

## RECENT ELDEN TASTINGS: GET ‘EM WHILE THEY’RE HOT!

In the last issue of ‘Selections’, we titled this page ‘The First of the 05s’, and talked about the hub-bub over the vintage. Our prediction then that there would be no more 05s available from the producers by the end of the summer came true sooner than we thought. So, here are the last of the 05s... and they are here only because we reserved them last year. Please bear in mind, therefore, that we have strictly limited quantities for many of these wines. You will notice also the first of the 06 whites which have been justly trumpeted for their open fruit and freshness. So you’ve got the Brigandat Champagne (if you are already planning for the holidays). There are Pascal Prunier’s white 05s (which we reserved, but decided to wait until this issue to present because his were some of the few 05 reds bottled in time for the Spring issue). And then there are the 05 reds that were not bottled in the Spring. We have Delagrang and Arcelain and Mouton. There is also a clutch of great wine from Vincent Rapet. And back by popular demand, the Boillot Volnay and Pommard...but the 1er crus this time. A couple of new-comers: Pierre Naigeon, who seemingly came out of nowhere with tiny quantities of some great appellations; and Eric Guyard from the northern end of the Cotes de Nuits with excellent Marsannay and Fixin. The CUT-OFF DATE for orders is a little short this time—15 August—because we are off to Orvieto for our Fall tours with Papillon Select Tours immediately thereafter.

PIERRE BRIGANDAT  
Champagne Brut Tradition NV

DOMAINE DES BEAUVAIS  
Chablis ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Chablis 1er Cru ‘Cote de Lechet’ 06  
Chablis 1er Cru ‘Montmain’ 06  
Chablis 1er Cru ‘Fourchaume’ 06  
Chablis Grand Cru ‘Vaudesir’ 04

MAISON CAPITAIN-GAGNEROT  
Ladoix 1er Cru ‘Les Grechons’ 06  
Ladoix 1er Cru ‘Les Hautes Mourottes’ 06  
Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru 05

PASCAL PRUNIER-BONHEUR  
Saint Romain 05  
Auxey-Duresses ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Meursault ‘Les Grands Charrons’ 05

DOMAINE RAPET PERE ET FILS  
Pernand-Vergelesses ‘Les Combottes’ 06  
Aloxe-Corton 05  
Pernand-Vergelesses 1er Cru ‘Ile des Vergelesses’ 06  
Corton Grand Cru 05

Bertrand Brigandat has attracted a lot of attention over the past few years. The family Champagne production that he took over little by little from his father and his sister suddenly burst into one of the brightest stars in small-production Champagne. We’ve seen his unstinting dedication to the vines, with an emphasis on Pinot Noir fruit, as well as a growing confidence in the winery. His wines now stand out at exclusive Paris tastings which include much better-known domains. Our meeting was a happy accident a decade ago; now we are thrilled to see his success and to have watched it come about step by hard-earned step.

2006 has proven to be a much more ‘Chablis’ vintage than 2005. Where the 05s are fat and ripe, the 06s (much like the maligned 04s, in fact) are showing off the minerality that we all look for in great Chablis. The common thread through the vintage is freshness and purity. From there, you have all the ‘terroirs’ in Chablis to choose from. The village old-vine version is deep and round, flinty almost. The Cote de Lechet is dusty dry, verging on severe...but that’s Left Bank Chablis to perfection! The Fourchaume is all fruit at first impressions, but it has a subtle stoniness that’s almost grand cru. And the Montmain is somewhere in between: serious minerality, but balanced with big fruit; the obvious choice for early drinking. The Grand Cru Vaudesir is from 04, and 04 was, despite what you may have heard, a great vintage in Chablis. This wine will be drinking well now through the end of the decade.

