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THE ULTIMATE BURGUNDY REFERENCE

127 Producers with 1,615 Wines Reviewed

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Statement of Principles

It is important that readers understand how I collect and evaluate the information that is reported in the pages of **Burghound.com** (the tasting notes and information are the sole responsibility of the author).

- I am personally responsible for all of my business expenses without exception. This includes airfare, hotels and effectively all of my meals. The purpose is as clear as it is simple: No conflicts of interest. *I do not accept nor do I seek any subsidy, in any form, from anybody.*
- Sample bottles are accepted for evaluation and commentary, much as book reviewers accept advance copies of new releases. I insist, however, that these sample bottles represent the final wines to be sold under that particular label.
- Finished, bottled wines are assigned scores as these wines are market ready. Wines tasted from barrel, however, are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished product.
- Wines are evaluated within the context of their appellations. Simply put, that means I expect a *grand cru* Burgundy to reflect its exalted status.

While the concept of terroir remains a controversial issue in the opinion of many people, it is not controversial to the Burgundian mindset—or to me, either. I attempt to convey, where appropriate, how certain wines are particularly good, or particularly bad, at expressing their underlying terroir. This is admittedly a difficult thing, rightly open to discussion among the Burgundians themselves, never mind an outside observer such as myself. Nevertheless, it is fundamental to great Burgundy. Mere "hedonism" is just that: empty pleasure seeking. Burgundy can deliver so much more—if it is asked.

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A Brief Word About Scores:

Numerical scores are endlessly debated among wine lovers. Inevitably, critics tend to emphasize certain characteristics at the expense of others. What follows is an explication of scores at **Burghound.com** and the underlying taste values they reflect.

Simply put, Burgundies that emphasize purity, elegance, overall balance and a clear expression of the underlying *terroir* are rated more highly than Burgundies that don't deliver these qualities. Other important characteristics include typicity, richness, balanced extraction, length and harmony. For example, a Volnay should taste like a Volnay and a grand cru should deliver a grand cru drinking experience.

The score is a summation of the taster's thoughts about a wine. It does not actually express those thoughts. Clearly, a mere number cannot fully represent the nuanced, detailed impression conveyed by a tasting note.

Please note: Wines are scored based on their expected quality at peak drinkability. Many grand crus that will, I believe, "be" a 92 may not necessarily taste like a 92-point wine when young, thanks to the tannins or general inaccessibility.

Wines rated 90 points or above are worth a special effort to find and cellar. Wines rated 85 or above are recommended, **especially among regional and villages-level wines**. There will be relatively few 90+ point wines, simply because there are relatively few outstanding and superlative wines. Finished, bottled wines are assigned specific scores as these wines are market ready. Wines tasted from barrel are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished, market-ready product.

95 – 100:	Truly incomparable and emotionally thrilling. A wine/Champagne so rated is as good as it gets. By definition, it is reference standard for its appellation or variety.
90 – 94:	Outstanding. Worth a special effort to purchase and cellar and will provide memorable drinking experiences.
85 – 89:	Good to High quality. Wines that offer solid quality in every respect and generally very good typicity. "Good Value" wines will often fall into this category. Worth your attention.
80 – 84:	Average to Good quality. The wine is "correct", displays no noticeable flaws and will provide pleasing, if straightforward, drinking.
76 – 79:	Barely Acceptable quality. The wine is not worth your attention nor is it a good value.
75 and Below:	Don't Bother. A wine with noticeable, irremediable flaws.

Estimated Maturities:

Estimating a window of when any pinot based wine will be at its peak is an extremely difficult thing to do with precision. The time frames that you see after the score is my estimate as to when a given wine will likely **begin to be** at its best. This is of course an educated guess about how the wine will evolve and assumes that it will have been responsibly shipped and stored, which as long-time collectors know is not always the case. Just as importantly, the suggested windows are based on how I personally prefer my Burgundies and pinots. This effectively means that for reds, there is still obvious freshness and vibrancy remaining to both the fruit and the flavors and while the tannic structure will be largely resolved, it by no means suggests that a completely smooth palate will exist devoid of any firmness. Especially tannic and or concentrated wines will necessarily have longer windows for obvious reasons. For whites, the windows are designed to indicate that point at which youthful fruit has passed into secondary nuances with more fully developed complexity as well as when the textures have rounded out and the sometimes bright acidity has mellowed. Important note: what the estimated maturities do NOT suggest is how long a wine will remain structurally sound and still able to provide enjoyment as many Burgundies, reds in particular, are of capable of remarkably long periods of graceful decline; however, beyond a certain point they will have passed their peaks and should be drunk, no matter how intellectually interesting they may be. As with anything this subjective, there is no substitute for your own experience and judgment and I offer these estimated maturities as general guidelines, not as gospel and as the saying goes, your mileage may vary.

