

BIBENDUM WINE Co.

DECEMBER 2011

AGRAPART-0-FIVE

2005 L'AVIZOISE EXTRA BRUT BLANC DE BLANCS GRAND CRU

"With its broad aromas and nearly exotic fruit character, the nose immediately gives away this wine's origins in clay soils. It's large in body without showing any excess fat, its ripe flavors tightly wound into a vivid, sleekly-shaped fuselage that takes forever to end. Despite its youth it's already complex and expressive, anchored by a saline, oyster-shell minerality, and its finish feels harmonious, complete and impeccably refined. This seems destined to be one of the great champagnes of the vintage, and it will be thrilling to watch it develop."



Agrapart notes © Peter Liem
www.champagneguide.net

2005 MINÉRAL EXTRA BRUT BLANC DE BLANCS GRAND CRU

"This is blended from two vineyards of similar terroir: Le Champ Bouton in Avize, which is fermented in tank, and Bionnes in Cramant, vinified in 600-liter oak casks. While it shows the depth and amplitude of the vintage, its flavors of apple, white peach and orange citrus are unusually high-toned, feeling delicately poised despite their concentration. It's all pinned down by laser-like acidity, producing a clean, kinetic tension on the palate, and it's thoroughly saturated by aromas of chalk, particularly on the long, finely-detailed finish. It's an excellent 2005, and should be long-lived."

2005 VÉNUS BRUT NATURE BLANC DE BLANCS GRAND CRU

"Compared to Agrapart's other wines the Vénus always shows a greater dimension and subtlety, with a complexity not only of fruit, but also of minerality. Here, the apple, pear and green citrus flavors are ripe and fragrant, yet they feel nearly incidental against the backdrop of pure chalk that envelops the palate, deep and profound in its expression, appearing both richly expansive and precisely detailed. This feels three-dimensional in its resonant, gripping aroma, persisting with brilliant clarity and long, nuanced length."



The new releases from one of Champagne's hottest grower-producers have landed. The Agrapart wine that is best known on our shores is the Grand Cru Cuvée, **Terroirs**. The current version is based on 2007, with the balance made up of 2006 reserve wine, aged for three years on lees. Less well known, thanks to the tiny quantities we receive, are the three, single terroir wines of this producer and yet, these are some of the most astounding Champagnes being made in the entire region. These have just landed. There is the brilliant, citric, chalky, **Mineral** 2005, the richer, more opulent, yet equally mineral **Avizoise** 2005, and the absolute knock-out, zero dosage, **Venus** 2005, named for the horse that first ploughed the soil in this single vineyard. These are three astounding 2005s that set new benchmarks for this Domaine and for the Côte de Blancs in general.

FRANC-LY DELICIOUS

We buy the Chinon from Domaine Bernard Baudry each and every year, sometimes twice a year if possible. If we didn't we'd probably get run out of town by those customers who follow the wines of this fascinating producer. The simple truth is that Baudry makes some of Chinon's finest wines these days: 100% Cabernet Franc from a range of superb terroirs. These wines are the perfect antidote to the oceans of homogenised wine that exists in the world today. They are totally unique wines of place, and some of the most interesting reds we import. From a fantastic growing season, the 2009 wines of Bernard Baudry turn things up a notch: these are succulent, complex, fleshy wines that nonetheless retain the refreshing, spicy, nettle-like nuances and powdery tannins that speak so loudly of Chinon. They have aromatics reminiscent of berries, violets and pencil with a juicy, silky personality in the mouth that keeps you coming back. They have a richness yet an intense savouriness at the same time. If the wine trade jury has been out on Loire Cab Franc for some time, with Baudry's 2009's, the verdict has to be guilty. **Guilty of being a damn delicious drink.**

Each cuvée is named after the terroir that gave them their unique character. **Les Granges** (2010) is a lighter bodied wine made for earlier drinking from grapes that are grown on gravel and sand, which makes for a lip smackingly bright and lively wine. **Le Domaine** is a blend of parcels of older vines (around 35 years old) planted mostly on the alluvial gravel near the river (that brings an earthy, inky edge) as well as some vines grown on the limestone/flint slopes above the river. **La Croix Boissée**, from a single site with clay/limestone soils, is solidly built; rich, full and suave. Finally **Clos Guillot** is another single vineyard situated on a steep, south-east facing slope in Chinon. The soils here are a mixture of clay, chalk and yellow limestone and the wine is the most powerful, profound and long lived. For anyone who may not be aware of Cabernet Franc's wily charms or who believes this grape incapable of producing fabulous wines, these bottlings are the perfect retort.



