Chablis 2023

It was a rough ride for many, weather-wise, but a late hot spell came to the rescue, resulting in plenty of good wines for drinking and for keeping. Having tasted almost 400 Chablis 2023 wines, our expert selects 30 of his favourites, along with five from top producers in neighbouring crus

REPORT & SELECTION CHARLES CURTIS MW

s one grower in the region put it, '2023 was easy and not easy...', and: 'It was that nature had offered us.' Indeed, generous yields raised fears of dilution throughout the Chablis region, though in the end, nature provided the raw material for careful growers to produce delicious results.

The prelude to the 2023 growing season in Chablis was warmer and drier than average until March. There were some minor incidents of frost on 28 March and 4 April, but the vines were not

'I'm optimistic - 2023 was an interesting essential not to be tempted by the excess vintage with fantastic ageing potential'

Didier Séguier, Domaine William Fèvre

very advanced and the impact was minor. Temperatures began to rise in early May and conditions were near perfect during flowering, which had peaked by 9 June, slightly ahead of the average. Because of the favourable conditions at flowering, a very large crop was set.

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After flowering, rain showers scattered throughout Chablis from June through to the end of August, ending with a stormy period that brought some hail. The rainfall had two effects: it activated mildew, which remained an issue for some; and where rain was less prevalent, some of the vines suffered drought stress.

Hot and dry weather returned in early September, causing sugar levels to jump and acidity to plunge. Choosing the correct harvest date was imperative. Some growers began to pick on 7 September; others waited through that weekend and began on 11 September.

Yields overall were high. According to BIVB regional data, at more than 49.400hl combined, premier cru and grand cru Chablis volumes were up 16.6% compared to the 2018-2022 five-year average; Chablis and Petit Chablis combined were up 23.2%. The biggest difference, however, was in the regional appellations, such as Bourgogne Côtes d'Auxerre, where production was 48.1% higher than the average.

STRENGTH ON BOTH SIDES

The quality implications of high yields are clear. If not controlled (by debudding early on in the season or cutting away excess bunches during ripening), the resulting wine might be dilute and lack concentration. Grapes also need to be sorted rigorously at harvest to avoid the possibility of mildew-affected fruit bringing in 'off' aromas (a concern that comes with machine picking). However, if a grower is working with lowyielding old-vine material in a prime location, the opportunity for real quality is there.

Despite the warmth, the seven climats of the grand cru slope on the right (eastern) bank of the Serein river all distinguished themselves in 2023.

Of the premiers crus on the right bank, Montée de Tonnerre and Vaulorent (part of Fourchaume) have given a predictably strong performance. On the left bank, my favourite wines came from Montmains (especially Butteaux) and Vaillons, and as far afield as Beauroy and Côte de Jouan.

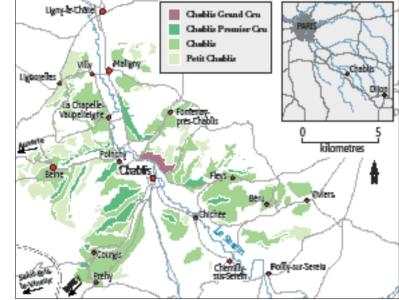
Often, the least successful wines were tied to warmer sites – while there were some excellent wines from warmer lieux-dits on the right bank such as Mont de Milieu and Les Fourneaux, there was also the potential for high-alcohol, low-acid wines that taste heavy and flat.

The best results are in line with recent sunny vintages (such as 2018-2020 and 2022), with ripe orchard and stone fruit, a lush texture, balanced acidity and plenty of extract.

PLENTY OF GOOD WINES

Anecdotally, there appears to be less in the way of mineral expression overall and very little of the





racy acidity that was exhbited by the Chablis of yesteryear. However, when viewed in the context of modern Chablis wine, there were some very successful results.

Top: the premier cru Les Fourneaux vinevard in the village of Fleys

Overall, the quality in 2023 was more variable than in 2022, with more potential issues in Chablis and Petit Chablis than with the premiers and grands crus. The best of the top wines, however, may age in a similar way to those of the legendary 1990 vintage ('high volumes and superb quality', according to chablis-wines.com). The wines will be friendly and approachable when young; the best of them have the potential to age for decades.

