

# DOMAINE BERNARD MOREAU

## *La Lumière Noire: 2019 Burgundy - Côte de Beaune*

### *Vinous – Neal Martin*

#### *December 2020*

Alex and Benoît Moreau have become two of Chassagne's most respected winemakers in recent years. Benoît is the more elusive brother, so as usual I met with self-effacing and affable Alexandre. Their range of Premier Crus showcases what can be achieved in the right hands with reassuring consistency. It was an early morning appointment and I arrived in the courtyard with the silence broken by the jet cleaning of barrels. "We did not have a real winter. It was a 'sort of winter,'" he began when I asked him to summarize the 2019 vintage. "The growing season started early, and we had some frost pressure in spring and came close [to being burned]. We thought we had escaped and did not light any candles but in a few areas we found very few bunches, so looking back, I think we under-estimated the effect [of the cold snap]. The damage might have been inside the bud. In the end we have only 40hl/ha for the Village Crus and 20-25hl/ha for the Premier Crus because of that episode and also the poor flowering. There was millerandage on the slopes on the Premier Crus and in old vines. Afterwards, during the summer, it was very warm, so the anticipated date of picking was initially the second week of September. But the heat wave moved the picking date ahead three times so that in the end we picked on 7 September, starting with the Les Chenevottes. We moved quickly because we knew the sugar would suddenly accelerate, but we ended picking at 12.5° to 13.5° potential alcohol. I'm happy with the quality - there is good acidity and freshness. There was no disease and the fruit needed little sorting. There was just not much juice. With the small crops I still kept the new oak at 20-25%. They have been in barrel until last July and then stayed in tank on the fine lees without fining. At the beginning of the maturation, because of that year's intense sunshine, I was concerned that it would be difficult to see the differences between terroirs. But I am not so worried now as they are coming through during their barrel maturation. I will probably bottle the Premier Crus next March, though the wines fermented dry by Christmas so it might be earlier."

I did not taste Moreau's three reds since they were racked the previous day and the shortfall in crop meant that some cuvées based on exchanges of fruit such as Les Vergers were not made, or in the cases of Champs Gain and Les Grandes Ruchottes, limited to single barrels. On the other hand, there

is a pair of additional Meursaults that were introduced a couple of years ago, previously sold in the Far East, that I tasted for the first time. This was a fine set of 2019s from Alex Moreau, the core of Premier Cru Chassagnes predictably the strong point. Perusing my notes, maybe it is not quite as consistent as recent vintages. That might be due to dealing with depleted quantities that inevitably reduce flexibility in terms of parsing out barrels that don't quite cut the mustard. Moreau himself did not wish to side between 2018 and 2019. "I think 2018 will be more charming," he opined. "The 2019s have been slower in terms of seeing where they would go. It was hard to see in the beginning. There might be more energy in the 2019s." I concur. This is one address where I think that the 2018s excelled over and above the 2019s, but let's see how they turn out in bottle.

#### **2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Saint-Aubin En Remilly 1er Cru**

The 2019 Saint-Aubin En Remilly 1er Cru has a little more depth and intensity compared to the Sur Gamay: green apples and wet limestone aromas unfolding nicely. The palate is very composed and harmonious, pretty, touches of blackcurrant leaf infusing the green apple notes that dovetail into peachy/grapefruit notes towards the concise finish. Very fine.

2022 - 2032 (90 - 92)

#### **2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Village**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Village felt tight and a little unresponsive when I tasted it at the domaine, especially after the two more expressive Saint-Aubins. The palate is well balanced and demonstrates good concentration with just a touch of viscosity. Ginger and orange rind notes furnish the finish that exhibits fine composure with moderate length. Enjoy over 8-10 years.

2021 - 2032 (89 - 91)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Clos Saint-Jean 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Clos Saint-Jean 1er Cru is very tight on the nose with flint and chalk aromas reluctantly showing their faces. The palate is pretty with touches of tangerine and apricot on the entry, a fine bead of acidity, harmonious with an elegant finish.

2022-2038 (90 - 92)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Les Charmes-Dessus 1er Cru**

The 2019 Meursault Les Charmes-Dessus 1er Cru has a little more concentration than the Porusot-Dessus, with lime and citrus peel, just a touch of passion fruit in the background. The palate is well balanced with a fresh entry of pink grapefruit, melon, blackcurrant leaf and spices, fine weight in the mouth and for me, showing more Meursault character on the hazelnut tinged finish. Excellent.

