



|| PETRUSADVISERS

Richebourg 2007 Horizontal

Tasting with Jasper Morris MW
16th May 2024 at 6.30pm

hosted by Klaus Umek

Pichlmaiers zum Herkner
Dornbacher Str. 123, 1170 Wien



2007

I overheard a Frenchman saying to his friend at the Gare du Lyon in August 2007: 'Do you know, we haven't had a single day of sunshine since we elected President Sarkozy'. Despite the summer rainfall, there are some attractive red wines and some very fine whites.

The weather

It was a fairly miserable summer but with two crucial saving graces: an astonishingly fine April which gave the vines a really healthy start to the year, then a fine, cool, dry September which enabled the harvest to take place in good conditions. It was the earliest harvest for very many years, excepting the freak 2003 vintage.

A few storms early in the summer resulted in hail damage, though not in the Côte de Nuits. May was mixed, with hot and cold weeks alternating, though not too much rain. However, the inconsistency of the weather meant that flowering was very drawn out – up to three weeks in all – which indicated that ripening was unlikely to be consistent either. If May was variable, June, July and August were frankly poor with altogether too much cool, grey weather. The summer never settled down, the ground never really warmed up and we never got more than a couple of days of decent weather in a row as the anticyclones failed to materialise and depressions swung in from the Atlantic.

In general the vineyards resisted remarkably well, however, perhaps because of the wonderful start to the season that they had enjoyed in April. Throughout the summer growers were saying that 'if only we get decent weather from the next change of the moon, it should still be all right'. But by August the rot was beginning to appear in the red vineyards. These days everybody knows how to eliminate unhealthy bunches before they go into the vats, but this necessary deselection reduced the quantity available.

Because the flowering was so early, many growers counted the regulation 100 days from this point and were reckoning on August 25 as a likely start date, though most now pushed this back in view of the lack of sunshine. However, the grapes needed more time – not necessarily for sugar levels to rise or acidity to drop, but for flavour ripeness to develop as the vines and



grapes progressed further and further away from the poor weather of July and August.

Some harvest teams were seen on Friday August 24th, but picking in earnest began on the Monday following. The busiest week of harvesting was from Monday September 3, in decent conditions, but how the early pickers must have regretted their decision when they saw what the next week (starting the 10th) brought – a cool, drying wind and fresh, sunny skies all week.

First impressions

The reds showed clear, bright colours and great purity of fruit. Flavours were ripe, with very pretty aromatics, frequently in a cherry or raspberry register. Some offered a crunchy minerality while others were softer and rounder. Some were evidently for early enjoyment, but as wise a vigneron as Michel Lafarge was convinced of their ageing potential., and the wines were showing well at 10 years old.

Richebourg: 8.03ha

This grand cru is made up of two lieux-dits, Les Verroilles ou Richebours (2.98 hectares) and Les Richebours itself (5.05). Domaine de la Romanée Conti is the largest owner with 3.51 hectares, followed by Leroy, various branches of the Gros family, Liger-Belair, Méo-Camuzet and Grivot. Richebourg is usually considered the grandest of the *grands crus* in the village, apart from the monopoles of Romanée Conti, La Romanée and La Tâche. It is typically deeper in colour and fuller in body than Romanée St-Vivant, with just a mite less of the haunting bouquet. It is the more robust and sumptuous wine of the two.

There is a slight difference in orientation between the two lieux-dits which make up Richebourg, with the Verroilles part having the merest fraction of north in with the east as the hillside turns up towards the combe. This occasions slightly later ripening according to Henri Mayer, but no other significant difference. It just needed picking two or three days later (reported in Rigaux, *Ode aux Grands Vins de Bourgogne*, p.70). Jean-Nicolas Méo



