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## **Burgundy Club!**

### **Fall 2016**

Welcome to the latest edition of the **Caveau Burgundy Club** – a twice-yearly tutored tasting and exploration of the great wines and terroirs of Burgundy.

This club functions just like our **Champagne Club** - *(and if you're not already a member, call us at 503-679-6233).*

<http://www.caveauselections.com/champagne-club/>

The wines in each 6-bottle shipment have been specifically selected to help educate and illustrate – each shipment is essentially a Burgundy seminar-in-a-box. You can use all of this to stage your own tasting seminar at home, or of course you can just drink the wines one by one. Whichever path you choose – there's lots of good Burgundy in your future!

### **Quality all across the spectrum...**

This time around we've put together a package that illustrates **the quality that can be found across the entire range of Burgundy** – from the humbler appellations to the more exalted. Over the years we've pointed out a number of times that excellent wines are not exclusively found in the legendary Grand Crus or from the superstar producers. In fact there are a lot of mediocre wines from lofty appellations – simply go to your local wine shop and pick up a random bottle of **Clos Vougeot** or **Echezeaux** if you don't believe it. You'll pay a lot of money for a pretty average to downright disappointing bottle of wine, and that's truly a shame. **There is quality to be had at every step along the Burgundy hierarchy, and we're here to help you find it!**

If you're new to the club, or would just like to brush up a bit, we'll start off with some good general Burgundy information to help you understand the lay of the land. Otherwise, please feel free to skip ahead for the details and info on the wines in this shipment.

## Burgundy Basics

The Burgundy region of France has been producing what are widely considered to be the world's finest Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays for nearly a thousand years. Burgundy is a relatively small area (only about 13,500 acres of vines in Burgundy's Côte d'Or, as opposed to Bordeaux's 235,000 acres or California's 515,000.) Oregon has recently grown larger than Burgundy, with some 18,000 vineyard acres planted.

As in Oregon, most of the winegrowers and producers in Burgundy are small, family operations. The average estate size is about 15 acres, enough to produce about 3,500 cases of wine each year. Those 15 acres are often split into 10 or more tiny parcels of vineyards scattered around several different vineyards and villages — so production of each wine is often only a few hundred cases or less. While it can seem quite complicated, even perplexing at times, in reality Burgundy is fairly simple to decipher.

**Red = Pinot Noir.** If it's a red wine from Burgundy, it is made from the Pinot Noir grape. (Beaujolais, while technically part of the Burgundy region, is truly a different world altogether. Beaujolais reds are made from the Gamay Noir grape.)

**White = Chardonnay.** If it's a white wine from Burgundy, it's a Chardonnay. (Again, there are minor exceptions you'll rarely see — there's a white grape known as Aligoté that produces some very inexpensive, lower-level wines — but it will not come into play in anything we're discussing here.)

Unlike America, France has legal classifications for their wines. In Burgundy, the actual vineyards themselves, rather than the producer or wines, are given a level of classification. There are four levels:

**Grand Cru** — The best of the best. There are 32 Grand Cru vineyards in Burgundy, accounting for less than 2% of all Burgundy wine production. Grand Cru wines mention on the label only the producer and name of the vineyard — as in "Montrachet" or "Musigny" — the name of the village is not deemed necessary in the case of these great vineyards.

**Premier Cru** — (Also written as 1er Cru) One notch below the Grand Crus — there are hundreds at this level, and the quality varies widely. The best Premiers rival the Grand Crus, the lesser ones seem barely deserving of the ranking. These makeup about 10% of total production. A Premier Cru wine will mention the name of the village and possibly an individual vineyard on the label, as in "Pommard-Rugiens" or "Vosne-Romanée — Les Suchots" — if it indeed comes from a singly vineyard. It will always bear the mark "Premier Cru" or "1er Cru". If the wine is a blend of more than one 1er Cru vineyard within a given village, it will simply bear the designation "1er Cru" without any vineyard designation.

**Village** — Grapes for a village wine come from one or many vineyards surrounding a specific Burgundian village, for example Vosne-Romanée or Puligny-Montrachet. These are classified below the 1er Cru level, but can often be lovely wines and great values. Village wines are about 43% of the total pie. The label will simply state the name of the village (although in some cases the name of a specific vineyard will also be mentioned, even though it is not of Premier Cru status.)

