



2016 VINTAGE



Stephen Tanzer on the Lucien Le Moine 2016s

**Lucien Le Moine takes #1 and #2 in his reviews of 2016 vintage whites
(LLM reds not rated yet)**

“Every vintage is the year of the century but this time it’s true,” said Mounir Saouma only half in jest about vintage 2016. Like a few of his colleagues, he compared ’16 and ’15 to ’10 and ’09, noting that ’15 and ’09 gave us our most mature grapes ever but that “in ’16 and ’10 we were surprised at the successful results.” He went on: “People learned from their mistakes in 2009 and did better in 2015; in this very warm vintage, many very fresh, fine wines were made. The ’16s were born by Caesarean: the baby was not sitting well, mom was hysterical and the doctors were in panic. So we cut out the baby and he’s a genius.” The key in 2016, said Saouma, is how to bring out the tannins and keep enough energy without allowing the wines to dry out by the time they go into bottle. “There’s a fresh, mineral aspect to the vintage, but I’m a bit concerned that if we make wines with tannins that are too supple, we’ll lose length, but if we go in the direction of tannins, we risk having dry wines.” Still, he maintained that alcohol levels are “classical” (i.e., below 13.5%) and that acidity levels and pHs are good. In fact, he went on, the 2016 tannins are fuller-bodied than those of the ’15s, which since the beginning he has considered a bit soft and fragile. “With the ’16s, you can do anything you want to the tannins. The wines are not sensitive by nature, although there was a lot of sameness at the beginning. We started with fresh, crisp, clean, almost underripe grapes, and we had to extract in order for the wines to express terroir. And of course the tannins of 2016 will soften with longer *élevage*.” He went on: “Even for producers who torture their wines by racking, pumping and fining them and by bottling early, the tannins of ’16 will give their wines some protection, but 2015s made this way really suffered. The ’16s are about black fruits and spices but they also have flesh. There’s also an impression of acidulation—almost a flash of citrus—from the not-quite-ripe grape skins. It’s a vintage that’s full of life.” Interestingly, Saouma managed to make four more barrels of wine in 2016 than he did in 2015. One explanation is that some producers who normally have, for example, six barrels of a given wine only had two in ’16. Rather than sell one barrel to Saouma and age a single *pièce* in their own cellar, they found it simpler to sell both barrels to Saouma. None of the ’16s had been racked at the time of my visit and the wines were very low in sulfur. (And several reds hadn’t even started their malolactic fermentations.) -- Stephen Tanzer, January 2018

Lucien Le Moine: An Overview

In two decades of work, Lucien Le Moine has become one of the most talked about Burgundy producers, making some of the most sought after wines from the region. The approach is extreme – two people, together doing everything by hand, working with a dazzling array of Burgundy’s great terroirs. In the late 1980s, Mounir Saouma’s visit to a Trappist monastery in the Middle East led to a prolonged stay during which he worked in the monastery vineyards and first learned to make wine. He subsequently studied Viticulture and Oenology in Montpellier, followed by six years working in Burgundy, other areas of France, and California. During this time he became fascinated by traditional methods of viticulture, vinification, and aging. In 1999 he decided to push to the extreme all he had seen and experienced, and with his wife Rotem created a small cellar dedicated to the philosophy of making wines of purity and typicity.

Rotem comes from a cheese-making family, and studied agriculture in Dijon, eventually orienting her studies toward wine. After winning a national prize from the French Academy of Agriculture for her study of the Côte d’Or, she participated in numerous harvests in Burgundy and California. The name for Mounir and Rotem’s winery, Lucien Le Moine, is comprised of two references: the Lebanese “Mounir” means light, hence the equivalent French “Lucien”; “Le Moine” translates as “the monk”, and refers to Mounir’s initial wine experiences at the monastery.

From their years spent in Burgundy, Mounir and Rotem knew many superb growers in the region. They devoted themselves to select production of Crus from these growers. They only produce Grands and Premiers Crus, trying each year to have the most beautiful Crus in each village. They revise their selection of Crus every year, depending on the quality of a particular vineyard in a given vintage, but do not produce any more than 100 barrels (2,500 cases), the absolute maximum for Mounir, who feels that any greater production would rob him of the ability to give each his personal touch.

The couple produces one to three barrels from each Cru. This provides the biggest technical challenge, since each barrel needs to be perfect, from selection, through aging, to bottling: there is no blending to cover up even the slightest errors at the end. They work with growers who are scrupulous with their vines, taste the wines very early (right after press), vinify (in the case of whites) or guide vinification in the methods they prefer (emphasizing phenolic ripeness, acid retention, and some employment of whole clusters), and put the wines in their barrels.

All wines are aged entirely on their lees. Gentle batonnage is done a few times a month, less or more depending on the vintage, and the wine is never racked during this process. The cellar is naturally humid and very cool, which pushes malolactic fermentations late into summer. The natural CO₂ produced during these long fermentations allows Mounir to use little SO₂ (it should be noted it is best to decant all Lucien Le Moine wines as they can have some residual CO₂). Once malolactic fermentation is complete, he and Rotem follow each barrel, tasting several times a month. Bottling is done by hand via gravity feed when the wine is ready, always after a full moon (when atmospheric pressure is favorable). No fining, filtration, or addition of sulphur takes place at bottling.

Montrachet Grand Cru



No superlatives need be stated here about Montrachet. Mounir has worked in several areas of Montrachet, both on the Pernand and the Chassagne side, and has even once bottled them separately. He does not produce a Montrachet every year, only when he feels it will be worthy of the vineyard's renown, and can stand at the pinnacle of his white wines.

“Bright yellow. Very shy aromas of pear, crushed rock and iodine; conveys an almost 2015-like ripeness without any loss of its Montrachet character. This brooding, thick, sappy wine began a bit shy but gained in vibrancy and definition with oxygen, conveying increasing purity. Dominated today by crushed-stone minerality and medicinal herbs, this reserved, utterly seamless wine is barely at the beginning of its evolution. Finishes with remarkable unflagging length. When I remarked to Mounir Saouma that there was something almost obvious and deceptively tastable about this wine, he responded that he still wanted it to develop a bit more volatile acidity before he racks the wine prior to the ‘18 harvest and then returns it to barrel for another couple months before bottling it.”

95-98 Points Vinous Media

Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru

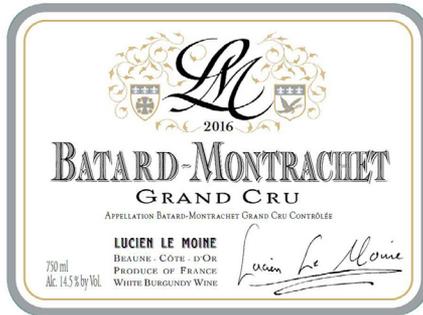


The gentleman, as Mounir calls Chevalier-Montrachet, a wine that always shows lovely definition and everything in place; classic grace.

“Bright lemon-yellow. Bright, pure, reticent aromas of citrus zest, flowers and crushed rock. Pristine and penetrating on the palate, with a sexy touch of sweetness countered by pungent minerality. Conveys an impression of extract-rich solidity with great energy and definition. The almost painful whiplash of a finish boasts razor-sharp focus and great sappy lift. A real essence of Chevalier-Montrachet--and one of the longest 2016s I tried on my late-spring visit.”

95-98 Points Vinous Media

Batard-Montrachet Grand Cru



Bâtard-Montrachet borders Montrachet on the west, and is typically a fatter, more open and more exotic wine than Chevalier-Montrachet, with less grip and a more flowery, honeyed richness.

“Extremely reduced on the nose, which Saouma takes as a positive sign for this cuvée. Wild, rocky and powerful, with very sweet (actually three grams per liter) flavors of pear oil and clove complemented by smoky minerality and framed by surprising lemony acidity (Saouma told me that this wine was stinky a few months ago, smelling like firecrackers). This Bâtard has the palate presence and tannic support of a red wine, finishing with extraordinary thickness and length. Today it’s hard to scrape this off the palate. These vines are planted on humid, clay-rich soil.”

94-96 Points Vinous Media

Criots-Batard-Montrachet Grand Cru



The soils in Criots are a combination of marl, clay and chalk. In fact, the word “Criots” means chalk in French. The south-east facing slope lies at an altitude of around 780 feet - slightly lower than neighboring Chevalier-Montrachet and Le Montrachet, so the slopes tend to have a higher proportion of clay. Mounir describes this wine as “a bridge between the body of Bâtard and the class of Montrachet.

“Musky, sulfidey aromas of peaty Islay Scotch and smoky minerality. Fat, large-scaled, pliant and mouthfilling, with the peaty quality carrying through on the palate. As big as this wine is, it still manages to open out further and gain in thickness on the back end. The finish is plush, satisfying and very long, with just a touch of warmth. Mounir Saouma noted that this classic Montrachet-like Chassagne-side grand cru needs to be fully ripe to approach the other hyphenated Montrachet grand crus in quality. It’s certainly plenty ripe here, but I’d still like to have seen a bit more energy.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru

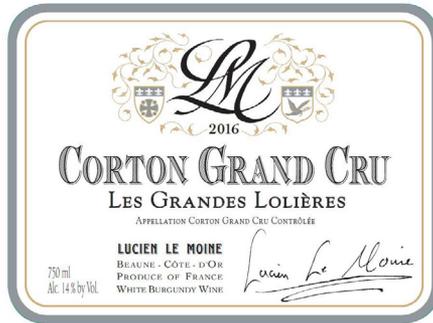


The commune of Aloxe-Corton, located above Pernand-Vergelesses at the northern end of the Côte de Beaune, has the unusual distinction of having over half its area covered in grand cru vineyards. These occupy 298 acres divided among 19 climats which take the Corton grand cru appellation for red wines; five among these, totalling 120 acres, take the Corton-Charlemagne grand cru appellation for white wines as well as the Corton grand cru appellation for red wines. The history of Aloxe-Corton is not complete without the contribution of the Emperor Charlemagne. It is known that he owned vines on the hillside above Aloxe, which, in 775, at age 33, he bequeathed to the Abbey of Saulieu in recompense for the destruction of their monastery by the Saracens. At this point in history, most of the vineyards were in red vines, and it is supposedly due to Charlemagne's wife that the first white vines were planted.