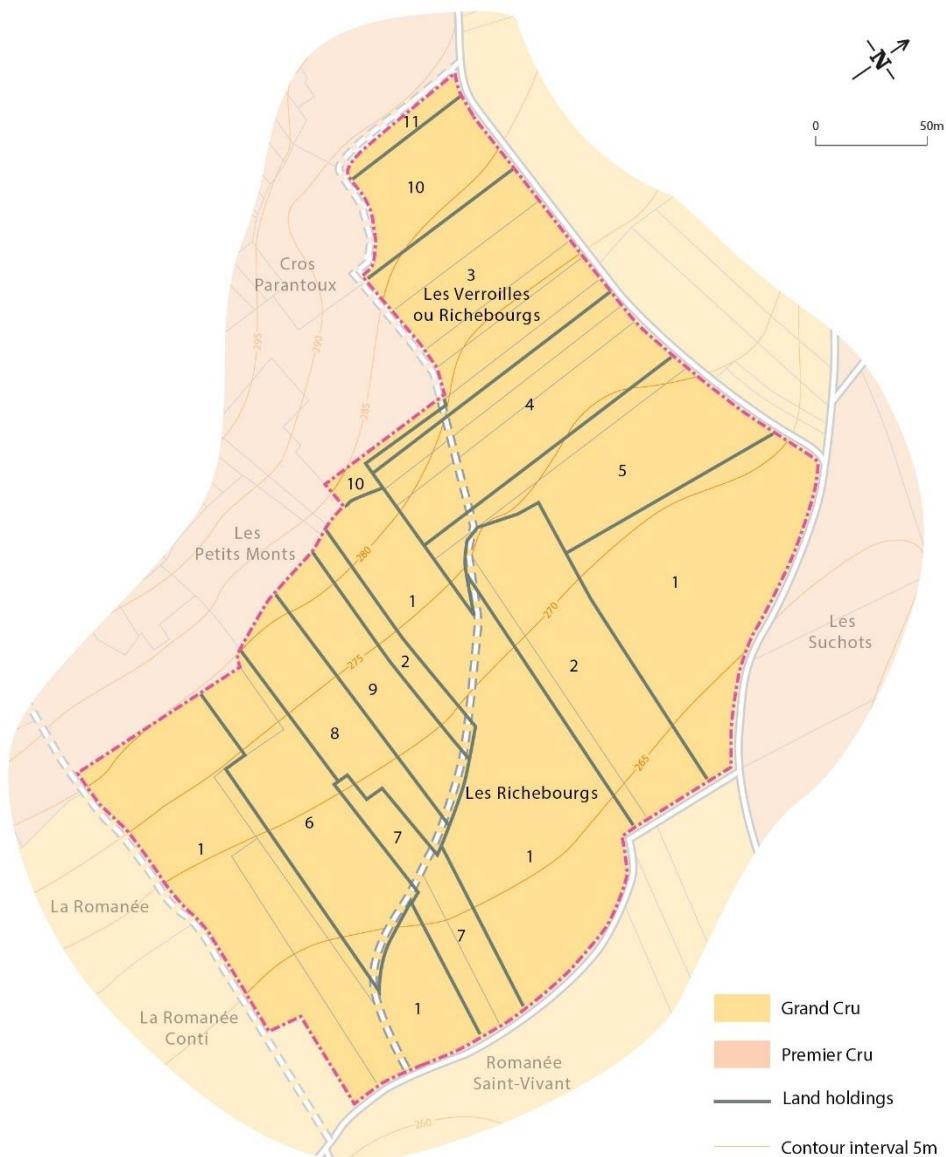
agrees, but notes that the upper part of Les Verroilles keeps the late-season evening sun longer than the rest of the cru.

Originally the designation here was Les Verroilles-sous- Richebourgs, but a deft piece of marketing changed 'sous' (under) to 'ou' (or).

This table – and the map – show accurately the holdings divided between the two parts of the vineyard. I was able to track down the correct results through a mixture of the cadastral map and walking the rows to see where viticultural practices changed. The numbers on the left reference the plots on the map.

	Richebourg	Richebourg ha	Veroilles	Total
1	Domaine de la Romanée Conti	2.5687	0.9370	3.5057
2	Domaine Leroy	0.7765		0.7765
3	Domaine Gros Frère & Soeur	0.0287	0.6645	0.6932
4	Domaine Anne Gros	0.0552	0.5450	0.6002
5	Domaine A-F Gros	0.1432	0.4568	0.6000
6	Thibault Liger-Belair	0.5205		0.5205
7	Domaine Méo-Camuzet	0.0462	0.3061	0.3523
8	Domaine Jean Grivot	0.3199		0.3199
9	Domaine Mongeard- Mugneret	0.3112		0.3112
10	Domaine Alain Hudelot-Noëllat	0.2817		0.2817
11	Domaine du Clos Frantin, Bichot		0.0733	0.0733
		5.0518	2.9827	8.0345

RICHEBOURG – Vineyards





Domaine Gros Frère & Soeur

0.69ha

Until he handed over to his son Vincent, the domaine was run by Bernard Gros, one of Jean Gros' children, though the name and the holdings come from Jean's brother and sister, Gustave and Colette Gros. A significant portion of the estate has been replanted from the mid-1980s onwards, when Bernard took over from his uncle Gustave.

