



MEET
30
YOUNG
STARS

BEAUJOLAIS
(has) a
FUTURE
...

LIMITED EDITION
SPRING 2012

ALL! ABOARD!

MEET
30
YOUNG
STARS



AGED between 25 and 35, these young wine-makers have only been established for a few years and yet they have undeniably affirmed themselves as 'very promising' young buds. Whatever their background they share a common, dynamic, refreshing enthusiasm. They look to the future, their hopes resting on the 'terroir' of Beaujolais they painstakingly preserve in order to produce the finest wines. All of them are conscious of the true potential of this region. In their work they perpetually seek optimal quality and do not hesitate, at times, to question methods laid down by former generations. Free, willing and certainly passionate they each have a distinct and magnetic personality. Through their work they give a fore taste of what Beaujolais will be like in years to come.

The following are 30 portraits of Beaujolais' young wine-makers. This list, though not of course exhaustive, already gives a good look at the diversity and richness of Beaujolais' future. Meet them in these pages, you will discover an eclectic array of people, a wealth of knowledge and above all some wonderful 'one hundred percent' Beaujolais projects.



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JULIE BALAGNY

A very natural girl



3.5 ha. in Fleurie

70 % old vines From 50 to 90 years old

Yields of 29 hl/ha

Label 'Nature & Progrès'

Hallmark: Only producer of 'En Rémont'

HER friends call her a 'graftor' and that's an understatement. For it takes guts to set up in the middle of a wine crisis. 'A happy life is a discreet life' might be her motto. This slight young lady with bubbling energy chose the higher ground of Poncié, on the steep slopes of Fleurie, as her retreat. Julie is happy to have embraced the land of Beaujolais from where she often takes a tender glance at the Alps and 'her' Mont Blanc. Her blue eyed gaze shines with sincerity when she speaks of her adopted region. She assumes the fact that she is a woman wine maker.

The first twenty years of her life were in Paris. But the countryside beckoned. Strongly. Although, after a preparatory year, she wanted to work in the field of psychomotor studies, she ultimately attained an under graduate degree in viticulture and wine making whilst working on a large estate in the Pyrénées-Orientales that worked with all forms of chemicals. Right next door was a small organic farm where she tasted... a tomato. This was the 'click' that made her want to be 'organic'. She started 'organics' in 2004 on an estate in Costières de Nîmes where she learned in the vine and cellar as well as on the business side. After eleven years spent in the south of France, she sought vines in Beaujolais or the Jura for 'tasting affinity' as she puts it. At a tasting she organised in Nîmes, she met Yvon Métras, a winemaker from Fleurie. She told him she was looking for vines. Some time after, he called her and asked her if she was interested in taking over three hectares of working forest along with 3.2 hectares of Fleurie. This was a new beginning, right from scratch with no loans.

From this vineyard came 12,000 bottles with an average yield of 29 hl/ha. This 'mini-estate' is made up of 70% of old vines between the ages of 50 and 90 years. She sells 90% on the export market: Japan, Australia, Québec and the United States which is unusual for Beaujolais. And all that without even setting foot there. She sells to the European market as well. 'The other 10% are for personal consumption', she says cheekily, and a little bit for the French clients, of course. As she says, 'Organics are like a daily ointment. It is care given to the vines and subsequently to the wine. I am not religious but I respect each persons beliefs. She already has the label 'Nature et Progrès' and will have Organic Certification in 2012, but she doesn't expect to use the certification as she believes this is her business, and she is answerable to herself alone. 'I work with whole clusters using traditional Beaujolais maceration though in a cold soak' she clarifies. The vats

and famous wooden ratchet press are ten minutes from the house. At each press the older growers of the region come and taste this elixir whilst reminiscing on a life measured by the rhythm of the vine. In 2009, the year she began, her vines were damaged at 60% by hail. She understood that nature was beckoning her to other paths. Her first vintage was made with the vines untouched by the hail. In 2010, with 25 hectolitres, she is finally able to make two batches between her young and very old vines. She is also the only one producing a 'En Rémont' wine in Fleurie. 'For me wine was the Mass when I asked my father, "What is the man drinking?" Her childhood meals come to mind when she evokes the Sunday bottle that superseded the food and all dinner preparations. Now she is the one who prepares. 'This evening my 'German' is coming' she says impishly. At Julie's there is no television but always someone dropping in. 'If I have children they will do as they wish. Wine is my passion. Not everyone's. But I wouldn't like them to do something if they weren't passionate.' Fair warning...her dream would be to set up a young grower in turn using her material. Did I hear 'graftor'?

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ALEXANDRE BLANCHARD

Roots and Wings

3.6 ha. in Chénas, Saint-Amour, Beaujolais-Villages Blanc

Tilling and grassing over

Hallmark: Scoffs at the authorized yields

GENEROUS. With his good-natured air (square rimmed glasses as well), Alexandre, 34 Springs behind him, exudes the art of sharing over a bottle. Everything wine does for him, he takes and gives back. For his wines, his life philosophy is ‘the principle of enhancement continues’. In 2002 he became associated with a Beaujolais vineyard but a differing vision caused him to leave two years later.

Working in the sales and marketing of wine transportation he went back to his studies in 2006 and completely changed his professional path. After completing a Masters in Systems Quality Management he became ‘responsible for quality, hygiene, security and environment’ in pharmaceutical research. Although his career itinerary was nothing out of the ordinary he knew deep down that he would one day return to wine. It is in his genes. Also his father and grand-father before him had always worked parallel jobs (up until 1985 his grand parents had a herd of dairy cows, his father was a history teacher)

He left his new career to turn heart and soul to the grand family adventure of wine. Before him, his father had wisely bought fine vineyards with non yielding, twisted vines (in 1976, he settled in Chénas and Beaujolais-Villages where he took his harvest to the Cooperative at Chénas then he collaborated with Domaine des Ducs with harvest from 17 hectares of which 11 he owned). In 2005, everything turned about face. Alexandre cleaned up the business, ripped up the vines while maintaining the planting rights in order to keep the option of replanting. Which is what he did in 2009, with 1.14 ha. of Beaujolais-Villages and then in 2012 planting 70 ares in Chénas. His long term plan is to plant another 7 hectares bringing the total area in vines to 12 or 13 hectares from different ‘crus’. ‘You have to believe in what you do and give yourself the means to do it’ he explains. Today Alexandre works 3,6 hectares of Chénas, Saint-Amour and Beaujolais-Villages Blanc rounding off with a Beaujolais rosé depending on the years. Meeting other Burgundy wine makers has given him plenty of food for thought. He does not care to respect authorized yields, he favors the development

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Today, you have to
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trade.
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of his work. Always keen to do the best, he adapts his wine making to each ‘terroir’, going from de-stemming for one to whole cluster for another, playing on the soaking times, the punching downs. Never ‘both feet in the same shoe’ his rural common sense couple with his innate business sense.

He has done a lot of horse-riding and is impassioned by horses. He defines himself as a ‘late-learner’. ‘It took me quite a while to decide to pursue the family wine line’. He did various other things without realizing one day he would take over the vines. ‘Today, you have to be professional; amateurism no longer has it’s place in the wine trade’. So he educates himself. Training sessions in Chablis and Châteauneuf-du-Pape enable him to understand the extensive differences between varieties, soils and aging techniques. A month in the Palatinate (West Germany) taught him to respect nature through the art of soil care and grassing over. In homage to his grand mother who founded the vineyard he created the ‘Cuvée Marie-Louise’. Old vines, maturity, recent but not new barrels. Alexandre only produces it in deserving years. A look to the future as ever. ‘When I have children, I won’t push them to be viticulturalists, I’ll accompany them, and if they want to be a butcher or a journalist, I will be happy with their choice.’ Mathilde, his wife he met during harvest, is, as it happens, a journalist. As a sign of the times, with each preserving reciprocal professional liberty, they do not live on the vineyard but 45 minutes from the cellars. He dedicates a lot of time to the development of Beaujolais undertaking internal communication; his good nature in the service of others. He secretly dreams of a group of young Beaujolais producers. Did I hear generous?

FABIEN & CLAIRE CHASSELAY

Angels



Organic certification in 2006

11 hectares in Fleurie, Morgon, Chénas, and Côte de Brouilly

No thermovinification, sulphur or yeast

Hallmark: The Family lives on the vineyard in Éparciaux since 1418

“
Wine culture is about
eating with it. So we
opened a guest house
and communal table.
”

WITH his back row build, his unkempt hair, his side-burns (like his father) and his pierced eye brow one could easily picture him with a hod on his back. It needs to be said that with all of 28 Springs behind him, this fellow stands out with his tonic speech and his natural good humour. Claire, his younger sister by two years, slender silhouette with a gentle visage, concentrates on the business side, leaving all technical decisions to her brother and father. She recognizes in her brother, ‘technical prowess veering on perfectionism’ He appreciates the good nature of his sister. They have been working together since 2008, never wishing to make wine but their parents infused their passion despite the children’s reticence. ‘Our father imagined he could rely on us to do the work and ultimately we have him doing even more!’ they say in harmony. Indeed, what harmony between Fabien, Claire and their parents! Fabien is ‘cash’ in his vision of wine: ‘The wines I don’t like I will not bottle’. Another anecdote: once he was in a fancy restaurant and left all in the hands of the sommelier saying he knew nothing about wine...

‘Wine culture is about eating with it’ exclaims Fabien ‘That is why in 2007 we opened up a guest house with Claire in the kitchen making the meals. We combine hospitality and food. In 1981 their parents were the first to open their doors to the public when the Beaujolais Nouveau arrived. In 1990 the family began to wine and dine their clients to demonstrate the festive qualities of the newly made wine. ‘During meals our clients were far more concentrated and suffered less from palate fatigue. It’s a lot of fun even if it is more tiring than the harvest!’ Wine culture flows in the Chasselay blood. Since 1418,

a land act in the Lyon Archives records the family living on the vineyard in Éparciaux where they live to this day. Fabien began his training in Macon-Davayé: various agricultural studies in viticulture and enology. He returned to Beaujolais to take his under graduate degree at Bel Air whilst alternating work at the family domain and an estate in Vosne-Romanée. It was a true apprenticeship. ‘Burgundy impressed me through its notion of ‘terroir’ connected to soil profiles.’ He also understands the particularity of Burgundy de-stemming techniques that his father never used and that he now applies at different degrees for different batches. ‘If the terroir is rich I de-stem more to avoid those green flavours’ He knows colour is not a priority in making persistent wines. He barrels wines in differing sizes behind the press and racks them just before bottling.

‘Before making organic wines, we already grassed over our vines, didn’t use yeasts or sulphur during vinification and we certainly didn’t use thermovinification. From vintage to vintage, all is noted: sun hours, harvests, wine making, rainfall.’ Actually Fabien believes that in Châtillon they have a lot less rain than their neighbouring communes. Always the last to harvest and prune, they assume totally, as all is connected to the lunar cycle and their organic methods (organic certification in 2006). Of the 11.5 hectares, half belong to the family, the rest are rented and organic grapes are bought for their ‘crus’ in Fleurie, Morgon, Chénas. Their Côte de Brouilly is in the process of transition. Another anomaly in this part of Beaujolais is that 95% of their harvest is bottled (an average of 75,000 bottles). A great pride they share along with their love of the area.

‘Beaujolais, is the beauty of the region’, says Claire. ‘We have a unique architectural diversity and countryside formed by extraordinary climatic conditions’, adds her brother. Both are parents and would secretly like their children to take over. However they will not force anything; all should be natural and spontaneous as it was for them. Fabien and Claire are not a couple but work as one. With pleasure being the driving force.



NICOLAS CHEMARIN

A wine maker following the moon

6.5 ha. in Beaujolais, Beaujolais Villages, Régnié and Morgon

20 to 25 day maceration for the 'Crus'

Hallmark: Beaujolais Villages at an altitude of 450m

ALTHOUGH Nicolas' visage portrays the 27 Spring times of his life, he talks like an old veteran with numerous vintages beneath his belt. Nick-named 'P'tit Grosbis' (Little Cutie) by his friends, he created a Beaujolais wine with a blazing red label. And that's the man, himself. A dose of originality and cheekiness set upon the plinth of the appellations. Born the night before a Beaujolais Nouveau, his love of Gamay was already in his baby bottle. This little fellow is a ball of energy, advancing at his own rhythm, but quicker than the others. Confirmed by his love of motor bikes that he races in competition. Gwendoline, his partner, loves his helpful side, always there for others. 'My great grand parents were already working this domain, in mixed farming, and my grand father bought it with the vines.' Always lilting the local accent. His father was the first Chemarin to work exclusively in viticulture. His roots are in Marchamp. With his parents, he makes up for half of the hamlet's population, not including the owls. After initial agrarian studies he opts for an undergraduate degree in the Mâconnais, as he wants to see other forms of wine making and not just reds. After this conclusive experience the return to the hill of Marchamp is imminent. He begins with 2 hectares in Beaujolais Villages, and taking his time to do everything right, he makes wine for a local merchant over the course of a year and a half. In November 2005, whilst searching for wines that would embellish his father's range he finds vines to work in Régnié in the magnificent sector of Haute Ronze. And then in 2006 he brings out his own signature wines standing apart, commercially, from his neighbours. In 2008, he adds 30 ares of Morgon 'Les Charmes' preferring acquisition to renting. At only 23, a courageous move. His father works under the name of Domaine des Villiers; Nicolas chooses to create his own label. He farms 6.5 hectares spread out between Beaujolais and Beaujolais Villages but also two distinctive 'crus' from Régnié et Morgon. He would like to work organically (as he experienced during his studies) but the slope, or moreso the tilling of the soil, prevents him. He does however follow the moon, 'A rural habit'. And he adds whilst cutting a piece of local dry sausage, 'Plants, as humans, are sensitive to the cycle of the moon.' With southern exposure, his Beaujolais Villages certainly soak up the sun, but at 450 metres high they are the last Gamay to be harvested.