“Green-tinged yellow. Very ripe aromas of apple, orange peel soaked in sugar, and spices, enlivened by white pepper and a positive vegetal nuance (“one smells the humidity of the west side of the hill but also feels the grape skins,” notes Saouma). At once sappy and weightless, with its seamless soft citrus and complex spice flavors energized by active limestone. Really splendid focus and inner-mouth tension here. The rising, unflagging finish is utterly pristine, with the energy of the underlying limestone giving razor-sharp clarity to the exotic spice and orange notes. This sappy yet weightless Corton-Charlemagne boasts great finesse and purity: one can feel the freshness of the mother rock.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

Corton Les Grandes Lolières Grand Cru



Sometimes this cru forms part of Lucien Le Moine's Corton Blanc, other times it is bottled separately. A cru that is not often seen, and is a red cru above all. It has an exotic spicy side to the aromas and flavors, and a broad body that maintains its precision.

"Ginger-spiced apple and wet rock on the nose; one feels the cool quality of the mother rock as well as a sunny element. Very fresh and penetrating but harmonious from the start, with a subtle sweetness and complex minerality to its flavors of apple, spices and fresh herbs. Not yet showing huge dimension but this wine tastes more finished than many of the top 2016s here. This long, tactile grand cru should give relatively early pleasure but its dusty extract suggests that it will evolve gracefully."

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “Morgeot”



This vineyard lies on this Santenay end of the road that leads down from Chassagne to Santenay, widely considered the best area for white Chassagne. The wines here are racier and have more depth than most other white Chassagne.

“Bright, light yellow. Ripe yet wonderfully detailed scents of lichee, bitter nuts and volcanic rock. A rather powerful, masculine style with a chewy texture, excellent breadth and strong underlying structure. This is actually quite closed and penetrating today, finishing with an element of crushed-stone austerity and the tannic structure of a red wine. I suspect that this premier cru will require at least five years of cellaring.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “La Romanée”



Mounir says that Chassagne-Montrachet “La Romanée” is, to make an analogy, the most “Puligny” wine from Chassagne. It has a lot of silkiness and sweetness, and low acidity compared to other Chassagnes; it is a very clean wine, with a particular crème brûlée character that gives way to sweet fruit. It is high on the hill, a sunny vineyard that sees little wind.

“Bright yellow. Aromas of spices, coconut and crème brûlée au citron put me in mind of a mini-Chevalier-Montrachet. At once creamy and zesty on the palate, delivering a subtle earthy complexity lifted by lime blossom. The wine’s compelling density and almost syrupy thickness are countered by pungent treble notes. Finishes very dry and classic, with shocking freshness and floral lift. This is utterly captivating today but should enjoy a graceful evolution in bottle.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru Les Embrazées



This vineyard lies on this Santenay end of the road that leads down from Chassagne to Santenay, widely considered the best area for white Chassagne. The wines here are racier and have more depth than most other white Chassagne.

“Aromas of pear, green apple, menthol, mint leaf and rosemary, complicated by warm southern herbs. Very rich, even opulent wine with noteworthy sucrosité and lowish acidity. This very tactile, smooth wine boasts excellent breadth without any rough edges. Finishes quite dry and rich, with palate-staining length and an emerging impression of lemon drop acidity.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “La Grande Montagne”

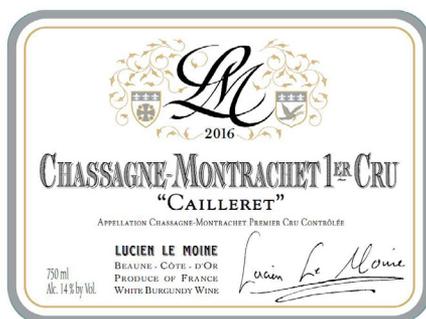


This tiny vineyard is located - as the name suggests - on the steep hillside of the same name just west of Chassagne-Montrachet. La Grande Montagne itself is the most southerly of the limestone hills which make up the Côte d'Or escarpment. It is located in the heart of the band of the best Chassagne 1^{er} Crus at the top of the slope that includes Grandes Ruchottes, la Romanée and Caillerets.

“Pristine, welcoming aromas of citrus zest, white flowers, crushed rock and dusty herbs (“welcome to Chassagne,” says Saouma): A distinctly airy style owing to its energy and wild herb character but saline, sappy and thick as well, gaining in breadth on the back half. This utterly seamless wine finishes with compelling length and brisk citrusy acidity (4.1 grams per liter, vs. 3.6 for the Embrazées). I found this beauty hard to scrape off my palate.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “Cailleret”



Chassagne-Montrachet Caillerets is defined by minerality. It is a very classy wine, with lots of dustiness. It's the wine in Chassagne that you can't totally pin down with an easy description, and that's why some consider it a Grand Cru level. Minerality is the main point – little white stones, lots of limestone. Like the Meursault Perrieres of Chassagne-Montrachet.

“Aromas of apple, spices, marzipan and iodine convey a distinctly flinty minerality. Dense, thick and backward, with its lovely sucrosité buffered by sheer thickness of material. The wine's mouthfilling opulence is given shape and lift by crushed stone and noble herbs, but today this massive, rather Montrachet-like Caillerets comes across as lower-pitched than the La Romanée. Really clings to the palate on the chewy, rising aftertaste. This is a bit inscrutable today but will probably equal the La Romanée in quality.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

“Reduction presently dominates the underlying fruit. The notably finer and even more mineral-inflected flavors possess a lacy yet punchy mouth feel while exhibiting sneaky long finish that also flashes a touch of dryness. In this case though it seems more likely that the dryness will dissipate with a few years of bottle age.”

89-92 Points Burghound

Puligny-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “Les Folatières”



The Folatières climat lies near the summit of this slope, above Clos de la Garenne roughly midway between Meursault and Montrachet. With 44 acres covering the three parcels of En La Richarde, Peux Bois and Au Chanot in addition to the principal parcel of Les Folatières, it is the largest of Puligny’s premiers crus. Folatières is also the most recent: prior to its elevation to 1^{er} Cru in 1959, it was covered by an underbrush inhabited principally by rabbits. Puligny-Montrachet Folatières is always sweet, has a lot of ripeness, showing apricot and other similar flavors. After 18-20 months the minerality comes out in the wine.

“Still a bit cloudy. A syrup of yellow fruits on the reticent nose (Saouma referred to Folatières as “the Condrieu of Burgundy”). At once thick, pure and dry, with strong mineral thrust giving precision to the middle palate. There’s a stony spring water note here from the mother rock. This very dry, serious Folatières finishes wonderfully stony and salty, with strong dry extract and outstanding floral lift—almost austere on the end following the syrupy nose. Not at all an oversized wine but this is still expanding. I have little doubt that it will turn out to be a more serious wine than many early-bottled 2016s from this vineyard.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Puligny-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “Champ Gain”



Champ Gains is high on the hill, and produces a wine in which a sense of dryness overshadows the sweet fruit - the sweetness that comes out is not an easy sweetness, and while you get apricot and other fruits on the palate, there is always a sense of dryness pulling them back.

“Bright yellow. Fascinating aromas of vineyard peach, fresh apricot and Chartreuse-like herbal infusion, plus a hint of kerosene. Very rich and fine-grained, with a captivating orange zest coolness accented by white pepper. There’s something Riesling-like about this wine’s impression of sucrosité without actual sugar. Almost oily on the aftertaste but enlivened by emerging minerality. Rich in dry extract and very long, but not quite as palate-staining as the best Chassagne-Montrachets at this address.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Puligny-Montrachet 1^{er} “Champ Canet”

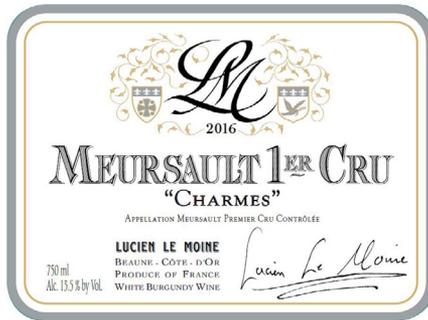


Mounir describes Champ Canet as a frustrated Puligny. It has a lot of vivacity, it is racy and salty, influenced strongly by Meursault. You can think of it almost as a Meursault Perrieres in Puligny.

“More expressive on the nose than the Chalumeaux, with a note of lemon drop suggesting good fruit sweetness. Then a bit syrupy on the palate, but with lovely focus and definition to its flavors of white peach, crushed stone, white pepper and spices. This wine delivers more inner-mouth tension than the Chalumeaux and Hameau de Blagny and finishes with excellent mineral-driven length.”

90-93 Points Vinous Media

Meursault 1^{er} Cru “Charmes”



Charmes is larger than both Perrieres and Genevrières put together, extending all the way down to the Meursault-Puligny road. The upper part of the vineyard produces extremely compelling Meursaults, with a soft flowery character that is less racy than Perrieres and less spicy than Genevrières, but just as intense.

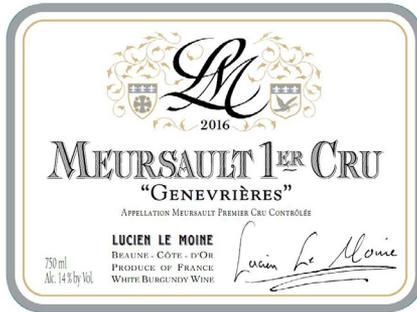
“Charmes du Haut and one from Charmes du Bas, but he noted that the grower produces very low yields and strong ripeness, the opposite of what he prefers): Bright lemon-yellow color. Lovely fruit-driven aromas and flavors of apple, lemon, white peach and spices. Wonderfully rich and dense, conveying an impression of dusty dry extract and full ripeness. But penetrating acidity gives lift to this very chewy wine. The thick finish saturates the palate and builds inexorably, making it hard to tell when you’ve spit the wine. A bit of an outlier in this collection but a very unevolved wine with outstanding potential.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

“A very pretty and airy nose features notes of red cherry, raspberry and spice with a shading of soft wood and earth. On the palate though this is not nearly as concentrated though there is still perfectly good concentration and a sleek muscularity on the vibrant, detailed and lingering finish. While this is by no means light, it is a Charmes built more along the lines of finesse than power.”

