



Burgundy Club

FALL 2022



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, email us - orders@caveauselections.com. Also, check out our new **"House Wine" Clubs** if you're interested in a steady supply of delicious Burgs at \$20-25 per bottle.

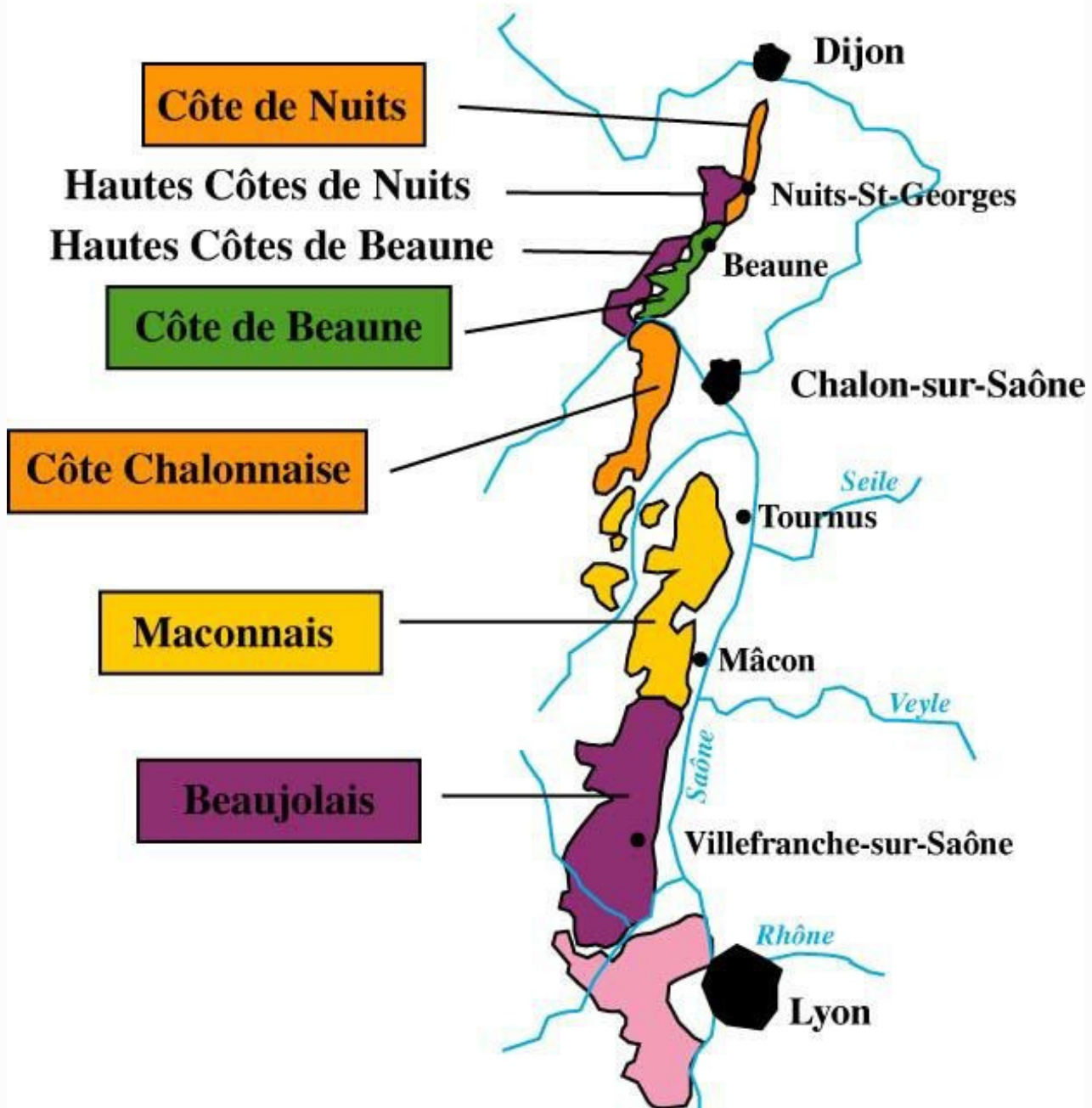
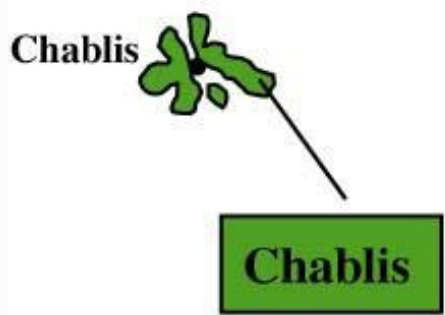
The wines in each 6-bottle Burgundy Club shipment have been specifically selected to help educate and illustrate – each shipment is essentially a Burgundy seminar-in-a-box. You can use all of this to stage your own tasting seminar at home, or of course you can just drink the wines one by one. Whichever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

