

# Burgundy Report

## Jean Fournier – 2017

April 2019

---

### **Laurent on 2017:**

*“Versus previous years, 2017 was a very easy vintage; no frost, no mildew, no hail etcetera. An obvious potential problem, of course, was the possibility of the vines compensating for their lack of volume in previous vintages such as 2016. The other possible problem was the dry conditions – some part of my Marsannay vines lost their leaves in August – but it was, fortunately, only half a hectare which I decided to sell as grapes.*

*“As for the wines, all the 2017 bottling was finished last week. The balance of the wines is good and I think we can have nice surprises with their evolution as there’s freshness and balance. I think that the vintage really respects the terroir – tasting at different producers each have the same personality”*

One thing that’s changed since I last visited Laurent, is his approach to fermentations and élevage: *“After 15 years of having no sulfur fermentations, I decided that my approach was producing wines that were too irregular – sometimes it produced something really great, sometimes less great. The big barrels I used meant that less oxygen was getting into the wines during élevage, so I had wines that were tighter after bottling. Now I’m using equal amounts of large format and normal (228 litre) barrels and am much happier with low sulfur together with this approach.”*

### **The wines...**

*I used to consider Laurent’s wines to be the equal of those from Sylvain Pataille but styled with more emphasis on structure. That’s probably still the case today, but the structure here is less overt than I remember. A super range of 2017s, well-concentrated with a number of star wines that are worth searching for.*

### **2017 Bourgogne Côte d'Or**

*'Mainly vines in the Marsannay rosé area – it's hard to sell rosé – there's the bling-bling market and the terroir market, but it's increasingly difficult to sell a rosé of with identity. We have 3 hectares here, so I make more Bourgogne plus I declassify some young vine Marsannay and Chapitre into this Bourgogne. Everything is organic, about 15% whole-clusters are kept here – 2/3rd big barrel for elevage, none new, the rest is aged in concrete.*

A nice freshness of pretty pinot fruit. Supple, fresh, lovely depth of flavour – layers of fine fresh flavour – a little depth of oak. Tasty wine – indeed delicious.

### **2017 Marsannay St.Urban**

*The name St.Urban refers to the small tower behind the domaine – the monastery burned-down by the Swiss soldiers. Bottled last December, 25% wc, more big barrels less concrete – also some Longeroies young vines included in this.*

Much sweeter, it's a more floral nose – lots of clarity – indeed really a super nose. More drive, more energy, less width to start, more bubbling complexity in the middle. Long Yes!

### **2017 Fixin Les Petits Crais**

*All these first 3 have a proportion of bought grapes from friends who work organically. 'For this wine, maybe my friends' vines are better than mine!'*

A rounder, redder nose – still freshly perfumed. Mouth-filling freshness – lots of pure energy, faint rose perfume in the mouth. A hint more structure but it's very well hidden. Yes.

***All the following wines are 100% estate:***

### **2017 Aloxe-Corton**

*The first domaine vintage. 'Three parcels, one not great placed, one not bad the other a great place in Les Combes.' 50% whole cluster, 50% oak. 18 months ageing like all the others.*

A more vibrant red fruit, perhaps a faint reduction. Supple, redder, layered but still beautifully fresh, delicious pinot – ooh – delicious. Long finish, almost a touch of orange fruit. Excellent!

### **2017 Gevrey-Chambertin**

2 parcels – Clos Prieur and Clos Bruillard – always low yielding.

Deeper colour. A bigger nose, a touch of reduction here with the more depth of darker fruit, slowly adding more and more perfume. Big and fresh, perfumed lots of volume, complex, spiced – ooh delicious again.

### **2017 Bourgogne La Chapitre Vieilles-Vignes**

*The vines in this plot date from 1947 and 1948. This is one of the earliest-ripening plots of the domaine – it flowers here 1 week before Gevrey. Each year, a fair proportion of the grapes are lost to wild boar because there is no hunting allowed here. This wine will soon change to a Marsannay label.*

A little more colour. A deeper nose, a little more spiced, but no extra whole-clusters. Lots of volume, depth of flavour, a little saline, extra complex. Slowly fading flavour. Ooh – excellent...

