

Burgundy-Report

Louis Latour 2018

**Tasted in Beaune with director, Jean-Charles Thomas,
5 December 2019**



Jean-Charles on 2019: *“More than normal, more than the last few years, more than 2003 even, was a heterogeneity. It was a later start to the growth than in 2003, some frost in the south of the Mâconnais, part of southern Beaujolais was hailed too. Given the concentration and the high acidity that we currently see – it could really be a great white vintage, but we will see.”*

Jean-Charles on 2018: *“A really good year; rich and generous from both flavour and volume – it’s a dream. We’re just starting to do our first bottlings, those in tank have (obviously) been racked, but not yet sulfured. The wood seems to have been eaten rather quickly in this vintage, but generally, I think*

that the wines need about 2-3 months less time than in many years so will be bottled relatively early – Criots one week ago, for instance. Practically no late fermentations with the reds but a little in some whites – even stopped in some cases. Was it the absence of rain and still some copper on the grapes? – I’m not sure. No whole clusters in 2018, except for the Clos de Vougeot. In 2003 there was no malic acid left in the grapes, although there wasn’t much in 2018, there was some – it’s an important difference.

The wines...

A few darker reds aside, there’s very little of the excesses of the vintage on display here – that said, it was the ‘smaller’ reds that excelled. For whites, unfortunately, it was one of the most expensive that stole my heart...

2018 Pinot Noir Les Pierres Dorées *All tank élevage – still young vines. This the only red tasted that’s already bottled – done 1 month. Under 40 hl/ha. Round but also rather deep – it’s an inviting nose. Full, round, a nice textural grab from modest tannin. A richness of delicious finishing flavour – well balanced. For the price this is a very easy recommendation!*

2018 Marsannay *This racked and in tank. Hmm – that’s a nice higher tone – just a little floral. Round, good energy, depth of flavour. This is a fine mouthful of wine today – delicious finishing. Very good!*

2018 Savigny-lès-Beaune *5 different parcels. Even a little higher-toned – very attractive. Gas. Nice open shape, a touch of tannin accentuated by the gas. Depth of flavour. Savigny is a great source in 2018 – here is another one.*

2018 Volnay

Deep, good fruit, quite a strong accent of oak today – which will, of-course, fade. Gas. A mouth-filling volume and really excellent freshness. A nice extra dimension of finishing flavour. This will be excellent.

Burgundy-Report

2018 Morey St.Denis

Hmm, that's an invitingly deep and round nose – of really inviting fruit. Supple, concentrated, layered. Delicious, a little less acidity but no lack of balance. Bravo.

2018 Gevery-Chambertin

'More than 5 different vigneron contributed to this – all in grapes.' Hmm, a dark wine, this is concentrated but there's a nice and actually quite elegant top note of aroma. Lots of freshness – a big mouth-filling wine but one that's open and accessible. Not quite my style but a wine that avoids major excess. The finish is excellent with a little graphite minerality...

2018 Aloxe-Corton 1er Les Chaillots

2.5 ha block – this is Latour's testbed where all is organic. An attractive nose – of modest but inviting width and some elegant higher notes. Gas. Mouth-filling, depth of flavour and texture – lovely balance though with mouth-watering flavour. This is a young pup right now that needs to calm, but the flavour, balance, finish and aroma are simply excellent!

2018 Beaune 1er Vignes-Franches

Dark colour but blind you wouldn't guess as this has much high-toned invitation. Fresh, driving with energy, lots of width. Mouth-watering with a lick of (very fine) tannin. So floral in the finish! This is excellent and you should have a little patience!

2018 Pommard 1er Les Epenots

A small part of the fruit is domaine, the rest grape contracts. Lots of colour. This is the first that smells just a little alcoholic, but behind is a faint spice and some well-textured dark fruit. Fresh, classic fresh, direct shape of Epenots. Open, lots of volume – more about intensity than overt concentration. A very good finish.

2018 Volnay 1er Chevrets

Quite a big nose, there's energy and lots of interesting complexity. Drive, direct, but also a wine of width, faintly drying tannin but no grain to the tannin. A wine of volume – a rounder, more mouth-filling Epenots – almost! Again a very fine and persistent finishing flavour. Yum!

2018 Vosne-Romanée 1er Les Petits Monts

Bottled 10 days. This had all new barrel elevage. Large scaled, very good texture – micro-grained tannin, a nice freshness to the fruit too – it's obviously 2018, but without the excesses of the vintage – rather floral in the finishing flavours.

