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Corton Charlemagne

**Dinner and Wine Tasting with Jasper Morris MW
on 28th September 2023**

hosted by Klaus Umek

Browns Hotel,
33 Albemarle St, London W1S 4BP





CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE

The establishment of the grand cru was not without controversy. Le Charlemagne is in Aloxe-Corton, whose vigneronns were happy for the Pernand vines in En Charlemagne to be designated as 'Charlemagne' but not as 'Corton-Charlemagne', since in their view the more westerly orientation of En Charlemagne was no match for the more southerly exposure of their own Le Charlemagne. In 1934 a first judgement sided with Aloxe – but the final appellation decree in 1942 gave the decision to Pernand.

Officially there are in fact two white grand cru appellations: Corton-Charlemagne and Charlemagne alone. The 1937 decree, confirmed in 1942, stipulated only Chardonnay for the former but allowed Chardonnay or Aligoté for the latter, at least until 1948. Charlemagne still exists in theory today, though with only one practitioner.

In 1966 Corton-Charlemagne in Pernand was expanded by about ten hectares further up the valley, exposed west or even north-west. It is hard to see that this justifies grand cru status. Then in 1978 parts of Hautes and Basses Mourottes were promoted to grand cru Corton or Corton-Charlemagne. In contrast to the grand cru Corton, the mention of individual vineyard sites within Corton-Charlemagne is discouraged.

There can be a wide divergence in style between a south-facing location such as Pougets, which needs picking right at the start of the harvest, and the western slopes in Pernand-Vergelesses which might be picked a week or two later. The underlying similarity though comes from the minerality of the soil.

A great Corton-Charlemagne should tingle the palate and the hairs on the back of the neck. Clearly the wine will have power, but rather than the richly rounded blocks of fruit of the Montrachet vineyards, Corton-Charlemagne is likely to be rather more linear, and with a magical stoniness behind the initial fruit of the grape.



En Charlemagne 17.26ha

At the border with Aloxe-Corton the hillside faces west and fine, racy white wines can be made. But the grand cru appellation has been extended right up to the village of Pernand itself, by which time the exposition is north-west and the valley has become noticeably more enclosed. The final sector was only promoted in 1966 and probably should not have been.

Le Charlemagne 16.95ha

This is the absolute heartland of the appellation, facing south-west, thus avoiding the risk of over-ripeness which can afflict the vines exposed due south. If I had Corton-Charlemagne vines here I would be tempted to let the world know by labelling the wine as Corton-Charlemagne, Le Charlemagne. It is legal but slightly frowned on by the movers and shakers. Expect a little more depth of flavour here, a touch more flesh on the bones and stones, compared to En Charlemagne.

Corton-Charlemagne is also grown in the following climats: Pougets and Languettes which are predominantly exposed to the south; Le Corton and the upper part of les Renardes which face east just below the wood at the top of the hill, and parts of Le Rognet et Corton, Hautes Mourottes and Basses Mourottes in Ladoix-Serrigny. Each of these vineyards, though officially part of the Corton appellation, actually produce more white wine than red.

Jasper Morris MW

CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE - Vineyards

- Grand Cru Corton/Corton Charlemagne
- Grand Cru Corton
- Premier Cru
- Appellation Ladoix-Aloxe-Corton/
Pernand-Vergelesses
- Regional vineyards
- Grand Cru border
- Contour interval 20m
- Only Premier Cru if red
- Only Premier Cru if white

- 1 Le Clos des Maréchaudes
- 2 La Maréchaude
- 3 La Huchotte
- 4 Au Village
- 5 Hautes Mouron





Scores and reviews of Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru by Jasper Morris MW

Pierre-Yves Colin-Morey

92-95 points

From Les Languettes, still in barrel, neither racked nor sulphured. A light yellow-green in colour. Warm, but not too ripe fruit, from a cooler site here. This is more of a sensual than a stony Corton-but I do like the persistence of flavour at the finish.

Henri Boillot

95-98 points

The Corton-Charlemagne is supplied in grapes from the Ladoix and Pernand-Vergelesses sectors. Pale lemon and lime, with a striking nose, more reductive than toasty. The fruit is explosive on the second half of the palate, really standing out, a near perfect expression of Corton minerality and offering exceptional length.

