



Handford

W I N E S



Handford Wines Burgundy En Primeur 2019 Offer

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Burgundy 2019 Vintage Report

The Weather

It's looking ever more as if the vintage we've not been able to taste *in situ* will be one of the great vintages of all time. I have a feeling the Bordeaux reds will show very well indeed and see good demand when they are bottled next year. One pundit says these red Burgundies are the best in 150 years. That may be over-egging what is, admittedly, a delicious pudding. Whatever your opinion on that, and taking into account another short harvest; it's a vintage to buy.

The early part of the vintage was punctuated with two niggling frosts, mainly around Beaune, in April. The problem was more one of early budding due to very mild conditions on all but these two days of slight frost. Dull and rainy weather at flowering in mid June caused poor flower set (millerandage). Some areas suffered to a level that I cannot recall in over 30 years of visits as there was one day of very heavy rain just at the wrong moment. This was coupled with the threat of mildew but warm weather soon took hold and became the headline of the year. Just a little rain in August refreshed the vines. Whites especially suffered sunburn in the searing heat of late August. Though this may have been a problem for the more interventionist growers, but none of our producers reported serious problems. For me, the unique feature of 2019 came with the slightly cooler (especially at night time) but still clear and dry September. There was unusually low humidity for much of the month and with this reduced threat of fungal disease growers were encouraged let bunches hang and phenolics (flavour compounds) ripen without risk of losing freshness. Tannins had the chance to ripen a little further, too. Grapes were perfectly ripe by mid September; it one of those rare years where leaving to hang for that little extra depth and complexity proved to be worth the risk. This made a great year into an exceptional one.

The Market

I'm not the only wine professional to cut teeth on the more marginal climate wines of Loire, Champagne, Burgundy, Germany and the like. 35 years later the fine wine market is seeing the light as so many of these sell out on release. Cellars of my growers in Burgundy have been empty for a few years (partly down to reduced yields). In many ways it's more pleasing to see Champagne and Germany going the same way. Loire and Alsace must be next on everyone's shopping list, not forgetting Tuscany and Piemonte!! There are a few price changes here but most just nudge a tiny fraction upward on exchange rate. History will show that we've all been lucky to live through this great wine generation and even luckier if we can fill our cellars with the bounty.

How the Offer Works

Prices are quoted per case of 6 (unless stated) in bond (i.e. duty free) at London City Bond. Wines may be stored by us or transferred in bond. Most wines will be shipped in the spring or autumn of 2021 for onward delivery. When you choose to receive wines the duty (currently £13.39 per case of 6) and V.A.T. on the total value (inc. duty) must be paid prior to delivery.

Transfer under bond and delivery to the UK mainland are free for orders over £500 (in bond value). Otherwise delivery charged at £20.00 per address. Wines may be collected from 105 Old Brompton Road. Storage with us at LCB is £1.08 per case (up to 12 bottles) per month inc. VAT. (£0.54 up to 6 bottles)

Where possible I have included tasting notes to give an indication of style. Drinking dates give an idea of when the wines will be ready. There are never fixed rules and wines should be enjoyed at as many stages of their life as possible. Village wines and generic Bourgogne should be tried, if not drunk in the early stages. In general we tend to be conservative on 'drink by' dates. Many of the 1er and Grand Crus from a great vintage like this will cellar for longer.

Please note

We have had an unprecedented number of enquiries on Burgundy 2019. Many wines will need to be allocated, in some cases by the single bottle. For the most difficult wines we will finalise allocations on 15th January. Orders will be confirmed and invoiced for payment by return and by bank transfer or debit cards. We do not accept credit cards for en Primeur and in bond offers, or for duty payments. Some growers ask that we do not export their wines.

James Handford MW and Greg Sherwood MW

The Wines

Frederic Esmonin, Gevrey Chambertin

These wonderful vineyards are still managed by Frederic's father, Andre, who was bottling quality reds here at les Estournelles long before the fashion for domaine bottled burgundy took off. The vines are managed not always with the aim of reducing yield to produce soupy concentration but to achieve a balance between expression and concentration; a good deal of finesse and some fat to the wines. Andre is, in his modest way, one of most knowledgeable of Nuits vigneron. He remembers details of vintages back to the 1950s and planted vines with his father in the 1940s. He is not a big fan of intervention, especially green harvesting, as he believes that 'more often than not, it is an attempt to correct mistakes that have been made in the pruning and longer term management of vineyards'.

Gevrey Chambertin Clos Prieur 2019

SOLD

This adjoins the 1er Cru vineyard of the same name, first planted by monks from the Abbey of Cluny. One of the first 2019s tasted and what an introduction. I couldn't help compare with 2018. This is more poised, pure and perfect in its form. The fruits not quite so luxuriant but the inherent power combined with subtle mineral spice makes it a more desirable red for the cellar. 2022 to 2029

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru Estournelles Saint Jacques 2019

SOLD

One of the most classic of all red 1er Crus this is high up and beside the famous Clos St Jacques. Somewhat sandy and more friable soils spawn a more energized and spring water pure red. These high vineyards that benefit from some exposure are perhaps the most outstanding in this vintage. Ironically the depth of boysenberry, briar fruit seems greater than expected for such an exposed site as Andre was happy to leave the grapes hanging for a little longer. Outstanding. 2025 to 2035.