The Capitain Ladoix white first growths are local legends. Both are grown right up on the same hill and at the same elevation as the Cortons and Corton-Charlemagnes, so the quality of the vineyards is undoubted. The problem is that they are tiny holdings, both of them. The locals are in the know, and so the wines sell out soon after the bottling. The main difference between the two is that the Hautes Mourottes vineyard was literally created, jack-hammered out of the bedrock. Needless to say, it is the more mineral of the two. And as for the Corton-Charlemagne 05, given the Capitain track record with the appellation, combined with the 2005 vintage...we are expecting greatness.

You might think we got it backward, having presented the Prunier reds last issue and the whites this time. But it was a simple question of necessity. So many 05 whites had been released, and so few reds, we decided to present Pascal’s Pinots then, and reserved his Chardonnays for now. Three wines; and three distinctly different expressions of the grape. But that is Pascal’s forte: he works in a zone with a myriad of ‘terroirs’, and somehow manages to keep them distinct and precise. The Saint Romain is an appellation apart. Situated up on the cliffs above the Meursault plain, the wine has a mineral side that is like no other in Burgundy. Slightly flinty, but delicately so, it’s a wine that needs little or no wood to shine. The Auxey old-vine white is, as you may already know, one of our favorite white Burgundies year-in-year-out. We’re drinking his 02 now, and it is sublime. This 05 version will be outrageous, given the density and the fruit. And to the Meursault: Pascal makes what we like to call ‘grown-up’ Meursault. It’s not that ‘toast, butter and honey’ style that has become the caricature of the appellation. Rather it is rich Chardonnay fruit with just enough oak that you would call it ‘structured’, followed by a lemony acidity that brings the often-unseen minerality of Meursault to the fore. All three are examples of great winemaking.

When you write a newsletter like this, you are always looking for ways to make distinctions about things that are difficult to put into words. You try to avoid hyperbole; you don’t want to come off sounding corny; and of course not every wine can be described as the greatest thing you’ve ever tasted. So I am pleased to tell you that we have only ten cases of each of these wines available to us. Ten, and no more. You may find it strange, but I am pleased. Because I don’t have to convince you, I’m free to say that these Rapet 05s are indeed some of the best wines we have ever tasted. And I would add that you really do want to have some of this in your cellar for down the road. But it is strictly first-come, first-served; out of our control. So please get in touch before you send any paperwork to confirm availability.

DOMAINE MOUTON  
Givry 1er Cru ‘Clos Jus’ 05

MICHELARCELAIN  
Pommard ‘Clos Beaudier’ 05  
Beaune 1er Cru ‘Clos des Mouches’ 05

HENRIDELAGRANGE  
Volnay ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Pommard ‘Les Vaumuriens Hauts’ 05

ALBERT AND LOUIS BOILLOT  
Volnay 1er Cru ‘Carelle sous Chapelle’ 05  
Pommard 1er Cru ‘En Largilliere’ 05

DOMAINE DU VIEUX COLLEGE  
Marsannay ‘Les Favieres’ 05  
Fixin ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05

PIERRE NAIGEON  
Gevrey-Chambertin ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru ‘Cherbaudes’  
‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Chambolle-Musigny 1er Cru ‘Les Sentiers’  
‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05  
Morey Saint Denis 1er Cru ‘La Riotte’ Vieilles  
Vignes’ 05  
Bonnes Mares Grand Cru ‘Cuvee Reserve’ 05

CHRISTIAN BONFILS  
Sablet ‘Cuvee Clemence’ 05  
Gigondas ‘Vieilles Vignes’ 05

Sometimes the name of a parcel of vines will give you a clue to the style of wine it produces. Think how many vineyards are named ‘Charme-something-or-other’. It’s true of the ‘Clos Jus’ for sure. The wine from these vines is consistently deep and rich and, yes, juicy. This is another of those wines that we put in our cellar year after year. Gerard Mouton (now working with his son, Laurent, full time) makes several Givry first growths, but the Clos Jus in 2005 stands out among them. It reminds us of the 99s, another great year in the Cote Chalonnaise.

