

The Wine Guy's *Wine Tasting Notes*

June, 2010



Domaine de Vieux Lazaret, 2007 Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Rhone Valley

This is a new producer to me and I was very impressed. This is one of the few Châteauneuf producers who uses all 13 permitted grape varieties. With 67% Grenache, 22% Syrah, 5% Mourvedre and 6% of all the others this is a delicious wine, which is drinking very well now and could age for 6-7 more years. Perhaps it is the slight addition of the white Rhone varieties that make this so smooth, but we don't need to analyze it, just enjoy it.

Antinori, 2000 Tignanello, Tuscany IGT

This super Tuscan wine is rated IGT because it is a blend of Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon. The Cab is not recognized by the Italian wine community, however this is one of Italy's finest wines and with 10 years of aging it shows extremely well. Even with the bottle age we decanted this just before dinner to give it some additional air. Mellow yet with a backbone of rich flavors, this is one outstanding wine.

The European Trip - 2010

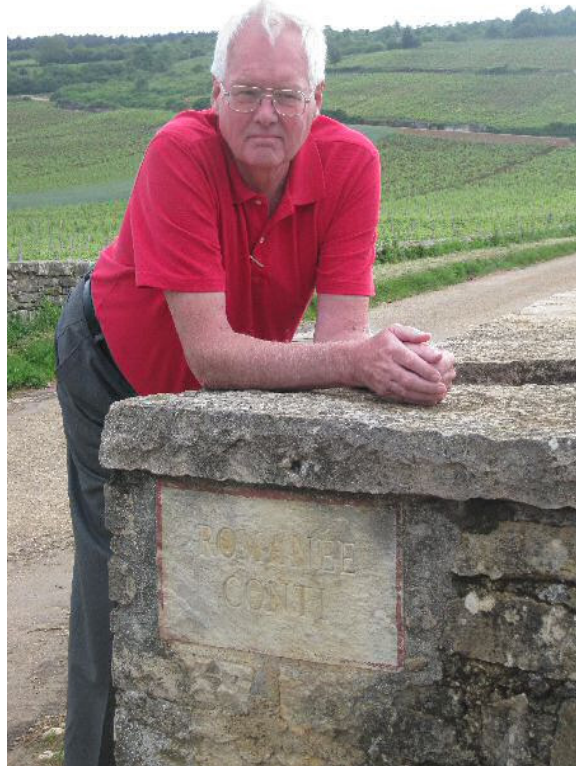
We arrived in London on Wednesday morning and went out for lunch with my son. Following lunch I took a one hour nap to overcome the lack of sleep on the plane. Dinner was at my son's home.

Louis Latour, 2002 Meursault, Burgundy

Domaine Ray Marc, 2006 Gevry Chambertin Vieilles Vignes, Burgundy

Domaine Michel Noellat, 2005 Morey Saint Denis, Burgundy

My son first opened the Meursault since he knew it is one of my favorite whites and because we were going to visit the Latour people the next week. His cellar is not kept at cellar temperature and the wine was showing premature aging, but we finished the bottle and enjoyed the wine and being together. The Gevry was a new producer to me and the wine was outstanding. It had the deep flavors that we expect from this vineyard area. Finally, he opened the Morey-St-Denis so we could get reconnected. The wine was a bit light, which was just right after the long day.



Bruce at DRC.

The London International Wine Fair (Trade Show)

I attended my first trade show when I was 18 so it has taken me a long time to achieve my first international one. This is the 30th anniversary show and it was big. French, German, New Zealand

and Australia had wines for sampling but they also had wines from Russia, India, Slovenia and Turkey. In fact, they claim that 1,600 different producers were represented. *Decanter Magazine* had a booth with 130 different wines. I got to taste all four blush wines produced by Sacha Lichine at Château d'Escians and they were terrific tasting. He has very low production and the wines sell for about \$40 retail. I also tried 4 Russian sparkling wines which were very good. I only stayed for 2½ hours because I had a dinner reservation at 5:30, but I sampled a wide variety of wines and got to talk with a similar variety of wine reps.

