

# Louis Latour

# House JOURNAL

ISSUE #01 - 2016

WWW.LOUISLATOUR.COM



## **Paysage de Corton**

Review of a viticultural initiative.

## **Building the brand**

Successful actions around the world.

## **2014 Vintage**

A closer look into the 2014 growing season.

## **Château Corton Grancey**

An unique building and its historic renovation.

## House JOURNAL - ISSUE 01

**W**elcome to the launch issue of the new House Journal, an insider view of Maison Louis Latour and its initiatives in Burgundy and around the world...

At Maison Louis Latour, we take the greatest care doing our best in what we do, whether it's in our vineyards, our wines, or in our relations with business partners.

With this in mind, we are delighted to introduce the latest addition to our blossoming communication toolbox: the House Journal. An open window on our initiatives in Burgundy and those of our importers worldwide aiming to promote the brand and our great wines.

A few years ago, Maison Louis Latour opened the door to a more structured approach of its communication. In a family business with more than 200 years of history, brand building is a subtle mix of traditional contents and modern points of contact. In terms of content management, we've come a long way in a few years. From the research in the archives, to writing a review of our viticultural history and oenological philosophy; as well as developing a fully renewed library of high end photos, website, trade app, brochures and masterclasses... We are now looking forward to go further with you, building upon our achievements in 2016. As the ambassador of our wines, you are our privileged contact to relay and share our history, values and vision.

This publication is an important step in our aim to communicate more, sharing more information with our partners. What has been done? What can be done to reach our common goal, the development of the Louis Latour brand. In this first issue, you will find in depth news of the Domaine, examples of successful actions of our importers and new resources with which to go further in 2016.



FLORIAN MIGEON  
MAISON LOUIS LATOUR

## On the cover

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Looking back at the largest renovation ever executed at the Château, located in front of our historical Cuvée Corton Grancey.

## Year after year

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MAISON HENRY FESSY page 16

For the year to come, Laurent Chevalier.

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To showcase our viticultural excellence on the Hill of Corton.

SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS page 14-15

Case studies of importers actions and a lot of new resources.

THE LONG READ page 17-19

Translation from the December issue of Vigneron Magazine



# For the year to come

In many respects, 2016 shall be another fascinating and challenging year. The stocks in Burgundy are still very low following several small crops, combined with increasing demand and interest for our region. Burgundy vineyards are now attracting wealthy investors, pushing land prices to an untouchable level for most wineries and creating potential problems. Fortunately, Maison Louis Latour is one of the better equipped to overcome those turbulences, thanks to our prestigious domaine, the quality of our stock, the power of the brand, all backed by loyal, strong and effective business partners.

Last November we got the “OEA” customs certification, which allows us to reduce paperwork related to shipping our wines, further facilitating our exports. This certification was celebrated at the Château Corton Grancey, whose renovation was completed in late 2015, and this magnificent place will become in the coming year, our most prestigious reception place, located in the middle of our Corton vineyards. The Burgundy “Climats” are now part of the UNESCO World Heritage List and we intend to continue to protect the ecosystem of this unique place, as you will read in the coming pages.

One of our major subjects in the year to come will certainly be the launch of our Pinot Noir from the “Pierres Dorées” area, final outcome after many years of reflection, replanting and working the land of southern Burgundy. We have always been a pioneer in the discovery of new horizons for our two varieties, with the succes we all know, and this project is no exception...

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Domaine Louis Latour

# PAYSAGE DE

**S**ince the early 1990's Maison Louis Latour has actively practiced sustainable viticulture and worked to preserve the ecosystems and biodiversity of the Hill of Corton. Boris Champy shares this vision and is actively following and developing the work already put in place by his predecessors. It is in this spirit that Maison Louis Latour chose to practice traditional and sustainable viticultural techniques where care of the soil and perfect pruning is essential to allow the vines to grow in the best conditions.

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Since 1996 our weather stations have been managed in partnership with the University of Dijon, the data collected has allowed us take better vineyard management decisions. In recent years this work has gone even further with an initiative called 'Paysage de Corton'. The initiative stems from the work begun by Maison Louis Latour and, in 2009, became an association with other growers from the village of Aloxe Corton.

*"This partnership between growers is unique and seeks to address the problems of erosion, drainage in the village's vineyards and undertakes projects such as the planting of trees and hedges and the maintenance of bee hives to promote biodiversity."*

*Boris Champy - Directeur du Domaine*



## Domaine Louis Latour in Aloxe-Corton...



**17 HECTARES**  
OF CORTON GRAND CRU



**11 HECTARES**  
OF CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE



**7 CLIMATS**  
ON THE HILL OF CORTON

Continued >



*“Bees are not there to be pretty, it’s part of our terroir, our territory.”*

*Boris Champy - Directeur du Domaine*



TOP:  
The bee hives in the top of the hill

MIDDLE:  
Irene, our plowing horse at work in the Corton Charlemagne

LEFT:  
Sky view from of the East side of the hill

BOTTOM:  
Vegetal material of the hill





TOP:  
The Charlemagne cross stand in our vineyard since 1943.