91-94 Points Burghound

Meursault 1^{er} Cru “Genevrières”

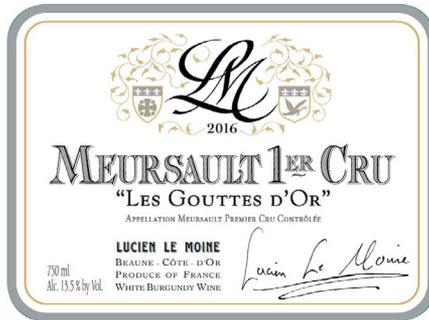


Genevrières is defined by viscosity. The vineyard is mid-slope, and in the Lucien Le Moine Genevrières there is always notable acidity (even in low-acid years) and alcohol. As a result, yeast has difficulty finishing its fermentation, and there is always a little bit of residual sugar. “Mr Too Much of Everything” is how Mounir likes to describe this wine. It ferments slowly, and for some reason it always has a touch of cloudiness – something never precipitates out. It’s a wild child.

“Slightly cloudy appearance. Classic, pure Genevrières scents of lemon, lime, tangerine and ginger. At once large-scaled and sharply focused, with its dusty citrus zest, spice and anise flavors communicating a strong impression of soil. For all its inner-mouth tension, this fruit was not harvested particularly early, according to Saouma. Finishes spicy, youthful and long.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Meursault 1^{er} Cru Les “Gouttes d’Or”

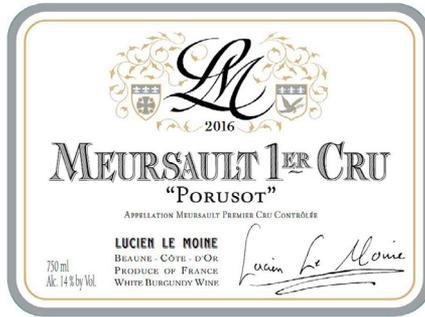


The first Premier Cru heading south into Meursault, Gouttes d’Or is characterized by displaying a full body offset along with a firm structure.

“Bright light yellow. Aromas of peach, fresh apricot and medicinal herbs show a sweet-sour quality that reminded me of some Chinese dishes. Very pure, juicy and penetrating; doesn’t show the body, density or ripeness of the Charmes but this is a compellingly energetic, intense Gouttes d’Or with sneaky power. Finishes very long and suave, with an impression of firm structure and an element of sweetness perfectly balanced by lemon-limey energy.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Meursault 1^{er} Cru “Porusot”

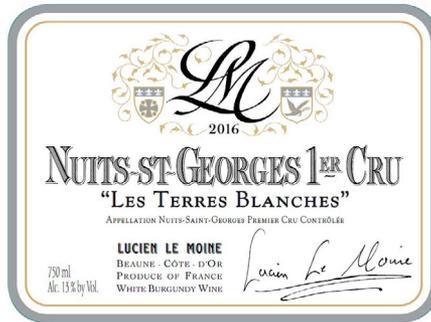


Mounir likes to call Meursault Porusot the ambassador of Meursault – it takes from everything around it, Gouttes d’Or, Genevrières, Charmes, and other vineyards, and shows a little bit of all their characters. It is a wine that doesn’t rest, it keeps changing all the time. Sweet yet flinty, as well as phenolic, it is an intellectual’s wine. Mounir was delighted to bottle Porusot for the first time in 2009.

“Bright but slightly cloudy yellow. Slightly oxidative on the nose, as it’s still working. Then shockingly ripe and fresh on the palate, with a touch of sweetness virtually neutralized by penetrating appley acidity. Wonderfully broad but still youthfully disjointed; this tastes like a nine-month-old wine. Not at all a tropical style of Porusot, due in part to its strong acidity. It’s hard to scrape this very long wine off the palate.”

90-93 Points Vinous Media

Nuits-St-Georges 1^{er} Cru “Les Terres Blanches”

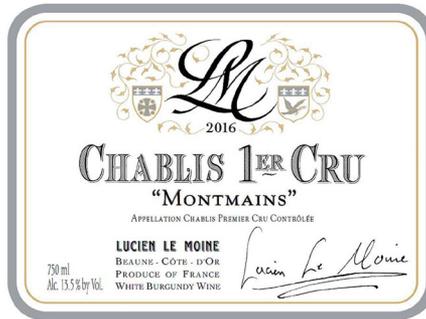


Les Terres Blanches is a 2.4 acre vineyard in the steepest area of Nuits-St.-Georges, and not far from the top Nuits-St.-Georges vineyards of Les Vaucrains and Les Saint-Georges. There are few producers in this small vineyard, and this very rare Nuits-St.-George white proves intriguing for its Nuits-St.-Georges character in spite of its variety and color.

“Bright, light yellow. Pungent aromas of lemon drop, crushed rock and Chartreuse herbs. Moderately dense but quite energetic, conveying an impression of firm acidity and pronounced minerality (“this very cool, humid plot in the highest section of the cru features a distinctive kind of calcaire, with white stones and almost no clay,” says Mounir Saouma, adding that “a lot of people ask if this wine has some Pinot Blanc”). Finishes pure, salty and long, with an unexpected touch of sweetness leavened by citric lift.”

89-91 Points Vinous Media

Chablis 1^{er} Cru “Montmains”



“Pungent herbs, lemon zest and marzipan on the nose. Superb intensity and inner-mouth lift to the flavors of green apple, green flowers and green melon. Juicy, concentrated, sappy and very long, with a rising, echoing back end. Leaves behind a taste of oystery sea water. Excellent material here but not particularly high in acidity.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Corton Renardes Grand Cru



Corton Renardes displays the sweet side of Corton, as opposed to Corton Bressandes. It has more viscosity, more tannin, color and sweetness than Bressandes. It is both an easier wine to understand than Corton Bressandes, and more immediately attractive.

“Reduction rules the fruit today. Otherwise there is an intense minerality that suffuses the powerful and extract-rich broad-shouldered flavors that are muscular and overtly rustic before terminating in a focused, balanced and linear finish. This bad boy Corton is fashioned in a ‘take no prisoners’ style and will need extended cellaring.”

91-93 Points Burghound

“Bright ruby-red color. Distinctly wild aromas and flavors of black raspberry, game birds and animal fur. Plush, dense and fine-grained, showing more early personality than the Bressandes despite the fact that there’s still a trace of unconverted malic acidity here. Finishes pure and very long, with very suave tannins.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Corton Bressandes Grand Cru



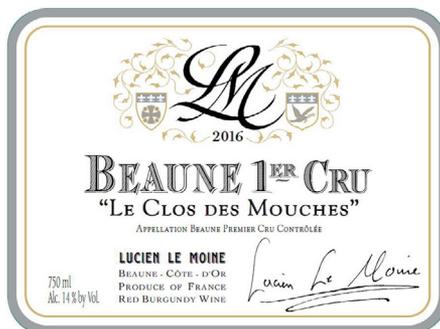
“A pure, super-fresh and airy nose is comprised by the essence of red currant that is liberally laced with notes earth, spice, violet and a hint of lavender. The bigger, richer and more muscular flavors also possess a relatively refined mouth feel that deliver fine length on the balanced more complex finale.”

90-93 Points Burghound

“Bright, full red. Very ripe aromas of plum, raspberry, strawberry and smoky minerality. Plush and fine-grained, with fresh red fruit flavors complemented by deeper saline and soil tones. The wine’s limestone lift energizes the middle palate. Finishes firmly tannic but not dry, with a slightly medicinal quality and excellent lift.”

90-93 Points Vinous Media

Beaune 1^{er} Cru “Le Clos des Mouches” Rouge



“Healthy medium-deep red. Expressive aromas of red and black cherry and flowers convey the site’s high altitude. Juicy and sharply delineated, with its medicinal flavors of black cherry and bitter chocolate lifted by an element of crisp limestone. Offers classic Burgundian energy and more definition than the Chassagne-Montrachet Morgeot. Finishes with firm tannins and a note of licorice. Lacks only a bit of length for an even higher score.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

“A discreet touch of wood sets off the pretty and well-layered aromas of both red and dark pinot, floral and lovely spice elements. The suave, rich and caressing medium-bodied flavors offer fine length on the dusty and balanced finish. This needs to develop better depth but the pieces are in place for that to occur.”

89-92 Points Burghound

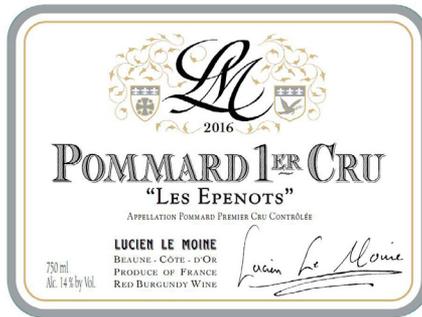
Chassagne-Montrachet 1^{er} Cru “Morgeot” Rouge



“Bright, dark red. Lively aromas of black raspberry, black cherry and violet. Distinctly dark in its flavors, with notes of cassis, black cherry, menthol and dark chocolate conveying a slightly medicinal quality. Has the stuffing to support its serious chewy-but-ripe tannins.”

88-90 Points Vinous Media

Pommard 1^{er} Cru “Les Epenots”

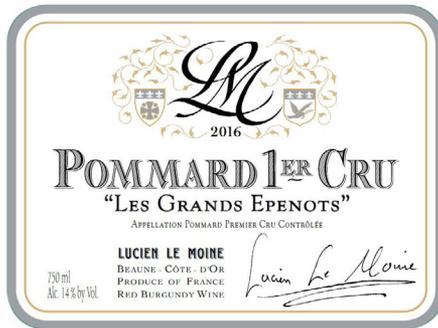


The commune of Pommard lies on a slope descending from Beaune, to the north, to Volnay, to the south. Of Pommard’s 832 acres of vineyards, 309 are ranked 1^{er} Cru over 24 climats. Les Epenots is by far the largest of Pommard’s premiers crus, with 75.5 acres. The vineyard for Lucien Le Moine’s Les Epenots has a clay and humidic soil, down on the bottom of the hill. It is compact soil, with not a lot of drainage. The wines as a result are very tannic, and need time. Les Epenots is a very powerful Pommard, with a lot of depth and muscle, and plum and spice notes. It is, as Mounir says, almost Bordeaux-like.

“Deep medium ruby. Very ripe aromas of crème de cassis, black cherry and smoke. Fat, chewy wine with lovely depth and fullness to its black fruit flavors. Very ripe but still a bit reduced, even youthfully stunted, and in need of more élevage to show more nuance, clarity and lift. Finishes with substantial ripe tannins and spreading flavors of kirsch and cherry pit.”