The "Outliers" (where the values are)

As climate change continues to deliver small crops, and world-wide demand for Burgundy continues to climb exponentially, wise Burgundy lovers are looking more and more to some of the "forgotten" appellations - where value is still to be found, and the quality is higher and more consistent than ever. We'll explore six wines from a few of these outlier villages, that provide excellent value and maximum pleasure. Come on in, this is going to be a fun and illuminating ride!



BURGUNDY



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 now 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 nice inexpensive, lower-level wines.)

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 single 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.



The "Outliers"

The famous villages of the Côte de Nuits and Côte de Beaune (the northern and southern halves of the Côte d'Or) are the birthplace of some of the finest, and most sought-after wines on the globe. Vosne-Romanée, Gevrey-Chambertin, Chambolle-Musigny, Pommard, Volnay, Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet - the names that make wine-lovers weak in the knees - these days are getting out of the reach of those without pretty deep pockets. Climate change has been a double-edged sword for Burgundy. The unprecedented weather patterns have produced historically small crops over the majority of the last 20 years, but the tiny amount of wine produced has never been of better or more consistent quality. This has all led to the imperfect storm - more demand than ever for fewer wines than ever. Thus wines that were \$35 not too long ago are now pushing \$100. What's a Burg-lover to do?

The answer is to take a closer look at some of the under-appreciated appellations, where quality-focused, diligent producers are making better wines than ever, and where we can find what relative values in Burgundy that are still there to be had. In the pre-global warming era, most of what we'll call the "outlier" appellations often had difficulty achieving sufficient ripeness - the prime reason they never enjoyed the lofty reputations of their more famous neighbors. Their geographic placement coupled with a true "cool climate" often did not deliver enough sunlight and heat over the course of a growing season to produce grapes that would make top-quality wines - or if they did it was two or three years out of ten. It was always a crapshoot at best.

Now, that's all been flipped on its head. We're clearly in the middle of a new era, where sites that were once second-tier are now consistently quite good. The great sites are still great, and in fact are still the greatest - though that too may soon change as the planet continues to get hotter.

That said, our mission now is to find the yummy, captivating Burgundies that fall somewhere in the range of "affordable". Burgundy will always be a pricey region - it's quite small (one-tenth the size of Bordeaux, for example), and the wines offer a level of elegance, finesse and complexity that cannot be duplicated anywhere else on the planet. There are more and more wines from the un-sung villages that are worthy of your attention and your dollars - one just needs to know where to look.