MIDDLE:  
Our fully renovated "Cabote" a old stone house used in the past to store tools. Located in the "Languettes" section of the Corton Charlemagne

## From the terroir to the territoire

Working together for a brighter future

### ORGANISE THE TROOPS

Noble terroir is central to a great wine, however to fully achieve this, the work of a highly skilled team is essential. Extreme attention to detail is required at every stage to ensure the right decisions are made. This is especially true in pruning and canopy management.

### SCIENCE MATTERS

At Maison Louis Latour since our inception and today, we are at the forefront of vine research in Burgundy. Our research investigates the impact of vinegrowing and winemaking on the climate, environment and geological complexities of each parcel, and the genetic diversity of the vines in our vineyards.

### BIRTHPLACE

From its birthplace at the foot of the hill of Corton, Maison Louis Latour has over two centuries of Burgundian history. The Corton Grancey Cuvée is nestled amongst the vineyards in the village of Aloxe-Corton on an exceptional site with unforgettable views over the Corton hillside. Construction of the Cuvée began in 1832 and was the first purpose designed and built winery in France. It is built with five levels into the hill; this allows the entire winemaking process to be carried out by gravity. All of Domaine Louis Latour wines are made and aged at the Corton Grancey Cuvée.

### SUSTAINABLE FARMING

Sustainable development and respect for the ecosystem are two of our fundamental values. In viticultural terms, preparing the future involves a careful review of our past. Our vineyards are certified ISO14001 by the Bureau Veritas and we have carried out sustainable farming for many years. Our technical team uses only necessary treatments in response to the environmental situation at the time. This implies that one must understand these conditions and their consequences. This commitment to viticulture that respects the environment brings with it proven and natural practices, such as leaving the vineyards fallow, making compost and growing grass between vine-rows, which are all part of a struggle to avoid the use of chemicals.

### FROM VINE TO WINE

Domaine Louis Latour's philosophy has always been to maximise the quality of grapes to produce great wines; 90% of the work is done in the vineyards however the remaining 10% is critical. The care and attention to detail seen in our vineyards is carried over into our winemaking where we are committed to traditional and manual techniques.

Further information  
on pages 17 to 19 >

Case Studies

## Successful Actions

# MASTERCLASS CORTON

## *excellence is expected*



Our intimate knowledge of the hill of Corton and willingness to go further in understanding our wines have led us to a new level of explanation. At the Domaine Louis Latour, we take great pride trying to be the absolute best attending to the small detail. That's the reason why we achieved one of the most in depth study ever made at Maison Louis Latour focusing the territory of the Hill of Corton and its impact on the wines made there. Based on this information, we have created a comprehensive but approachable document in the

form of a presentation that can be used during seminars to showcase our viticultural excellence and our great wines of Corton and Corton-Charlemagne.

Such seminars have already been successfully implemented in Japan, Ireland and France thanks to this new Masterclass support.

Do not hesitate to enquire further information to your contact at Maison Louis Latour if you want to organize events around this new presentation.

### RESSOURCE

Download the Masterclass document at:

[box.net/masterclass-corton](http://box.net/masterclass-corton)

Other examples of case studies  
on pages 14 to 15 >



Business initiative - Ireland

# Latour' Wine Corner



*"It's a great example of cooperation between Maison Latour, our distributor and a key customer. Limiting costs and maximizing brand exposure to the final consumer."*

**Mark Allen - Area Sales Director**

Tradition and innovation, owner Rodney Leonard and general manager, Alan Kelly, have created an interesting and original off-licences in Ireland, and showcased recent developments at the Trim establishment at a special opening "Evening of Discovery" on Friday 27 november 2015. Recent developments within The Winehouse include refurbishment of the property, and the opening of an exciting first of its kind partnership with Maison Latour. "The House of Louis Latour" is a fully branded Louis Latour corner, with customized shelf display made with Latour' wooden cases, two large format printed displays on our history and vines plus a eye-catching co-branded storefront (see above).

The idea was agreed upon when Mark Allen visited The Winehouse in February 2015. Alan Kelly's vision became a reality when the partnership was formed to create the "The House of Louis Latour" which

stocks a wide range of Louis Latour wines. "We like to consider ourselves an Artisan Off-Licence", said Alan Kelly. And why not? The justification is that The Winehouse Off-Licence offers wines and Champagnes from specially sourced family-owned wineries around the world.