90-93 Points Vinous Media

Pommard 1^{er} Cru “Les Grands Epenots”



The 25 acre Les Grands Epenots vineyard is considered by some one of the very finest climats in Pommard. The fruit for Lucien Le Moine’s “Les Grands Epenots” comes from higher up in the vineyard leading to a classic and very fine expression. It can be viewed as the opposite of a typical “Les Epenots” even though they are next to each other. The vineyard is higher, it has better drainage, and there is more limestone, resulting in a wine that is both silkier and more easygoing than “Les Epenots.”

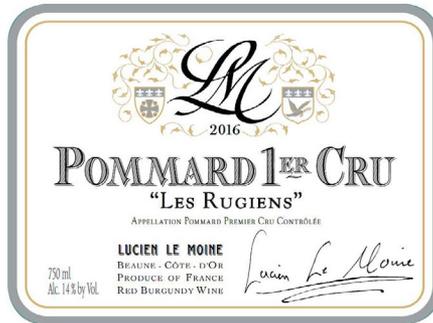
“Bright, dark red. Less purely black on the nose than the Epenots, showing enticing spicy lift to its raspberry and mint aromas. At once sweet and brisk in the mouth, with its red berry flavors complicated by notes of honeysuckle and citrus fruits. This penetrating, energetic wine boasts a tight core of fruit and terrific definition. Finishes energetic, classy and long, with noble tannins.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

“Here too the super-fresh nose is expressive with a redder fruit profile that is laced with plenty of earth and spice along with a hint of wood. The more refined middle weight flavors are notably less mineral-inflected though more seductive, all wrapped in a balanced and beautifully persistent finish.”

91-93 Points Burghound

Pommard 1^{er} Cru “Les Rugiens”



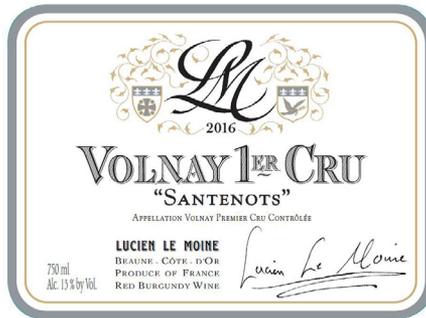
“Bright ruby-red. Highly nuanced nose melds aromas of cherry, raspberry, flint and tobacco lifted by white pepper and rose petal; one feels the red soil influence here. Delivers a winning combination of silky texture and inner-mouth floral lift to its red fruit flavors, not to mention terrific mineral tension and a light touch. Finishes with spreading, fine-grained tannins, rising length and noteworthy mineral thrust. At once flashy and noble, this Pommard has Côte de Nuits-like class.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

“A slightly riper yet still very fresh nose is more deeply pitched with its array of cassis, plum, black cherry and a whiff of the sauvage. There is a lovely sense of underlying tension to the bigger and more powerful flavors that possess a sleek, even polished mouth feel before culminating in a much more mineral-driven, youthfully austere and notably firmer finale. Patience strongly suggested.”

91-93 Points Burghound

Volnay 1^{er} Cru “Santenots”



The Santenots vineyard comprises about 56 acres. Down in Meursault, actually in the village of Meursault, Santenots is really planted on white wine soils. Sometimes you can even find the smokiness of Meursault in the wines. They are light and fruity wines, easily gliding through the palate because they don't have firm structure.

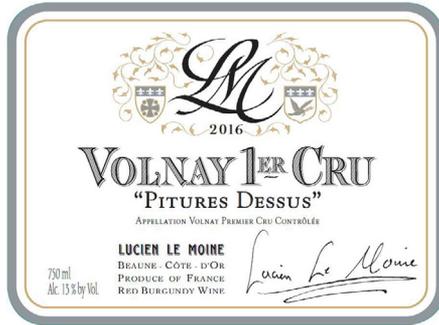
“Full, deep red; a bit less bright than the Clos des Chènes. Somewhat lower-toned on the nose, with aromas of raspberry, strawberry and Damson plum jam complemented by mellow soil nuances. Fat, broad, spicy and dry, showing a sappy cherry note in the middle but a bit dominated today by medicinal menthol and earth notes. Finishes with dusty tannins, a rocky quality and modest sweetness, plus a note of pear that reminded me of a white wine.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

“A very spicy nose reflects notes of plum, violet and Asian-style tea. There is fine concentration to the vibrant middle weight flavors possess both good intensity and minerality as well as a polished mouth feel that contrasts somewhat with the firm, austere and slightly drying finish. This may come together but at present it is less well-balanced than the better wines from the Côte de Beaune.”

88-90 Points Burghound

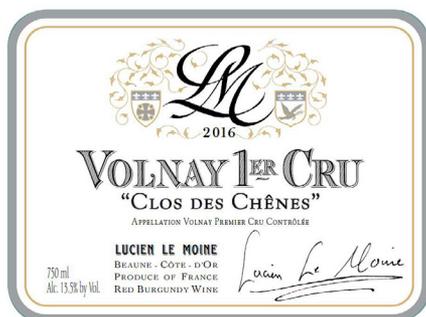
Volnay 1^{er} Cru Pitures Dessus



“Bright, dark red with ruby tones. Complex nose offers aromas of dark raspberry, black cherry and smoky soil, along with an element of sweet oak. Juicy and tight, but with an old-vines density to its flavors of crushed black cherry complicated by coffee and game. This pure, smooth wine finishes with a fine dusting of tannins and excellent supporting acidity.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

Volnay 1^{er} Cru “Clos des Chênes”



Clos des Chênes is a Premier cru site located at the southern end of Volnay. It is just up the hill from neighboring Les Caillerets, but is opposite in style: Clos des Chênes is typically a fuller wine than les Caillerets, with more body, tannins, depth and spice.

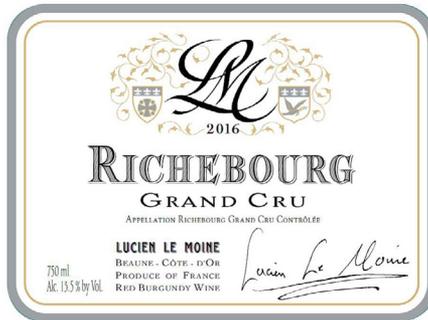
“Dark red-ruby. More serious on the nose than the Pitures Dessus, with its currant, chocolate, menthol and oak aromas complicated by a mineral quality. Sappy and chewy on the palate, with flavors of redcurrant, mocha and tobacco leaf conveying a red-clay character. The firmly structured finish shows surprising freshness and lift, not to mention excellent length.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

“A well-layered nose combines notes of red and dark currant, spice and a pretty hint of lavender. The denser, serious and more powerful big-bodied flavors brim with both dry extract and minerality that carries over to the super-intense, youthfully austere and linear finish. This very firm effort also needs to develop more depth but if it does this could be a first-rate Clos des Chênes.”

90-93 Points Burghound

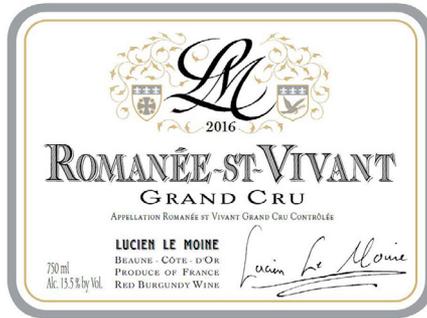
Richebourg Grand Cru



“Bright medium ruby. Initially closed nose opened somewhat with air to reveal powerful aromas of dark berries, black cherry, menthol, crushed rock, tobacco, violet and peat. Extremely primary and deep but with nothing edgy about its black fruit, licorice and mineral flavors; conveys a strong impression of inner-mouth lift. Utterly young but already projects a sexy wildness. This extract-rich wine finishes with outstanding length and building crushed-rock minerality. I’d love to have the chance to retaste this wine next to the RSV in about 10 years--and then again in 20.”

94-97 Points Vinous Media

Romanée-St-Vivant Grand Cru



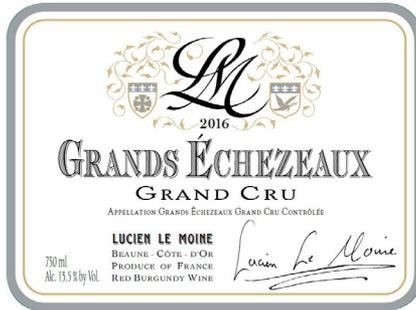
“Bright ruby-red. Knockout, spectacularly lifted aromas of black raspberry, cocoa powder, cappuccino, rose petal and white chocolate. Wonderfully sweet, dense and seamless, with excellent delineation to its flavors of dark berries, spices, earth and dark chocolate. Finishes with subtly building dark raspberry fruit, the plush tannins reaching the front teeth. This wine made me shiver. Saouma has only two barrels of this elixir and may bottle the wine in magnums.”

94-96 Points Vinous Media

“There is plenty of herbal tea influence surrounding the subtly spiced aromas of red and dark pinot fruit. The middle weight flavors are at once racy and lacy with excellent delineation and a highly refined mouth feel, all wrapped in a lingering and beautifully balanced finale. This is not especially concentrated but it is very classy.”

92-94 Points Burghound

Grands Échézeaux Grand Cru



Grands Échézeaux is a 23 acre vineyard, one that only recently Lucien Le Moine has started working with to produce wines that show unusual subtlety and harmony. Mounir describes Grands Échézeaux 22 as the “Les Amoureuses” of Vosne. It sits between Échézeaux and Clos de Vougeot, which are big and tannic, but Grands Échézeaux is very balanced and straight - nothing is exaggerated.

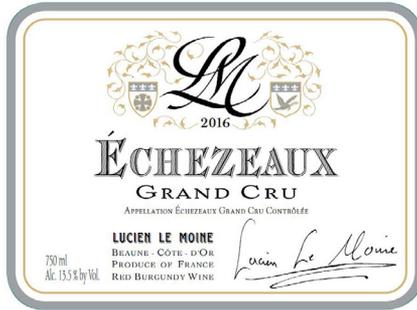
“Full, bright ruby. Higher-toned and considerably more expressive on the nose than the Echézeaux, offering aromas of black raspberry, licorice and violet along with suggestions of more exotic ripeness. Densely packed and seriously concentrated, but a bit youthfully imploded owing to its crushed-rock minerality; conveys a strong impression of dry extract but little early sweetness. As young as this wine is, it’s much more harmonious today than the Echézeaux. Finishes very long, with serious but fine-grained tannins.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

“Here there is no reductive funk as the restrained but very complex nose offers up a wide range of spice elements that include notes of hoisin, Asian-style tea, cassis and pretty floral nuances. The sleek, even polished big-bodied flavors possess a refined mouth feel despite plenty of muscle thanks to the relatively fine-grained tannins shaping the finish where the structure really comes up on the finish. This is very clearly built-to-age and is going to need it.”

