



Handford

W I N E S



Handford Wines

Burgundy En Primeur 2020 Offer

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Burgundy 2020 Vintage Report

The Weather

It's a rare early bird vintage and perhaps too rare to blame completely on global warming, as 2021 harvests were almost a full month later. In the southerly, white appellations, many started on 22nd August. Picking was highly selective, vineyard by vineyard and plot by plot. When the growing season is foreshortened that precise pick time becomes more elusive. Get this right and you have some of the very best white wines that Burgundy has ever offered us.

A beautiful and balmy early spring led to early bud break and strong growth. Vineyards were busy with workers trimming and tying early growth and, for many their first time ever, seeing flowers appear by the end of May. Clear skies and dry winds accelerated progress until the end of June. A warmer spell at the end of June broke with rainstorms to refresh the vines. It wasn't until the very end of July and into August that the much publicised hotter spells came along to slow down the fleshing out and concentrate colours and flavours. Importantly there had been just enough rain, and at the right intervals, to prevent shut down and avoid any comparison with 2003. The result though was another short vintage with harvests down by 10 to 20% of normal for the great whites, and 30 to 40% off for the reds. Perhaps the worst news is that it was the Grand Cru and best 1er Cru reds that suffered most; they are Grands Crus because life for grand vines is tougher than it is in the lowlands. That's why they produce the best quality fruit.

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.

2020 offers glorious whites and distinctive, condensed red wines, but in restricted volumes

The Market

The market is even hotter than was the climate in 2020. There's not much left of the abundant 2018 and the mighty 2019. With 2021 being of very high quality but laughably low volumes (Fred Lafarge is likely to make one blended 1er Cru Volnay from his plots, and in just 30% of the normal quantity), we are relying on a return to normal in 2022 to replenish the cellars of the world.

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 2022 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

Once again we have unprecedented enquiries on Burgundy 2020. Many wines will need to be allocated, in some cases by the single bottle. Some growers we will allocate to previous buyers. For the most difficult wines we will finalise allocations on 14th 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 not always managed 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'. The cellar was a sad sight in November 2021, filled with hardly one third of the normal volume of the 2021 vintage.

Gevrey Chambertin Clos Prieur 2020

£325.00 (12)

This adjoins the 1er Cru vineyard of the same name, first planted by monks from the Abbey of Cluny. This is a lovely wine to assess the vintage at an early stage. Open, ripe, loganberry, red cherry pie and just very easy on the eye. You can pick at this one any time over the next 7 years or so. 2023 to 2029

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru Estournelles Saint Jacques 2020

£645.00 (12)

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 sites are very low yielding in the warmer 2020 vintage and so quantities down a little. Here the mid palate is concentrated to the point of numbing. Fruits are just that little more attainable compared to the Grand Cru, though the overall quality is very close indeed. 2028 to 2039

Ruchottes Chambertin Grand Cru 2020

£675.00

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 64 years old. Pronounced cranberry, pomegranate, raspberry freshness and bite with a deep, deep core that will take time to flower. Plenty of Grand Cru richness to come in a couple of decades or so. 2032 to 2055

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 had a lot to say about 2020! There was extra work in managing the vines through dry periods as the vineyards reacted so differently. He highlighted growing production costs (as do wine makers the world over at the moment) and, unfortunately, the volumes here are very low this year.

Bourgogne Aligote 2020

£55.00

Not one that we have offered before but, like many whites in 2020, this is worth a spin as there is that much extra density, creamy lime pie and a subtle edge of chalky acidity to keep it fresh and upbeat. 2021 to 2023

Morey Saint Denis Blanc 2020

£185.00

Exceptional. These whites take advantage of a vintage that offers near perfect balance of fine natural acids. Dried apricots, ground almonds and orange with a hint of citrus zest are all wrapped up in a delicate grape skin structure. The dense fruit almost pops out of its skin and into your mouth! Difficult to resist now but hold on to a few for 3 to 6 years! 2021 to 2027



Benoit Stehly with cask samples

Morey Saint Denis 2020**SOLD**

Sucrosity, concentration, rich plum, briar fruit and a pinch of spice. The quality of the village wine has somewhat made up for the shortfall in other vineyards. As alluring as the 2019, and perhaps even more voluptuous. 2023 to 2030.

Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru Clos des Ormes 2020**SOLD**

Oh dear! Never before has our order been cut. This year Benoit has rewritten the order book onto the back of a business card. Once again it's a massive favourite though: jam on the nose with an almost unique density, tension and complexity. This will get your attention. It is an extraordinary and unique glass of red Burgundy. 2027 to 2038.

