

# VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

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## **Bret Brothers and La Soufrandière (Vinzelles)**

### **2011 Mâcon-Villages “Cuvée des Terroirs du Mâconnais”- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Mâcon-Villages “Cuvée des Terroirs du Mâconnais” from Bret Brothers is a lovely wine and a very good value. The deep and expressive nose shows lots of soil personality (perhaps due to its relatively low octane of 12.5 percent?) in its aromatic blend of peach, apple, spring flowers, a fine base of soil, a touch of vanillin oak and a bit of orange zest in the upper register. On the palate the wine is fullish, succulent and quite classy, with good, but, not great depth at the core, good acids and sneaky length and grip on the complex finish. This is a very stylish bottle of Mâcon-Villages that should drink well for the next three to five years. 2013-2017+. 88.

### **2011 Mâcon-Chardonnay- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Bret Brothers’ Mâcon-Chardonnay is a very pretty and vibrant example of the vintage, with plenty of elegance on both the nose and bouncy palate. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a mix of tangerine, pear, lovely soil tones, a nice touch of lime zest, apple blossoms and a dollop of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is fullish, juicy and bright, with a good core, very nice, framing acids and impressive length and grip on the wide open and classy finish. Lovely juice. 2013-2020. 89.

### **2011 Mâcon-Chardonnay “Climat La Roche”- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Mâcon-Chardonnay “Climat La Roche” from Domaine La Soufrandière is an excellent and very serious example of Mâcon-Villages. The deep, complex and very classy bouquet wafts from the glass in a musky mix of peach, orange, deep soil tones, citrus peel, a touch of smoke and a topnote of orange blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite ripe for the vintage, with a rock solid core of fruit, bright acids, and fine focus and grip on the open, plump and totally inviting finish. This is a bit Rubenesque in stature, but crisp and racy at the same time and a delicious glass of white Burgundy for relatively early consumption. 2013-2018+. 90.

### **2011 Mâcon-Cruzille- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Mâcon-Cruzille from La Soufrandière is a lovely wine for drinking over the next six to eight years, with the purity and elegance of the vintage beautifully synthesized in an impressively mature sense of terroir. The nose offers up a mix of apple, white peach, a bit of Mâconnais toastiness, dried flowers and a nice dollop of soil tones. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, ripe and wide open, with a bit more citrus in the flavor spectrum than is evident on the nose. The finish is long, ripe and generous, with a good framework of acidity, fine focus and very good length and grip. This is a lovely wine that delivers a fine synthesis of youthfully generous fruit and soil signature. 2013-2018. 89.

### **2011 Mâcon-Cruzille “Clos des Vignes du Maynes”- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Mâcon-Cruzille “Clos des Vignes du Maynes” from the Bret Brothers is a lovely bottle of Mâconnais white Burgundy, offering up a deep and classy nose of pear, tangerine, a touch of almond paste, a lovely base of soil, spring flowers and a fine base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and snappy, with a fine core of ripe fruit, lovely soil signature, crisp acids and a long, focused and complex finish. This wine is wide open for current drinking, but has the balance and structural spine to cruise along nicely for the next decade in bottle. 2013-2023. 90.

### **2011 Mâcon-Uchizy “Cuvée La Martine”- Bret Brothers**

I am a big fan of Mâcon-Uchizy, as I find it one of the most elegant and transparent of the various appellations in this region. The 2011 version from the Bret Brothers is a very classic example of both this village and the elegant, low octane side of the vintage, with its alcohol a very sleek twelve

percent and the wine exuding fine style and purity. The lovely nose wafts from the glass in a mix of pear, lemon, a touch of straw, acacia blossoms, pretty soil tones and perhaps just a whisper of vanillin oak way in the background. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and youthful, with good, but, not great depth, ripe acids and very nice length and grip on the youthful and bouncy finish. There is a nice, discreet touch of minerality and citrus peel on the backend that augurs very well for this wine down the road, and I would be strongly inclined to give it a year or two of bottle age to allow more complexity to develop. 2014-2023. 89+.

**2011 Mâcon-Vinzelles “Le Clos de Grand-Père”- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The Bret Brothers’ 2011 Mâcon-Vinzelles “Le Clos de Grand-Père” is one of the riper examples of the vintage I have tasted, tipping the scales at 13.5 percent and showing off a bit of a tropical fruit profile as a result. The nose is a deep, ripe and complex mélange of pineapple, peach, toasty soil tones, orange peel and apple blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and ripe, with a good core, sound framing acids and good length on the wide open, juicy finish. This is a good bottle that fans of bigger styled chardonnay-based wines are going to like even better than I did, but to my palate, after some of the really refined Mâcon bottlings from this vintage that I tasted from the Bret Brothers, this seems just a bit clumsy and simple. 2013-2020. 87.