Michel Arcelain has a hard time understanding why we want to put the 2005s on this list. He has a cellar full of older vintages that he is holding until they are mature. For him, we’ll talk about the 2005s in ten years. But we convinced him that the world is clamoring for the 05s now. He is bottling the new vintage as we go to press, and we are pleased to offer two wines that you will want to age (as Michel expects!), but which you will at least be sure to have in your cellar for the future.

We have said it before— but it is fascinating still: to taste the difference between this Volnay and this Pommard, both ‘village’ appellations, both made by the same person, both from the same year, the same grape, and hardly a quarter of a mile distance between the two vineyards, is to see one of the clearest examples of Burgundy ‘terroir’ that we know. If Pommard is ‘masculine’, Volnay is ‘feminine’; the contrast inspires such striking similes. Henri Delagrang and his son Didier live and work in a privileged spot in the vines, as have generations of Delagranges before them. Which could explain a lot; their wines seem to be almost instinctively true to the ‘terroir’.

We introduced the cousins Boillot in the last issue of ‘Selections’ with a 2002 Pommard first growth and a 2005 Volnay village. We got great feed-back from those who tasted these wines, so we asked if we could present something else from 05. They have proposed these two 1er crus. Theirs is a tiny production, as traditional as they come. True Burgundy that you will want to hold for some time.

The appellations of Marsannay and Fixin are often over-shadowed by their more illustrious neighbor, Gevrey-Chambertin. However, as with the ‘lesser known’ appellations of the Cotes de Beaune that we present to you regularly, these wines can be hidden gems, especially from the best producers. We met Eric Guyard at a tasting in Paris last winter while we were specifically looking for a Fixin for our list. We made an appointment to taste with him in his cellars in Marsannay the following week, and we have been waiting ever since for his 05s to be bottled so that we could introduce him to you.

We’ve been around Burgundy for awhile, and so were dumbfounded when, seemingly out-of-nowhere comes a winemaker whom we have never heard of, offering some of the most prestigious appellations imaginable, and these crafted with the exquisite touch of a Pinot master. As it turns out, the domain has been around since 1850, but was tiny and sold its wine to a loyal clientele out the door. When Pierre Naigeon took over the domain in 1996, he was looking to expand his production, and looked to the south...Australia. He is one of the generation known as the ‘flying winemakers’. Recently (his first vintage was 2002), he decided to augment his Burgundy production and set up a small negociant house. The wines we present here are some examples of that work. We expect his reputation to spread quickly, and we’re pleased to forge a relationship with him at this early stage. You will be too. Very limited quantities, so please confirm availability before you send any paperwork.

Christian’s touch with Grenache and his sensibilities with the balance of Syrah make these southern Rhone wines almost Burgundian. Those of you who follow this newsletter know that his wines are fine and elegant. These 05s will need a bit of cellar time to reach that perfect balance, but the richness of the fruit will be accessible right from the start

# The Burgundy Wine Institute

based in  
BEAUNE

in the heart of Burgundy wine country

in association with  
ELDEN WINE

and

L'ECOLE DES VINS DE BOURGOGNE

The Burgundy Wine Institute is a 'glass-in-hand' exploration of the world's most complex and confounding wine region.

We offer a range of intensive tasting-based courses to meet the needs of Burgundy lovers, whether amateur or professional. From the cellars to controlled-condition tasting rooms, from the vineyard to the winery, our program takes the student into the real world of Burgundy Wine.

We contend that there is no other way to understand Burgundy than to walk the vineyards with the people who make the wine, and to line up bottles and taste with those who shape Burgundian culture.

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*Based in Beaune*

*Small Group Classes*

*Expert Instructors*

*World Class Facilities*

*Professional Tastings*

*BIVB Cellar*

*All Lunches*

*Evenings Free*

*Welcome and Farewell  
Dinners*

*Grand Cru Graduation*

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## SAMPLE PROGRAM: ONE WEEK INTENSIVE

ARRIVAL. Welcome and Presentation of the Program. Informal tasting before welcome dinner.