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Plants, as humans,
are sensitive to the
cycle of the moon.
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Adept to two different styles of vinification he still sells 65% of his harvest to a local merchant that he thermovinifies 'against his will for his banker'. That which he bottles himself he makes traditionally, totally de-stemmed, or not, depending on the batches. Thus the Morgon is and the Régnié is not. Cement vats receive 30% of the 'crus', the other 70% go into barrels that have seen from 4 to 10 wines to just give a hint of oxygenation in the aging process, and no overwhelming oak. During long maceration for his 'crus', from 20 to 25 days, he punches down his caps and controls his temperatures. He had fun with the powerful 2009 vintage on a batch of Régnié, 'Haute Ronze' which underwent 22 months of aging in oak. And, as if joking with his youth, he named it 'L'âge mûr' (Adulthood). Today the low yields of 2010 has limited his production to 5,000 small bottles. A free run Rosé, a pink label and a frosted bottle adds colour to the table. 'Le Rocher' is an untypical plot of Beaujolais Villages vinified without sulphur in barrels but not withstanding strenuous work due to the gradient of the slope.

'There are few varieties that have as many facets as Gamay', enthuses Nicolas. 'We can create little red fruits as much as wines for cellaring!'. The proof is in the glass. The bottle, it, acclaims modernity without complex, where the owners name upon a visually attractive support competes with the notoriety of the appellation. On his labels, the latter appears in sub-titles as a proof of quality. Having recuperated a part of his father's clientele he cannot raise his prices as he would like to. He counterbalances this with wines such as 'L'âge mûr' from Régnié which enables him to cross the 10 euro mark.

A guest house should see the light of day in the Spring of 2012 to occupy the house and increase cellar sales. But it is the birth of his first child which makes him believe in the future of his trade. 'If he wants to take over, I will help him as my father did me.' As he loves regional products, chickens and the vegetable patch are part of his daily bread. The combination of dry sausage and Beaujolais are going to make many of his friends and family very happy as soon he will be slaughtering his pig! Did I hear he was always willing to help?



RAPHAËL CHOPIN

Small but strapping!

4.8 ha. in Régnié, Morgon and Beaujolais-Villages

Reasoned Viticulture

Working the soils and sorting the harvest

Hallmark: plays around with hot and cold during thermovinification

“
Trust is won and
not just because of
an appellation or a
name.
”

PUGNACIOUS. There's a trait of character rare in those of his age. At 27 years old this 'kid' as he is called locally 'doesn't give up'. And to quote the writer Bernard Weber, who he reads faithfully: 'It isn't because it is impossible that one shouldn't do it, it is because one doesn't do it that it is impossible'. The 'kid' is born on the 21st November; Beaujolais Nouveau. Suffice to say that wine was already in the cradle. Although coming from a local family who had been living there since the twentieth century, his parents did not make wine, but his grand father did. His mother 'encouraged' him, she who had not been able to be a wine-maker but worked in banking. His grand mother was overjoyed to see someone reviving the trade and above all taking over the cellar of her deceased husband. Even though he works a 'pocket-size' vineyard he expresses himself through three appellations Régnié, Morgon and Beaujolais Villages divided in equal plots over 4.8 hectares. He produces a volume of 11,000 bottles with barely 15% actually in bottles and the rest sold as bulk to local merchants. The story is that his departure to study and an administrative error in his application to set up his own business enabled him to begin in 2009 whereas initially he was destined to work the wet and difficult 2008 vintage...

As with many of his generation, experience overseas opened his eyes to an international trade and the wines of the world. Like Julien Clerc he dreamed of 'La Californie' but that coincided with harvest in Beaujolais. So it was in a 'small' Australian estate of 60 hectares.... He recalls 'an incredible experience'. He discovered ways to

make wine totally different to those of his region with a mastering of temperature control both with hot and cold. And although he could easily have made a good living as a wine maker 'down-under' his vines and a yearning for his native Beaujolais soon had him returning to France. Although he applies reasoned viticultural methods he admits being unready to make the transition to organic growing as he feels there are too many constraints for the moment. However, tilling the soil and sorting the harvest are, for him, two basic elements of quality. While working his wines, after pressing, three weeks at cool temperatures he extracts an elegant fruitiness to his rosé. And he moderately applies the same technique on his Beaujolais. 'I play around with both hot and cold temperatures during my thermovinifications. But I adapt these techniques to each batch. A wine is a virgin canvas where I paint my picture or compose my music. When I make wine I am elsewhere' Nothing surprising when one is called Raphaël... and Chopin!

Raphaël loves the trade he has chosen but states he would not break his back for it if he didn't enjoy his work, as he does today. Although he now sells his wine to several local restaurants it is mostly at wine fairs that he meets his clients. Many buy three or six bottles and then call him back to buy 24. 'Business has changed and you need to be available' So, his cellar remains open outside of the traditional 'open-days' from June until December. According to Raphaël, 'Trust is won and not just because of an appellation or a name'. Did I hear pugnacious?

LOUIS-CLÉMENT DAVID-BEAUPÈRE

Three first names; one appellation

4.12 ha. in Julié纳斯

40-45 hl/ha

Began Organic conversion in 2011

Hallmark: Hopes to acquire other reputable climates in the appellation



His mother describes his principal quality as being 'able to adapt to anyone'. He has effectively been able to adapt to his new trade as a wine-maker, coming from a French family living in Algeria (Pieds Noirs), farmers of both cereal and vines. His grand father bought the domain on returning to France, after independence. Louis-Clément is the first David to uniquely work the vineyard. Ten years of further studies with two engineering degrees under his belt in commerce and agriculture, he wanted to start out on his own. He remembers his first vintage of 2008 as it began with a devastating hail storm that even cut through the trellising wires. No Worries! He sorts and makes his first wines. Yields fall, Downy Mildew ruins the rest of the harvest. Despite all that, when the tenant farmer leaves, he grabs the opportunity to take over the family vineyard. Today he works alone on the 4.12 hectares but from time to time employs seasonal workers. This doesn't take away the pleasure of pruning the vines with his mother. In his hamlet of La Bottière, the imposing house is surrounded by vines, those of his beloved 'cru'. This young man has Julié纳斯 in the blood. Not content with owning wonderful plots he seeks out other reputable climates in the appellation (He dreams of Les Mouilles, Les Capitans or Les Chers). As for digging deeper, Chardonnay arrives soon after as the idea has been mulling for some time in his mind. Meanwhile he deals with the corollary difficulties in taking over an old estate. 'I have economically fee-

ble yields because my vineyards are made up of old vines' An extensive replanting project awaits him. Forty to forty five hectolitres per hectare would suit him fine but he is not there yet... The transition, in 2001, to organic farming also contributes to the lower yields. The aging process goes from oak barrels for certain wines to cement vats for others which gives fruitiness. The future is his present. Just like a chess player, he is always thinking one step ahead. 'When you have a birthright, you want it to survive'. And so, yes, if he has a child he will help him or her to subsequently take over.

On the business side, 60% of his wines are sold, at present, in bulk, and he has given himself four more years before all is sold in bottles. His tasting cellar is a mixture of modern and traditional styles and can accommodate fifty people. Numerous press articles placed here and there confirm his quality and that he is on the right track. Professional recognition and that of his pairs reassures him, thinking sometimes that perhaps he made the wrong choice. Certain wines such as the grand 'Saint Antoine' are appreciated by the independent merchants. He hopes to create markets in the USA where he believes they have a culture of 'terroir'. He knows this as he spent two months in New York and Washington in 2000. But then, if you had said he would be one day working in wine he would have replied, 'Certainly not!'. Did I hear someone say he could adapt?

“
When you have a
birthright, you
want it to survive.
”



XAVIER ET KERRIE DE BOISSIEU

A divine couple

11.47 ha. of which 75 % are in Beaujolais

Organic Certification in 2010

Plough their vines

Hallmark: 3 nationalities under the same roof

“
I don't mind killing
the weeds but I'll
do it by ploughing
between the rows.
”

DETERMINED. Kerrie, his wife, finds this quality in Xavier de Boissieu. He loves her intelligence and curiosity. Dominating the invisible frontier between Beaujolais and the Mâconnais, the stone of a 17th century castle illuminates the rocky hillock of La Vernette, where the granite foot hills of the Beaujolais blend with the clay and calcareous soils of the Mâconnais. This is the place where the de Boissieu family live and work. It is 2003 and Xavier, who is working the vintage in Napa Valley, meets his future wife who is none other than the person overseeing his work experience, a young American enologist. Kerrie falls in love with this tall, fair haired and beautiful blue eyed gentleman and then she falls in love with the two wine regions where he lives. She encounters Beaujolais through its 'crus' and loves their personality. It is during a romantic dinner with her future husband that she discovers this taste 'from afar'.

They get married, and as if by destiny, Basile is born in 2007, on the day they harvest the plot of vines they bought to consolidate their settling on the domain. It was the night before 'LA Revoule', a traditional feast to celebrate the end of the harvest. It is an understatement to say that their son, as soon as he was born, fell into a tub of grapes! Little Zoé appeared in 2009. Even though Kerrie and Xavier would love their children to continue in their footsteps, they will do as they wish in later life. Xavier is all hands-on and Kerrie helps make the important decisions. In 2005, she convinced Xavier to convert a third of the domain (Beaujolais Blanc et Pouilly-Fuissé) to Biodynamics. The certification of all the plots was completed in 2010, but in their eyes the label was not the main aim. When, in 2004, his father asked him to spray the first her-

bicides, Xavier replied, 'I don't mind killing the weeds but I'll do it by ploughing between the rows'. His father, at that precise moment, was over-joyed that his son had made a decision that he had never been able to make.

His taste for wine leads him through the halls of pleasure. According to Xavier, 'if you like old wines, lay them down, otherwise wines are made to be drunk. If you like them now, well, don't wait to drink them. If you wait too long you might be disappointed.'

Xavier continues his parents work of increasing bottle sales, particularly on the export market. Little by little all the domain's wines are being sold by the bottle. Two thousand and twelve was a very generous year despite a reticence to attain the authorized yields. The youngest Gamay vines are thirty five years old and the oldest are about sixty. Actually, with an average of 50,000 bottles from nearly 12 hectares the authorized yields are rarely met, which is not a problem for them. On the business side, the major sales (60%) are abroad, in particular Belgium (Xavier's mother is from Batavia) and evidently the USA. Thus Xavier has duplicated the family pattern of mixed marriages, as he has succeeded in marrying Beaujolais with Burgundy. Today, the domain's 11.47 hectares are divided between white and red Beaujolais (75%) and Pouilly-Fuissé on the other side of the hill at Chaintré. In 2012 they will be planting 37 ares of red Beaujolais Villages rouges at Leynes, proof of their belief in Beaujolais. Did I hear determined?

ARNAUD DESPRÈS



Well cared for wines

18 ha. in Fleurie

The average age of the vines is 45 years old

The longest aging at the Domaine du Niagara

80% of overseas sales

Hallmark: wants to develop direct sales from wine tourism.

It's -5°C outside, a light frost has whitened the trees and vines giving them an otherworldly appearance. The statue of 'La Madone' adorning the chapel has her feet in the mist. We are in the warmth of the cellar with a glass full of the juices from the hillside we look out upon. 'Shy', says his mother referring to him, 'but opens up with his clients.' 'You can't imagine how much I identify with Beaujolais. As for the wine, I feel more Burgundian as we make Beaujolais for laying down just like our neighbours.' This is how Arnaud presents his work. It is important to note that his wines, as those of his ancestors, improve with time spent in the bottle.

His two grand and great grand fathers already worked the vines of La Madone and he feels lifted by this family heritage, and does not see his life anywhere else. He who has played trumpet since the age of fifteen with the local orchestra 'Harmonie de Fleurie' knows what it is to be reknowned. The family estate, situated near to the Chapel of La Madone, overlooks the village and is a reference for the Fleurie 'cru'. He did try to sell other 'crus' but none of his clients would have believed him. Such is the influence of six generations of wine-makers on both his father's and mother's side. And the love of Fleurie as a birthright.

His schooling was straight forward but he did two undergraduate degrees; one in viticulture and wine-making and the other in the business of wine and spirits. After work experience in Bergerac where he practiced organic farming, he returned home, wondering how he could apply such techniques to his own 18 hectares and his father's vineyard (Domaine de La Madone) but it was too difficult to do everything by hand. Ah...to be a Desprès and uniquely toil on hillside vines... 'I am often on my knees before 'La Madone' but it isn't to pray', he says with a slight smirk emerging. He de-stems the harvest on his domain whereas his father never does. For him, a 12 to 14 day maceration makes de-stemming obligatory to smooth the texture. In the end, the de-stemmed grapes are blended with the whole clusters. In years such as 2009, when maturity was almost perfect, the grapes were gathered as whole clusters. The ageing is longer at his Domaine du Niagara, 18 months in concrete vats as a pose to 10 for La Madone. 'When I finished my work experience my cousin stopped working on the family domain and I took over the 6 hectares with 2005 being my first vintage.' A terrible Spring hail storm reduced the yield to 15 hectolitres/hectare.