**2011 Mâcon-Viré-Clessé “Climat La Verchère”- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Mâcon-Viré-Clessé “Climat La Verchère” from the Bret Brothers is a lovely wine, offering up a pure and classy nose of peach, tangerine, the lovely, minerally soil tones of Viré-Clessé, a bit of Mâconnais toastiness and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and elegant, with a good core, lovely soil signature, ripe acids and very good length and grip on the focused and quite classy finish. This is a delightful wine for drinking already, and another year or two of bottle age will only allow more complexity to emerge. Classy juice. 2013-2020. 91.

**2011 Mâcon-Viré-Clessé “Climat Sous les Plantes”- Bret Brothers**

The Bret Brothers’ 2011 Climat Sous les Plantes is a tad riper than their Climate La Verchère bottling (13.5 percent versus 13 percent), but it beautifully retains the inherent elegance and minerality of Viré-Clessé. The vibrant nose jumps from the glass in a mélange of orange, pear, a beautifully complex base of soil, citrus zest and a topnote of fruit blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and intensely flavored, with a fine core, bright, zesty acids, fine focus and balance and a very long, youthful and classy finish. Today, the La Verchère is more complex, and it may be that its slightly lower octane will always deliver a touch more complexity. On the other hand, the Sous les Plantes is certainly a younger wine and with a year or two of bottle age, perhaps the complexity of Viré-Clessé will emerge more fully in this vibrant wine. Another lovely example of Viré-Clessé. 2014-2020+. 90+.

**2011 Saint-Véran “La Côte Rôtie”- Bret Brothers**

The Bret Brothers’ 2011 Saint-Véran “La Côte Rôtie” is a very pretty wine that offers up bright fruit, a touch of toastiness and good length and grip on the palate. The bouquet is a blend of apple, peach, toasty elements, a nice base of soil and citrus peel. On the palate the wine is fullish, juicy and wide open, with good, but, not great, depth at the core, sound acids and good length and grip on the tasty, but rather un-complex finish. This is a tasty example for near-term drinking, but it is not up to the complexity and breed of the best examples of villages such as Viré-Clessé. 2013-2018. 87.

**2011 Saint-Véran “En Combe”- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Saint-Véran “En Combe” is lower in alcohol than the La Côte Rôtie bottling, only tipping the scales at 12.5 percent and the wine is correspondingly more soil-driven and serious as a result. The nose offers up a fairly complex mix of apple, pear, a nice touch of soil, acacia blossoms, a bit of almond paste and a gentle base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and a decided step up in complexity and grip from the La Côte Rôtie bottling, with a lovely core of pure fruit, zesty acids, very good grip and a fine signature of soil on the long, classy finish. A lovely wine. 2013-2023. 90.

**2011 Pouilly-Loché Climat “la Cologne”- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Pouilly-Loché Climat “la Cologne” from the Bret Brothers is a lovely example of the vintage, offering up a deep, pure and perfectly ripe (like an apple right off the tree and still warm

from the sun) bouquet of apple, peach, pretty soil tones, spring flowers and a touch of youthful citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and still quite young, with a good core of fruit, fine soil signature, good acids and sound length and grip on the still fairly primary finish. At thirteen percent alcohol, this is a very classic bottle of Mâcon, with impressive depth in the mid-palate and very good backend intensity and bounce. I would opt for giving it another year or two of bottle age to let the secondary layers of complexity to emerge. Fine juice. 2014-2025. 90+.

#### **2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles from La Soufrandière is a fairly ripe at 13.5 percent, and missed a bit of the elegance of the vintage as a result. The nose is a ripe and straightforward blend of peach, delicious apple, a bit of stony soil tones, lemon zest and citrus blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and four-square, with a ripe core of fruit, sound framing acids and just a touch of youthful backend bluntness. This will be better with a year's worth of bottle age, but it seems likely to always be just a touch simple. 2013-2020. 87.

#### **2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles Climat les Longeays- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Climat les Longeays" is a pretty ripe example of the 2011 vintage, tipping the scales at a full 13.5 percent alcohol. The nose is very pretty and invitingly ripe, offering up notes of pear, pineapple, a nice touch of straw, pretty minerality and a topnote of orange peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and quite broad on the attack, with a good core, sound, framing acids and a long, ripe and wide open finish. This is one of the more fruit-driven 2011s that I tasted from La Soufrandière, and while I am sure that it will have plenty of crowd appeal, I had a preference for the more minerally-defined wines in their range this year. This is still a very well-made wine, but for fans of Mâconnais fruit tones, rather than soil. 2013-2020. 88.

#### **2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Climat les Quarts"- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Climat les Quarts is another quite ripe example of the vintage (13.5 percent), but it has a better vein of minerality to drive its generous and very pretty fruit tones than the Les Longeays bottling this year. The deep and classy nose is lovely, wafting from the glass in a blend of pear, tangerine, a touch of almond paste, elegant soil tones and a gentle topnote of orange zest. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and beautifully transparent, with a lovely core, fine focus and detail and a long, crisp and very elegant finish. This is a lovely wine. 2013-2020+. 90.

