



## **2012 Billaud-Simon Chablis 1er Cru Vaillons**

A Chardonnay Dry White Table wine from Vaillons, Chablis, Burgundy, France

Review by Neal Martin

*Wine Advocate # 214 (Aug 2014)*

Rating: 90

Drink 2014 - 2020

The 2012 Chablis 1er Cru Les Vaillons comes from 3.55 hectares of 30-year-old vines cropped at 58 hectoliters per hectare and sees 15 months in stainless steel. It has a very elegant and feminine bouquet with scents of orange zest, dried apricot and a hint of honey. The palate is well-balanced with that orange zest embroidered from start to finish. Linear, and focused, this is a very fine Vaillons. Drink now-2020. It is confusing having both a Samuel Billaud and a Billaud-Simon producing wines in Chablis, but unfortunately that is the case while the intra-family dispute goes on. One hopes it is resolved sooner rather than later. Charles Louis Noel Billaud established the estate in 1815, thereby making it one of the forefathers of the region. Bernard Billaud returned to the domaine in 1991, whereupon he seized the opportunity to ratchet up the quality by installing a pneumatic press and stainless steel tanks. I have tasted the wines regularly here in the UK and they have always been impressive. For sure, the 2012s were perhaps a little more inconsistent due to the challenges of the growing season. But the grand crus certainly deliver where it matters – in the glass – while I appreciate the premier crus remaining true to their respective terroirs. Post-script: As this report went to print, news filtered through with regard to the sale of Domaine Billaud-Simon to Maison Faiveley, giving them a strong foothold in the region. How this will impact Samuel Billaud remains to be seen, though it clearly thwarts any hopes of him returning to farming the vines that he once tended (wouldn't it be a twist if Faiveley subsequently appointed him winemaker!). Exact details are yet to emerge, but hopefully all parties can move forward. Importer: Langdon Shiverick, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 483-5900