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By Neal Martin

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Burgundy 2013 – Gevrey-Chambertin

Domaine Drouhin-Laroze – The Rub

This domaine in the heart of Gevrey Village has one of the most impressive portfolios of premier and grand crus in the Côte de Nuits. Few growers can claim to have 8 grands crus under their wing. Winemaker Philippe Drouhin faced the same challenges as everyone else including 17 days of rain in May when temperatures were 3. 6 degrees below average and a protracted flowering from 20 June until 7 July, commencing the harvest on 4 October. The vines had been affected by coulure and millerandage and so sorting had to be done, both in the vineyard and in the winery. In many ways, everything I wanted to say about this grower was written in the introduction of their 2012s last year. These can be excellent wines when they want to be, but I would like them to be excellent wines more of the time. Occasionally there are some « belters ». The Musigny Grand Cru was seared with all the audacity and nobility you could shake a stick at, the Mazoyères-Chambertin and Chambertin Clos de Bèze full of « stuffing » and the Clos de Vougeot stylish. But then some other cuvées such as the Bonnes-Mares, Chapelle-Chambertin and Charmes-Chambertin just seem to lack the harmony and conviction you expect from these vineyards. Here is the Rub. Philippe kindly let me taste from one-year old barrel from the same cooperage so that I could compare and contrast. If I am being honest, in all but the top three wines I felt that they did not require too much more new wood, which they ineluctably will receive by the end of their 18 month élevage. So whereas in 2012 I felt that the vintage gave them the concentration to support that level of new oak, in 2013 I am less convinced, hence some of my more prudent scores. In a nutshell, I just know that this domaine has the parcels of vine to be up there with the Rousseau's of this this world. It just needs a little….fine-tuning.

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