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Progress Report:

1978 Vintage 36 wine Horizontal

An Important Word about the Tasting Notes:

99% of the following Burgundy notes are based on tastings conducted in October, November and December 2024. Note: finished in-bottle wines are assigned scores, as these wines are market-ready. Wines tasted from barrel are scored within a range, which simply reflects the reality that they are not finished, market-ready wines. The wines in the presentation boxes are listed alphabetically while the tasting notes are presented in the order that the winemaker chose to present the wines; this often is an indication as to the esteem in which the winemaker regards each wine.

Our policy on reviewing wines is simple: during domaine or winery visits, if a wine is presented for consideration, and it is to the best of our knowledge representative and has finished both its primary and secondary fermentations, then it is reviewed – no exceptions. So if, for example, you are looking at a range of 2021's from a specific Burgundian producer and you do not see a particular wine in the Issue or database, it means that it was not presented for review and does NOT mean that it received an exceptionally poor score; it could also simply mean that the wine wasn't made in the first place. Either way, if a given wine is not in the database, it has not been reviewed. If you do not see any wines for any particular producer in a given year, then it means the wines were not reviewed – it does **NOT** mean they were reviewed but found to be uninspiring.

Note: Wines receiving a ➡ symbol are particularly outstanding for their respective appellations and especially merit your attention; readers should note that *grand crus* stand on their own and never receive an arrow (which is a heart symbol in the database).

Burghound.com 2023 Vintage Selections:

The “Top Value Wines” are those that are generally available in the marketplace at a price point of no more than approximately \$100 US; prices do of course vary from one country to another and even within those countries, they can vary widely, especially now with the fluctuation of many currencies. The “Sweet Spot Wines” section addresses the wide gulf between the under \$100 Top Value wines and the generally over \$250 “Don't Miss Wines”; note that I have tried to layer these selections to portray a representative range between the various price points. The “Don't Miss” wines are chosen based on sheer quality alone with price or availability having no effect on their selection. The reviews for each of these selections can be found in the corresponding producer section and will also be available via the Burghound searchable database.

either burned or compromised by botrytis. Potential alcohols came in around 13% for the pinot and slightly higher for the chardonnay at around 13.5%. We had no issues with the vinifications as acidities were adequate and there were no technical concerns of note. While it's still early days, both colors are fresh, transparent and balanced. Moreover, they should drink well young but because they're well-balanced, they should have no trouble aging well over to the short to medium term. In any event, I should think that the '23s will drink well before the 2022s are ready.” Ambroise has fashioned some excellent wines in 2023, particularly at the regional and *villages* levels. In particular, the old vines Bourgogne is sensational for what it is. Ambroise noted that the reds will be bottled without filtration. (Bertrand's Wines, www.bertrandswines.com, NY (most US states), USA; Charles Taylor Wines, www.charlestaylorwines.com and Wine Service, www.wineservice.co.uk, both UK).

Domaine Drouhin-Laroze (Gevrey-Chambertin)

2023	Bonnes Mares Grand Cru	red	(91-93)
2023	Chambertin-Clos de Bèze Grand Cru	red	(89-92)
2023	Chambolle-Musigny	red	NR
2023	Chapelle-Chambertin Grand Cru	red	(90-93)
2023	Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru	red	(90-92)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "En Champs"	red	(88-91)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "En Combes"	red	(88-91)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "Au Closeau" 1er	red	(89-92)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "Craipillot" 1er	red	(89-92)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "Clos Prieur" 1er	red	(89-92)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin – Dix Climats	red	(87-89)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "Lavaut St. Jacques" 1er	red	(90-92)
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin – Sans Souffre	red	87
2023	Gevrey-Chambertin "Vignes Belles"	red	(87-89)
2023	Latricières-Chambertin Grand Cru	red	(91-93)
2023	Morey St. Denis "Très Girard"	red	(86-89)
2023	Musigny Grand Cru	red	(90-93)

