+ year old vines). A really pretty nose is strikingly perfumed with its notes of ripe black cherry, spiced plum, violet and rose petal. The sleek and again almost painfully intense flavors though the mildly warm finish is again dusty, austere and a bit coarse. This too may harmonize in time though it's a sufficiently open question that my projected range is a bit wider than usual. **(87-91)** / 2030+

2018 Charmes-Chambertin

(from a total of .65 ha in both Charmes and Mazoyères). A ripe, fresh and unusually elegant, indeed even perfumed, nose displays notes of black raspberry, cassis and plenty of floral influences. There is both good focus and density to the quite powerful and vibrant medium weight flavors that culminate in a mildly warm, compact, rustic and somewhat short finish. My guess is that this will better harmonize as the tannins resolve but that is not a given. **(89-92)** / 2033+

2018 Vosne-Romanée “Les Beaux Monts”

Here too a background application of wood can be found on the spicier and more floral nose of both red and dark currant, sandalwood and exotic tea scents. The beautifully well-detailed and more mineral-driven flavors possess a super-sleek texture before concluding in a grippy but not short finish. While this is not nearly as elegant or refined as it usually is, the structure does appear as though it will integrate in time and my projected range offers the benefit of the doubt in this regard. **(89-92)** / 2030+

2018 Vosne-Romanée “Les Malconsorts”

(from a 1.57 ha parcel). This is even spicier with its mélange of subdued but elegant and pure aromas that speaks of red and dark currant, violet, rose petal and exotic spice nuances, all of which is trimmed in subtle wood. There is first-rate intensity to the muscular full-bodied flavors that coat the palate with dry extract that also partially buffers the very firm, serious and austere finish that is shaped by raspy but not drying tannins. This will likely never be an elegant wine but it does seem quite promising if you're prepared to be patient. **(90-93)** / 2033+

2018 Echézeaux

The wood treatment is more evident though it certainly doesn't intrude on the exceptionally spicy and very floral aromas that reflect notes of cassis, plum, exotic tea and a touch of violet. The medium-bodied flavors possess a seductive and succulent mid-palate that contrasts markedly with a powerful but grippy and slightly drying finish. Again, the open question is whether this will eventually harmonize? **(88-91)** / 2028+

2018 Clos de la Roche

This is the first wine to display any appreciable wood and menthol characters and here it's not subtle though to be clear, it doesn't dominate the very ripe liqueur-like aromas of black raspberry, cassis, floral and plenty of sauvage nuances. The sleekly textured and impressively intense large-scaled flavors possess evident power on the dusty, serious and palate coating finish that is definitely quite grippy and a bit coarse but the supporting tannins seem to be mature. I like the overall fruit/tannin/sap balance and while it will take extended bottle age, this should eventually come together. **(91-94)** / 2038+

2018 Clos St. Denis

(from a 1.48 ha parcel). This is actually quite aromatically similar to the Clos de la Roche but with even more spice and a bit more floral influence as well. There is excellent volume to the seductively textured, fleshy and succulent medium weight flavors that firm up immediately on the firm and serious but slightly better balanced finale. Patience is once again strongly suggested. **(92-94)** / 2035+

2018 Bonnes Mares

Soft reduction is enough to push the underlying fruit and floral scents to the background. Otherwise there is really lovely energy to the cool and restrained yet muscular medium-bodied flavors that are compact, firm and a bit drying on the short finish. Based on the structure, this may well be a fruit/tannin race as this ages and overall I found this to be well below its usual excellent level. **(89-91)** / 2030+

2018 Chambertin

(this consists of two well-separated parcels totaling .29 ha, mostly from Clos de Bèze with .24 ha and the remaining .05 ha in Chambertin proper; when both are blended in this fashion, the declared appellation must be Chambertin). Here too the nose is sufficiently reduced to block a proper evaluation. More interesting are the super-sleek, intense and equally muscular larger-scaled flavors that brim with minerality on the extremely tannic and somewhat hard finale. This is pretty in its fashion but like the Bonnes Mares, over time this is going to be a fruit/tannin race and at this early point, it's not clear that the fruit is going to win out.

(90-92) / 2038+

2018 Romanée St. Vivant

(from a .17 ha parcel). A pure, elegant and very spicy nose willingly offers up notes of cool red currant, raspberry, plum, exotic tea and an interesting hint of orange peel. The delicious, intense and tension-filled middle weight flavors possess better acid/fruit/tannin balance and this is particularly evident on the ever-so-mildly rustic finish due to the raspy structure. Even so, I suspect that this will round out with a few years of bottle age. In sum, this too is perfectly OK but it would be fair to observe that it's not at its usual lofty level.

(91-93) / 2033+

Vins Blancs

2018 Morey St. Denis

(from Les Porroux). Moderate reduction dominates the nose at present though there is good freshness and verve to the succulent and seductively textured middle weight flavors that terminate in a clean and dry if somewhat attenuated finish. This will probably flesh out but it's on the lean side today.

(87-89) / 2023+

2018 Morey St. Denis "1er"

Here the nose is completely dominated by SO₂. Otherwise there is excellent intensity to the much more mineral-driven medium weight flavors that offer better depth and persistence on the austere and bone-dry lemon-infused finish. This too will need to add flesh and even when it does, this is so dry that it won't be for everyone.

(88-91) / 2026+

2018 Puligny-Montrachet "Les Foliatères"

(from Peux Bois and Foliatères proper). There is a whiff of the exotic in the form of pineapple whiffs that combine with notes of acacia blossom and various white-fleshed fruit aromas. The lush and opulent yet relatively refined medium-bodied flavors possess slightly better mid-palate density, all wrapped in a youthfully austere but not quite as dry finale. This isn't classically styled but there's clearly more here.

(90-93) / 2028+

2018 Puligny-Montrachet "Les Combettes"

(from a .60 ha parcel). Here too there is a vague suggestion of the exotic to the aromas nut oil, pear liqueur and floral nuances that are trimmed in just enough wood to notice. There is better density still to the delicious flavors that also culminate in a dry and firm but not really austere finish that is a bit more complex.

(91-93) / 2028+

Vins de Fils et Pere

2018 Chambolle-Musigny

A notably ripe yet fresh nose consists mostly of red currant, raspberry and a floral wisp. The delicious middle weight flavors possess a succulent mid-palate that contrasts somewhat with the intense and raspy, indeed grippy and slightly rustic, finish that is borderline robust. The tannins seem to lack just a bit of phenolic maturity.

(86-89) / 2025+

2018 Morey St. Denis

(this has 50% 1er juice in it that comes from Les Millandes, Les Charrières and Clos des Ormes with the remainder from the villages level vineyard of Les Seuvrées). Here too there is good freshness to the slightly more complex nose that reveals notes of various red berries, new turned earth and a pretty floral hint. There is fine intensity to the solidly dense and relatively powerful medium-bodied flavors that also culminate in a firm, dusty and grippy but not really drying finish where the tannins are slightly riper.

(88-90) / 2028+

2018 Gevrey-Chambertin

(from Croix des Champs). Firm reduction dominates the fruit today. Somewhat curiously the middle weight flavors possess a finer mid-palate mouthfeel that also contrasts with the firm, serious and rustic finale that is somewhat short and awkward. This may well harmonize with a few years of bottle age but today it's edgy.

(87-89) / 2028+