



# 2019 BURGUNDY REPORT

2019 Burgundy Report, written by Harriet Tindal MW  
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Tartaric acid seems to be the new buzz word when it comes to vintage reports. Both Burgundy 2019 and Barolo 2017 have seen repeated mention of the surprising retention of acid in the wines. Despite being warm vintages, it seems dry conditions concentrated every aspect of the grapes, including the acid, tartaric that is. The Burgundians fail to hide their relief at this discovery. Tasting reports have returned with glowing references of ripe, supple wines displaying generous fruit expression sewn together with lifted acid lines.

Extreme weather conditions are becoming the norm for producers. The trend is for wines to express the vineyard. Producers can't take their eye off the ball with this one. Delayed pruning to avoid the precarious late frosts, whether to thin shoots, leaves, when to harvest, all is to play for now. Gone are the relaxed days of August, family days by the sea. Take your eye off the vineyard and that Baume reading can go through the roof.

2019 was another year like no other. Despite an early start thanks to a warm February, there was no significant loss to the April frost. April was Irish in character, cool and rainy slowing the progress of the vintage to a sensible June flowering, later than both 17 and 18. A prolonged flowering period gave way to uneven fruit set and a high incidence of millerandage. This directly affected the overall yield. Domaine William Fevre saw a reduction of yields in Chablis of up to 50%, entirely down to the reduced berry size. But this increase in skin to pulp ratio is part of the reason that the acids remained in the wines. Retaining the freshness that has lifted the spirits of producers and given us fragrant, lifted fruit expression in what was, on record a very warm vintage.

The middle of the summer saw three separate heat spikes, closing vines down and jeopardising the fruit. Shrivelled berries from water and heat stress were evident.



PHOTO : CAVE À BOUTEILLES, BOUCHARD PÈRE ET FILS



PHOTO: MICHEL BOUZEREAU & FILS

Some rain in August refreshed the vines, delaying harvest and allowing flavours to emerge further. Harvest started respectably on 9th September.

In the winery, careful extraction was key. Frederic Weber of Domaine Bouchard Pere et Fils refers to up to 100% whole bunch in the cote de nuits and reduced maceration times. This was rewarded by more fragrant tones, delicate berried fruit, lifted by those gratifyingly high tartaric levels.

Whites are more generous, some have compared the traditionally richer styles such as those of Meursault showing some memory of the oatmeal, broader, more showy styles of old. Fruit expression and character are exciting and forward, reference has been made to the encouraging increase in terroir expression this year.

By all accounts 2019 brings all the pleasantries of Burgundy together, fragrant ripe fruit, supple tannins and a satisfying freshness. For those waiting for those 18s to open up, the 19s could offer a rewarding option.

With the increasingly top-heavy pricing from the top sites, our 2019 offering has been carefully curated to represent a mix of exceptionally drinkable wines from great value, sought after producers as well as some investment worth wines that could fund your drinking in the long-term. Much as been made in the international press of the speed at which the 'drinking' wines are being snapped up. In 2019 quantities are low and with a drought ridden 2020 close on its tail, you may be wise to stock your cellars sooner rather than later!