2018 Château Corton-Grancey

Perrieres, Bressandes and Clos du Roi. Of-course plenty of colour but far from opaque. Fresh, mineral, with a special, late-arriving floral note that I don't recognize. Directly fresh, the flavour melting over the palate, wide, concentrated, but balanced and layered – a luxurious Corton!

Burgundy-Report

2018 Clos de Vougeot

Assembly of 6 different parcels. The only wine with some whole clusters. A vertical nose – high and low-toned, less width, faint spice and violets. Ooh that's fresh and driving, of-course it's ripe but less obviously a 2018 than most. Long, graphite accented in the finish. Proper wine, not austere but of-course for saving. Excellent!

2018 Chambertin Cuvée Héritiers Latour

Rather dark coloured. The nose is deep, not so wide, ripe-fruited, another that suggests a little alcohol. Suave, there's tannin but as part of a velvet texture, no astringency. This feels super in the mouth, lingering, mouth-watering – not showing everything today the parts visible are on a high level!

2018 Romanée St.Vivant Les Quatre Journeaux

These last 3 all new oak. Again a very dark colour. Like the Chambertin, there's a depth of ripe fruit that's faintly accented by an impression of higher alcohol – slowly widening with a more floral aspect. Sweeping shape and lines – this has fine energy and even more scale than the Chambertin – it's really impressive. The nose didn't tell much of the story, but in the mouth this is a tour de force.

Les Blancs...

2018 Beaune Blanc

This only a few days in bottle. The vigneron has practically retired so Latour do all the work in the vines and pay for the harvest. White soil here, high up in Beaune. Ooh – that's a bright punchy, really attractive nose of fresh but ripe fruit – nice purity. Round, perfumed, the fruit a little less classy than the nose – in terms of ripeness, but still a refreshing tasty wine, modestly oaked.

2018 Pernand-Vergelesses 1er En Caradeux

Domaine vines. A little more toastiness to the fresh nose. Gas. The slightly reductive style of Pernand, more concentrated and mineral than the Beaune – a super finish and the oak is showing much less – despite 30%. This will be super.

2018 Meursault 1er Château Blagny

A similar toast to the last wine – eventually relaxing with fruit and a modest (non-oak) spice. More open, more inviting, melting with proper Meursault flavour. This is delicious and excellent!

2018 Meursault 1er Charmes

A little toast, again, but here the nose is a little more compact at first but slowly becomes more floral. Bright, intense, open, mineral – ooh – where did that come from? Slowly adding detail as you hit the finish – bravo!

Burgundy-Report

2018 Puligny-Montrachet 1er Sous le Puits

No toast, wide, sweeter, almost faintly spiced. More density but fine width, a more direct concentration but also more minerality versus the Charmes. Rather sweet but very long. I prefer the Charmes.

2018 Puligny-Montrachet 1er La Garenne

Bottled about 1 month. A deep nose, of concentrated and ripe yellow citrus. Gas. This is more open and mouth-watering. Complex, less overtly sweet, more mineral finishing. Excellent.

2018 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er La Grand Montagne

Clean, vibrant, classically involving, high-class Chassagne. Round, open, mouth-watering layers of mineral-based and citrus flavour. That's a simply gorgeous mouthful of wine – bravo!

2018 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Morgeot

Also about 1 month in bottle, mainly from Les Cerisières. That's also a very nicely vibrant nose – wide, mineral and inviting. Bigger, more muscle, a little more structural. Similarly mouth-watering, a little more to wait for – great finishing, needing just a little more time for 'completely delicious' but it's already close! Bravo.

2018 Corton-Charlemagne

Currently racked to stainless, wont be bottled before Feb-March. Deep, a hint of caramel, becoming wider and wider but at the same time, the depth tightens. This is actually rather concentrated, rather mineral too.

2018 Criots Bâtard-Montrachet

Just bottled, a small cuvée. Hmm – this has mouth-filling volume and freshness plus energy. (...) Lots of middle and finishing complexity. There's power in this finish but it's never heavy – this reminds Charles of his 2010 which looks back on with 'fondness.'

2018 Chevalier-Montrachet Les Demoiselles

Wow – what a nose – Grand Montagne plus, plus – and so complex too. Great scale, freshness and cut. The acidity is practically perfect, this is mineral and it is melting with great agrume citrus. Vibrantly mineral finishing too with no rigour, just love! Grand Vin. one of my two top whites in December!

2018 Montrachet

Hmm – there is power and freshness here too – acacia complexity. Full, concentrated, layered – this is almost a little too big in the mouth, but most wines might look like that after the energy of the Demoiselles! Layered, practically oily but with a very good balance. The finish is a tour de force of complexity, but today at least this can't compete with the overall package delivered by the Demoiselles. This is longer though!