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Which hasn't changed his motivation. On the business side, three hectares of La Madone go to the Fleurie Co-operative, the remaining fifteen are fermented in the cellar with certain vintages going to local merchants. Eighty percent of sales are in the export market, for the most part Great Britain but also China and Russia. The remaining 80,000 bottles are sold on the property in a stone and wood cellar.

Today, he only works in Fleurie with his parents. They have left the vines of Beaujolais Villages 'Grille midi' and 'Madone' the heavier soils of the domain lay claim to their differences from their specific climates. According to Arnaud, the first is, 'fleshy, dense and 'aromatic' as it ages', and the second is 'finer. Ethereal. It portrays the appellation'. The vines are between five and one hundred and twenty years old (these latter vines benefit from a separate bottling since 2009) and thus there is the whole life span of a Gamay vine. The majority are 80 years old with the average being 45. 'The old vines are the genetic heritage of the domain', he stresses.

And when a child is born. 'I will do as my parents did, I will show him or her my trade with no obligation to follow this path.' But for the moment his projects are elsewhere. He wants to develop wine tourism. This shouldn't be too hard as visiting the family vines has become a tradition. As has the much practiced tasting sheltered from the outdoors behind the cellar bar. Did I hear timid?

LOUIS-BENOÎT & CLAUDE-EMMANUELLE DESVIGNES

Soul Brothers



10.2 ha. in Morgon including the celebrated 'Côte du Py' and 'Javernière'.

Bottle sales exclusively

2007: Stopped using herbicides

Hallmark: would like to create a group of young wine-makers with a 'Quality Club' as their father did in his time.

As you walk through the majestic arch that has given the road its name, you take a step back in time three centuries. The scenery is straight from a film, the only difference being the lorry has replaced the horse. The place exudes a certain sense of perfection both within and without the walls. Louis-Claude, the father, is there, seated beside his children. He acknowledges the tradition of calling the first-born Claude. Claude-Emmanuelle, 35, and his 'little brother' Louis-Benoît, 31, work as partners.

She loves her brother's listening ability and his patience. He calls her affectionately 'Manu', appreciating her drive and cutting edge. She admits to always having loved the vine resulting in further studies in wine and spirits, each time studying in another region. At barely 17 she forged her independence visiting other wine regions and entertaining differing view points. She studied Merlot and Cabernet in the Medoc. With the help of her father's New York importer she worked on Long Island on the 2011 vintage, leaving the USA just before the bombings. On returning she set up with her father.

'Petit Louis' was still living at home and chose to pursue studies in Industrial Creation, but with little enthusiasm. In 2004, he returned to the domain as an employee and 'learned the ropes', as he did not want to return to his studies. In 2009 he became co-partner. As his sister before him, he learned much on his travels, wherever his love of drumming would take him. 'I learned more meeting people around the world than I did in my studies,' he declares.

The two together are the eighth generation to work the 10.2 hectares that are exclusively sold in bottles. Four wines laud their only 'cru': 'Voûte Saint-Vincent' a generic, pleasurable Morgon alongside the famous 'Côte du Py' and 'Javernière'. The final wine is a blend selected from the old vines called 'Les Impénitents'. This 'flask', attired in black, was created by the children in homage to their father after a newspaper article defined Monsieur Desvignes, the father, as an 'unrepentant traditionalist'. As Jean

Cocteau said, 'What ever you are reproached of, nurture it for it is truly you.' And with a smile Louis-Benoît rubs it in by saying 'As we only work with Morgon, it's quite fun to claim to be the Morgon specialist'.

In wine-making, there are no fixed recipes, but with a good harvest we leave 40 to 100% of our grapes in whole clusters and undergo semi-carbonic maceration. We extract our wines whilst respecting each facet of the Gamay grape', says Louis-Benoît. 'We sort and de-stem when the vines have been damaged by hail; we practice 'delestage'. Since 2007 we no longer use herbicides in the vineyard'. Tilling the soil and unorthodox methods are their signature: 'We aren't looking to make a particular style; we just make the wines we love' they acclaim in unison. Their approach is very traditional but they are far from being hermits. An acquisition project with a colleague from Moulin-à-Vent, called 'Indigènes' is on the drawing board: 1.39 hecatres in a fine Chénas climate. 'This site has enormous potential' they announce collectively. They would also like to create a group of young wine-makers. In his day their father had done the same, creating the 'Quality Club' with twelve Beaujolais producers.

Between 45 and 50,000 bottles are sold annually with a third sold on the export market (EU, England, Canada with an established Anglo Saxon clientele) and the rest in their tasting cellars on the property. With no less than 2,500 private clients, of which 10% are independent wine-merchants, they open by appointment (except Sundays) and enjoy welcoming their customers whilst sharing a glass of Morgon. Did I hear someone say attentive?

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make a particular
style; we just make
the wines we love
”

ANNE-SOPHIE DUBOIS

Her corner of paradise

2.5 ha in Fleurie

100% vinification with whole clusters

10 % of sales on the export market

Hallmark: wants to plant 20 ares of the hybrid variety Gamaret on a Fleurie hillside



BORN under the sign of Pisces, at 29 years old she believes in the influence of each Zodiac sign. As a true Pisces she is a great listener not only to others but also to the environment. This is why she knows she prefers working outside to sitting behind a desk. In her house situated like a precious stone in the hollow of a valley of vines, the young, brown haired lady is serene. Of calm disposition, she watches the world with a keen eye and the Mona Lisa's smile. That said, she admits being 'strict' in her work. David shares her life and works in wine sales. He loves her honesty. And if he had to compare her to an object? 'It would be a plumb-line'. It's true there is a certain rigour when it comes to wine but no rigidity.

When she says she is a native of Épernay with parents who have a property in Champagne she is often asked if she has been disinherited! In Fleurie, there is much to be done. Reviving the vines, bottle sales, making wine with no reference; in short, everything that would have thrown a local lad she has taken on board heart and soul. As Mark Twain wrote, 'she knew it was impossible, so she did it...'. As a child she was seduced by nature and she knew she would work in the vines. She undertook studies in Champagne. Then further studies with hands on experience in Burgundy. Here, however, she liked the grower but not his methods. She gained essential knowledge on the philosophy of tilling soils and wine: 'Reach for the sky when it comes to the product you are working on'. She completed her studies with an undergraduate degree in sales and marketing undergoing work experience in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Here she realized that in the larger domains production and sales go hand in hand. 'They didn't seem to understand that you make wine before selling it and therefore before anything you need to look after the vines.' She believes she is not good at sales and that the heart of her trade lies in production. She leaves

all the bottle sales to a team of sales people with 10% going to the export market and the vast majority remaining in France (principally in Paris). At only 24 years old, with the departure of the tenant farmer, she took over the family property of 2.5 hectares in the delicate vintage of 2007. 'What is important is the wine sold under my name, and not the 6 hectares taken to the local cooperative.' She was hit by hail in 2008 and 2009. 'I have earnestly begun bottling as of the 2010 vintage.' She has two Fleurie to her name; one aged in traditional and 600 litre barrels (demi-muids) and another aged over a year with two thirds in vats and the remaining third in oak. The latter, baptized 'L'Alchimiste' in reference to Paulo Coelho's novel, is a more forward and easy drinking wine. She wants to continue working small plots to 'keep an eye on every-

thing'. And so, if she acquires another vineyard it will be a tiny plot and in a 'cru'. Like the 20 ares of Gamaret, this hybrid variety that she wants to plant on the slopes of Fleurie. Just to see what they might yield.

She is an adept of 100% de-stemmed vinification. 'When you buy a bunch of grapes at the market, you eat the berries, not the stalks', she says convincingly. She macerates the grapes for a long period (three weeks) in cement vats with several pumpings-over. 'Malolactic fermentation takes place in barrels but sometimes I have to be patient'. She respects her thought process to the end and filters none of her wines.

The day a child arrives, it is evident: 'He or she will do what she wants! But if it is their dream, I will help them take the reins!' And opening her heart to her adopted country: 'I love the countryside and the view I have over the vines. Compared with Champagne, where I grew up, this is paradise!'. And when it is an avid hill-walker who tells you, there seems to be much more truth in it. She doesn't see herself working with David as 'making wine is my thing, not his'. Did I hear someone say honest?

“ I love the countryside and the view I have over the vines. Compared with Champagne where I grew up, this is paradise! ”

JULIEN DUPOURT

Warms to the challenge



8.10 ha. Half in Brouilly, half in Côte de Brouilly, 30 ares in Beaujolais Villages

Double Cordon de Royat pruning

2010: Stopped using herbicides on Clos Côte de Brouilly

17 day Fermentation For the Côte and 8 to 10 For the Brouilly

Hallmark: has 'Tuppervin' weekends where he presents his wines at sales-tastings

THE house where Julien, 32, lives in Brouilly is none other than his grand-mother's which he has restored with taste. It's imposing stone grey mass sits on Mont Brouilly as a beauty spot on a slender neck. 'At Poyebade, as elsewhere in Beaujolais, the only thing missing is the sea' he says with a smile. His companion, Aurelie, an assistant chemist, sees Julien as a generous man with other's interest at heart. Gabin, his little boy of 2, three dogs and a cat with the nick-name 'Grise Motte',... he loves the company. 'As with most wine makers I would love to see my child take over the domain but I would never force him.' With the build of a rugby front row forward, his crew cut and his square jaw, this native of Forez, near Saint- Étienne, has an imposing presence. 'Although my parents were not wine makers (my father was a fire-man and my mother worked in a printers) I wanted to make wine at the age of 4, My grand-mother relates that I wanted to be a 'fire-man-wine-maker'. He completed his studies with an undergraduate degree in viticulture and enology at the local Bel Air college with hands-on experience in the Beaujolais region. His family has lived in the same wine region since 1916. He took over the estate, as the family nephew, after one of his uncles retired. He began in November 2002 with a first particularly hot vintage in 2003 and yields of 30 hectolitres per hectare. 'These wines were both complicated and easy to make.' His vineyard: nearly 100 year old vines for one part and a new plantation in 2001; the marriage of old and young. As is often the case, young proprietors begin with little property. One and a half hectares under his name and 2 hectares rented. With 8.10 hectares, half in Brouilly and half in Côte de Brouilly, he finds himself with a 'cru' for each vine. And don't forget the 30 ares in Beaujolais Villages recuperated in 2011. Although many young producers abandon this appellation, the latest vineyard is his 'little toy'. As if in personal opposition to the 'vin nouveau' (new wine) he made it as a 'primeur de garde' (a new wine for cellaring) and it is sold in bottles. A partisan of whole cluster wine making he ferments up to 17 days for his Côte and 8 to 10 days for his Brouilly. He is one of the rare wine-makers to 'roast' his 'crus' in an area where most use thermovinification. On the wines he doesn't roast, he uses 'delestage' which, he believes

" I don't make wines to be thrown into a spittoon but to be shared and drunk. "

brings 'more structure, but gently, as a pose to pumping over which extracts hard tannins'. He works his lees in a reductive state, in pure Beaujolais tradition, in three to five wine barrels. He bottles the Brouilly at Easter and the Côte de Brouilly in the summer.

'I would like my wines to imitate the style of Régis Champier with the consistency of Georges Viorner as they make great wines and truly promote their 'terroir' he confides, aside. He sells three quarters of his Brouilly and half of his Côte de Brouilly to merchants. His Beaujolais Villages and Beaujolais rosés (immediate pressing) are all bottled, averaging 10,000 bottles. He is a member of 'Vignerons Indépendants' (Independent Wine-makers) and though he doesn't participate in the wine fairs he often does 'Tuppervin' (Tupper-wine) weekends where he presents his wines for tasting and sales. 'If one is forced to be a wine-maker it will show in the finished product. When I talk about my wines my clients all say they want to drink my wines; this is paramount. I don't make wines to be thrown into a spittoon but to be shared and drunk. Let's be clear. He admits that he would sell all of his wine in bottles if he could but after ten years of experience he knows that he couldn't do without the funds provided by the merchants. The increase in bottling will obviously coincide with increasing the export market but first of all he needs to relearn English. For one must learn to work before one can run. 'For thirty years we didn't want to change our viticultural techniques' He speaks as if he always knew he would live here. And so, he has changed his pruning for the new plantations and his Gamay is now in double Cordon de Royat. 'We need to develop our wines' he states confidently. Today he is considering limiting his surface area to better develop the appellations not just with the vine but also the bottle. In 2010, in his 'Clos' vineyard in Côte de Brouilly, he chose to stop using herbicides. The result was 'quite convincing'. He believes that Organic Certification brings a form of 'sectarianism' and he wishes to remain, above all, open minded. And his final words, 'We have a real challenge in Beaujolais and I want to help, in my own way, in improving the region. Did I hear someone say he had other people's interest at heart?