RHINE RANGERS



LIMESTONE JUICE



NEW CHABLIS GUY

RHINE RANGERS

Time to shelve the humility: we have an enviable cache of some of the world's finest Riesling (and other aromatics) available for your perusal from legendary Domaines such as Robert Weil, Muller Catoir, Von Buhl and Domaine Weinbach. Please contact us for the offers. It is *worth highlighting that the 2010 Von Buhl QbA Trocken has just arrived*. Stay tuned for an offer on this and the mind-blowing 2010 single vineyard wines of this producer.

WEINGUT ROBERT WEIL, RHEINGAU (2010)

THE SITES: Kiedrich Klosterberg, Kiedrich Turmberg and of course, Kiedrich Gräfenberg.

WHAT WE SAY: From these historic sites, Wilhelm Weil, a pioneer of 'earth to glass' wine growing, guides Rheingau Riesling to its most seamless, precise expression and in doing so produces some of the world's most inspirational Rieslings.

WHAT THEY SAY: *"The style of Robert Weil wines is unmistakable. There is absolute and mineral, citrus-fruit flavour in the dry wines with no angular acidity and a crescendo of concentration and white peach fruit in the sweet wines."* **Freddy Price, Riesling Renaissance**

MÜLLER CATOIR, PFALZ (2010)

THE SITES: Haardter Bürgergarten, Haardter Herrenletten, Gimmeldinger Mandelgarten, Breumel In De Mauern

WHAT WE SAY: Is there another Estate that has done so much to advance the reputation of the Pfalz in recent decades? Certainly none other has achieved the cult status that Müller-Catoir enjoys in Germany. These are hard-core dry Rieslings - wines of drama, tension, exuberance and rare refinement.

WHAT THEY SAY: *"Showered with praise during the last decade, this estate is now widely recognised as one of the country's best... Each wine is like an essence of its grapes yet, however dense and powerful, Müller-Catoir wines possess an excellent harmony."* **Stuart Piggott, Wine Atlas of Germany**

DOMAINE WEINBACH, ALSACE (2009)

THE SITES: Clos de Capucins, Schlossberg GC, Furstenheim GC.

WHAT WE SAY: This unique Estate, under the gifted winemaking of Laurence Faller, somehow manages to harness the natural depth and power of some of the greatest sites of the central Alsace area, north of Colmar, while maintaining an almost Germanic clarity and freshness that is so rare these days in Alsace. The 2009s are remarkably elegant, fresh and pure, whether it be the Rieslings from the legendary Schlossberg Hill to some of the finest (certainly the most savoury) Gewürz in all of Alsace. These are brilliantly pristine and intense wines - they glow with life on the palate, as if they have been lit from behind.

WHAT THEY SAY: *"These are extreme wines – not in the sense that the description is usually employed, to denote huge concentration, overripeness, or high alcohol levels, as one might find in Zind Humbrecht, but extreme in their minerality and winy-ness. There are no other Alsace wines like them."* **Margaret Rand, The World of Fine Wine, Issue 17**

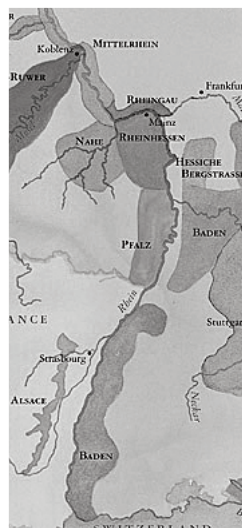
YOU SAY YOU WANT A #REVOLUTION?

Our contribution to the Rosé Revolution is that we try to only source perfect examples of the style that can stand alone when it comes to any assessment of wine quality. The truth is, we don't really believe in 'wine style', we believe in 'place' and that the best wines, no matter the 'style' should reflect that place, and, ideally, are only produced because they are good at showcasing the soils in which they are grown. Here's a list of our producers that make dry, textural Rosé that does just that: **Pibarnon** (Bandol), **Larmandier-Bernier** (Champagne), **Ricasoli** (Tuscany), **Verget** (Luberon), **Spinifex** (Barossa) and **Gonzalez Lara** (Cigales).

REICHSRAT VON BUHL, PFALZ (2010)

THE SITES: Ungeheuer Forst, Pechstein Forst, Ruppertsberg Reiterpfad.