In less-skilled hands, however, there's a chance of watery wines that lack freshness and verve. Buying as high up the quality ladder as your purse allows, from growers you trust, will be a winning strategy (as is often the case).

According to respected producer Vincent Dauvissat: '2023 was a year of volume, although complicated by the almost tropical amount of water, which caused mildew to explode on the grapes, but they were saved by a warm, sunny autumn. Despite a bit of botrytis and a bit of sour rot, the balance is like 2022, with slightly softer acidity, since it dropped off in the heat at the end of the season."

NAMES TO KNOW

Despite the potential dangers, 2023 qualifies as a vintage that's eminently worth stocking up on: Petit Chablis for everyday quaffing and some good village wines, and premiers crus to drink now or pop in the cellar for five to 10 years. The best of the grands crus will age for years or even decades to come.

If money is no object, look for François Raveneau's Grand Cru Les Clos and 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre, Dauvissat's Grand Cru Les Preuses and 1er Cru Séchet, William Fèvre's Grand Cru Les Clos, the 1er Cru Fourchaume La Pièce au Comte from Bessin-Tremblay, and the 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre from Jean-Paul & Benoît Droin.

Didier Séguier at Domaine William Fèvre summed up his thoughts: 'I'm optimistic - 2023 was an interesting vintage with fantastic ageing potential, and one that presents the possibility of staying true to the Chablis style.'

Chablis 2023 great buys: the Curtis pick

Many retailers' allocations for these wines are as yet unconfirmed - prices and stockists are given where available. No alcohol levels are shown, as production of many of the wines was incomplete at the time of writing. If we have awarded 'Top value' to an as-yet unpriced wine, it's based on our predicted pricing

(1) WINE OF THE VINTAGE & TOP PRODUCER Domaine François Raveneau, Grand Cru Clos 97

This superb wine boasts plenty of pronounced, youthful and upfront fruit aromas, with hints of Granny Smith apple and passion fruit touched with spice, and a profound saline mineral underpinning. The texture is creamy and dense, with an almost brooding character. Isabelle Raveneau sees it as a combination of Blanchot and Valmur; for me, it's simply a triumph. Although it's nearly approachable now, a savvy wine lover will wait 10 years to open and drink it over decades to come. Drink 2035-2065

(2) TOP PRODUCER Domaine Vincent Dauvissat, Grand Cru Les Preuses 96 POA £ Burnett & Herbert, Lea & Sandeman In a swirling aromatic complexity, fruit

aromas range from lime peel to guava, green apple and spice. Chalky minerality underlines hints of white blossom and toasty reduction. The palate has lovely concentration, but the wine is never heavy; it has perfect finesse and precision. Exceedingly youthful, and while delicious now, it will age for at least another 30 years. This has it all. **Drink** 2035-2055

③ TOP PRODUCER William Fèvre. Grand Cru Les Clos 96 0

POA £ Bon Coeur, Bordeaux Index, Burnett & Herbert, Fine & Rare, Howard Ripley, Jeroboams, Millésima Year after year, Fèvre's Les Clos is among the great wines of Chablis. In 2023, aromas



Chablis: know your vintages **2023★★★★☆**

A large harvest with a hot, sunny conclusion. The growing season was up and down, with abundant rain and cool temperatures, but the success of the year was decided by the hot, dry conditions that in the end delivered healthy grapes with moderate alcohol but slightly lower acidity.

$2022 \star \star \star \star \star \star$

In retrospect, the warm, sunny conditions of 2022 edge out those of 2023, oddly because August was too hot, causing the vines to shut down and preserve more acidity than 2023. This slightly superior freshness means the wines of 2022 will have a seductive balance and might well age better.

2021★★★★☆

The low yields and the difficult growing conditions were a constant challenge for growers. In the end, however, the lower yields and resulting concentration meant the top wines were thrillingly fresh, concentrated

and powerful and will undoubtedly enjoy a long life in the cellar.

2020★★★★☆

A warm, easy year, the antithesis of the year that followed: the vines had everything - heat, sunshine, enough rain. The result is an approachable vintage with easy, moreish fruit aromas that will drink well young but may drop off sooner than the wines from 2019.

