



2012 Billaud-Simon Chablis Grand Cru les Clos

A Chardonnay Dry White Table wine from Les Clos, Chablis, Burgundy, France

Review by Neal Martin

Wine Advocate # 214 (Aug 2014)

Rating: 93

Drink 2016 -

The 2012 Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos has a very well-defined and precise bouquet with yellow flowers, hints of tangerine and almond coming through with aeration. The palate is crisp and focused with a fine thread of acidity and a precise, tightly wound finish which, like the domaine's fellow 2012 Grand Crus, needs another two or three years in bottle. 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