

Samuel Billaud 2021- Burgundy Report

Samuel Billaud – 2021

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Tasted in Chablis

with Samuel Billaud, 18 January 2023.

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Samuel on 2022:

"22 started with a big frost – again! But the opposing buds were not yet underway so the vines recovered well – helped by a very good flowering. It's not a big volume vintage but it's still a welcome volume after the lows of 2021. Of course, it was a very early, August, harvest but the alcoholic fermentations went okay and the malos are towards their end right now."

Samuel on 2021:

"Unfortunately, there's not a lot but from the perspectives of typicité, minerality and concentration it's a lovely vintage – there's not too much sunshine in the wines and they have good acidities and tension – but it was a technical vintage with triage for botrytis – hand harvesting and triage helped enormously here. Depending on the parcel – ignoring Petit Chablis where there wasn't really a commercial cuvée – I had between 10-20 hl/ha – depending on the place that's a third to half a normal harvest."

The wines...

One of the top addresses for the 2021 vintage – but don't I say that in most vintages? Bravo!

NDTEC corks from Trescases for the GCs, all the rest are DIAM. "I still have deviation with NDTEC – the decision is still to be made how I will seal the grand crus in the future. A part of the bottling had been done but most of the 1ers and GCs won't be done until April/May:"

2021 Bourgogne d'Or

The Mâcon-Auxerrois blend of previous years.

A welcoming and faintly generous ripe yellow citrus – nice and clean. Supple, nicely textured wine with a mobile flavour and a mix of cushioning and stony flavours – that's far too easy to drink – absolutely delicious wine!

2021 Chablis Grand Terroirs

Pargues, Grand Ecarts with 80-year-old vines, and Chapelots – roughly equal parts of the three parcels.

Here is an extra width of higher tones – very inviting. Extra volume but also extra mineral – less sweet – stony flavours again and with just a hint of generosity to the texture. That's a beautifully direct and very long finish for the label – great villages.

2021 Chablis 1er Montmains

In the middle of Montmains from 37-year-old vines, all in tank. One of the worst affected by the frost – 10-15 hl/ha.

An extra lift of more acidulated citrus notes. Mouth-filling – there's impressive volume here – ultra-mineral but not severe. The salinity is very present in the finish of this fine and classic wine – really an excellent thing...

2021 Chablis 1er Vaillons Vieilles-Vignes

From the heart of Vaillons, vines over 70 years old. Like the last, it will be 15 months of tank élevage for this.

A yellow-fruit width, slightly cushioned, maybe even a whiff of spice. Beautiful on the palate – mineral, silken – hyper-fluid. Ooh – slowly growing miner-citrus intensity. That's as good a Vaillons as you will find – just so long! Bravo!

2021 Chablis 1er Fourneaux

Two parcels, all organic but they are contracts so it's not noted on the label. 44-year-old vines and steeper here. 20-25 hl/ha in this area.

Less forward but airy and pure citrus with occasional flashes of florals. A little more impact at the base of this wine – there's more power here – extra saline and chalky finishing – another really great finish – it just needs to express itself a bit more in the higher tones to be another great wine!

2021 Chablis 1er Mont de Milieu

3 heights of vines, all harvested by hand and vinified together as they are small parcels. 20% 450l barrel élevage – all assembled in tank on lees. Youngest vines here are well over 60-years-old.

Less direct, good width and clearly there's more complexity here. Super in the mouth – there's volume, clarity and energy – a fluidity that's almost at the same level as the Vaillons too – that's, maybe, the best MdM I've tasted so far this year (so far)!

2021 Chablis 1er Montée de Tonnerre

2 parcels of 40 and 45-year-old vines: the top of Chapelots, other at the top of the triangle. Like the last with 20% barrel élevage.

The first nose is multi-dimensional – deep, broad, high-tones too – wow – we talk a little and I return to a calmer aromatic. Volume like the MdM but a little more mineral intensity supporting the rest of the flavours here – an accent of reduction to the more forward but delicious minerality.

2021 Chablis 1er Séchets Vieilles-Vignes

'The most mineral part of Vaillons.' Great grandmother's vines – 90 years old on 161-49 rootstocks – never more than 35 hl/ha – more like 20 in 2021.

A breadth of fine aroma – the first impression of fresh, wide, yellow citrus the second of the minerality that supports it. Stronger gas here. Less volume but more concentration seems to be the style. Bursting with lots of energy in the

middle and finishing complexity – ooh a great finish – I'd wait longer to attack this is my first impression. Simply excellent wine!

2021 Chablis Bougros

Côte de Bougros approaching Preuses.

A vertical nose with very attractive high tones today. Wow, mineral then a little creamy barrel. A wine of stature and ultra-broad and persistent finishing flavour – ooh wow – compelling wine.

2021 Chablis Blanchots

Older 5-7-year-old barrels used. More blue clays here.

Yellow citrus and a bit larger note of barrel. A more airy style of mouth-filling flavour – more open than the Bougros though still with plenty of creamy barrel flavour today – it looks like a super example...

2021 Chablis Les Preuses

More than 70-year-old vines, from a lower part of Preuses between Bougros and Valmur

Fuller aromatic, again with some plump barrel notes present. Extra gas. But here's a more overtly direct and mineral wine – the flavour of barrel less than the previous grand crus. Wow...

2021 Chablis Vaudésir

2 parcels – one near Moutonne the other near Grenouilles – Both sides of Vaudesir.

Less impact but a more open and airy, complex, nose – that's very lovely! Mouth-filling architecture again – a more airy mineral style but beautifully intense in the finishing flavours again, the barrel present but already fading. I have a slight preference for the Preuses – but slight – bravo!

2021 Chablis Les Clos

Over 70 year old vines at the top of the hill next to the Billaud-Simon/Faiveley vines. One of the worst affected by the frost.

Not full power but a width of delicate pure and complex notes – very lovely. More direct, then broadening – a very classy texture and width to this wine – the barrel is already almost invisible – clarity no excess of intensity, concentration or generosity – only pure wine. That will certainly be a great one – I hope that you can find a bottle to drink in 12-15 years! Bravo!