CÉLINE DUTRAIVE

The glass and the dish

14 ha of which 7 are in Brouilly, 2.5 in Beaujolais, 3 in Beaujolais Villages and 1.5 in Beaujolais Villages Blanc

30,000 bottles produced

Cuvée 'Brouilly Ancestral' in good years

2000: Wine tourism with a guest house

Hallmark: has diversified her production with 25 ares of Saffron

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Everything we learn at
school only makes sense
when we put it into practice
for then it becomes
tangible.
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BLUE eyes and a heart of gold shine through a generous and welcoming expression. 'She is altruistic with a huge heart'. This is how her husband Thomas describes her. At 32 years old Celine's head is spinning with projects and Thomas tries to channel them. If the characters of Beaujolais have changed, so have the wines. 'Justin Dutraive, my grand father was a touch misogynous... but today I think he would be proud to see his grand daughter continue the family tradition' she muses. The eldest in the family (with two sisters and a brother), she took over the vineyard even though she pondered on making wine. She wanted to be a chiropodist but after school thought she would probably be better off looking after vines than people's feet. 'This is what keeps me upright. Today my feet are in my roots', she says jokingly. An undergraduate degree in viticulture and enology in Mâcon-Davayé convinced her to take up the wine trade. Hands-on experience varied from vinification in Chiroubles, the viticulture centre in Nîmes and, finally Château Thivin (in Côte de Brouilly) to complete this organoleptic package. 'Everything we learn at school only makes sense when we put it into practice for then it becomes tangible', she says analytically. Before going out on her own she worked for a year with a nearby, reputable merchant doing anything from sommelier to laboratory work. Although determined in her project she didn't follow the course that would have entitled her to government funding as a young farmer. One of her sisters followed her husband rather than take over the property with Celine. 'Today there isn't scope for more than two families and my parents are still working'.

Her husband works with her and has even become her employee. The former trainer of France's under-21 mogul skiing team brings 'a fresh look' relates Celine: 'He has radically improved our hospitality and has brought a sense of magic to Beaujolais'. It is important to know that wine-tourism began in Beaujolais when, in 2000, the Dutraive family opened a guest house on a beautiful site with a 360 degree view of the vines.

Thirty thousand bottles leave the cellar each year and 'we are increasing progressively', she adds. Of the 14 hectares, 70% goes to merchants, the rest is sold by the bottle representing four appellations, one being Brouilly. Today, Celine is exploring the export market for, at present, she only sells in the French market. This is one of her future priorities. She has diversified her production with a 25 are plantation of saffron that was originally destined to be planted with white grapes. 40,000 bulbs provide 400 grams annually. 'It is meticulous work but enables us to get in the door of the top restaurants with our Beaujolais. Saffron is my project with Tomas, as the guest house was my parents'.

Whole cluster vinification with a period in cement vats covered in an epoxy resin suits her fine. 'I aim to partially de-stem my Brouilly to begin with and subsequently, if possible, totally in order to maintain that fruity quality'. And then, the Brouilly spends 6 to 8 months in 'foudres' (large oak containers) to 1 for the Beaujolais Nouveau. In excellent years she 'creates' the 'cuvée' 'Brouilly Ancestral'. In 2003 she planted her first Chardonnay and made the wines with her father. The year was all the more 'hot' as she was learning hands-on, in her own words, as a 'commis-chef'. In 2005 she 'made her marks' on a fine vintage and it was, in turn, the father who came and asked her for advice.

She cannot see her two young daughters taking over, 'even though I would be delighted' she confides. And finally, 'A saffron tasting menu will be available during our Spring Open Day'. Coupled with her Brouilly, she also has grants free access to her saffron recipes on her website. Did I hear generous hearted?

CLAUDE-ÉDOUARD GEOFFRAY

In Praise of Patience



28 ha. In Brouilly and Côte de Brouilly

40 to 50 % hillside vines

Organic Certification in 2012

Cordon de Royat pruning and vine densities of 7,000 vines/hectare

Hallmark: the '7 vines' cuvée brings together a selection from seven different vineyards

DISCREET. A virtue inherited from his family. Discretion in the image of the château that rises above the neighbouring houses without overshadowing them. His wines make the noise. Initially, in a glass. Because here the customer must taste before buying. And then the reputation of the estate was made by word of mouth from contented followers. Claude-Édouard's aim is to make 'living wine'; a wine that reflects all he does. The wine takes its time in a world that is always rushing. It would be an error to make simple wines that can be drunk young. 'In our family tradition, we cellar our wines for longer periods and subsequently we can present wines that are ready. It is also our role to explain different vintages from youthful wines, wines that need cellaring and more complex wines'. He hides behind a smile when complimented. He relates that he enjoys spending time with his clients but time spent away is less time in the vineyard. Creating balance between vine time and business time is dear to his heart.

A story that began at the end of the 19th century with a bottling at the property, sorry, the château. With the famous visually stark label, simply dated and standing out amongst thousands, an image was born. The colourful neck-label still reads 'laughter at table' rather than the vintage year. All part of the spirit. Claude-Édouard sees the reverse label, one day, as being essential to explain the varietal, the 'terroir' and containing information such as the web site. His generation has brought other novelties to the table with vine spacing increasing to 1.80 m. enabling a more gentle mechanization (avoiding packing the soil), less pollution and reduced costs. We have stopped the gobelet vineyards at 10,000 vines/ha. in favour of Cordon de Royat at 7000 vines/ha. on trellising that will air and ventilate the grapes which is ideal for the humid years. We have made the hillside work safer as with 40 to 50% of vines on slopes we now use caterpillar tractors' His father listens to his projects (and heeds his advice); he made the wine with him in 2007. Claude-Édouard believes that having partially de-stemmed, the wines have gained in

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and richer, appellations
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”

elegance. His wife, Sonja, a wine-maker's daughter, will return to the vineyard when the children are older. 'We are trying to gradually convert to organic production', he confides. The 2012 vintage will attain certification. He continues the work of reasoned culture that his father began in 1998. 'My children play in the vineyard and if I used dangerous products they would be in the firing line'. He hopes to pass on his passion for wine to his three children (Tobias-Claude, Nicolas-Claude, Florina Lavinia Claude). Whether it be in the vineyard, the cellar or the market place there will always be a trade that suits. 'When living on the domain everything seems so easy. It is evident that the family history will continue.'

He confesses a weakness for oaky whites (planted in 2001 with the first harvest in 2004) as the barrel adds depth and persistence. Moreover, one of his plots in Brouilly was converted to white due to the clay-calcareous profile of the soil, and a new vine saw the light of day in Theizé (to the south in the Pierres Dorées) with its first vintage in 2011. He believes aging gives body, and not over ripeness. But it is surely the reds that are the 'soul' of the cellar and in particular the 'Côte de Brouilly'. Although all the harvest is bottled there is still a Paris bistro that buys two barrels of 'Côte de Brouilly' and bottles it itself. The wooden fermentation tanks arrived at the beginning of the last century and are used to prepare the wines of Côte de Brouilly. To each tank a plot. Claude-Édouard believes the wine is made, after aging, during blending. Thus the 'cuvée' of '7 vignes' (seven vineyards) gathers a selection of seven different sites giving a totally different structure to the other 'Côte' wines. As for the Brouilly they are only made in concrete tanks giving them a much fruitier body.

'Brouilly and Côte de Brouilly are recognized labels and to be part of the wine-makers who drive the appellation forward is paramount. When faced with larger, and richer, appellations we must defend our 'crus', quite simply by having people taste them', he concludes with a glass in his hand. Did I hear someone say discreet?

AURÉLIEN GRILLET

Hands-on



7.5 ha in Morgon ('Grands Cras', 'Les Charmes' and 'Côte du Py') and in Beaujolais

Converted to Organic Viticulture in 2003

Disciple of natural wines

Works with biodynamics

Hallmark: Is a baker and makes bread on the property

SENSITIVE as a vine. Aurélien, aged of 25 Spring-times, senses everything about him. The study of a plant, a pertinent remark; as soon as possible that inspiration is put into practice. Following the example of nature, he works in cycles. Despite seven generations of wine-makers in his family he had no intention of taking over the family tradition. He recognizes his Beaujolais roots but thought he would make wine elsewhere. Vacation in South Africa and Canada opened his eyes to wine-making other than his own. He made up his mind on returning that he would make all but 'technical' wines. Carrying on the work came naturally. The taste, the flavour of the 2000 vintage made by his father had him rapidly in the drivers seat of the family estate. With his kinetic personality, naive air and gentle visage, he certainly couldn't spray chemical products on his plants. And in the hot summer of 2003 the domain saw its conversion to organic farming completed. Under his impulse, the domain was consolidated to 7.5 ha. In Morgon in the grand trilogy of celebrated 'climates', the 'Grands Cras', 'Les Charmes' and the 'Côte du Py' and just a wisp of Beaujolais red. Two thousand and eleven sees the dawning of a first tank fermented Beaujolais white. In 2009 he diversifies. His musing on wine leads him to another trade, that of baker. Two vintages later he qualifies as a baker and creates his own oven in the centre of the property. He kneads the flour from his own fields of organically grown wheat. Three days a week the local villagers can come and buy their bread, and their wine. According to him, the yeasts work in the same way for the bread as for the wine. And so each batch is like a mini-vinification. 'I like natural wines and so I make natural bread. I could work my wines and bread without yeast if I wanted. I don't want to normalize my products. My trade is to go from the vine to wine, I couldn't sell a product if I knew it contained chemical or artificial residues', he happily proclaims. He has been a volunteer fireman for five years, at the service of others. Logically, he will be part of the wine-maker's solidarity group for the appellation. Although young,

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I could work my wines and bread without yeast if I wanted. I don't want to normalize my products.
”

the future inspires him. 'If I have children, I will try and give them the taste of wine, the culture and pass on my passion,' he says with a smile. His girlfriend Charlotte, who is studying to be a psychologist, is very open minded with others and, according to Aurélien, the organic culture has that effect. Behind his 'organo-ecolo' side he remains 'a kid of 6'. The local tradition of camaraderie has forged friendships from the past: bread shared amongst friends, and the bottle slowly emptying. His two trades are harmonious enabling him to reunite all those dear to his heart. Incidentally he has an idea for an educational farm where his sister would take on the lessons and his brother the market-gardening. He, who sees faith as an inner journey, recognizes the importance of listening to intuition, enabling him, with a magic wand in hand, to find living water in the earth that carries him. Did I hear someone say sensitive?



ROMAIN JAMBON

Brouilly in the heart

7 ha. of Brouilly on the same site

Working the soils

De-stemming the Burgundy way

Hallmark: getting wine-merchant status to make Chardonnay and increase his list of wines

OBLIGING. You can see it in him when he arrives with a bottle in his hand and the glasses in the other. Ready to draw the bottle opener... Shaved head, like a monk. 'Tranch' (Slice) has his friends call him affectionately, has the 'dried ham' (Jambon) look; a true lad from Beaujolais. A fixed, deep stare, he is the fourth in a line of Jambon; a surname closely associated with Beaujolais.

At the top of a hillock, the cellar sits on the plinth that creates an invisible line between two 'crus'; Brouilly et Côte de Brouilly. The former tenant of the domain never saw a hail storm here. If the courtyard is in the village of Charentay, the house (and the head quarters) is in the village of Odenas. Like a hand hesitating between two glasses. That said, the vineyard is 100% Brouilly; 7 hectares of rented vines surrounding the house. A Bordeaux style domain, without the château, but with added hospitality. 'That means, when I see customers arrive, I can come and greet them'. After a year and a half working with his father he stopped. 'With my approach and the ideas I have I couldn't work with him'. His fermentation lasts 16 to 21 days whereas his father works with thermovinification. He de-stems in 'Burgundian' fashion and tills his soils; 'I like to till the soil to push the roots deeper'. He 'fell into' Gamay when he was a child. 'It's an easy varietal to cultivate, it can be made into fresh, new wines or make great wines for cellaring like Burgundy's Pinot Noir'.

Bulk is an essential stage before bottling. He is only 25 but this lad likes a challenge. He could have made one 'cuvée' with his 7 hectare site but he enjoys making several wines. He began in 2010 with his first bottling of Brouilly,

'Les Éronnes', a juicy entry level, easy drinking wine and another more structured wine called 'Les Vieux Ceps'. In 2012, the third wine, 'La Pointe des Einnards' will come from an old vine that will give a firm grain different from the other Brouilly. From a stony and granite soil this Gamay will be entirely aged in oak.

His short term projects include becoming a wine merchant in order to make Chardonnay and embellish his wine list. One of the signs that he is from the new generation is the mobile number and e-mail address on the reverse label. 'Having spent six months in New Zealand making wine, I saw what I didn't want to do' To make himself known and sell his production he relies on independent wine-merchants and private clients. When he has a larger list of wines he sees himself participating in wine fairs. To go out and meet his future customers. 'On the property, I want to create a relaxed tasting area, as my grand father had done with all the old tools, from times gone by, displayed on the walls and a large old farm table' His partner is a social worker and helps in the vineyard at harvest time. If he has children, he won't push them to make wine, 'but I'll still push them!', he concludes. Just what his father did when Romain finally exclaimed, 'I'll never be a wine-maker!' Never say never. Even though he is passionate about his trade, he doesn't just live for himself. Despite a packed calendar, he still has time for sports. 'I love playing football but not watching it on the television' so evidently he kicks a ball around with the local Odenas-Charentay club. Playing as full back. And all this confirms his belief in the area's wines. 'I strongly believe in the future of Beaujolais'. Moreover, he plans on taking over two hectares of Brouilly in 2012 as well as one hectare of Beaujolais Villages to make rosés and primeur wines. To be part of the tasting space for Brouilly wine makers is his only 'political' act. On the other hand he strongly maintains his connection with the Odenas' solidarity organization. And thus he helps other wine makers in their vineyards when they are sick. Did I hear someone say obliging?