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru les Combottes 2020**SOLD**

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, an uncanny fullness and depth and, it seems, some consistency in the face of shifting conditions. It's on the Morey side and, like the Grand Cru, has more attributes of Morey than of Gevrey. The 2020 retains fineness and purity of blueberry and bilberry fruits. Tannins are more evident on a ripe, black cherry finish. Full of life and longevity. 2030 to 2041

Clos Saint Denis 2020**£650.00**

Being exposed to the drying north winds fruit is often more delicate, but always clean and with mineral notes. Again, this is fine and focussed but a little more closed now. Fruits are more refined of rhubarb, raspberry and blueberry. Natural acids are at the limit but you don't feel that, as the intensity of fruit is just so strong. 2032 to 2045

Clos de la Roche 2020**£825.00**

A fabulous wine to collect in recent years, being extremely serious and fair value for a Grand Cru. Though the flavours are of more delicate redcurrant, red cherry and plum there is yet more intensity and an undercurrent of crushed rock, earth and truffle notes. Benoit's recent experiments with coopers have achieved a sense of roundness, rather than dominance from the oak. This bodes well for the future of a truly grand vin. 2033 to 2047

Bonnes Mares 2020**£995.00**

A little under one third of a hectare normally produces around 1300 bottles. Last year Benoit couldn't fill four barrels and in 2020 hardly two. That's less than half the expected yield. The Bonnes Mares is most similar to the Clos St Denis but a notch up in intensity and with a few seconds extra on the length. Too rare. 2035 to 2049

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. This was an outstanding tasting. The wines are so pure and perfect, reflecting the beauty and elegance of both the vineyards and the grower. A very fine range.

Morey Saint Denis Blanc 'les Crais' 2020 £225.00

A quirky white from this famous red wine village and an impressive one too. Cotes de Nuits whites too often show an unsightly layer of fat but not so here as the Clerget Morey once again shows off its peach skin coat and feathery acidity. It is perhaps a little finer and more elegant than Benoit's and has more of that crème fraiche, 'veloute' note on the very finish. 2024 to 2028

Chambolle Musigny 2020 £260.00

The deeper colour on this vintage stands out alongside that open and perfumed, rose petal and red fruit nose. More guts to this than in 2019 with bags of red fruit to chew on and a little more grainy and textured feel to that classic Chambolle chocolate note. There's a striking balance and poise here that bodes so well for the bigger wines to come. There's no doubting that Justine has class. This will be a beauty in 2 or 3 years. 2024 to 2030

Vosne Romanee 'les Violettes' 2020 £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. This vintage seems a little more forward than in recent years as it already boasts some of the classic, velvet, almost milky texture of Vosne. There are so many dimensions here; seashell minerals, silky smooth tannins, soft milk chocolate, a hint of spice and a plunging depth of currant and berry fruit at the core. A great vineyard and an alluring wine that will show well in the shorter term. 2025 to 2031

Vougeot 1er Cru les Petits Vougeots 2020 £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. Justine is particularly pleased with the fruit here and has used a couple more new barrels. The result is a little tricky to decipher right now but that is so often an indication of greatness to come. I couldn't stop sniffing this one! There are so many nuances; red cherry pie, bay leaf, cinnamon, redcurrant, brioche and many more. Enchanting. 2027 to 2035

Chambolle Musigny 'aux Croix' 2020**£350.00**

Along with the lieus dits of les Condemennes and Clos de l'Orme this is one of the finest vineyards in the Cotes de Nuits not to be of 1er Cru status. The Clergets have 12 tiny parcels in what is already a small vineyard. They are largely planted north to south as the land slopes down from 1er Cru aux Echanges. The first blast of early morning sun to this east facing land gets the plants going and results in a wine of power and muscle. With sinewy, almost black fruits that are beautifully ripe, this will age gracefully into a classically moulded Chambolle. One to look forward to in the medium term. 2026 to 2035

Chambolle Musigny 2020 1er Cru les Charmes**£425.00**

There is a good holding of over a hectare here and Chambolle Charmes is often thought of as one of the great 1er Crus. These Chambolles were the first to be picked chez Clerget. They were done by 2nd September. This shows a similar mix of the richness, sweet spice, ripe loganberry of last year's and with an edgy acidity and soft tannin to balance. Very good indeed. 2027 to 2037

Echezeaux 'en Orveaux' 2020**£825.00**

Another enviable vineyard area of nearly a hectare from two parcels in the 'Orveau' sector. Super sweet and generous fruits with plenty of backbone, minerality and length. There's a certain brilliance and purity that will mark Clerget out as one of the very fine producers in a vineyard that offers a rare combination of the very highest quality and no mean surface area. A Grand Cru for the purist this is technically brilliant, broad, balanced and long, but never over-baked. 2029 to 2041



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, Vaucrains 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, 2019 and now 2020. 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. Sadly there will be no more Argillas and Poulettes 1er Cru wines. They are such small areas and yields seem to only go down that it becomes more economical to sell the fruit, and put a little into the excellent Nuits villages of course! Quantities are way down but prices only just nudging up a little.

