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Burgundy Club! SPRING 2018

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 - scott@caveauselections.com. <http://www.caveauselections.com/champagne-club/>)* Also, check out our new **“House Wine” Clubs** if you're interested in a steady supply of delicious Burgs at around \$20 per bottle.

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!

Looking for Deliciousness - beyond the “obvious”

Seven small-quantity vintages in a row (2010-2016) have driven prices up for pretty much all Burgundies across the board. The world-wide demand continues to outstrip the supply, and it's simply the forces of basic Economics 101 at work. The good news is, while supply was going down and prices were going up, climate change was also happening - and for the Burgundy vineyards this is a good thing. It's especially good for the areas that historically had difficulties achieving full ripeness on a regular basis. These areas now consistently get enough heat and sunlight to ripen a crop beautifully in most years - and that was far from the case as recently as 20 years ago.

Thus we can now find really yummy reasonably priced Burgs from many of the appellations that have often been “overlooked” in the past. I've selected five such bottles to include in this package, plus **one older treasure** from a legendary cellar as the cherry on top. Enjoy the wines!

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 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 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.

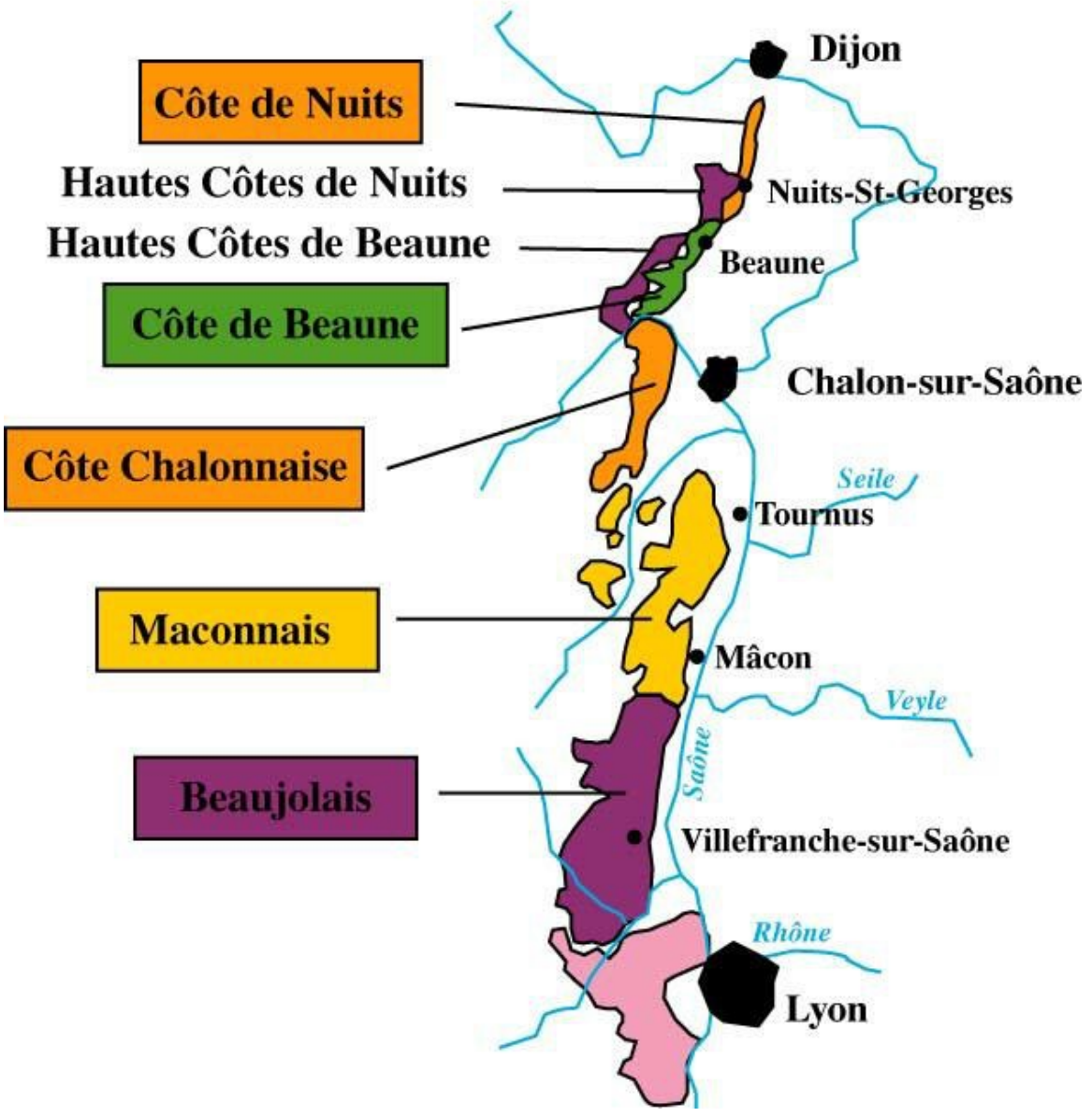


BURGUNDY

Chablis



Chablis



Looking for love (in all the “wrong” places)