“
Having spent six months
in New Zealand making
wine, I saw what I
didn't want to do...
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JÉRÔME JANODET

The Gamay trump card

7 ha. in Chénas, Saint-Amour and Moulin-à-Vent

Vines between 40 and 80 years old

Yields of 45hl/ha

Hallmark: wishes to make signature wines based on his various distinct 'climates'

JÉRÔME is a conscientious young man. With great humility he tries to work both carefully and seriously. A third generation wine-maker he has always been in the world of wine and never really asked the question whether or not he would do anything other than continue the work his parents have shown him. His initial, and main-stream, studies in viticulture and enology had him set up at the early age of 22. Just prior, he completed six months of work experience with Gilles Flachet in the northern Rhône. Here he learned about destemming, rarely used in Beaujolais. He chose to set up his own domain without his parents (who have kept their own property). He used the name his grand father had chosen ; 'vieilles caves' (old cellars). The same cellars dating back to 1840, as the neck label on his bottles indicates. Beneath three solid vaults, all his 'crus' are aged between six months and a year. No new oak but aging in barrels that have seen four to five wines 'which gives complexity to the wine' he adds.

Initially, he rented five hectares of vines. Today he has seven hectares spread over Chénas, Saint-Amour and, most of all, Moulin-à-Vent. All with vines aging from 40 to 80 years old, giving yields averaging 45hl/ha. Which he believes 'is just the right balance for Gamay'. He retains the wine-making method of 'chapeau grillé' (the cap remaining in the middle) from his parents: 'The mass of skins and solid matter soaked in its juices enables more exchange and extraction, and even more when I use the technique of 'délestage'. He has just stopped working his one hectare of Beaujolais Villages which he now gives to the cooperative in Chénas. 'I made this choice in order to concentrate on the vines that have greater pecuniary value. Today Beaujolais is no longer lagging behind, our region has enormous potential. With a small amount of effort we can make magnificent wines. You just need to look at all the trenches dug (during the 'terroir' identification study taking place in the region) to perceive the richness of the under-soils.' And he continues by saying that Gamay is a trump card.

Sales to merchants are still important for Jérôme but he is developing his bottling side. Between loyal customers and passing visitors he sells 80% of his 10,000 bottles on the property. A house opening on to a paved court yard full of flowers that brightens the descent to the cellar. From the first steps you sense you are in good company. That of

Jérôme, or of his grand father Fernand, with his bubbling good-nature from Beaujolais and who, at 83, continues his work welcoming clients. An encounter in 2006 with Pascal Dufaître, the manager of Château de Pizay, enabled Jérôme to create markets in France and China. The other major export market is England; a market set up by his grand father.

'My grand father had four daughters, three married wine-makers and his two grand sons are also wine-makers.' The day he has children Jérôme admits to hoping he will see them push open the doors of the cellar to roll the barrels in these ancient walls. He plays the saxophone with the Romanèche-Thorins brass band, of which he is vice-president. One rehearsal a week: 'It helps me to unwind and I get to see my childhood friends'.

For Jérôme, the future is full of projects. He would very much like to vinify specific plots to outline the diversity of his 'terroir'. As with his Burgundian neighbours, mentioning the specific 'climates' adds a touch of quality. Making Chardonnay doesn't inspire him as he is largely content with his 'crus' and Gamay. He has already changed his pruning to move towards trellising. Thus, he hopes to adapt part of his vines to mechanical harvesting. He has also begun to grass over narrow strips between his rows although not in the old vines where the competition would tire the vines. Did I hear someone say conscientious?

“
Today Beaujolais is
no longer lagging
behind, our region has
enormous potential.
”



CHRISTOPHE LAPIERRE

A native of the Cru



10 ha: 2 in Chénas, 8 in Moulin-à-Vent

Average vine age of 45 years

Reasoned Viticulture

Punching down the caps

Hallmark: the cuvée 'Prestige' has only been made six times in the last twenty years

At 32 years old Christophe Lapierre is a practical man. He chooses to serve his customers in little glasses 'not for penny-pinching but because of drink-driving and a smaller glass reassures'. His bottles have his father's name on them even though the reins have been passed on, his parents still working the vines throughout the year. The domain name Chênepierre is a contraction of Chénas and the family name.

The father loves his son's kindness. Ever since he was a child Christophe knew he would make wine. He began his studies at fifteen going to the Davayé agricultural college where he furthered in scientific studies culminating in an under graduate degree in viticulture and enology. He preferred taking over the vineyard rather than going on to become an enologist as his parents had imagined. He claims his diplomas were gained during his work experience in Germany in the Mittelrhein. No language problems here when your mother is the daughter of Alsace wine makers! Five months of hands on experience taught him how to successfully attract clients in the business field along side the fine hospitality of the German producers. Under his influence, the bottle sales side of the business, having previously only worked from the tasting room, has flourished with the participation in the Independent Wine-maker Fairs (salons des vigneron indépendants), and tastings with colleagues from other regions. However the Lapierre family welcomes customers throughout the year, with or without an appointment, a question of tradition and, on the odd occasion, Sunday as well, 'if we are here'. The 20,000 bottle production is attained the years where there are no bulk sales. When the wines go to merchants it is by small batches of thirty hectolitres. The export market accounts for a small 15% of sales but for Christophe the aim is to sell everything by the bottle.

When he took over the domain, there was no generational conflict, as the connection between parents and son is strong. The handing over was natural. Two thousand and one was his first vintage with the keys to the cellar. 'It was a huge responsibility and a creative moment where I had to do the best.' In vinification he began de-stemming in different proportions according to the batches. 'We need the stems for our wines, we roast systematically all our 'cuvées' and complete with 'délestage' to gain colour. 'Délestage' is above all interesting to extract more structure and enabling longer and more homogeneous fermentation kinetics. This provokes the yeast to work better and creates more body for the wines.' Although he tried

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I love Chénas which I believe is a compromise between the fruitiness of Gamay and its cellaring potential, as with its neighbouring Moulin-à-Vent.
”

'pigeage' (cap-punching) on his 2011 Moulin-à-Vent he doesn't necessarily use it for all his tanks. With an average vine age of 45 years old he often barely attains his desired yields but that suits him. 'As of 2002 we began pruning forty ares of Gamay with 'double cordon'. It was fascinating to work through this radical change. We gained in harvest quality and can now begin to mechanize. We will try a harvest machine on this plot in 2012.'

Although organics are not his thing, he does practice reasoned viticulture. 'The move to organic viticulture on my domain is complicated: 80% of the vines don't belong to me.' Besides, half of the 10 hectares goes to the Chénas cooperative that overlooks the house. In 2010 he planted 40 ares of Chardonnay on a clay soil in the village of La Chapelle de Guinchay. White Beaujolais is on its way. He is always eager to extol the delights of the 'cru' of which he is so proud: 'I love Chénas which I believe is a compromise between the fruitiness of Gamay and its cellaring potential, as with its neighbouring Moulin-à-Vent.' For that matter Christophe continues to make the 'cuvée' 'Prestige' in Moulin-à-Vent, created by his father in 1989. After fifteen months in new oak it only sees the light of day in the finer years; six times in twenty years (2009, 2005, 2003, 1999 1996)! This rare 'cuvée' ages into a wine comparable to that of a Burgundian Pinot Noir.

As for future generations taking over the domain, he cherishes the idea that his name and vineyard will continue to exist. 'I was never forced to be a wine-maker. Like my parents, I wanted, at an early age, to flourish in a rich and varied trade. The taste of wine came almost like Obelix who fell into the cauldron of magic potion.' You know, the affable Gaul from the cartoon. Does he remind you of anyone?



15 ha. in Morgon

25 to 30 % of bought harvest makes up the domain's production

Sorted harvest in small crates

Date of bottling on the label

Hallmark: took over Château Cambon in 1994 with another wine-maker.

MATHIEU LAPIERRE

The piano man

EVEN in the midst of winter, large shoulders and bright eyes, enhanced by blond curls, make Mathieu look like an Australian surfer. And with that, as soon as he opens his mouth, his deep voice exudes savoury words as if each is being tasted.

This love of taste began in the Culinary School of Poligny where he learned to be a chef. His interest in the culinary arts was born from meeting chefs at the family domain as a child. When he left school he went to work in the specialist restaurants of Lyon. Then off to Paris with 'loads of work and little sleep'. One of the chefs he worked under said he needed to 'go for it' and 'go for it' he did. After working in a prestigious Parisian restaurant, he went off 'knives in hand' to the USA and Canada. At the same time he made wine in British Columbia in 2003. Wine as another hat. All the time he was training to be a chef he used his vacation to make wine in Burgundy and the Côtes-du-Rhône. When he returned he studied in Beaune to fine tune his wine making. 'Cooking teaches me to use my senses and I apply this to my wine making. I maintain a certain rigour in my work and can be somewhat difficult during the harvest.'

He calls himself a 'merchant-wine-maker' as he buys the harvest from the family domain, completing it with 25 to 30% of grapes bought elsewhere, in order to honour the ever increasing requirements of his clientele. 'We give incentives if the vines are tilled, if the pruning is done in a particular way, if the producer is organic'. He has been working with the same producers since 2001. Trust does not exclude stringent controls. Such controls, however, do provide the occasion for spontaneous meals. He made his first wine in 2004 with his father and called it 'Marcel'. That year, he rented five hectares bringing the domain up to 15 hectare shared between rented and owned vines. And until the passing of Marcel in 2010, father and son had always made wine together.

But the standard had been passed on. Mathieu's vision differs to that of his father's 'I don't make natural wines but wines that are not doctored. The aim of refusing additives or being organic are mere tools in the process and not an end in itself'. Nothing has changed with the 2010 and 2011 vintages, made purely by Mathieu, apart from his discourse. And this is how he hopes to clarify what people refer to as 'natural wines'. 'They are 'terroir' wines,

organoleptically unpolluted by faults or enological additives. That said, it is up to the wine-maker to estimate risk, trusting both in himself and his grapes.'

He doesn't wish to be categorized as a 'wine-maker who does not use sulphur. The vinification is straight forward: a ripe Gamay carefully sorted, brought to the harvest in small crates to avoid bruising. The freshly harvested grapes are placed in tapered wine tanks, and depending on the nature of the harvest, they undergo carbonic or semi-carbonic maceration. The fermentation begins.

Carbon dioxide is generated with the tank being closed though not hermetically. The length of maceration is dependent on daily tasting and varies, according to the vintage, from 12 to 26 days. When emptying the tanks of their matter Mathieu 'smells' the vintage. The wine is then placed in differing barrel sizes for nine months; the time it takes to give birth. The bottling date is written on each bottle. There are two Morgon: one with sulphur; one without, which gives a 'natural' wine. And so, each customer can choose a wine

according to taste and technique.

On the bottle side, the 'Morgon' and 'Raisin Gaultois' (Gallic Grape) (from young plots or sites that have been damaged by the weather) are completed in certain years by a 'cuvée' Marcel Lapierre. For a sum total of 120,000 bottles of which 90,000 are Morgon. Export accounts for 30% of sales with 30% in Europe and 40% in France. Fourth in a line of wine-makers, his grand father was one of the first to develop private clientele. And they continue to come to the domain even though there are no signs, and the grand children follow on from their parents. Mathieu's mother manages Château Cambon, taken over in 1994 with another wine-maker from the village. His two sisters are not involved in the domain but one hopes to return in years to come. A young father to little Margot (the 'M' is already there!), he remains philosophical when it comes to succession: 'Having been left freedom of choice, I returned to wine so I shan't push her at all but I will share my passion.'

To relax, he plays the piano from time to time. And when he parties he plays percussion in a batucada. And there are many occasions to party, that's not what lacks in Beaujolais. With Morgon from Lapierre, if you please!

“
I don't make natural wines
but wines that are not
doctored. The aim of refusing
additives or being organic are
mere tools in the process and
not a finality.
”

MATHIEU MÉLINAND

A stationary traveller



20 ha. in Beaujolais, Beaujolais-Villages, Chiroubles, Fleurie, Julienas and Morgon
Reasoned Viticulture

Hallmark: a 'cuvée' from the 'terroir' of 'Pavillon'; a ninety year old vineyard

“
I bottle to promote
my appellations, not
to lose money on
them.
”

His father claims with honesty and humour, 'I am the father of Mathieu Mélinand'. This gives you an idea of the respect within this family, entirely devoted to Beaujolais. He appreciates the 'meticulous and passionate' side of his son. It needs to be said that, aged of 26 Springtimes, Mathieu has much professional acclaim. After completing his under graduate degree in viticulture and enology he worked the 2007 harvest in Australia. Here he learns not to do what he sees. Ever curious to learn, he had hardly unpacked his bags and he was off for another six months to New Zealand, just before he set himself up. There he vinified Gamay's cousin, Pinot Noir.

