

# The Burgundy Briefing

news, views and tastings

Sarah Marsh MW

copyright © Sarah Marsh

## Issue 12

I

### Best Burgundy

### Hit list of favourite white wine in 2009

The following list of wine is provided to simplify choices for those who want an easy 'hit list' of good wine, but is not a substitute for looking through the full list of tasting notes. Within each domaine the wines which were liked most were given a star. A selection of these are in the list below.

#### Puligny-Montrachet

##### Puligny-Montrachet, Champ Gain

Domaine Roger Belland

#### Domaine Roger Belland, Santenay

Roger Belland considers the vintage: "For me it is exceptional to have such regular ripeness in all the grapes. Everything in 2009 was of the same ripeness. The reason for this was the flowering and the nice weather in September...." Roger, who has vines in several villages, saw no difference across the villages in the conditions as can often be the case.

However Roger points out that "Each year for us the rain is not very important as all our vines have grass between the rows and the roots are very deep, so the vines do not follow the wet weather..."

"The Pinot Noir is higher quality. The whites are good but higher quality in the reds."

"I was not the first to start picking...I never hurry up as I never have botrytis because of the grass between the vines. I start with Chardonnay. The sugar was a slow evolution. We kept acidity and the malic and tartaric were of normal proportions."

They continued bâtonnage here until March and the wine will stay in cask until the beginning of October when it is moved to cuve until January to allow it to stabilize for a decent period.

##### Bourgogne Chardonnay

There was no Bourgogne in 2009.

##### Santenay, Comme-Dessus

No new oak.

Lemony and nutty. The palate is sweetly fruity and slightly sherbert. Zesty acidity and a fruit-driven finish. Touch mineral. Very attractive to good. From 2012

##### \*Santenay-Beauregard

This premier cru has 10% new oak.

Creamy, rich aroma with notes of nuts and hay. Sweet and supple on the palate, honeyed and slightly spicy. This is nicely underpinned with acidity and there is a chalky minerality on the finish. Elegant. Very good+. From 2012

##### Chassagne-Montrachet, Morgeot Clos Pitois

25% new oak, just Vosges. Roger uses this because, "the wine is rich and the Vosges wakes it up."

There is spice on the aroma, ginger and orange. Broad attack to a richly textured palate, fullish-bodied with decent concentration and generous fruit on the finish. Very good+. From 2012

##### \*Puligny-Montrachet, Champs Gain

25% new Allier oak, "because this is mineral the Allier brings the sweetness," remarks Roger.

Tight citrus aroma. This is neatly focused and well defined on the palate. Good intensity; streamlined shape and a long, very mineral finish. Fine. From 2012

##### Meusault, Les Santenots

25% new wood half in Allier and half in Vosges.

### **\*Criots-Batard-Montrachet**

40% new oak.

Concentrated aroma with notes of mandarin and chalk and white flower. This is a big step up in depth, breadth and intensity. Although compact and substantial it is not too big. It has power, chalky mineral grip and layering, but is also elegant and the finish is scented with white flower. Fine to very fine. From 2014

Roger remarks that the Criots is "more Puligny this year than Chassagne and I normally make a wine which is bigger and more Chassagne. It is more mineral than I normally make"

### **Red wines**

The classic vinification for me is to ferment at 12 to 13 degrees. (This is very low). It is a very long fermentation for 4 to 5 weeks." Roger started this approach in 2005. Also in each cuvée there is one part whole bunch. "If you have strong fermentation you lose keep the aromatics. At low temperature you extract only the finer tannins. You have concentration but not excess. I feel this way you get more fruit in the mouth and the elegance of Pinot Noir."

"To use grapes without destemming you must sort and have perfect grapes. We select every year so we use only ripe grapes...I do not want to extract dry tannin."

He has very dark wine and I wondered how he achieved this given the low fermentation. To achieve this colour stability he raises the temperature for a day after the fermentation has finished.

He makes a comparison with 2005 and 1985 for the reds: "The quality of the fruit; very ripe and for the flavour...I remember at this same stage with the 1985 for the reds – the fruit was very black; black cherry and good tannins. I think it is a vintage which can age in red."

"The character of the 2009 has a lot of tannin, which is why I say it is like 2005 and 1985."

### **Maranges, La Fussieres**

This premier cru has a vibrant black cherry aroma. Succulent and juicy attack. It is zesty, but with good firm tannins. Fresh and crunchy. Appealing. Simple but very attractive. From late 2012

### **Santenay, Les Charmes**

Lovely berryish fruit on this village wine. Summer fruit explosion on the palate. Sweet and vibrant. No lack of tannins here though. Slightly stalky, although to be fair there was a lot of CO2 in all the reds which will accentuate the tannin. Good. From 2012. Roger remarks that he will fine to 'sweeten' the tannins.

### **Santenay, Comme**

This premier cru has very fruity aromatics. Most attractive with marzipan and ripe red cherry notes. Sweet, vibrant, zesty and really quite tannic. Very good. From 2012

### **Santenay-Beauregard**

This premier cru has a delicious aroma of dark cherry and almond blossom with a touch of high spice. Ripe summer fruit attack to a sweet, quite concentrated middle palate. Firm tannins. Quite elegant with an attractive fruit-driven finish. Very good++. From 2013

### **Santenay Gravière**

Richly, ripely perfumed aroma. Juicy attack. The acidity is noticeably lower here and the fruit is very ripe summer fruit compote. Softer tannins. Very good. From 2013

### **\*Chassagne-Montrachet, Clos Pitois**

Sunny, red summer fruits on the aroma. It is broad, dense and quite muscular. This has the concentration to carry the tannins. There is a good equilibrium of tannin and fruit here. The tannins are slightly sinewy, but in balance with the acidity. It is dense and rich and nicely woven. Particularly good. From 2014

### **Pommard, Les Cras**

This village wine is rather perfumed on the aroma with high spice. Sweet and bold on the palate with plenty of tannic structure. Compact and tight, it has a chalky, taut, savoury finish with plenty of acidity at the end. Rather an elegant Pommard. Very good. From 2013

### **Volnay-Santenots**

Whole bunch. Violet fruit aroma. Ripe attack to a supple, elegant and fluid palate. It has a flowing, textural quality and luscious red fruit. The acidity comes through on the finish and freshens the palate. A harmonious and balanced wine. Fine. From 2013