

# Louis Latour

# House JOURNAL

ISSUE #02 - 2017

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## **Pierres Dorées**

A visionary Pinot Noir project in south Burgundy

## **Building the Brand**

Successful actions around the world

## **2015 Vintage**

A closer look into the 2015 growing season

## **Sustainable Viticulture**

Our commitment beyond time and generations

## House JOURNAL - ISSUE 02

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

Last year we announced the launch of this publication as a new step in our approach to communication. In this second edition, we wish to reaffirm our determination to bear on the common work undertaken in recent years in order to consolidate and improve our brand image.

Balance is a key word in winemaking, the same applies to the marketing of a company celebrating this year his 220 years anniversary! Being able to deal with both tradition and innovation has always been one of our keys to success. On that regard, the last year was no exception, a large part of our time was dedicated to the launch of an innovative product, crafted around our most traditionnal grape variety... Fruit of a five years project, our Pinot Noir "Les Pierres Dorées", born in september 2015, flew out of the nest at the end of 2016!

Maintain "harmony" in the product mix is another key to success. We did spend a lot of time focusing on our Pinot Noir Pierres Dorées, which represent – despite its domaine aspects – a great entry level product in our price list. In the other hand, our image is still, and has always been established through our great wines. We intend to keep our leadership on that regards, well helped by the superb wines of 2015. We hope you will be as enthusiast as we are with this *grandissime* vintage! In our cellars lies an extensive range of exciting Premier and Grand Crus from this vintage, that will come to the market in 2017.

This year, Prowein and Vinexpo both take place in the first semester and as a consequence, this is going to be a rich time for meetings and projects. We look forward to use all those opportunities to discuss, decide and take action for the year to come.



FLORIAN MIGEON  
MAISON LOUIS LATOUR

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Translation from the November issue of "En Magnum" Magazine





# For the year to come

2017 might be promising, it will be challenging, Burgundy had another difficult viticulture year in 2016 and we can still deplore a too low level of stocks in Burgundy. Some part of Burgundy are going to suffer, Chablis in particular, because the weather has caused important localised damages and loss of crop. The situation is better today than one year ago, thanks to the 2015 and 2016 vintage, but the demand is still strong, as well as the interest for our region.

Burgundy vineyards are still attracting wealthy investors. Last year I expressed my concerns on that matter, because it's pushing land prices to an untouchable level. Early this year, our neighbours on the Hill of Corton, friends of the family for more than 200 years, have been taken over by an American wine investor. These events remind us how important it is to have a clear strategy and a sustainable model to remain independent at all levels. It is this independence that allows serene transmission to future generations.

Today more than ever, we must be imaginative and committed to future projects in order to keep a strong offer at all levels. It is important for a Maison like ours to maintain the balance in its product range in order to offer affordable wines of high quality along with the Premiers and Grands Crus. In that regard, the "Auxois" vineyard of Simonnet-Febvre and our latest "Pierres Dorées" projects are examples of our commitment to the future of Burgundy.

One of our major subjects in the year to come will certainly be the release of our second vintage of our Pinot Noir from the "Pierres Dorées" area. We have always been a pioneer in the discovery of new horizons for our two grape varieties and this project is no exception...

This year, as you may know, we will celebrate this year our 220<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we are delighted to have an exceptional 2015 vintage on sale this year. We've got an amazing range of wines from 2015 and we've got alternative wines and vintages, so please feel free to discuss with Bruno and his team.

A visionary Pinot Noir project

# Les Pierres Dorées



An innovative and visionary project. The purchase of 20 hectares (45 acres) in the vineyard of the Pierres Dorées (Golden Stones) in the heart of the Beaujolais district, with the aim to convert this vineyard to Pinot Noir.

We took the plunge in 2012, when the relatively new appellation, Coteaux Bourguignons allowed us to plant Pinot Noir on vineyards located down south in Beaujolais. Up North, the beautiful rolling landscape of Beaujolais offers a granitic soil perfectly adapted to Gamay, but the area is not only about volcanic granite. For two years, starting in 2010, we've been exploring the south of the region with the secret aim to plant Pinot Noir on those hills made of clay and limestone. Indeed it quickly became obvious to us that the Pierres Dorées area was perfectly adapted to plant Pinot Noir. Notably because of its classic burgundy soils combined with high altitude and a continental temperate climate. We've had seen before some initiative with Chardonnay but nothing close to what we wanted to do with Pinot Noir...

The Pierres Dorées region is located at the gates of Lyon and is also named after its breathtaking landscape which reminisces Italy, "the Little Tuscany": vineyards, hills, and 39 little villages sitting on their tops. Houses and castles built from stones bear a wonderful golden color. In this region the crinoidal limestone (marine fossils



*“Superb, the mouth is straight, fleshy with a salivative and tonic finale. A masterstroke.”*

*En Magnum Magazine - Bettane & Desseauve*

*“Delivering juicy fruity notes, round mild tannins and a hint of savory, earthy notes. A smashing success.”*

*Michael Apstein - WineReviewOnline.com*



from the family of starfishes) are tinted by iron oxide which gives its characteristic yellow ochre colour to the stone: Les Pierres Dorées (Golden Stones). In prehistoric times, the land in this area was under a vast sea, everywhere you look there are fossils embedded in the stones. One of our small parcels, that had been planted with Pinot Noir in the 1970s even carry the evocative name of “Clos de Pierres Folles” (Crazy Stones Vineyard).

By 2014, we had bought and replanted about 18 hectares (45 acres) of Pinot Noir in southern Beaujolais. We had used a variety of rootstocks suited to soil characteristics: “Riparia” on the deeper land, “3309” and “Gravesac” on dryer land associated with the classic burgundian “161-49” in intermediate terrain. The selection of the genetics of Pinot Noir to be grafted on the rootstock is the result of a long selection of genetics from ATVB (Technical Vinegrowing Burgundian Association) which were already used at Domaine Latour in Burgundy. While 99% of worldwide plantation are clonal (selected) plants. We are using Burgundy “massale” (field) selection of “Pinot fins”. Those fine, low yield Pinot Noir are producing elegant wines thanks to small bunches with varying grain size. Due to its youth, our vineyard is very well populated, fine plants are much more qualitative than clones of the 1980s!

We chose trellised vines planted at 1.8m, our own variation of a system widely used in California and New Zealand, but also in Alsace or Saint-Emilion. The goal was to be modern, standard tractors replace straddle tractors, thereby both economically efficient

and also environmentally friendly. The soil is worked with mechanical “intercep”, 1 row out of 2 with cover crop to limit erosion and favorise root competition.

Alike Domaine Louis Latour in Côte d’Or, (see page 8 ) we work on sustainable farming where inputs are reduced on a minimal dose and mechanization in the vineyard helps to better manage the vines: mechanical defoliation, ploughing between the rows... We have brought our expertise on the Guyot pruning, especially tying and managing yields, in order to successfully re-implant the Pinot Noir in southern Beaujolais. To us, the Pierres Dorées sector is a wine region that can be considered in transition between a high yield culture to a more qualitative approach, it is the same transition that we operated in the Ardèche vineyard in the late 70s.