92-95 Points Burghound

Échézeaux Grand Cru



At 93 acres Échézeaux is a large Grand Cru, and the specific vine site of Échézeaux matters tremendously. Lucien Le Moine has been producing one of the very finest examples of Échézeaux for several years running. Mounir says that you can make the analogy that Échézeaux is the syrah of Burgundy. On the Flagey side there is a flat exposition and the limestone is not as evident. As a result the wine has a licorice, smoky note which almost brings you to the Côte-Rôtie. You don't want a lot of maceration or extraction in this wine, it just needs time sitting on its lees.

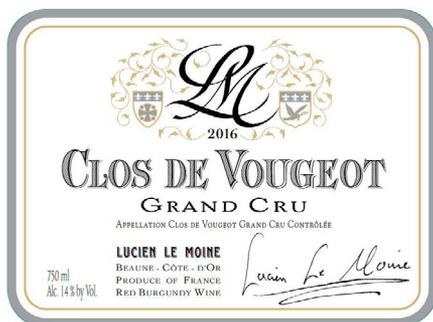
“Moderate reduction masks the fruit today. There is an excellent sense of underlying tension to the almost racy medium-bodied flavors that possess fine delineation on the firm, youthfully austere and palate soaking finish. This is quite structured but not really hard but thanks to the abundant dry extract, a wine that should be accessible in its youth.”

92-94 Points Burghound

“Good medium ruby. Inviting aromas of black raspberry, tobacco, gingerbread and honey. Large-scaled, saline Echézeaux in a rather cool style, conveying modest sweetness but excellent focus. Very concentrated but youthfully imploded, and clearly in a closed phase. The cool, rather linear finish displays slightly tough tannins. This highly concentrated wine will need time in bottle to develop more generosity of texture.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru



The largest Grand Cru in the Côte-de-Nuits, at 125 acres, Clos de Vougeot possesses differing soil structures and expositions and, notably, a large number of growers. The top of the vineyard features soils of pebbly limestone, which become marl further down the slope, and finally more alluvial at the 23 bottom. Notoriously variable, from the best producers Clos de Vougeot produces generous, complex wines that can stand alongside any Grand Cru Burgundies.

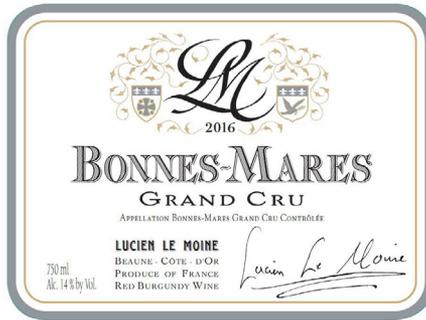
“This is very ripe, indeed to the point where the cassis, warm earth and softly floral-scented aromas exhibit hints of mocha. In much the same fashion as the Clos St. Denis there is a relatively sleek mouth feel to the solidly intense and muscular larger-scaled flavors that possess a lovely sense of harmony and excellent complexity on the lingering finish that is a bit less youthfully austere than usual.”

92-95 Points Burghound

“Good dark red. Sexy dark berries and musky black cherry on the nose. Juicy and imploded on the palate. with its dark berry and smoke flavors communicating a rather cool character and little in the way of easy sweetness. Showing a bit less energy in the early going than the Clos Saint-Denis. Saouma says the fatness comes from the top of the Clos, and the coolness from the bottom. One of the most austere of these 2016s today; am I underrating this wine’s complexity?”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru



Bonnes-Mares is a wine of paradox. The Côte de Nuits area has two faces – it faces east, with a part of it is facing a bit north, and a part a bit south. The border between north and south is the border between Morey-St-Denis and Chambolle Musigny. Here sits Bonnes-Mares, on both sides, and exposed both to the north and south. There is also an important difference in limestone within the Bonnes-Mares vineyard, with some white and some brown limestone. Mounir thinks of Bonnes-Mares as the ambassador of all the Côte d'Or – taste 15 wines from the Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits, and when you come to Bonnes-Mares it will have all the fruit, tannin, sweetness, and spice of the wines you just tasted. Because of its multi-dimensional power and beauty, Bonnes-Mares has become one of if not the signature wine from Lucien Le Moine.

“Good dark ruby-red. Raspberry and pepper aromas are lifted by floral, spicy and herbal nuances on the very pure, perfumed nose. Sappy red and dark berry flavors project terrific peppery energy, with a note of chocolate emerging with air. This very deep wine will need considerable bottle aging. Finishes with superb spreading tanning and palate-staining length. One of the highest in alcohol among this extraordinary set of 2016s but with plenty of buffering extract. A great Bonnes-Mares in the making, from a vintage that was generally kind to this grand cru except for some frost losses close to the village of Chambolle.”

95-98 Points Vinous Media

“Here too there is a touch of herbal tea character to the very ripe yet still attractively fresh liqueur-like nose of cassis, dark cherry and pretty floral notes and especially violet. The overtly muscular, rich and full-bodied flavors possess excellent punch though the built-to-age finish is somewhat drying today though at the same, there is noticeable gas. This is tough to read today but I prefer to remain conservative.”

89-92 Points Burghound

Mazis Chambertin Grand Cru



The Mazis-Chambertin parcel used by Lucien Le Moine lies in poor clay soils, from the highest part of the vineyard where there is only 4 inches of soil. Mounir likes to say that the sun almost touches the roots. As a result, this wine has powerful, jammy, almost barbecue flavor and a lot of smokiness (some will attribute this to oak, but it is the natural character of the site). There is an animal side to the wine that at Lucien Le Moine is tempered by an extended aging which brings out notably a red currant character. In addition, with bottle age the fruit becomes more apparent.

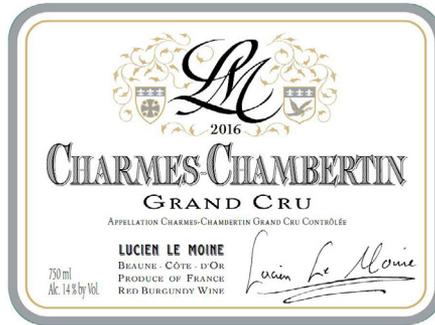
“There is enough reduction to mask the fruit but not the savage elements Mazis is famous for. There is a bit more size, weight and power to the big-bodied flavors that brim with both minerality and dry extract, all wrapped in a dusty, mouth coating and tightly wound finish that is austere but not rustic. Once again ample patience will be required as this is very clearly built-to-age.”

93-95 Points Burghound

“Bright medium ruby. Fresh scents of black cherry, baking spices, flowers and smoky soil communicate an impression of delicacy. Dense but light on its feet, with intense red fruit flavors enlivened by chalky energy. Finishes with firm but fine-grained tannins and superb persistence. A very classy Mazis in the making.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru

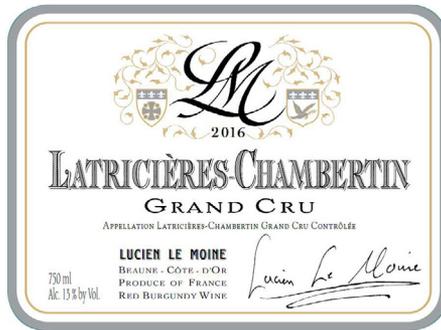


As the name suggests, wines from this vineyard are full of charm - beautiful aromatics and weight. The vineyard is near Mazis, but Mounir has used different parts of the vineyard, from both Charmes or Mazoyères; so sometimes his fruit comes from the heart of the Gevrey Grand Crus and sometimes it is almost in Morey-St-Denis where there can be an influence of sand and iron in the soil. Mounir looks for the “charm” in Charmes-Chambertin - a wine with sweetness, fruit, spice, chocolate notes. He feels it is at its best when it is attractive and approachable.

“Good medium ruby. Brooding aromas of medicinal black cherry and bitter chocolate complicated by a spicy element. Very dense, concentrated and savory, conveying grand cru depth of texture and subtle sweetness but still quite primary and even a bit stunted today. Finishes with surprisingly suave tannins and a building spiciness.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Latricières-Chambertin Grand Cru



Latricières is often thought of as a “sturdy” Gevrey-Chambertin Grand Cru, Le Moine’s 2014 has an overtly elegant side that comes through, surprising and exceptionally promising.

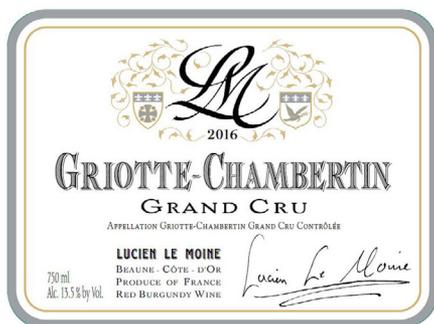
“Bright, dark ruby-red. Aromas of black cherry, licorice, black pepper and menthol; one feels the grape skins here. Dense, sappy, tactile and strong; expressive in terms of its sweetness but a bit imploded in its texture. Boasts serious medicinal reserve and a weightlessness to its cassis and black cherry flavors. Finishes with firm, suave tannins and slowly mounting, echoing length. Mounir Saouma noted that this cold site had some frost, but that its protection from wind allowed the fruit to ripen well. Has the backbone for extended aging.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

“An ultra-fresh nose of various red berries, underbrush and Gevrey-style earth gives way to polished, intense and racy mineral-driven flavors that possess excellent depth and persistence on the mildly austere, linear and wonderfully balanced finale. This notably firm effort is very Latricières in style.”

92-95 Points Burghound

Griotte-Chambertin Grand Cru



Griotte-Chambertin is one of the most elusive Grand Crus in Burgundy; it's the smallest Grand Cru in Gevrey at only 3 hectares in size. The vineyard faces north-east, which means the vines are not fully exposed to the morning sunshine - this contributes to the fresher, less masculine style of its wines.