Ruchottes Chambertin Grand Cru 2019

SOLD

This is the wine that stood out all those years ago and so where our wonderful journey with Fred Esmonin began. They are the oldest vines of the domaine, and now 63 years old. A flawless red of seamless tannin and acidity and a slatey mineral crunch to blend with the most exquisite red cherry, raspberry and cranberry fruit style and a rich, chocolate finish. 2030 to 2049

Georges Lignier, Morey Saint Denis

I met Georges at a village tasting in 1994. His nephew Benoit Stehly has been at the helm for a while now. He's a great thinker and happy to share. He will always dabble with wine making fashions (whole bunch fermentation is the current talking point), but is rarely thrown off a course planned to heighten freshness and typicity in his reds. There is more and more work in the vines. Soil structure is vital and he is running extensive trials on grassing between rows to conserve moisture deep in the soil and force the vines roots away from the surface. Benoit has preferred early harvests in recent years but 2019 has afforded the opportunity to let the Grand Crus hang a little longer and develop levels of complexity rarely seen here. We have taken a little of the Morey Blanc this year as the Cotes de Nuits whites are looking very good indeed.

Morey Saint Denis Blanc 2019 **£175.00**

Weighty, golden yellow in appearance and a feeling of density on the nose as if the bass is turned up! Dense stone fruits with a squeeze of lime that highlights the bright, slightly chalky acid finish. A classically creamy Cotes de Nuits white with weight of peach juice. Best to drink most of your bottles in the first 3 years but hold on to a few! 2021 to 2027

Morey Saint Denis 2019 **£175.00**

Full and with the signature pepper and spice feel of Morey. It will five years to show that classic, Morey softness and sex appeal. 2023 to 2029.

Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru Clos des Ormes 2019 **£225.00**

Dense plum red and purple with chocolate, raspberry, violet notes. There's an enticing combo of ripeness and perfume. The palate mirrors the nose in its richness, mocha and chocolate texture with sweet, red apple and loganberry fruit. Power, presence and a hint of Chinese spice on the mid palate. Quite delicious in 2019. 2025 to 2034.

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru les Combottes 2019 **£395.00**

Sandwiched between Grand Crus, Combottes is in a slight dip with meagre soils that seem to give a unique style. Berries are a bit smaller resulting in lower yields and an uncanny fullness and depth. It's on the Morey side and, like the Grand Cru, has more attributes of Morey than of Gevrey. Brighter and blacker, purple in colour than the Moreys with focussed, spicy, raisined fruit, almond and Turkish delight. It's Christmas in a bottle! A brooding red with salty caramel, ripe tannins and a certain vigour that gives both splendour and longevity. 2028 to 2039



Benoit Stehly with cask samples of 2018s

Clos Saint Denis 2019

£595.00

Being exposed to the drying north winds fruit is often more delicate, but always clean and with mineral notes. As in 2018, this is a touch more delicate in both colour and aromatics. The nose is of intense raspberry, plum and rhubarb compote and with a gritty tone of minerality. The palate is more dense, with hints of liquorice and cinnamon. For now, a fine casing of acids and minerals is locking down a firework display for the future. Tremendous length. 2029 to 2042

Clos de la Roche 2019

£745.00

A fabulous wine to collect in recent years being extremely serious and fair value for a Grand Cru. This year the Roche is star bright, pure, purple and red, and understandably closed on the nose. Wow! Dark, brooding red fruits with vanilla and sweet spice from that bit of new oak. Beautifully even across the palate and with power to last nearly a full minute on the tongue! Doing the right deals with the cooper and achieving that sense of roundness, rather than dominance from the oak is becoming a hallmark here. Judged to perfection. 2030 to 2044

Bonnes Mares 2019

SOLD

A little under one third of a hectare normally produces around 1300 bottles. This year Benoit couldn't fill 4 barrels and so only around 1000 bottles. That's too little to be sending bottles around to try and so we will have to trust in these great vines and the skills of Benoit.

Christian Clerget, Vougeot

The first time I met Christian he was in a hurry to catch a plane to Nepal and climb the 7th or 8th highest peak in the world. Fortunately his wife Isabelle and daughter Justine are equal parts of a wonderful family who strive to express what their vineyards offer. As Christian says, 'don't try to cheat the vines'. Justine is in charge now though and starting to make her mark. She is forging ahead with biodynamics and using whole bunch fermentation for almost a third of the harvest. Congratulations to Justine on the birth of Auguste. I will be able to taste when she gets back to work in January.

Morey Saint Denis Blanc 'les Crais' 2019 £225.00

A quirky white from this famous red wine village. These are showing extremely well in the 2019 vintage. One of the signatures of Nuits whites is a layer of cream that can sometime be a little fatty. No so here where the peach skin notes are complemented well by soft, crème fraiche notes. Often a surprise on blind tastings and will age in the medium term. 2022 to 2027

Chambolle Musigny 2019 £260.00

Not a heavily coloured Chambolle but star bright and beautifully aromatic and expressive. There is so much to appreciate on the nose here; rose petal, soft chocolate, rhubarb and custard, ripe raspberry and a dash of mint. Beautifully pure and poised. Delightful. 2022 to 2028

Vosne Romanee 'les Violettes' 2019 £350.00

These vines are high up by the famous Bize whites of Vougeot. Deeper and more opaque with sultry, dark fruit, saline and charcoal notes. Clearly a serious and expressive red the palate offers ripe, silky smooth tannins with an oyster shell minerality and plenty of currant and berry fruit at the core. This will need a few years to show that velvety ripe fruit so typical of the best of Vosne. A very serious wine indeed. 2025 to 2032

