

DOMAINE DE VILLAINÉ

Propriétaire à Bouzeron

Bouzeron, 04th december 2019

More and more, with this idea that the weather is warming up, we talk about a vintage effect, the quality of a wine linked to the weather. Often with very defined corollaries: a dry weather will give a solar vintage, warm wines whilst cold weather will offer a vintage where the wines will have kept a little more righteousness, freshness so sought after nowadays.

We have the feeling that the 2018 vintage bring these two faces together: exceptional rainfall during the winter which nourished the soil and summer drought that followed, allowed the world from above and under ground to unite. Our vines, not only did they benefit from this rain water, as long as there was some, to breathe, live and ripen the grapes but also when the weather dried up to force their roots to search for the water from the terroir, happy and nourishing deep in its subsoils.

To attempt to “tame” the effects of an exceptional weather condition such as 2018 with ancestral cultural practices, is to integrate this weather in a global definition of the terroir. It is to make it react through lively, joyous, digestible and enjoyable wines.

We had left it off just after the 2017 harvest. The vine was already wearing its autumnal garb of tawny, golden and purple colours. It didn't last very long.

Rain, humidity, barely cold enough weather settled in from October to January (with the latter month's rainfall exceeding 150% in Côte Chalonnaise compare to 2017), leading us to limit plowing and work on the soil. We in fact left the vine dormant. The winter started really in February with finally some cold temperatures even freezing towards the end of the month.

The older generation was saying that how a cold winter by decompacting the soils naturally were worth all the human labour. This was the case during this short 2018 winter.

March, with seasonal temperature, is marked once again by heavy rainfall (average 120mm of rain, therefore more than 50% above average).

This rainy weather allowed the soils to replenish its water reserves, which proved useful later.

The vine, however delayed the growth of new buds. The budbreak was slow!

It was only from April that temperatures became more lenient and the vegetative cycle started once again its activity. This warm and bright weather for the season allowed finally a quick, even dazzling budbreak.

The very mild temperatures persisting in May allowed the flowering to take place in very good conditions, mid-flowering is reached between 29th May and 3rd June in particular for our Aligoté Doré vines.

June, however started, under the rain and we had to wait until the second part of that month to have again dry weather with temperature levels flying through.

It won't rain until harvest. Despite the water deficit during the rest of the summer, the vine will draw from its reserves formed earlier in the year.

Throughout this year, the estate's team had to follow the ultra-fast growth of the vine's vegetation and all the more sustained as we were for the first time working the new vines from the domaine (Rully 1er cru Rabourcé, 1^{er} Cru Raclot, 1^{er} Cru Cloux). We didn't know these vines would react to the farming change. The move from conventional agriculture to an organic and biodynamic one, was it not going to weaken them, and make them more prone to diseases? There was none of that.

The team was incredibly concentrated and mastered the rate of development of the vine.

July and August, despite the thundery episodes with no consequences on the vines, experienced summer heat. The sun dominated largely with a heatwave from 3rd to 7th August. The heat and the lack of water delayed *véraison* (the moment when translucent yellow for the Chardonnay and Aligoté Doré grapes). At the same time, the maturation of the grapes evolved at a maintained level from beginning of August to slow down afterwards.

The sun's luminous energy that managed to be photosynthesised by disease-free foliage, and water reserves reconstituted in winter, allowed the grapes to mature in extremely favourable conditions. The sugar levels increased around 1.25° each day and the tartaric acid (one of the three main organic acids present in the grape) is maintained at a good level, allowing the grapes to reach an exceptional balance sugar/acid.

An impeccable sanitary state of the vines, optimal maturity and homogeneity of the grapes for all three grape varieties, and weather conditions still summery, allowed us to start the harvest the 30th August under the beautiful sunshine to then complete by 12th September with the Aligoté Doré vines in Bouzeron

This vintage endowed with exceptional weather conditions (high temperatures, rainfall in the end in deficit, generous sunshine hours) enabled us to offer you wines equally exceptional.

We thank you in advance for the trust that you give us, please kindly receive our warmest regards,

PRESENTATION OF THE WINES

In this 2018 vintage, each wine offers the most beautiful and honest expression of its terroir. Its identity is here, present after each sip, each sensation.

All our Premiers Crus are from the 2017 vintage. Their vinification and ageing being a little longer, we always offer them with a year behind.

Our wines from Bouzeron

Our Bouzeron 2018

Vinified and matured for 12 months in wooden casks (*foudres*), our 2018 Bouzeron is pale yellow colour with a touch of gold. The nose evokes acacia, white flowers and a handful of hazelnut that we nibble on. The mineral notes, associated with marl, mixed with very fresh notes of citrus fruits and white-fleshed fruits are balancing perfectly with an acidity and bitterness bringing a saline finish and a digest wine. This wine demonstrates perfectly the terroirs of Bouzeron through its grape variety, the *aligoté doré*, and brings out sensations of vivacity, nourishing freshness. A beautiful and happy wine. To drink now to taste its “sharp roundness” of the fruit or wait five to ten years to feel the marl, the “wet stone” of the terroirs of Bouzeron.