Nuits Saint Georges 2020

£160.00

Fruit comes from 5 parcels in 4 climats; Alliots, 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. Harvests began in August for the first time in two generations but selective pickings kept the grapes coming in for 10 days. This is a tour de force: such a gourmet red you can almost eat it. Crunchy tannins and a fine frame of acidity balance chunky cherry fruits. Once again this is an excellent buy. 2023 to 2029.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Rue de Chaux 2020

£265.00

On this my first post covid trip I thought I'd go to Chaux where this particular rue actually goes. There's not much for the tourist but I did see a baguette vending machine for the first time! Rue de Chaux is a tiny 1er Cru is further subdivided by the six owners and the few rows of vines were planted in 1936, the birth year of Jean Chauvenet. These old vines have ridden the heat well. They are further challenged by drying winds that come through the valley resulting in tiny, but flavourful berries. Spice, liquorice, truffle and a hint of savoury give this a very different profile. Fruits are a little more delicate and there is added complexity of soft herbs on the finish. A rollercoaster on the palate and this provides contrast in a wonderful range of 1er Crus. 2026 to 2034

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Damodes 2020**SOLD**

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. This is indeed rich, juicy and a little creamy, like a Vosne, in 2020. Super silky. Wonderful. 2026 to 2036

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Aux Bouselots 2020**£295.00**

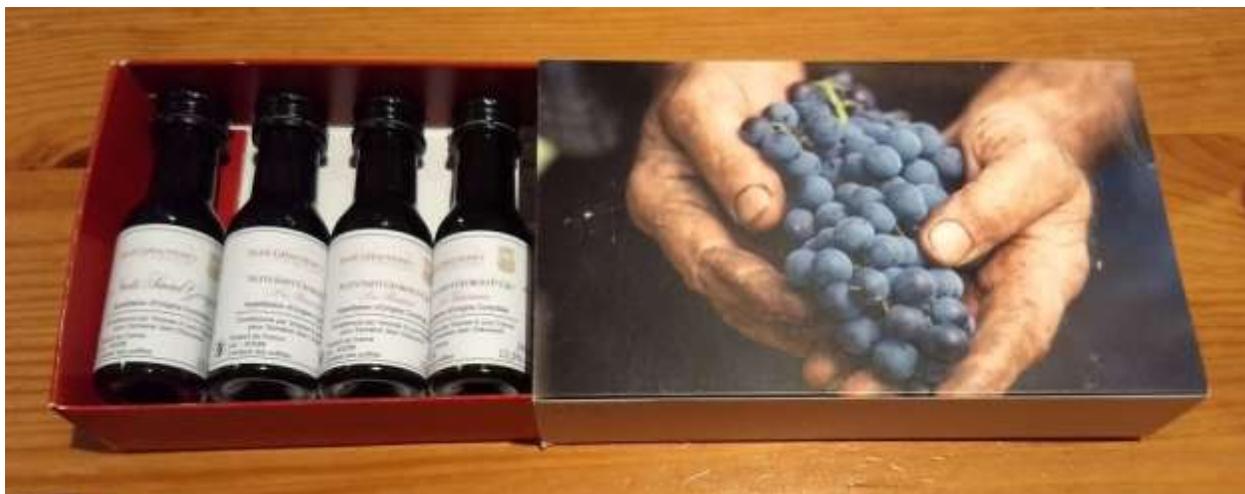
Still north of the villages but sheltered, and a little lower down the hill. Soils are more clay and hold water well in hot, dry summers. Berries tend to be smaller and more concentrated, a phenomenon that was highlighted in 2020 as thin, slightly sandy soils and a rocky sub strata allows for little or no water retention. Soils are contiguous with Vosne Romanee les Raviolles. Very dark in colour and with intense, wild, animal, spice and cassis on the nose. Once again this might be mistaken for Grand Cru such is its combination of force and grace. 2026 to 2037.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru les Perrieres 2020**£325.00**

Another tour de force again, showing those wild notes and this time more briar fruit, loganberry and acai. Malic acids were a little lower than usual for the vines to the north of town and so I'm expecting these to offer some lush and approachable fruits quite early in their life time. They will cellar well but do try a bottle or three in relative infancy. 2025 to 2035.

Nuits Saint Georges 1er Cru Vaucrains 2020**£375.00**

Christophe has 42 ares but produced only 5 barrels in 2020. It's another remarkable Vaucrains with a super sweet and ripe finish. Quite traditional in style with its grainy acidity and chunky fruits up front. The finish is more refined. As ever, it's a classic. 2031 to 2043.



Chauvenet 2020 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 three different plots inherited from Jean Marc's uncle and makes a very attractive, early drinker.

