

Joseph Voillot – 2019

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*Tasted in Volnay
with Etienne Chaix,
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Etienne on 2020:

“Compared to the world, in general, it was a lovely year, we just avoided the frost and the vines were very early growing. The flowering came in great weather. We saw a little dried grapes during the first heatwave – very little though it took only 1 day. Half of August was similar and particularly the last three days of that heat and it was here that we lost the



most of the grapes from the vintage – minus about 30% perhaps in this short number of days – the only blemish on a practically perfect year. Harvesting 22–28 August – we never finished in August before! Our best surprise was the balance that we found in the grapes.”

Etienne on 2019:

“A very small vintage – about 60% of a normal year – but following two good ones so there are no complaints here. The growth also started early but then we had a cold period in the spring – we worried about frost and I think we were touched a little in Epenots – but anecdotally versus 2016. The Flowering was the biggest problem – there was a lot of rain during this time – not bad for the Bourgognes but worse for the 1ers. Not a catastrophe as there was plenty of space for the growing grapes. We had two periods of heat/dryness the first didn’t affect the vines the second did show some effect from the dryness. We harvested from 13 September.”

The wines...

I missed the 2018s. And was disappointed by the 2017s – at least my timing of the tasting, perhaps – but the 2019s are really singing. Just absolutely delicious and complex wines – so many that are worth your (and my) time.

The Bourgogne Rouge and the whites were already bottled – done just before the harvest. All the rest were racked about 3 weeks before I visited, Etienne planning to bottle at the end of the year:

2019 Bourgogne Pinot Noir Vieilles-Vignes

‘Customers habitually buy this so it didn’t seem necessary to change the label to Bourgogne Côte d’Or.’ Vines in both Volnay and the first vines over the border into Meursault too.

That’s a nicely forward nose, with a certain perfume too – attractive. A little structure, an easy, melting, flavour over the palate. Mouth-filling but not completely. Tasty, easy – importantly also delicious – and all the way through the finish too.

2019 Volnay Vieilles-Vignes

From 5 different parcels; Grand and Petits Poisots, Gigotte, Pacquiers and Famines. Just one new barrel – but that’s only 5% of the total.

Really perfumed again – impressively so. Rounder, a little depth to this texture – the tannin is visible but the clarity of fruit flavour is another level. This is delicious, pure, proper, great finishing Volnay villages. Bravo!

2019 Pommard Vieilles-Vignes

Normally from Cras, Saucilles, Vaumauriens and Poisot. Like the last, one new barrel was slipped into the elevage.

The same perfume again – I’m almost questioning the glass – but I would buy this cleaning material (if it’s to blame) if it smelled this good. A more relaxed and open palate, the tannin is there but actually more subtle than the Volnay. Definitely something that you could drink earlier than the Volnay – top finishing fruit too – bravo villages again!

2019 Beaune 1er Coucheries

Here with 20% new oak in the élevage.

It must be the glass – but now I'm starting to smell differences too – here the fruit is redder and more direct. The most supple and silky so far – the tannin is an accent here – though an unmistakable one. Open, nice clarity, silken finishing Excellent Beaune.

2019 Volnay 1er Cru Fremiets

Elevage like the Beaune

A deeper nose, no perfume(!) growing clarity of fruit in the middle. Wow – that's wide, gorgeously flavoured – openly structured wine. Captivating wine.

2019 Volnay 1er Cru Champans

A nose of complex and rewarding depth – yes! Silky entry, a width but such a mouth-watering width of flavour. Is there the concentration that I expect? Frankly, I hardly care because this floral fruit is just so good. The biggest part of this wine is it's brilliant, stunningly perfumed, finish. I'd drink it any day.

2019 Volnay 1er Cru Caillerets

Planted in 1982. More new oak here, but given that there are only 2 barrels in total, I'll leave you to guess how much, the clue is that it's not 100%

Ooh – that's a deep nose, but of silken dark fruit. Wide, getting bigger, cool fruited, and fruit of clarity too. Really very silky in the mouth. Like the last, a touch of the ethereal, but still not a glass that I would want to put down. Nearly as great a finish as the Champans though showing a little extra salinity.

2019 Pommard 1er Clos Micault

Old vines, no new barrels here despite having 2 barrels!

Airy, fine, red fruit aromas. A little halo of fine tannin, but here again is clarity of fruit. Mouth-watering through a modest structure, lip-smackingly delicious. Simply excellent...

2019 Pommard 1er Cru Les Epenots

From Petits Epenots, in the last part before Beaune Epenottes, below Pommard Boucherottes. Similar oak élevage to Caillerets

There's a floral accent here, but this nose is not really wanting to reveal itself. Wide, vibrant, energetic wine. Really mouth-watering. Despite the growth of a little tannin, this is surprisingly accessible today. Super-juicy in the finish too, and that's despite the attendant tannin!

2019 Pommard 1er Cru Pezerolles

25% new barrels here, but with Damy, like the Rugiens. It's more a mix of coopers in the other wines but always oak from the Vosges

This is a wide nose, almost smeared – a sort of blend of the complexities – but slowly a little

clarion of redcurrant fruit becomes visible. Great presence in the mouth – fresh, concentrated fruit but never heavy. A suggestion of the mineral here too. Sustaining a very persistent finish. Excellent...

2019 Pommard 1er Cru Les Rugiens

25% new oak once more – Damy.

This is a very complex aromatic but unfortunately not that forward – it just seems just out of reach. Everything that was missing in the Pezerolles – actually not that much – is to be found here. Fuller, equally mouth-watering but with an extra focus to the considerable complexity. That will take some time, but I'm sure it will be great – bravo!

Les Blancs

There's only two barrels of each of these – so no new oak was used:

2019 Meursault Les Chevaliers

Depth and width of aroma – faintly spiced, not a bit sweet. Unlike on the palate where there's a direct sweetness of fruit – easy over the palate but with just enough structure and mid-palate citrus to keep all in good shape. Finishing well; faintly tannic and very long. A medium-term keeper for me – say 5 years(?)

2019 Meursault 1er Les Cras

Wider, much more interesting, complex, fresh and ginger-spiced. Wide, bright, an intensity of flavour here, bubbling along. Very citrus, very long, again with the tactile finish. I'd give this plenty of time – and why not, my 93s are still very good! For both of these I'm unsure if the heat of the vintage has destabilized a little or it's just there stage in elevage, but I'm sure still excellent.
