

2012 BURGUNDY EN Primeur Offer Part 1

Great things come in small packages

2012 has brought forth a small crop of high quality wines. The whites are consistently fine and the reds, whilst more variable, are, at the top level, excellent, characterful wines.

In contrast to 2011 which got off to a great start, the 2012 growing season commenced slowly with below average temperatures throughout April and May. There was a little late frost that caused problems in Chassagne-Montrachet but the real loss of volume was the result of continued bad weather during the flowering period in June. This affected the whole of Burgundy from Chablis in the north to Mâcon in the south. The generally wet weather continued until the middle of July and tested the resolve and skill of the vignerons. There was a lot of mildew around and less conscientious growers lost much of their crop.

There was also a series of hailstorms which principally affected the area between Pommard and Chassagne-Montrachet. The premiers crus between Puligny and Meursault were hit on three occasions, the most devastating on August 1st. Yields in many of these crus are as low as 15hl/ha, a third of the usual amount.

Fortunately the weather gradually improved and the second half of July, August and the all important run up to the vintage were progressively warmer and drier. Indeed by the second week of September, the ground was very dry and producers were eagerly anticipating a few showers to coax the fruit to final maturity. The harvest started the third week of September in the Mâconnais and quickly followed in the Côte d'Or and Chablis as the fine weather and small crop had ensured a final burst of ripening. The fruit was in healthy condition with good levels of both sugar and acidity and the low yields had contributed a natural concentration of flavour.

As a result, the whites are rich and characterful with good, but not excessive alcohol levels, ripe fruit flavours, fine balancing acidity and an intensity and length on the finish rarely seen in 2011. It is particularly good in Chablis, where yields were often excessive in 2011, and in

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the Côte d'Or where many of the lesser villages (Saint Aubin, Saint Romain, Savigny, Pernand-Vergelesses) took full advantage of the fine late summer weather.

The reds are more variable as the difficulties with hail and mildew necessitated a strict sorting of the fruit, but the best growers picked perfectly ripe, healthy grapes that have given elegant, medium-bodied wines that show great charm and personality. The lack of extreme heat during the summer has meant that the accent is on red rather than black fruits but overall these are high quality pinot noir wines that will be accessible when young and have the balance to age gracefully.

As already mentioned, the great difficulty is the volume produced with many top estates harvesting at best half a normal crop. Jean-Marc Pillot made three barrels of his Chenevottes instead of his usual eight.

This is just a small selection of wines that I urge you to consider for your cellar and Part 2 of this offer will follow early January once I have had a chance to taste more wines. I recommend you let me know what you'd like as soon as possible as inevitably many wines will run out quickly this year – there will also be a shortage of samples to taste when the merchants show these wines to their clients early next year.

Please note that due to the tiny quantities available, allocations are still being calculated at the domaines, therefore orders will be confirmed in the New Year when I should know what we can expect to receive.

Karl Elwood

December 2013

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Domaine Billaud-Simon

Bernard Billaud, together with consultant oenologue Jean-Pierre Lédé and wine-maker Julien Martins, make exceptional unoaked Chablis. The 2012 harvest took place between October 2nd and October 9th and the wines are richer and more concentrated than in 2011. Bernard Billaud compares them to the best 2008s or 2010s, both the product of cool summers when acidities were high.

White	£ per case (12x75cl) IN BOND
Petit Chablis	120.00
<i>Billaud-Simon own 2ha of Petit Chablis on the plateau just above grand cru Les Clos. This has nothing to do with most Petit Chablis produced on the outskirts of the region. Lovely, fresh, floral aroma. Crisp and fresh with a fruity finish. Drink 2014-2016.</i>	
Chablis	130.00
<i>The domaine's vines are all adjacent to the premiers crus of Vaillons, Montmains and Montée de Tonnerre. This is one of the very finest village Chablis with fine fruit and crisp, minerally texture. Drink 2014-2017.</i>	
Chablis 1er Cru Vaillons	185.00
<i>One of the best premiers crus on the right bank of the river Serein which flows through the heart of Chablis. The purer kimmeridgian soil gives a full-bodied, intense wine with more bite and acidity. Classic Chablis. Drink 2015-2018.</i>	
Chablis 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre	240.00
<i>Splendid premier cru adjoining the eastern end of the grands crus and benefitting from the same soil and southerly exposition. Lovely, complete wine combining the fruit of Vaillons with the structure of Mont de Milieu. Drink 2015-2018.</i>	
Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos	545.00
<i>Generally considered the finest grand cru, of which Billaud-Simon own 0.44ha. Planted in 1966. Fermented in stainless steel, this has wonderful freshness and purity of fruit and a fantastic, mineral character. Drink 2016-2020.</i>	

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Domaine Jean-Marc Pillot

Like many estates in Chassagne, Jean-Marc was hit by frost at the beginning of May, poor flowering in June and hail three times in June, August and September. By performing an early *effeuillage* in June he was able to maintain his fruit in perfect condition and the small crop was naturally concentrated and fully ripe. The result is a splendid range of rich, honeyed whites with a lovely balance of ripe fruit and crisp acidity. The difficulty is the quantity. Jean-Marc

made less than half his usual quantity of Chassagne-Montrachet. All the 2012s will be aged for 18 months (12 months in barrel followed by 6 months in tank) before being bottled in spring 2014.