$2019 \star \star \star \star \star$

Several heatwaves during this sunny year meant many initially felt that the wines lacked freshness. But time has shown that the wines' intensity means they should hold well and have the structure to support their weight.

2018 ★★★☆☆

A large harvest in a hot year produced wines with lots of body and warmth, but sometimes without the structure for long ageing. A very rewarding vintage to drink now, but few wines will survive decades in the cellar.

range from grapefruit to nectarine and green apple, laden with pungent, salty mineral notes and a little smoky reduction - a bit of everything, really. The texture is dense, almost impenetrable at this age,



but enlivened by a lovely hint of bitterness at the end. This is truly a wine for the ages. Ideally wait a decade before opening; it will last at least 40 years. **Drink** 2030-2050

④ Albert Bichot, Domaine Long-Depaquit, Grand Cru Moutonne Monopole 95 0

£140 Brunswick, Fine & Rare, Flint Wines, Honest Grapes

Moreish aromas of Mirabelle plums with honey, 'the beginning of apricot and quince', according to director Louis Gimonnet. The palate has marvellous concentration and depth of flavour, balanced acidity and superb elegance and finesse. This 2.35ha monopole lies in an amphitheatre, mostly in Grand Cru Vaudésir but overlapping into Les Preuses. The grapes are hand-harvested, gently crushed, fermented in stainless steel tank and old cask (25%) before an extended maturation. Classic. **Drink** 2028-2045

Domaine François Raveneau, 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre 95

POA £ Haynes Hanson & Clark

Apricot and quince aromas with an exotic edge, suggestions of coconut milk and spice, the whole suffused with an intense, chalky minerality. The texture is concentrated and powerful, but the wine never overwhelms and there is a silky elegance that makes it seem gentle instead of substantial. The grapes are from a blend over 3ha of low-yielding old vines in the lieux-dits of Chapelot and Pied d'Aloup. **Drink** 2030-2050

(5) TOP PRODUCER Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin-Tremblay, La Pièce au Comte, 1er Cru La Fourchaume 95 ()

There's something deliciously different about 'the Count's barrel'. It begins with ripe aromas of Mirabelle plums and acacia blossoms, with an almost honeyed note underneath. The texture is creamy, rich and dense, the finish long. Undeniably lovely today, this will improve in five to 10 years and age for decades more. The grapes are from 0.7ha in Fourchaume, planted between 1934 and 1952 on a site that takes the sunshine for the entire afternoon, giving it ripeness and balance. **Drink** 2028-2045

Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin-Tremblay, Vieilles Vignes 95 ()

POA £ Berry Bros & Rudd, Lay & Wheeler The aromas of lime peel and passion fruit with a decidedly tangy saline/mineral



underpinning are an enticing introduction to this superb wine. Lively acidity balances rich extract to drive to an impressively long finish. Most of the vines date to 1950-1974, planted on the higher slopes of Bessin's native village of La Chapelle-Vaupelteigne. Romain Bessin feels the 2023 shows more balance and less influence from the warm weather than in 2022. **Drink** 2024-2040

Laurent Tribut, 1er Beauroy 95 POA £ Crop & Vine, Justerini & Brooks, Lea & Sandeman

A dizzying array of aromas, from green apple and peach to soft white blossoms and spice. The texture is dense, but surprisingly good acidity deftly balances the richness and carries the wine to a solid finish. The grapes are blended from the best villagelevel sites across the appellation; they're fermented in stainless steel and large casks (15%) before ageing to add depth. This will drink well on release and represents fantastic value in Chablis. **Drink** 2028-2045

TOP PRODUCER Samuel Billaud, Grand Cru Les Clos 95

£115.85 (ib) Fine & Rare There is only one 400L cask of this exquisite wine, described by Billaud as 'my Chevalier des Clos' due to its mineral tension. Aromas of lime zest, green apple and nectarine with a strong, saline mineral undercurrent and hints of flowers and spice. The texture balances thrilling tension with a creamy depth of flavour. Billaud explains his success: 'In the vines, one must remain alert

depth of flavour. Billaud explains his success: 'In the vines, one must remain alert and listen to what the vintage tells you; just because there is volume doesn't mean the concentration is lacking.' **Drink** 2030-2050