His globe trotting opened his eyes to other wines to better understand his own. His first vintage was in 2009. Not an easy one despite having been anticipated as 'legendary'. 'Because of high potential, hygiene in the cellar had to be impeccable. In retrospect, and that is my perfectionist side, I should have extracted less but I was pleased with the result. My vision of wine prohibits the use of thermovinification. What a shame to waste a year of work by 'cooking' the wine!' Evidently experience from afar, here's a young wine-maker who maintains his principles whilst respecting others. Mathieu admits to whole cluster fermentation, as it brings clarity and complexity to the Gamay. 'The harvest date needs to be determined precisely with a perfect ripeness. This diminishes the acids that sharpens the wine.' He privileges certain 'crus' with '12 months in old wooden casks whilst working the fine lees to bring necessary structure for cellaring.'

For Mathieu the vineyard work is all about controlling yields. 'I aim for moderate yields, 45 to 50 hectolitres per hectare.' Beneath might mean finer wines but not neces-

sarily better than 45 hl/ha.. The outline of the vineyard and the economic factors make him reticent to convert to organic farming. He does, however, reason his viticulture. The average age of the vines is 50 years old which implies replacing plants each year. Twenty hectares is a large surface area for Beaujolais and when you learn that he added 6 more, of Chiroubles and Morgon, on arriving you'll understand his implication in the region. In Fleurie, the 'cuvées' 'Champagne' and 'La Chapelle des Bois' are referenced in his listing but are not yet acclaimed on his labels. For Mathieu, this site selection will be promoted in the next five years. Since 2002, the 'cuvée' from the 'terroir', 'Pavillon' is selected from a plot of 90 year old vines (one hectare in five). This process had already been started by his father. His logic follows suit. With already four high flying 'crus' this shouldn't be a problem. The aim is to bottle 20 hectares where today half of the production is sold in bulk. 'I bottle to promote my appellations, not to lose money on them', he confirms. He sells half his wine in France and half on the export market and that suits him down to the ground. He hopes to better target the restaurant market and to find new importers who will be loyal to his wines.

His girl friend Pauline fell in love both with the wine-maker and the wine. She is a sommelier in a prestigious Lyon restaurant. She will one day work with him, that is certain! They will settle down and raise a family imparting the taste of wine in the hope that their children will be naturally swayed. Mathieu, as the eldest of three sons, 'had no choice, but at the same time, had a choice' as he says in his own words. When he is on vacation, this lover of off-road cycling and rambling, fills his time on the hillsides of his and other wine regions, for he'll never totally let go! Did I hear someone say passionate?

JULIEN MERLE

A glass of freedom

7 ha. in Beaujolais

20,000 bottles

Traditional wine-making with indigenous yeast

No additives or artificial fertilizers in the vineyard

Hallmark: wine tourism project with a guest house or self catering accommodation



A Heineken Staff 'blazoned polo shirt with short cropped hair, a black earring either side and three days stubble; this young 31 year old producer looks more like a navy than a cellar master. Or just the master at home. His name in French means 'blackbird' and he has surely black feathers as a fifth generation Merle making wine. Jennifer 'his shepherdess' as he calls her affectionately works in the Beaujolais region looking after an amusement park. She extols her boyfriend's character of 'always being there for others'. With glass in hand, Julien reminds you that he is above all a drinks manufacturer and with him one 'glass' leads to another. He redefines his trade thus, 'It's not a job; it's a way of life. I wake up a wine-maker and go to sleep a wine-maker'. He loves his trade and goes as far as painting on his van, 'Julien Merle, the contemporary wine-maker' and certainly not a 'temporary' one. For he believes the trade of farmer-winemaker must reflect the times. He winds down by going to the cinema, getting involved in village life or doing sport such as the Vietnamese martial art he practices for two hours a week. He surfs not just on the internet but on the ski slopes.

His training? He prepared all his wine studies as an independent candidate. Already a rebellious spirit. Before setting himself up, he had odd jobs in a factory, and then time in the Cognac distillery, 'where he built his knowledge and took his liver too pieces'. He also distilled with the cooperative distillery of Bois d'Oingt for three seasons. In 2003, he took over the six hectare family domain, but in 2005 he almost closed down after two years of making wine like his father' but 'without the enthusiasm'. So he decided to give purpose to his professional choice by doing things his way. His method: reinstate traditional fermentation methods with indigenous yeast and numerous 'pigeages' (cap-punching) and 'délestages', all without sulphur (he accepts the label 'natural wine'). The way forward is simple for him: make wine the way his grand father did even though standards have changed. Since he no longer uses additives or artificial fertilizers, he is looking for ways to finance his conversion to organic farming. Above the chimney hearth, a slate reads the following saying from Jules Renard, resuming his relaxed

“
It's not a job; it's a way
of life. I wake up a wine-
maker and go to sleep a
wine-maker.
”

philosophy 'There are moments when everything works out; don't worry; not always'. Beaujolais' third colour arrives with a 2011 white. 'A trial run', as he says but with 1900 bottles...

He sells a certain amount at wine fairs and his clients say he makes wine that are like him. Before seducing the consumer he seduced the restaurant owners, in particular those in Lyon. 'If you want good Gamay wine, you need to reduce yields', he adds. A lucrative decision. In less than a decade he has increased his bottling from 1,000 to 20,000 bottles. He even allows himself to sell the older vintages as they become ready to drink. Promoting his products is paramount. He has, moreover, gone from 7 to 8 hectares to bottle. And he maintains a small bulk market, out of loyalty to a merchant-vintner who seeks to prolong Julien's wine-making methods. Jean-Gilles Chasselay, a Beaujolais wine-maker, 'inspired' him and taught him to 'dive in' each year. And he sees in Jean-Paul Brun a keen approach to his clients with original methods of communication but above all excellent products. The future is the present for him. And although the 'Merle' has no children for the moment, he has no difficulty in looking ahead: 'If my children find happiness in this trade I will help them and if they want to do something else, I will likewise encourage them.'

Although horse drawn ploughing is not possible on his domain he would love to create a farm spirit. Moreover the idea of a guest house (or self accommodation) is simmering in the back of his mind. Enabling another vision of Beaujolais. Did I hear someone say he was open to others?

CYRIL PICARD

Mr Ambassador...



26 ha. in Brouilly, Moulin-à-Vent and Beaujolais

President of the association 'Cadoles et Sens'

(Cadoles are traditional stone cabins in the vineyards)

The majority of vines are 80 to 120 years old

Hallmark: cap punching done by the harvester's feet

VERSATILE. Here's an adjective that highlights the implication Cyril has in his 'chosen trade' which he chose when he was fourteen. He's an all round producer with good knowledge of wine (and not just through tasting it) but also the often difficult business side. At 35 he is the eighth generation of wine-makers and has 16 harvests on the family domain beneath his belt. Each vintage is carefully noted from the grape picking to the daily weather, not forgetting all the vinification records. 'It takes a big man to become smaller', explains Cyril. With his parents he down-sized the domain from 37 hectares to 26 to improve the work in the vineyards and spend more time on wine sales. They own 96% of their vines which is unusually rare in Beaujolais.

In 2009, despite many owners ripping up their vines since 2000, the Picard family negotiated the acquisition of certain 'crus'. A Brouilly, 'Le Chêne' on a somewhat untypical layer of calcareous clay and a Moulin-à-Vent marked with the specific climate of 'Champagne' of which part has become a rare bottling of 700 bottles from press juice. The property extends over fifty hectares and six villages from Graves-sur-Anse in the south to Chénas in the north. From this wide variety of soils Cyril makes two 'crus', a Beaujolais red and white and a Beaujolais rosé. He also has a 100% sparkling Chardonnay. All the tints and the hierarchy of a region on one property.

For Cyril, the ratio between juice and solid matter is essential in understanding Gamay. Fifteen hectares have 80 year old vines, with one being 120. Actually, as these vines give little fruit there can often be disturbingly high maturity levels. 'Our wines are rich, concentrated but with good acidity, that which supports the wine for a very long time.' He does 20 to 27 days of whole cluster maceration thus respecting the grapes in their entirety. At the end of the soaking process all of the domain's finest wines are made from free run juice. The rest of the grapes are trodden by the harvesters (a tradition he has chosen to reinstate) just as he did when he was five. The grapes are honoured as they paint legs with sugary juices. His father hasn't participated in the wine making for the past five years. Cyril is now at home as cellar master with his four tanks. But his father remains very present in looking after

the employees and sharing his wealth of experience. He boasts, moreover, of their 'complementarity'.

Part of Cyril's make-up is his innate sense of business. Although one Burgundian merchant in particular has become a loyal partner whilst paying above market prices for his wines, he continues to sell two thirds of his production in bulk. The final third is bottled with an average production of 37,000 bottles. Creating export markets with reliable importers is one of his priorities. 'I want to watch over the vineyard closely, setting up a system of traceability for each plot enabling me to do the best with what I have.' His hands are marked by his life with wine.

The 15th century golden stone 'château', sporting the Picard family name, has had a vast modern building added as an extension where marriages and seminars take place, taking up a lot of time but establishing a private clientele. 'When a wine is not up to my standards, I sell it to a merchant; I don't bottle it. For my 'Cuvée Marly' in the past ten years I have skipped two vintages.' Let it be written. He is so ensconced in his wine that nothing else seems to distract him. To note the quality of his 'simple' Beaujolais he lets you taste

his 'Cuvée Marly' (made in homage of his great great grandparents) after his Moulin-à-Vent. And guess who wins? He began sport studies at the age of 12 'but I didn't continue'. He soon realized he was destined to pursue the family line. When wondering about children he can't imagine forcing such work upon them. 'They will make their own choice. It's a difficult life'.

In 2009, without knowing, he received a group of 'Meilleur Ouvrier de France' (France's finest chefs) who tasted his wines and listened attentively. The following week he received the honour of 'Grand Ambassador of French Cuisine'. He has received many accolades such as the 'Marmite d'or' (Golden Cauldron), the 'Ordre Culinaire International' (International Culinary Order) etc. for his natural ability to harmonize wine and food. Even his hobbies are connected with wine, he is president of the association 'Cadoles et Sens' enabling tourists to discover the enlightened region of 'Pierres Dorées' (Golden Stones) through walks and picnics. Did I hear someone say versatile?

“
Our wines are rich,
concentrated but with
good acidity, that which
supports the wine for a
very long time.
”



MATTHIEU ROCHETTE

A Gentle Life-force

4.9 ha. in Morgon, Côte de Brouilly, Brouilly and Régnié

2 ha. of Régnié go to the cooperative

Aging in 35 hl. casks for his richer wines

Hallmark: wants to open a guest house

WITH his gentle voice you sense that Matthieu is listening to you. He is an imposing yet gentle man with blue eyes and scruffy auburn hair. You might imagine he would take the ground in an encounter but quite the contrary. His father finds him humble, 'maybe too much'. But it is a quality when one is a wine-maker, living by the seasons and relying on the weather.

Having done initial studies at Mâcon-Davayé, he continued with an undergraduate degree in viticulture and enology. He did not complete the necessary work experience when setting himself up administratively as he has gained much experience during the three years. The most memorable in Burgundy, in Meursault where he learned how to make Chardonnay, and another experience in Bandol where he fine tuned the art of extraction. It is above all the three years spent in a bottling and filtration company where he discovered other wines. A grafter, he continued working in his own vines all this time. He set himself up in November 2008 and made his first wine in 2009. His tastes led him to rich and mineral 'crus' and he began looking for Morgon or Côte de Brouilly. A stroke of luck allowed him to rent 4.5 hectares in Morgon in the famous site of Côte du Py. Added to the 33 ares of Côte de Brouilly, Brouilly and Régnié, that brings to four the number of 'crus' he has.

Matthieu doesn't wish to imitate other producers but maintains his own way. With his parents vines he works 14.6 hectares whilst getting a worker to look after two of them. The rest is looked after by him and his twin sisters who, although work outside the domain, return to help with the harvest; just like the swallows. Two hectares of Régnié go to the Quincié cooperative as he doesn't have 'enough room'. One of his projects is to extend the tank room so he can make all his wines on the estate. He believes Gamay must have perfect grapes. He thermovinifies the Beaujolais Nouveau for six days and 15 for the Morgon. His soaking times are longer than his father's but he continues to work the fine lees for wines destined to be

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We have but one variety
and it is the 'terroir'
that makes all the
difference, not me
”

cellared. He uses cap punching 'pigeage' and 'délestage' which he says 'favours colour extraction and fine tannins'. In the tank room, half of his tanks are stainless steel and the other half are concrete being used both for fermenting and aging. The aging in 35 hl. Casks is reserved for the Régnié 'Cuvée des Braves, Morgon 'Côte du Py' and the Brouilly 'Pisse-Vieille' and he still works the fine lees on these wines destined for cellaring. His 55,000 bottles are half sold in France and half on the export market (particularly the USA and Japan). He sells 20% of his production to merchants and he aims in the long run to bottle everything himself on the domain.

At one point he was a keen cyclist but has now turned from competition to cycling tourism. He is part of the local Chiroubles brass band, he also plays the synthesizer and livens up the harvest with his harmonica. It was at the age of 17 he decided to make wine: 'Watching my father at work gave me the itch'. The day he has children, he would love the family story to continue, but he won't push. His girlfriend, Justine, is a chef from Chiroubles and after some experience she'll return to the domain with Matthieu. 'And why not open a guest house', she slips in gently.