### DAY 1

AM CLASS. SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION. The first of 3 intensive sessions in the Ecole des Vins professional facilities. Expositions on the Geography and Geology of Burgundy, on vineyard techniques and Burgundian grape varieties; on Climate and Vintage; on Vinification and aging; on the Appellation Contrôlée regulations and labeling requirements in Burgundy; on the bases of tasting (methods, techniques, vocabulary, analytic control).

Introductory tasting. Restaurant lunch with commented table tasting.

PM EXCURSION. Orientation drive through the Cote d'Or wine villages, with commentary on the physical layout of the vineyards, AOC distinctions and first notions of 'Terroir'. Commented tasting: Cote de Beaune vs. Cote de Nuits.

### DAY 2

AM and PM CLASS. SUBJECT: TASTING. A full day of intensive training in tasting in the Ecole des Vins professional facilities. In-depth analysis of Burgundy wines from each region—Chablis, Auxerrois, Cote de Beaune, Cote de Nuits, Cote Chalonnaise, Maconais—from the BIVB tasting cellar. Numerous practical exercises. Lunch with commented table tasting. The bases of analysis, methods and techniques illustrated by commented tastings over a wide range of wines. Restaurant lunch with commented tasting.

### DAY 3

AM FIELD. SUBJECT: COURTIER. This morning we'll accompany a professional courtier on his rounds. As opposed to finished wines, the courtier tastes wine at the earliest stage possible, in order to make recommendations to negociant houses about vintage quality and individual lots of wine available for purchase. In contrast to the controlled and organized tasting of the previous days' classes, today we enter the real world and put our skills to the test. We will pick up techniques for analyzing young wines in the barrel from professionals whose livelihood depends on their tasting ability. Picnic lunch in the vines.

PM FIELD. SUBJECT: NEGOCIANT HOUSE. The negociant houses control the Burgundy wine market and have the capacity to sell all around the world. The courtier acts as a liaison between the grape farmer and the negociant. This afternoon we will look at how that system operates: what becomes of the wine that a courtier arranges for a negociant to buy, and how large volumes of wine are produced from small individual lots. Cellar tasting.

### DAY 4

AM FIELD. SUBJECT: SOMMELIER. We'll spend the morning with a master sommelier in the restaurant where we will have lunch. We will look at the sommelier's role in matching wine with food; and also their skill in choosing wine that will please each client. From the client's point of view, we'll learn how best to make use of a sommelier's knowledge. And we'll see how to deal with a problem bottle. We'll discuss our lunch menu and the proposed wines, before sitting down to a commented tasting over lunch.

PM FIELD. SUBJECT: BARREL MAKER. We'll visit the production facility of one of the foremost 'tonneliers' in France to see the importance of oak in aging wine. This ancient and complex craft is visually stunning. At the same time, to see first-hand the raw materials, the techniques and the expertise involved in barrel production gives us the opportunity to examine oak as an element in winemaking. Commented tasting: Oak and Wine.

### DAY 5

AM FIELD. SUBJECT: SMALL DOMAIN. We'll walk the vineyards and visit the winery of a small domain. These are often husband and wife teams who oversee every aspect of wine production (from planting, working the vineyards, harvesting, vinification, aging, bottling, as well as the business side of selling and accountancy.) It is a labor-intensive life, but for many, a passionate one. The best producers are perfectionists who appreciate a knowledgeable client. Cellar tasting. Restaurant lunch.

PM FIELD. SUBJECT: THE NEW NEGOCIANT. The 'new negociant' is a revolutionary structure that allows ambitious small domains to add to their production in situations where purchasing vineyards is not possible. Many of the most talented producers today started with a small stake of vines inherited from their families, and have 'rented' additional vineyards to increase their volume and perhaps to add a prestigious wine to their list. These domains are the 'locomotives' driving modern Burgundy, and the structure is the future for talented young winemakers. We'll visit one of these domains to understand the evolution of the market for quality Burgundy. Cellar tasting.

EVENING DINNER: Grand Cru tasting. Distribution of Diplomas. Farewell dinner.

The descriptions and syllabus presented here are not contractual.