Jean-Marc Roulot

93-96 points

This year some grapes from Hautes Mourottes have been added to the provision from Les Languettes. Not only does Jean-Marc think this makes a successful mix, but he also has 10 barrels of it! Pale lemon yellow. Sun on the stones, but the stones definitely have the upper hand, medium-plus in body, very delicious, with good tangy notes at the back, absolutely in the mineral style.

Domaine Simon Bize

94-97 points

Fine clear pale colour, tightly wound, but not reductive, with a powerful steely thread through the middle. The palate offers citrus notes, complex, fine boned and really persistent. There is an electric thread throughout and I feel that I am only seeing the birth pangs of a potentially very fine wine.

**Domaine G Roumier****94-96 points**

In bottle since the end of August. Delicious pale colour, and indeed a delicious light fresh but ripe nose, with a wave of gentle plum and fresh pear notes. A bit of warmth on the Pernand side of the hill (where this comes from) does no harm. The 2019 Corton-Charlemagne measure 13.2% alcohol, with excellent mineral acidity, and fine persistence. Very promising.

Domaine Rapet Père & Fils**96 points**

If you want the technobabble, the vines here are now 'tressed' rather than hedged and vinification takes place in a couple of cement eggs as well as barrel. The vines are mostly in En Charlemagne with a small part in Le Charlemagne. Attractive lemon and lime colour, lovely stylish and very classic bouquet. Terrific tension behind, no feeling of heat, a crystalline minerality and exceptional persistence. Very fine indeed.

Domaine de la Vougeraie**94-97 points**

From Le Charlemagne and En Charlemagne, so the domaine has opted for the old appellation of just Charlemagne since 2013. All managed by horse, with the Pernand plot (En Charlemagne) being picked later. Pale primrose, with a startlingly fine bouquet, explosive, yet also displaying a really fine balanced core with mineral intensity, which infuses the second half of the palate. The 2019 Charlemagne is exceptionally fine and extremely long, but not too muscular.

Domaine Bonneau du Martray**94-97 points**

The 2019 Bonneau du Martray Corton-Charlemagne was picked between 12th and 18th September. For Winemaker Emmanuel Hautus, it comes across as a blend between 2015 and 2017. It will be bottled in May. Quite a pronounced primrose colour. The former vintage shows in a slight oiliness on the nose and sweeter, richer yellow fruit on top whereas the 2017 comparison can be seen in the crystalline underlay. There is a light salinity to finish, with white flowers and the lightest dusting of coconut.

**Domaine de la Romanée-Conti****97 points**

There are four plots one lower down, one above and two in the middle, all vinified and matured separately. During élevage the middle plots seemed to be the best, the lower section good, while the wine from the top block appeared to be too acid. But it is now clear to Aubert that the blend needed them all, including the top, which was raised in one year old wood, the rest in new barrels. The wine took its time, both for the alcoholic and malolactic fermentations, so the Corton-Charlemagne was bottled later than the Montrachet. A first bottle was extrovert but soon evidence of a slight cork taint appeared. The second bottle was clean, if not quite so immediately exuberant. This is chiselled and fine with wonderful length. The stones are more apparent and they are washed with a fresh citrus. Clean pure and classy with real grip, there is power behind and the fruit totally fills out the back of the palate. A brilliant first offering of Corton-Charlemagne.

Domaine de Montille**93-96 points**

Pale primrose, less reductive. The fruit expands gorgeously on the palate, as well as the nose, very expressive and absolutely fruit driven. No bananas, plenty of ripe citrus fruit, plenty of stones. Textbook Corton-Charlemagne from a sunny vintage.

Les Héritiers Louis Jadot**95-97 points**

From Pougets. The Jadot habit is to show this after the Montrachet, but it manages to stand up all the same. The 2019 is really quite a complex wine. Sunny of course, but not over-ripe, this is definitely a big wine, not much more than 14%, but explosive on the palate. This wine can carry it, but you will really have to wait to enjoy it at its best.



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Olivier Leflaive

Flight 1

Tasting Notes





Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Jean-Marc Roulot

93-96 points

Flight 2



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, G. Roumier

94-96 points

Flight 2



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Domaine Rapet

96 points

Flight 2



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Domaine de la Vougeraie

94-97 points

Flight 3



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Joseph Drouhin

Flight 4



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Domaine de Montille

93-96 points

Flight 4



Tasting Notes



Corton-Charlemagne 2019, Louis Jadot

95-97 points

Flight 4



Tasting Notes



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