The parcels that Maison Louis Latour has selected form two blocks which are situated in the villages of Morancé and Theizé. Those villages met all our requirements, combining the needed slopes, altitude, exposition, climate and soils. Most of the Morancé village is built with the famous golden stones as well as white stones from Lucenay. Theizé is perched on the hillside of Mont Bansillon, the village has a wealth of stones of all ages. Soils are very stony in both area but Theizé has slightly heavier and richer soils.

We have a good and various sun exposure on our plots thanks to a variety of expositions, from full East to full West! The climate here is continental, temperate, influenced by both the mountains and the Mediterranean sea. It allows our parcels to benefit from slightly warmer days

than Côte d’Or with nice cool temperatures at night. As a result, the harvest dates are the same as in Côte d’Or - we are further south but higher in altitude - and 100% of the grapes are hand harvested in back basket with a team of 25 pickers. Our very low yields in 2015 are the consequence of the combination of a low targeted crop and juveniles vines.

Immediately after harvest, the Pinot Noir grapes are kept cold and carried by truck to our winery near Beaune, a trip that takes only about one and a quarter hours. Vinification is similar to our other red Burgundies. A new micro winery was specially set up in our modern vinification site of Savigny-les-Beaune. We used the latest generation of pneumatic press for the first time on this vintage 2015 of Pinot Noir Les Pierres Dorées. The first vinification was made in barrels and tanks, future vintages will certainly be, in proportion, fermented mostly in stainless steel vats, due to the expected increase in volumes. Our choice toward vinification is a short cold fermentation, 5 days with 1 push downs and 1 pumping over a day. The bottling of our first vintage of Pinot Noir Les Pierres Dorées was finally done by June 2015.

For the first year, we allocated the small quantities available on a variety of markets, notably France and Japan, where the reception has been positive beyond all our expectations.

There was a demand for quality Pinot Noir at affordable prices under Louis Latour label. We believe the caution of the brand combined with the domain aspects and an innovative labeling form together an admirable cocktail of desirability.



### TASTING

Bright and intense red colour with red-garnet lights. On the nose, we discover a gourmet blend of flowers, red berries and soft spices. On the palet, it is crunchy, round and ample. The Pinot Noir from the Pierres Dorées terroir offers a wine with a great freshness, underlined by concentrated black fruits aromas with a superb length.



## Packaging

### A quest for distinctive identity

Such a project deserved a particular attention to the packaging. The result is breaking all our codes of consistency and tradition in labelling..

#### NECKLABEL

We have chosen to use a specific necklabel to mark a differentiation with our classic range. The design remain classic but its lighter structure give it a modern look. The paper is of course coordinated with the label paper, which participate in the distinctive character of this necklabel.

#### FONT

The font on the label is a ad-hoc creation made after many tentatives with standard fonts. This is finally a variation of a font with very modern features, nothing close to our habits at Maison Louis Latour. Above everything, the modern-looking style of the label is due to this new font.

#### BACKGROUND

We spent a lot of time working in the vineyard to make this new project possible. We believe it was a

natural tribute to this hard work to use the parcellar delimitation of our plot as a decorative background. The background of the label is the map of the real borders of our plots in Morancé.

#### PAPER

Again, the paper we use is a specific, classic but modern paper, mat and textured in order to give some relief to the design.

#### LOGOTYPE

Here come the classic calligraphic logotype for the support of the tradition. With a left alignment and a low position, our logo comes to "sign" this label, as if to affix a quality stamp to the general design.

#### SPECS

Last but not least, the attentive people will have noticed the discrete technical mentions at the bottom of the label. It completes and justifies our approach which starts in the vineyard to finish in bottle, all the most important information are there: soil, geography, viticulture and vinification.

## Succeed in Style !

There is always a great deal of uncertainty in a viticultural project, even if the soil, the grape variety and the climate are known. Wine is happily not an exact science and the combinaison of known elements doesn't result in predictable style and taste. Ultimate milestone of a journey of five years, the first tasting of the finished wine was a delectable moment, in that case indeed, it was a reward in itself!

We are extremely surprised and happy of the accolades we had since, from our clients but also visitors and friends of the family. We now have great press reviews that we can build on to release the wines on a few new markets with the vintage 2016.

Case Studies

## Successful Actions

# MASTERCLASSES *to be continued...*



Last year, we introduced a brand new communication tool: our new Masterclass on Corton Hill and its wines. Since then, this very detailed presentation has been used both in wine fairs with an audience of connoisseurs and journalists, as well as in private events with our importer's trade teams. In order to follow up with the success of this masterclass, we have decided to craft new ones on other distinctive characteristics of Maison Louis Latour.

As a result, we have 2 new masterclasses. The first one is a focus on the pioneering spirit of the Latour family over the last century. An historical journey illustrated by the tasting of wines showing Louis Latour's impact on the landscape of the Bourgogne

wine industry. Each of those wines represent a milestone of our innovation pilgrimage. The second Masterclass is an in depth focus on our most recent project, to which the previous pages are dedicated: our Pinot Noir Les Pierres Dorées. This masterclass trace back 5 years of reflection and actions that led to the creation of this new wine.

Do not hesitate to enquire further information to your contact at Maison Louis Latour if you want to organize events around this new presentation. The next step is already a work in progress, we are crafting Masterclasses on our two iconic grape varieties : Pinot Noir and Chardonnay..

Domaine Louis Latour

# SUSTAINABLE

Since 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. At Domaine Louis Latour, we share this vision and we actively following and developing the work already put in place by our predecessors. It is in this spirit that Maison Louis Latour choses 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.

"The best things in life are the simplest". Far be it from us to contradict this adage, yet the simplistic approach to sustainable development, a complex subject by definition, often loses its meaning; sustainable viticulture is no exception to this rule.

There are two, fundamental principles that inform our practices at Domaine Latour with respect to sustainable agriculture – experience and observation.

Experience is imagining the future by way of an attentive decoding of the past. At our domain we have never compromised our work in the vineyards with techniques that would be more expeditious but more invasive. This philosophy continues to this day. We use neither insecticides, herbicides, nor chemical fertilizers. The extraordinary archives at our disposal, reflecting our predecessors' experience in the vineyards, represent a wealth of invaluable information that we apply in managing and replanting our vines, as well as at the time of harvest and vinification.

Observation consists of being attentive, conducting research, experimenting and measuring the impact of our decisions on both the vine and the wine. Our viticulture has been sustainable and certified ISO14001 by an independent organization for the last 20 years. During this time, even if we followed an "organic" path, yet do not seek organic certification. We believe some elements of the organic regimen do not fully afford the necessary flexibility given the intensity of specific disease conditions. As such, it can be incompatible with our ultimate objectives of sustainable development and environmental protection. For example, we reject the use of copper mixture in irrational quantities that lingers indefinitely in the soil,

instead preferring a targeted conventional treatment of limited scope.

Replanting is a critical activity and we do everything to maintain our vineyards at peak strength. Today, the average age of the Latour vineyards is 35 years. We replant 3 to 4% of the domain each year.

