

The Ultimate Burgundy Reference

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Maison Samuel Billaud

Samuel Billaud noted that “2017, in much the same fashion as 2016, the early season frost gave us tiny quantities overall but the yields were quite disparate according to the specific sectors involved. This is to say that in some areas, they were almost normal and in others, it was hardly worth sending pickers to search for a bunch here and another there. The growing season thereafter was actually quite warm and the warm temperatures and low yields brought the fruit to a relatively high level of ripeness. We chose to begin picking on the 5th of September and at least the fruit was spotless so there were essentially no sorting losses. As to the wines, I would describe them as strongly resembling 2015 but with more evident minerality. The style of the 2017s contrasts markedly with that of the 2016s as the latter is somewhat exotic with what I would describe as a cold minerality.” Billaud remarked that all of the 2017 grands crus were still completing their malos and thus were not presented.

2017 Petit Chablis “Sur Les Clos”

This is sufficiently reduced today that it’s hard to read but the underlying fruit appears to be ripe. Otherwise there is both good energy and minerality to the beautifully defined flavors that conclude in a very dry but not austere finale. This chiseled effort should drink well early on if desired. (**Top Value, 87-89 pts**)

2017 Chablis – Grand Terroir

An overtly floral-infused nose combines notes of various white orchard fruit with those of sea shore scents. The delicious, round and supple flavors are generous and easy going with just enough depth and persistence to remain interesting. This too should drink well young though reward a few years of cellaring too. (**87-89 pts**)

2017 Chablis “Montmains”

(from Montmains proper). A pure, pretty and airy nose consists mostly of essence of pear and apple aromas that are liberally laced with mineral reduction and floral nuances. There is fine richness to the seductively caressing middle weight flavors that also possess good punch along with better depth and energy on the balanced and lingering finish. **(88-91 pts)**

2017 Chablis “Vaillons Vieilles Vignes”

(from Vaillons proper). This too is super-floral in character with its layered nose that exhibits notes of spice, moderate Chablis character and various white-fleshed fruit aromas. The sleek, intense and nicely focused medium-bodied flavors also possess a lovely sense of energy and minerality on the very dry and sneaky long finish. If this can add more depth it should merit the upper end of my projected range. **(88-91 pts)**

2017 Chablis “Les Fourneaux”

(from Côte de Près Girots and Morein). There is more obvious classic Chablis character in evidence on the nose in the form of oyster shell and tidal pool nuances that render the citrus and mineral-reduction-suffused nose more interesting. The mouth feel of the medium-bodied flavors is relatively sleek compared to what is typical for Fourneaux before culminating in a powerful and complex and only moderately rustic finale. I particularly like the complexity of the chalky finish and this too should be accessible young but reward mid-term cellaring. **(89-92 pts)**

2017 Chablis “Mont de Milieu”

(from a .58 ha holding). Firm reduction blocks an evaluation of the nose. Otherwise here too the mouth feel is unusually sleek for a Mont de Milieu with solid volume and mid-palate density, all wrapped in a mineral-driven, powerful and tension-filled finish that goes on and on. This youthfully austere effort will require at least some patience and should reward up to a decade of keeping. **(Sweet Spot, 90-93 pts)**

2017 Chablis “Montée de Tonnerre”

(from a .45 ha holding in both Montée de Tonnerre proper and Chapelot). This is relatively classic aromatically speaking with its cool citrus, floral, spice and quinine-suffused aromas. Once again there is a sleek mouth feel to the finer if not quite as intense and delineated middle weight flavors that exude a fine bead of minerality onto the saline and moderately dry finale. I quite like this as it's like rolling a small pebble around in the mouth and in contrast to the prior wines, this one is going to require at least a few years of patience first. **(Sweet Spot, 91-93 pts)**

2017 Chablis “Séchet”

(from a .60 ha holding). This too offers good Chablis character to the aromas of sea shore, algae, lemon rind and a whiff of iodine that is picked up by the intense and beautifully delineated middle weight flavors that flash equally good minerality on the bone dry finish. This won't wow you with its finesse but it is very good and clearly built to reward mid-term keeping. (**Sweet Spot, 90-93 pts**)

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