Savigny les Beaune 2020

£295.00 (12)

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. Perfumed, rich and rounded with ripe, chewy raspberry fruits and a hint of sucrosity. Immediate and appealing. 2022 to 2029

Cotes de Nuits Villages 2020

£295.00 (12)

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. She is rightly proud of this one and has instigated an annual tasting to highlight hers and many other great reds in this appellation. Exceptional weight and so smooth on the finish. My note on this has two words underscored twice; 'amazing Alix!' 2024 to 2030

Vosne Romanee 2020

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. More precise than the outstanding 2019 and with lifted red plum and cranberry fruits. The enticing suppleness of Vosne comes through on the long finish with hints of mocha and chocolate. 2024 to 2030

Vosne Romanee 1er Cru Suchots 2020

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. In the few vintages that Alix has taken charge I have seen a slight change, year on year, in the fineness and purity of these reds. Sweet red cherry fruits here with much of it wrapped up in fine acid structure. Very fine indeed and incredibly long and balanced on the finish. 2028 to 2036

Echezeaux 2020

SOLD

Sandy soils in this part of Echezeaux allow free drainage. Similar harvests to 2018 mean another tricky round of allocations for us! The 2020 has an alluring texture of cream and sweet red fruits. I noted that there is almost too much fruit concentration to bear! Need I say more? Just tremendous. 2031 to 2043

Clos Vougeot 2020

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. There are many, many layers of fruit on the mid palate, all bound together by biscuit tannins and some vanilla and wood notes too. It's too early to define the flavours for now as this is a true vin de garde. Destined for greatness. 2032 to 2047.



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. It's such a shame that volumes are down so much as Philippe is our favourite under the radar producer. We have a very few bottles of older vintages in stock that are worth a try.

Vosne Romanee les Barreaux 2020

SOLD

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 big scores. 2023 to 2030.

Chambolle Musigny '40 Ouvrees' 2020

£260.00

A tiny plot that seems to get picked on by the weather. 2016 was devastated, 2017 difficult but 2018 was a joy. Grapes are all de-stemmed but pressing is left until the very last minute to allow for as much natural extraction as possible. In fact a part of the fruit is separated to allow an even later pressing. Though down on quantity yet again the 2020 is extraordinarily rich in vibrant red fruits. It has all the appeal of the best Chambolles and with seductive, Christmas spice, baked cherry pie and crème fraiche. This remains a silky and ethereal red with an energy that makes this ever more animated on the mid palate. 2026 to 2033

Chambolle Musigny 'Clos de l'Orme' 2020

£275.00

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, a quarter of the fruit is fermented as whole bunches resulting in a little more zing and a generally more youthful impression. It is more dense and chunky, with liquorice and black fruits. Muscular. meaty and age worthy. 2026 to 2032.

Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru la Romanee 2020

SOLD

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. Black pepper, spice, animal, wild herbs are just some of the complexities of this fabulous Gevrey. Harmonious and pure with an attractive tweak of acidity. It's as close as you can get to 100 points without being Grand Cru!
2030 to 2040

Domaine Roche de Bellene, Beaune

An exciting range 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 and Savignys. 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 2020

£115.00

Savigny offers subtle changes in terroir and Nicolas counts seven different soil types in the small area that yields this juicy chardonnay with soft lemon, white peach and a honeyed almond finish. The vineyard is undergoing conversion to biodynamics with Nicolas spending time hand weeding. The bottle is beautifully presented with yellow wax capsule. 2022 to 2026

Savigny les Beaune Rouge Hommage a Jean Ferte 2020

£185.00

Jean Ferte was Nicolas' great uncle and, along with his father, a great mentor. Back in the day he was the top man in Savigny. This is a deep and pure red with an almost sweet stripe of intensity of red cherry, cranberry and raspberry fruit on the tongue. A little more restrained and serious than the 2018, a wine that proved very popular on taste here. 2026 to 2032

Beaune 1er Cru Hommage a Francoise Potel 2020

£235.00

From five 1er Cru vineyards, the youngest vines are 50 years old. This is a fascinating mix of Beaune more famous vineyards of Clos du Roi and Les Bressandes, both on the Savigny side and les Pertuisots on the Pommard side. Then from the high and low parts come fruit from Montee Rouge and les Reversees. The latter is a stones throw from town. This idea works; it combines all the red berry, chocolate and vanilla complexity of Beaune with a softness and approachability that will not test the patience. 2024 to 2029

Vosne Romanee 1er Cru Suchots 2020

£695.00

This is fermented on the bunches. A wine of this magnitude and made in that reductive way makes it very difficult to judge en Primeur. This will be truly magnificent in 10 years time. Go for it! 2031 to 2046

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!