All along the projet, our marketing team worked very closely with Jenny Coffey, the Louis Latour Brand Manager at Febvre, our Importer in Ireland. In coordination with Alan Kelly, we designed all aspects of the art-work for the installation. The vision

*"We are surprised with the success we have since the beginning"*

*Jenny Coffey - Marketing Executive at Febvre*

of partnering with The Winehouse is for us to create a leading flagship of our brand and wines within Ireland. It's a

win-win situation where we have established a "lighthouse" for our wines, and our partner is happy to benefits the brand awareness and have access to a larger range. Our importer can also use this place to promote sales and activities around the brand.



## Vintage Report

# Closer look into the 2014 Season

Some of the 2014 village are already on the market, the Premiers and Grands Crus will be released in the coming months. This section is a comprehensive look of the growing season at the Domaine, a close look into 2014 vintage.

## Phenology cycle 2014 :

*Budbreakt* : April 6<sup>th</sup> (13 days early\*)

*Blooming* : May 28<sup>th</sup> (12 days early\*)

*Véraison* : July 31<sup>st</sup> (5 days early\*)

*Beginning harvest* : September 13<sup>th</sup> (5 days early\*)

\*Compare to average 1981-2010

## Hail - France 2014

265 days with hail in France (record)

9 warning days in Burgundy

3 days with hail (2 during warning days)

June 28 in Volnay:

118 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

1200 hailstones/m<sup>2</sup>

Energy: 347 joules/m<sup>2</sup>

The 2014 winter was particularly wet and mild, frost days could have been counted on the fingers of one hand and we had no snow at all. Spring that followed was the opposite, extremely dry and very sunny. Some vineyard sectors even had 45 days without rain, very rare in our latitudes, where regularity of rainfall is a usual feature of our climate.

When the summer came, we paid our dry spring with heavy rains from the end of June until mid-August. The period from August 8th to 15th is execrable.

Fortunately we saw a return to good conditions late August and during the month of September. Except the presence of "Suzukii" fruit flies, legacy of a favorable summer to them, maturation took place in good conditions.

The early departure of vegetation is carried out in very dry conditions. For those who have chosen long pruning - to recover from the quantity loss in 2012 and 2013 - their vines look like bonsai! Fortunately at the domaine, we always prune short, always.

Flowering is early, and the anticyclonic weather is perfect at this time with a very strong North wind. The grapes are beautiful in comparison with previous vintages, but we are a little bit disappointed by their size "just average".