It's no secret that there is great wine to be found in Vosne-Romanée, Chambolle-Musigny, Volnay, Meursault, Gevrey-Chambertin, and all of the other world-famous villages of the Côte d'Or. It's also well known that there are no bargains to be had among Burgundies from the most well-bred of appellations - if you want to play, it's not going to be a free ride.

What most folks don't know is that the quality has exponentially improved over the last 10-15 years in what were sometimes considered “marginal” appellations. The significantly warmer climate now easily gets the grapes reliably ripe throughout the region - in places where historically only 2 or 3 years out of 10 would produce anything interesting. The most dramatic change has been at the generic “Bourgogne” level. Those wines, in the hands of scrupulous and principled producers, can now be quite excellent. Now that producers can sell their “Bourgognes” for a Euro or two more per bottle than they used to (these vineyards were habitually massively over-cropped and produced lean, green wines), they can now farm for quality rather than yield - and the extra heat brings them full ripeness on a regular basis. Boom! That's a big victory for us as consumers.

In my tastings across Burgundy during my 3-month stay last fall, I found more and more really delicious wines from appellations that historically had not been very “sexy”. I'm excited to find such yummy stuff from the likes of Ladoix, Santenay, and the Hautes-Côtes, and even from so-called “lesser” sections of more famous villages. I'm really excited to share this collection with you. Let's drink some wine!

The Wines

1. **2016 Hautes-Côtes de Nuits**— Domaine A-F Gros **\$36**

The Hautes-Côtes (upper slopes) are the second tier of vineyards higher up, above the first hilltops of the main Côte. It's a very different micro-climate up there, and very different terroir as well. It used to be pretty dicey - getting ripe grapes up there didn't happen all that often. The Gros family has always been dedicated to producing delicious wine from their parcel on the hillsides above Vosne-Romanée. People used to refer to Hautes-Côtes wines as “rustic” - these days my notes often say “refined, elegant, spice notes, very nice length”.

Anne-François Gros' son **Mathias** has taken over winemaking here as of the 2015 vintage, and he's turning heads with a beautiful range of wines. He's one of my three picks to be one of Burgundy's next generation Rock Star winemakers - the young man's got the goods. You don't have to spend the big bucks for his Richebourg if you just want something to have character, personality, and to be reliably delicious. This 2016 is perhaps their best Hautes-



Côtes yet, showing better balance than the plush and fabulous 2015.

Mathias Parent - Domaine A-F Gros

2. **2014 Ladoix “Clos Royer”** - Domaine Michel Mallard

\$38

For five generations Domaine Michel Mallard has been producing gorgeous wines in the Côte de Beaune, and virtually no one on these shores has ever encountered the wines. By way of introduction, then, here are a few quotes from the world's leading Burgundy authority:

"The Mallard wines are really quite good and almost completely unknown outside of Burgundy. I was impressed with what I found ... indeed Mallard is now one of the best domaines in Ladoix. I would observe that the quality at this domaine has skyrocketed in recent years and as the scores and comments confirm, not just for the reds, as the whites offer excellent quality and value." Allen Meadows, Burghound



