

## Hospices de Beaune 2020

There are 630 barrels on offer this year (one less than just the red wines in 2018!) with 474 barrels of red wine (471 last year), and 156 barrels of white (118 last year) where yields were a little more even. 50 different cuvees are being offered once again, 33 red and 17 white. These tasting notes were compiled in early November.

### THE RED WINES

*2020 is the third vintage in a row grown in warm sunny conditions. There were no exceptional heat spikes, fortunately, but the conditions enabled the grapes to ripen early, with harvest taking place between August 17<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Yields and sugar levels were similar to 2019, with slightly higher acidity. Ludvine Griveau has taken care to vinify the wines to ensure that the fruit retains the fresher quality which is desirable.*

### AUXEY-DURESSES – MONTHELIE- PERNAND – SANTENAY - SAVIGNY

*These cuvées offer both affordability and accessibility: any of them will start to be ready to drink after about 5 years in bottle, yet will age safely for as long again. All wines are currently being matured in new barrels.*

#### **Auxey Duresses, 1er Cru Les Duresses, Cuvée Boillot (4 barrels)**

The 2020 Cuvée Boillot delivers an evenly spread deep purple colour, with discreet aromatics on the nose, followed by an intensity of fresh blackcurrant fruit thereafter which should not take too long to develop into an attractive glass of wine. There are some fine-grained tannins and good acidity levels.

#### **Monthelie Les Duresses, Cuvée Lebelin (9 barrels)**

Fine rich mid purple in colour. There is a sensational weight of fresh fruit this year, with great density, and a smoothness of texture while retaining a red fruit character which indicates that this wine has ripened to optimum level. Note that the majority of this cuvée is from the 1er cru sector of Les Duresses with a small proportion classified as village Monthelie Les Duresses.

#### **Pernand-Vergelesses, 1er Cru Les Vergelesses, Cuvée Rameau-Lamarosse (6 barrels)**

Dense black purple, presenting huge weight of dark fruit here, blackcurrant and deep raspberry. This is a typical profile for Cuvée Rameau-Lamarosse, though rarely is there quite as much concentration of fruit as the 2020 delivers. Though seemingly austere, this is a wine which will develop well in a relatively short time frame and should drink well from five years time.

#### **Santenay, Cuvée Christine Friedberg (5 barrels)**

One of the last vineyards to be picked, lean and more angular in character, more in a red fruit style, for those who like the crunchy side of pinot. The wine has retained good acidity which will stand it well over the next decade.

#### **Savigny-lès-Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Arthur Girard (17 barrels)**

Intense rich purple. The fruit burst out on the nose, with blueberry and intense dark raspberry notes. The key to this wine is the way the supple texture is matched by the structure of ripe tannins and correct acidity, leaving a finale where the concentration of ripe fruit is balanced by a fresh finale. The most seductive of the three Savigny cuvées.

**Savigny-lès-Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Fouquerand (17 barrels)**

Bright purple, quite a sensual nose offering notes of blackberry and morello cherries, supported by a sound weight of dark fruit on the palate too. The tannins from the old vines in Les Talmettes and Gravains vineyards offer a firm backbone.

**Savigny-lès-Beaune, 1er Cru Les Vergelesses, Cuvée Forneret (24 barrels)**

Very dense purple. The bouquet is the most backward of the three Savigny-lès-Beaune cuvées. Rich fruit up front, blackberries, succulent and long. This is an intense wine which will develop slowly. In its youth, the concentration of the fruit covering the bone structure.