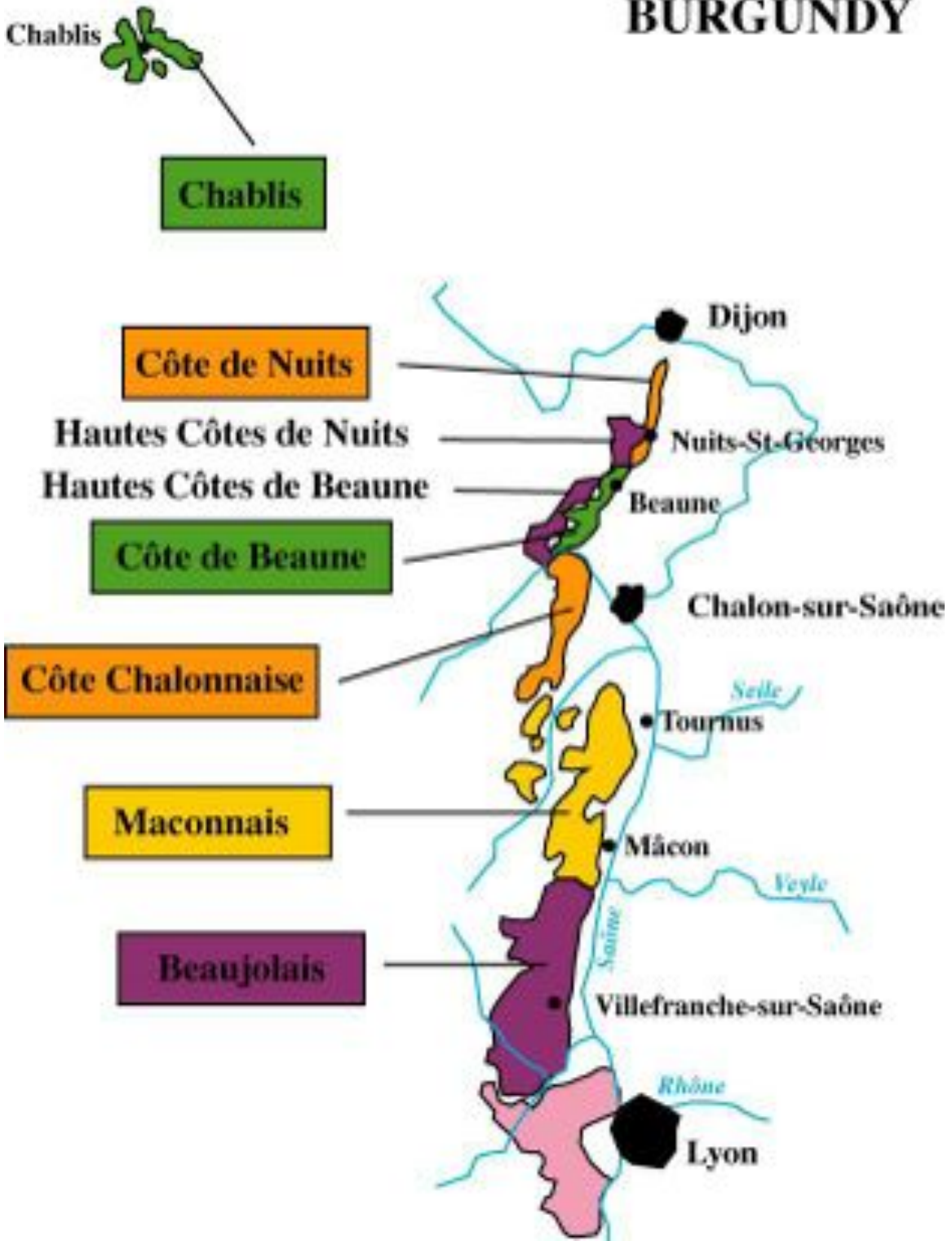
**Regional (Bourgogne)** — A bit less than half of all Burgundy vineyards (45%) are classified at the regional level. In the hands of dedicated and talented producers these can be lovely wines. In the hands of others they can be thin, weedy, and rather unpleasant. These wines are labeled as Bourgogne Rouge or Bourgogne Blanc, or Bourgogne Pinot Noir or Bourgogne Chardonnay.