#### **2011 Pouilly-Vinzelles Climat les Quarts "Cuvée Millerandée"- La Soufrandière**

The 2011 Climat les Quarts "Cuvée Millerandée" from the Bret Brothers is a very pretty wine that shows off plenty of intensity from the small berries that are used for this bottlings. This is a ripe example of the 2011 vintage, offering up scents of pear, mandarins, lovely soil tones, orange blossoms and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and bright, with a good core, a fine base of soil, crisp acids and a very long, ripe finish that is still pretty young and could do with a year or two of bottle age to really blossom. The label here states that the wine is fully fourteen percent in alcohol (from the concentration of the small berries?), and it tastes as if this is quite accurate, as there is a bit of backend heat here that is currently uncovered on the youthful finish. This is good juice, but it may prove that it is just a touch too heady for its own good- time will tell. Certainly, the constituent components here are pretty impressive. 2014-2025? 88-90+?

#### **2011 Pouilly-Fuissé "Cuvée Terres de Fuissé"- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Pouilly-Fuissé "Cuvée Terres de Fuissé" from the Bret Brothers is another very elegant and relatively low octane version of the vintage, tipping the scales at a very old school 12.5 percent alcohol. The bouquet is a lovely and quite refined blend of apple, tangerine, lovely, toasty soil tones, apple blossoms, a touch of orange oil and a bit of fresh almond in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a lovely core of fruit, fine focus and very good balance on the long, zesty finish. This does not quite possess the same precision of soil signature or grip as the Climat bottlings, but it is a fine bottle that is long on both personality and depth. 2013-2025. 90.

#### **2011 Pouilly-Fuissé "Cuvée Terres de Vergisson"- Bret Brothers**

The Bret Brothers' 2011 Pouilly-Fuissé "Cuvée Terres de Vergisson" is one of the riper examples of Pouilly-Fuissé in their lineup this year, reaching fully thirteen percent, but it is fresh, bright and very stylish at the same time. The fine bouquet is pretty much defined by its lovely fruit, with notes of

pear, peach, a touch of orange zest augmenting notes of almond paste, musky floral tones and a nice touch of soil. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and very generous on the attack, with a fine core, lovely focus and very good length on the fruit-driven, laid back and wide open finish. The acids here are a tad soft in comparison to many of the other 2011s in the Bret Brothers' lineup this year, and while the wine is bright and fresh today, I would opt for drinking this up over the near-term, before one starts to yearn for a bit more cut and grip. 2013-2016. 88.

**2011 Pouilly-Fuissé Climat “En Carementrant”- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 Pouilly-Fuissé Climat “En Carementrant” from La Soufrandière is a more classic interpretation of the vintage than the riper Pouilly-Vinzelles “Cuvée Millerandée”, weighing in at a very civilized 12.5 percent alcohol. The bouquet shows off the precision of this lower octane, jumping from the glass in a classy blend of delicious apple, fresh pear, lime blossom, a lovely base of complex soil tones and a touch of spring flowers in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and very transparent, with very good, but not great depth at the core, fine focus and nascent complexity and lovely bounce and structure on the long, soil-driven and youthful finish. This is a lovely wine today, but another couple of years of bottle age will certainly pay dividends with more complexity. 2015-2030. 92.

**2011 Pouilly-Fuissé Climat “La Roche”- La Soufrandière (Bret Brothers)**

The 2011 La Roche from La Soufrandière is an absolutely beautiful bottle in the making, offering up a deep, vibrant and nascently complex aromatic mélange of apple, mandarins, lemon oil, apple blossoms and a complex and very refined base of chalky minerality. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and dancing, with a lovely core, great focus and balance, ripe acids and lovely focus and grip on the transparent and dancing finish. This is also a very refined and low octane example of the vintage, with only 12.5 percent alcohol, and the terroir reigns supreme here as a result. Lovely juice. 2014-2030. 92+.

**2011 Pouilly-Fuissé Climat “Les Clos Reyslié”- Bret Brothers**

The 2011 Pouilly-Fuissé “Les Clos Reyslié” from the Bret Brothers is a bit more marked by its new oak than any of these other Pouilly-Fuissé bottlings, and while this adds a bit of early dramatic appeal on the nose, it also tends to take away some of the lift on the backend of the palate. The bouquet is deep and complex, offering up scents of apple, pear, almond paste, a very pretty base of soil, orange zest, spring flowers and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with fine complexity, bright acids, good focus and a very long, slightly oaky finish. This has aspirations, and it may well be that with bottle age, it will distance itself from some of these other bottlings, but today, I am much more taken with the dancing sense of soil found in bottlings such as the 2011 La Roche or En Carementrant from La Soufrandière. I may be underrating this a tad, but today this comes across as just a touch heavy-handed in style, despite it probably having the best stuffing of the entire lineup in this vintage. 2015-2030+? 88+?