

The Burgundy Briefing

news, views and tastings

Sarah Marsh MW

Issue 5, May/June 2006

Tasting

Les Artisans vignerons de Bourgogne du Sud

Les Artisans Vignerons de Bourgogne du Sud was created in 2004 by fourteen (now sixteen) vigneron in the Mâcon region to promote and develop the production of regional wines which focus on the diversity of terroir and use sustainable agriculture. The members are also members of the G.E.S.T. (Groupement d'Etude et de Suivi des Terroirs), a terroir study group created in the Cote d'Or in 1995 and extended to the Mâconnais in 2000.

The vigneron are driven by three main objectives: to understand the fundamental role that soil plays in the way the vine sustains itself and allows fruit to reach full maturity; to create wine which is a faithful and honest expression of the site on which it is made; to work in a sustainable way in order to preserve the diversity of the ecosystem.

Eleven vigneron sent wine, but there was a problem with one set of samples.

Scoring: The scoring potential ranged from a soundly made, but basic 11, a reasonable 12, a pleasant 13 and a very attractive 14. Given that Pouilly-Fuisse might be expected to reach the quality level of a reasonable village Meursault (not a lieu dit) or village Puligny the maximum score awardable for a Pouilly-Fuisse, Vinzelles or Loché was extended to 15, which would represent an outstanding village wine there, within the context of the vintage. A top notch Macon (plus village name) would score 14. So, while Lafon's Macon, Clos du Four was my favourite wine of the tasting it was capped at 14. I admit this is imperfect, but the scores have to relate to the expectations of the appellations and to scoring for the rest the Côte d'Or.

Domaine Daniel et Martine Barraud.....	2
Brett Brothers	2
Domaine Guillot-Broux	2
Domaine Les Héritiers du Comte Lafon	3
Domaine Nicolas Maillet	3
Domaine Olivier Merlin	3
Pascal Pauget	4
Château des Rontets.....	4
Domaine Sante Barbe	4
Jean and Gautier Thevenet	5

* denotes my favourite wines

Domaine Daniel et Martine Barraud

This producer has seven hectares. He seldom filters and he labels his wine 'vignes vieilles'.

Pouilly Fuisse, La Verchère, 2004

Quite rich with a hint of minerality. A broad, medium bodied and generous palate with ripe citrus, gravelly and earthy notes and rather good grip. Score 13.5-14

Pouilly Fuisse, En Buland, 2004

An overt aroma, buttery and rich with new oak. A full-bodied palate, rounded and quite dense with notes of cashew nut and opulent fruit. Moderate intensity. I prefer the wine above. Score 13.5

Brett Brothers

***Viré-Clessé, Sous Les Plantes, 2002**

A really attractive bouquet. Certainly it shows evolving characters of new hay and parmesan with a touch of honey. Sweet strike into a very honeyed, almost caramelly palate with notes of cinnamon. There is sufficient lime-like acidity to keep it from cloying and it is fresh and clean on the finish. Drink now and enjoy. Score 14

Domaine La Soufrandière, Pouilly-Vinzelles Les Quarts, 2004

Buttery, ripe aroma with a touch of mango. On the palate there is more slightly tropical fruit. It is broad, balanced and quite seductive with a touch of toastiness on the finish. Score 13.5-14

Stockists

UK: Berry Brothers

Domaine Guillot-Broux

Macon-Cruzille, Les Perrières

A very toasty, marmitey aroma. The palate is showing a lot of evolution with cheesy, nutty, tertiary flavours. Score 12.5

Contact

tess.thomson@wanadoo.fr

Domaine Les Héritiers du Comte Lafon

Lafon has 7.8 hectares. Four of his two cuvées were tasted. Very neatly made.

***Macon Chardonnay, Clos de la Crochette, 2004**

Fresh, breezy aroma, nicely intense with a hint of minerality and a light floral edge. Attractively flowing palate with fresh acidity, slight stoniness, lemony fruit and a harmonious profile. Really rather elegant. Score 14

***Macon-Milly-Lamartine, Clos du Four**

Very attractive and vibrant aroma redolent of apricots and passion fruit with some creamy characters. Lovely textural, silky palate, rich, ample with decent depth and intensity. Some toasty notes and very well balanced. Score 14

Stockists

UK: Adnams; John Armit Wines; Domaine Direct; Farr Vintners; Justerini & Brooks; Lay & Wheeler; Fields, Morris & Verdin; Tanners.