On June 28, a storm of an incredible



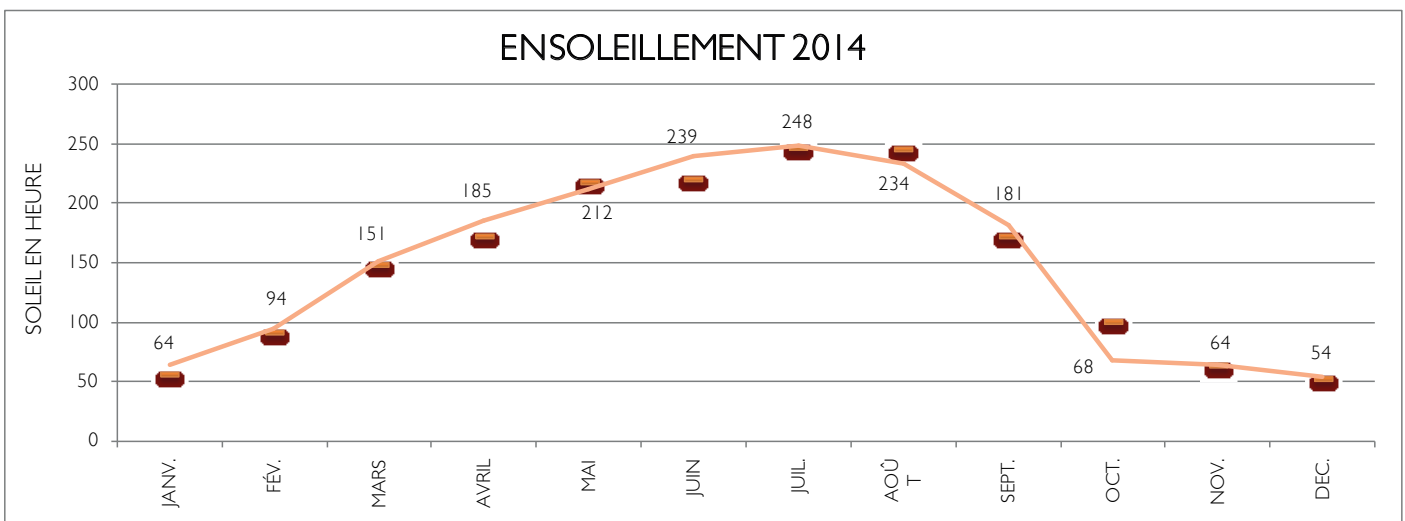
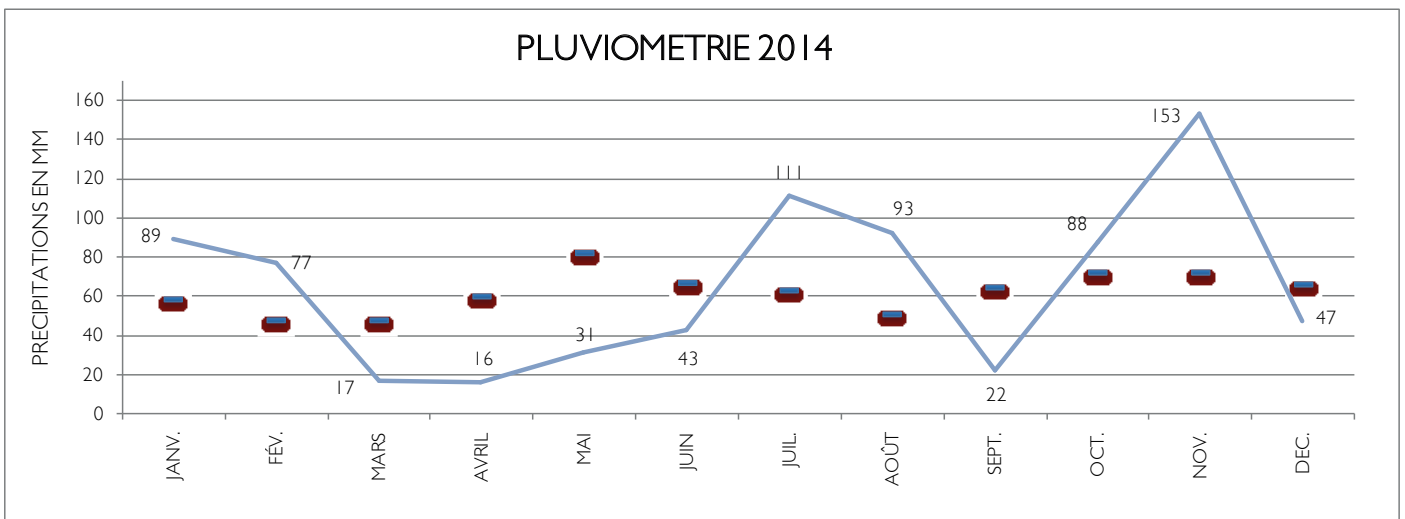
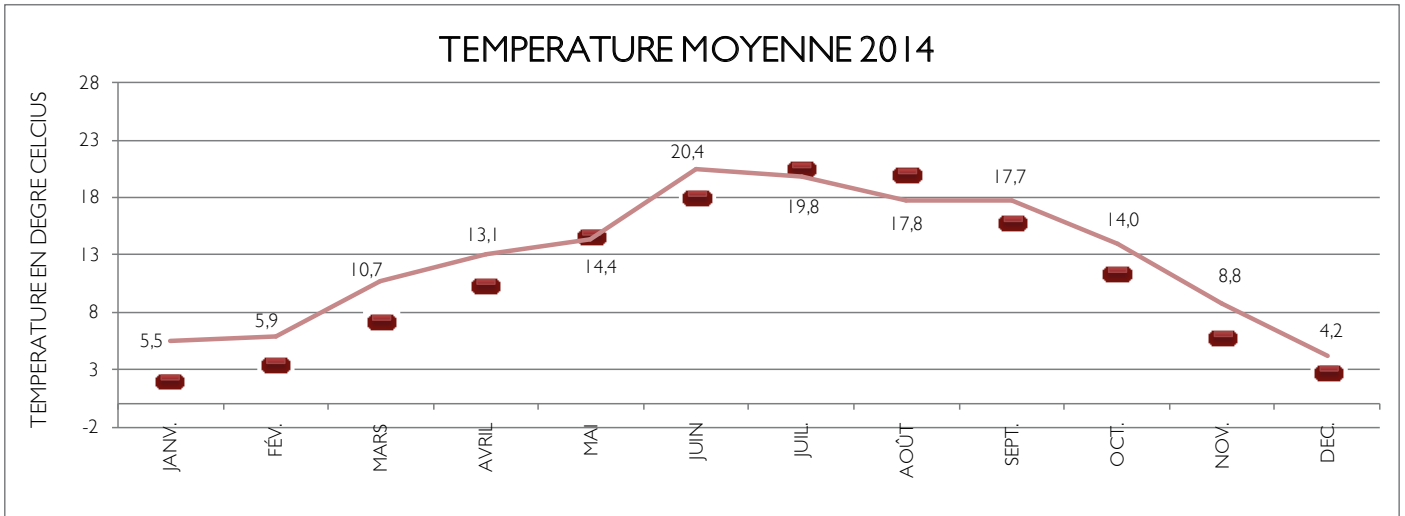
violence destroys the Pommard/Volnay sector and also sorely damage the South of Beaune. Miraculously, Corton is less affected than expected, thanks to the absence of wind. The hailstones of 2,5cm fell vertically, destroying "only" 20-25% of the harvest in Corton, while the loss is up to 90% in Beaune...