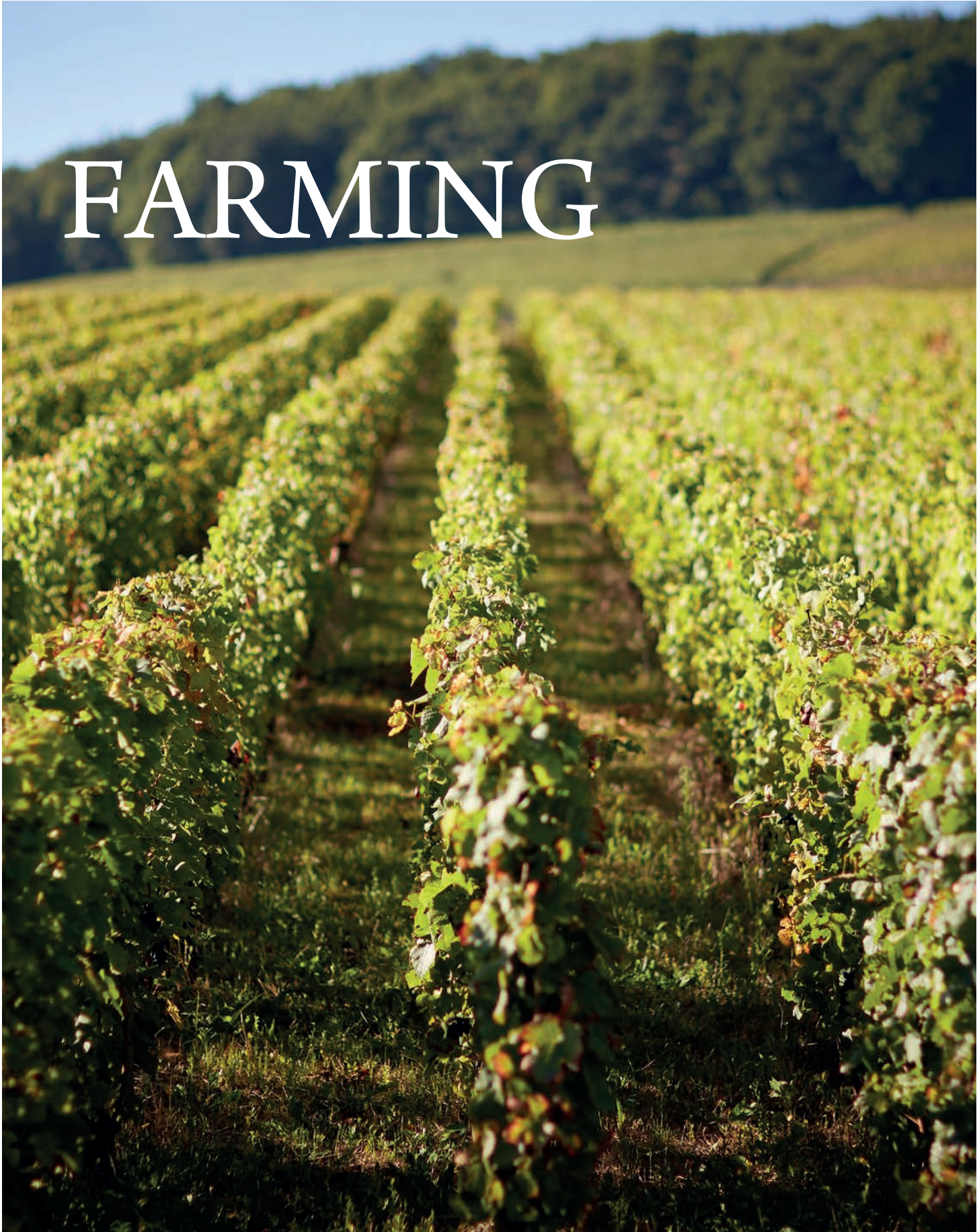
The primary consideration is rootstock. We prefer type 161-49 for our Grands Crus, that we blend with 420 A (though this type is less drought-resistant) and the later-ripening 41 B which could in some ways be considered an answer to global climate change. This last being very vigorous, we combine it with grafts that are less so.

For the same parcel we consistently seek diversity by planting 12 genetically distinct vine strains to promote optimum vine individuality. This conservation approach was expanded in 2008 with the Pinot Noir Foundation that selects Pinot Noir (fins) from old vines and whose results will be actionable in 2020.

The maintenance and promotion of our team's pruning and soil-management skills is also a high priority of the domain. We firmly believe that a vine that is well-managed and established in exceptional soils from the outset will be stronger and of excellent quality throughout its lifecycle.

Our philosophy could be summed up by both an attentive observation of our vines combined with the exhaustive efforts of a team of dedicated, expert workers engaged in the preservation of the quality of our varieties and the protection of our region.





# FARMING



From its original birthplace on the hill of Corton, Maison Louis Latour represents over two centuries of Burgundian tradition. Established in 1797, the Domaine has established itself as the natural trustee of a time-honored tradition. A symbol of authenticity. We have always been deeply proud of its 48 hectares of vineyard holdings, half of which are Grand Cru. Each generation has contributed to maintaining this exceptional heritage while guaranteeing its future health. With our viticultural practices we seek both excellence and the protection of our common heritage in order to transmit the best of this to future generations.

Maintaining the extremely diverse and protected ecosystem of Burgundy is a critically-important challenge. The jewel of rural, medieval architecture that is Burgundy, benefits from an exceptional heritage that Louis Latour strives to preserve in the heart of the vineyard. Everyday, we are confronting the effects of soil erosion and hydrography while at the same time replanting trees and hedges. These initiatives represent an effort to bolster the quality of the ecosystem and its biodiversity while simultaneously promoting the authenticity of the landscape. It is at once this remarkable landscape, the exceptional architectural heritage as well as an unparalleled know-how that is responsible for Burgundy's recent designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

We systematically use the followed land technique to regenerate and re-oxygenate the soil after uprooting old vines and before replanting. For a period of one to two years, plants such as clover, rapeseed or even



mustard seed restore the critical nutritional elements necessary to the regeneration of the soils, preparing the way for future vine plantings. The plant roots involved in these fallowing operations also have the advantage of anchoring the soils of these very steep slopes thus mitigating the significant erosion that can occur when they are left unplanted. Also, Maison Louis Latour introduced beehives in the heart of the vineyards of Corton on the south-facing slope of the hill. The presence and the reproduction of bees is a highly qualitative component for the ecosystem. The growing number of bees recorded is a very positive indicator of the health of the environment. This is made possible through a common desire to preserve the area's biodiversity by reducing the impact of humans on our natural surroundings.

Canopy management consists of partially removing leaves surrounding the fruit zone. This practice allows for better aeration of the grape bunches and for better sun exposure. The soils management is another critical task for the vine to develop in optimal conditions.