WHAT WE SAY: The 2010 dry wines from this marvellous Estate are a blinding light, with the acidity defining their ample texture with acute precision. Their expression is more pungent, delineated and even more exhilarating than the 2009's. This is rocky and pulpy dry Riesling at its zenith. The QbA is a steal.



VALENCISO:

ALL THE EGGS IN ONE BRILLIANT BASKET

At a recent dinner in Melbourne, Jesús Barquín, renowned Spanish wine writer and founder of the Equipo Navazos Project, had a very clear message about Valenciso. He said this, *"If you asked me to name just one producer from Rioja that you should buy, it would be Valenciso."* This should be enough said! This tiny Domaine, run by the lovely Luis Valentin (Valen...) and his equally lovely partner, Carmen Enciso (...ciso), make one, single red, a Rioja Reserva from old vine Tempranillo grown organically in the Rioja Alta and aged exclusively in French oak. They also make an incredible complex white from one acre of Garnacha Blanca, but as the production is so small it hardly counts. *Basically, it's one wine, it's a Reserva, and it's a beauty.*

Valenciso is a complex, savoury, terroir driven (as opposed to brand-driven) Rioja, revealing Luis and Carmen's preference for subtle, elegant and super refined wines. The **2005 Valenciso Reserva** is luscious and textured, exceedingly fragrant and drinking beautifully. The palate is delicious - shot through by mulberry and blackberry fruit, backed up by an armed guard of minerality, soft tannins and refreshing acidity.

"Compañía Bodeguera Valenciso makes one wine, a Reserva. The 2005 Valenciso Reserva, from an outstanding Rioja vintage, displays lots of spice, cedar, leather, violets, and blackberry aromas in its already complex nose. Savory, ripe, and nicely proportioned, this impressive Reserva is beginning to be approachable and will be at its best from 2013 to 2025." **91 Points, Jay Miller, Wine Advocate, July 2011**

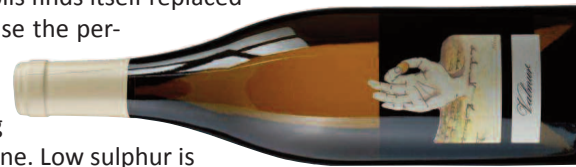


NEW PRODUCER MOREAU NAUDET

Finding a non-conformist vigneron in Chablis is harder than finding a decent coffee in the French countryside. We've been poking around the region for years, seeking out a vigneron who might be trying to shake things up, seeking to redefine what so much of the wine world accepts as authentic Chablis. You know the stuff: flinty, austere, crisp. This style has its place, but it has as much to do with the early harvesting, high yields and machine harvesting that dominate the region (almost all of Chablis is machine harvested these days) than it does with terroir. *Dauvissat and Raveneau have always shown what was possible but where were the others?* This year, at last, we 'found' what we had been searching for - thanks to the Graillot family who gave Rob a couple of bottles to try. **This is a producer that we believe is on the way to joining the elite producers of this famous region.** Stéphane Moreau (no relation to the other Moreau families in Chablis), is a devotee of Vincent Dauvissat, Didier Dagueneau (who helped him design his idiosyncratic labels), and Nadi Foucault (Clos Rougeard) and offers us basically everything we search for in great makers of white Burgundy, starting with a remarkable patrimony of old vines (many parcels 50 years +) in superb terroirs (including Forêts!) Here is a youthful talent that has turned his family Domaine around using the old, pre-industrial growing methods to make something truly distinctive and extraordinary. Don't be surprised if you have not heard of this producer: the transformation has only taken place over the last five years or so and many writers seem not to have become aware of the major changes that have occurred here. It has been Allen Meadows who has been first to pick up the trail.

These are not your brittle, simple 'Chablis-by-numbers' where acidity is oft confused as minerality. Here the style is born of low yields and ripe fruit and that crunchy, citric, acid tang of generic Chablis finds itself replaced by an intense, mineral freshness interwoven through pulpy, sexy fruit. We recognise the personality of these wines. We see it in all of the finest, artisanal Burgundy. This makes sense - Moreau's methods - which include ploughing, organic viticulture, hand-harvesting, whole berry pressing, natural yeast fermentation, natural settling, long slow élevage in large oak - sound identical to the best growers of the Côte de Beaune. Low sulphur is another key to understanding the wines. *It's all very un-Chablis.* Ripe, balanced, fruit from hand tended vineyards is Moreau's mojo. He has 13.5 ha of AC Chablis including a small 1ha of in **Les Pargues**. At the 1er Cru level Stéphane has old vines in, **Montmains, Forêts, Montée de Tonnerre** as well as a 0.60 ha soupçon in the sheltered **Valmur** Grand Cru. > **LOOK OUT FOR THE UPCOMING OFFER.**

