

Burgundy Report

Profile: Laurent Martray (Odenas)

by Bill Nanson

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Laurent Martray's great grandfather was a vigneron, and Laurent is the 5th of that line. His house and small winery are hidden on a hillside behind Château de la Chaize where he worked the vines. Laurent was a long-time metayer of the château, with 9 hectares plus another 3 in fermage. He now has 2 new hectares in Pierreux so will have 5 hectares when the other vines revert back to the château. At that time, Laurent will be *upping sticks*, but with equally impressive new neighbours – he will have a new place below the Mont Brouilly, near Château Thivin.

I asked Laurent about his 2017s:

"2017 brought neither frost nor hail here, but it was still a low volume – about 35-40 hl/ha – but I'm happy with the freshness and character of the wines."

I like to make wines that can be kept, and they sell quite well in the US – in fact, much of my production is exported.

The wines...

I like the man and I liked his wines – they have depth, interest and energy. The range of wines that he offers will necessarily be changing over the next couple of years, but I'm pretty sure that the quality won't be changing!

2017 Brouilly Combiaty

10-12 days whole cluster maceration

Hmm – this is weighty and floral. Fresh and energetic in the mouth, a little graphite, almost liquorice – long tasty finishing.

2017 Brouilly La Folie

'More complex soils,' longer maceration up to 16 days and half-destemmed 'to have a little more finesse. This is like a link between the Brouilly and the Côte de Brouilly. I'm against new wood but I buy barrels every now and then that have at least three wines behind them.'

Hmm – a little less energy but a fine and fresh width that slowly grows with floral hints. Silky, but there is a great line, slightly mineral, insistent, juicy and intense – this is great and holds a very fine and persistent length!

2017 Brouilly Corentin

100% barrel but old barrel – there's usually some foudre too but the volume was low in 17. Brouilly with a bit more elevation

A lovely perfume again to this nose – floral with a captivating weight too. Fresher, more drive and direct – juicy again – I love – but really so very different shape to the last!

2017 Côte de Brouilly

Beautiful fresh cherry here, dark cherry. There's a little grain – Laurent makes remontage to start but then a little pigeage at the end of the fermentation. Intense and persistent – to wait a little for but this is delicious and more structured than the previous wines.

2017 Cote de Brouilly Lois

Cement tanks for all, all wines have a fine filtration but no fining, this all bottled by hand. Older vines some from 1916.

A more open nose – fine, complex if less direct weight and invitation. Ooh – lots of fresh volume, of energy, a suggestion of barrel in the complexity. Open, very wide and complex – a wine with more subtlety than most, but a weight of finishing flavour that's really very persistent. Excellent but today I'd drink some of the juicier wines in preference.

2016 Brouilly Corentin

'2016 is a more Beaujolais vintage, easier, a little more volume too and also no hail or frost.'

A round nose, less aromatic volume than the 17s perhaps suggesting animale – but maybe not – it becomes a more floral perfume but a heavier perfume than

the fresh flowers of the 17s. Bright, lovely energy, I this super concentration – the floral note of the nose coming through on the flavours of the palate too. Again juicy and weighty finishing – this is super but I'd wait a little and drink my 17s in preference today.

2015 Brouilly Corentin

Opaque in colour. 'The same rendement as 17 but with an extra dryness to the style of the wine.'

A nose of concentration, of faint spice, deep but clearly not fully open. Big, very fresh, a depth of structural tannin, very faintly astringent, the first with an overt salinity in the finish – a long-term wine here. Very good!

2011 Côte de Brouilly Les Feuillées

Deeply coloured. Aromatically this has more about it – more complexity – of age too – but not too much. Wide, mouth-filling – tons of volume, almost a touch of mint-leaf in the complexity – weighty, long – wow persistent – still a bit of a baby but you would get lots of pleasure today – excellent...

2009 Côte de Brouilly Les Feuillées

More floral elements in this complex nose – less volume but more elegance than the 2011. More intense, more compact a little more astringency from the present tannin, really a great finish here – growing with complexity. Almost younger than the 2011 I'd probably wait longer for this.