Our Bourgogne Côte Chalonnaise « *Les Clous Aimé* » 2018

Vinified and matured during 12 months in wooden casks, the « *Clous Aimé* » 2018 has a very expressive nose of white flowers, broom and acacias. On the palate, it is energetic, fresh, offering a beautiful acidity all in roundness and unctuousity. The wine whose aromatic pallet will expand over time.

To drink for the fruit or wait three to five years to feel the wine gain in density.

Our Bourgogne Côte Chalonnaise « *La Fortune* » 2018

Vinified in wooden vats for 14 days and then matured in one or three year old barrels. This is a real aromatic wine. Red fruits dominate whilst the palate shows wild strawberry character. The tannins are ripe, silky with some notes of acidity giving this wine a beautiful and aromatic freshness.

To be drunk now for the fruit or wait three to five years to see the wine gain in density.

Our Bourgogne Côte Chalonnaise « *La Digoine* » 2018

Vinified in wooden vats for 14 days and then matured in two to five year old barrels.

The nose immediately seduces with the depth of the fruit and its power. The palate is incredibly fine for a pinot noir at this appellation level. The ripe and silky tannins give the wine some weight, depth which augurs a good ageing potential. The aromatic identity of *La Digoine* is preserved.

To drink now for the fruit while taking care to open the bottle few hours before or wait a good ten years to discover its deep aromas and see the wine gain complexity.

Our Wines from Rully

Rully « *Les Saint Jacques* » 2018

Vinified and matured in wooden barrels, our Rully 'les Saint jacques' is a very beautiful wine. Its nose is very elegant and expresses sweet notes of white flowers, flint. The palate is harmonious and balanced. It combines fruit maturity and freshness before ending on a saline and refreshing finish making the wine very digest.

Drink now for the fruit or wait 10 years.

Rully 1^{er} Cru « Montpalais » 2017

Vinified and matured in one to three years old barrels and a new Demi-muid for 18 months. The honest character of the wine is expressed immediately by the nose. The presence of muscat-like Chardonnay in the vineyard give to the wine some slightly exotic notes enhanced by wood sensations. On the palate, it is the fruit's flesh that we taste, in its most powerful, silky, fresh and digest at the same time.

To drink now for the fruit or wait around five years for the oak to be fully integrated.

Rully 1^{er} Cru « Grésigny » 2017

Vinified and matured in barrels of one to three year old wood as well as a new "demi-muid" for 18 months. We can sense the richness of the Chardonnay vines which are in average 80 years old. The wine is ripe but still expressing the oak. The palate is fine, elegant, deep and harmonious. The wine is now showing a beautiful balance between white flowers and pear and white peach aromas which make it Moorish. The mineral freshness and salinity enhance perfectly the finish.

To savour now or wait eight to ten years.

Rully 1^{er} Cru « Margotés » 2017

Vinified and matured in *foudres* (wooden casks) for 18 months. Our Rully 1^{er} Cru "Les Margotés" 2017 is honest and fruity, going between white flowers and fine chalk notes. Whole bunch pressing confirms a beautiful purity of its juice giving the wine its elegance, distinguished as well as perfect balance of alcohol, fruit and acidity. The finish, moving between bitterness from the skin and the one from the wood, remains fresh and of a rare digestibility.

To drink now or in ten years once the fruit has been absorbed.

Rully 1^{er} Cru « Les Champs Cloux » 2017

Vinified in wooden vats for 14 days and then matured in barrels of one to five year old wines. Deep in colour, our Rully 1^{er} Cru "Les Champs Cloux" 2017 offers at first a closed nose but then opens up to red fruits, red current and raspberries. The palate, powerful and full bodied, remaining fresh with a slight acidity as well as maintaining a beautiful vivacity. A lightly astringent finish that suggests a good ageing potential.

To drink now for the fruit whilst taking care of opening the bottle few hours before or wait ten years or more to discover this wine "beyond" the fruit.

Our wine from Mercurey

Our Mercurey « Les Montots » 2018

Vinified in wooden vats for 18 days and matured then in one to five year old barrels. Rather deep ruby in colour, the nose shows black fruits with a touch of animal notes and some spicy sensations. The

palate is structured and let perceive, all in finesse, tannins which are indeed firm but ripe and ensuring an exceptional length.

To drink now whilst taking care of opening the bottle few hours prior or drink in six to ten years.

Our wine from Santenay

Our Santenay 1^{er} Cru « Passetemps » 2017

Vinified in wooden tank for 18 days and matured then in one to five year old barrels. The nose presents red fruit and floral notes (peonies, rose petals) with a touch of spice. Full bodied, fresh, dense and ripe tannins, the palate offers a finish lightly sappy suggesting a great ageing potential.

To drink now but open the bottle several hours before or to drink in the next ten years.

Our wine from Saint Aubin

Our Saint Aubin 1^{er} Cru « Les Perrières » 2017

Vinified and matured in one to five year old barrels and a demi-muid from new oak during 18 months. Generous aromas of ripe white and yellow fruits, sweet spices and almonds on the nose, whilst the palate presents more mineral notes, fresh between wet stone, citrus peel and even a touch of iodine. The balance between the fruit and the salinity of the soil enhance this feeling of acidic freshness on the finish.