Vougeot 1er Cru les Petits Vougeots 2019 £395.00

Although the Clergets have a little Echezeaux, this is the flagship wine. 5 generations have worked this land which is a stone's throw from their house in the village. It lies just north east of the road that comes in from the Chateau du Clos Vougeot. This is a very special and rare vineyard that yields a rare combination of density and vivacity. There will be nuances to find with every mouthful. Fabulous. 2026 to 2035

Chambolle Musigny 2019 1er Cru les Charmes

£425.00

Perhaps the flagship of the house this as there is a good holding of over a hectare here and Chambolle Charmes is often thought of as one of the great 1er Crus. Again the wine is a lovely mix of richness, sweet spice, ripe loganberry on the one hand, and zingy, red cherry acidity and fine tannins on the other. Very fine. 2025 to 2037

Echezeaux 2019

£795.00

Another enviable vineyard area of nearly a hectare from two parcels in the 'Orveau' sector. This is fine, more defined in red fruits, lifted acidity and pure tannic structure, especially in comparison with other examples. Very much a Grand Cru for the purist this is technically brilliant, broad, even, balanced and long but never fat or over-ripe. 2028 to 2040



Terrible selfie with Christian and Justine Clerget

Jean Chauvenet, Nuits Saint Georges

These cellars, carefully managed since 1990 by Jean's son in law Christophe Drag, are just off the main road. Fork right as you go north out of town and you will be treated to some of the best around. Vineyard holdings are relatively large here but in Boussselots, Vaucraains and Perrieres; Christophe has some of the finest 1er Cru vineyards in the Cotes de Nuits. Truly outstanding in recent years such as 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2018 and now 2019. He harvests into very small crates and so cleaner and less damaged fruit can be moved directly into the fermentation vats without the need of auger or pump. Almost all the fruit was de-stemmed and there is a cool pre-fermentation maceration for 5 to 6 days. There are two 1er Cru vineyards north of town and two south. As the village wine incorporates some of the 1er Cru and finer village vineyards it is a very good buy for drinking in 2 or 3 years. Once again, Christophe has decided to delay harvest to the end of September. This works especially well in the higher vineyards such as Damodes and Perrieres.

Nuits Saint Georges 2019

£150.00

Fruit comes from 5 parcels in 4 climats; Alliotics, Charmottes, St Jacques and St Julien. All but St Jacques are iron rich and with gravel or sand to give good drainage. The St Jacques is chalky and with mean soils. Edgy but pure raspberry, kirsch and floral notes with a dusty minerality. Wonderful poise and length for a village red. 2022 to 2027.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Argillas 2019

£245.00

A south facing vineyard with rows planted north to south to reduce mid day sun burn. This ploy has proved its worth in 2019; it's the freshest and most easily identified in the range with its hint of cool, crème de menthe amongst the energetic red fruits. Once again the Argillas offers ripe Pinot fruits with a unique vim and vigour. 2024 to 2031

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Rue de Chaux 2019

£245.00

Another lovely quirk as this offers more of a savoury note with hints of cured meat and truffle to compliment juicy red fruits. Again there's a great mix of lightness and verve along with depth of redcurrant and red cherry fruit. Just a hint of dry herbs on the very finish add to the complexity. Lovely, and I fancy will age well in the mid-term. 2025 to 2032

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Damodes 2019

£295.00

From high up on the north side, there is a strip of rock running through resulting in just an 8 to 10cm layer of top soil. Damodes bears fruit with an edge of minerality and the seductive power of its immediate neighbour Vosne Romanee. More wild strawberry and bitter cherry here, but with that velvet tone so notable in Vosnes. You just have to buy more than one of these great 1er Crus; there is so much to experience in the expression and variation. 2026 to 2033

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Busselots 2019

£275.00

Still north of the villages but sheltered, and a little lower down the hill. Soils are more clay and hold water well in hot, dry summers. Berries tend to be smaller and more concentrated. Soils are contiguous with Vosne Romanee les Raviolles. Opaque to the eye, austere to the nose with just a hint of spice and black cherry. The power on the palate is almost of Grand Cru level. Behind the spice and dry tannins there's a dense cloud of fruitiness ready to pour down on the middle of the tongue. An homage to Darth Vader ... the force will be with you! 2026 to 2034.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Perrieres 2019

£295.00

Similar in power and intensity to Busselots but with more open, creamy, black cherry, vanilla and even bramble fruit notes. There aren't the hard edges of recent years and so this is a red to enjoy over a long drinking window. That alone is a sign of exceptional quality. 2025 to 2036.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Vaucrains 2019

£345.00

Oh my word - you can feel the concentration of this beauty on lifting the glass! I wrote that the open, expressive, massive, soupy, red and black fruited monster of a 2018 was a one off. This goes up a step. Christophe has 42 aes but produced only 8 barrels in 2019. It's another remarkable Vaucrains and another that deserves at least two ticks in this range. 2030 to 2044.



Chauvenet 2019 Tasting Pack

Jean Marc Millot, Nuits Saint Georges

Jean Marc and Christine have passed on their hard earned experiences and beautiful vines to their second daughter, Alix. She is very well qualified for the task making just small changes that result in the Millot label being highly prized. There is just a little new oak on the Grand Crus and the Suchots but the wines rely on a very natural feel and intensity of fruit. The Cotes de Nuits Villages, originally from a single plot, has been a great value wine for some years. Savigny is from 3 different plots inherited from Jean Marc's uncle and makes a very attractive, early drinker.