Chassagne Montrachet 1er Cru en Cailleret 2020 **£295.00**

Nicolas has a delicious range of Chassagnes and Pulignys. We can't do them all so I picked my favourite. En Caillerets is a sheltered site beneath la Grande Montagne (hardly a mountain at 350 odd metres but it's very steep, trust me!). So the style reflects the reputation of the village being cool and fresh, yet sumptuous and intense. There's a zesty finish that complements the boldness very well indeed. 2024 to 2029

Bourgogne Pinot Noir Cuvee Reserve 2020 **£80.00**

This is a complete upgrade as much of the fruit is coming from Chorey and Volnay. So it's no ordinary Pinot Noir. Still made organically and using the large barrels this offers intensity and roundness way above its station. Vanilla brioche, red cherry and raspberry fruits with an unexpected density. It does retain that cool finish so characteristic of many great wines but this is whopping Pinot for not so much money. 2022 to 2026

Pommard aux Vignots 2020 **£225.00**

High up the hill and almost due south facing resulting in a fresh but very full Pommard in a vintage as good as 2020. I always think of Pommard as the more opulent of the Cotes de Beaune reds and once again this one doesn't disappoint. In fact Nicolas compares this to the greats that are 1964 and 2015. It is very tight now and has low pH, so it's likely to do well in the cellar. With such natural protection there was no need for sulphur. There aren't too many wines at this quality and price that could age for so long. 2028 to 2040

Charmes Chambertin Grand Cru 2020 **£450.00 (3)**

With just a little raisining here, there is astonishing concentration without losing elegance. There is a hint of black spice, deep red cherry, redcurrant, pomegranate and loganberry. A lush finish, with an acidity that seems to come in waves to keep the finish alive for a minute or more. A thing of beauty. 2032 to 2044.

Le Chambertin 2020 **SOLD**

Richer still and truly worth paying for this experience. I was lucky enough to try a range of 8 Grand Cru here. This one was a good step up on any other. Sublime. 2035 to 2055

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 2020

£235.00

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 2020. 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 2020

£645.00

Magnums £675.00 (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 2020 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

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. This year I had the privilege of both Frederic and Chantal, and some stupendous wines of course. A superlative range.

Bourgogne Aligote Raisins Dorees 2020 £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. Left on the vines a tad later than most whites but still harvested by 6th September would you believe! Deeply coloured, with generous lime, quince and almond aromas. Seems a little smoother, riper and easier on the eye than recent vintages so we are looking forward to a pleasurable white as early as Spring 2023. 2023 to 2026

Meursault 2020 £175.00

A great example of biodynamics coming to the fore, as the overriding sensation here is one of life, natural tension and vibrancy. This is an elegant example, not over-powerful but with floral, ripe citrus and orange blossom fragrance. As the wine opens, more subtle stone fruit aromas appear. There is sustained pressure of citrus and white peach fruit. A Meursault with a beautifully natural and almost ethereal feel to it. 2024 to 2030

Meursault Vendanges Selectionnees 2020 £225.00

And the super premium version with just that bit of power and richness to add to the high energy and purity that defines the house of Lafarge. 2025 to 2033

Beaune 1er Cru Aigrots Blanc 2020 £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. There's no less tension here but it's softer at the edges and there's a little more flesh and density. Key lime pie! Plump, lively and full of energy. 2024 to 2029

Bourgogne Passetoutgrains a l'Exception 2020 £75.00 **£110.00 (3 Mags)**

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. Seems a little riper this year with a funky red cherry and popsicle note. Clean and clear with a hint of reduction that allows for bottle ageing. Another wine to drink young and fresh but hold back a bottle or three for a fun surprise. 2022 to 2025

Bourgogne Pinot Noir 2020

£99.00

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. This is not as immediate as the 2019. It has a more serious, Volnay like touch. Wonderfully persistent with a rich mid palate worthy of laying down for a few years. Sensational Pinot and a worthy flagship of one of the best growers in the Cotes de Beaune. 2023 to 2027

Volnay 2020

SOLD

We come to some exceedingly serious reds now. Though these wines are shy on the nose for now, the mid palate pressure is enormous. Distinct raspberry, red apple skin and a hint of orange, this will put on a bit of fat, adding that hint of white chocolate and caramel to the complexity. These two Volnays remain some of the best values in red Burgundy. 2024 to 2031

Volnay Vendanges Selectionnees 2020

£245.00

More strict, this is a firm hand on some very soft and appealing red fruits. There is a hint of bramble and loganberry too. Fabulous depth, intensity and energy in another fantastic year. 2026 to 2037

Beaune 1er Cru les Aigrots 2020

£295.00

As for the white Beaune, the red is that but softer and more subtle with roundedness and an easy going coolness on the finish. Redcurrant, cassis and a hint of orange zest with soft cocoa notes. A tempting Beaune that's hard to resist. 2024 to 2031

Volnay 1er Cru les Mitans 2020

SOLD

A notch up from the great 2019 in intensity. There are red cherries, raspberries and that super long complexity that seems to last for minutes and not seconds. With no hard edges at all this would drink well in its youth, though better kept a few years if you can refrain! 2025 to 2038

There are tiny quantities of other 1er Crus. Please ask

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 as is this years Maranges 1er Cru. Sadly volumes are way down but the quality of whites is outstanding. Puligny Chalumeaux stood out for me this year.