William Fèvre, Côte Bouguerots, Grand Cru Bougros 95 () POA £ Howard Ripley, Jeroboams

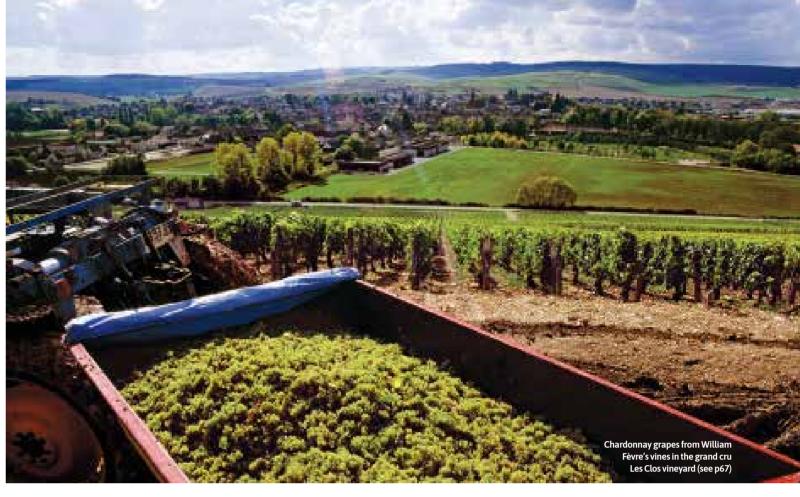
Initially a bit restrained, the fruit opens up on the palate with notes of white peach, nectarine and Mirabelle plum, accented with a salty minerality and a hint of spice. Chiselled and fine but still impressively powerful. Fèvre owns more than a third of Bougros; 2ha are located in this unique parcel, which rises steeply from the river in south-southwest-facing slopes, producing this exotic, concentrated wine, which will live for decades. **Drink** 2028-2045

TOP PRODUCER Domaine Billaud-Simon, Grand Cru Les Blanchots 94

Billaud-Simon's Blanchot is the most supple and elegant wine of the range, with fruit aromas including lemon peel, high-toned white peach and a distinctive floral cast. Soft and supple, a delicate scent of white blossoms develops on the palate. Despite the finesse, there's a persistence here as well. The grapes come from 0.18ha of old vines that look over Montée de Tonnerre, with which it shares a cool, white marl terroir. **Drink** 2028-2045

Domaine Christian Moreau, Clos des Hospices, Grand Cru Les Clos 94 POA £ NY Wines, Tanners

Rich and luxurious, this impresses with pronounced aromas of ripe pear and nectarine with a strong undercurrent of oyster shell and spice. The texture is dense and powerful, and the wine is pleasant in cask but ideally should age for a decade before it will disclose its secrets. The walled clos on the lower slopes of the eastern edge



of Les Clos was purchased by the Moreau family 120 years ago, in 1904. The grapes are fermented in cask to deliver this powerful, long-lived wine. **Drink** 2028-2045

6 RISING STAR/UNDER-THE-RADAR Domaine Pattes Loup, 1er Cru Côte de Jouan 94 0

Aromas of ripe pear, greengage plums and nectarines with a floral edge and a note of smoky reduction that comes from ageing in large oak barrels, but not from the wood. The texture is supple, round, almost fat, but never loses its lively freshness; it continues



to vibrate on its dynamic finish. The wine will probably be released in two years (2020 is on the market now), and it should drink well for another 20. **Drink** 2030-2045

Jean-Claude et Romain Bessin-Tremblay, 1er Cru Montmains 94 ()

POA £ Berry Bros & Rudd From 1ha of vines more than 50 years old on the upper slope, on the border with Forêts, facing southeast, the Montmains from this producer stands out for its pronounced aroma of ripe pear and white blossoms with a note of chalky minerality. It's concentrated and powerful, and the balanced acidity drives the wine to an impressive finish. Although approachable now, it will truly begin to open in 10 years. The wine matured for 18 months, partly in tank and partly in cask. **Drink** 2028-2045

TOP PRODUCER Jean-Paul & Benoît Droin, 1er Cru Vaulorent 94 ()

