



2012 Billaud-Simon Chablis Grand Cru les Blanchots Vieilles Vignes

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

Review by Neal Martin

Wine Advocate # 214 (Aug 2014)

Rating: 92+

Drink 2017 - 2027

The 2012 Chablis Grand Cru Les Blanchots Vieilles Vignes (one assumes there is more than one old vine, but that is how the label reads) has a deft, defined and focused bouquet with delicate floral notes intertwined with the citrus fruits and orange blossom. The palate is well-defined with a sharp citrus entry, crisp acidity and a tense and long finish that will offer more with two or three years in bottle. This has great potential. Drink 2017-2027. 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