



Blockbusting Burgundy plays a blinder

Wine columnist Neil Cammies enjoyed a recent tasting highlighted the fine wines from Maison Louis Latour

There is nothing quite like a glass of fine Burgundy, whether white or red. It conveys elegance and the personification of the purest expression of chardonnay or pinot noir. It's a region that evokes hyperbole and almost a religious devotion to its produce. They can command eye-watering prices, but that just seems to add to its mystique. The chaps at Fine Wines Direct have a few nice bottles of Burgundy in their range but wanted to add to the portfolio, so who better to get in one of the big boys – Maison Louis Latour?

A lunch was arranged at the recently refurbished Le Monde for a fun afternoon of wine and food hosted by Louis Latour Agency's regional account manager, Nina Sears.

The négociant* acquired its first vineyards in 1731 and the Maison Louis Latour name was created in 1797. Domaine Louis Latour covers 48 hectares of vineyard, from the red Grand Cru of Chambertin and Romanée-Saint-Vivant in the Côte de Nuits to the white Grand Cru of Corton-Charlemagne and Chevalier-Montrachet in the Côte de Beaune. The company went from strength to strength during the 19th century, culminating in the purchase of these exceptional sites. Today, Louis Latour's vineyards, represent the largest holding of Grand Cru vineyards in Burgundy.

Starting with the [POUILLY-FUISSE 2017](#), this is a crisp lively chardonnay that shows expressive minerality and is an unashamed food wine.

We then leapt nose first into some of their heavyweight whites, starting with the [PULIGNY MONTRACHET 2016](#). Aromas of smooth creamy, vanilla tones to the white peach fruits, but not overblown partly due to the 40% of new oak which leaves room for freshness on the palate and a touch of lemon citrus across the finish.

Continuing our tasting of what reads like a "Top Trumps" of Burgundy, the [CHASSAGNE MONTRACHET 2015](#) was next to ravish our tastebuds. Finished in 100% oak, of which 15% is new, this carries on with the opulent bouquet theme with rich butterscotch to the sweet floral tones. The honeyed fruit on the palate still carries crisp minerality which sits well with the luxurious mouthfeel.

Talking of oak, Louis Latour has its own cooperage using oak from the forests of northern France and ages in the open air for more than two years. The five coopers produce some 3,500 hand-crafted barrels a year for use on their top wines and for sale to other great wineries around the world.

We moved to our final white of the afternoon, [CORTON CHARLEMAGNE 2015](#). This blockbuster was aged for eight to 10 months in 100% new oak, giving the wine a smoky, toasty nutty aroma. This transmits onto the palate with the buttery fruit showing power and finesse in equal measure.

Our first red was the crisp and crunchy [MERCUREY](#) showing lots of lively red-berry fruit and another foodie favourite.

Next up the [VOSNE ROMANEE 2104](#) was aged for 10 to 12 months, 20% new, which gives some heft and texture to the smoky red fruits on the nose. In the mouth there is a smidge of savoury tones to the redcurrant fruit that has a little earthiness to it. Long and silky on the finish.

For those who think that red Burgundy is all svelte elegance, they should try the [CHARMES-CHAMBERTIN GRAND CRU 2012](#). This is a blockbuster wine with the showiest nose of spice, cassis and a punnet of deep, red and black fruits. On the palate the fruit carries a little sweetness initially then the spice characters tumble in with some kirsch cherry weight. The tannins are prominent but silky and the finish is a mile long. For those who like their pinot noir with plenty of gas in the tank this is the very chap for you... at a cost.

Finally the tasting concluded – boooo – with the [CORTON GRAND CRU 2014](#) hewn from old vines and natural in its approach, avoiding pesticides in its production. Black cherry fruit aromas from the glass have a little floral prettiness to them.

In the mouth the old-school style shows the tannins slightly before the fruit opens up in the glass to reveal a savoury tone and a smidge of acidity through the mid-palate.

A blinding tasting showing a cross-section of the great region of Burgundy through the Louis Latour lens.