Savigny les Beaune 2019

SOLD

This is from three plots of village Savigny. The majority is from Aux Fourches, next to 1er Cru Fourneaux on the Aloxe side; the rest is from the south facing and more generous soils of Les Gollardes and les Vermots to the west of the village. As is typical of these vines on the Aloxe side, the 2019 has retained a lot of freshness and red fruits. There is a little more velvet texture this time. 2022 to 2027

Cotes de Nuits Villages 2019

SOLD

With the gradual demise of the Clos des Faulques, Alix is now selecting from old vines both inside and outside of the Clos. The remainder goes to Bourgogne Rouge. This is a burly red with plenty of blood and guts that will need a few years in bottle. There is a soft heart of rounded red fruits to this monster so it's well worth the wait. A Nuits that punches above its weight. 2024 to 2030

Vosne Romanee 2019

SOLD

Quantities of these bigger wines have suffered again. Less than 4 barrels from these parcels in Maizieres and Hautes Maizieres will be tricky to dish out. Wonderfully expressive on the nose showing spiced plum, briar fruit and cranberry. There's a note of coffee bean and bright acidity to balance overt ripeness, velvet texture and tremendous persistence. 2024 to 2029

Vosne Romanee 1er Cru Suchots 2019

SOLD

Between Echezeaux and Clos Vougeot this is another of the great 1er Crus. The moniker Suchots holds many possibilities though it's likely to be named for tree stumps (souches) in what was a forested area. I see more similarity to the village wine this year. Of course there is more weight and the wine is a little more chiselled. Very fine indeed. 2027 to 2034

Echezeaux 2019

SOLD

Sandy soils in this part of Echezeaux allow free drainage. Similar harvests to 2018 mean another tricky round of allocations for us! It's a little deeper and more precise than in 2018. It seems to start on low volume and ramp up to a huge crescendo. Amazing length and finish, perhaps a little less wild than in previous years. 2029 to 2041

Clos Vougeot 2019

SOLD

The upper parts of the Clos were chosen as most suitable by the monks of the Abbey of Citeaux and first planted in 1098. Much of the area known as Grand Mapertui, where the Millot holding is situated, lies within this prestigious section. This is more a match of two parts. One part power, intensity, pressure, biscuit tannins; the other a supple, cool bowl of red fruit salad. Black fruits, liquorice, spice and a hint of dried herbs are the hall marks of a red Burgundy that is as good as the very best of them. 2030 to 2045



Jean Marc Millot with the Amphora of Aligote

Philippe Cheron, Nuits Saint Georges

Philippe Cheron lost his long time management role at Domaine Belland following the sale of the business. He must have been chuffed to learn that his grandfather, Paul Misset, purchased vineyard land in Clos Vougeot, Vosne Romanee and Chambolle Musigny in the 1930s and 1950s and the leases had finally expired. There are 1.4 hectares in Clos Vougeot, split 50/50 between the high and low part; a stunning lieu dit above Richebourg in Vosne and 12 tiny parcels in Chambolle. With gentle handling, only a little de-stemming, cool settling and no fining and rarely any filtration, Philippe is going for a simple and natural style. It's wonderful to watch the development of a grower so determined to express wonderful fruit. He is now fully organic. This is the seventh vintage of our journey with Philippe and it seems the project is moving into a new orbit. Pleased to report that the 2013 Chambolles are tasting beautifully now and that bodes well for the first class examples here.

Vosne Romanee les Barreaux 2019

£260.00

This is the most heavenly situation. Just under the trees and looking down over Richebourg and Romanee Saint Vivant to the right and, to the left, over the great 1er Crus of Beaux Monts and Suchots towards Echezeaux and Clos Vougeot. There are only 3 growers to share a little over 3 hectares (one other being Anne Gros); quite a place to go to work and even better to enjoy a bottle with a picnic! It's a steep slope with chalky soil that turns out a lively and finely tuned red cherry fruit Vosne. Super supple 'come and get me' nose this so rich and easy. No surprise that Philippe has at long last caught the eye of the commentators with so big scores. 2023 to 2030.

Chambolle Musigny '40 Ouvrees' 2019

£250.00

A tiny plot that seems to get picked on by the weather. 2016 was devastated, 2017 difficult but 2018 was a joy. Though down on quantity the 2019 is more than promising with boat loads of soft, seductive spice, baked cherry pie and crème fraiche. The finish is long and wonderfully balanced and this remains a silky and ethereal red with an energy that makes this ever more animated on the mid palate. We've had some older vintages in the shop and it's a find that we are very proud of. Another one to be discovered just as we sell through!! 2024 to 2031

Chambolle Musigny 'Clos de l'Orme' 2019**£265.00**

Bordering the 1er Cru les Charmes, this sits on a gentle, well drained slope, as it is made up of a thick layer of limestone scree from the Chambolle valley. It's a dry and mean patch of land that yields a ripe but sturdy and gripping red. Quite a difference against the 40 Ouvrees, this is more dense, chunky, black spiced and with black cherry, bilberry and acai fruit. It's what they used to call 'masculine', muscle and it's certainly more age worthy. 2026 to 2032.

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru la Romanee 2019**£345.00**

Like the Charmes Chambertin, this is another prodigal vineyard that has been sold as a monopole until this year. The situation is extraordinary, almost hanging off the very highest bit of south facing cliff edge at the very top of the village. And what a year to make a debut! Slight density in the glass, black and red fruit with plenty of spice and a steely edge to the nose. Wonderful ripeness and persistence. Gosh this is good. 2028 to 2037

Clos Vougeot 2019**£795.00**

There's a delicious coolness on the finish here but plenty of underlying force. You almost feel you are eating, rather than drinking this towards the end. Mouth watering. 2029 to 2041.

