



## Will We Ever Get Burgundy Back in Our Glasses?

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*We've loved and lost – but is there a glimmer of new hope now?*

### The Reunion

The time machine portal opened the very first night, a cool but nonetheless comfortable evening. The BIVB had arranged for an American colleague and myself to dine at **La Ciboulette** in the city of Beaune – the heart of the wine region. The food at the tiny two-room restaurant is simple, local, and very, very good, the service warm and familial, and the wine list intriguing. As we mulled over which wine to have, I looked at the tables around us to see what the locals were drinking. The near unanimous wine of choice was a red Burgundy, a **Maranges Premier Cru “La Fussière,”** so we decided to go with that, a 2012 vintage from **Domaine Roger Belland**.

I was bowled over. This was an ocean away from so many of the vapid, overpriced, cherry bomb Burgundies that we find in too many American wine stores. It was rustic but elegant, with echoes of an oak desk strewn with dark, ripe blackberries and chestnuts. Wow, in terms of Burgundy, here, indeed, was old-time religion.

The thing was, I had never heard of this appellation. I thought I knew Burgundy (although, as noted earlier, the ardor and thus attention has cooled in recent years), but Maranges was unknown to me. What was this stuff? So, with the help of the BIVB and my trusty guide Yuri Lebault, I set out to (re)discover the wines of my youth.

### IV. What She Looks Like Now

Back to the object of my current search, wine from the small Maranges district. Apparently it is under the radar for almost everyone who doesn't live there. Indeed, you would be hard pressed to find it in any wine shop or restaurant list in the U.S. Wine writers as respected as Clive Coates, Hugh Johnson, and Frank Prial have used terms like “forgotten” and “obscure” to describe the area.

If you are a Burgundy drinker you probably have had the wines but didn't even know it. Maranges became an AOC only in 1988, half a century after Burgundy's main AOCs were delineated. Before that the Maranges wines were bottled and sold under the broad label of Côte de Beaune, even though the area is comprised of three villages that are technically outside the Cote d'Or and are part of the Saône-et-Loire: Dezizes-les-Maranges, Cheilly-les-Maranges and Sampigny-les-Maranges. There are some 200 hectares under cultivation.



So expect about \$25-40 a bottle in the U.S – that is, if you can find them. Maranges is still elusive.

Search in your local shop or online, and you will find most don't carry a single Maranges wine. Maybe if wine lovers make enough noise, more Maranges wines can make it to our shores so that this well-kept secret of Burgundy can be shared with an appreciative and thirsty audience.

And if you find them, will you let me know?

Maranges wines, if available, usually run anywhere from €10-20, or about \$11.50-22.75, with higher prices for Premier Cru. A few outstanding examples I found:

The 2012 Domaine Roger Belland Maranges “La Fussièrè” Premiere Cru cited above was about €18 in Beaune, and about \$30 in U.S., sometimes available via mail order from

**Ansonia Wines in Boston** <<http://www.ansoniwines.com>>

There is a wealth of fine restaurants in Beaune proper and across the Cote d'Or, but here are a couple of standouts from an all-too-brief visit:

La Ciboulette  
69 rue de Lorraine – 21200 Beaune  
Tel: +33 (0)3 80 24 70 72  
[laurent.mall@orange.fr](mailto:laurent.mall@orange.fr)

Local dishes, great wine (try the Maranges!) and friendly service. Another plus is that it is open on Sunday.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Wine Review Editor

Gary Thomas is also a longtime professional journalist, and former senior correspondent at the Voice of America. He was the wine columnist for the Austin American-Statesman in Austin, TX, and has freelanced wine articles for other publications, including the Wine Spectator. He has spent much of his long journalistic career working overseas, managing to cadge needed wine in the harshest of circumstances and unlikeliest of locales, even in places like Pakistan and Iran.

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