	£ per case
	(12x75cl)
	IN BOND
Bourgogne Chardonnay Les Grands Champs	139.00

Classy wine from a vineyard within the commune of Chassagne-Montrachet, but too low on the slope to benefit from the appellation. Vinified with the same care as the Chassagnes. Rich and generous with a lovely fine and fresh finish. Drink 2014-2017.

Chassagne-Montrachet	320.00
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Jean-Marc's vines lie predominately on the border between Chassagne and Puligny-Montrachet, just below the grand cru of Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet. All aged in new and one year old barrels as a result of the small crop. Drink 2015-2018.

Puligny-Montrachet Les Noyers Brets	285.00
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Leaner and crisper than the Chassagne, this needs a little time to open up, but has great length on the finish. Drink 2015-2018.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Chenevottes	415.00
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North-east facing, looking out over the grands crus of Puligny. This plot has the oldest vines of the domaine, giving exceptional weight and concentration to the wine. Drink 2016-2012.

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Domaine Vincent et François Jouard

Frost, poor weather at flowering and hail on August 1st all took their toll on the yields in 2012. Fortunately the quality is excellent and the Jouard brothers decided to sell fewer grapes to the Beaune négociants so hopefully the overall volumes we can get won't be too dissimilar to last year.

François has also decided to reduce the amount of Vosges oak in the cellar buying more Allier casks particularly for the softer, fruitier wines such as Champs Gains.

White	£ per case (12x75cl) IN BOND
Chassagne-Montrachet Vieilles Vignes	270.00

A selection of the oldest vines of the estate, this is of premier cru quality with honeyed fruit on the nose and a full-bodied, solid texture on the palate. rich, intense fruit, full-bodied firm texture and a long finish. Drink 2015-2017.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Champs Gain	355.00
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The most forward and fruitiest of the domaine's premier crus. Soft and seductive with lovely juicy texture and vibrant fresh fruit. Drink 2015 – 2018.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Maltroie	355.00
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A fine premier cru situated immediately behind the Jouard cellar just below the church of Chassagne. This is more backward with a closer knit texture and more concentrated flavour. Full and firm with higher acidity and an intense flavour. A great success. Drink 2015 – 2018

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Chaumées 'Clos de la Truffière'	375.00
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Superb plot above the village, facing Puligny. Chalky soil gives bite and intensity. Solid yet fresh. Lovely stylish wine, needs a year or two but will be magnificent. Drink 2016-2019

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Bâtard-Montrachet

1245.00

The Jouards made only 1½ barrels of this wonderful grand cru in 2012. Always rich and opulent. Drink 2016-2019.

Domaine Jean-Jacques Girard

Jean-Jacques and Agnès Girard together with their son Vincent work one of the best domaines of the northern Côte de Beaune. Based in Savigny, they also have substantial holdings in Pernand-Vergelesses, Beaune, Volnay, Pommard and Aloxe-Corton.

The southern vineyards in Volnay and Pommard were badly hit by hail in 2012 a situation that was to be repeated to even worse effect in 2013 when hail struck not only Volnay and Pommard, but the villages of Beaune and Savigny as well. Jean-Jacques harvested the 2012 grapes between September 22nd and October 3rd at fine levels of maturity and no trace of rot. They are the estate's finest wines since 2009 with lovely red fruit aromas, good concentration on the palate and long, fresh aftertastes. Like all Girard wines they will be delicious young, remain open as they develop and age remarkably well.

White

£ per case

(12x75cl)

IN BOND

Savigny-Lès-Beaune Blanc

170.00

Produced from vines high on the slope above the village. The chalky soil gives a crisp yet rich wine, one of the best value whites of the Côte de Beaune. Drink 2014-2016.

Pernand-Vergelesses Les Belles Filles

165.00

This climat lies opposite grand cru Corton-Charlemagne. Crisp and honeyed with just the right amount of oak. Drink 2014-2017.

Corton-Charlemagne

720.00

This comes from the south-facing sector of Charlemagne and is rich and aromatic with concentrated, honeyed chardonnay aromas and intense flavour. Only two barrels made in 2012 due to the poor weather conditions at time of flowering. Intense and concentrated as a result. Drink 2014-2017.