Charmes Chambertin 2019**£825.00**

Now I've been waiting patiently for this as Philippe has only recently taken back the vines from a long lease. I am not disappointed. Almost completely opaque, with a juicy, golden raisin, milky chocolate and raspberry nose, this is utopia in wine; purity and density in equal portion, seamless and with layer upon layer of rich fruit on the finish. It's rare to find a wine with every bit of its firm structure so well hidden behind such natural and floral fruits. 2030 to 2046

Domaine Roche de Bellene, Beaune

An exciting threesome here as the great, white Savigny bites back after last year's frost-out. There are some very old and well tended vines producing the Beaunes. Nicolas Potel gave up his organic certification in 2013 and more are following; leaf minors that transmit virus can be destroyed by selective insecticides instead of the weaker, but non selective, 'flame thrower' solution that the organics allow. The 'reasonable' approach carries over to the winery too where the most gentle handling is done, where possible, in the absence of electricity.

Savigny les Beaune Blanc 2019

£105.00

Savigny offers subtle changes in terroir and Nicolas counts seven different soil types in the small area that yields this juicy chardonnay with the coolness of pomegranate and some crushed almond too. A real head turner. 2020 to 2024

Beaune 'les Blanches Fleurs' Rouge 2019

£115.00

A stone's throw from the famous 1er Cru Clos du Roi and another attractive Beaune in 2019. The locals say the relatively new motorway is one of the best terroirs in the Cotes de Beaune and you can just see the road from here! Soft, smooth and cooling raspberry ripple with crushed strawberry. I enjoyed the extra tension in this vintage. By and large this is a wine for early drinking but this year it's worth holding one or two bottles back for a bit. 2022 to 2027

Vosne Romanee 1er Cru les Suchots 2019

£595.00

This is perhaps the Vosne vineyard that could be Grand Cru being adjacent to Richebourg and Romanee Saint Vivant. This sample is not giving much away, often a good sign. There are just hints of red cherry, wild strawberry and cranberry. It's a red with real poise and will stay fresh and uplifting for a long time to come. This is also evidence of a great stride forwards for Nicolas Potel. 2019s are better still; more natural and more expressive. 2030 to 2045

Maison Roche de Bellene, Beaune

Nicolas Potel's latest trick is to manage the red wine cellars by candle light as normal lighting damages the resveratrol; a key compound in the cholesterol reducing properties of red wine. Ageing is more and more in larger barrels and there are now soft wax capsules for Grand Crus; just put the corkscrew straight through the wax ... most satisfying!

Montagny Villages 2019 **£75.00**

There will be many more delicious Chalonnais and Maconnais whites to come later in the year. This combines floral delicacy with some real power of stone fruit. The slate edge of Montagny is a little more in the background this year. Sumptuous stuff. 2021 to 2024

Bourgogne Pinot Noir Vieilles Vignes 2019 **£60.00**

A phenomenal Pinot now aged in large barrels. The super bright sheen is the least of its appeal as ripe red cherry and crunchy raspberry notes emanate from the glass. Bright and cool on the finish. Concentrated yet refreshing. Lovely. 2020 to 2023

Pommard aux Vignots 2019 **£199.00**

High up the hill and almost due south facing results in a fresh but very full Pommard in a vintage as good as 2019. I always think of Pommard as the more opulent of the Cotes de Beaune reds and this one doesn't disappoint. Super juicy bramble fruits with loganberry juices and a hint of black spice. There are fainter notes of violets and charcoal. We've been chuffed with this in recent years and this 2019 is the best yet. 2025 to 2035

Vosne Romanee 1er Cru Beaux Monts 2019 **SOLD**

Another year and another monster from the 'high hills'. Despite the density and jam packed black fruit style, there is something of the Vosne charm to come; coolness and bitter strawberry will add to this complex mix as it develops. Don't touch for a decade. 2030 to 2040

Charmes Chambertin Grand Cru 2019 **£845.00**

There's more elegance to the Charmes this year. Soft blueberry and floral aromas and a slightly more supple, easy going taste. Intricate and neatly woven if not the powerhouse of vintages like 2015 and 2018. It's like a stylish and effortless swing to the heart of the green. 2029 to 2042.

Le Chambertin 2019 **SOLD**

The Chambertin however is a blockbuster. Double doses of everything; blackberry crumble, liquorice, black forest gâteau, perfectly ripe and rounded tannins. Extraordinary. 2031 to 2052

Domaine de Comte Armand, Pommard

After a seven year apprenticeship, the capable Paul Zinetti has taken over here and done an exceptional job under the tricky conditions. Fully organic since 2005 and now certified as biodynamic, the lower parts of the vineyard are worked by horse and the reduced compaction is already resulting in a better soil structure. Epeneaux is, of course, one of the great reds of the Cotes de Beaune.

Auxey Duresses 1er Cru 2019

£225.00

Never an easy one to secure stocks but always worth the tussle. These reds from a little higher up the Cotes de Beaune are some of the most desirable in 2019. There's a wonderful combination of rich, red and black fruits, liquorice and spice along with a lifted acidity and red apple bite. Intense and refreshing at the same time. Delicious. 2023 to 2030.