1. **Domaine Ninot 2020 Rully "La Barre" - \$30**



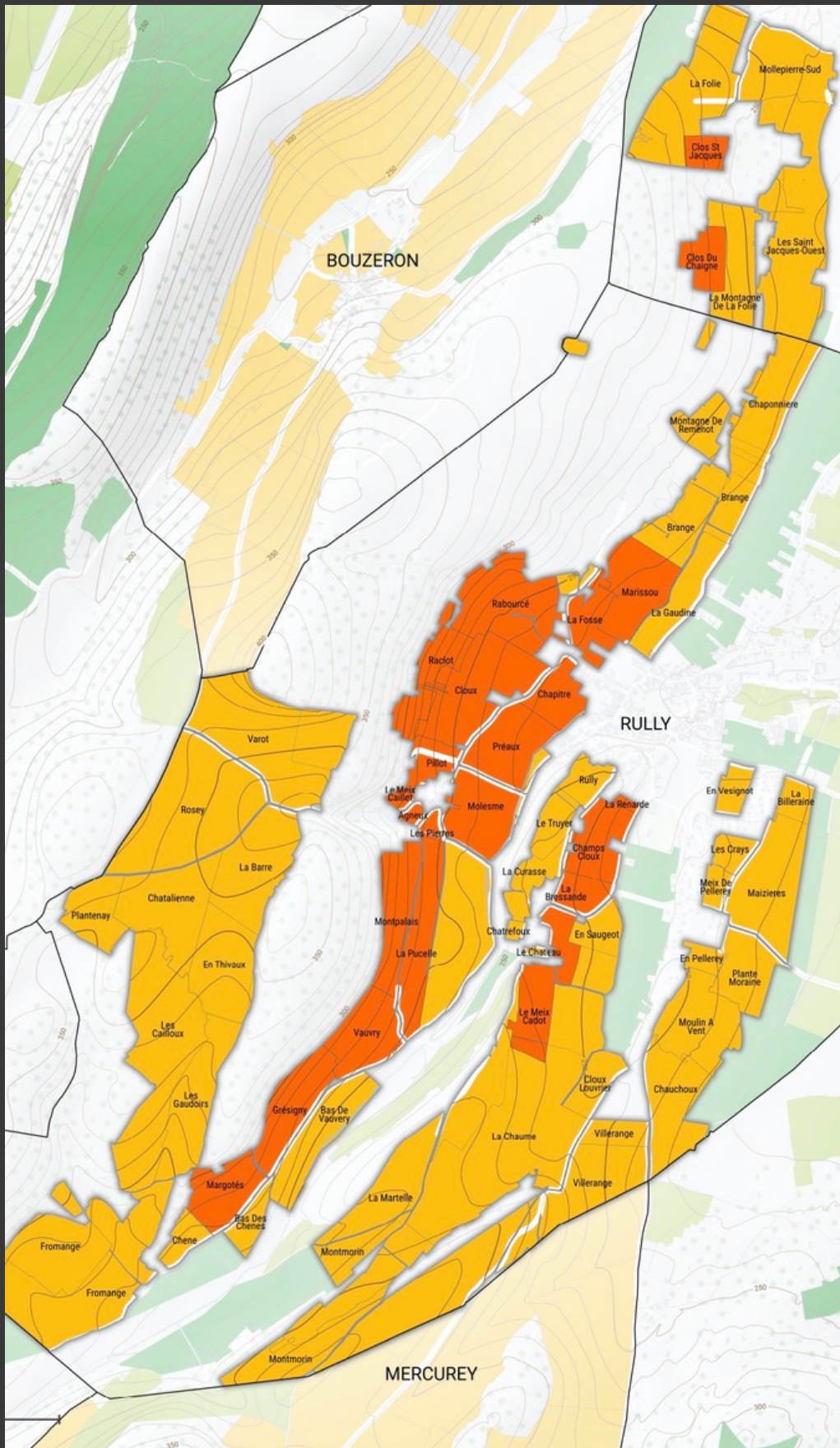
Just to the south of the Côte de Beaune lies the region known as the **Côte Chalonnaise**. Wines from there are the "Rodney Dangerfields" of Burgundy - they just don't get no respect - or at least not the respect they deserve! The villages of **Rully, Mercurey, Givry** and **Bouzeron** are producing many of the best bang-for-the-buck wines in Burgundy these days, but they've always been treated as a poor step-sister to the "exalted" villages to their north. Much of the vineyard land was not replanted after WWII, only starting to come back to life in the 1960s and 70s. Now that there are serious artisanal producers there (as opposed to growers selling mass quantities of grapes to the negociant houses), and now that climate change has given them a big kiss in terms of quality, the Côte Chalonnaise is one of my favorite places to look for delicious wines at approachable prices.

Of course these wines have gone up in price in recent years like everything else, but not as wildly as the top 1er and Grand Crus. They've become even better values in recent years, as the price gap between them and the "prestige" appellations gets wider and wider.

Winemaker **Erell Ninot** has been on a tremendous roll since taking over the family estate in 2003. The Ninot family traces their winegrowing roots in Rully to 1313 - they've been at this a while! Her brother Flavien joined in 2011 to take over viticulture, and they've been going from strength to strength ever since.

Rully is the first appellation you come to in the Côte Chalonnaise - just a few minutes south of Beaune. It's a lovely village filled with ancient stone houses and a well maintained chateau, and surrounded by rolling hillsides that produce some of the best values in all of Burgundy.

It's a small appellation, just 880 acres in total, and about two-thirds of that are devoted to Chardonnay. Certain sectors are especially good for Pinot Noir as well, and we've got two of them for you in your club package this fall.