Domaine des Marronniers, 2008 Chablis, Burgundy

Tasted at J. Sheekey restaurant. I chose this seafood restaurant because it is one of the best restaurants in London, and it is also about one block from the English National Opera where we had tickets to see *Tosca*. I also picked this restaurant because I have had their Dover Sole before and wanted to have a bottle of Chablis with the Sole which was a perfect match.

Chateau Musar, 2003 Blanc, Lebanon

Dog Point, 2007 Pinot Noir, Central Otago

Plantagenet, 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon Mount Barker, Western Australia

TMV, NV Vin Pi, Late Harvest, South Africa

Dinner with friends from Winston-Salem is one of our London traditions, and we usually are hosted by my son and daughter-in-law so that we can have our own wines. I bought the Chateau Musar white wine in order to do some blind tasting with my friend who has an incredible palate for identifying wines. I didn't think he would have had this one before. I guessed right and he could not identify the grapes Obaideh and Merwah, which are clones of Chardonnay and Semillon and only grown in the mountains of Lebanon. The wine was slightly oxidized, but the shop where I bought it, Philglas & Swiggot, said that is the style that Serge Hocher, the owner and winemaker, liked. The Dog Point is one of my favorite New Zealand Pinots, and it was light and rich at the same time. Our guests brought the Plantagenet, which was rich and potent and stood up well against the venison chops. Finally, a friend of my son's owns the TMV Winery in South Africa. This is a blend of three vintages and we guessed it was a Muscat. It did make a light, refreshing wine for the end of the evening.

Albert Mann, 2007 Gewurztraminer, Alsace

La Chiara, 2007 Gavi di Gavi, Piedmont 375ml

Ten Minutes by Tractor, 2008 Pinot Noir 10X Mornington Peninsula, Victoria

Baumard, 2007 Quarts de Chaume, Loire Valley

We were a bit early for our reservation at Clarke's, so we started the evening across the street at the Kensington Wine Room for a glass of wine. I ordered the Mann wine from a long list of wines by the glass. It had light spice with a slight sweetness. Clarke's is one of the better restaurants in London and I wanted to visit it once again. They formerly had only one menu each evening, but now have choices in each category on the menu. We started with the gentle Italian white wine, which in a half bottle was just right to begin with. At our table we were having lamb and chicken so I, of course, was challenged to pick a wine that would work with both. At the London Wine Fair I had tasted the Australian Pinot Noir with the name you would never forget. So I ordered the Ten Minutes by Tractor which worked with both entrees. This is a very rich Pinot but it did not diminish the terrific chicken dish I had ordered. I asked the Sommelier to select something sweet for me as a dessert wine, and he picked the Baumard which I have had many times, but not the 2007 version. It was slightly sweet and just right to end the evening.

Kir

Domaine Cyrot Buthiau, 2007 Maranges 1er Cru Les Clos Rousots

After a long day of traveling to Burgundy we were tired and chose to eat near our hotel. I will not mention the name of the restaurant since they would probably sue me for libel. I can't decide if the service was awful and the food worse or if the food was awful and the service was worse. The

Kir was relatively tasteless and the Maranges had a rough, country taste. What a welcome to Beaune.