Pommard 1er Cru Clos des Epeneaux 2019

SOLD

Magnums £660.00 (3)

At just over 5 hectares, this is one of the largest monopole vineyards in Burgundy. It is managed biodynamically and with utmost respect not only for the vineyard, but for the expression of its constituent parts. The style of Epeneaux has become ever more friendly in recent years and so the wine will be more approachable within a decade. The 2019 is thick, powerful and with notes of dark chocolate, intense blackberry and black cherry. It is luscious and rounded with a deep core and salty mineral tones. Quite superb. 2026 to 2039

Michel Lafarge, Volnay

Sad to report that this was the last vintage for Michel. What a man and a great mentor. We had many great times and his 1er Cru ageing cellar will always be my favourite haunt. A great man never forgotten. His son Frederic has a well earned reputation as a leading biodynamic viticulteur, keeping chickens in the Clos de Chateau des Ducs and reviving some ancient methods. These reds have become the most sought after in the Cotes de Beaune. Of his 8 hectares, only one is of 1er Cru standing, but their fruit combines delicious Pinot flavours with layers of firm mineral character and delicate vanilla from a short-ish oak ageing. I have noted consistent depth, complexity and perfect balance across the range. The 1er Cru ageing cellar is my temple. Coming here to taste is not a job but a pilgrimage.

Bourgogne Aligote Raisins Dorees 2019

£70.00

A patch of very old vines that tends to ripen with a heavier colour and flavour. Raisins Dorees is a clone or type of Aligote, perhaps best known at the Bouzeron estate of Aubert de Villaine. Fullsome, golden colour with a generous nose of ripe melon, lime, quince and almond. Fills the mouth evenly and is poised and persistent. This is a truly fine white and worth taking a bit of trouble to enjoy its development over the next 5 years or so. 2021 to 2026

Meursault 2019

SOLD

A great example of biodynamics coming to life as the overriding sensation here is one of life, natural tension and vibrancy. As the wine opens, more subtle stone fruit aromas appear. There is sustained pressure of citrus and white peach fruit on the mid palate. Subtle, perfumed but, above all a great tonic and a very exciting white Burgundy to follow. 2022 to 2028

Beaune 1er Cru Aigrots Blanc 2019

£295.00

Aigrots has a rich clay loam soil with a fine dusting of gravel like stones that yields a lavish style with some minerality. This is an excellent pick in 2019; what is too often a little over ripe is now ripe, but with high tensile structure to balance. Stunning. 2020 to 2025

Bourgogne Passetoutgrains a l'Exception 2019

£75.00

As ever this is half Pinot and half Gamay. The vines, planted by Frederic's grandfather, are now over 90 years old and the planting is mixed and so this is a 'field blend' from an exceptional site just below Meursault. Frederic tells me that, with such old vines, meagre yields and small berries it is not always easy to tell the Gamay from the Pinot in the field, especially as they seem to synchronise their ripening naturally. This was the first wine to be bottled and sold directly from the domaine in 1934. There's a bit of fat on a wine that is more often bone and muscle at this stage. One to look forward to in the spring of 22. 2022 to 2024.

Bourgogne Pinot Noir 2019**SOLD**

Another parcel of very old vines; these are 50+ years old. There's a bit of debate over the value of old vines at the moment. One of the strong arguments for is that the vigneron are in tune with the vine that they have grown up with. Frederic would have seen every vintage in the life of this vineyard. There's a riper, denser feel to the 2019 over the 2017 and 2018. Notes are of gently cooked plum, loganberry and hint of orange zest. The natural zing of Pinot is perfectly preserved here resulting in a serious and age worthy Pinot. 2021 to 2025

Volnay 2019**SOLD**

The Village is less generous on the nose as it is busy hiding bags and bags of ripe red fruit that pile up in the middle of the tongue. There are hints of rose hip, red apple and plenty of red berry fruits. Succulent and sumptuous, with a dash of white chocolate on the finish, this is a real beauty. 2023 to 2030

Volnay Selectionnees 2019**SOLD**

More strict, this is a firm hand on some very soft red and black fruits. There's an ethereal depth about the ripeness and even some black fruits; blackberry, black cherry and acai. Great intensity and energy in another fantastic year in Volnay. 2025 to 2035

Beaune 1er Cru les Aigrots 2019**SOLD**

There's a supple feeling of juicy grapiness that lingers on the back palate that is the peak of perfection in Beaune. We are always looking for that little bit of natural softness in the reds. This has it in spades. The finish has a beautiful coolness about it too. Delicious. 2023 to 2029

Volnay 1er Cru les Mitans 2019**SOLD**

Tight and unyielding to smell but huge, sinewy, almost edible Pinot to the palate. Absolute quality of red Burgundy at its peak as the plethora of flavours last for minutes and not seconds. Richer in style than any vintage of this decade too. Extraordinary. 2026 to 2038

Thierry Matrot, Meursault

Now run by Adele and Ailsa Matrot, the third daughter, being established with her chef partner at the hotel le Chevreuil in Meursault; highly recommended of course. There are bright fruits and super silky tannins on this exciting range of reds. Meursault, 'La Piece sous le Bois' is very smart. Volumes of the great whites have suffered a little through lack of rain through the growing season. But this element of stress has led to wines worth chasing after. The girls have expanded the red vineyards in the Hautes Cotes and these are tremendous in 2019.

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2019 **£65.00**

As for many whites there's more depth of golden colour than in 2017 or 2018 suggesting a different profile of maturity and an indicator of a little more time in barrel and some new oak too. It's the new wood that gives this a hint of sweet spice and vanilla. Powerful flavours of crystalline citrus and ginger, cream texture and plenty of weight add up to a showy wine. Opulence in a glass and worth holding a few in the cellar too. 2021 to 2024.