USA: Beaune Imports; Classic Wines Imports Inc.; Grape Expectations Inc.; Jeroboam Wines; Selection Becky Wasserman, France

Domaine Nicolas Maillet

Macon Verzé, 2004

Forty year old vines.

A sunny almost heady aroma with luscious apricots and spice followed by an equally exotically fruit palate, buxom, broad and thickly textured. Lots of impact on the middle palate and notes of coffee on the *shortish* finish. Not very typical. Simple, but rather attractive. Score 13

Macon Verzé, Le Chemin Blanc 2004

Another spicy aroma with a touch of lime. The palate is creamy, exotic and wide and somewhat more concentrated, heavier and fuller-bodied than the previous wine. Score 13

Contact

www.vins-nicolas-maillet.com

Domaine Olivier Merlin

Very sound wine

Macon La Roche Vineuse, Vieilles vignes

A generous, warmly fruity aroma and a slightly topical rounded palate. It is quite fleshy, soft and pleasant. Score 12.5

***Saint Veran, Le Grand Bussière**

Very pleasant and golden aroma with a touch of butter – seamlessly into a lush, spherical and buttery palate with a decent finish. Score 14

Stockists

UK: Berry Brothers and Rudd

Pascal Pauget

Very pleasant wine

Macon, La Croisette

A very pleasant forward and fruity aroma and an equally fresh, uncomplicated and honest palate. This simple, unpretentious and fruit-driven style is very refreshing. Score 13-13.5

***Macon, Tornus 2004**

I could write the same note for the red as for the white, but to elaborate.....crushed raspberry fruit, bright, lively and zesty. Lovely, uncomplicated and fruit-driven. Perfect for a summer evening. Score 13-13.5

Château des Rontets

***Pouilly Fuissé, Pierrefolle 2004**

An attractive orange and floral aroma and an equally flowery and pleasant palate. It is appealingly fresh and lively with good vivacity and fresh lime on the decent finish. Really rather refreshing. While it's not especially complex, I like it for its vivacity and pace. Score 13.5-14

Pouilly Fuissé, Les Birbettes 2003

The vines were planted between 1910 and 1920. 15% new oak. Biscuity notes and crystallised fruit, but a slightly oxidative character. Score 12 at most

Domaine Sante Barbe

A biodynamic producer.

Viré Clessé, L'Épinet 2004

An overtly vanilla and toasty aroma and palate.

***Viré Clessé, Thurissey 2004**

Ninety-five year old vines. White pear and white flower aroma. Bright and lively attack and zesty palate. Very clean, fruit-driven and pure with light and zingy tannins and a very attractive fresh finish. Score 13.5-14

Contact

www.domaines-chaland.com

Jean and Gautier Thevenet

Three good wines under the appellation of Macon-Villages

***Domaine de Roally, 2003**

Bright, fresh and blossomy aromas. Crisp apple on the strike to slightly creamy and plump middle palate. Not at all fat and very nicely balanced. A very charming wine and unexpected for the vintage. Score 13-13.5

Domaine Emilian Gillet, 2001

This is much spicier with notes of elderflower cordial on the nose and ginger on the palate. It is broader, honeyed and earthier with an exotic twist. Although richer, fuller bodied and quite soft, it is not heavy. Given that it is a 2001, it is still very fresh and youthful. Score 13.5

Domaine de la Bongran, 2001

This has a very honeyed intense bouquet with notes of marmalade. It is rich and viscous on the palate which is heavy with lychee and ripe apricot fruit. It is well, and more seriously structured, than the previous wines and has decent concentration and sufficient acidity. It has a spicy, decently long finish, if a touch hard. This has received 18-20 months in foudres and is a very different style to the other wines. I imagine it is put forward as the most serious wine, but they are all good, and I rather like the first. Score 14