**BEAUNE 1ER CRU**

*Hospices de Beaune is well provided in wines from Beaune itself: 10 different 1er cru cuvées delivering all the nuances of style that Beaune can offer. The tasting notes below will indicate the varying styles from one cuvée to another. Cuvée Cyrot-Chaudron and Cuvée Rousseau Deslandes might suit those seeking a wine which will be accessible earlier, whereas Cuvée Floquet or Cuvée Nicolas Rolin are for the long term.*

**Beaune, 1er Cru Les Montrevenots, Cuvée Cyrot-Chaudron (9 barrels)**

Gorgeous mid purple, a sensual attractive nose, this is always one of the most welcoming cuvees, indicating that it will suit those who would like to start drinking their barrel earlier rather than later. The dark red fruit strikes a very lively note on the palate, while the long finish is entirely without discordant tannins.

**Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Hugues & Louis Bétault (14 barrels)**

Cuvée Hugues & Louis Bétault has a firm weight of very deep dark fruit which emerges more as fresh raspberries further back on the palate. The wine is beginning to integrate nicely with its barrel. An attractive Beaune for drinking in the medium term.

**Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Brunet (9 barrels)**

After the powerful purple-black colour, the bouquet of Cuvée Brunet offers an inky concentration of dark red fruit, suggestive of boysenberries. Medium-bodied on the palate, the finish is defined more by a balanced acidity along with some ripe tannins. This is an attractive Beaune to drink in 8 to 12 years time.

**Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Maurice Drouhin (18 barrels)**

A lively purple colour. Cuvée Maurice Drouhin often shows a toasty character when very young before the richness of the fruit develops to take over the running. The fruit is supple on the palate with well integrated tannins.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Rousseau-Deslandes (17 barrels)**

Rousseau-Deslandes is unable to hold back the charm of its fruit from the very first sniff. There is an abundance of fresh raspberry fruit with some strawberry notes alongside, medium-bodied, with just the right balance of fine tannins and light acidity to offer enough support. This will make beautiful wine with only a few years in the cellar.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru Les Grèves, Cuvée Floquet (10 barrels)**

Offering an imposingly deep purple colour, Cuvée Floquet stamps the presence of the Grèves vineyard from the outset. This wine has an intense gravelly structure to support the fruit which is perfectly on the cusp of red and black, with ideal acidity. High class fruit is backed by the perfect structure for ageing over the medium to long term.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru Clos des Avaux (12 barrels)**

The Clos des Avaux is one of the emblematic vineyards for the Hospices. Deep mid-purple in colour, the bouquet offers a sturdy style of fruit which should keep well. There is a burst of rich deep red fruit with some grenadine notes through the middle of the palate, backed by adequate tannins and lifted acidity.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Dames Hospitalières (28 barrels)**

One of the most concentrated wines in terms of colour, the Cuvée Dames Hospitalières which has the honour of opening the sale, provides an intense bilberry and blackberry bouquet, with a degree of succulent fruit on the palate, now including some glossy black cherries. The 2017 is beginning to drink exceptionally well at the moment: the 2020 will take longer to emerge and will provide a memorable cuvée from 8 to 20 years from now.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Guigone de Salins (25 barrels)**

Black centre with a purple rim. The bouquet is reserved at first but soon delivers a weight of ripe dark cherry fruit. As always, this is one of the most intense wines among the 10 Beaune cuvées, a wine capable of long ageing but delivered in a style which usually makes it more accessible younger than Cuvée Nicolas Rolin. Tannins bring up the finish to ensure longevity.

### **Beaune, 1er Cru, Cuvée Nicolas Rolin (25 barrels)**

There is a good depth of colour here, though not quite as intense as Guigone de Salins. However the fruit swells beautifully on the palate, with some fresh raspberry character, very evenly distributed across the balance, fine-boned tannins and exceptional length. This will make an outstanding Nicolas Rolin, capable of ageing very well over a long period. Perfectly judged acidity as well.