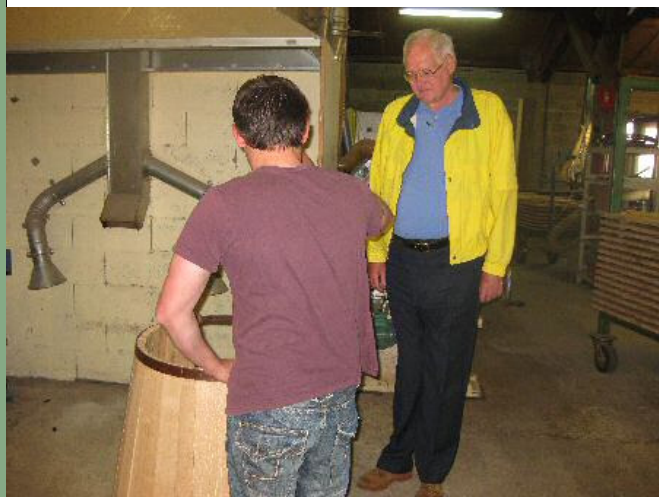
Kir

Domaine Leflaive, 2001 Puligny-Montrachet Carillon

To make up for the bad dinner the evening before we went to the small town of Puligny-Montrachet and had lunch at the Hotel Le Montrachet. What a great afternoon! We were early for lunch so sat in the bar area and ordered a Kir which had flavors that were not present the night before. We ordered our lunch and wine before entering the dining room. What a treat to be shown to our table and find our bottle of wine waiting and chilling. The Leflaive was spectacular. Was the body better than the nose, was the nose better than the taste or did I savor each element throughout the lunch? It was a multi-course affair, and I decided to have a red wine with the veal course and just asked the waiter to bring glasses of their house Gevry-Chambertin. I saved a full glass of the Puligny-Montrachet to have with my cheese course. When the couple at the table next to us were leaving they stopped and asked "What was that wine you were raving about?" Now I felt welcomed to France.

A Day at Louis Latour

Our friend with Louis Latour who visits Winston-Salem once or twice a year arranged for a tour of their facilities. Since Latour started as a barrel maker we first went to their barrel plant and saw how barrels were made. Latour makes all of their own barrels.



We next went to their red wine production facilities near the hill of Corton. This is a very old facility, and the red wines are made as they have been for over one hundred years. We were offered a chance to barrel taste the 2009s and the tasting was lead by Boris Champy, Vineyard Manager for all of the Latour property. We sampled village wines and Grand Cru from Romanee-St-Vivant, Nuits St. George, Aloxe-Corton, Volnay, Chambertin, Beaune and Corton Grand Cru. It was clear to me that the 2009 vintage of red wines will

be outstanding and probably one of the best vintages in the past 20 years.

We then proceeded into the tasting room in the cellar. This was special for me since this room was bricked up in 1940 to hide the best wines from the Nazi's. Latour has about 150,000 bottles of wine stored in this cellar dating back to 1860. Waiting for us on a barrel were the following bottles for our tasting:

- 2008 Grand Ardèche
- 2008 Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru "Sous Le Puits"
- 2007 Meursault 1er Cru "Château de Blagny"
- 2007 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru
- 2007 Marsannay
- 2008 Beaune 1er Cru "Vignes Franches"
- 2007 Aloxe-Corton 1er Cru "Les Chaillots"
- 2007 Corton Grand Cru "Clos de la Vigne au Saint"

What a morning of tasting some of the finest wines in the world. But we were not finished. Our host drove us back to Beaune and took us to lunch at Le Conty restaurant around the corner from their offices. As we set down I quickly noticed a bottle of 2006 Chassagne-Montrachet opened on the table. What a great wine to start a wonderful lunch. About the time that our main courses were served a bottle of 2006 Volnay "en Chevret" appeared on the table. This is one of my favorite

Latour wines, and I have at least four vintages in my cellar and the 2007 is currently on order. Now I can't wait to tell the Latour story and my love of Burgundian wines.

Kir

Domaine Ramonet, 2005 Puligny-Montrachet

Domaine de la Pousse d'Or, 2005 Volnay 1er Cru en Calleret

Domaine Chevalier Pere & Fils, 2001 Aloxé-Corton

All tasted at the Hostellerie de Levernois in Beaune. We met my younger son and a friend at the hotel for dinner. They were traveling in Burgundy trying to make contacts to be admitted to the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin. This is a very upscale hotel with an outstanding dining room. The Kir was Royale because it was made with Champagne and was just the right touch to be followed by 3 outstanding wines. The Ramonet, as expected, was gentle with balance and enough age to give it richness. The Volnay, which is my favorite, was soft and delicate yet with rich flavors. Finally, the Aloxé-Corton was the wine of the evening with deep rich color and a lingering finish.