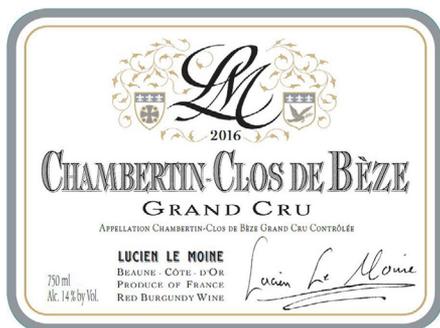
“This is restrained to the point of being almost timid yet it is also exceptionally pretty with a really lovely nose of red and dark currant, earth and a hint of spicy tea. There is fine richness to the beautifully textured and intense medium-bodied flavors that culminate in a very serious, dusty, mouth coating and quite firmly structured finish that is presently markedly austere but not hard. This is also going to require an extended snooze in a cool cellar.”

92-94 Points Burghound

“Healthy dark red-ruby. Dark, rather subdued nose shows more soil and limestone character than primary fruits, but an element of violet emerged with air. Dense and lively, with its chalky energy accentuated by an element of white pepper. The wine's dark fruit flavors are a bit brooding today and not yet in harmony with its minerality and saline tension. Best today on the very pure, spicy, long finish, which features firm, classy tannins and noteworthy verve.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Chambertin-Clos de Bèze Grand Cru



A vineyard sitting between Mazis-Chambertin and Chambertin, Chambertin-Clos de Bèze is on the same limestone as Montrachet - you can almost think of it as a wine from Chassagne, a white wine with red color. It has almost an essence on the palate, it is supple, long, and without a lot of body or tannin. A sublime wine.

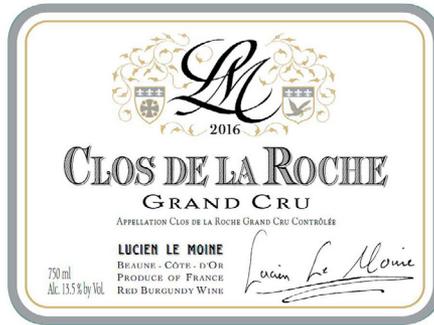
“Good medium ruby. High-pitched violet perfume lifts the aroma of ripe black cherry. Wonderfully suave, intense and refined, with a pungently fresh quality that reminded me of cut grass. This highly concentrated wine has perfectly integrated acidity, as well as a stronger limestone character than usual. In a rather masculine style but also seamless and suave. Finishes with outstanding length and class, the tannins totally buffered by fruit and minerals. Mounir Saouma noted that this wine has been “great since the beginning.”

94-97 Points Vinous Media

“Exuberantly spicy liqueur-like aromas of cassia, dark cherry and plenty of floral elements introduce the succulent, round and seductive, even opulent imposingly-scaled flavors coat the palate with dry extract while a subtle minerality adds a bit of lift to the stunningly persistent finish. This very classy effort is balanced and beautifully complex and while it should reward long-term cellaring, it should also be approachable after 7 to 8 years if desired.”

93-96 Points Burghound

Clos de la Roche Grand Cru



Clos de la Roche lies on an easterly-exposed slope at the northern end of Morey-Saint-Denis, divided by the road leading to Gevrey-Chambertin, and shares some of the nuances associated with the grands crus of the commune. It is divided into eight parcels totalling 41.75 acres: Les Genavières, with 2.2 acres; Monts Luisants, with 9.25 acres; Les Mochamps, with 6.3 acres; les Froichots, with 1.6 acres; Les Fremieres, with 5.6 acres; Les Chabots, with 5.3 acres; Les Chaffots, with 0.2 acres; and Clos de la Roche, proper, the largest parcel, with 11.3 acres.

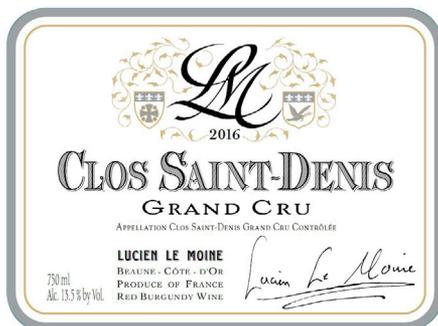
“Bright ruby-red. Knockout nose combines black raspberry, brown spices, fresh blood, game and crushed-stone minerality. Similarly wild on the palate, and surprisingly expressive for young Clos de la Roche, displaying a very smooth texture and superb inner-mouth energy. Finishes classy, rich and very long, with terrific detail and compelling sucrosité.”

93-96 Points Vinous Media

“Firm reduction dominates the fruit today. Otherwise there is exceptionally good volume and richness to the powerful and concentrated big-bodied flavors that evidence moderate rusticity on the very firm but notably more complex finale. This beauty is also going to require extended patience if you wish to see it at its apogee.”

92-95 Points Burghound

Clos Saint-Denis Grand Cru



The soils of Clos Saint Denis are very drained, and the fruit achieves a lot of ripeness and flavor Mounir calls this a humiliating wine, because your first impression is of a wine that is full of earthy, dirty notes, but when it emerges after time to breathe, or with age, it displays sweet red fruits and a sweet finish. The soil here is rich in iron and phosphorous, giving this wine a contrast between dirty and sweet.

“Firm reduction also dominates the nose. There isn’t the same power, size and weight to the less imposingly-scaled flavors compared to those of the Clos de la Roche but as one might expect, the beautifully complex finish is finer and more understated though almost as serious and structured with the same outstanding length. There is a touch of unintegrated wood sticking out on the finish but it should be absorbed in time.”

93-95 Points Burghound

“Medium red-ruby, a bit lighter than the Clos de la Roche. Less delineated and nuanced on the nose in the early going, hinting at violet, dried rose and blood orange. Dense but quite reticent, and hiding more than it’s showing today. With aeration, notes of iron, orange zest and celery seed emerge, along with a zesty positive bitterness. Finishes with terrific inner-mouth spicy lift and a light touch. I was shocked to hear that this wine was among the highest in pH and lowest in acidity of the 2016s at Lucien Le Moine. Mounir Saouma told me that ten days ago, this wine was more presentable than the Clos de la Roche.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Chambolle-Musigny 1^{er} Cru “Les Amoureuses”



This esteemed vineyard bordering Musigny and Clos de Vougeot regularly produces one of Lucien Le Moine’s most celebrated wines. Mounir says that the vineyard parcel from which his wine comes from has roots that go deep into the rocks, and the wine can be described as one with a lot of minerality, but with very little tannin or acidity, and notably a character of a very limited attack that draws out to an incredibly persistent finish. This character is what you leaves you breathless after you drink it, as you ask yourself - where did this wine all of a sudden come from?

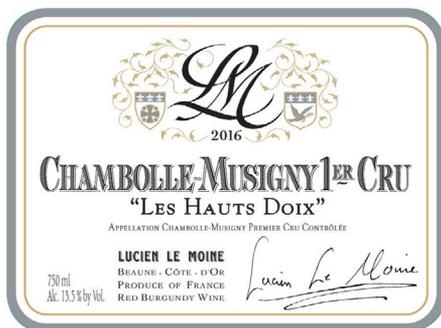
“Bright ruby-red. Very dark, rather masculine nose offers aromas of black raspberry, boysenberry and violet. Wonderfully dense, concentrated and pure but youthfully restrained, with its refined dark fruit and bitter chocolate flavors complicated by subtle saline minerality. Superb sweetness here but still very primary. The wine’s noble tannins spread out to saturate the palate without leaving any impression of weight. Offers brilliant potential but this wine will require extended aging.”

92-95 Points Vinous Media

“Like several of the preceding wines, this is aromatically quite restrained though a bit of aeration eventually exposes a lovely range of spice elements on the lavender-inflected red and dark raspberry scents. The even more refined and certainly more mineral-driven medium weight flavors possess a caressing mouth feel before concluding in a lingering if slightly one-dimensional finish. While more depth will almost certainly develop with bottle age, it’s not clear that this is going to match the best of the Vosne and Gevrey 1^{ers} in that regard.”

90-93 Points Burghound

Chambolle-Musigny 1^{er} Cru “Les Hauts Doix”



Les Haut Doix is a small vineyard between Les Charmes and Les Amoureuses. It sits within Les Amoureuses before the road to Les Charmes, but the wines show more acidity and fresh fruit than Les Amoureuses. It is crisper, less spicy, with fruit that is less ripe in character than Les Amoureuses. There is less drainage in this vineyard, and the soil is more viscous.

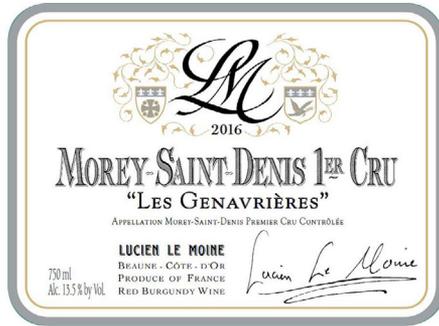
“Bright medium ruby. Very dark, discreet scents of black raspberry, crème de cassis, licorice and flowers; rather Musigny-like. Densely packed, intense and energetic, boasting terrific savory minerality and inner-mouth violet lift. There’s no easy sweetness here but this wine communicates a crystalline quality and finishes with slowly mounting length and utterly noble tannins. Amazingly, the yield was normal in 2016; in fact, Saouma told me that the grower actually carried out a green harvest.”

92-95 Points Vinous Media

“Whiffs of raspberry, red currant and cherry enjoy added breadth in the form of spice, floral and orange pekoe tea. The much sleeker and more refined if substantially less powerful and muscular flavors possess a lacy mouth feel that carries over to the youthfully austere finale. This is very Chambolle in style.”

91-93 Points Burghound

Chambolle-Musigny 1^{er} Cru “Les Baudes”



Lying just under Bonnes-Mares, Les Baudes shows a more structured and powerful side of Chambolle- Musigny.

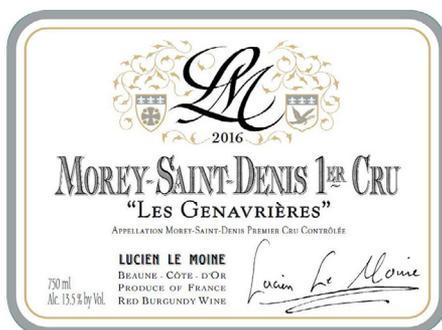
“A deft touch of wood can be found on the dark pinot fruit, spice, floral and newly turned earth aromas. There is once again excellent punch and a taut muscularity to the medium weight plus flavors that possess fine mid-palate density, all wrapped in a balanced, saline and driving finish. Patience required.”