## **VOLNAY & POMMARD**

*These two appellations are often paired but they are certainly not identical twins. Volnay typically offers wines of great elegance, but those from Les Santenots have rather more structure. Pommard on the other hand is likely to be more robust – except for the consistent, underlying elegance to be found from the Epenots vineyard. The recent warmer vintages have been very kind to Pommard, though unfortunately yields were rather lower this year than last.*

**Volnay 1er Cru, Cuvée Général Muteau (18 barrels)**

A fine even crimson to purple colour. The nose shows the ripeness of the vintage with smooth fruit covering the palate and holding up well throughout. There are some fine-grained tannins at the finish, though the general style of this cuvée is to be accessible relatively early.

**Volnay 1er Cru, Cuvée Blondeau (18 barrels)**

Particularly intense in colour, the Cuvée Blondeau 2020 delivers a sterling power of fruit, the initial exuberance being well matched by the quality of the tannic structure. This is a firm, powerful Volnay which will last well. Dark fruit with some deep raspberry notes is the defining style here.

**Volnay 1er Cru Les Santenots, Cuvée Gauvain (17 barrels)**

The clay soils of the Santenots vineyard retained the humidity well in 2020, which has helped to maintain a fresh vigour in the dark raspberry fruit backed by some brisk cherry notes. This is a middleweight Volnay with the appellation's elegance backed by a framework of ripe tannins.

**Volnay 1er Cru Les Santenots, Cuvée Jehan de Massol (18 barrels)**

The imperial purple colour delivers the sense of majesty of this wine. It is the most complete of the Volnay bottlings with a driven energy that keeps the intensity of the fruit light on its toes. An excellent balance of fruit and just the right acidity, with a persistence of finish that promises extremely well for the future.

**Pommard, Cuvée Billardet (10 barrels)**

The vineyards of Pommard are favoured by the recent string of warm dry vintages, which play to the appellation's strengths, refining the tannins while enhancing the volume of fruit. The 2020 Cuvée Billardet is an excellent example of this phenomenon, offering a balanced wine which delivers a precision in the fruit profile as well as very good persistence.

**Pommard, Cuvée Suzanne Chaudron (15 barrels)**

A delightful fresh purple colour kicks off, before the intense raspberry fruit notes, and slightly firmer tannins than can be seen in the Cuvée Billardet. Suzanne Chaudron is brooding today and will take time to emerge, but the potential is clearly there.

**Pommard, Cuvée Raymond Cyrot (17 barrels)**

A powerful purple colour with a deeper darker centre, the Raymond Cyrot cuvée of Pommard offers an intensity of dark fruit enlivened by good acidity as well as the necessary tannins. This is the most backward of the three Pommard cuvées and will repay keeping. The finish is particularly long. Note that there is a good proportion of 1<sup>er</sup> cru vineyards (Charmots, Bertins, Rugiens) in this blend.

**Pommard 1er Cru, Cuvée Dames de la Charité (20 barrels)**

Powerful deep purple in colour. The nose displays an intensity of dark raspberry fruit which promises well for the future. The fruit on the palate is tightly wound, displaying a restrained elegance and

intensity, with a fruit profile reminiscent of summer pudding, that heady mix of red berries and blackcurrants. A long, seamless finish.

#### **Pommard, 1er Cru Les Epenots, Cuvée Dom Goblet (10 barrels)**

From one of Pommard's noblest terroirs, Dom Goblet 2020 is a very striking wine. On the nose the fruit is discreet without any sign of excess ripeness. On the palate, the flavours expand to fill the mouth with an intensity of fruit picked at optimum ripeness, as red notes shade into black fruit with a graceful harmony that is the essence of Les Epenots. The tannins and acidity maintain this sense of balance. A great wine with excellent ageing potential.