Most of the vineyards in Burgundy are owned by multiple owners — as many as 70 or 80 different owners in some cases. (In the rare cases that a single producer owns the entirety of a specific vineyard, this is designated as a **“Monopole.”**) *This means that each winery may own only a few rows of the vineyard, and will make only a few barrels of that specific wine each year (but they are likely to own small pieces of several other vineyards as well.)* So, not all wines from the same vineyard are created equal. The quality can vary widely from producer to producer. In Burgundy, the most important consideration is in fact **the producer**. Get to know the styles of different producers, and zero in on the ones you like best. They will likely give you the most enjoyment year in and year out regardless of the classification level.



***Sunset over Musigny***

# BURGUNDY





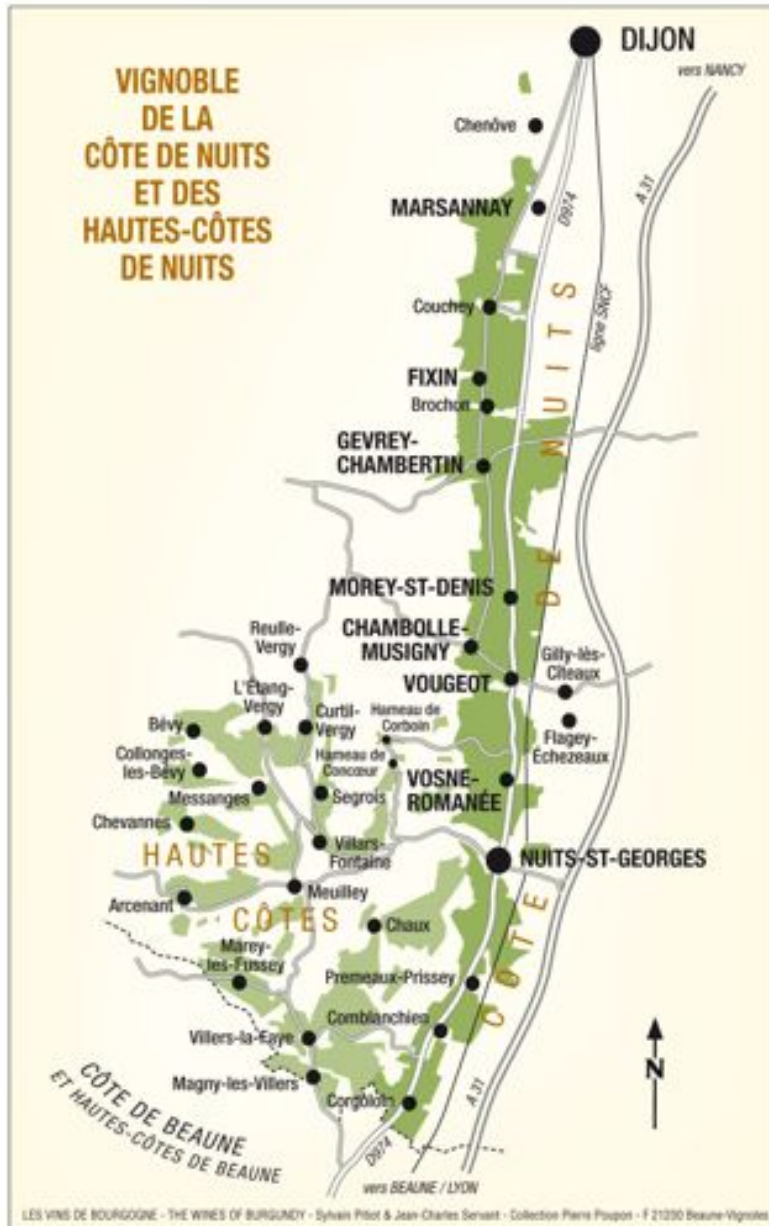
Now that you're armed with some solid basics, we'll take a closer look at the Burgundy sub-regions we'll be exploring in this package, and illustrate that excellent wines can come from many different points along the Burgundian spectrum.