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2020

£80.00

2019 was a little less inspiring but 2020 is right back on form showing subtle white flower and soft caramel with 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 2020

SOLD

The vines suffered here from dry conditions. Yields were very low and the wine takes a bit of revving up. It is reserved to begin with but as it hits the palate the volume builds and the wine flowers to a fresh, floral white with hints of orange zest and finely focussed citrus, ripe honeydew melon and even mango. 2024 to 2030

Meursault 1er Cru Blagny 2020

£295.00

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. I wrote that it's a little like biting on a grape with slightly under-ripe skin but perfectly formed flesh. So it's as firm as ever but very fair, and even generous with it's mid palate concentration of citrus and apricot fruits. As plucky as it always is and a good one to hide away for 5 years. 2026 to 2031

Meursault 1er Cru Charmes 2020

£345.00

The Matrots sold some as fruit this year as the vines in the middle of the slope are recently replanted. That concentrates the fruit from higher up, towards the great Perrieres vineyard. Creamy, tangerine and milk chocolate notes with a gorgeous and sensual, honeyed citrus fruit core. There's a hint of sweet lime and gooseberry fool. Beautifully composed. 2025 to 2031

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru les Chalumeaux 2020

£345.00

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 tastes of white peach, nectarine and pomegranate. I loved the coolness that gives a sensation of tasting fruits straight from the vine. 2025 to 2031

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru les Combettes 2020**SOLD**

Low on the Meursault side, with the protected microclimate and slightly richer soils here. It's a more open, sunny and ripe vineyard that took a bit of managing in the drier conditions. Again, quantities are low due to recent replanting. Most of the fruit comes from the part with old vines remaining and they were planted in 1961! This year the Combettes is distinctly rich and creamy. As so often in hot years, the terroir character is pronounced and so that more delicate and mineral side appears on the long finish. Thierry compares this to the 1990. 2026 to 2030

Meursault 1er Cru les Perrieres 2020**SOLD**

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 150 dozen bottles. Tasting this wine took me back to the 2014 tastings. I do think these 2020s will be as good! Dynamic, energetic and, again, worthy of Grand Cru status. 2028 to 2035+

Maranges Rouge 2020**£95.00**

Harvest was done very quickly on 29th and 30th August as yields were halved to 20 hl/ha. There is a new system of temperature controlled vats and pigeage by moving the juice gently from one vat to another. That's all worked a treat (except the volume!) to give a sensational basket of red fruits with piquant acidity and great length of flavour. This will be delicious from the minute it lands in May 2022. 2022 to 2024

Maranges 1er Cru la Fuissiere Rouge 2020**£125.00**

Another innovation for these reds is a machine that stirs the lees by gently rotating the barrels rather than opening the bung and stirring. That reduces the chance of oxidation while increasing the lees contact. That serves to enrich the wines with a brioche texture and extra longevity. This has breadth, spice and firm acidity. Very good indeed. 2024 to 2032

Blagny Rouge 1er Cru la Piece sous le Bois 2020**£225.00**

A favourite at Handford, and bigger than ever in 2020. Deeper, black red at the core, soft cinnamon and sandal wood, allspice and a little sweet viscosity too. Soft red and black cherry and wild strawberry. The brooding liquorice notes reappear on the finish. Nicely in tune and set on high volume again this year. 2026 to 2035

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 and 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 2020 and so likely to be strict allocations.

Bourgogne Aligote 2020

£95.00

Lime cream, super dense in the mid palate. Another Aligote that seems more rounded this year. They have more flesh and ripeness to balance that ever present acidity. There's a soft crunch of macadamia nut on the finish. 2022 to 2028

Bourgogne Chardonnay 2020

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). Sadly there's very little of this pocket battleship of a Chardonnay. It packs such a powerful punch for a wine of its standing; super long, fresh green citrus and lemon, melon and orange zest. All guns are firing in 2020! 2023 to 2027

Meursault 2020

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 3 parcels of Meix Chavaux, Tillets and le Pre de Manche (which is up by the camp site!). I tasted these components separately so difficult to give a note on the final blend. Tillets is high up and shows the cool peach skin fruits and the force of a Charmes. Pre de Manche has slightly richer soil and so more tropical notes. Meix Chavaux lies across the valley from Pre de Manche and is a bit of a sun trap. This will give extra ripeness and honey note to the finished Meursault. 2024 to 2029



Meursault 1er Cru Poruzots 2020

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 Genevrieries 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 and is 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 Genevrieries 2020