91-94 Points Burghound

“Healthy red-ruby color. Soil-driven aromas of black raspberry, smoky minerals, wild herbs and pungent black licorice. Then dense and deep but relaxed, with a Chambolle fluidity of texture supported by a firm mineral underpinning. A bit like a softer Bonnes-Mares. This utterly seamless, sedate wine finishes with lovely breadth and nicely buffered tannins. Mounir finds that most of his Chambolles are rather fat in 2016, and he believes that “the wines will make themselves later than the Gevrey-Chambertins.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

Morey-Saint-Denis 1^{er} Cru “Les Genavrières”



The 1^{er} Cru Genavrières is located on the highest part of the Clos de la Roche vineyard. The wine has both the body of the Clos de la Roche and the finesse of this high part of Morey St Denis. The vines here were once exclusively white, but have gradually been taken over by Pinot Noir. The site is very rocky, with a visibly high content of limestone in the soils. The limestone quarry on the hill above the vineyard lays bare the sub-strata of the area.

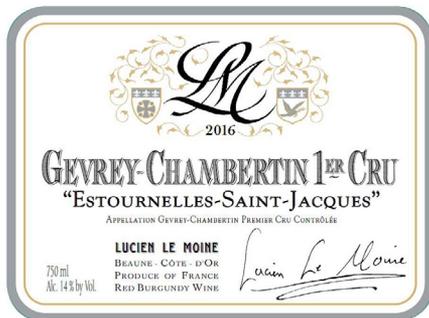
“An overtly spicy nose speaks of plum, violet and dark cherry scents. The rich and sappy flavors possess a velvety palate impression yet despite the seductive mouth feel there is good underlying power, indeed the finish is almost robust yet it’s not rustic. Fine quality here.”

91-93 Points Burghound

“Bright ruby-red. Sappy black cherry, brown spices, orange zest and flowers on the nose; there’s an almost exotic note of fruit syrup here yet the overall impression is dark and serious. Then plush and thick in the mouth, conveying terrific spicy lift and a restrained sweetness to the dense, dark, youthfully medicinal fruit. Finishes with big but thoroughly ripe tannins. This wine will need to lose some of its baby fat and gain in length in its final months of élevage. Saouma says it needs “a bit of volatile acidity in the summer; now it’s tight and polite.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

Gevrey-Chambertin 1^{er} Cru “Estournelles-Saint-Jacques”



Estournelles St Jacques sits just above Lavaut St Jacques, a five acre vineyard at the top of the slope. Mounir Saouma describes this wine by stating it is in character between Les Cazetiers, which is fine and subtle, and Lavaut St Jacques, which is more powerful and tannic. Estournelles St Jacques has a beautiful balance, and a lovely weight that also displays subtlety.

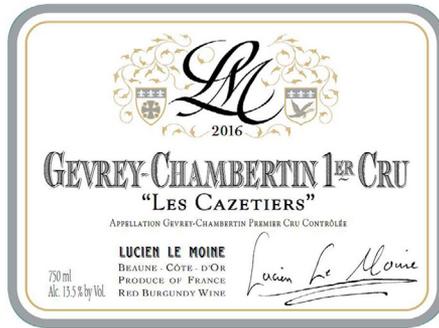
“Here too there is an attractive freshness to the cool and restrained aromas of cassia, plum and soft earth and floral wisps. The racy, intense and overtly stony middle weight flavors possess a lilting, even lacy, texture that exhibit a touch of youthful austerity on the firm, balanced and saline finish where the supporting tannins make clear that at least some patience will be required.”

91-93 Points Burghound

“Bright red-ruby. Aromas of raspberry, strawberry and milk chocolate convey a syrupy ripeness. Plush and pliant in the mouth, as much red fruit as black in character. Offers good concentration and firm acidity, as well as a note of chocolate, but finishes slightly peppery, with dusty tannins. In fact, this is the closest to dry on the finish of any of these ‘16s to this point, perhaps owing to incomplete skin ripeness.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

Gevrey-Chambertin 1^{er} Cru “Les Cazetiers”



Les Cazetiers is a 21 acre vineyard that faces almost due east. Always one of Lucien Le Moine’s exciting wines, it combines fantastic definition and complexity. Mounir Saouma explains that the vines he uses are nearly 100 years old, and there is tremendous subtlety, spiciness and elegance. It is the essence of Gevrey without the body, all finesse.

*“The particular form of reduction the Burgundians call *bourgeon de cassis* overshadows the fruit today. More positively, here too the big-bodied flavors possess excellent muscularity and power along the first-rate mid-palate concentration and plenty of minerality that really comes up on the austere, moderately rustic and built-to-age finish. This is an old school and very robust Cazetiers.”*

92-94 Points Bughound

“Slightly cloudy appearance. Classic, pure Genevrières scents of lemon, lime, tangerine and ginger. At once large-scaled and sharply focused, with its dusty citrus zest, spice and anise flavors communicating a strong impression of soil. For all its inner-mouth tension, this fruit was not harvested particularly early, according to Saouma. Finishes spicy, youthful and long.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

Gevrey-Chambertin 1^{er} Cru “Lavaut Saint-Jacques”



Estournelles St Jacques sits just above Lavaut St Jacques, a five acre vineyard at the top of the slope. Mounir Saouma describes this wine by stating it is in character between Les Cazetiers, which is fine and subtle, and Lavaut St Jacques, which is more powerful and tannic. Estournelles St Jacques has a beautiful balance, and a lovely weight that also displays subtlety.

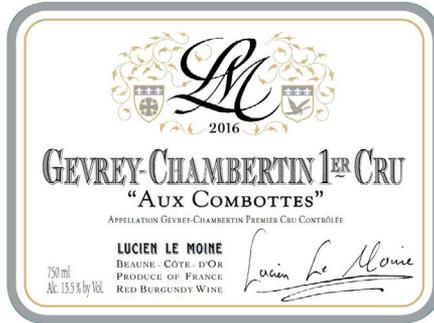
“Reduction dominates today. Otherwise there is outstanding size, weight and intensity to the larger-scaled, muscular and much more powerful flavors that are not nearly as elegant but they do deliver even better depth and persistence on the very firmly structured finish. This is textbook LSJ.”

91-94 Points Burghound

“Bright ruby-red. An aroma of medicinal black cherry comes across as quite fresh for this cuvée. Dense and sappy, with a flavor of black cherry syrup enlivened by savory limestone-driven minerality. This is rather suave for a frosted wine in 2016. Finishes with subtle, sneaky length. Mounir Saouma told me that this wine actually began meaty and reduced but has been getting more civilized in recent months.”

91-94 Points Vinous Media

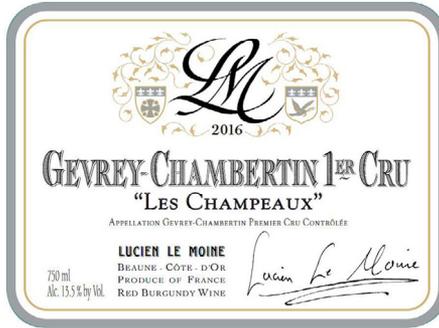
Gevrey-Chambertin 1^{er} Cru “Aux Combottes”



“Reduction flattens the underlying fruit. Otherwise there is a slightly finer mouth feel to the rich, vibrant and attractively delineated medium weight flavors that terminate in a youthfully austere and balanced finish that is just a bit less complex and much less mineral-inflected.”

90-93 Points Burghound

Gevrey-Chambertin 1^{er} Cru “Les Champeaux”



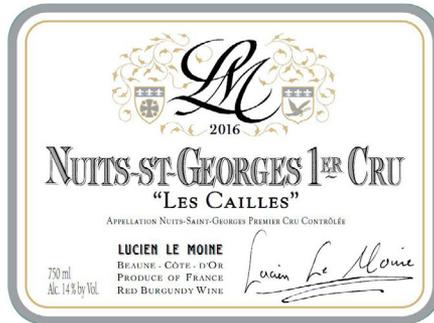
“Bright ruby-red. Deep, brooding, very pure aromas of black cherry, dark raspberry, cocoa powder and earth. Pliant, harmonious and sweet if without quite the power of the Morey-Saint-Denis Clos des Ormes. But this wine offers a nearly perfect balance of fruits, minerals, flowers and utterly suave, ripe tannins. Not at all overconcentrated, this sexy wine finishes smooth, plush and very long.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

“Liqueur-like aromas of various dark berries are liberally cut with notes of the sauvage, earth and a wisp of humus. The intense, focused and linear middle weight flavors exhibit ample minerality on the compact and very tightly wound and firm finish. This balanced effort is going to need time to flesh out.”

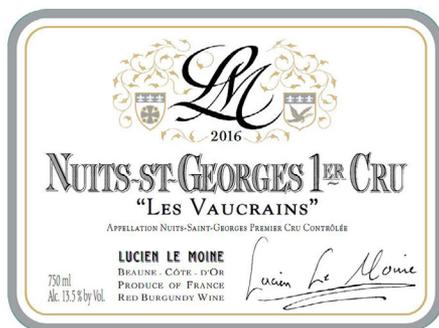
91-93 Points Burghound

Nuits-St-Georges 1^{er} Cru “Les Cailles”



The Les Cailles is an 18 acre vineyard from which the last several years Lucien Le Moine has produced wines of surprising power that still retain the elegance of Les Cailles. Les Cailles, Mounir Saouma says, is deeper than other Nuits-Saint-Georges 1^{er} Crus, with more body and more tannin. It is dense, and the heat of the vineyard gives a “charred” character to the wine - it becomes clear that this character is the wine’s (and not from oak) when you come to the finish, which is purely fruit. It is clear why some consider it a Grand Cru level vineyard.

Nuits-St-Georges 1^{er} Cru “Les Vaucrains”



The commune of Nuits-Saint-Georges is the southernmost commune of the Côte de Nuits, and includes, from a viticultural standpoint, the small adjoining commune of Prémieux-Prissey. There are 431 acres of vineyards which take this appellation at the village level, of which 29 are in Prémieux. Of the 1^{er} Cru vineyards, numbering 36, 28 vineyards occupy 248 acres in Nuits-Saint-Georges; the remaining eight, in Prémieux, cover 104 acres. The Les Vaucrains is a vineyard of 15 acres lying upslope at 260-280 meters in the south part of Prémieux.