## Hautes-Côtes de Nuits

**Hautes-Côtes** means “upper slopes” – and the appellation Hautes-Côtes de Nuits covers the vineyards on the hillsides **above** the Côte de Nuits. These are at a higher elevation – between 1,000 and 1,300 feet – as opposed to the Côte proper where the vines are planted in a band of 650-900 feet. The Côte itself ends in a plateau, and then another hillside rises up to the west – that second hillside is the Hautes-Côtes. Running from above Chambolle-Musigny in the north down to just above the hill of Corton in the south – the Hautes-Côtes de Nuits comprises 1,725 acres of vineyards, about 80% of which is Pinot Noir (the remaining 20% is Chardonnay.) The vineyards are on the same Jurassic-era limestone bedrock as the Côte below, with little if any topsoil to be found.

The most important thing to know about the Hautes-Côtes de Nuits is - most of it frankly isn't very good. Why? One, it's much cooler that high up, thus making it harder for the grapes to get ripe on a regular basis. A lot of Hautes-Côtes de Nuits grapes are harvested at very low alcohol and high acid levels, leaving many of the wines fairly un-generous to put it mildly. Two, many producers who own vines there don't pay much attention to their Hautes-Côtes parcels and wines – they are often treated as an afterthought. They put their time and energy into the better appellations (i.e. the ones they can sell for more money), and get around to the Hautes-Côtes only after they've paid proper attention to everything else.

However, in the hands of a producer that actually cares and treats the vines and wines with respect, the potential is there for excellent quality at very reasonable prices. When Hautes-Côtes wines are good, they can be some of the best values that Burgundy has to offer. In your package is a good example of what the Hautes-Côtes can be, though sadly is often not.



## Cru Beaujolais

A quick refresher – the red-wine grape grown in Beaujolais is **Gamay Noir**. There are four levels of wine produced in the Beaujolais (pronounced **Boh**-juh-lay, NOT **Boo**-juh lay) region, the southernmost sector of Burgundy. The three lower levels – *Beaujolais Nouveau*, *Beaujolais*, and *Beaujolais Villages* are rarely if ever worth your consideration or your \$\$ - life is simply too short to drink crappy, uninteresting wine.

At the top of the Beaujolais food-chain are the “Crus” of Beaujolais – wines from the ten villages in the region that have the best-situated vineyards and the right to use the name of the village on the label. From north to south these villages are:

**Saint-Amour, Juliéna, Chenas, Moulin-à-Vent, Fleurie, Chiroubles, Morgon, Regnié, Brouilly, and Côte de Brouilly**

Wines from these villages will state only the name of the village on the label, and the word Beaujolais will not appear anywhere. This is a good thing, as these excellent wines should be clearly separated from the three other levels of wine produced in the region. They are in fact at another level entirely. Many of these wines are *really really* good, and some are simply great.

Cru Beaujolais is a hotbed of excitement right now, and is perhaps the most dynamic wine region on the planet these days (along with the Grower Champagne revolution.) A new generation of young, forward thinking and meticulous grower-producers have revolutionized the region, making complex and delicious wines that are astoundingly good values. The relatively cheap cost of land makes it possible to start a small domaine there, something that is virtually impossible in the Côte d’Or these days. The big Beaune negociants and larger domaines of the Côte d’Or have also been buying up as much Cru Beaujolais land as they can get their hands on, as this is the only place in Burgundy they can expand their holdings with any chance of recouping their investment in less than 100 years.

Superb wines can come from any of the 10 Beaujolais Crus, but the villages of Morgon and Fleurie tend to be the most consistent and of the overall highest quality. All 10 can be the source of superb wines, and in your package are examples of an excellent Morgon, and an outstanding Regnié.



## Nuits-St. Georges

Hardly unknown, Nuits-St. Georges is a world famous village in the Côte de Nuits, but it's the **1er Cru** vineyards in the village that make its reputation. The **Village**-level parcels don't get as much love, and mostly with good reason. Quality of Village NSG wine can be all over the map, from fairly dismal to absolutely delightful, but it is truly a minefield that can be difficult to navigate. As we always preach, what matters most is producer, producer, and producer.

The philosophy, care, rigor, energy and attention put into the vines and the wine make all the difference in the world. The underlying terroir is there waiting to be expressed, but it takes the human element to best realize the potential. **Think of the terroir as a piano concerto composed by Mozart. The notes are there on the sheet music, but it can be played poorly by a less-talented musician, or it can be made to sing gloriously by skilled and experienced hands.** In your package you have a bottle of Village Nuits-St. Georges that was played by a master.