Philippe Drouhin's children, Caroline and Nicolas, now both work at the domaine full-time and have essentially assumed all responsibility for the wines. I met this trip with Nicolas, who briefly described the 2023 vintage as "one of abundance and a relatively easy growing season as there wasn't much disease pressure or climatic incidents like we had in Gevrey in 2022. The fruit set was large so even with our efforts to control yields directly, it was still necessary to drop fruit in some vineyards. Yields were relatively generous but not excessive at between 40 to 45 hl/ha with very good potential alcohols that ranged from 12.5 to 13.5%. The fruit was largely quite clean so there wasn't much sorting required. We used on average around 20% whole clusters for the vinifications though it varied. We had no trouble with the fermentations finishing and overall, 2023 gave us a style of wine that should appeal to basically everyone, both purists and casual Burgundy lovers. See also the wines from Maison Laroze de Drouhin below. (Atherton Wine Imports, www.awiwine.com, CA, Terlato Wines International, IL, USA; The Wine Society, www.thewinesociety.com, FINE+RARE Wines Ltd, www.frw.co.uk, Davy & Co., www.davywine.co.uk, Goedhuis & Co., www.goedhuis.com, Decorum Vintners, www.decvin.com, Averys Fine Wine Merchants, www.averys.com, Tanners Wine, www.tanners-wines.co.uk, Laytons, www.laytons.co.uk, Cru World Wine, www.uk.cruworldwine.com, Justerini & Brooks, www.justerinis.com, Anthony Sarjeant, anthony@anthonysarjeant.co.uk and Fields, Morris & Verdin, www.fmvwines.com, all UK; Watson's Wines, 852.2606.8828, www.watsonswine.com, Hong Kong; Domaine Wine Cellars, www.domaine.com.tw, Taiwan).

2023 Morey St. Denis "Très Girard": (from a .18 ha parcel planted in 1946). Subtle if still easily perceptible wood influence can be found on the ripe aromas of mostly black cherry and newly turned earth. The vibrant and attractively textured middle weight flavors are not particularly dense but I like the persistence of the youthfully austere finale. This does however need to develop quite a bit of depth if it's going to merit the upper end of my projected range. (86-89)/2029+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin – Sans Souffre: (from Croix de Champs). Here the nose is moderately reduced though it seems clear that the underlying fruit is ripe. The succulent and suave, though not dense, barely medium weight flavors offer acceptable length while also needing to develop better depth. 87/2026+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin – Dix Climats: ("Dix Climats" means 10 vineyards). A brooding dark berry fruit, earth and *sauvage*-inflected nose leads to lighter weight flavors that possess a finer mouthfeel and particularly so on the youthfully austere and dusty finale. (87-89)/2029+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin "Vignes Belles": A very ripe though appealingly fresh nose freely offers up its blend of black cherry, cassis, warm earth and a dollop of oak toast. There is very good vibrancy to the rich and generous middle weight flavors that conclude in a lingering bitter chocolate-tinged finale that is delicious but could use better depth. (87-89)/2029+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin "En Combes": (from Combe du Bas). Here too there is both good ripeness and freshness to the earthy array of forest floor and wild red and dark currant. The sleek, delicious and more voluminous flavors display focused power that carries over to the more youthfully austere but also more complex and longer finale. Patience. (88-91)/2031+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin “En Champs”: Firm reduction presently dominates the nose but there is both good verve and freshness to the succulent and delicious medium weight flavors that flash a subtle minerality that adds a sense of lift to the youthfully austere, linear and serious finale that is firm enough to need patience as this is borderline strict. (88-91)/2031+

2023 Chambolle-Musigny: (a mix of .18 ha in Les Baudes and .04 ha from the *villages* portion of Les Véroilles). This is firmly reduced on the nose and the funkiness extends to the palate, which is never a good sign. Now this may of course clean up successfully but since I can't predict that with confidence, I prefer to remain cautious. Not Rated