#### **THE GRANDS CRUS**

*The six grands crus are evenly balanced between the Côte de Nuits and the Côte de Beaune, where the Hospices de Beaune are particularly fortunate in their extensive holdings of the Corton Bressandes, Renardes and Clos du Roi vineyards. All of these wines have the ability to age for 20 plus years, so will easily survive into the adulthood of children and grandchildren born this year. The three grands crus from the Côte de Nuits are all majestic in their different styles.*

#### **Corton, Grand Cru, Cuvée Charlotte Dumay (22 barrels)**

This gorgeous cuvée blends the sensual fruit from Les Bressandes with the more structured background of Renardes. Together they make a complete Corton. Thank you, Charlotte Dumay for your kind donation back in 1534. We remain eternally grateful! There is a plump quality to the fruit, but with fresher dark red notes and some iron rich blood orange qualities. Complex, intriguing wine, destined for a long future.

#### **Corton, Grand Cru, Cuvée Docteur Peste (23 barrels)**

The Dr Peste cuvée has a blacker note to the colour and a deeper more brooding nose, compared to Charlotte Dumay. This is for those seeking a more muscular interpretation of Corton, with good tannins in the background behind the predominantly black fruit profile.

#### **Corton Clos du Roi, Grand Cru, Cuvée Baronne du Baÿ (9 barrels)**

The Clos du Roi deserves its reputation as a vineyard apart within the appellation of Grand Cru Corton. There is a noble structure to this wine based around fine-grained tannins and the perfect level of acidity, which supports a density of fruit picked at optimum ripeness, still predominantly with red fruit pinot character. Harmonious, fine and beautifully constructed for the long term.

#### **Echezeaux Grand Cru, Cuvée Jean-Luc Bissey (6 barrels)**

The intensity of the colour is awesome. 2020 is a vintage of telling concentration. Happily, the beauty of the flavour profile has been maintained. The fruit remains beautifully nuanced on the palate, just in a more intense register than normal. The finish displays the delicacy of Echézeaux to good advantage.

#### **Clos de la Roche Grand Cru, Cuvée Cyrot Chaudron (2 barrels)**

### **Clos de la Roche Grand Cru, Cuvée Georges Kritter (3 barrels)**

There is less wine than usual here as a barrel has been made separately to become this year's President's Barrel (see below). This regular version is deeply impressive too with a purple fruited intensity that gives this wine a hedonistic buzz over and above the Echézeaux. The beautiful black cherry fruit swarms across the palate, living in harmony with the structure, with a valuable fresh acidity assisting the balance.

### **Mazis Chambertin Grand Cru, Cuvée Madeleine Collignon (17 barrels)**

There is a majesty about Mazis-Chambertin every year, perfectly captured once again in 2020. The colour displays an imperial purple robe, the bouquet delivers an intensity of the deepest raspberry fruit that one could hope for. Despite this intensity, the 2020 Mazis-Chambertin retains a liveliness which is admirable. It has a breathtakingly long finish.

## **THE PRESIDENTS' BARREL**

One barrel is chosen to represent the **Pièce du Président** each year. In 2020, in honour of the 160<sup>th</sup> Hospices de Beaune wine sale, the barrel is even more distinct than ever in the past. Wood has been selected from the famous forest of Chambord, and the barrel has been created by Tonnellerie Cadus, under the watchful eye of Hospices winemaker Ludivine Griveau. Grapes from the marvellous Grand Cru of Clos de la Roche have been vinified as whole bunches within this barrel, and will mature therein harmoniously until the time for bottling. Exceptionally this year, the purchaser may choose to ask the Hospices de Beaune to tend the barrel for them.

The wine itself is majestic! It all starts with a heavenly full purple robe. The bouquet delivers the extra lift which is associated with whole bunch fermentation, introducing an ethereal element to a wine which is superbly concentrated from the outset. The wine is even more subtly nuanced than the regular Clos de la Roche, wearing a cloak of harmonious density lightly. The balance of fruit, fine tannins and perfectly integrated acidity stretches out to finish of the utmost persistence.