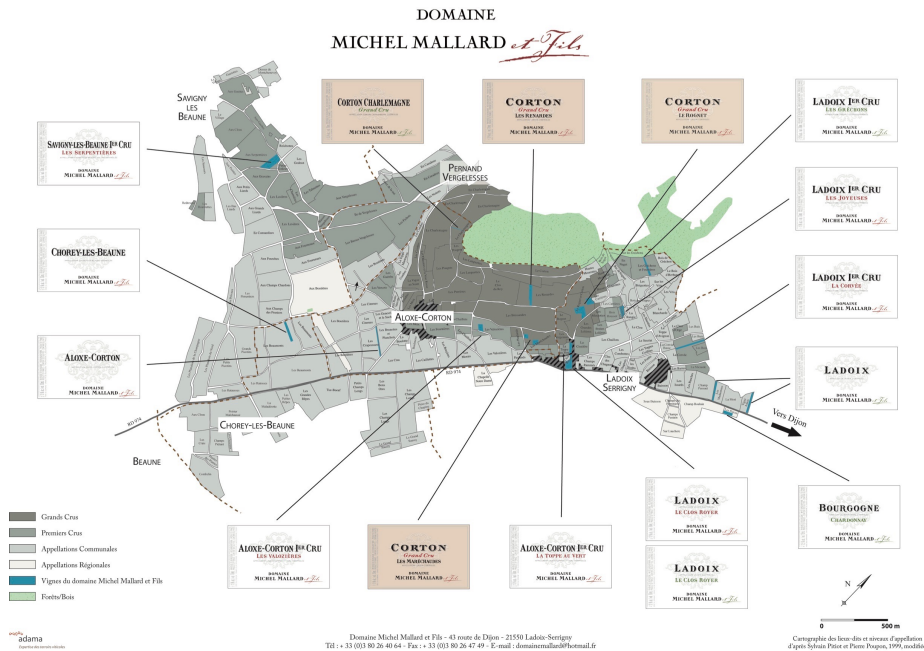
Michel Mallard

The father and son team of Patrick and Michel Mallard jointly run the estate, which is named for Michel's grandfather. They own an impressive 27.17 acres of vines on the hill of Corton and the surrounding villages of Ladoix, Aloxe-Corton and Chorey-lès-Beaune - including four exemplary Grand Crus.

Michel makes the wines, and he has an interesting side-hustle - he's also the winemaker for the revered **Domaine d'Eugénie** in Vosne-Romanée. (Locals will tell you, off the record, that his estate wines are better than what he makes for d'Eugénie, but I digress...)

One of the things that blew me away at Mallard is that they, by design, have older vintages for sale. Huge thanks to Michel's grandfather for starting the process - it takes guts to hang on to wines that you could be selling right away. They hold their wines for a long time before release (they won't even be releasing their high-end 2015 reds until fall 2018), and they routinely cellar decent quantities of much older things to release when the wines are fully mature. Michel explained that they (like me) find the fullest expression of beauty in wines that have been carefully stored and have reached new levels of maturity and complexity over years in the bottle.

Most Village-level 2014s would have been released over two years ago, but this enticing Ladoix is Mallard's current release. The village of Ladoix is below the east-facing slope of the Hill of Corton, and is capable of producing superb wines at very approachable prices. I fell in love with this one at first sip - incredibly fresh, supple, long, and so very pretty. We offered some of the Mallard wines to



our mailing list earlier this year, and you promptly snapped them all up - I'm glad I thought to reserve a good allocation of this one!

3. 2015 Santenay Clos Rousseau 1er Cru – Domaine Chevrot

\$39

I'm thrilled to introduce you to another new addition to the Caveau Family - **Domaine Chevrot**. (It was a very fruitful 3-month stay in Burgundy last fall!) Domaine Chevrot is based in one of Burgundy's "forgotten" appellations - Cheilly-les-Maranges - at the far southern tip of the Côte de Beaune below Chassagne-Montrachet. They have significant Village and 1er Cru holdings in Santenay and



Maranges totaling 49 certified organic acres, and have been around since 1830. Paul Chevrot created the current incarnation of the domaine in 1936, and it's now run by his grandchildren - brothers **Pablo and Vincent Chevrot**.

The Chevrot brothers

While little known in the US, their wines are a huge hit in France and most of western Europe, and have a big following in Japan as well.

The village of Santenay has often been overlooked - there's always been potential there, especially in the well-placed 1er Cru vineyards, but many of the owner-operators there have been underperformers for a long time. In the right hands, with attentive viticulture, lower yields, and skilled winemaking, Santenay can produce wines with character and personality and charm to compete with the "good stuff" from the more famous villages in the Côte de Beaune.

Case in point this lovely effort from the Chevrot brothers. I was quite simply floored by the elegance, the minerality, and the finesse. This is fine 1er Cru juice for \$39! Not all Santenay is this good of course, but it's there if you know where to look.