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin “Au Closeau”: (Drouhin is the only producer of this tiny .53 ha vineyard and owns 83% of it, or .44 ha; from vines planted in 1943). A ripe mix of red and dark cherry reveals wisps of both earth and the *sauvage*. There is good vibrancy to the seductively textured medium weight flavors that conclude in a dusty and youthfully austere finale. This should drink well on the younger side but reward up to a decade of keeping. (89-92)/2031+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin “Lavaut St. Jacques”: (from a .3 ha parcel of vines planted in 1943). Firm reduction dominates the fruit. On the palate there is a lovely sense of tension suffusing the middle weight flavors that exude evident minerality on the balanced and persistent finish that is firm and serious. This does however need to develop better depth so at least some cellaring should prove helpful. (90-92)/2033+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin “Craipillot”: (from a parcel measuring .26 ha planted in 1943 and 1953). This is also quite firmly reduced and revealing nothing aromatically. The succulent, suave and seductively textured flavors are unusually rich if less powerful and stony than those of the Lavaut, all wrapped in a dusty and ever-so-mildly warm finale. (89-92)/2031+

2023 Gevrey-Chambertin “Clos Prieur”: (from a parcel of .30 ha that was planted in 1954 though a section was replanted in 2003). Enough wood to merit pointing out is present on the liqueur-like aromas of poached plum, cherry and discreet earth and spice wisps. The vibrant middle weight flavors are not as rich but they are finer and more mineral-driven as well before culminating in a refreshing, dusty and youthfully austere finale that needs to develop better depth. (89-92)/2033+

2023 Chapelle-Chambertin: (from a .52 ha parcel in En La Chapelle). Once again a deft application of wood envelops pretty and layered aromas of violet, black cherry and crushed anise. There is good if not exceptional volume to the caressing and rounded medium weight flavors that conclude in a compact, moderately austere and clearly built-to-age finale where a touch of bitter bit fruit character eventually surfaces. (90-93)/2035+

2023 Latricières-Chambertin: (from a .67 ha parcel of extremely old vines). An interesting nose is at once quite cool but also markedly ripe as there is a touch of bitter chocolate character to the nose of airy red berry and wet stone aromas. The finer but not richer or more voluminous flavors are definitely more mineral-driven while delivering slightly better depth and persistence on the balanced, youthfully austere and balanced finale. (91-93)/2035+

2023 Bonnes Mares: (from a 1.5 ha parcel that is almost entirely in the *terres rouges* section). This is also interesting aromatically as there is a red cherry bonbon character to the aromas of kirsch, spice and pretty floral nuances. The succulent, caressing and admirably rich larger-bodied flavors display excellent power on the sappy, youthfully austere and equally compact finale that is also austere though not quite to the same degree. More depth will be needed to achieve the upper end of my projected range. (91-93)/2035+

2023 Chambertin-Clos de Bèze: (from a parcel of 1.5 ha of vines planted in 1949). Once again the nose is sufficiently firmly reduced to preclude an assessment. By contrast there is a lovely sense of freshness and verve to the medium-bodied and caressing flavors that exude a subtle bead of minerality that adds a sense of punch to the dusty, compact and somewhat grippy finale. This may well come together but today it's less harmonious than its grand cru brethren. (89-92)/2035+

2023 Clos de Vougeot: (from a superbly situated 1 ha parcel high on the hill). Here too firm reduction overshadows the underlying fruit. There is even better volume and slightly better mid-palate density to the sappy broad-shouldered flavors that also conclude in a dusty, very austere and compact finale where a prominent bitter pit fruit character, as well as a touch of warmth, appear. This is difficult to accurately read as the bitterness concerns me though at this early stage, it could well age out if given a chance. (90-92)/2035+

2023 Musigny: (from a .12 ha parcel). Spicy aromas include those of exotic tea, black raspberry and a hint of violet. The refined and delicious, if not especially dense, flavors flash an almost aggressive minerality on the moderately austere, chalky and dusty finish that is compact and sneaky long. This is also clearly built to repay extended keeping so at least some bottle aging is strongly advised. (90-93)/2035+