Meursault 2019 **£195.00**

Selected from 12 parcels, this is another bright and deep yellow golden wine. Aromas are more subtle of honeydew melon, apricot skin and white flowers. There's more concentration than in recent years; crunchy and persistent acid freshness combines with lime and honeydew melon fruit and a very powerful, ripe finish. 2023 to 2030

Meursault 1er Cru Blagny 2019 **£250.00**

The bowl shaped Blagny vineyard sits high up above the conjunction of Meursault and Puligny. It basks in the late summer sunshine to give intensity and minerality. Although firm and four square as ever, there is good lift of dried apricot skin and ginger spice. Chunky and gutsy with plenty on the middle palate to keep this going for 4 or 5 years. 2024 to 2030.

Meursault 1er Cru Charmes 2019 **£275.00**

Classic Charmes with its clever marriage of tension, lively freshness aside a gorgeous and sensual, honeyed citrus fruit core. There's a hint of minerality to this beautifully poised white Burgundy. Excellent. 2023 to 2030

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru les Chalumeaux 2019 **£275.00**

On the Meursault side but well above the Combettes. In great years there is more lift and purity of a classical Puligny. This doesn't give away much on the nose (good sign in such a youthful white!) and the palate is very much more about the feeling of ripe custard apple, peach and rhubarb fruits. There some delicate white flower notes too. Tremendous persistence and much more classical in style this. Very good indeed. 2023 to 2031

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru les Combettes 2019**SOLD**

Low on the Meursault side the protected microclimate and slightly richer soils here. It's a tricky one to taste in barrel, again this is often a good sign at en Primeur stage. There's a tight frame of acidity surrounding what appears to be complex fruit. Long, more delicate, saline and mineral finish. Very serious this year. 2024 to 2032.

Meursault 1er Cru les Perrieres 2019**£375.00**

The Matrots have half a hectare here which is a pretty decent holding in what is possibly the finest 1er Cru white vineyard. The vines are 50 and 55 years old producing a miserly 200 dozen bottles. Tasted only just after it's racking into tank for the final assemblage and so a bit clunky. But you can see the immense complexity and fine acidity. Will be a classic. 2026 to 2035+

Maranges Rouge 2019**£85.00**

This is spectacular. Longer hang time high up on the hill above Meursault results in a deeper red and more richly endowed Pinot than ever. The Matrot sisters are certainly doing it again in Maranges. Hard to resist from the moment we ship in April! 2021 to 2024

Maranges 1er Cru la Fuissiere Rouge 2019**SOLD**

A red wine village by Chassagne as the Cotes de Beaune tapers to a more undulating landscape. In such ripe years as 2019 these little villages on the Hautes Cotes (Auxey and Monthelie too) are juicy, attractive and outstanding buys. Vineyards here are managed by the Matrots brother in law. He has done some good work in 2019. Deeply coloured but surprisingly delicate, floral and refined on the palate this will give pleasure for some time to come. 2022 to 2029

Monthelie Rouge 2019**£120.00**

It's not often that we buy all of these reds but they have done extremely well in 2019. This is possibly the pick. The vineyard almost abuts Volnay and the wine isn't far off in style and quality. Just that extra bit of richness over finesse, but that's no bad thing for a Pinot to pick up and go in the next year or three. Lively red berry puree. 2022 to 2027

Blagny Rouge 1er Cru la Piece sous le Bois 2019**£225.00**

A favourite at Handford, and bigger than ever in 2019. Deeper, black red at the core, soft cinnamon and sandal wood, and a hint of liquorice and black fruit too. Soft red and black cherry, wild strawberry and a touch of caramel too. The brooding spice notes reappear on the finish. Nicely in tune and set on high volume this year. Excellent. 2024 to 2033

Domaine Francois Mikulski, Meursault

Francois' father was a Free Polish fighter at Arnhem. After the war he married Pierre Boillot's sister and determined to follow a life in the vines. Francois himself has travelled the world, purely for research purposes of course, working with the greats that are Domaine Roulot and Littorai. The domaine was born from land inherited from Pierre and has been supplemented his wife, Marie-Pierre's family holdings. The vineyards are fully mature now with the newest plantings in les Poruzots now a quarter of a century old.

Fruit is carefully selected, de-stemmed. There is a cool settling before fermentation and ageing in barrels. Francois uses around 20% new oak. There are some 450 litre barrels now and a new cellar has just been finished over the road and conveniently conjoined by the excellent Goutte d'Or restaurant. Francois and Marie-Pierre's son in law, Thomas 'le Boc' Boccon, is doing a lot of the work now and making great strides on the reds, too. These are the safe hands of CS Beaune Rugby's long time number 8.

Quantities have suffered here in 2019 and so likely to be strict allocations.