4. 2015 Nuits-St. Georges “Aux Allots” – Bertrand et Axelle Machard de Gramant

\$59

And yet another strong new addition to our Caveau world! Bertrand Machard de Gramant was an heir to the old Chantal Lescure domaine, and he started his career in the cellar at the legendary Domaine Comte Georges de Vogüé in Chambolle-Musigny, where he learned to love wines of elegance and finesse. When he started his own domaine, there were some 5 acres of his vineyard holdings that were not planted - high on the slope atop the extreme southern end of the Nuits-St. Georges appellation, a lieu-dit named Les Vallerots. There had been vines there prior to phylloxera, but everything was ripped out at the end of the 1800s. Between the two World Wars people had attempted to replant there, but the project was started and then abandoned multiple times. Finally Bertrand planted it in 1984. Then in 2001 he took on the massive job of removing trees and boulders from the highest portion of his parcel and planting on the steep, thin soils there. This parcel is now called Les Terrasses des Vallerots, and it produces a wine of extreme refinement and purity.

His daughter **Axelle** joined her dad in 2004, and has been the driving force in converting the estate to organic viticulture with a focus on lower yields. She also seems to have the elusive “magic touch”, as her wines started taking huge leaps in quality by 2010. Interestingly, it was Axelle's sister who was scheduled to take over the estate, but she got cold feet at the last minute. Axelle jumped in to help out of necessity, and soon fell in love with the life of a vigneronne.



Axelle Machard de Gramant

It's not exactly a secret that excellent wines can come from Nuits-St. Georges. It's a famous appellation, well known and reputed for big, powerful, bold, black-fruited, structured, tannic and long-lived reds. For most of the well-known wines from the village that is indeed the case. It's a fairly large appellation at 795 acres, and it's quite spread out geographically. Different sectors are distinctly different terroirs, and thus have little or nothing to do with other parts of the village. Such is the case with the vineyard "**Aux Allots**" - which is mid-slope on the northern half of the appellation toward the Vosne-Romanée border. The wines from here have more in common with Vosne than they do with those from the southern half of Nuits - in fact they can be as different as night and day.

"Aux Allots" is a site rich with clay on top of the limestone bedrock, and there's an underground spring that runs through it. The name is thought to refer to water - as in "*à l'eau*"- (to the water.) Axelle's parcel was purchased by her father in 1959, and it consists of very old vines - some 80-100 years old. The wine is rich with black-cherry fruit, and it's incredibly supple and refined for a Nuits-St. Georges. The length is extraordinary for a Village wine - enjoy this at the table with grilled or roast meats and mushrooms, a match made in heaven.



5. 2012 Volnay “Frémiets” 1er Cru – Caroline Parent

\$99

Yes, this is a beautiful **2012** 1er Cru Volnay, direct from Caroline’s cellars under the streets of Beaune, and the wine has not been moved since the day it was bottled. Talk about pristine provenance!

Caroline Parent is of course the daughter of **Anne-Françoise Gros** and **François Parent**, two big-name vigneronns on the Côte, and she started her own small operation based at the family facilities in 2010. Today her wines are made by her brother Mathias, but back in '12 it was her father and brother working in tandem to create this stunning wine.

Volnay Frémiets is one of my favorite 1er Crus in the village - about 14.5 acres that are split by some 18 different producers. Minerality is its middle name - beneath the few inches of reddish topsoil the vines in Frémiets grow directly into the limestone mother-rock, with beautifully chiseled red-fruit flavors and a saline-inflected finish are the beautiful result. The 2012s, though limited in supply, were beautiful wines - very precise and pure, and are now in a window where you can catch them as they’re hitting their most interesting phase. You can absolutely drink this now with great pleasure, and it’s got at least another five years of upside if you’d like to bury it in the cellar a while.



Caroline Parent

In the Burgundian tradition, we’re ending the flight with a **White**. Yes, I know that flies in the face of the old “white before red” mantra that most people believe to be the way to go. However, when tasting in the cellars in Burgundy, if you happen to be at a domaine that produces both reds and whites, they will most likely end with the whites. (Even DRC saves the Montrachet for the end.) Not only do the whites serve a purpose as a palate-cleanser after a line-up of young, structured and rather tannic reds, the whites seem to show better coming after the reds. I’ve come to believe in the system and prefer to end multi-wine tasting sessions with the whites. (Of course, when pairing with foods it’s a different animal all together. Go with what works best with the dish you’re about to eat, bien sûr...)

Puligny-Montrachet is hardly an overlooked appellation either, but its reputation and the focus of attention is based on the Grand Crus (**Montrachet, Chevaliers-Montrachet, Bâtard-Montrachet**) and the top 1er Crus (**Demoiselles, Pucelles, Folatières**, etc.) Not a lot of buzz is seen around the Puligny-Montrachet Village level wines, though many of them are extraordinarily good (though none are what most would consider inexpensive.)