The end of the growing season was not as quiet as its beginning. If diseases were not an issue in dry weather conditions, it is the opposite from the month of July, when mildew pressure increases and weeds start to grow again. We had to maintain a high passages rate in the vineyard to avoid disease development, and we worked the soil until early August.

2014 is a great year for whites with an optimum grapes maturity due to the sun of September. As a result, white wines are well-balanced, with a good cellaring potential

Red wines of 2014 vintage present an intense color, a fruity nose, some concentration on the palate and soft tannins. Very delicate, these wines reveal a lot of "classic" qualities of the delicate Pinot Noir.

2014 Average Year (1981-2010)



TO THE INSIDE:  
The decoration of the Chateau is both  
traditional and modern, in the same spirit  
than the restoration of the building.

# Looking back A Long Work



# Château Corton Grancey Renovation



*“The older I get, Sir, the more I feel the price of your kindness. Your good wine has become a great necessity to me, I give good Beaujolais wines to my guests in Geneva, but I drink your wine from Corton Grancey in secret.”*

Voltaire

## The result is the reward

Welcome to our new playground

Château Corton Grancey is in the north of the village of Aloxe-Corton and is surrounded by a large 18th century walled garden and a Clos that houses part of the premier cru appellation of Aloxe-Corton Les Chaillots. It was built in 1749 by Gabriel Lebault, the grandfather of the Marquis de Cordoue (who later inherited the Château) and the President of the Burgundian Parliament. On his death the Marquis left the property to the Comtes de Grancey who sold it to the third Louis Latour in 1891 at the height of the Phylloxera crisis.

For a long time the Château was the Latour family’s summer residence and its situation amongst the vines was the perfect place to observe the development grapes before harvest.

Today, we are delighted to officially announce the end of a historic renovation, the largest ever executed here. Started in 2013 and ended in 2015, our priority was to preserve the fabric of the building and its heritage while converting an old residential building into a modern and prestigious reception place.

The architect and member of the Latour family Dominique Belgrand, worked closely during two years with our Technical Director, Christophe Deola. Together they had to organize a dozen of different trades,

working together in the renewing of all the aspects of the Château.

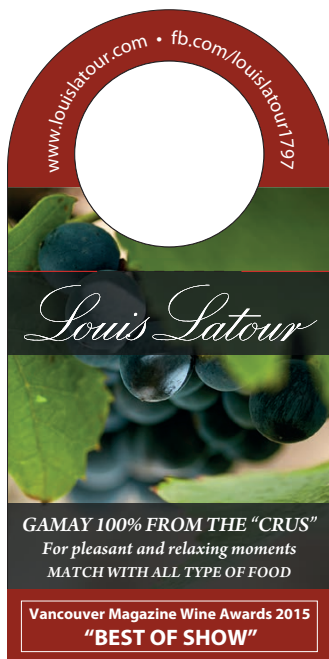
The result is a rejuvenated Château where all the historical aspects have been preserved while modern equipments have been discretely implemented. Technical ceilings allowed us to climatize each room of the edifice and to add a few new features, internet access, high quality video and sound system are, for example, part of the progress.

The new arrangement of parts in the Château allows us to organize different types of events, from a private dinner in one of the three dining rooms, to a large cocktail in the master living room of the two different levels. A tasting room is also fitted in the new arrangements, as well as a comfortable seminar room open on two magnificent terrasses offering the most amazing view on the East side of the hill of Corton.

The “Grande Cuisine” has been specifically designed and equipped to accommodate chefs who will come regularly to pair their exceptional dishes with the great wines of Maison Louis Latour.

We look forward to welcome you into this place, where history and innovation have found a perfect meeting place.

Case Studies, continued >



## Video

HONG-KONG

Information retained in one minute of video is equal to about 1.8 million written words. We are going to produce more videos in the years to come and we rely on you to help us to spread our messages.

## Focus Wine

Create material to promote a wine in a specific market

CANADA - TAIWAN - FRANCE

We believe that “push” strategies acknowledge and give ways to avoid major constraints of traditional marketing in our industry: wide range of product, low brand loyalty, disproportionate weight of the price in the selection process, submission to the region category effect and immeasurable impact of subjective attributes like label design and storytelling.

Applying a strategic “push” to specific SKUs help sales without a doubt! First and foremost, it requires to build storytelling around a specific wine within the portfolio, such as the newly released Bourgogne Gamay. The next step is to create interesting and easily redistributable contents: specific sell sheet including insider KSP and press accolades, neck hangers, table tent, winemaker video tasting, specific pictures, animated presentation, posters etc...