## **WHITE WINES**

*The white wines are matured in barrels from the Tonnellerie Damy. All wines are being matured in new 228 litre barrels this year, as is the custom, with the following exceptions among the white wines: The Chablis 1er Cru has been placed in one year old 228 litre barrels, while the Pouilly-Fuissé is currently in a mix of new 456 litre barrels and stainless steel tank. These components will be blended to fill the barrels for the purchasers of this wine.*

*2020 is the fourth exciting white wine vintage in a row, and destined to be the greatest of them. The tasting of the young samples in the cuverie of the Hospices de Beaune was a humbling experience. Sugar and therefore alcohol levels are similar to 2019 but with even better acidity and a more dynamic taste profile. Great wines in the making, with very good ageing potential.*

### **Pouilly-Fuissé, Cuvée Françoise Poisard (25 barrels)**

A fine fresh clear colour. The bouquet displays a southern exuberance in a very fresh style. The 2020 Pouilly-Fuissé offers a gorgeously clear and fine bouquet with light peach and pear notes, backed by just the right acidity. The barrel element is in harmony, and there is a strikingly long finish.

#### **St-Romain, Cuvée Joseph Menault (9 barrels)**

A little more colour here with a bouquet reminiscent of fresh Cox's orange pippin apples, very tasty indeed! The wine is less austere than St-Romains of the past and will make for a delicious wine in the next three to five years.

#### **Chablis 1er Cru Côte de Léchet, Cuvée Jean-Marc Brocard (3 barrels)**

Ludivine Griveau has made the sensible choice to place the Chablis in one year old barrels. The sunshine shone just as much in northern Burgundy as in the Côte de Beaune, allowing for some mandarin and grenadine notes to appear alongside the classical Chablis marine markers. Côte de Léchet is typically ready to drink from three to five years old.

#### **Beaune 1er Cru Les Montrevenots, Cuvée Suzanne & Raymond (14 barrels)**

This excellent vineyard adjacent to Clos des Mouches is proving itself as a fine site for white grapes. The bouquet is very fruit forward, but there is plenty to cover the whole palate, light notes of ripe citrus infuse the whole leading to an excellent crisp finish, with impressive persistence.

#### **Puligny-Montrachet, Cuvée Bernard Clerc (1 barrel)**

Clear pale lemon. The bouquet speaks well of Puligny with its floral notes, backed by a significant volume of fruit. Lemon zest behind, and a rich weight of fruit nicely intertwined with the vanillin from the barrel. There is a racy quality throughout, supported by just the right level of acidity. Only one barrel, sadly, but it will pay dividends.

### **MEURSAULT**

*Meursault remains the core of the Hospices de Beaune vineyard holdings with seven cuvées to chose from, including two each from the fabulous Charmes and Genevrières 1er cru vineyards. In total there are ten more barrels of Meursault to enjoy this year, compared to 2019.*

#### **Meursault, Cuvée Loppin (13 barrels)**

Pale lemon in colour. The bouquet offers a good fresh pure pear fruit. This is a classical Meursault, rounded and mouth-filling, which should satisfy those who yearn for Meursault to deliver weight on the palate and eventually a rounded buttery finish. This is the best Cuvée Loppin I can remember tasting.

#### **Meursault Cuvée Goureau (5 barrels)**

Pale lemon and lime colour. The bouquet is a little more reticent than that of the Cuvée Loppin. There is nonetheless impressive power and weight here, with a tighter finish, very evenly spread across the palate, yet also an elegance to the fruit. Ripe but balanced and with the superb persistence that marks a really fine vintage.

### **Meursault 1er Cru Porusots, Cuvée Jehan Humblot (9 barrels)**

This is the first cuvée to undergo its malolactic fermentation, so was more difficult to taste. For the moment the bouquet reflects this stage of development. On the palate the wine is dominated by concentrated white fruit with just a few more exotic elements appearing with the lightest of touches.

### **Meursault 1er Cru Genevrières, Cuvée Baudot (21 barrels)**

Pale lemon colour with a light lime streak. Fresh apple nose, but the bouquet brings a zest and concentration over and above the other Meursaults. There's a long, tensile thread through the middle which really delivers. The balance of fresh fruit and mineral acidity is excellent, with the typical delicacy of Genevrières. Very long finish.