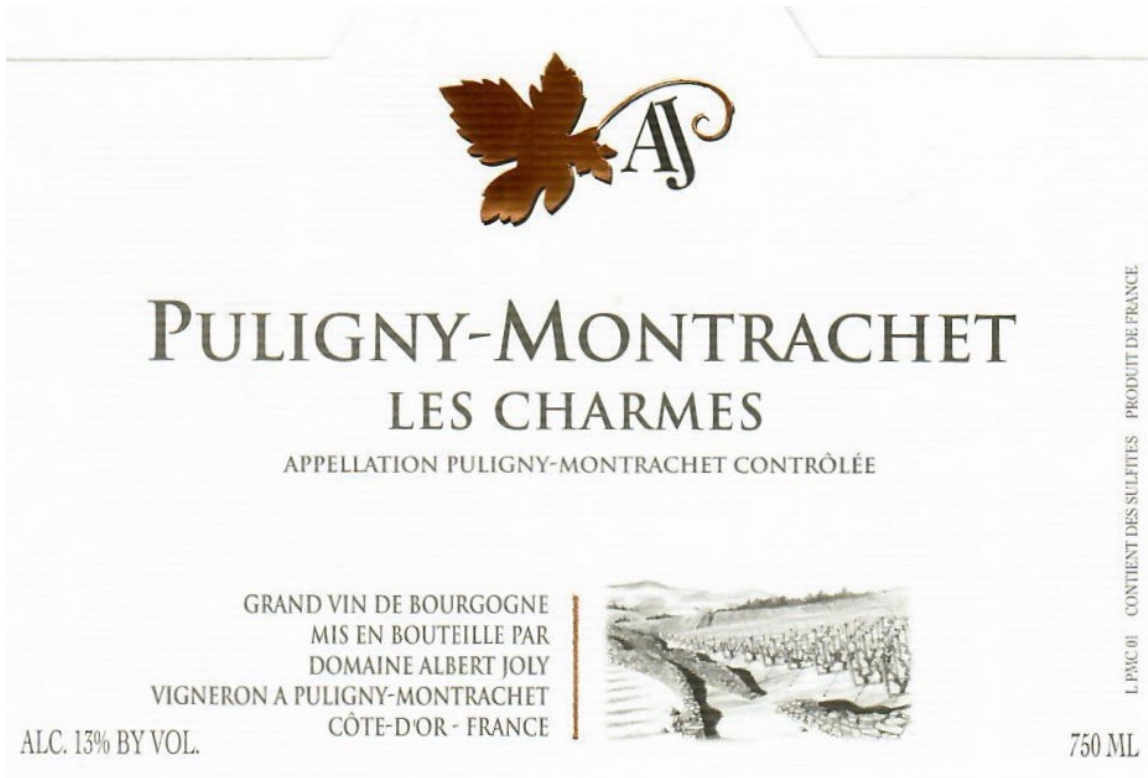
Puligny is a small village, with relatively few producers. The ones everybody knows are generally stratospherically expensive, and the ones that are unknown are usually so for a reason. That’s why it’s so wonderful to find an exception. Massive thanks to Switzerland-based journalist Bill Nanson (Burgundy-Report.com) for turning me on to the tiny **Albert Joly** domaine.



Sylvie and Gilles - Domaine Albert Joly

It's a small operation indeed, just 11 acres in total, and all of it in Puligny-Montrachet. What's more, they sell off some 85% of their fruit to the negociants, so their own production is miniscule. Albert's daughter **Sylvie Prevot-Joly** and her brother-in-law **Gilles Gerard** took over the estate in 2007, and only then started bottling some of the production under their own label.

Sadly they have no 1er or Grand Crus, but their village holdings are superb - two very different lieu-dits at opposite ends of the appellation. They have a nice old-vine piece of *Les Tremblots* at the southern end near Chassagne, and then this lovely parcel of **Les Charmes**, which directly abuts **Meursault Charmes 1er Cru** (alas, it is only classified at the Village level on the Puligny side.) The result is in fact quite Meursault-like, in its rich fruit core that wraps around a subtle but pure mineral streak underneath. I'm pumped to introduce you to a great little grower in Puligny - **Albert Joly** is going to be a staple in my cellar (and yours, I hope!) for many years to come.



Next shipment in the Fall...

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 fall, 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

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, 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 for more information.*

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