Moreau Naudet Chablis	Many other Chablis
Herbicide free	Herbal notes
Dead gorgeous	Dead soil
Purity	Purely boring
Produits du terroir	Production line
Low yields	Gross yields
Stand out	Standardized
Saline, focused	Sales focused
Flinty	Flimsy
Refinement	Refinery
Ploughing	Planking
Hand harvest	Rise of the Machines
Kimmeridgian	Kim Kardashian
Elevage in wood	Wooden spoon
Minimal sulphur	Minimal character
Limestone	Lime soda



THE HYPE 2009 RED BURGUNDY

I guess if you were to make a list of everything you love about Red Burgundy, the 2009s, at some point over their life span, would tick all the boxes. Although we have tasted enough 2009 Red Burgundies to throw a few logs of our own onto the already roaring fire, there seems little point; most of you already know what's in store. From a textbook growing season, yes, we believe our producer's 2009 Red Burgundies are fantastic. *The wines exhibit layers of fleshy, hedonistic, ripe fruit, yet with equally superb elegance, fine tannin and regional nuance in the context of the vintage. These are brilliant wines that in the best cases, want for nothing.* Furthermore you don't have to go looking far up the hierarchy to hit the jackpot. As in many top years, the quality of the generic and village wines seem to step up the most, and in 2009 this is **more** than true. So far we have offered **Chandon de Briailles, Benjamin Leroux** and **Arnoux-Lachaux** - **and all had blinders in 2009.** And now it is the outstanding value offering of Gevrey Chambertin's **Domaine Harmand Geoffroy** that has landed. Again, contact us for the full offer. Also, for those who missed out on the first parcel, we also have another tranche of Leroux's spellbinding Côte de Beaune cuvées. These are some of the finest values that we have ever offered from the Côte d'Or.

MAX GETS EMOTIONAL ON NAVAZOS:

"SOMETIMES you taste a wine that reminds you why you became obsessed with fermented grape juice in the first place. This wine is so extraordinary, so mind-blowingly good, that it causes your pupils to dilate, your pulse to race and the hairs to stand on the back of your neck. This is the way of the wine junkie: we're all chasing that next hit of vinous magic. My latest pupil-dilating moment came halfway through a tasting of the amazing Spanish sherreries from Equipo Navazos."

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BENJAMIN LEROUX

- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin VV
- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin En Jouise
- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin Clos Prieur
- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru Bossiere
- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru La Perriere
- Harmand Geoffroy Gevrey Chambertin 1er Cru Lavaux St Jacques
- Harmand Geoffroy Grand Cru Mazis Chambertin
- Benjamin Leroux Savigny Les Beaune
- Benjamin Leroux Savigny Les Beaune Les Haut Jarrons





LIMESTONE ALLSTARS

Kimmeridgian, Tuffeau, Caillots, Saint-Doulchard. To paraphrase the New York Times' Eric Asimov, if a courtroom case was deemed necessary to prove that terroir **REALLY** matters, wines from top growers farming these limestone soils would be part of Exhibit A. These are wines that combine crystal-cut clarity with a piercing minerality, and in doing so bring us closer to the stony resoluteness that could be termed 'elemental' when it comes to French wine. In fact we would go as far as to say that the producers below craft some of the most perfect exemplars of limestone-enriched wines. Gerard Boulay in his 'wall of limestone' Chavignol slopes, Alphonse Mellot (in his rocky Moussiere vineyard in the heart of Sancerre), Franois Chidaine (in his biodynamically farmed Montlouis and Vouvray sites) and Daniel Defaix are an *all-star line-up of artisans who specialise in handcrafted wines that intensely reflect their individual limestone terroirs. These producers craft wines that crackle in the mouth and take you on a journey through their soils.*