The aim is to aerate the soil, eliminating weeds and allowing water to drain more easily which aids in deep root irrigation. Some of our plots of young vines on steep slopes are extremely hard to work, especially their soils, therefore we employ the services of Irène, the "Comtoise" mare who is unaffected by the steep slopes. This allows us to avoid compacting the soil making for a deep penetration of the root system. The ground more readily also better absorbs water creating deep water reserves in the subsoils.

The pomace from our pressings are mixed with pulverized vine clippings, this practice yet again respect the environment and also minimizes waste. With 120 tons of compost per year, we maintain excellent soil quality that not only contributes to the development of subterranean, microbial life but promotes the recycling of significant quantities of vegetal matter as well.

As much as we can, we fight against vine disease with natural means. In addition to the now widespread pheromone capsules that avoid the proliferation of highly-destructive butterfly larvae, Louis Latour employs mite predators as a sort of biological insecticide. Typhlodromes, mite predators from the Phytoseiidae family, are, as an example, used to eliminate red spiders. Most importantly, our weather stations have been operational since 1996 in partnership with the University of Dijon and allow us to fine-tune our decision-making in order to best protect the vineyards. In this way, the vineyard's regulation of its own native ecosystem becomes practicable. For example, we do not systematically treat vines mildly affected by rot. Finally, these weather stations underscore the significance of microclimates by exposing temperature variations from the plains to the slope's summit.

The first 60 centimeters of each vineyard block is comprised of a mix of clay, limestone, stones and marl sitting atop a primary, fractured-rock base that completes the geological make-up. For Domaine Louis Latour, terroir typicity is a priority, and as for the study of the microclimates in our parcels, we have always been ahead of time in analysing the complexity of our soils and its potential impact and influence on both vinegrowing and winemaking. For each vineyard, we have taken a soil sample that





is encased in a cylindrical column allowing for the full visualization and analyse of each unique terroir of the Domain. Though soil composition is the key element of each site's terroir, many other natural factors have an influence on the quality, the typicity and the expression of a given wine including: orientation, altitude, soil depth and drainage, climatological conditions of a given vintage, microclimate, etc.

The wines of Louis Latour thus intimately aim to reflect their origins. We are keenly focused not only on geological research but pedology as well. We've come to the point that we consider the pedology is at least equally important than geology, because it takes a look at the soil's overall structural profile and the mineral, electrical, chemical and biological life that goes on underground. It ultimately underscored that the physical properties of the soil are as important as soil composition: i.e., soil aeration as it impacts root vigor, overall soil lifecycle and its greater ecosystem, for example, did you know the earthworms have a huge action on the soil? Then, imagine a million indefatigable individuals per hectare of vineyards whose the common and sole purpose is digging galleries...

Our reliable, permanent, numerous, highly qualified team on the field insures healthy vine development throughout the year. Pruning is both the most critical and technical operation that each worker undertakes. A high degree of precision and attention to detail are necessary to successfully accomplish the intricate technical tasks required. Typically, we favor "Guyot simple" vine-training which is the most common method employed in the Côte d'Or. The concept involves maintaining the vines low to the ground which allows them to take advantage of radiant heat while simultaneously protecting them from strong winds. Pruning is rigorous with only two canes retained each year. The first is the "baguette" that consists of six to eight buds. This cane is tied off at approximately 30 cm from the ground. The second cane is the scion "spur" which is pruned leaving two buds; these will produce the replacement canes for the following year.

**At Maison Louis Latour, we are both committed with tradition and innovation. To us, the preservation and the protection of the**

**genetic diversity of our grape varieties is more than a concern, it's a mission. We use modern tools in order to preserve traditional aspects of the art of making wines in Burgundy. In 2008 the "Association de la Sauvegarde des Cépages Bourguignons" was created by Denis Fetzmann the former Director of the Domaine, and Aubert de Vilaine from DRC. Today the association is privately funded by 40 of the very best domaines from Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits. The objective was to select breeds of "Pinot or Chardonnay Fin" on the vineyards of the best domaines and to keep them in a nursery to preserve their genetics in the future. "Special traits" is a good definition for the criteria of selection, most cuttings were selected for small cluster (Pinot Fin) to very small cluster (Pinot très Fin) as an important characteristic, berries size, cluster looseness, dark color, but not only, leaf shape and size was used too, as well as disease resistance, acidity, balance sugar/acid, branches port (strait or falling). Additionnally we selected "unusual or special" traits like a late ripening characteristic. The cuttings were taken from Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits, from vineyard planted prior to 1970/65 (before clonal selection) vineyard not too affected by major viruses . 5 to 6 Hundreds of "Lignées" (not "Clones") of Pinot Noir, and 2 to 3 hundreds of Chardonnay will potentially come out of the selection and testing program, out of the 5000-6000 original selected vines. Pinot is probably the variety with the most diversity. Today they are in a comportement field, the first new plantation with the result of this amazing work should happen in 2020.**





Domaine Louis Latour

# Vegetative Cycle 2015



**T**he vintage 2015 was notable for being the sunniest on record and corresponds with the inclusion of the Climates as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

## Phenological cycle 2015:

*Bud break:* 14 April (1 day late\*)

*Flowering:* 31 May (10 days in advance\*)

*Véraison/ripening:* 24 July (12 days in advance\*)

*Harvest:* 3 September (16 days in advance\*)

\*Compared to the average 1981-2010

## Climate analysis France - 2015

Average temperature above normal during most of the year (except February, September and October)

Two periods of scorching heat in July and a very mild weather at year end.

2015 is the third warmest year since 1900, behind 2014 (+1.2°C) and 2011 (+1.1°C).

After a normal winter, spring and summer were exceptional. From March to August, six months in a row were above seasonal temperature norms, and five consecutive months saw below average rainfall, Burgundy experienced a solar-powered year! 2015 will remain the year of the World Heritage classification of UNESCO and the vintage with a fabulous summer. With 315 hours of sunshine, July was a record month!

The vineyards were glorious throughout the season. Rains were rare but they were perfectly timed for all the important stages for the physiology of the vine.

We had a bud burst at lightning speed, an explosive flowering, followed in mid-June by a beautiful, long day of rain which happened, perfectly, after the flowering, to feed the nascent grapes.

In July, the driest month, the vine suffered a little, and the growth stopped. The grapes promised great intensity. In August, the summer became more "Burgundian", alternating between beautiful sunny periods lasting several days and decent downpours.