SOLD

Toasty mineral on one side; a burst of lime, lemon, nectarine freshness on the other. More lifted 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 2020

£99.00

Another juicy blockbuster with a tinned cherry and black forest gateau all wrapped up in a crunchy, grape skin acidity and freshness. Excellent again. 2022 to 2025

Monthelie les Toisieres 2020

£195.00

A new wine to the range that is so soft, ripe and easy on the eye. It is reasonably punchy but the overriding sensation is one of being sucked in by that siren that is Pinot Noir at its most lush. 2023 to 2027

Volnay 1er Cru les Santenots 2020

£350.00

Grapes are de-stemmed and left to begin fermentation as whole berries. This is followed by normal delestage. (Delestage is a two-step rack and return procedure in which fermenting juice is separated from solids by racking. It is then returned to the fermenting vat to re-soak the solids). 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 cool and intense red cherry and currant flavours but with lush tones and hints of stone fruit. There's even a bit of caramel to the finish, another trait of great white Burgundy. 2024 to 2031

Domaine Philippe Chavy, Puligny Montrachet

Philippe is a bundle of energy and enthusiasm! You don't need to talk to him for long to realise that he genuinely loves the vineyards he so carefully nurtures. In fact he loves them so much he lives and breathes them. In recent years he has reverted to more and more manual operations: ploughing the land to keep the weeds down, managing the vines rather than spraying and even bottling by hand. The vineyards have been certified as biodynamic since 2010. He has risen to the top echelons of Burgundy production by virtue of such diligence, and following some outrageously high scores for his 1er Crus. Expressive, energetic, exacting and exquisite.

Bourgogne Aligote 2020

£60.00

Two parcels of vines to the south of the village produce a more classic, nervy and pure Aligote. There's a light note of lime marmalade and a lively zing on the finish. Good pick-me-up this! 2022 to 2024

Meursault les Narvaux 2020

£175.00

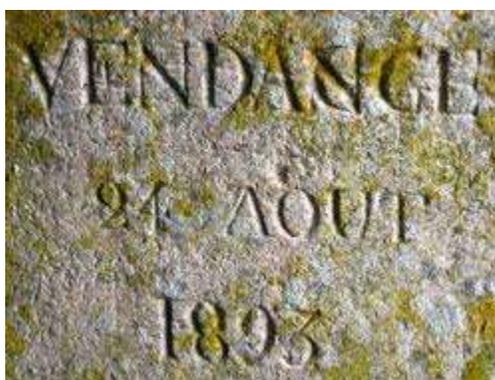
There is a short series of smaller appellations chez Chavy. This is where I found the fun really started! Wonderful purity with a rocky minerality, an impressive weight of sherbet and citrus fruit and a very fine structure of lively acidity. Smart white Burgundy with good potential to gain breadth and more weight in the medium term. 2024 to 2027

Puligny Montrachet Corvees les Vignes 2020**£199.00**

A selection of vines from the Meursault side of the village make a powerful yet still tense and zesty Puligny. There is honeysuckle, white flower and peach with a touch of caramel and vanilla cream on the finish. Philippe's mother was from a Meursault family and this gives a flavour of both villages in one bottle! 2025 to 2029

Puligny Montrachet Rue Rousseau 2020**£225.00**

As you drive south on the Route des Grands Cru you see Bienvenue Batard Montrachet on your right. Look over to your left and there is a low wall. Behind that are the vines of Rue Rousseau. This is just stunning. Creamy, rounded, superbly complex and it has such a strong, natural and energetic feel. It will take a bit of ageing and I wasn't allowed to have very much but I'm going to keep asking. Outstanding!! 2026 to 2031



In Philippe's Puligny vineyards; perhaps the globe was warm a century ago!

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru Folatieres 2020**£345.00**

Classic Chavy; nervy, zesty, full of beans, edgy, honest, natural and yet still nicely rounded. At time of tasting, just prior to bottling, there was a little feel of the wood. That will dissipate to yield an exceptional Puligny. Needs time. 2027 to 2033

Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru Pucelles 2020**£395.00**

Being next to the Grands Crus, this is perhaps the most iconic 1er Cru vineyard. There's more though as Philippe's vines are right up in the south west corner at the junction of 1er Cru le Cailleret and Batard Montrachet. Again I tried this at an awkward moment but the sheer brilliance of the wine was still plain to see. Lime pith, lemon, soft nectarine, ripe melon and honeysuckle. There are so many contrasting but complimentary flavours here. Outstanding. 2028 to 2035

Domaine Leflaive, Puligny Montrachet

Sadly we haven't had a chance to try these in 2020. We have a small allocation of these and the 1er and Grand Cru wines. Please ask on those.

Bourgogne Blanc 2020	SOLD
Puligny Montrachet 2020	SOLD
Puligny Montrachet 1er Cru Clavoillon 2020	SOLD

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. The 2020s here are stunning.