POA £ Burnett & Herbert, Jeroboams Benoît Droin says of this wine, 'it's not to drink – it's to wait 15 years', but wine lovers will be forgiven for jumping the gun. Aromas of lemon peel, green apple and pear are accented with flint, chalk and spice. The texture is lively and taut, and the tension draws the wine to a dynamic finish. The grapes are from a 0.33ha plot on the right bank, near the grands crus in thin, stony soils over a compact layer of Kimmeridgian – classic Chablis. **Drink** 2028-2045

⑦ TOP PRODUCER & TOP VALUE Laurent Tribut, Chablis 94

POA £ Burnett & Herbert, Lea & Sandeman Vibrant and dynamic, this wine explodes with aromas of lime peel, passion fruit and greengage plums adorned with acacia blossoms and chalky minerality. The feel is racy and bright, but there's substance as well. Will be crisp and approachable on release but will profit from mid-term ageing. The fruit is from parcels at Courgis and Poinchy, with a bit from the Beauroy and Forêts premiers crus. Fermentation in tank, then six months in cask. **Drink** 2028-2045

Domaine Billaud-Simon, Tête d'Or, Chablis 93

£45 Jeroboams , Millésima

This luxurious, rich Chablis merits its name, 'Golden Head', with its rich apricot and quince nose, hints of cream and spice, and dense, sensual texture. A pleasant bitterness brings freshness to the palate. Will likely please lovers of a Côte d'Or style, and although it lacks the chiselled character loved by some, it has its own unique charm. The grapes are from nearly 3ha of vines in the L'Araignée and Le Bas de Chapelot

VINTAGE PREVIEW: CHABLIS 2023

parcels, located at the base of premier cru Montée de Tonnerre. **Drink** 2024-2035

(8) Domaine Christian Moreau, Cuvée Guy Moreau, 1er Cru Vaillon 93 (1) POA f Haynes Hanson & Clark

There's a lovely, opulent balance between the richness of this wine and the elegance of its acid structure. The initial attack is redolent of grapefruit and quince with hints of hawthorn flowers and chalk. The texture is tightly wound and powerful, yet the wine is silky and very fine, even at this stage. The grapes are from the heart of the Vaillon lieu-dit, planted in 1933 by Fabien Moreau's grandfather Guy. One third was fermented in cask, two-thirds in tank; aged for 18 months before bottling. **Drink** 2028-2045

TOP PRODUCER Domaine Moreau-Naudet, Vieilles Vignes Les Pargues, Chablis 93

POA £ Lea & Sandeman

This exceptional village Chablis has a deceptively pale yellow colour with hints of green, yet boasts pronounced aromas of ripe Mirabelle plum, exotic passion fruit and delicate white flowers. The texture is creamy and the palate has a lovely depth of flavour. The grapes are from three parcels of 70-year-old vines totalling 1.8ha in the left-bank lieu-dit of Les Pargues; they are crushed as whole clusters and then fermented in tank and old casks (25%) before bottling. **Drink** 2028-2045

Domaine Pattes Loup, Vent d'Ange, Chablis 93 ()

Although early in its maturation (likely not available before 2027), this arrestingly





lovely new vintage is fragrant with aromas of lime zest, ripe pear and white flowers. Extended ageing on the lees gives it a patina of Parmesan cheese and a lovely depth of flavour. The grapes are from old vines around Courgis and nearby Préhy and are fermented on native yeasts in tank and old barrels. The wine is aged for a year or more and then racked and aged for two to three additional years in tank or large oak before release. **Drink** 2028-2045

Jean-Paul & Benoît Droin, 1er Cru Vaillons 93 ()

£29.50 (ib) Farr Vintners, Ideal Wine Co, Jeroboams, Lay & Wheeler, Philglas & Swiggot, Uncorked This delicious wine boasts initial exotic notes of pomelo and melon and opens up to suggest acacia blossom and cream. The texture is creamy and rich, but the wine is not lacking freshness; the extract carries the wine to a lovely lingering finish. The grapes are from 4.82ha spread over five lieux-dits – Vaillons, Séchet, Beugnons, Roncières and Epinottes – lightly crushed and fermented in tank and in cask (25%). The warm microclimates and thin soils here deliver some of the ripest fruit on the left bank. Drink 2028-2045