The Chateau de Rully

"La Barre" is a lieu-dit southwest of the village at the very top of the hill - a high elevation site at slightly over 300 meters (just under 1,000'). The Ninot parcel is 3.9 acres of vines planted in 1974 on an east-facing plateau. There's excellent white wine made from this parcel as well - a rare piece of terroir that does well in both colors.

The red version of La Barre (100% Pinot Noir, of course) is always dominated by flavors and aromas of black fruits - think black currants, black berries, black cherries - with some captivating spice notes that make it very enticing. For a "simple" Village wine from a "lesser" appellation, there is a LOT going on here! It doesn't lack for power or intensity, and it makes for a major upgrade to your "pizza wine" - it's got the right combination of fruit and acid that make it a knockout with food.

2. Domaine Ninot 2020 Rully "Chaponnière" - \$32

This one's the *Yin* to La Barre's *Yang*, as it's focused on aromas and flavors of red fruits - red currants and red cherries mostly. **Chaponnière** is another of the rare sites - in Rully or elsewhere - that is equally suited to both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Ninot's parcel is just over 4.5 acres of 1975 plantings on the lower slope of the gentle south-east facing hill just down the road from the winery in the center of the village.

In the mouth it's fairly silky on the entry, expanding to show good richness on the mid palate, and it all flows nicely over a good acid backbone and crunchy tannins. Another one that totally rocks with food - especially awesome with cheeses and charcuterie. You could hold this in your cellar for 3-5+ years, if you have the patience!



Pablo and Vincent Chevrot

3. Domaine Chevrot 2020 Santenay Vieilles Vignes - \$40

Next we'll head north just a mile or two to the southern end of the Côte de Beaune, where we'll find the adjacent villages of **Santenay** and **Maranges**. If you keep heading south from Chassagne-Montrachet, you run smack-dab into Santenay - an appellation that historically always showed potential, but never fully distinguished itself. Much of that had to do with the fact that there were few serious, quality-oriented producers there for a long time. There are still very few, but the Chevrot brothers have moved to the head of the pack over the last 10-15 years, blowing people's minds with the quality and precision of their wines from what have historically been "un-sexy" appellations.

Pablo and Vincent Chevrot are third generation vignerons at the helm of the 49-acre family estate. They're based in cellars that date to 1798, and have recently built new state-of-the-art production facilities. The Chevrots work organically and Biodynamically, plow by horse, and are meticulous farmer-winemakers. Their wines are very well made and always out-perform their appellations, and represent excellent values across the range.

We have two great examples from the Chevrot lineup for you this time, starting with this beauty from Santenay. "**Vieilles Vignes**" means "old-vines", in this case a selection from different parcels that are 50-75 years old, all in the Village level appellation of Santenay. The domaine has several parcels scattered across the village (Santenay is the 4th largest appellation on the Côte d'Or - only Gevrey, Beaune and Merusault are larger.) The vines for this bottling were planted by their grandfather. Some are on the southern end of the village, some higher up the hill and on the northern end.



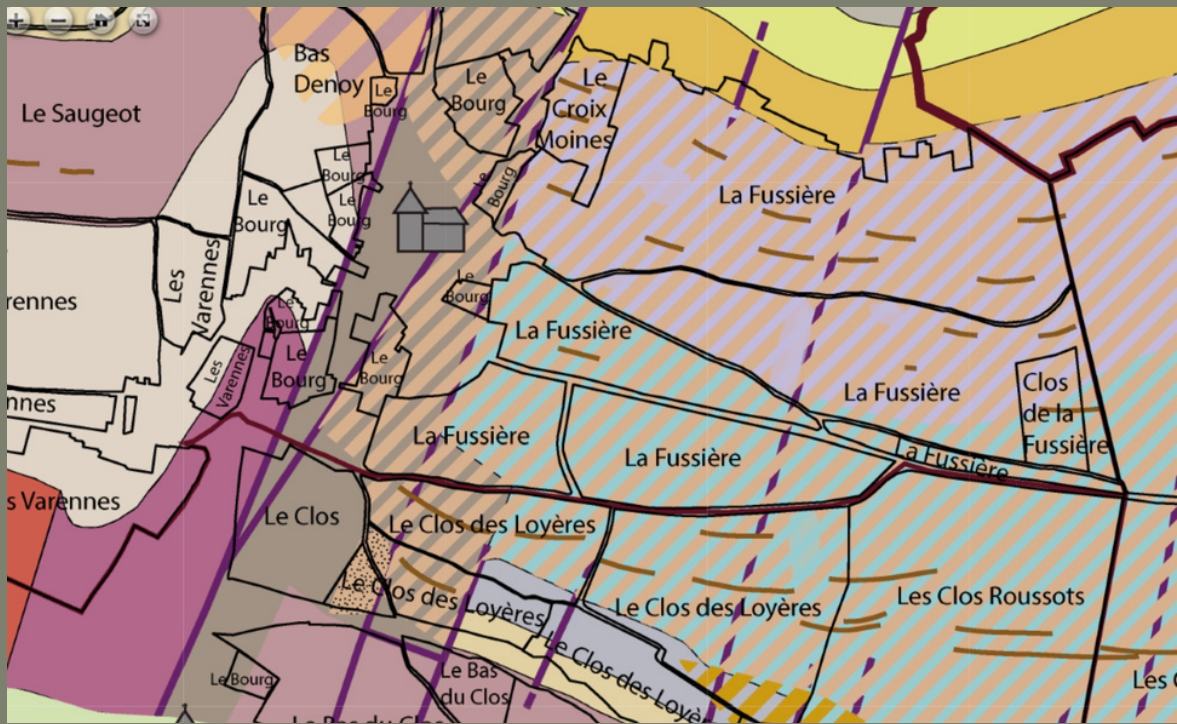
Old-school farming by horse at Domaine Chevrot