Saint Aubin 'Champ Tirant' 2020 £199.00 (12)

There's a wonderfully edgy, energetic side to balance fresh peach juice and lime fruits. A concentrated core finishes with just a touch of crème caramel. Just perfect with shellfish or a simple white fish on a fresh spring day. 2022 to 2024

Saint Aubin 1er Cru Murgers des Dents de Chien 2020 £265.00 (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 2020. Many whites on exposed sites retain their mineral, oyster shell edge while offering super ripe, almost tropical fruits. It's a heady mix that will benefit from a couple of years in bottle. This is likely to one of the best dog's teeth ever! 2024 to 2027

Saint Aubin 1er Cru la Chateniere 2020 £275.00 (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. Conversely this is a little more restrained but with the richness and cream of a Chassagne. A brooding beauty that will continue to ripen in bottle for 3 or 4 years yet. 2025 to 2029

Chassagne Montrachet 1er Cru les Chenevottes 2020

£425.00 (12)

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 2020

£425.00 (12)

High up on the hillside, and virtually contiguous to the Murgers des Dents de Chien vineyard of Saint Aubin. Just as the Chassagne is a turbo charged Chateniere, the Puligny is the stronger form of the Dents de Chien. Pronounced mineral notes with more citrus and cool tangerine fruits. Power and delicacy in one glass. Very good Puligny for the money. 2025 to 2031



Domaine Quentin Jeannot, Santenay

Locals Valerie and Philippe Jeannot took to the vine a little late in life. They began farming these 11 hectares in 1997. Their son, Quentin, studied at the Davaye school in Macon. He has rapidly become well respected amongst his peers as a thoughtful and conscientious producer of expressive reds and whites in the Cotes de Beaune. Santenay is perhaps the flagship of the house with some outstanding Meursault and Pommard too. I first met Quentin in 2017 and have been stalking him ever since. Finally we have a few cases of wine to show for all our efforts!



Meursault les Narvaux 2020

£215.00

Bright golden colour with finely focussed aromas of honey, tender white flowers, nectarine skin and a hint of caramel. The palate is full yet remains gentle in character with soft citrus and peach juice notes. I enjoyed the balance here as there is plenty of acidity but, rather than standing out, it is so well integrated with the fruit characters. Quentin seems to be in tune with the sensitivities of the vine and wine making. What a future he will enjoy. 2024 to 2029

Meursault 1er Cru Poruzots 2020

£395.00

Still fresh and tightly knit, the Poruzots offers a little more depth and complexity. There's a little more of that honey note and a touch of truffle too. It's a wine of feel as well as taste. The components are in perfect harmony and seem to come and go in waves on the tongue. Exquisite. 2025 to 2032

Santenay Rouge Vieilles Vignes 2020

£105.00

This is where the family seat is and is perhaps the flagship of the range. It is certainly good enough to be. Strong and sinewy, yet still fine and elegant, tannins are ripe, silky and precisely tuned. I love the ever so slightly unripe note to the Pinot that allows for development in bottle. I tried the 2018 again and wow, that is something spectacular now. A new one that must be tried. 2023 to 2028

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 2020

£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. Wonderfully dense and expressive with a sweet blob of ripe strawberry fruit at the core. The tannins are ever more silky. One of the attractions to me is the way the complexity of wild herb and truffle appear as the wine lingers on the palate. It gives the feeling that this great red will develop so much more complexity as time goes by. Worth a detour from the A6 but, be warned, the locals do love their offal! 2024 to 2032

Domaine Faiveley, Mercurey

The Faiveley family has dominated this wonderful appellation since 1933 when they took whole ownership of the impressive vineyard of 'la Framboisiere'. The wines are juicy, approachable and very popular on the fine dining circuit. Wines are vinified in a bespoke cuverie that is named after this unique parcel of vines. Clos Rochette is another Monopole. It is contiguous with Framboisiere but a little higher, facing more to the east and with more compact, limestone that is more suited to Chardonnay. A very fine pair

Mercurey Clos Rochette Monopole 2020

£120.00

There was an element of selective harvesting here to ensure levels of acidity could match the intense tropical fruits of this impressive Chardonnay. Only half the must is fermented in French oak, of which 25% is new. So the style is intense but tempered by a vibrant, piquant note that lifts up the depth of flavour and encourages the wine to benefit from a year or 3 of bottle age. 2022 to 2025

Mercurey Framboisiere Monopole 2020

£135.00

In warmer years a larger portion of the juice is allowed to ferment before de-stemming or crushing. So a measured extraction in the sealed environment that the whole grape provides results in a slightly reductive wine that is ready to explode in the palate with classic, sweet Pinot overtones in a couple of years time. Mouth-watering stuff. 2023 to 2027



Please call 020 7589 6113 for more advice, or e-mail james@handford.net or greg@handford.net

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