### **2017 Marsannay Clos du Roy**

Ooh – the nose here reminds of the last, perhaps a little silkier. Lots of volume again – a small touch of tannin, big, fresh, vibrant, saline. There's a little more flavour in the Chapitre today – but more class to the shape of the wine over the palate here.

### **2017 Marsannay Longeroies**

*More colour – just bottled last week. Same age of vines as the Clos du Roy – this was just bottled a month later, for logistic reasons as can't bottle all at once. 4.9 ha in Longeroies, keeping the best 3 hectares for this wine.*

Ooh – a big nose – fresh, faint spiced – dark sweet fruit complexity. Fuller, vibrant flavour – layered, silky finishing – ooh – really great – bravo!

### **2017 Marsannay Es Chezots**

*A cool plot, always later to harvest – 'but always good grapes.'*

Lots of colour again. Fresh and fine nose – of width but not particularly of depth. Lots of volume and faint tannin in the mouth. More structural – super wine but wait longer for it to come around...

### **2017 Pernand-Vergelesses 1er Les Vergelesses**

*1 hectare of vines: 'It's my weekend work here – so I don't see so many of the*

*other producers! The first time I ploughed here I thought I don't remember the grass like this – Ouch it wasn't my row of vines... For me a perfect example of pinot with super vines and beautiful small clusters – lots of redness in the soil.'* Big, vibrant, complex nose – ooh that's good. 2/3 wc here and only big barrel ageing – big – fresh, full of vibrant energy – ooh that's great! A faint touch of barrel – great wine – bravo! A wine that made a massive impression!

### **2017 Côte de Nuits Villages, Croix Violette**

*The vines here in Brochon were planted between 1936 and 1939 – they always deliver millerande bunches. There's maybe some chance to class as Fixin in the future.*

Lots of colour again – and there's some weight of aroma here – some floral notes too. Big, fresh, depth of flavour – quite mineral, layers of mouth-watering flavour. Structured wine, slowly fading with a lingering, great flavour. Yes!

### **2017 Marsannay Trois Terres**

*A new blend since 2016 – old vines from different vineyards this year, but still old vines from the 30s and 40s.*

Good colour again. A little more weight and spice to the aroma – good freshness. Big, supple, easier but with good clean lines, a touch of tannin – more a drag to the texture than a grain. Lovely depth of flavour, really a super persistence.

### ***Les Blancs:***

### **2017 Bourgogne Aligoté Champ Forey Vieilles-Vignes**

*Vinified without sulfur, not crushed – fermentation in barrel but with temperature control.*

A sweet, golden fruit. Bright with drive and energy. Supple, fresh, tasty wine. Textured and long – yum!

### **2017 Bourgogne Origines Cuvée Speciale**

*No chardonnay – a blend of pinot blanc and pinot gris.*

A musky depth to this nose – quite different to the aligoté. Ooh – a wine of freshness and drive once more – no weight, not a bit heavy – vibrant, mineral, yum – juicy wine!

### **2017 Marsannay St.Urban Blanc**

*80:20 Chardonnay:Pinot blanc. A little young vine Longeroies and Clos du Roy too. Austrian barrels used here which Laurent think respects the purity of the whites more.*

A bigger roundness, and yellowness. Ooh – vibrant again, silkier, more intense – drive, gorgeous flavour, depth and deliciousness. Bravo!

### **2017 Marsannay Clos du Roy Blanc**

*All chardonnay for 20-40 year-old vines.*

More creamy depth of aroma. Drive – more mineral, great energy. Super, intense, long, some oak flavour in the finish.

### **2017 Marsannay Longeroies Blanc**

*Also all chardonnay, planted at a density of 13,000 vines per hectare.*

A creamy, ripe citrus. Ooh – vibrant again – even more mineral, less oak, faintly saline, great wine.

### **2017 Marsannay Rosé**

*“My father made 30% of the estate as rosé, today it’s 2% – I want to continue but it’s hard – nobody seems to appreciate the fight today but it’s important not to forget that rosé probably saved the village for a time...” 1 year in barrel “from good grapes – not young vines. I try to find a pinot on marl soils so that it has some structure. It’s not for the swimming pool as it’s not bottled in time for the summer!”*

Salmon colour. Hmm – saline, complex – not sweet. A little touch of gas – energy, mineral. Delicious. Precise tasty wine – ooh that’s super.