(10) TOP VALUE La Chablisienne, Château Grenouilles, Grand Cru 93

This La Chablisienne flagship is showing well in 2023, with pronounced aromas of ripe pear, hints of hazelnut and spice and a good expression of chalk and oyster shell. The very fine balance between extract and acidity sustains the wine, and the finish is highlighted with a pleasant, slight note of bitterness. The grapes come from a sizeable 7.5ha grand cru parcel between Vaudésir and Valmur at the base of the Benoît Droin, Jean-Paul & Benoît Droin



slope, fermented partly in tank, partly in cask. Drink 2028-2045

Louis Moreau, Grand Cru Les Clos 93 POA £ Jeroboams

With aromas of citrus and ripe nectarine, and hints of smoky reduction and hay, this grand cru shows lovely concentration and lively acidity that bring depth and carry it through an impressively long finish. The grapes come from five parcels in Les Clos that total 3.2ha. Gently crushed before fermentation and then aged in stainless steel. Although it's approachable now, this has the substance to age. Drink 2028-2045

11 RISING STAR/UNDER-THE-RADAR & TOP VALUE

Domaine 47°N 3°E, Chablis 92

A standout in my blind tastings this year, boasting concentrated aromas of pomelo, passion fruit and coconut water. The pleasant weight and density on the palate speak to the rigorous work in the vines, and a lively freshness leads to an impressive finish. The grapes are from a 1ha parcel in the village of Beine that is in biodynamic conversion and should be certified with the next vintage. Drink 2024-2035

12 Domaine Laroche. Saint-Martin 92

£31.99 Blanco & Gomez, Carruthers & Kent, Hay Wines, Millésima, North & South Wines, Shekleton Wines, Shelved Wine, The Fine Wine Co A dizzying array of aromas – from green apple and peach to white blossoms and spice. The texture is dense, but good acidity for the vintage deftly balances the richness and carries the wine to a solid finish. Grapes from the best village-level sites are



Decanter PREMIUM

MORE CHABLIS?

In addition to the 30 excellent Chablis wines shown here, for our expert's full breakdown of the vintage, tasting notes and scores on 56 more top Chablis 2023 wines tasted and rated for Decanter by Charles Curtis MW, as well as 14 of the best 2023 wines from the nearby Grand Auxerrois appellations, please go to decanter.com/premium

drink well on release and represents fantastic value in Chablis. Drink 2024-2035

months on its fine lees to add depth. Will

casks (15%), then the wine aged for six

fermented in stainless steel tanks and large

TOP VALUE Domaine Moreau-Naudet. Petit Chablis 92

POA £ Lea & Sandeman

Lovely, bright and fresh with lime peel and gooseberry aromas, this has a floral note and a gentle, soft aroma. The texture is balanced, lively and refreshing. The grapes are from a 3ha parcel between Beine and Courgis on the left bank; they are gently crushed and fermented in tank to produce this wine, which should drink marvellously well on release and over the next several years. Drink 2024-2030

13 TOP PETIT CHABLIS Domaine Vincent Dauvissat. Petit Chablis 92 POA £ Burnett & Herbert

Not to be missed. Fresh, green apple and nectarine fruit aromas and a suggestion of hawthorn blossom. The texture is silky and fresh, with enough acidity to balance the ripe fruit. The grapes come from 0.4ha at the top of Les Clos in Portlandian soil. Although made for consumption now, there's enough substance to hold up to mid-term ageing. Drink 2024-2030

Régnard, Grand Cru Les Clos 92

This version of Les Clos boasts concentrated aromas of ripe nectarines, citrus and floral notes with an edge of spice. The palate has tension and vibrancy, and a lively balance between the crisp acidity and a lingering finish. The grapes come from 0.35ha in Les Clos and are fermented and matured in cask.



