

DOMAINE BERNARD MOREAU

Reviews of 2013 Vintage Wines

by Stephen Tanzer - Vinous

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The Moreau family works 14 hectares of vines, mostly in Chassagne-Montrachet, with Chardonnay accounting for two-thirds of their production. Alexandre Moreau, who took over vinification responsibilities from his father Bernard in 1999 (his younger brother Benoît is responsible for the vineyards), now does an 18-month élevage for his wines, racking them from barrels into cuves prior to the following harvest for another several months of aging. He told me he uses a good percentage of lightly toasted new oak and does little lees stirring, and that he looks for "ripe but not too ripe fruit," preferably in the range of 12.3% to 12.6% potential alcohol.

Moreau described 2014 as "a pretty vintage with an almost-normal crop level." He compared it to 1992 in its combination of ripeness and energy. "The wines are very clean, with no off aromas," he added, "and they have a lot of dry extract." While Moreau described the vinifications as simple, a couple of the 2014s still had a bit of residual sugar at the time of my visit, and a few of them were in the middle of their malolactic fermentations, so I will have to follow up on these cuvées next year.

In contrast to 2014, 2013 was "a very complicated season," according to Moreau. The wines have good acidity but also a bit of botrytis, which has given them a bit of "false sweetness," he told me. He did not use anti-botrytis sprays because the rot arrived so late, so he did a longer débourage for the cuvées where there was botrytis. Moreau noted that he was happy when the harvest was over. "We had no idea what we had, but the vintage has turned out to be a pleasant surprise," he

summarized. "The wines are rounder than the 2012s, which were very taut here."

2013 Domaine Bernard Moreau et Fils

Saint-Aubin En Rémyilly 1er Cru

(20% from vines planted in 1990 and 80% from 50+-year-old vines): Bright, light yellow. Very ripe aromas of peach, soft citrus fruits and vanilla, plus a whiff of musky apple. Lovely appley fruit is nicely framed by harmonious acidity. This wine was fined and filtered, whereas the rest of these 2013s were only fined. 89

Chassagne-Montrachet

(20% new oak; made from multiple parcels, combined in the press, with two-thirds of the fruit coming from the Puligny side of the appellation): Slightly high-toned aromas of peach and spicy oak. Intense peach fruit shows good intensity and sweetness, with nicely ripe acidity for the year. Finishes firm and persistent, with a slight phenolic edge. The crop level was normal here, in the range of 50 to 55 hectoliters per hectare, according to Moreau, who told me he likes the notion of an assemblage as he believes it gives an accurate impression of a village. 89

Chassagne-Montrachet La Maltroie 1er Cru

(bottled in March): Bright, light yellow. More minerally on the nose than the village offering, displaying scents of yellow fruits, spices, mint, menthol and caraway seed. Fine-grained and energetic, conveying an impression of density without weight thanks to its ripe acidity and underlying minerality. The spice and honey flavors carry well on the lively back end. 90+

Chassagne-Montrachet Les Vergers 1er Cru

Pale, bright yellow. More floral and initially less yellow-fruity than the Maltroie, but a ripe peach quality emerged with aeration. Displays ripe fruits and flowers with air, with nicely integrated acidity leading to a tight finish featuring brisk notes of lemon and mandarin orange. Moreau's vines are planted on rocky soil on the north side of the cru, which he says always produces fruit with good acidity and low pH. 91+

Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chenevottes 1er Cru

(from two parcels, one 50 and the other 65 years of age): Ripe peach and fruit salad aromas are complicated by tropical fruits and a vanilla nuance. Concentrated, tactile and lightly saline; not as tight today as the Vergers but boasts surprising balancing acidity. This very round, smooth, long wine delivers flavors of peach, vanilla and spices. The crop here is always tiny and very ripe, noted Moreau, adding that he picks the Chenevottes first in nine out of ten years. 92

Chassagne-Montrachet Champsgain 1er Cru

Pale, bright yellow. Complex nose combines citrus scents, flinty minerals and nutty oak. Sweet on entry, with mirabelle, honey and wet stone flavors framed and lifted by lemony acidity. In a distinctly tight style and a bit youthfully disjointed, finishing with a firm edge. This wine struck me as less primary than the Chenevottes but in need of even more time in bottle. 92+

Chassagne-Montrachet Morgeot 1er Cru

(from Fairendes and La Cardeuse, the latter a monopole of the domain): Pale yellow. Reticent, distinctly rocky aromas of lemon, honey and crushed stone. Rich and plush in the mouth, with yellow stone fruit, pear and rock flavors nicely framed by harmonious acidity. In a fairly masculine style, finishing with excellent lift and an almost tannic impression. 91+

Chassagne-Montrachet Grandes Ruchottes 1er Cru

(from vines in the center of the cru, planted in 1930; just 26 hectoliters per hectare produced in 2013): Bright, light yellow. Ripe, expressive aromas of peach, pear and minerals. An outstanding expression of dense, ripe fruit with a firm supporting mineral underpinning.

Shows an old-vines creaminess and volume without heaviness. Most impressive today on the gripping, bracing back end. This vineyard benefits from hard rocky subsoil. 93+

Batard-Montrachet Grand Cru

(purchased fruit from vines on the Puligny side of the cru near the Chassagne border): Wet stone and menthol dominate the nose. Chewy and vinous but tighter at present and less harmonious than the Grandes Ruchottes. In a powerful style but not thick or heavy. The echoing finish is salty and dry. This will need time in bottle. 92+

Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru

(made from purchased must): Pale yellow. Pear, ripe apple, menthol and mint on the nose. Dense, sweet and essentially gentle, showing lovely mineral lift but less power than the Batard. Quite dry and juicy on the long back end, offering spearmint and crushed stone notes and an impression of dusty tannins. 92