He admits making appellation wines mean more to him than varietal wines as he goes on to express his love for Beaujolais. 'We have but one variety and it is the 'terroir' that makes all the difference, not me'. Did I hear some one say humble?

NICOLAS ROMY

A Colourful Chap

28 ha in Beaujolais red, white and rosé

Terra Vitis certification in 2011

90% sold to one local merchant

Hallmark: a soil analysis shows similarities with Volnay in Burgundy



LOOKING somewhat like the singer Colagero with sharp almond green eyes, 31 year old Nicolas is not as shy as he looks. A glass is soon in your hand and his gentle, though affirming, presence instills confidence. Coralie, who shares his life whilst working in Lyon, loves his generosity, especially when he shares his trade with others. In their new house, the modern and bright interior contrasts the old cellar where steel and concrete tanks are lined up like sphinxes. And rightly so as the wine trade is well established in the family since the 1700.

The Romy's don't count wine-makers by generations but by centuries. The Napoleonic land register of 1815 shows that all the plots were planted with vines in the village of Morance to the south of Beaujolais, with the orchard as well as the cellar courtyard. In these parts there are no 'crus' so Nicolas has based his reputation on his red, rosé and white Beaujolais. It is above all the latter that has made his reputation. And with all this, he continues to move forward. 'You learn each year' he confides as he lowers his eyes, and adds 'and all of your life'. His 2008 trophy from the Lyon's culinary circles naming him 'wine-maker of the year' confirms this. When people refer to this title he brushes it off saying it was a long time ago and time goes on... It was only four years ago. He has not forgotten the heat wave of 2003 when he set himself up with 25 small hectolitres of yield. Although he had begun scientific studies aspiring to be an architect, once he had stepped into the vineyards with his parents he took root. He thoroughly prepares his vinification.

In years such as 2010 and 2009, he inhibits the malolactic fermentation as the acid equilibrium is already present. Some of his grapes are harvested manually and others mechanically, depending on the vineyard. On the old vines hand picking is done. The young vines have been trained for a harvesting machine. All the vineyard is trellised, even the vines from 1900. The nine hectares are planted at 8,900 vines per hectare even though the appellation decree allows 4,000 vines per hectare. A qualitative decision to push the roots deeper. Each has a precise role: the father manages the harvest; Nicolas looks after the cellar. With his father's vines the domain makes up 28 hectares. Nicolas works six days out of seven but has decided to entrust a large proportion of the sales side to a

company that distributes his wines after being bottled under his name at the property. Of the 20,000 bottles made, a tenth is sold directly to private clients, restaurants and certain independent wine merchants. 96 % of his volume is sold to a local merchant who has an historical partnership with the Romy family.

Nicolas hopes to extend his tasting room and to promote his Chardonnay production: 'I think it is part of the region's future'. All his whites are, unusually, in the village of Morancé where he was born and raised. He undertook a geological study of his soils with a renowned geobiologist who proved that his soils are the same as Volnay in Burgundy. In 2013, this site will be planted with Gamay as it had been between the wars. 2012 is the first vintage with the Terra Vitis certification but the conversion to organic viticulture is not possible for Nicolas. His choice is to quite simply diversify his production of Beaujolais. Despite the investments necessary for the modernization of the domain, he lives well. 'Also, I feel as though I am contributing to the upkeep of the economy so dear to our local customers. As well as the fact that our vines contribute to the beauty of the area.' Did I hear someone say generous?

“
I feel as though I am contributing to the upkeep of the economy so dear to our local customers.
”

RICHARD ROTTIERS

The lion with the red heart



4 ha in Beaujolais and Moulin-à-Vent

15 plots within the one appellation

Already applies organic methods

In 2014 will begin converting to organic viticulture

Hallmark: makes a still and a sparkling Beaujolais rosé

“
In New Zealand I was
working in an industrial
winery which made me
appreciate my French
‘terroir’
”

‘MODEST and courageous’ That’s how Corinne describes her wine-making man. With his mane of long blond hair attached in a bunch, this lion is more of a hearty than a grumpy soul. Richard first met her at her parents house in the north of Burgundy where her mother owns a famous Chablis estate. He first met Corinne, who became his partner, during his student years. He specialized in agriculture and environment whilst studying engineering. ‘I have always been interested in the life of a soil.’ And it has become a bug as he wants to discover many types of soil. His initial experience required for setting himself up took him to South Africa for four months and then he spent a year in California. Here he began to notice the differences between producers and ‘huge and bulky’ wine styles, all making him appreciate the finesse of Gamay. His last voyage was for a year and a half in New Zealand. ‘I was working in an industrial winery which made me appreciate my French ‘terroir’. He returned in 2002 and ran the production in an estate in the Côtes du Ventoux. But just for a year as the owner didn’t want to improve his wines... There was no way he would compromise on quality. After a short period in the Jura where he worked in ski rentals, Richard was hired at the Fleurie cooperative to vinify the 2003 vintage.

At the beginning of 2004 he began a ‘vineyard and cellar’ job at Château Thivin. For three years he learned much from Claude Geoffray. He discovered the variety, the different nuances of ‘terroir’ and the unique flavour of Gamay. ‘Then, I wanted to set myself up in Moulin-à-Vent as it is my favourite ‘cru’. Two thousand and seven saw

the birth of two babies; his first daughter and his domain. He finally chose the appropriate type of tenancy for his aims and to promote his harvest. ‘I apply organic principals but do not have the certification. I think I will convert in 2014 when my vines can produce less with better quality.’ He follows the lunar cycle for all his work whether it be pruning or bottling. All the Moulin-à-Vent wines are aged in differing barrel sizes. With four hectares he happily chooses gobelet pruning. His three and a half hectares in Moulin-à-Vent are made up of fifteen different plots. The rest of his vines provide for two bottlings of Beaujolais rosé; one still and the other sparkling. His manners are sober, refined, ‘Burgundian’ as he says himself. Traditional, certainly but with a modern stride. You need to look up to find Richard’s cellar in a narrow road in the centre of Romanèche-Thorins. The indicating signs are on his cellar wall. And when he racks off he passes a pipe over the road as his tank room is opposite. Resourceful, he shares a bottling line with other village producers. He bottles everything: 20,000 each year. And private clients make up 20% of his annual sales. He wants to develop cellar sales and make appointments with his clients to get to know them better and share his vision of Gamay. He sells the most part of his production on the export market through a syndicate of Beaujolais Mâconnais producers. He says he’ll encourage his daughters to make wine; as the mother inspired him so it shall be with the girls. ‘But the vine will decide; being stronger than the lesser mortal’. Did I hear someone say modest?



RAPHAËL SAINT-CYR

A handle on the vines

22 ha, in Beaujolais, Chénas, Morgon and Régnié

100,000 bottles in direct sales

Organic certification in 2012

Hallmark: very involved with the local organic producers

IN winter, the cellars of Domain Saint-Cyr look like a mountain chalet covered in snow, in the path of the wind and looking out over the magnificent landscape of the Pierres Dorées, (the golden stones). With his Canadian lumber-jack build and portly visage, this 'kid' is gutsy and blunt. His mother, a winter ski instructor who looks after the administrative side of the domain the rest of the year, finds him 'merry and hard working'.

Raphaël preferred his undergraduate degree in management rather than viticulture as he had greater need to understand the insides of a business than to know how to prune. With his degree in his pocket he headed off to New Zealand with his wife to be, to experience life outside of his native Beaujolais. He chose to emigrate to avoid the blues of home; the village of Anse and his family. He validates his work experience in the country's largest winery. On the four hectares of tanks and 90,000 barrels he discovers another dimension to wine. Each stainless steel fermentation tank of 2,500 litres represents over twice his production. And the vinification is totally computer controlled: 'I needed to encounter this other way of doing things to appreciate our work on small plots'. He returned with a mechanical system to bring in his 'crus', situated at 40 kilometres from the cellar, in a refrigerated lorry to protect the harvest from heat.

Today, after some difficult years, he bottles 'barely 50% of the domain', a total of 100,000 bottles in direct sales to 8,000 clients! The rest is sold in bulk and of course 'organic' to a wine merchant. One of Raphaël's projects is

to widen his distribution on the professional circuit with independent wine merchants and importers, to balance his market. But he never forgets his initial trade: 'I need to be both in contact with my vines and my clients; they are complementary', he affirms before adding the unflinching 'I love everything about Beaujolais. I may be chauvinist but it's true, we are a welcoming people.'

He loves the 'easy aspect' of the Gamay as a variety and explains to whoever wishes to listen that he makes 12 different wines from the same grape. And of his daughter Oceane, he says with a young father's smile: 'I don't know what she will do later in her life. What I do know is she will do what she believes to be right'.

His transition to organic viticulture began between 2008 and 2009, all the domain will have certification for the 2012 vintage. When he arrived in 2008, he went from 16 to 25 hectares. 'My father would never have converted to organic viticulture if I hadn't wanted to take over.' The transition to organics was evident especially with this surface area (22 hectares in production with 16 in the three tints of Beaujolais, five in 'crus' and one hectare of Sauvignon Blanc). Although established in southern Beaujolais, the northern 'crus' have a grand place on his list. The y own the vines in Morgon and rent those in Chénas and Régnié. And when there is need to lend a hand in the community with the local organic producers or to make a stand against certain producers who exaggerate their bottle prices, he is always to be seen, always ready to defend the values of 'his Beaujolais'. Did I hear someone say 'hard-working'?

“
I love everything
about Beaujolais. I
may be chauvinist but
it's true, we are a
welcoming people.
”

JULIEN SUNIER



An enlightened dreamer

3 ha. in Régnié, Morgon and Fleurie

Has the label 'Agriculture Biologique' since 2012

100 % direct sales

Hallmark: wine-maker and Farmer

WITH his hand upon his glass of Morgon Julien swears that he 'lives life to the full' in Beaujolais, more so than in Burgundy where he is from. He speaks of 'tipples' when referring to his Gamays. His creed? 'A good bottle is an empty bottle!' Sylvie, his partner, loves his natural enthusiasm: 'Julien is an impassioned optimist. He has no fear of the future,' states this burgundian wine-maker's daughter. 'If you ask too many questions you never move forward' explains he who returned to Beaujolais after working on one of the Momessin properties from 2003 to 2007. Thanks to his versatility and experience and despite his 'simple' undergraduate degree he was chosen to manage the fifteen hectares instead of an enologist. He spent four years making wines in the Monternot cellars; Côte de Brouilly, Morgon, Fleurie, Juliéna and other Saint-Amour. And that is how you discover all the jewels of a region. As he chose all the suppliers as well, he visited the vineyards of other producers. 'That way, I learned how things happened locally.' He also gave support to the brand's sales team traveling abroad three months of the year. It was then he realized the commercial potential of Gamay. The fuse was set.

The detonation was his meeting with the producers of 'Vins Natures' (natural wines); a movement created by Jules Chauvet at the beginning of the 20th century. That said, Julien detests being placed in a box. He reserves the right to sulfite if he deems necessary. Another example, the AB (Agriculture Biologique) logo will appear discreetly in black and white as of the 2012 vintage... When he set up his small vineyard in 2008 he knew he could work organically but above all knew he could tender his vines well. With three hectares of rented forty year old vines over three appellations (Régnié, Morgon and Fleurie), he can pamper his vines as if it was a vegetable garden. Moreover he is interested in farming. Next to his vineyard are 2.5 hectares of forest that he cuts for fire-wood. He is waiting on 4.5 hectares of prairie already certified organic. He

believes that 'life is short' and with already fifteen vintages to his name he sees himself planting barley and rye to make artisanal beers. Evidently organic.

With his small area, his modest yields and his way of life, he could but sell all of his production in bottles. Julien defines this childish nonchalance in one short phrase: 'Life is a game where the rule is to make dreams reality.' At twenty he wanted to be a wine-maker, and he is one. He wanted his own farm was interested in farming...his garden is vast. In 2011 the harvesters were all fed by food grown in his garden. But let no-one say he is backward. He has an e-mail address and a mobile phone. He has so many clients who come from afar to taste his wines that they mustn't get lost on the way. Paradoxically, he sells most of his wine in Beaune to independent wine merchants and restaurants. They have brought him an international clientele and importers from Japan, Australia and America. His farm's potential has, evidently, inspired him to develop wine tourism. His roots are there in his farm called 'Noisetiers', hazelnuts; his paradise.

His father had hoped he would take over the barber's shop in Dijon... and as for a future child taking over the domain, Julien says 'Let's wait for him or her to be born. We'll see what happens afterwards.' It is certain that Julien's life has a quicker pace than his wine. Did I hear someone say enthusiastic?

“
A good bottle
is an empty
bottle!
”

3 ha. in Régnié

Two plots on granite 'terroir'

40 hl. per hectare

75% on the export market

Hallmark: No fixed recipe, works with what he has

CHARLY THÉVENET

Pure Juice

“
I work for myself, not for
a label. My certification
is a document that
resumes my soil analyses,
vinification and bottling
details...
”

THIRTY years old and a three day beard outline the attractive features of Charly's visage. His determination shines in his blue eyes. He has a cautious disposition, standing back and listening to conversations from a distance. 'I am more of a spectator than an actor', he explains. A discreet fellow who seems very sensitive.