Village-level Santenay can be a mixed bag. When it's good, like this one, the earthiness and tannins are balanced out by some very appealing berry-fruit richness, and dare I say even a touch of finesse. The knock against Santenay has always been that the wines could be overly coarse and lacking in refinement. Now with climate change pushing up the ripeness a couple of notches, we're seeing more fruit richness on the palate and more wines that are full-on delicious. This is made for pairing with roast meats and ripe cheeses. I love the intense, dark cherry-berry flavors and the powerful finish - this one definitely punches above its weight.

4. Domaine Chevrot - 2020 Maranges "Le Croix Moines" 1er Cru - \$69

Directly adjacent to Santenay is the appellation of Maranges. Prior to 1988 there were actually three separate villages - Cheilly-lès-Maranges, Dezize-lès-Maranges, and Sampigny-lès-Maranges, and they were all ultimately combined into one appellation. Prior to the rule change most wines from here were labeled and sold as "Côte de Beaune Villages", as some things were just too complicated and confusing for even the French!

There are a total of 559 acres under vine in Maranges, 186 acres of which are entitled to Premier Cru (1er Cru) status. The 1er Crus are high up on a steep slope, on very stony, brown limestone soils, with just a scant inch or two of topsoil before hitting the mother rock. This is the very end of the Côte d'Or, with the Côte Chalonnaise starting just a kilometer or two to the south. Terroir-wise, Maranges is quite similar to Santenay, with the best parts being a continuation of the hillside of the Santenay 1er Crus, on the same Jurassic limestone. There is not really a distinct Maranges signature, as the geology varies greatly across the three sub-villages.



Le Croix Moines is a small enclave within the 1er Cru climat *La Fussièrre* - at the very top of a very steep and stony hill. As good as the Santenay VV is, this wine is a clear leap up the food chain. All the hallmarks of a better pedigree are clearly present - complexity of aromas, depth of flavors, a quantum leap in refinement, and dramatically longer on the finish. There's a nice, earthy, limestone-y thread that runs all through it - highlighted by some pretty red fruits on the nose, brambly Blackberries on the palate, and a firm texture that indicates this one has a long life ahead of it. With most 1er Cru Burgs trading for \$100-200+ these days, this is a relative steal.



Looking down the hill from the top of *Le Croix Moines*



Michel Mallard

5. **Michel Mallard** 2018 Savigny-lès-Beaune "Les Serpentières" 1er - **\$49**

Now we'll head up to the northern tip of the Côte de Beaune, where we find the storied **Hill of Corton**. Three villages wrap around the hill - **Ladoix** on the eastern flank, **Aloxe-Corton** on the south face, and **Pernand-Vergelesses** on the west-facing slopes. The village of **Savigny-lès-Beaune** lies below them on the plain and the foothills. Domaine Michel Mallard has 27+ acres of vines on various sections of the hill, including four Grand Crus. Winemaker **Michel Mallard** farms the estate, which is scattered over five villages and dozens of small parcels. (Michel also moonlights as the winemaker-for-hire at Domaine Eugène in Vosne-Romanée. If you can afford those wines, they're magnificent. And please invite me to share some!)