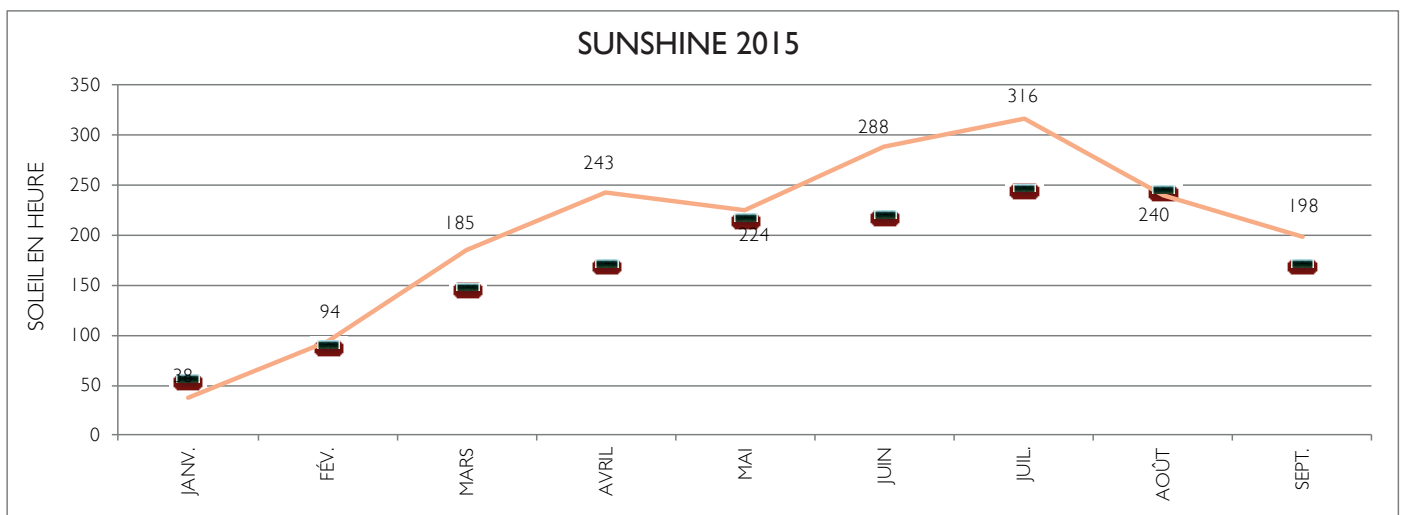
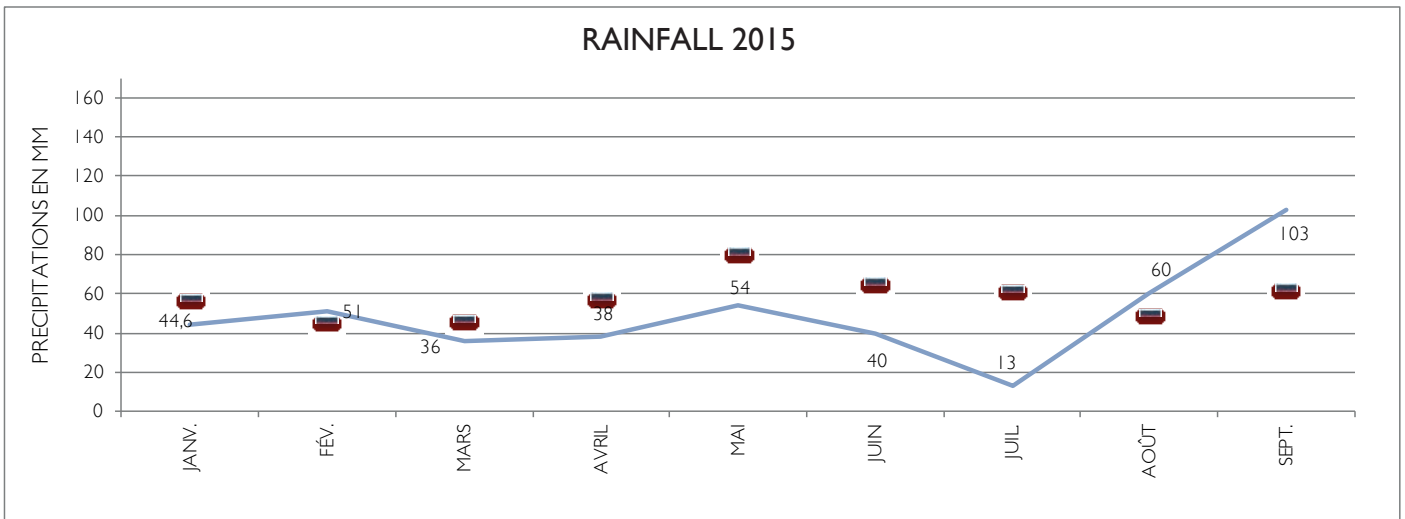
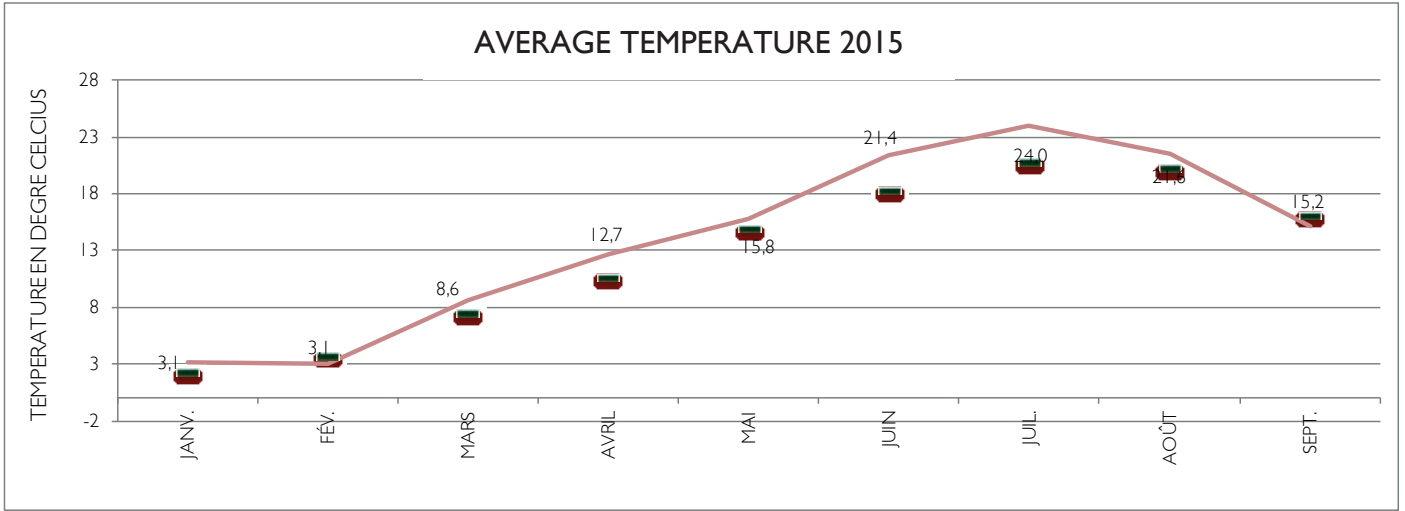
The vines were neat and the soils sufficiently prepared to prevent the weeds competing with the vine for water. The grapes benefitted perfectly from the downpours in

August; the well-worked soil allowing the rains soak in. The veraison was achieved in just a few days; the Pinot Noir grapes had great colour, with no sign of over-maturation. The final yields were low, a combination of a moderate set, and a dry summer. This will also be a very important factor in the overall quality of the 2015 vintage, and in the concentration of the wines.

Chardonnay also reached ideal ripeness. An interesting point of the 2015 harvest at Domaine Louis Latour, is that the first grapes to be cut were from Corton-Charlemagne. This is a decision we take only in the most mature years to preserve freshness. There was not a single rainy episode during the harvest, the Pinot Noir was picked quickly and easily with no sorting. The fruit was perfect!