A.M. & J.M. Vincent, 2007 Auxey-Duresses Blanc

P. Clémencet, 2008 Beaune Les Epenottes

All tasted at the Le Bouchon Restaurant in Meursault. In smaller restaurants, the wine list generally contains many of the smaller local producers which are well worth a try. Auxey-Duresses is a small town next to Pommard that can produce rich wines both red and white. We had a half bottle, which was a good match to my first ever Burgundian dish of Oeufs (egg) poached in red wine. However, this restaurant used a red and a white wine sauce and they were both outstanding. The Beaune was rich and flavorful along with a lamb roast.

Château Bonnet, 2008 Beaujolais Blanc

Tasted at lunch at the restaurant Au Coq de Vin in Julié纳斯 in Beaujolais. I have always been a Beaujolais fan, and the wines produced there are much better than the standard Duboeuf wines we usually have here. This small family-run restaurant was a treat. Outdoor dining is something I always look forward to, and the owners have flowers planted around the patio and even 6 grape vines were planted. The wine was just what anyone would like for lunch, light, fruity and not anything that needed to be discussed at length.

Caves de Grand Vin de Fleurie

This is a tasting room for a large co-op in the town of Fleurie. Beaujolais is a series of very small towns with winding, narrow roads in between. I chose not to try all of the wines available because of the driving. However, I did taste the 2009 Chiroubles and Fleurie along with the 2008 Brouilly and Moulin-a-Vent. Each had a richness that had depth which we just don't see often in America.

Domaine Chevalier Pere & Fils, 2001 Aloxé-Corton

Tasted at La Boissonniere in Aloxé-Corton. This is a very elegant restaurant on the main north-south road. We started with a glass of Cremant de Bourg then moved on to our red wine. I didn't realize until writing these notes that this was the same wine that we had before, but it was a delight to have such a fine wine again.

Andre et Michel Quenard, 2008 Chignin, Savoie

We drove to Lake Annecy (about 35 miles south of Geneva) for the first ever Heye family reunion.



Both my sons were there along with my two grandchildren, daughter-in-law and Judi. We tasted this local wine at La Bastille restaurant in Annecy. The family decided to do a Fondue dinner so this light, fruity wine, made from the Jacquère grape, fit the bill very nicely.

Paul Jaboulet Aine, 2007 St. Joseph Blanc, Rhone Valley

Andre et Michel Quenard, 2007 Chignin Late Harvest, Savoie

Both tasted at the Auberge de Savoie restaurant in Annecy. I love the wines of Burgundy, but it is a treat after such a long trip in that region to have other styles of wine. The St. Joseph was an easy choice. It was rich with good balance. With our dessert we ordered the local late harvest wine which was a good ending to our French visit.

Cullinan, 2008 Chenin Blanc, South Africa

Cullinan, 2008 Cinsault, South Africa

Both tasted at Amy's Restaurant at the Gatwick Hilton Hotel. This is as good an airport restaurant as there is. The service is very attentive and the food very good. Unfortunately the wine list lacks any quality wines. Both of these South African wines were big and bold but had no characteristics of their grape. But it is nice to have a relaxing restaurant to visit at the airport. This ended a wonderful two week visit that was so memorable.

Marc Brédif, 2006 Vouvray, Loire Valley

Maison Louis Latour, 2005 Gevry-Chambertin, Burgundy

This dry Vouvray is an old favorite of mine, but what makes it most interesting is that I left about 2 glasses in the bottle when I left for Europe. I was ready to pour it out but smelled it first and was surprised that it was still fresh and wonderful. We opened the Latour wine in order to relive the great visit with them and the wide sampling of wines that were offered to us. Rich and delicate at the same time this was a treat and brought back very good memories, which is what all great wines should do.