### **Meursault 1er Cru Genevrières, Cuvée Philippe Le Bon (10 barrels)**

Fine pale yellow. The bouquet is a little richer and rounder than the Cuvée Baudot, and this same weight of fruit continues on the palate, with a soft gracious intensity. The acidity appears at first to be a little less present, but that is more the effect of the opulence of the fruit which coats the mouth and masks the structure. Exceptionally promising.

### **Meursault 1er Cru Charmes, Cuvée de Bahèze de Lanlay (9 barrels)**

Pale to mid lemon in colour. Charmes as a vineyard source offers more immediate weight of fruit than Genevrières, and this is no exception. This is a full-bodied Meursault with light Mirabelle plums and fresh pears, backed by excellent acidity. A complete and substantial offering which will need 5+ years.

### **Meursault 1er Cru Charmes, Cuvée Albert Grivault (10 barrels)**

Clear fresh colour. There are some refreshing citrus notes on the nose, an attractive balance of ripeness and energy. There is a backbone of steel running through this wine, backed by an impressive weight of fruit picked at optimum ripeness. Sunshine in the glass! There will be much more to be revealed later, as the wine develops. Fine acid balance.

## **THE GRANDS CRUS**

*There are four whites offered from the Corton family and one fabulous cuvée of Bâtard-Montrachet. The Cortons, happily, have returned to more normal yields after a deficit in 2019, and they are showing exceptionally well. These wines can age as well as their red counterparts.*

### **Corton Blanc, Grand Cru, Cuvée Docteur Peste (6 barrels)**

Clear pale colour. There is an immediate sense of white fruit on the nose, a few apples behind. The grand cru quality shows in the way that the fruit builds at the back of the palate, integrating very well with the light toastiness that brings up the finish of this wine.

### **Corton-Vergennes, Grand Cru, Cuvée Paul Chanson (4 barrels)**



The colour has retained a faint green tint. More restrained on the nose, before the fruit leaps out on the palate, more in the register of concentrated fresh pears, with firm energy, and a powerful aftertaste. The finish is generous yet with no feeling of heat, superbly judged. Grand Cru all the way!

**Corton-Charlemagne, Grand Cru, Cuvée Le Roi Soleil (4 barrels)**

Pale fresh lemon. The nose shows ripe pears from the outset. Then something leaner but even more intense. This Cuvée Le Roi Soleil demonstrates the saline quality often to be found on the hill of Corton, contributing to the sense of refined elegance.

**Corton-Charlemagne, Grand Cru, Cuvée Francois de Salins (9 barrels)**

Attractive mid lemon with a lively fresh apple note with many other flavours bubbling up behind. This is always a magisterial cuvée and it is not letting us down today. Huge intensity behind, floral, roses and ripe fruit, with a very long classy finish. There is a majestic weight of fruit here but it treads lightly. Happily there are nine barrels this year compared to just four in 2019.

**Bâtard-Montrachet, Grand Cru, Cuvée Dames de Flandres (4 barrels)**

The Bâtard-Montrachet is unsurprisingly the most backward and powerful wine in the cellar. It has a pretty, pale primrose colour, while the bouquet delivers power with grace. There is a vastly intense sweet fruit supported by the oak, all in harmony, but it is still too early to pick out the detail. Waves of flavour slide across the palate, with some baked lemon zest and Williams pears - but this is a wine which is going to take much longer to show all the nuances. For now, we see the power and the intensity.

**Afterword**

In this most complicated of years, it is a relief to find that the grapes came through the season unscathed and that the wines are showing such promise early in their life in barrel. Please be generous in your bids for the very worthy cause of the Hospices Civils de Beaune. We wish every fortune in obtaining your choices on November 15<sup>th</sup>.