The juices were delightfully fruity. Fermentation was vigorous. The temperatures were carefully controlled to benefit from a long, steady increase. The wines took on colour quickly and showed silky tannins. Up to putting the wines in barrel, suppleness and fruitness dominated.

2015 Average (1981-2010)



## Business Strategy

# Modern Marketing in Small Businesses: Into the Wild



*In this increasingly interconnected world, the evolution of the marketer's skillset was an inescapable need. Today, marketing has to be a rosetta stone able to convert complex commercial opportunities into simple technological possibilities...*

To a small to medium company in the wine business, in the era of global communication, David versus Goliath is an understatement. But when an established yet passionate wine brand is faced with lack of time and a decent but limited budget, there are still many avenues an aspiring marketing strategy can explore, including to venture into the wild, wild west of "modern marketing".

At Louis Latour, day to day, we follow a simple strategy that aims to target all audiences, on different platforms, with distinct messages enhancing the brand image through the extraordinary elements that already compose it: our history, the quality of our wines and of our distribution. Story telling is not a new concept in the world of wine but the implementation of a more structured approach requires a few years of reflection and learning.

Maison Latour is fortunate to have initiated the change of its marketing approach at a pivotal time when the sector itself was in the verge of change. Key technologies have come out of the hands of technicians to become the prerogative of business users (at least in companies with large marketing teams). As a result, traditional and digital marketing have merged to give way to a cross-channel marketing based on contents and contacts, driven by behavioral data that allows extreme customization of the offers.

The first step to integrate this approach is to structure the fundamentals, "the Content", which is why since 2011 we have completely rebuilt our databases: centralization and enrichment of product information, renewal of all our photos. We also did the rewriting

of the "story-telling" around the history, the family, the brand, the domain and our remarkable buildings and vitivinicultural heritage along the Côte d'Or.

In parallel to that, another fundamental work has to be done in order to store and categorize information on clients, contacts and sales. This is "the Data", the structure needs to be well thought because it's by essence a very heterogeneous pool of information. Besides, data often lives in many different places, especially within companies that were doing business before the invention of the writing machine! The structure needs to be strict but adaptive to rapid changes and additions. Data has provided the science behind the art that makes the overall customer experience more relevant, personalized and contextual.

There is an enormous gap between having data and having an ability to use the data in order to generate contacts and deliver contents that drive an improvement in sales and/or in services. That, in itself, is a journey into the wild. It involves exploring changing, unusual and highly technical territories, with heavy luggage full of habits and indispensable knowledge. Managers also have to accept to spend time understanding and developing processes that don't seem very useful at first in a traditional business environment: this is "the Activation" part...

At Maison Louis Latour we have been working for some time to fill this gap which separates us from a more intelligent use of our data. We are open to all discussions on this exciting and complex topic: good practices, case studies, consolidation of information. Feel free to come to us if you want to exchange on the subject.



# Extranet : New Ressources

## Old Documents

### Revitalize our rich history

At Maison Louis Latour, we are proud of our long family history. These two centuries have allowed us to accumulate an impressive number of documents, photos, models, sketches, plans, current prices, prestigious menus. We continued this year our digitization project in order to fulfill two objectives: to protect these documents for long term preservation and promote their dissemination thanks to the digital format that makes them very easy to use.



## Ardèche Pictures

### Breathtaking landscapes

Breathtaking landscapes, healthy vines in the middle of a sloping and carved terroir, villages with a so typical charm... You are in Ardèche, in the heart of the Louis Latour vineyards. We have redone in summer 2016 a photo report in order to highlight those beautiful places that are dear to us and which sees born every year among our most famous wines: our Chardonnays d'Ardèche. Don't hesitate to use those new images!

## Coming soon

### Making of a brand new movie...

You might have already seen the Maison Louis Latour movie, but things change over time, even for us! We have decided last year to launch a project with the aim to redo a whole movie on Maison Louis Latour with a new and exciting partner: Bourgogne Live Prod. Capture by drone, sunrise, follow the season's thread at the Domaine and relive the history of the domain thanks to a modern and interactive support. We are thrilled by this new project and the resulting movie should be out in late 2017. If you want to follow the making of, don't hesitate to join us and @BourgogneLive on the social media!



For the year to come, continued >



## Maison Simonnet-Febvre

Jean-Philippe Archambaud

After a record 2016 year for Maison Simonnet-Febvre, we started 2017 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 2017 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 was launched last year. We have made a lot of effort over the last three years to embellish our brand image with improved packaging, pictures and packshots. This new website is using 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

After a beautiful sunny summer for the 2016 vintage, we started harvesting on September 19th in perfect conditions. The quality of the wines is extremely promising. Whilst waiting for the new vintage, we have the exceptional 2014 and 2015 to enjoy. As the journalist Joanna Simon recently wrote, Beaujolais is Back! A breath of renewal is blowing across the region! Also, the really amazing James Suckling scores (all above 90/100) on our wines are the result of our commitment, and hard work in the vineyards and the cellar at Maison Henry Fessy.

You will see from our new list two new premium labels. The first is a single site vineyard from the famous appellation of Moulin-à-Vent, called "Champ de Cour" and the second is a Moulin-à-Vent from the superb vines of the "Domaine de la Pierre". Both these wines are generous and charming but also have personality and reflect the "manganese terroir" illustrating the more robust style of Moulin-à-Vent.

Not only have we been working in the vineyards as we have also been busy building other areas of the business with improvements to packaging and presentation. We have also launched our online store in France. More resources are also available, with our new brochure and a renewed online photo library available illustrating the different landscapes of the region and our wines.



# The Long Read

Translation from the article of Guillaume Puzo, published in the November issue of *En Magnum Magazine* :

*“Coopers turned vintners and winemakers, the Latour dynasty embody the very essence of Burgundy, where some changes are virtually invisible but where their company has been modernizing in spectacular fashion. Here, we accompany Louis-Fabrice Latour, tenth generation, on the journey from vine to bottle.”*

Guillaume Puzo - *En Magnum Magazine*

## LOUIS LATOUR

### Cortons in hand

Arriving in Beaune from the north-south motorway, one is immediately captivated by the spectacular landscape: the premiers crus in perfect alignment, with the hill of Corton standing guard over them, capturing the sunset's last rays. Corton and Corton-Charlemagne are the two most famous terroirs in the legendary Burgundy region, and the only part of the area with wonderful chardonnay whites, and of course, the pinot noir reds, all ranked grands crus since 1936 when they were recognised as AOC (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée).

The Corton hill is not only impressive for its presence in the landscape, but also for its prominent place in winemaking folklore thanks to its valuable domains. Some of them are a respectable size for Burgundy, where renowned parcels of land tend automatically to be divided by successive inheritances, ever since the abolition of sole birthright. Maison Louis-Latour is one of Burgundy's greatest ambassadors world-wide, and a cornerstone of the Beaune economy: its headquarters are still located in the old town centre and the ancient stone wine-cellars testify to age-old presence and influence.