He began his studies at the Bel Air school and did more than he had imagined. 'I didn't like going to school and longed for one thing only: learn about vines and wine from the person who was my mentor (a famous Morgon wine-maker). And yet, listening to him talk would make you think you were conversing with an enologist. He harvested for a month in Italy, at Canneli in the appellation of Asti, and then another month in the Val de Loire whilst tilling and trimming the vines of Bourgeuil.

Charly never stops. He worked for four years as his father's employee before setting up on his own in 2007 on a three hectare site in Régnié. He is able to subsist on this small area as he has no investment needs. His only loan was to acquire his production tool: 80 year old vines. 'I was looking for old vines to have fine quality grapes above all'. Granite 'terroir' on shallow soils (in the region of Braves) make up these two distinct sites, one with a southern exposition and the other south-west. During the summer he tills the rows with an offset tiller mounted on a lightweight tractor so as not to compact the ground. And in the winter he gently removes the soil from around the vines taking care not to wake them from their dreams.

'From the offset, I wanted to produce and sell, and so all the Gamay ended up in a bottle.' His two plots are fermented separately and blended at bottling. When Charly talks about wine-making it's like listening to a recipe: 'I destem a quarter of the tank as a starter for the fermentation, and the following day, I incorporate the fresh harvest at 10°C. I then saturate it with carbon dioxide, whilst adding neither sulphur nor yeast. After three days, I pump over and gently punch the cap. Once the alcoholic fermentation has begun I leave the harvest to soak for two to three weeks. One or two more 'punches' to get that final boost from the yeast before pressing. Then, four to five months in concrete vats for the fruit and seven to eight months in oak for the complexity. And the year is over.' So, there we are, now try and copy him. And just to emphasize the lesson: 'I seek to make wines that reflect the 'terroir'. I am on granite and want the minerality to show but I also want the Gamay delicacy to be present. We don't have the variety of grapes that they have, for example, in the Rhône valley but that is our strength. It's what the Gamay can reveal. To plant anything other than Gamay would be madness'. So let it be said. He works together with his parents on the sales side but sells 75% of the production on the export market (of which 50% is for the USA). In France he essentially sells in Paris, in restaurants and boutiques. With yields at 40 hectolitres per hectare he makes roughly 13 to 14,000 bottles. At wine fairs, he doesn't try to convince the taster who dislikes his wine. Take it or leave it. This is how he works. His father, who has worked on the organic viticulture certification, knows only too well. Charly refused the certification. 'I work for myself, not for a label. My certification is a document that resumes my soil analyses, vinification and bottling details, sulfite doses... everything! I am always talking about wine, always!' He is 'as stubborn as a mule' as he puts it, for certain topics. He knows he could export more if he had certification but he doesn't want to do it for that. An impassioned sportsman he jumps from mountain-walking to skiing and football. 'I like to cook to eat. Second to wine, that's my thing.' But, as a pose to wine, he cooks instinctively without a recipe. He is ever guided by his intuition: 'My father never forced me to make wine and I don't intend to force my future child to do the same as me'. Did I hear someone say determined?





PAUL-HENRI THILLARDON

A wine adventurer

7 ha. in Beaujolais and Chénas

An organic perspective on the vineyard

Ploughs his vines with a horse

Hallmark: he made his first wines when he was fifteen

“
I knew I could no
longer make wine
without tending
vines.
”

PASSIONATE. That's the best way of describing him. Although this strapping lad was born in Gleizé in 1986 and lived in Frontenas, a typical village in the Pierres Dorées, he chose to come and make wine in 'the north' amongst the smallest 'crus'. His father, a viticulturalist who worked with the south Beaujolais cooperative and his grand father, were to be his first teachers. At the age of 10 he made wine in basins in his parent's garage. And even then he was satisfied with the results. At 14, he looked after the cooperative tasting room with out a problem. It was the best way to learn as he never liked schools that 'were too strict'. But he did go on to complete a graduate degree in wine and spirits marketing, at Tournon in the Rhône. He believes he met more people during his studies than during his classical schooling. Choice of life, once more. He has kept in touch with all the producers he has met through wine, and all who have introduced him to wine. In his own words: 'Wine brings people together'. He calls his friends, challenges their opinions and matures through these encounters. He continues his hands on experience with Thierry Saint-Cyr who gives him his first responsibilities as a wine-maker, he is only 15! And then it clicked in 2008, returning from the Saint-Cyr cellars with another vision. He suddenly sees the relationship between vine and wine. 'From then I knew I could no longer make wine without tending vines', he confides. Trusting, the producer leaves most of the winemaking to Paul-Henri now 21 years old. And makes, in 2008 his first Chénas that he drives to Anse 40 kilometres away in a refrigerated lorry.

That same year, the year he set himself up, having just taken out a loan, destiny hits hard: hail. Paul-Henri picks barely 10 hectolitres per hectare. But this young man has a stubborn streak and he hangs on to his organic vision of wine. In January 2010 he hires his younger brother Charles who admits he wanted to return and make wine with Paul-Henri. As far as business goes, 'everything is simple', he starts from scratch. He sells to private clients as he hasn't enough wine to work with the independent merchants. In 2011 he visits boutiques and restaurants who have heard of him through the specialist press. Some come to him of their own accord. The roles are reversed. He is a naturally talented business man and when he is tired of traveling the wines speak for themselves. Behind this very communicative Paul-Henri, there is another man who fights against doubt with a rational vision of wine. He writes everything down; cap punching, pumping over, in short all the 'ings' pass through his analytical prism. The notes are archived and referred to at each vintage. At the same time he is well able to be a gentle dreamer, listening to a tank ferment as if staring at the ever transforming clouds. Today, the domain comprises 7 hectares and goes from the south of Beaujolais to the Chénas 'cru' that he loves above all. His family roots are anchored in his passion for this 'cru'. A music lover, he has taken to the guitar these past two years to while away the lonely evenings without his partner. Once again, he knows what he wants and gets what he wants. And so, he wanted to plough his vines with a horse and learned to do it. Each year, he throws 'a mattress in the van' and goes off traveling with his sweetheart to discover new people and new places. Preferably countries with vineyards. Did I hear someone say passionate?

CÉDRIC VINCENT

The great white giant



5.37 ha. in Beaujolais red, white and rosé

65 % Chardonnay

50 % sold on the export market

Hallmark: Has two trades as a wine maker and a technical sales representative

THIS man lives in the clouds. It is not a reference to his height, two metres, but to his tank room built on the hill overlooking his native village of Pouilly-le-Monial. He doesn't live alone, Magali shares his life and loves his altruism: 'It's in his nature and his wine, he loves convincing others to love his wine...' And that's a director of human resources talking! Beneath his armour, Cédric is a timid chap always seeking perfection to better himself and not to teach you about life.

'There comes a time when you have to get on and do it' he announces. For him, the first glass shows the tint of a Chardonnay he makes in white Beaujolais. He swears by this appellation for here lie his origins and with this name he provokes the interest of his clients. It is moreover what will be the future majority of his production. 'It is terrible to see 'crus' reclassified on generic', he states. So, he pampers his 'Beaujo'. Although today he is more happy than proud to be a wine maker in Beaujolais, this has not always been the case. 'In 2012 there is a general awareness of our identity and our common good, the appellation, is better defended' In conclusion, 'We have responsibilities towards our 'terroir'. When we integrate an appellation we have an obligation to take care of what has been handed down.' He knows a thing or two about that having taken over his grand father's domain. With his mother working in a boutique clothes store and his father manager of an olympic swimming centre, he was destined to be an accomplished sportsman (he even qualified for the olympics but a motorbike accident prevented that. No regrets). Listening to his grand father in the vines gave him the taste for the land. With a strict ethical sense, he taught him how to think whilst working. The taste of wine arrived later as his grand father sold his harvest to the local cooperative. He did initial studies and went on to do an undergraduate degree in viticulture and enology at Bel Air, which he doubled with another in international wine and spirits commerce at Mâcon-Davayé. At 18, during one of his periods of work experience for school in Beaujolais, he put into practice the recently acquired theory managing a vinification.

With no cellar buildings or home, he had to build everything, and with his three hectares in Beaujolais, it wasn't viable. So Cédric works two 'jobs'; one as a wine-maker

and the other as a technical sales rep. For seven years, he has visited large and small burgundian properties with his call card being a natural understanding of vineyards and cellars. Thus, each time he set foot in a tank room he could see what was missing or needed changing. Everything he earned in Burgundy he invested 'down to the last cent' in his Beaujolais domain and administrative fees for the three year long planning permission to construct his buildings. But his determined nature won the day for him once more. In spring 2010 he returned permanently to his domain which now covers 5.37 hectares of which 65% is planted in chardonnay that clings to the sun filled slopes of Pouilly-Le-Monial and Jarnioux, two very rich soils of calcareous-clay.

He produces 17,000 bottles, 10,000 red, a small and confidential amount of Beaujolais rosé and the rest highlight the white character of Beaujolais. With the 2011 vintage, the white has overtaken the red and by 2015 it will be 24,000 bottles ready to travel. He has increased his bottling with the export market, (50% of sales to the USA, England and Holland) and with professional markets such as restaurants. He had tried to find markets in Amsterdam without success and then a Bata-vian importer, inspired by his 'blog', came to see him after a trip to Burgundy... and became his emissary.

As for the wine, both the reds and the whites, he harvests whole clusters in perforated cases. He partially de-stems his reds, for with a maceration of 10 to 18 days he only wants to extract the skin tannins and not those of the stems. In the vineyard he looks for the small clusters of Gamay grapes with thick skins. He thins his harvest each year getting rid of the larger clusters. 'Generally when my neighbours have finished harvesting their Gamay, I begin mine'. He grasses over in the middle of the rows but tills between the vines. Thus his Beaujolais culture is enriched with his Burgundian experience. The whites have sulphur added regularly during aging; the reds are dosed at bottling. Looking to 2015, he hopes to build a warehouse with a bottling line to bottle on the property. In his house, he has already built a large reception room designed to receive clients and friends, with an impressive view over the hills of Beaujolais and Mont Blanc, 'when the weather is fine' he points out. Did I hear someone say altruistic?

“
We have
responsibilities
towards our
'terroir'
”

MARIE-ÉLODIE ZIGHERA-CONFURON

In a class of her own

5.3 ha. in Fleurie and Morgon

50 % in bottles

50 % to the export market

Hallmark: chose Beaujolais and not Burgundy



“
It was seeing the sentimental attachment I had for my origins that my parents decided not to sell after the passing of my grand mother.
”

At 32 years old, a young and level-headed lady, with blond hair, and the gentle touch of one who takes her time. Her husband defines her as a determined woman. Born in Paris, to an architect mother, fine hands and a gracious demeanor, nothing pointed to her making wine (it was easier to see her as a dancer, which she does regularly as a hobby). For two generations her family sold their 17 hectares to the cooperative at Fleurie (at that time the women did not make wine). In the beginning, Fleurie was a holiday destination rather than a work place for Marie-Élodie.

Until the age of 11 she would leave Paris for the holidays to visit her grand parent's village: Fleurie. 'It was seeing the sentimental attachment I had for my origins that my parents decided not to sell after the passing of my grand mother. At fifteen she decided to study viticulture with the idea of taking over the vineyard with her father. Just before finishing her studies her father, who was looking after the domain for the time being, died. She mourned sometime before beginning her adventure. 'I couldn't see myself working in an enology laboratory (having spent three weeks collecting samples) but I could in the vineyard. Each moment of hands-on experience was tailored to my future needs. The first was in Beaujolais to get to know the Gamay plant, the second in the Côtes-du-Rhône with someone who had just left the cooperative to make his own wine, and for the last one I chose someone who did whole cluster vinification, in mono-varietal, and with a similar size vineyard to my own.' During her second year of enology studies in Burgundy at Château de la Tour she met her future husband who was none other than her studies director, the son of a wine-maker from

Vosne-Romanée: 'During the harvest, for one month, it's each to his own; he's in Vosne and I'm in Fleurie. He is though the first to come and taste my wines..'

So what happened to change everything? She is invited to a tasting of aged Beaujolais by a French journalist who shows her Gamay's cellaring capacity. Since setting herself up, the 1st April 2006, she shares her time between the pink granite of Fleurie and the clay of Vosne-Romanée in Burgundy. The domain name 'Clos de Mez' is a contraction of her name Marie-Élodie Zighera. As for her wines, and seeking the maturity of the grapes, she whole cluster harvests with an initial semi-carbonic maceration followed by cap-punching. On average she harvests 25 hectolitres in Morgon and 30 to 35 in Fleurie. Half is sold in bulk, the other half representing 9,000 bottles.

'In the future, I want to develop bottle sales. Currently half of these are sold in France and the other half on the export market.' She does admit however that it is not easy to build an image and create a clientele. 'You might think that with a foot in the Burgundy door everything is easier. Nothing is farther from the truth. The notoriety of one does not imply the notoriety of the other and the clientele for Côte-de-Nuits in Burgundy is not necessarily the same as for the 'crus' of Beaujolais. And yet the encounter is possible!' Prejudice is tough but Marie-Élodie is tougher than that. Did I hear someone say determined?



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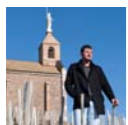
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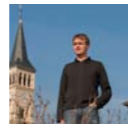
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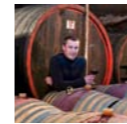
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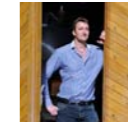
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