Drinking well now and should continue to improve for years to come. Drink 2028-2040

Samuel Billaud. Chablis 92

£22.50-£26 (ib) Fine & Rare, Jeroboams, Laithwaites, Lay & Wheeler

There's a great purity to the aromas of nectarine and lemon peel in this delicious Chablis. It's lively and fresh, with a tension that carries it to a lingering finish. The grapes are from three parcels: two on the left bank - Pargues and the back side of the Montmains slope - and on the right bank, vines at the base of Montée de Tonnerre. They represent 5ha in total: 2ha domaine and 3ha purchased fruit. Drink 2024-2035

RISING STAR/UNDER-THE-RADAR Domaine des Pérégrins, Envers de Beauregard, Petit Chablis 90 0

Boasts a surprising concentration of apricot and guince aromas for the appellation. The texture is waxy and pleasantly silky, with an enjoyable heft balanced by crisp acidity on the palate that carries it through to a lovely finish. Grapes are from a 0.33ha parcel from a lieu-dit in Poilly-sur-Serein, on the right bank of the Serein. They are picked by hand, fermented with native yeasts in tank and the wine will see 18 months of maturation on the lees. **Drink** 2024-2035

Chablis and the Grand Auxerrois

Chablis is certainly the best-known wine from northern Burgundy, but it's not alone. The Chablis appellation is surrounded by areas of vines that compose the larger Grand Auxerrois (Greater Auxerre) region, which also includes the crus of Vézelay, planted to Chardonnay; St-Bris, for Sauvignon Blanc; and Irancy, for Pinot Noir.

Different grape varieties are also planted in the regional appellation Bourgogne Côtes d'Auxerre, including the obscure César for red wine (allowed as a blending grape in Irancy, up to 10%) and Sacy and Melon (as in the Muscadet grape) for white wines.

Some spectacular wines are being produced in the Grand Auxerrois, and I have chosen here the very best producers and five of the most interesting wines to ensure Decanter's complete coverage of the wider region's best wines.

TOP PRODUCER Guilhem et Jean-Hugues Goisot, Mont Morin, St-Bris 95 **B**

The tiny production from this special site features a field blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Sauvignon Gris (roughly 50/50),

planted on a 45° slope (virtually impossible to work) located at the western border of the appellation. The complex, almost pungent aroma features notes of grapefruit, gooseberry and lime, along with a savoury, almost gamey edge that leads to a silky, explosively fresh feel on the palate. Although this is undeniably delicious now, it also possesses the substance to age in the cellar. Drink 2024-2035

(14) RISING STAR/UNDER-THE-RADAR Sainte Madeleine, Les Saulniers, Vézelav 92 0

The pale lemon-yellow colour belies the intensity of the bright, lemony fruit with notes of chalk and acacia flowers. The texture is silky, with crisp acidity and a finish that lingers invitingly. A delicious 100% Chardonnay that shows the potential of the appellation, the grapes are from a 1.1ha parcel in the lieu-dit Les Saulniers; they are gently pressed as whole clusters and fermented in stainless steel to ensure the purity of the fruit. Drink 2024-2030

15 Domaine Camu Frères, Cuvée des Ducs, Vézelay 91

Elegant and subtle, this 100% Chardonnay

boasts discreet aromas of white nectarines and greengage plums with a bit of spice. The texture is light and fine, but there's enough persistence here to let this age. The grapes come from a 1ha plot at the base of the slope; they are gently pressed before fermentation and ageing in five-year-old casks. This 15ha domaine is the property of Baron Ladoucette, and the wines are made by Philippe Rossignol, the cellar master in Chablis. **Drink** 2024-2035

16 Guilhem et Jean-Hugues Goisot, Les Mazelots, Irancy 94 ⁽¹⁾

100% Pinot Noir. More serious and concentrated than most, Goisot's Les Mazelots boasts abundant mulberry and pomegranate aromas with hints of truffle and earth. Tannic and firm, concentrated but not heavy. The vines are planted in a band of grey Kimmeridgian that delivers prominent minerality; one third of the vines are 80-110 years of age (the oldest in the appellation), a third are 40-80 years old and the rest are young vines. The combination is spectacular. Drink 2028-2045

Domaine de la Fontaine Goby, Irancy 91 **B**

POA £ Cork & Cask

100% Pinot Noir. This delightful wine sports a light ruby colour, but the aromas of currant and plum are ripe and adorned with hints of violet and Ceylon tea. The texture is firm and lively, with impressive length for the category. The grapes are gently fermented on natural yeasts before ageing in cask for a year (15% new). There's enough substance here to warrant at least mid-term ageing. Drink 2024-2035 D