Latour is a widespread family name in the wine growing business, with some well-known fellow family members responsible for wines just as refined, but different in style. Maison Louis-Latour is one of the last family businesses in Burgundy, an enterprise founded in 1797, but whose first vines were actually purchased in 1731. The company masterminds the whole process of production, from the vines to the cellars of course, but also still the barrels, for the Latours' have gradually turned from being coopers to wine merchants. In fact, the



Maison Louis-Latour's historic address is 18 rue des Tonneliers (Coopers Street) in Beaune. Louis-Fabrice Latour, eleventh generation Latour and the seventh generation to be named Louis, follows in his predecessors' footsteps, builds the family empire still.

#### 48 HECTARES OWNED BY THE DOMAIN

Like his colleagues in Beaune, Louis Latour wears two hats; wine merchant and vineyard owner. From its many vineyards in all regions, the company produces around 6 million bottles, with volume purchased representing more than 60%.

The high-profile heritage vineyard estate in Côte d'Or has 48 hectares of vineyards, including 28 hectares of grands crus. The jewel in the crown of the vineyard is located on the Corton hill, where the company holds the largest domain by far: 25 hectares, 14 in Corton (red), 11 in Corton-

Charlemagne (white). Other grands crus grown here are Chambertin (0.8 hectares), Romanée-Saint-Vivant (0.8 hectares), Chevalier-Montrachet (0.5 hectares) and Bâtard-Montrachet (0.5 hectares). With the exception of Bâtard-Montrachet, all the grand cru vines are owned by the Maison, meaning that the estate's value in the market is unimaginable.

Their vineyards spread far beyond the Côte d'Or borders. Maison Louis-Latour has also owned Domaine de Valmoissine in the south of France (Var) since 1989, with 120 hectares of pinot noir, Simonnet-Febvre since 2003, and Henry Fessy since 2008.

Besides its many purchases for its Cremants de Bourgogne and its still wines from the Yonne, Simonnet-Febvre also works 5 hectares in Chablis (chablis and chablis premier cru Mont de Milieu appellations). Recently they have also been producing from 15 hectares in the little-known vineyards of Auxois, halfway between Auxerre and Beaune. Henry Fessy, famous wine-house in the Beaujolais region, owns 70 hectares with 9 of the 10 crus from the area. Let's not forget the Ardèche region either, where Maison Louis-Latour owns no vineyards, yet has been purchasing grapes since 1979 in order to create the perfect range of value for money chardonnays.

#### NO HERBICIDES, NO CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS, NO INSECTICIDES...

The estate director confesses: “We practice sustainable viticulture on all 48 hectares owned in Côte d'Or. Five hectares are grown organically, including the “Les Chaillots” parcel that surrounds Château Corton-Grancey. We are environmentally certified under ISO 14001, which allows us to show



export markets that we are inspected in that area, but we don't intend to convert to organic viticulture for now. However, since 2008, we haven't used any herbicides on any of our vines. No chemical fertilizers, no insecticides, no botrytis treatments either. Nevertheless, we continue to treat for mildew once or twice during flowering. A year like 2016 has proved us right, practicing organic viticulture in such difficult conditions would have been impossible, especially on such a large area. On the other hand, we have always kept on working on soil management. Even when my predecessors had to resort to weeding in the 80's-90's, as did everyone at the time, our vines were always ploughed. So we can speak of change over time rather than a radical change. We also try to fight erosion smartly by adapting the work on the soil to suit the slope. At the bottom of the slope the vine stock is protected with a clod of earth and we avoid doing this in the middle of the slope to avoid water from gaining speed and eroding the soil. In Burgundy, we must see the water flow as a vertical thing.

... Whoever is at the top of the hill must take care not to inundate whoever is at the bottom, it's common sense and also about a collective approach to the job, which is important."

On the hill of Corton, an association comprising sixty wine growers, called 'Paysages de Corton' has been established, whose aim is to develop winemaking practices. A recent initiative is to set up beehives on the hill. This is a dual-purpose move: on one hand, the winegrowers may proudly offer the honey produced from their vines, and on the other, as bees are especially sensitive to insecticides, the winegrowers know that they cannot be used any longer. The Maison still insists on the tradition of the three-year rest period for each plot to replanting. Two out of the three years are set to cover planting (mustard, oats), so as to add the organic matter to the soil loved by the worms, and to provide the bees with a variety of flowers from which to gather their pollen.

#### THE QUEST FOR A SUGAR-ACID BALANCE

Like the majority of wine houses and winegrowers in Burgundy, the Louis Latour vineyard has many clonal selections of pinot noir. In order to develop the finest collections of pinot noir and chardonnay, around forty Burgundy estates and prestigious maisons (including Louis Latour, the Romainée-Conti estate, Clos de Tart, Bouchard Père et Fils, the Dujac estate, etc.) have united their resources to eliminate all disease carrying stock. A



trial plot of 1.5 hectares has already been planted with the very best vines carefully chosen from their vineyards, and the first shoots will be taken from it shortly. Clearly, expectations are high, as some of these plants will be naturally resistant to botrytis blight. It is recognised that many of the current cloned plants leave something to be desired. The majority of them were selected for their high sugar content in the 1970s, when grapes had less sugar. As a consequence, there is now an overabundance of plants whose fruit contains higher sugar levels and, with the onset of climate change, this virtue has become somewhat of a handicap. For instance, in 2015 which was a hot year for Burgundy, if such a thing exists, Maison Latour noticed that whereas the clones easily registered 13.5° on the mustimeter, the recent fine selections did not reach above 12.5-13°. Amidst the general ageing of the vine stock, the different diseases and blights that proliferate, the soil cultivation that damages the roots and suppresses growth, a huge programme of replanting is underway, beginning in 2009 with the Corton-Bressandes vineyards.

These new plants should now allow the wines to evolve towards a finer, higher quality style, as explained at Domaine Latour: "We talk a lot about global warming and we blame it for making the sugar levels too high, but the plant material also plays a part in the fact that today we have wines with higher alcohol content and less acidity than in the past, and for this the clones are blamed. We ought to be able to arrive at our preferred sugar-acid balance with these fine selections. It requires a lot of work, but that is what it means to be a winegrower. Watching our plots and choosing from our old vines is the basis of our job.

#### 150 VINTAGES, 6 MILLION BOTTLES

In the wine cellar, a team works away at

producing some 150 different wines, revolving around the expertise of cellar-master Jean-Pierre Thomas and his oenologist, Nathalie Bobard. This team successfully navigated the rise in sales in the early 2000s, following the arrival of Louis-Fabrice Latour at the helm, when the annual volume produced rose from 4 to 7.5 million bottles, only to see the rate decrease to approximately 6 million bottles in the wake of a surge in the pricing environment. The company's style has changed little with the passage of time. The winemaking process is the same whether the grapes have come from the estate or from a vintner. Grapes are still harvested by hand, as they have always been (except in the vineyards in the Ardèche region where machines are used). In Corton-Charlemagne, the chardonnay grapes are gathered in large willow baskets holding 40kg, as in the old days. Since 2012, all the pinot noir grapes have been collected in small 12kg mesh cases, allowing the unwanted juice to run off before going to the cellar.