The final step is in our importer’s hands; they need this material in order to reach out to a target group of customers based on their needs, objectives of the distribution plan or brand activity. For example, strategic actions, PR and sales activities in order to develop consumer brand awareness and demand for specific wines from across the portfolio

Feel free to come back to us to implement these initiatives in your market.

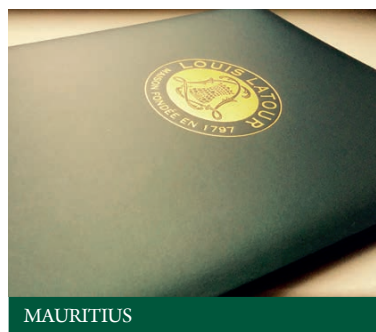


## Food & Wine

JAPAN

Put things in perspective

Not only final consumers can be lost with food pairing. Restaurant owners want to be guided as well. Our Japanese importer has created a beautiful brochure that explains to restaurant owners and staff how to pair some of our wines with their local dishes.



MAURITIUS

## POS

Increase sales and brand awareness

POS can be used to increase brand association in specifically targeted distribution channel. For example, our importer in Mauritius has used a significant budget in supplying our menu holder to targeted restaurants in the island.

## Social Network

FRANCE

In France, our communication toward final consumers have been strengthened by our presence on social networks, jointly with the launch of our new website at the end of 2014. To date, our choice to offer very short and illustrated news is a great success. This is an easy way for the sales team and the final consumer to have fresh news from the field and to animate around the brand. Don’t hesitate to connect with us and to translate and share our publications.



# Extranet : New Ressources

## Fessy Brochure

Check out our brand new brochure for Maison Henry Fessy.

## Library

In modern communication, image are of an extreme importance. We have fully reviewed our libraries for our 3 brands. All these pictures are new, beautiful, unique and belong to us. Feel free to use them in your presentations and documents.



## Packshot

To showcase a product, a good packshot is a basic, we have just made major improvements on that regard. From now on, we will supply higher quality packshots.



## The Trade App

app.louislatour.com is an open gate to all our wine specs for our three brands. Accessible on your computer, smartphone and tablet, this puts you two clicks away from the answer to 90% of the questions you have about

our wines.

Make sure the sales team is aware of that...



## Neck Hanger Layout

Don't hesitate to ask us to design elegant neck-hanger layout that can be easily printed anywhere.



## Storyboard

Sometimes an image speaks more than a thousand words.

For that reason we have created a basic storyboard, explaining in an infographic style, 200 years of family story, illustrated by historic and modern pictures. This can be adapted to specific needs.

## Grand Cru Stories

Prestigious wines have extensive stories. For our flagship wines, we have put together those stories to create a series of simple documents called "Grand Cru Stories". Feel free to use this raw material to enrich the story telling on those SKUs.

## Historic documents

In 2015, we have launched a digitization program of our old documents. The first result and reissue will come soon.

## 2016 POS

Our 2016 POS catalog is out, do not hesitate to use our POS for your promotional operations.



For the year to come, continued >



## Maison Simonnet-Febvre

Jean-Philippe Archambaud

After a record 2015 year for Maison Simonnet-Febvre, we started 2016 with confidence and determination. We will further expand the surface of our vineyards and our winery to increase our winemaking capabilities, particularly for the vinification of our red wines from the Auxerrois area.

We also intend to continue developing our domain in the Auxois, where we have replanted vineyards since we bought the estate in 2013, today we have 15 hectares and we aim to carry on rebuilding this IGP and its reputation. We will also capitalize in 2016 on the international success we have with our Crémant de Bourgogne, in order to become a qualitative benchmark for this Appellation.

In terms of communication, we are happy to announce that a clearer, more wine-focused website will be launched during the year to come. We have made a lot of effort over the last two years to embellish our brand image with improved packaging, pictures and packshots. This new website will use all those elements to put everything together and become a real sales tool.

With those new communication resources we wish to supply all you need to design eye-catching displays and impactful presentations of Maison Simonnet-Febvre in your market!



## Maison Henry Fessy

Laurent Chevalier

The year 2015 will be remembered in Beaujolais for the quality of its vintage. The hot and dry weather last summer has offered a very good ripening of the grapes. This 2015 vintage is very auspicious for the Maison Henry Fessy, as we are committed since the takeover by Maison Latour, in an unprecedented qualitative approach. The dynamism of our business over the past two years is directly related to this philosophy, as well as a voluntary and qualitative dynamics toward "primeur" wines. In this regard, we are really proud of the awards and accolades we had along the year.

The continuation of this upmarket will result in 2016 with two new wines from Moulin-à-Vent, a parcellar selection "Champ de Cour", aged in oak, and the "Domaine de la Pierre" a new estate that we are thrilled to add to our premium collection "Chateau and Estate." We also intend to continue our efforts during the period of primeur, with very well made "Nouveaux" wines that we take the utmost care to vinify, in order to craft generous and friendly wines.