FOR A COMPLETE PRESENTATION SEE

[www.burgundywineinstitute.com](http://www.burgundywineinstitute.com)

## A TASTING IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

With Issue 24 of 'Elden Selections', we complete our twelfth year as your eyes and ears—and palate!—here in Burgundy. Through it all, there has been one recurring theme to this newsletter: that to understand Burgundy, you must get to know the winemakers. Those of you have been with us from the start have watched a dynamic generation of Burgundian producers revitalize the region, putting respect for nature in its rightful place, and playing Burgundy's trump card—quality—in the world wine game. Until now, our main job has been to introduce you to these winemakers. We have several ways to do this in print: with vintage reports and grower profiles; with technical analysis, regional surveys and the occasional cross-cultural rant. But these pale before the prospect of a real introduction. Burgundy is a minefield. And a tasting is worth a thousand words. If you are truly serious about getting to know the growers, about really getting to the heart of Burgundy, the only solution is to see the region first hand. An hour's drive from Dijon to Chalon-sur Saone will tell you more about Burgundy than a year's reading. A tasting of wines from neighboring villages will give you a better notion of 'terroir' than all the geological charts in the world. Taste the same wine from one winemaker over five different vintages; you'll see the role of nature. Then taste the same wine from five different winemakers in the same vintage; you'll see the hand of man. And the only way to do this is to come to Burgundy. This is why Elden Wine has pooled its considerable resources here in the region and is pleased to present the Burgundy Wine Institute.

ELDEN

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SELECTIONS

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LES LILAS, GRANDE RUE, 21500 FAIN-LES MOUTIERS, FRANCE - TEL/FAX: 33/380 967 830 - [ELDEN@CLUB-INTERNET.FR](mailto:ELDEN@CLUB-INTERNET.FR)

<http://eldenwine.com> — [www.burgundywineinstitute.com](http://www.burgundywineinstitute.com)

THE BURGUNDY WINE INSTITUTE

'Get to know the growers'. 'Meet the winemakers'. 'Live like a local'. For the past twelve years we've been telling you that it is possible to train your palate, and learn to appreciate Burgundian culture as a Burgundian does.....even from a distance. But the truth is, it's difficult to get good source material in a world where wine writers shape opinion, and the distribution system supports them right to the point of purchase. If you have a wine merchant whom you trust and whose palate is similar to yours, you are one of the lucky few. Most wine lovers, though, find Burgundy wine very 'hit or miss'. The problem with Burgundy is that one good 'hit' will keep you coming back. So what's the solution? How do you avoid the 'misses'? The Burgundy Wine Institute has courses designed to immerse you, not just in Burgundy wine, but in the world of Burgundy wine.

All of our programs have at their base intensive introductory sessions with the Ecole des Vins de Bourgogne, the continuing education branch of the BIVB, whose impressive staff of instructors includes oenologists, geologists, chemists, technicians, university lecturers and master tasters. These first sessions take place at the BIVB facilities in Beaune, in professional tasting rooms, designed and

equipped for optimum sensorial analysis. You will leave these early courses well prepared for what lies ahead.

Burgundy Wine Institute Field Sessions are based around experts from various segments of the wine world. We'll travel with a 'courtier' from client to client to learn the art of barrel tasting young wines. We'll have a morning session in a restaurant with a 'sommelier' to learn about combining food and wine, in preparation for a guided 'degustation' over lunch. We'll meet and taste with all strata of Burgundy producers from the little mom-and-pop domains who are hands-on from the vine to the bottle, to the vanguard 'negociant-eleveur' wineries, and on through to the mega-negociant houses that control the market and cover the planet. We'll walk in the vines, and climb down in the cellars; we'll see barrels being coopered, and we'll join in the rhythm of the winery. Because every aspect of the wine world influences every other, the Burgundy Wine Institute teaches skills intended to help you get the big picture. And once you are there, you are in. Burgundy will no longer seem daunting and confounding, but rather a place you have made you own. And every cork you pull will carry you back there.