## Vosne-Romanée

Probably the most famous village in Burgundy, Vosne-Romanée is home to six of the most exalted Grand Crus (Romanée-Conti, La Tâche, La Romanée, Richebourg, Romanée-St. Vivant and La Grand Rue), as well as 14 highly regarded 1er Crus – but the **Village** level Vosne-Romanée does not get a lot of love or respect. This is the same phenomenon we see in Nuits-St. Georges, and indeed in many of the famous villages up and down the Côte. Again, the quality of the Village wines can be highly variable, but good plots in the right hands can produce stunningly beautiful juice. While by no means inexpensive, they're a fraction of the price of their loftier neighbors, and can be excellent examples of where to find great quality in unexpected places.

In this package you have a great example of a Vosne-Romanée Village that outperforms a lot of the over-hyped and over-priced 1er Crus. Yes, please!



**St. Vincent, watching over the cellars beneath the streets of Beaune**

## Beaune

On the face of it Beaune is probably another unlikely candidate for an unusual place to look for quality wines. Beaune has for centuries been the wine capital of Burgundy. It is the home of the Hôtel Dieu – the original Hospices de Beaune – the charity hospital built in 1443. There are 1,174 acres total in the Beaune appellation, of which 825 acres, or about 70%, is classified as 1er Cru.

It is due to the power of the negociants, who own or control a huge percentage of the vines here, that so much of the land is classified at the 1er Cru level. Modern thinking is that much of it is probably not truly deserving of that rank, or at the very least it is not universally highly regarded. Historically the Beaune vineyards and wines were held in higher esteem than they are today.

Much of Beaune 1er Cru is produced by the million-case negociants, and while it is often good it is rarely outstanding. It's when smaller, top-quality producers have holdings in the better Beaune 1er Crus that we get to see how excellent these wines really can be. Too often Beaune 1er Cru in general is dismissed as "lesser" 1er Cru, but you have an example in your package of a killer Beaune 1er that flat-out rocks.



*The Hospices de Beaune*

## The Wines



*Gilbert & Christine Felettig in their cellar in Chambolle-Musigny*

### **1. 2014 Hautes-Côtes de Nuits** – Domaine Felettig

**CLUB PRICE \$20**

Since taking over the family estate in 2005, Gilbert Felettig (Fell-uh-teeg) and his sister Christine have taken the estate from the depths of mediocrity to a place where they now rival the best in their home village Chambolle-Musigny.

They own six superb 1er Crus in Chambolle, Village parcels in five different villages of the Côte de Nuits, a tiny piece of Grand Cru Echezeaux, and a small vineyard in the Hautes-Côtes de Nuits up near the hamlet of Arcenalt, From this 1-acre parcel they produce an exceptional example of the Hautes-Côtes, one that is brimming with fruit and elegance that is rarely found in this neck of the woods.

- 100% de-stemmed
- Wild-yeast fermentation, minimal SO2 addition prior to bottling
- Vinified and aged in stainless steel – no trees were harmed in the production of this wine
- From the excellent 2014 vintage, a year that gave us wines of great freshness and bright fruits



## 2. **2015 Morgon** – Antoine Sunier

**CLUB PRICE \$25**

One of the newest and brightest rising stars, Antoine Sunier produced his first wines in 2014 and immediately captured the attention and hearts of Burgundy lovers around the globe. He's the younger brother of Julien Sunier (see wine #3 below), and made a rare change in career from high-tech to winemaking, inspired by his brother's wines.

With his brother's connections in the region Antoine was able to purchase a few small, well-situated parcels in the villages of Regnié and Morgon, and hit the ground running with well-made, beautiful wines. His 2.9-acre parcel of Morgon consists of 60 year-old vines which had been farmed organically for the previous 12 years. He has continued working in the most natural methods possible, including some biodynamic practices and coordinating activities in harmony with the lunar calendar.

- Native yeast fermentation, 100% whole-cluster
- Fermented in tank
- Élévage 8 months in used Burgundy barrels (80%) and in concrete tank (20%)
- Bottled un-fined and un-filtered in June 2016

Of all the Beaujolais Crus, Morgon has the reputation for ageability. While it is absolutely delicious now, 3-7 years of bottle age would not be out of line to let this fully blossom. Rich and deep with fresh black cherry and raspberry notes, this delivers big flavor and a mouth-coating texture that culminates in an impressively long finish. Great stuff!