These actions on the field are accompanied by a communication which has also improved in terms of packaging, but also available resources with our new photo library and packshots. Our new brochure is a reflexion of that: an open window on our history and amazing landscape, the rolling hills of Beaujolais.



# The Long Read

Translation from the article of Frédéric Durand-Bazin, published in the December issue of *Vigneron Magazine* :

*“Maison Louis Latour, being bicentenary and present all over Burgundy and beyond, follows its path with a constant inner sense of intelligent development, a mixture between well elaborated small vintages for connoisseurs, and historical Grands Crus such as the wonderful Corton-Charlemagne.”*

Frédéric Durand-Bazin - *Vigneron Magazine*

## Louis-Fabrice LATOUR.

### eleventh of his line

It's eight o'clock in the morning. The morning haze which has been wrapping the hill of Aloxe-Corton, slowly clears to give space to a beautiful sun. The scenery is stunningly calm for this time of year. On this weekend eve of September, the vineyard rows should be crawling with grape pickers led by their team leaders. Roads should be congested with tractors and vans moving feverishly to bring the crop of grapes into the wine cellars. It's quite the opposite; nothing seems to disrupt the peace and quiet walk of the hiker. When arriving at Maison Louis Latour's Grancey winery, in the area where the grapes will be delivered, the sorting table is properly installed. No signs of action here either. Then, the director in charge of the domains, Boris Champy, comes forward all smiling: "You're too late, the harvest ended yesterday!"

Indeed not a bunch remains on the vine stocks around. "It's the earliest harvest we've experienced in a century, apart for 2003, he points out, and most probably the shortest. All the grapes were picked between September 3rd and September 10th. It only took us three days to harvest the 11 hectares of Corton-Charlemagne. Everything was easily picked. The crop was healthy and the grapes showed no trace of botrytis, there was no need to sort the grapes and no rain to slow us down". A perfect year then? "Almost" exclaims Louis-Fabrice Latour with a laugh. But as you well know, a vineyard owner always has to complain. We can therefore regret the small volumes provided by the harvest." In 2015, Grand Crus

produced between 23 to 25 hectoliters per hectare which is 10% less for the domain, compared to last year's harvest on whites.

Boris Champy easily explains this trend: "The yield decreases have been observed all over Burgundy. This is partly due to the fact that the vineyard is aging, the average now being 49 years. At the Latour domain, we try to keep the vineyard in the prime of life; it has reached 35 years. We replant 3 to 4% of the domain each year, whereas in the early 2000's, we would only renew 1% of it each year." The manager of the domains considers this stage to be crucial, the starting point being the selection of the rootstock. "For our Grands Crus we favor 161-49 that we combine with 420 A, however less resisting to drought and 41 B, being more tardy. This could be due to global warming. Its problem being its high productivity, we have to combine it with less productive clones." Boris Champy also chose diversity by planting 12 different clones on a same parcel in order to keep a great variety. "There has been a loss in the pruning expertise. By guiding the vine stock from the root, many troubles, such as esca, can be prevented."

Far out on the hills of Pougets, dozens of bees are swirling around their hive. "They are not only here to look pretty; they are an integral part of our terroir and territory" immediately informs Boris Champy. The Icomos expert understood the benefit of them when he came to the Côte d'Or County as part of the submission of the Burgundy vineyards to UNESCO World Heritage. These bees bind us all. There is another

hive further away on the parcels of Bonneau du Martray. Their presence contributes to encourage vineyard owners in between those parcels, to change their behavior in order not to endanger the vines." Maison Louis Latour is certified ISO 14001 (Environmental management systems) and is proud to be a particularly environmentally friendly and protective; no insecticide, weed killer nor chemical fertilizer are used. "We follow an organic path but are not aiming for the certification. The organic specification requirements are not flexible enough and can sometimes be contradictory when for instance, allowing the use of important amounts of copper ..."

One must say that the Latour family is very bound to its vineyard. In 1731, Louis-Fabrice Latour's ancestors already owned vineyards in Côte de Beaune. Notarized acts mention allotments of well-known Crus such as "Vigne aux Sains", "Caillettes", "Grèves" or "Bressandes", which are still owned by the domain almost three hundred years later. "Let's not forget that at the time, we were also coopers, recalls Louis-Fabrice Latour, a profession that we still practice in the traditional way. Our five master coopers produce 3500 barrels each year, sometimes using equipment from the 19th Century." It is in 1768, that the Aloxe story really begins, when Jean Latour (1746-1811) establishes in the wine-growing village of Aloxe. Louis, his son, (1784-1844) will create Maison Louis Latour, in 1797; thirty years later.