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Domaine Jean-Jacques Girard continued...

Red	£ per case
	(12x75cl)
	IN BOND
Savigny-Lès-Beaune Rouge	170.00

The Girards own numerous plots in Savigny and this is a fine fusion of soft, red fruit from the Beaune side of the village and the deeper, more concentrated, tannic style of wines from the sector near Aloxe-Corton. Drink 2015-2021.

Savigny-Lès-Beaune 1er Cru Peuillets	210.00
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One of the best premiers crus adjacent to Beaune 1er Cru Clos du Roi. Always well structured and has the potential to age well. Drink 2016-2022.

Savigny-Lès-Beaune 1er Cru Lavières	230.00
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The domaine's finest premier cru. Full-bodied, gutsy wine with more tannin and ageing potential. Drink 2015-2020.

Beaune 1er Cru Clos du Roi	250.00
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This is the sweet, seductive end of Beaune, far removed from the more tannic offerings found on the border with Pommard. This wine tends to drink well young, but I suspect has the potential to age gracefully. Drink 2016-2023.

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Domaine Bertrand Ambroise

Bertrand and his son François own this organic estate and are one of the few Burgundy domaines to make equally fine white and red wines. This offer focuses on the reds. Production in 2012 was much reduced as a result of spring frost and poor flowering, only 80,000 bottles compared to over 150,000 bottles in 2009. The quality, however, is superb with intense aromas and concentrated flavours, the finest reds since 2005 according to Bertrand.

Red	£ per case
	(12x75cl)
	IN BOND
Beaune 1er Cru Tuvilains	240.00

To be aged in one third new oak and all 400 litre barrels. Leans towards an opulent style, but there's always sufficient tannin to provide texture and structure for long ageing. Drink 2017-2022.

Nuits-Saint-Georges	310.00
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Bertrand believes this is the most concentrated villages wine he has made for many years. Drink 2018-2025.

Nuits St Georges Vieilles Vignes	340.00
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From the oldest (65-70 year old plants) vines of the domaine in three parcels adjacent to premiers crus Les Saint Georges and Les Cailles. Drink 2019-2026.

Nuits-Saint-Georges 1er Cru Vaucrains	495.00
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The domaine's finest Nuits premier cru giving intense, concentrated, tannic wines. Drink 2020-2029.

Corton Le Rognet	565.00
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Bertrand only made four barrels in 2012 instead of the usual twelve. Drink 2020-2030

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Domaine Bertrand Ambroise continued...

Clos Vougeot

1025.00

From the Monpertuis sector of the clos. Rich, fine and opulent. Lovely, expansive quality and very fresh finish. Drink 2016-2026.

Domaine Rossignol-Trapet

Quality has soared since brothers Nicolas and David Rossignol converted the domaine to biodynamic viticulture. In particular, the wines display significantly more depth and concentration than when they took over from their father in the 1990s. Vinification is traditional with a majority but not all the bunches being destemmed, a maceration of 10 to 14 days and a proportion of new oak that varies from 15% for the village wines to 50% for the Grands Crus.

Priority will be given if you order across the board as our allocation will be tied accordingly. I will have a better idea of how the domaine plans to allocate orders in the New Year, so please let me know asap what you would like to order and I will confirm as soon as I know.

Red

£ per case

(12x75cl)

IN BOND

Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes

299.00

The Rossignols vinify their old vines separately and this cuvée comes from plants between forty and eighty years of age. A fine benchmark Gevrey and very close to a 1er Cru in quality without the price tag. Drink 2018-2022.

Beaune 1er Cru Teurons

355.00

The Rossignols pick the Beaune vineyards first as the grapes are always riper there. A rich and opulent wine that will probably have good potential for ageing. Drink 2017-2022.

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Domaine Rossignol-Trapet continued...

Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Clos Prieur 620.00

Splendidly-situated premier cru just below grand cru Mazis-Chambertin. Drink 2019-2023.

Latricières-Chambertin 990.00

The last vines to be picked, but ripeness was not a problem. Drink 2021-2026.

Chambertin 1450.00

The Rossignols own a sizeable 1.6ha of Chambertin with the oldest vines dating from 1919. Drink 2023- 2028.

Terms and Conditions

All wines are offered subject to availability and final confirmation

Prices are quoted either as cases of 12 x 75cl bottles In Bond

Minimum order is 1 case

Free delivery for orders over £300, otherwise delivery will be charged at cost

Some of the whites have been shipped and the rest will be available for delivery between the Spring and late 2014

Payment required on invoice

E&OE. December 2013.

Elwood Wines Ltd
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East Sussex
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