### 3. 2015 Regnié – Julien Sunier

**CLUB PRICE \$30**

Antoine's older brother, Julien is established as one of the leaders of the renaissance in top-quality Cru Beaujolais. He started his journey in wine by interning for superstar producer Christophe Roumier in Chambolle-Musigny (Julien's hairdresser mom cut Christophe's hair!), and his fascination for viticulture and winemaking quickly caught fire and led him around the world working harvests. He returned to France to manage the Beaujolais operations for one of the large negociants, and took what he learned from his years there to start his own domaine in 2008.

Julien is dedicated to organic and biodynamic viticulture and works all of his parcels personally and by hand. His meticulous attention to detail at every step shows clearly in his beautifully crafted wines, a number of which we've included in our Club packages previously.

This time we've got his Regnié, from his 2.7-acre parcel of 60 year-old vines on a perfect south slope. Regnié is perhaps the least known of the Beaujolais Crus. It's quite small (less than 1,000 planted acres), and was only granted appellation status in 2008, the most recent addition to the Beaujolais Cru ranks. The better situated parts of the appellation – like this parcel - are adjacent to Morgon, and are on rose-colored granite soils mid-slope

- 100% whole-cluster
- Native yeast fermentation in tank with no SO2 additions
- Aged in neutral oak barrels (80%) and cement tank (20%) for 8 months
- Bottled un-fined and un-filtered in June 2016

There are distinct notes of ripe raspberries and fresh white peach on the nose, with velvety tannins and a lovely texture. Ready to drink now and over the next year or two, this is a wine of pure pleasure.



*Scott with Antoine (l) and Julien Sunier (c) in Beaujolais*

**4. 2014 Nuits-St. Georges “les Fleurières” – J-J Confuron CLUB PRICE \$49**

Winemaker Alain Meunier and his wife Sophie Confuron-Meunier have one of the most respected domaines in the Côte d’Or, one that other winemakers cite as a shining example of an operation that is “serious and does everything well, does everything right”. They have magnificent Grand Cru parcels of Romanée-St. Vivant and Clos Vougeot, great 1er Cru holdings in Chambolle, Vosne and Nuits, and this beautiful piece of Nuits-St. Georges “les Fleurières” that just may be the best example of a Village NSG around.

The Confuron piece of Les Fleurières is their largest holding, consisting of 3.03 acres of organically farmed vines in two parcels, one planted in the 1980s and one in 1960. It’s in the southern half of the village, which is reputed to produce wines with more pronounced tannin and structure – though this is clearly an exception. With Village wines from the Côte de Nuits routinely pushing \$100 these days, it’s a treasure to find a gem like this under \$50.

- Native yeast ferment, minimal SO2
- 100% destemmed
- Tank fermented and barrel aged, 35% new
- Bottled un-fined and unfiltered in January 2016

The Confuron signature style of “power without weight” is well in evidence here, with a great flavor intensity on a lithe and elegant frame. There is honestly very little Village-level NSG this good – but it proves the potential of the appellation when treated masterfully.



*Lunching with Alain Meunier (c) of J-J Confuron*

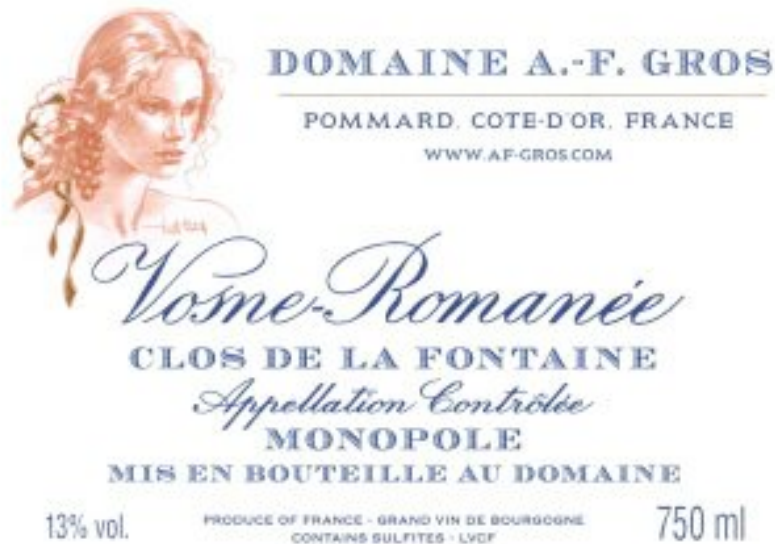
#### **5. 2014 Vosne-Romanée “Clos de la Fontaine” – A-F Gros CLUB PRICE \$82**