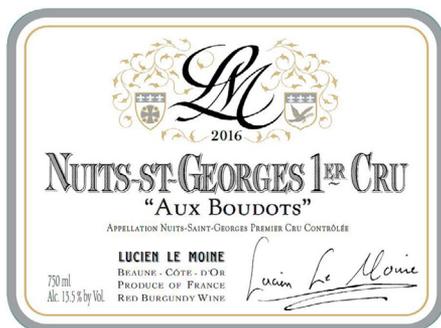
“Bright, full ruby. Lively aromas of black fruits and violet are given an airy quality by limestone lift. Juicy, penetrating and a bit youthfully imploded, with its rich flavors of blackberry, black cherry and bitter chocolate enlivened by strong mineral energy. Finishes very long and firmly tannic, with a structure to support extended aging. Mounir Saouma said he’s likely to bottle this wine toward the end. Offers a sexy sweetness but comes across as less extreme than the Boudots, and showing less baby fat. Exciting potential here.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

“This is so deeply colored that it stains the glass. The restrained and beautifully layered nose is composed by notes of earth, game, smoke and fresh black currant. The rich, bold and massively constituted flavors brim with sappy dry extract while there is plenty of minerality evident on the very firmly structured, rustic and overtly austere finish. This is very Vaucrains in character and as such, it’s clear that this is going to need a great deal of bottle age before it becomes sufficiently civilized to enjoy.”

91-94 Points Burghound

Nuits-St-Georges 1^{er} Cru “Aux Boudots”



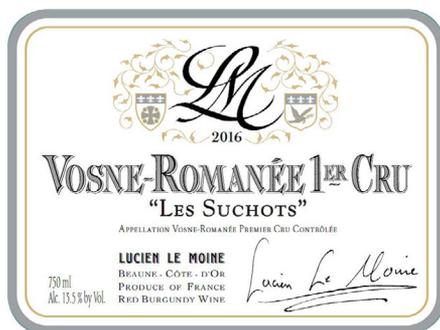
“Bright, full ruby. Deep, almost liqueur-like aromas of cassis and black cherry; there’s something old school about this. Hugely concentrated and mouthfilling, with its very ripe flavors of cassis, blackberry, dark chocolate and violet complicated by saline minerality. Finishes dense, saline, floral and very long, with big but utterly smooth tannins that reach the incisors. This is a major mouthful of wine already but it will need time to lose some baby fat. With its slightly high-toned character and impression of fat, this wine struck me as rather 2015-like.”

92-94 Points Vinous Media

“A very ripe yet still agreeably fresh nose features notes of warm earth, poached plum, mocha and cassis. There is excellent richness to the solidly concentrated and well-detailed flavors that possess a sleek mouth feel despite the presence of plenty of taut muscularity, all wrapped in an austere and serious finish that is impressively complex and persistent. This is not as concentrated as the Vaucrains but it’s every bit as structured.”

91-94 Points Burghound

Vosne-Romanée 1^{er} Cru “Les Suchots”



Vosne-Romanée covers 388 acres, and the fourteen 1^{er} Cru vineyards cover just over 141 acres: eleven of these are in Vosne, two are in Flagey, and one is split between the two, with total acreage of 113 and 28 acres, respectively, in each commune. The principal premiers crus in Vosne-Romanée lie in Vosne, and the finest of these, approaching grand cru level in quality, are generally considered to be Les Suchots, Les Malconsorts and Les Gaudichots. Les Suchots consists of two contiguous parcels totalling 32 acres situated between Romanée Saint-Vivant and Le Richebourg, on the south side, and Les Echézeaux, on the north side. Les Suchots is one of Lucien Le Moine’s finest Crus every year. Mounir says that, like Échézeaux, there is an almost Syrah-like character of licorice and smoke. Les Suchots is a wine with a lot of tannin and less of a classic, delicate Burgundian profile.

“Bright ruby. Slightly compact aromas of black cherry, licorice, menthol and dark chocolate. Very ripe on the palate but with terrific inner-mouth tension, showing as much red fruits as black and therefore a bit less heavy than usual for this cru, which Mounir Saouma says is normally a bit too Côte-Rôtie-like for his taste. The fine-grained but firm tannins spread out horizontally and build, with late notes of cocoa powder and violet emerging. Good verve here.”

91-93 Points Vinous Media

“Moderate reduction masks everything save for a few spice elements. The rich, full-bodied and very generously proportioned flavors brim with an abundance of dry extract while showing fine persistence on the balanced finish that is a bit one-dimensional, at least at present.”

90-92 Points Burghound

Vosne-Romanée 1^{er} Cru “Aux Malconsorts”



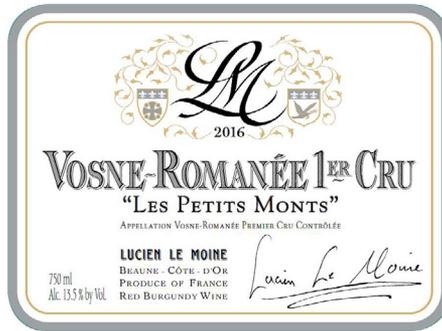
“A restrained and slightly grumpy nose requires aggressive swirling to coax the aromas of red and dark cherry, a wide range of spice elements and touch of sandalwood to reveal themselves. The right, intense and tautly muscular broad-shouldered flavors possess excellent mid-palate density while flashing plenty of minerality on the balanced but very, very firmly structure finale. This is excellent but very much built-to-age.”

92-94 Points Burghound

“Dark red; a bit disturbed. Less pure on the nose than the last two Vosne premier crus, hinting at a leesy quality. Then chewy and ripe on the palate, conveying an impression of brooding energy to the flavors of dark chocolate, minerals, herbs, earth and fresh tobacco leaf. But somewhat disjointed today and not particularly showy. Today the wine’s tannins come across as slightly dry, as the mid-palate still needs to fill in.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

Vosne-Romanée 1^{er} Cru “Les Petits Monts”



Les Petits Monts is a small, 9 acre vineyard just up-slope from Richebourg. Mounir Saouma says about Les Petits Monts that it is not far from Les Suchots, and on top of Richebourg, with a poor, dry soil. It is in character the opposite of Les Suchots, which is colored and tannic - it is a subtle and very fine wine, which shows little tannin, more floral notes and more of a St-Vivant character.

“Bright ruby-red. Spectacularly pure, high-pitched, kaleidoscopic nose combines raspberry, blood orange and white pepper. Seriously dense and powerful but extremely young and not yet showing the harmoniousness of the Beaux-Monts, which was completely destemmed. The whole-cluster element gives this wine captivating peppery energy but has not yet fully integrated with the wine’s acidity. But this beauty cleanses the palate and leaves the taste buds humming, finishing with a magical impression of weightlessness.”

93-95 Points Vinous Media

“Notes of herbal tea, spice, black cherry and sandalwood lead to racy, intense and almost pungently mineral-driven medium weight flavors that possess a chiseled, driving and wonderfully long finish that is austere, linear and slightly lean. This is very clearly in need of extended cellaring, indeed to the point that even as good as this potentially is, I would not recommend it unless you have the express intent of keeping it for at least 10 years.”

91-94 Points Burghound

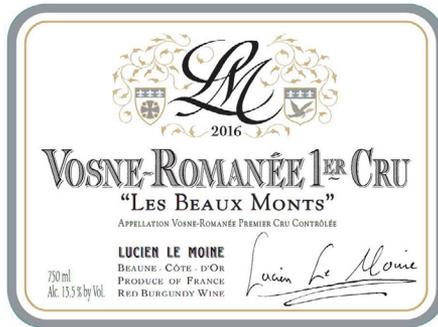
Vosne-Romanée 1^{er} Cru “Au-Dessus Des Malconsorts”



“Dark red; a bit disturbed. Less pure on the nose than the last two Vosne premier crus, hinting at a leesy quality. Then chewy and ripe on the palate, conveying an impression of brooding energy to the flavors of dark chocolate, minerals, herbs, earth and fresh tobacco leaf. But somewhat disjointed today and not particularly showy. Today the wine’s tannins come across as slightly dry, as the mid-palate still needs to fill in.”

90-92 Points Vinous Media

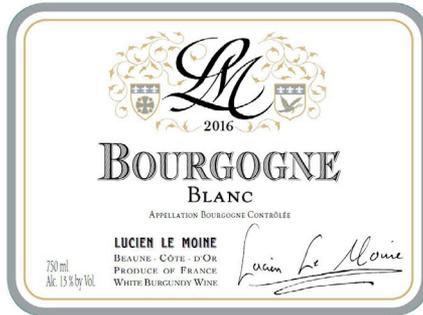
Vosne-Romanée 1^{er} Cru “Les Beaux Monts”



“Bright, medium ruby-red. Very ripe, slightly high-toned nose combines expressive rocky minerality with hints of flowers and white fruits. Communicates an impression of relaxed tension on the palate, showing a very smooth grain, considerable soil-driven complexity and a surprising light touch. Not a particularly thick or fruity style but perfumed and alive. This sophisticated, spicy wine finishes with perfectly buffered tannins and superb energy and rising length.”

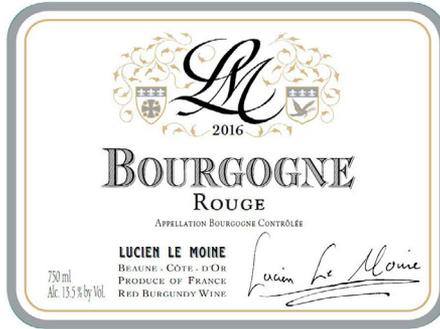
92-95 Points Vinous Media

Bourgogne Blanc



A blend of Rully Premier Cru, Marsannay white, Monthelie, Pernand Vergelesses, and Bourgogne from Meursault. Also, since the 2014 vintage, old vine Pouilly-Fuisse aged in new barrels.

Bourgogne Rouge



This wine features Givry fermented by carbonic maceration, Hauts Côte de Nuits, some beautiful Cte de Nuits village, Fixin, Marsannay, and Pernand. Both the Bourgogne red and white spend a full 2 years in barrel, with some Premier and Grand Crus even bottled before them.