The domaine was slow to abandon the use of herbicides, but the vineyards are now being ploughed since Vincent's arrival. The grapes are picked late, destemmed, and as soon as the grapes go into the tank, before any effects of the maceration with the skins can take place, a proportion of juice is removed (maybe one quarter), is measured for expected alcoholic degree, and then concentrated through evaporation if necessary. The idea is to avoid needing to chaptalize but to do it very early so that the aromatics from the skins will not be in any way changed.

New oak is used lavishly, imparting a glossy overlay to those wines with enough fruit to stand up to this treatment. All the red wines from village level upwards are aged 100% in new wood.

Domaine A-F Gros

0.60ha

Anne-Françoise Gros, originally of Vosne-Romanée, married François Parent of Pommard – where they live, though their wines have been made in substantial premises in Beaune since 1998. The domaine consists of Anne-Françoise's share of Domaine Jean Gros, additional wines in and around Vosne-Romanée which she has bought or leased, and her husband's share of Domaine Parent. Now the domaine is in their hands of their children, Caroline and Mathias.

There has been a sorting table since 2008, after which the grapes are destemmed but not crushed. The grapes are given a short cool maceration, then fermented with more pumping over than punching down. Mathias has been concentrating on improving the work in the vineyards so it no longer be necessary to resort to the concentrating machine which was last used in 2014. There will be some changes from the 2022 vintage, as the final Gros family inheritance is finally completed between the different branches of the family.



Domaine Anne Gros

0.60ha

This is a small domaine of 7ha of which nearly half is at generic level. However, the remainder consists of two village wines and three grands crus – to which a fourth will be added from 2021 as various Gros family holdings get redistributed. Anne has been joined by her daughter Julie and more recently by her son Paul.

The wines have a delicacy and charm about them without any corresponding loss of power. Some see this as the effect of having a vigneronne at the helm, instead of the usual masculine hand. Others feel it reflects the natural character of Vosne-Romanée. In any case the quality of the wine and its scarcity make this a heavily sought-after domaine. Interestingly, for one who makes her wine with such a light touch, Anne prefers the warmer vintages such as 2009, and presumably those which we are now experiencing regularly.

There are no secrets here, no concentrating machine, just meticulous work in the vineyards and common sense in the winery. For the maturation of the wines, 30 per cent new barrels are used for the generic wines, 50 for the village wines and 80 for the *grands crus*.

Domaine Méo-Camuzet

0.35ha

The vineyards are farmed organically, though without certification. The grapes are sorted at the winery, destemmed, cooled if need be to 15°C for a short pre-fermentation maceration, and then spend around 18 days in vat in total, with temperatures being maintained around 30-32°C. Early on the juice is pumped over twice a day, with some punching down subsequently. Afterwards, the wines are matured in barrel, with 50 per cent of new wood for the major villages, 60 to 70 for the *premiers crus* and 100 for the *grands crus*. Jean-Nicolas has refined his choice of wood, while retaining François Frères as more or less sole supplier.

The domaine's Richebourg vines, planted in the 1950s, are at the top of Les Verroilles, and catch the late evening sunshine. This plot is often cooler and fresher, but not in the warm years. This is a wine of discretion and finesse rather than sumptuous weight. It needs time to display its full range of flavours.



Thibault Liger-Belair

0.52ha

In 2001 Thibault Liger-Belair took over an old family property in Nuits-St-Georges, taking back the vines which had been contracted out to various sharecroppers, and leasing a cuverie just down the road. The original family jewels (his branch) consist of Richebourg, Clos de Vougeot and Nuits-St-Georges Les St-Georges, to which he has added significantly over the following 20 years.

The vines are certified organic and farmed biodynamically, with horses used to plough the vineyards where possible. The grapes are rigorously sorted, then destalked and fermented without much punching down or pumping over.

The oak regime is not to exceed 50 per cent new barrels, but also not to use any barrels more than three years old. The natural style of Thibault's wines is plump and full-bodied, though the benefits of his farming methods seem to be bringing a more mineral aspect to the fruit as well.