Anne-Françoise Gros and her husband François Parent are two of Burgundy’s most celebrated vigneron, and their marriage united two storied domaines that go back 18 generations. Their son Mattias has taken over winemaking as of 2014, with his dad still overseeing operations in the vineyards and cellar. Their daughter Caroline has her own small micro-negociant operation as well, and we’ve featured her wines in previous Club packages.

Their holdings include magnificent pieces of Richebourg and Echezeaux along with a string of 1er Cru and Village parcels up and down the Côte d’Or. The Gros side of the family hails from Vosne-Romanée, and they therefore have extensive holdings there. **Clos de la Fontaine** is a monopole, as the entire vineyard is owned exclusively by A-F Gros.

- From a .88-acre parcel planted in the 1970s
- 100% de-stemmed
- Native yeast fermentation, minimal SO2
- Tank fermented, barrel aged 50% new, 50% once-used
- Bottled un-fined and un-filtered in February 2016
- 165 cases produced

This is a rare Vosne-Romanée Village-level wine that can compete on equal footing with many of the 1er Crus. It sits just below Aux Réas, and has many of the same attributes of that famous site – most notably distinct spice notes and an impressive level of finesse. The lovely freshness of the 2014 vintage shines brightly in this one – it’s one of my favorite Village wines of the vintage.



**6. 2014 Beaune “les Boucherottes” 1er – A-F Gros CLUB PRICE \$69**

The piece of Beaune “les Boucherottes” totals just .74 acres of old vines, planted in the 1960s. Most of the domaine’s holdings in the Côte de Beaune come from the Parent side of the family, which has been based in Pommard since the 1600s.

We’ve chosen this wine for the Club package to demonstrate how good Beaune 1er Cru really can be, as it often gets short-shrift in the modern day wine press. In the 18th and 19th centuries these wines were considered to be among the most elegant and refined, on a par with Chambolle and Vosne, but have fallen out of fashion over time. “Les Boucherottes” is beautifully placed just below the famous Clos des Mouches, and shares similar attributes.

- 100% de-stemmed
- Native yeast ferment, minimal SO2
- Tank fermented, barrel aged, 50% new
- 125 cases produced

Take the blackberry and dark cherry fruit of Pommard, add some exotic spice notes, and enrobe it in silky, fine tannins, and you’ve got Les Boucherottes, a gorgeous Beaune 1er Cru that will age nicely for 6-10+ years from the vintage. Enjoy!





*Anne-Françoise Gros & François Parent*

## Next shipment in the Spring...

I hope you've enjoyed our continuing exploration of all things Burgundian. Thanks for joining us! Watch your email for information on our next Caveau Burgundy Club shipment coming in the spring, and for pre-arrival offerings on all the yummy wines headed your way throughout the year. All the latest information is always available on our website: [www.caveauselections.com](http://www.caveauselections.com)

Please let us know if we need to make any changes to your account. Email us at [hellocaveau@gmail.com](mailto:hellocaveau@gmail.com) or call us at 503-628-9857 if:

- You have a new or updated credit card
- You have a change of billing or shipping address
- You want to change your order from "ship" to pick-up, or vice-versa
- You have any questions about your Club membership

*Launched in 2005, **Caveau Selections** is owned and operated by Martha & Scott Wright, the founders and former owners of top Oregon Pinot Noir producer Scott Paul Wines. Scott has been drinking and studying the wines and regions of Burgundy and Champagne since the 1970s, and visiting regularly since the 1980s. He leads annual Insiders' Tours of both Burgundy and Champagne, and teaches seminars here and abroad. He is available to teach private seminars and conduct tutored tastings for your group – email [Scott@caveauselections.com](mailto:Scott@caveauselections.com) for more information.*

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