“We have celebrated our bicentenary eighteen years ago. We then became part of Le Club des Hénokiens, which is a select club gathering companies that have been standing for at least two hundred years and that are still managed by a founder’s descendant. 44 companies are part of this Club which allows us to rub shoulders with other vineyard owners such as Hugel, but also bankers such as Lombard Odier, the Hottinguers and the Pictets...” The Latours pursue with ease both vineyard and cooperage activities in Aloxe until 1867, and this is when the company decides to move to Beaune, the trade capital of Burgundy, in order to acquire the Lamarosse wine house located at 18, rue des Tonneliers, where 150 years later, the headquarter offices of Maison Louis Latour are still based. In those years, a bug coming from the United States, phylloxera, will devastate all the vines in Europe and particularly the Burgundy vines. Being discouraged by this calamity and not ready to fight this losing battle, some vineyard owners will give up and sell their domains. Louis Latour, third of his line and great-great-grandfather of Louis-Fabrice Latour is far from giving up and it’s quite the opposite; he sees there an

opportunity to start a new chapter of the family’s history. In 1891, he acquires from the Grancey family, the Aloxe-Corton winery and the Château on the opposite side of the road.

Even though the winery was built in 1834 by the Marquis de Cordoue, it remains as of today a modern and flawless building where everything is gravity operated. Small wagons carry the grapes throughout a railway network, they are hauled by elevators and poured into the open vats. Then, once the fermentation is made, the juices are sent into the barrels located in the floor below. Not a pump is activated. The smell that comes out of the winery is pervasive. At the beginning of the fermentation process, the teams are busy working on each vat; some lightly punch-down while others are foot-pressing the grapes. “The treading technique is more efficient when the cap is compact, points out Louis-Fabrice Latour. And nothing is more pleasant than the physical contact with the fermenting juice.” The vatting will last around fourteen days for the reds. On the active parts of the fermentation, some punch-down will be made in order to slightly stir the mixture. “I constantly communicate with Boris at this stage in order to

define the strategy to put in place. We usually let the malolactic fermentation act on its own, and we try to interfere as less as possible.”

Even if Boris Champy concedes to be leading some experiments on whole bunch, here, all the grapes are destemmed. “This winery, exclusively dedicated to the domain’s reds, has always been state-of-the-art in modernity, carries on Louis-Fabrice Latour. This is why we have equipped it with the first pneumatic wine press in 1955.” This could be the house’s motto for that matter: “Innovate, always move forward”. This is how Louis Latour, third of his line, after acquiring the winery, and while phylloxera is devastating the vineyard, decides to replant the damaged vines using an American rootstock that can resist the disease. Louis Latour then decides to replant Chardonnay, after removing the Aligoté and Gamay vines that made the majority of the terroir behind the winery, on the hillside of the Corton hills. This will create the first Corton-Charlemagne wines. Just ahead of Bonneau du Martray, Maison Louis Latour is the largest producer in this appellation; detaining 11 hectares out of the 70 hectares (57 hectares being in production).

This expansion will continue throughout the 20th century. As of today, the domain owns 48 hectares in the county of Côte d'Or and 27 hectares of these are Grands Crus. "With all our domains put together, we now vinify 150 different appellations and produce almost 7 million bottles", reminds Louis-Fabrice Latour. The house has now even expanded outside the Burgundy borders. In 1970 it set foot in the Ardèche county, where 350 hectares of Chardonnay are now planted. Then, in 1989, Louis Latour, sixth of his line and father of Louis-Fabrice, continues the expansion until the Var county, where 100 hectares of Pinot Noir will be planted to create the Domaine de Valmoissine. In 1999, it is time for Louis-Fabrice Latour to take over as head of the family wine house.

Eleventh of his line and seventh Louis, he will contribute to the expansion of the family wine house when, in 2003, he will acquire the domain of Simonnet-Febvre in Chablis and, in 2008, Maison Henry Fessy in the Beaujolais region, owning today close to 70 hectares of prime vineyards. "With all these acquisitions, we should not forget that our roots remain in Burgundy, and more precisely in the county of Côte d'Or, reminds Louis-Fabrice Latour. Therefore, in 2013, we have decided to reinvest in the terroir of Auxois with Simonnet-Febvre. The Auxois hillsides which used to represent many thousands of hectares before the phylloxera disaster, are now down to 15 hectares. We have to recapture the forgotten vineyards." In sixteen years, Louis-Fabrice Latour clearly marked the bicentenary wine house. However his commitment goes beyond; he likes to promote Burgundy all over the world. Currently Deputy Chairman, he will succeed to Claude Chevalier and become President of the BIVB in January 2016 (Inter-professional Bureau for Burgundy Wines). He is also Vice President of the French Federation for Wines and Spirits Exporters (FEVS) and has been greatly involved in the submission of the Burgundy vineyards to UNESCO World Heritage, for which Maison Louis Latour is an important sponsor. After graduating from Science Po (political sciences), Louis-Fabrice Latour would have seen himself as a journalist, but instead he now ensures the best interests for the 80 shareholders and the three family generations who hold in their hands a priceless heritage.





*Louis Latour*

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