The holding of Richebourg Grand Cru was planted in 1931 and is in the southern part of Les Richebourgs, with Domaine de la Romanée-Conti on one side and Etienne Grivot on the other. According to Thibault, you feel this wine in the throat – it is not ready to show all the detail on the palate when young, but the richness of fruit is revealed in an incredible aftertaste.

Domaine Alain Hudelot-Noëllat

0.28ha

The domaine has extensive holdings based around the Noëllat heartland of Vosne-Romanée and covering all the villages from Nuits-St-Georges to Chambolle-Musigny. Charles van Canneyt arrived at the domaine to take over from his grandfather Alain in 2008, assisted at first by Vincent Munier who had been working there since 2005. In the last few years Charles has led this domaine to the forefront of quality producers in the Cote de Nuits, without deviating from his grandfather's aim of making fine, fragrant wines.

Charles van Canneyt has joined neither the high trellising nor the biodynamic movements, and nor has he embraced whole bunch vinification, but he is nonetheless seen as a leader of his generation. With a few vintages under his belt Charles seems to have mastered the perfect balance – delivering enough body to the wines without compromising the nuanced and ethereal style of burgundy for which this domaine is reputed.



Domaine Jean Grivot

0.32ha

The grapes are 100 per cent destalked, though the destemming machine is sophisticated enough to keep the berries whole, and the fermentation is allowed to start naturally, though not immediately, with a little punching down before this starts.

Etienne Grivot in recent years has produced a Richebourg of great majesty, luxuriant, caressing, harmonious yet precise. The exceptional density of fruit requires at least a decade before much detail will be released. Etienne's poetic side is evident when he talks about Richebourg: "It has unbelievable power without any sense of brutality. Think of the souk, with silk and spices, fresh meat. Others say masculine but I prefer torrid sensuality, a muskiness of flesh, the oriental markets. It levitates you into another dimension."

Tasting note from a Grivot Richebourg vertical tasting in 2015

2007, Richebourg Grand Cru, Domaine Jean Grivot ****

96

Paler than some vintages, but still bright and youthful. Quite reductive, but not ignobly so. Sweet young fruit on the palate, actually quite thrilling, and beautifully lively. Very persistent indeed. Great texture, a wine which dances across the palate. Tasted: November 2015.

Domaine Leroy

0.78ha

In 1988 Lalou Bize-Leroy purchased Domaine Charles Nöellat in Vosne-Romanée, which included the buildings and cellars that are now the domaine's headquarters, and a wonderful array of vineyards including Richebourg. The domaine has been farmed biodynamically from the start and is now certified by ECOCERT. They pioneered the high training of the vines and what is called tressage, where the shoots are not hedged but are rolled into the canopy.

The domaine is blessed with a heritage of ancient vines, in part because Lalou Bize-Leroy never grubs up and replants. The average yield across appellations and vintages at Domaine Leroy is around 16 hectolitres per hectare, according to Lalou.

The grapes are placed, stems and all, in wooden fermenting vats. These are never heated but can be cooled. Lalou Bize-Leroy feels that wines develop their natural fat best between 18 and 24°C. All the wines are aged in François Frères barrels which have been air dried for three years. They are racked after malolactic fermentation down to the cooler cellar below. They are neither fined nor filtered – "sediment is the jewel in the bottle".



Domaine de la Romanée Conti

3.51ha & 5.29 ha (RSV)

Domaine de la Romanée Conti is co-owned by the de Villaine and Leroy/Roch families. The former are successors to Jacques-Marie Duvault-Blochet, who bought the vineyard of La Romanée Conti in 1869; the latter acquired the shares of other descendants of Duvault- Blochet in 1942. In 2007, the domaine was run by Aubert de Villaine and Henri-Frédéric Roch, and is now jointly managed by Aubert's nephew Bertrand de Villaine and Lalou Bize-Leroy's daughter, Perrine Fenal.

The Richebourg is always a robust wine, deeper in colour than the Romanée St-Vivant but not necessarily as elegant. About a third of the holding remained in ungrafted vines until 1946, with two cuvées being produced – a regular Richebourg and a version labelled 'Richebourgs Vieux Cépages'. When these vines were grubbed up and replanted after World War II, cuttings were taken from La Romanée Conti which was also being replanted.