Savigny-lès-Beaune has for a long time been a Burgundy insiders' secret - a great appellation for wines that deliver big value. They've doubled in price in the last 15 years, but are still great values vis-à-vis their peers. Yummy 1er juice at under \$50 is basically a unicorn these days. "Les Serpentières" is from a 2.7-acre parcel of 40+ year-old vines on a gentle slope. It's a standout value 1er Cru, a rich and dense offering that showcases rich raspberries and cherries and a layered, structured and dense finish. This 2018 is the domaine's current release - Mallard holds his wines years longer than most, and releases them when they're starting to mature. They tend to be very long lived - this is one of his most approachable wines, ready to rock now and over the next 3-5+.

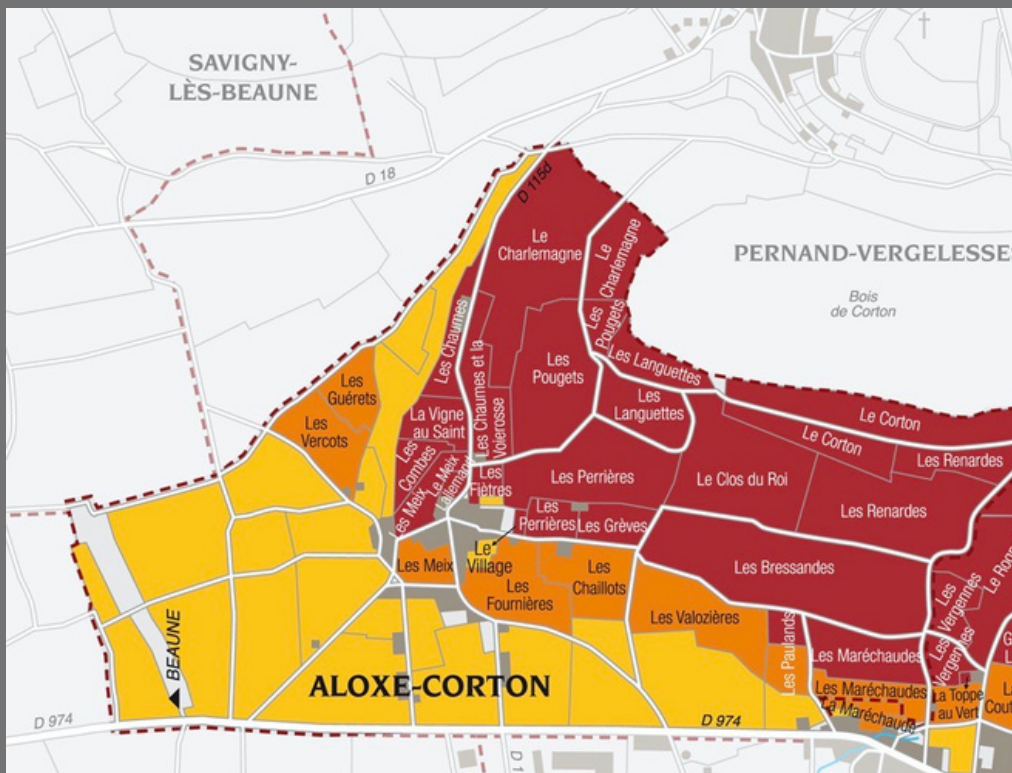


6. Michel Mallard 2017 Aloxe-Corton "La Toppe au Vert" 1er - \$79

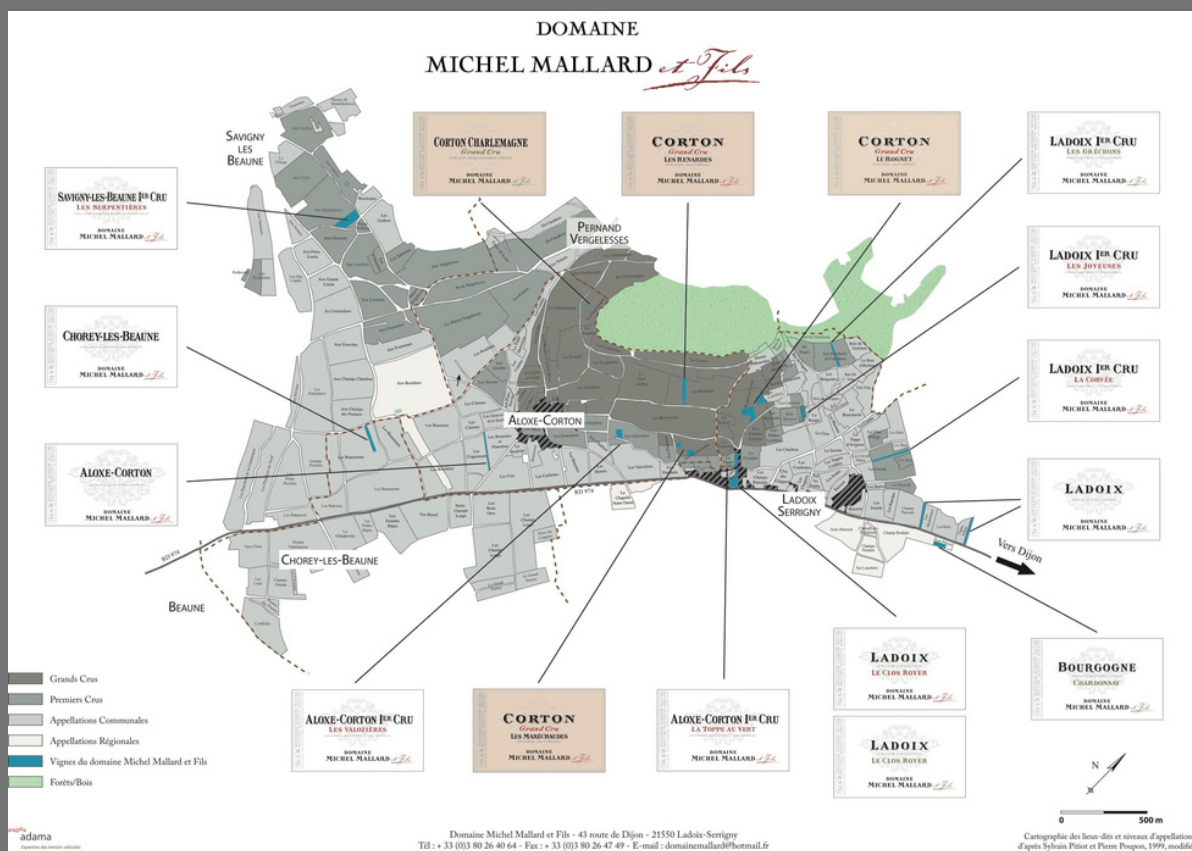
Now we're on the Hill of Corton itself. In a bizarre circumstance that makes sense to absolutely no one, not even the French, the vineyard "**La Toppe au Vert**" is physically in the village of Ladoix, but the appellation for the wine produced from it is Aloxe-Corton 1er Cru. (All one can do is shrug your shoulders and say "C'est comme ça" - that's just the way it is. Aaargh...)

Inexplicable French regulations aside, what's important to know is that this a sweet piece of vineyard land, on the south-east-facing slope of the hill just below and contiguous to the Grand Cru Corton-Rognets. Mallard's parcel is 1.05 acres of 50 year-old vines planted by his grandfather (who was also named Michel.)

Well, this is not a shy wine, to say the least. It does not whisper - but then it doesn't really "shout" either. It's bold and confident, and sucks you in with some very seductive floral notes on the nose. In the mouth it's all dense red currants and Griotte cherries, and the finish just keeps on pumping. This 2017 IS the domaine's current release - again they build their wines to age, and hold them back much longer than just about anyone. I'd hold this for another three or four years to see it in its prime - but you can totally enjoy it now. I'd decant and give it air for about an hour and then dive right in!



La Toppe au Vert at bottom right



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 great Burgs and Bubbles headed your way throughout the year. All the latest information is always available on our website: www.CaveauSelections.com

Please let us know if we need to make any changes to your account. You can update us on our secure form online at <https://www.caveauselections.com/credit-card-update-form>

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

Launched in 2005, Caveau Selections is owned and operated by Martha & Scott Wright, importers and winemakers in Oregon, Burgundy and Champagne since 1999. Scott has been drinking and studying the wines and regions of Burgundy and Champagne since the 1970s, visiting regularly since the 1980s, and now spends up to six months per year in France. Scott Co-produced and directed the award winning Burgundy documentary film **Three Days of Glory**. Email orders@caveauselections.com for more information.