VINT.	DESCRIPTION
GERARD BOULAY, SANCERRE	
2010	Gerard Boulay Sancerre Tradition (NEW)
2009	Gerard Boulay Clos Beaujeu Sancerre
2009	Gerard Boulay Monts-Damnes Sancerre
2001	Gerard Boulay Clos Beaujeu Sancerre (NEW)
2008	Gerard Boulay Sancerre Comtesse AOC Blanc
2007	Gerard Boulay Sancerre Comtesse AOC Blanc (NEW)
ALPHONSE MELLOTT, SANCERRE	
2010	Alphonse Mellot Domaine De La Moussiere Sancerre
2010	Alphonse Mellot Generation XIX Sancerre (NEW)
2009	Alphonse Mellot Cuvee Edmond Sancerre (NEW)
FRANOIS CHIDANE, MONTLOUIS	
NV	Francois Chidaine Montlouis Brut (NEW)
2009	Francois Chidaine Clos Du Breuil Montlouis
2009	Francois Chidaine Les Argiles Vouvray
2009	Francois Chidaine Clos Habert Montlouis
2008	Francois Chidaine Les Tuffeaux Montlouis
BERNARD DEFAIX CHABLIS	
2009	Bernard Defaix Petit Chablis
2009	Bernard Defaix Chablis (375ml)
2009	Bernard Defaix Chablis (NEW)
2009	Bernard Defaix Les Vaillons 1er Cru Chablis (NEW)
2009	Bernard Defaix Cote De Lechet 1er Cru Chablis (NEW)
2009	Bernard Defaix Vaudesir Grand Cru Chablis (NEW)
2008	Bernard Defaix Cote De Lechet Reserve 1er Cru (NEW)
2008	Bernard Defaix Bugros Grand Cru Chablis (NEW)

Gerard Boulay, Chavignol (Sancerre). Perched on the sheer, white limestone slopes of Chavignol, Gerard Boulay's Sancerre vineyards yield incredibly atypical Sauvignon Blancs branded by elegance, power and minerality. The **2010 Tradition** has recently replaced previous vintage and is a wonderfully precise vintage for Sancerre. We were recently offered another crack at the **2007 Comtesse Sancerre** and happily obliged. Some might remember this was the first Comtesse we ever shipped and it's great to be able offer its shimmering delights once more. On their last visit to Chavignol, the boys also picked up a parcel of the **2001 Clos Beaujeu Sancerre**. No, that's not a typo. Shipping a 10-year old Sauvignon Blanc may sound like commercial suicide to some, but when you factor in the unique Kimmeridgian terroir of Chavignol and Boulay's exacting standards, it starts to make sense. Boulay's wines are renowned for their ability to hold on to their layers of flavour and pinpoint structure well into their second decade. He holds parcels of older wines that he typically only sells to French restaurants. Stuart was clever, or greedy, enough to ask the question and we got an allocation. This is going to surprise and delight in equal measure.

Alphonse Mellot, Sancerre. Jacqueline Friedrich's quote "*Each Sancerre [from Mellot] is at its most elegant: discreetly herbaceous, a beautiful weave of citrus, oak and minerals..*" perfectly sums up the crackling **2010 Estate La Moussiere** bottling. This is one of the best ever releases under this label so we've taken steps to ensure supply for as long as possible. As well as this restock, the new vintage 'Super-Sancerres' have just landed. Both the **Generation XIX** and **Cuvee Edmond** are very rare, old vine parcel selections from La Moussiere, where the Estate's most historic white wines are grown. By bringing fastidious attention to the ancient biodynamic vines, the Mellot's craft two of the most mind-blowing, non conformist examples of Sancerre; both wines are examples of Sauvignon Blanc at its most daring and eye-opening.

Franois Chidaine, Montlouis. Here's a little something for those who missed out on the wines from our previous shipment; restocks of Chidaine's 2008 **Les Tuffeaux**, 2009 **Clos Habert** and 2009 **Clos Du Breuil** Montlouis as well as the 2009 **Les Argiles** Vouvray cuvee. *We have also shipped Franois' arrestingly fresh and vivid sparkling wine, a rare Montlouis Brut, made according to the methode ancestrale.* Like all Chidaine wines, it's a must-try and a must buy - we have only 50 boxes for the wise ones.

Domaine Bernard Defaix, Chablis. Bernard Defaix has produced some wonderful 2009 Chablis at remarkably good prices from their organically tended vineyards. The wines are crystalline and intense, with just enough texture and long salty/tangy finishes. These are the product of a ripper vintage for Defaix. As Allen Meadows has written, "I agree with Defaix' (positive) take on the 2009 vintage, at least for his wines as they are among the very best in the region. ...while I've noted this before, it bears repeating...the quality of the Defaix wines now puts the domaine among the top 10 in Chablis." (Burghound, Issue 40). These are indeed wonderful wines from some of the finest vineyards in Chablis. We have also double dipped with some 2008'S and have landed a small parcel of each of the Defaix' stunning **Cote de Lechet Reserve** (our favourite Defaix wine, made from 50+ year old vines aged in 40% old oak) and the powerful **Bougros** Grand Cru.