Their **Romanée St-Vivant** formerly belonged to the Marey-Monge family, but was farmed and made by the domaine from 1966 and purchased in 1988. It is a beautifully refined, stylish wine, perhaps having more in common with La Romanée Conti itself than the more rugged Richebourg. This vineyard has made considerable progress as a result of careful attention, especially to the drainage. Part of the vineyard was replanted with higher quality pinot material in 2005, with another sector having been topgrafted the previous year, and the final plot of less than ideal plant material was pulled out in 2009 for replanting between 2012 and 2014.

Jasper Morris MW



TODAY'S LINE UP

Aperitiv

Willi Schäfer Graacher Domprobst

1st course

- 1 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Gros Frère & Soeur
- 2 Richebourg 2007, Domaine A-F Gros
- 3 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Anne Gros

2nd course

- 4 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Méo-Camuzet
- 5 Richebourg 2007, Thibault Liger-Belair
- 6 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Jean Grivot
- 7 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Leroy

3rd course

- 8 Richebourg 2007, Domaine Alain Hudelot-Noëllat
- 9 Romanée St-Vivant 2007, Domaine Alain Hudelot-Noëllat
- 10 Richebourg 2007, Domaine de la Romanée Conti
- 11 Romanée St-Vivant 2007, Domaine de la Romanée Conti

Richebourg 2013, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti

Richebourg 2004, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti



Aperitiv

[illegible]

2007.

DOMAINE A-F. GONNARD
POMMARD, COTE D'OR, FRANCE
WWW.AF-GONNARD.COM

Richebourg
GRAND CRU
Appellation Contrôlée

MIS EN BOUTEILLE AU DOMAINE

PRODUCE OF FRANCE. 100% VIN DE BULGARETTE.
CHAMPAGNE BOUTEILLE - 1.0L

RICHEBOURG
Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée
GRAND
RED BURGUNDY WINE

DOMAINE
ANNE GROS

PROPRIETÉ VINICOLE & ÉLEVATION D'UNES VITICULTURES
Propriétaire Vignobles - www.anne-gros.com

IMPORTED BY: NORTH BERKELEY WINE, BERKELEY, CA

2007

Maison Fondée en 1858

Maison Fondée en 1858

GRAND CRU
RICHEBOURG

APPELLATION D'ORIGINE CONTRÔLÉE

Domaine Mic-Camuzet

PINOT NOIR & VITIS ROMANÉE, BURGUNDY, FRANCE

2007

THIBAULT LIGER-BELAIR

PROPRIÉTÉ À NOTRE-DAME-SAINTE-GEORGES

CÔTE D'OR

RICHEBOURG

RECOLTE, ÉLEVÉE ET MISE EN BOUTEILLE AU DOMAINE

RICHEBOURG
 GRAND CRU
 APPELLATION RICHEBOURG CONTRÔLÉE
 2007
 DOMAINE JEAN GRIVOT
 10 RUE ROMARTEL - 21700 - CÔTE D'OR - FRANCE
 PRODUCE OF FRANCE
 100% VIN DE GRAPPE BLANCHE



Flight 2

[illegible]

2007

Produit en France

Grand Cru de Bourgogne

Richebourg
GRAND CRU

APPELLATION RICHÉBOURG CONTRÔLÉE

Mis en bouteille à la Propriété par
Alain HUDELOT-NOELLAT
Propriétaire à Chambolle-Musigny, Côte d'Or, France

500 ml



Flight 3

[illegible]

SOCIÉTÉ CIVILE DU DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI
 PROPRIÉTAIRE À VOSNE-ROMANÉE (CÔTE D'OR) FRANCE

ROMANÉE-ST-VIVANT
 MAREY-MONGE
 APPELLATION ROMANÉE-ST-VIVANT CONTRÔLÉE
 13.976 Bouteilles Récoltes

LES ASSOCIÉS GÉRANTS
Henri-Jules Fick
 A. & V. G.

DOMAINE N° 00060
 ANNÉE 2007

Mise en bouteille au domaine

RUE DE CIVIL DU DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CÔTÉ
 PROPRIÉTAIRE À VOSNE-ROMANÉE (CÔTE-D'OR) FRANCE

RICHEBOURG
 APPELLATION RICHEBOURG CONTRÔLÉE
10.310 Bouteilles Prestige
 LES ANGLAIS-GRANDS
 A. de Villiers
 Mise en bouteille au domaine

RICHEBOURG

APPELLATION RICHEBOURG CONTRÔLÉE

n. 310 Bouteilles Réserve

LES ANGES DÉCHET

A. d. V. 1989

Mise en bouteille au domaine



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