2022 – 2038 (91 – 93)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Porusot--Dessus 1er Cru**

The 2019 Meursault Porusot-Dessus 1er Cru is not actually the first vintage as Alex Moreau made it in 2017 and 2018 especially for their Hong Kong importer. Alex Moreau keeps half of the production and this will be distributed through his other agents. It comes from a mixture of purchased fruit and purchased grapes from the same source. It has an attractive bouquet with vanilla pod and egg white scents discretely intertwined with the citrus fruit. The palate is well balanced with a lightly spiced entry, crisp and focused if just missing a little Meursault DNA towards the slightly tapered finish. Fine.

2022 – 2035 (90 - 92)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chenevottes 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chenevottes 1er Cru has a slightly more austere bouquet compared to Moreau's other cuvées, yet there is fine delineation and tangible mineralité already in situ. The palate is medium-bodied with fleeting apricot and white peach aromas. This has a fine bead of acidity and good concentration since Moreau said that it was a "wall of millerandage" when he picked the fruit (incidentally, the first to be harvested in 2019). Very good length. Excellent.

2022-2040 (91 - 93)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet La Maltroye 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet La Maltroye 1er Cru has an expressive bouquet with Granny Smith apples, sliced pear, crushed rock and a touch of white peach. The palate is full of energy thanks to that silver bead of acidity. Very harmonious with just a hint of albumen towards the long and tender finish. Give this 2-3 years for that oak to fully assimilate.

2022-2038 (92 - 94)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Champs Gain 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Champs Gain 1er Cru, which is limited to just one barrel this year, has a fresh nose of citrus peel, grapefruit and tinned apricot aromas. Good delineation. The palate is well balanced with a fine bead of acidity, taut and fresh but perhaps just missing a little edginess towards the finish. I would drink this over the next decade.

2021-2032 (89 - 91)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Morgeots 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Morgeots 1er Cru has a terse bouquet, certainly one of the most austere and Puligny-like from Alex Moreau this year. The palate is well balanced with a fine bead of acidity, taut and fresh, steely and focused with wonderful sapidity towards the finish. Excellent.

2023-2042 (91 - 93)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Les Caillerets 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Les Caillerets 1er Cru has a similar nose to the Morgeots: austere and steely, very mineral driven with hints of sea spray/seaweed. The palate is well balanced with a fine line of acidity, spicier than the aforementioned Morgeots with a lovely sapid, spicy finish. Very fine.

2023-2042 (91 - 93)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chassagne-Montrachet Les Grands Ruchottes 1er Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Les Grands Ruchottes 1er Cru, limited to a single 350-litre barrel this year, has a very malic bouquet: Granny Smith apples mixed with pear and kiwi, wonderful definition and as the Morgeots, quite Puligny-like. The palate is superb with impressive concentration and salinity, very focused with a judicious touch of stem ginger enhancing the persistent finish. You would never guess this was from a warm growing season.

2023-2048 (92 - 94)

**2018 Domaine Bernard Moreau Bâtard-Montrachet  
Grand Cru**

The 2019 Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru has a crisp bouquet with wet limestone and flinty aromas, though quite muted at the moment. The palate is well balanced with a fine bead of acidity, good weight in the mouth with the concentration loaded at the back end. A little creamy in texture (although it is raised in a used barrel racked into an older barrel) with a persistent finish. Very fine.

2023-2045 (91 - 93)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Chevalier-Montrachet  
Grand Cru**

The 2019 Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru, raised in a single 350-litre used barrel, was racked the week before my visit. As the first barrel was new, the wood influence is quite pronounced at the moment, though that will be assimilated by the time of bottling. The palate is fresh and delineated with candied orange peel and apricot notes. Again, there is a touch of vanilla from new oak but again, that will go with time. Good depth and very persistent on the finish. Very good potential but it will require cellaring.

2025-2050 (92 - 94)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Corton-Charlemagne  
Grand Cru**

The 2019 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru is limited to just one barrel that was just racked from a new to old barrel. It has a crisp, almost clinical bouquet with great penetration and delineation, a very mineral-driven Corton-Charlemagne. The palate is well balanced with a fine bead of acidity, very saline in the mouth with a sappy, saliva-inducing finish. Maybe it just misses a little persistence, but it is very well executed.

2023-2043 (92 - 94)

**2019 Domaine Bernard Moreau Clos Saint-Jean 1<sup>er</sup> Cru**

The 2019 Chassagne-Montrachet Clos Saint-Jean 1<sup>er</sup> Cru is very tight on the nose with flint and chalk aromas reluctantly showing their faces. The palate is pretty with touches of tangerine and apricot on the entry, a fine bead of acidity, harmonious with an elegant finish.

2022 – 2038 (90 - 92)