#### THE WHITES ARE NEVER STIRRED

The white wine grapes are pressed whole, in bunches, in a pneumatic press. "No settling," insists Jean-Pierre Thomas, "this is how it has always been done, and I am a firm believer in it. When the vendange is sound, the smell of the reduction doesn't bother me while it is on its lees and before the malolactic fermentation. The odd unpleasant smell goes away soon enough, but the process is important as it protects the wine from oxidation, and the lees will feed the wine during fermentation." In order to control the temperature, all alcoholic fermentation takes place in stainless steel vats, then, halfway through the fermentation, the wines are put into casks. The proportion of new wood barrels used will vary, from 25% for village designations, to 50% for premiers crus, right up to 100% for grands crus,

with barrels of other ages being used as standard for up to three wines (one to three years). The wines are never stirred once the lees reach a height of 10cm at the bottom of the barrel, a traditional practice for the Maison, but rather unusual in Burgundy. Only wines from Côte d'Or of village quality and above are aged in wood, with the regional varieties (Mâcon Blanc, Bourgogne Blanc) being made in stainless steel vats, in order to preserve the fruitiness required for more immediate consumption. The wine is aged for between 10 and 12 months, tasted and blended when deemed ready. Managing the lees in this way means working in reduction and so lowering the amount of sulphites required over recent years, although a way to manage without them altogether has not yet been found. Likewise, the CO<sub>2</sub> content is adjusted according to the vintage, for instance, it needs to be higher in warmer years to better protect the wine.

#### TOWARDS MORE POWER AND COLOUR

The pinot noir grapes are gathered by hand and put on the sorting table after systematic destemming. "We trialled harvesting the grapes in whole bunches last year, in 2015," admits Jean-Pierre Thomas, "but I didn't see any obvious benefits to it. We have always used this method of destemming for our reds, and it works for us. We won't reintroduce the stems." The barrel fermentation stage lasts around two to three weeks depending on the vintage, which is probably the most significant change in terms of production method since the 1990s, when it took no longer than ten to twelve days. Cap punching is reduced and has been replaced by pumping over. This successful change is correctly attributed to Louis-Fabrice Latour: "Twenty-five years ago, our reds were rather criticised for being somewhat light, including our Cortons. Nowadays, it is true to say that we have increased the colour and power, contrary to the tendency of some winegrowers to make lighter wines. We extract a little more, we ferment for a little longer. It's a strange evolution, which goes slightly against the tide of current winegrowing practice." When taken from the vats, the first press and free run wines are systematically brought together, and subsequently put into barrels, where the malolactic fermentation occurs. Next, the sulphites are added and the wine will be left to age for between eight and twelve months, at which point they will be drawn off and blended. The proportion of new barrels used varies from 100% for grands crus, to 50% for some premiers crus and village wines, to 30% for basic wines, with the remainder being made up of pieces

ageing from one to three years, as for the whites. Even though the percentage of new wood used has always remained the same, it is worth noting that in recent years, the average age of a barrel has gone down.

#### HOME MADE BARRELS

The Latours were coopers before becoming wine merchants, and they have perpetuated this tradition by continuing uninterrupted production of their own barrels. At first, the business was situated right in the heart of Beaune, on Rue des Tonneliers (Coopers Street), then it was moved to Place Madeleine, still in the town centre, before the new wine cellars were built in the processing complex at Clos Chamerois, in Savigny-Lès-Beaune, where they remain to this day. The barrel staves are seasoned for 3 years, whereupon they are lightly burned with a medium heat. Each piece, from Burgundy of course, is identical, regardless of whether it is destined for making red or white wine. Since the end of the 1980s, the company has exported a proportion of its barrels to a variety of destinations (Napa Valley, Australia, South Africa, Spain, etc.), but it has never sold its unique Louis Latour model in France. Annual production ranges between 3,000 and 3,500 units and meets all the needs of the Maison. If this activity is cash-hungry (the seasoned wood must be paid for somehow), it does allow for a key component in the final quality of the wine to be assured in advance: a component that contributes to the ageing process and, most significantly, the aromatic composition of the wine.

#### BORDEAUX STYLE BLENDING

If one wine epitomises the savoir-faire of the maison Louis Latour, it is most definitively the Corton. In its chardonnay or pinot noir form, whether under the label of Corton-Charlemagne (white) or Corton (red), it is most certainly a grand cru. At the pinnacle of this hierarchy, presides the Château-Corton-Grancey. Simultaneously a commercial brand, a wine producing site, a wine and a reception venue, the name has a unique history. It is here in the village of Aloxe, that the story begins. Like many others in 19th century Burgundy, it adopted the name of the best-known climat in

the local farming area, Corton, to become Aloxe-Corton. In 1749, Gabriel Lebault, president of the Burgundy Parliament, commissioned the château to be built. The winery was added in 1830, on the other side of the road, nestled into the hillside in the depths of the Les Perrières climat. It was then to be bought in 1834 by Monsieur de Grancey, who subsequently rechristened the property in his own name. The Maison Louis-Latour acquired the property in 1891, along with 33 hectares of vines belonging to the de Grancey family, of which 15 hectares were on the renowned Corton hill. Today, these place names have still retained their original cachet. True, the winery has technically been modernised (thermoregulation of vats, etc.), but has always remained in its original layout. It is here that all the red wines from the Côte d'Or estate are produced (the whites are made at the Savigny site). The château has recently been renovated. For a long time, it was the summer residence of the Latour family, who keenly watched the progress of the ripening grapes from their windows. Now, it has been converted into a reception centre, with uninterrupted views east to the hill.

The iconic wine of the Louis Latour range, the Château-Corton-Grancey, distinguishes itself from its peers for at least two reasons. The first: it is a Corton blend whose provenance has been undisputed for many generations. Even if the hill itself has many climats, (Renardes, Perrières, Clos du Roi, etc.) the Grancey gets nothing from them. It is in actual fact a blend from the best areas of the estate, in the Bordeaux style. True, the vines' ownership makes it is easy to separate a large proportion of the best batches to make this great wine. The second peculiarity, following from the first, is

that Château-Corton-Grancey is not a terroir but a brand name, which the Maison Louis-Latour alone may use, without actually owning it. This anomaly is due to the system of Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée, Corton being designated one

of them, where a brand may not use or contain all or part of this name. However, the Maison Louis-Latour, being able to prove that this particular name had been in commercial use well before the creation of the AOCs, retained the right to the name.





*Louis Latour*

MAISON FONDÉE EN 1797

Owner of  
Château Corton Grancey  
Domaine vineyards in the Grands Crus of  
Chambertin,  
Romanée-Saint-Vivant,  
Corton-Charlemagne,  
Corton Clos de la Vigne au Saint,  
Chevalier-Montrachet  
and the Premiers Crus of  
Beaune,  
Pommard,  
Volnay,  
Aloxe-Corton,  
Pernand-Vergelesses

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