Bourgogne Aligote 2019

£85.00

There's an extra layer to the Mikulski Aligote. Sweet lime and a dash of white pepper, the classic contrast of fruit bomb and bright acidity is the best that Aligote can give. Very persistent with the flavours never outdone by that acidity. A great gourmet white. 2022 to 2027

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2019

SOLD

An annual treat for a few clients, this is as close to Meursault as you get without writing it on the label. It's from 2 parcels on the eastern border of the appellation, Herbeaux and Lombois (long wood). In contrast to the Meursault there's enough fruit from upper slopes here and so this as worked very well in 2019. Excellent. 2021 to 2026

Meursault 2019

SOLD

This has those 100 year old vines in Limousin (some likely to be released as a separate cuvee later on), some of the Poruzots fruit as well as the classic 3 parcels of Meix Chavaux, Charmes and Narvaux. Volumes really suffered in these lower parts as they caught a touch of frost too. Fine grained, lime fruits, very pure, distinctive. Less opulent than in previous years but more precise and perhaps a little more age worthy. 2022 to 2027

Meursault 1er Cru Poruzots 2019**SOLD**

From the lower portion of the vineyards that tends to offer a little more ripeness and density. As the vines are fully mature now the Poruzots has reached the supreme quality of the other two and so I'm surprised the price has not followed! It has more of the Genevrieres character. A tiny notch down on the volume button allows a little caramel and vanilla cream to come through from the wood. Still delicious of course. 2022 to 2028

Meursault 1er Cru Charmes**SOLD**

Two main plantings here, one in 1930 and one in 1968. One parcel is in the lower Charmes and the majority in the upper vineyard. The more profound and luxurious of the trio. Almost honeyed in its depth yet the fruits are forward and fresh, almost hints of green plum as well as the more typical apricot and peach juice notes we come to love in Charmes. 2022 to 2030

Meursault 1er Cru Genevrieres 2019**SOLD**

Toasty mineral on one side; a burst of lime, lemon, nectarine freshness on the other. More lifter than Charmes and so perhaps the ultimate keeper. This is right up there with the best of the village. 2023 to 2034

**Bourgogne Pinot Noir 2019****£95.00**

Another juicy blockbuster. Francois is getting very good at these reds!

Volnay 1er Cru les Santenots 2019**£325.00**

Often cited as the red burgundy from a white wine vineyard, this shows a soft chalkiness that you feel you can almost scoop into! Plenty of red cherry and currant flavours but with lush tones and hints of stone fruit juice texture that you would expect in a great white. If we could have a tasting I know this one would go well! 2023 to 2029

Domaine Leflaive, Puligny Montrachet

Sadly we haven't had a chance to try these in 2019. We have a small allocation of these and the 1er and Grand Cru wines. Please ask on those.

Bourgogne Blanc 2019	£299.00
Puligny Montrachet 2019	£499.00
Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru Clavoillon 2019	£645.00

Gerard Thomas, Saint Aubin

Gerard is a kindly, robust and ruddy faced year round Santa, whose life has been dedicated to his vineyards. He has rebuilt some unusually precarious terraces, replanted and maintained his Chardonnay vines with pride. The first Saint Aubin 1er Cru is endearingly known as 'dog's tooth' by many clients; old stone gate posts look like giant canines. The second takes its name from cats that bask in this sun-baked parcel on the lower slopes. No visit here since last January but bottles of these are already here and tasting beautifully.

Saint Aubin 'Champ Tirant' 2019 **£180.00 (12)**

Before you even sniff this just looks so pure and bright with a delicate but ripe colouring. Peach skin and lime zest and a hint of crème caramel to finish. Gerard's twin daughters have a silky touch! 2021 to 2023.

Saint Aubin 1er Cru Murgers des Dents de Chien 2019 **£250.00 (12)**

The vineyard borders Puligny 1er Garenne. It is named after the tooth like stones that form the gate posts. This is a Handford favourite. It's high up above Puligny and borders the Garenne vineyard so it's probably the pick of this range in these slightly warmer vintages of 2018 and 2019. There's a little more tropical fruit on this although, for the most part it retains its classical mineral and citrus fruit zing. Very attractive fruit salad finish to this. Lovely. 2021 to 2025

Saint Aubin 1er Cru la Chateniere 2019

£260.00 (12)

Down the slope, and close to chez Thomas at the southern end of the village, the vineyard is named for the wild cats that bask in the warmth of this sun trap on the lower slopes. The terraces were constructed by Gerard's own hand, though many years ago now. Quite a mouthful this, and it's almost new world in style. There is plenty of grip to balance the lush and ripe stone fruit notes. 2022 to 2027

Chassagne Montrachet 1er Cru les Chenevottes 2019

SOLD

The vineyard is mid slope and at the St Aubin end of Chassagne. This is tough, stony, loamy site that faces east and a bit north. Great depth and power with hints of slatey minerals, this is all a bit closed up right now. It's Chateniere with the volume turned up. 2024 to 2031

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru la Garenne 2019

£395.00 (12)

High up on the hillside, and virtually contiguous to the Murgers des Dents de Chien vineyard of Saint Aubin. This is a little more refined in 2019. The mineral notes are soft and the lemon and soft tangerine notes are tantalising, cooling and positively alluring. This Garenne is so well integrated you hardly feel the oak as there is both power and delicacy in one glassful. Now I'm torn between the great 2018 and this 2019! 2023 to 2030.



Domaine de Meix Foulot, Mercurey

I do love popping in to see Agnes de Launey and her fabulous dog. She is so diligent in her hospitality, her sense of collaboration with the vineyards and the familial devotion that continues the great and pioneering works of her father, Paul, not just for the domaine, but for the appellation of Mercurey.

Mercurey 1er Cru Montaigu Monopole 2019

£120.00

Entirely owned by the family this beautiful vineyard oversees the entire appellation. It lies below the ruined castle of the Dukes of Montaigu and would have been the pride of Burgundy in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Like many 2019s this is lush, opulent and will be approachable in youth. There are fresh and uplifting, crushed wild strawberry and cherry notes. Though this wine has become more polished with sleek, silky tannins, it retains a wild side of herbs, savoury notes and hints of black truffle. A historic and delectable red for the cellar. 2023 to 2030

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