

Allen Meadows'

4th Quarter, 2005

Issue 20

B U R G H O U N D . C O M®

THE ULTIMATE BURGUNDY REFERENCE

2004	Pouilly-Fuissé Cuvée Pantacrine	white	(87-90)
2004	Pouilly-Fuissé - "Vignes Blanches"	white	(88-90)
2004	➔ St. Véran "Les Crêches"	white	(87-89)
2004	➔ St. Véran Vieilles Vignes	white	(87-89)
2004	➔ Pouilly-Fuissé "La Roche"	white	(89-91)
2004	Pouilly-Loché "La Colonge"	white	(88-90)
2004	Pouilly-Vinzelles	white	(86-88)
2004	Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Longeays"***	white	(87-89)
2004	Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Longeays"	white	(87-89)
2004	➔ Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts"	white	(89-92)
2004	➔ Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts" Cuvée Millerandée	white	(89-92)
2004	Pouilly-Vinzelles Cuvée X Mûr	white	NR
2004	➔ St. Véran "En Combe"	white	(87-89)
2004	St. Véran "Les Fournaises"	white	(86-88)
2004	Viré-Clessé "Sous les Plantes"	white	(86-88)
2004	Viré-Clessé "La Verchère"	white	(86-89)
2003	Pouilly-Fuissé "Carentrant"	white	86
2003	Pouilly-Fuissé "La Roche"	white	87
2003	Pouilly-Loché "La Colonge"	white	87
2003	Pouilly-Vinzelles	white	87
2003	Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts"	white	88
2003	Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts" Cuvée Millerandée	white	88

***Bret Brothers Cuvée

Brothers Jean-Guillaume and Jean-Philippe Bret told me that they delayed the start of the harvest until "September 27th". The *ban de vendange* was declared September 14th but there wasn't any way that you were going to have adequate sugar and maturity levels that early, especially given the fairly generous yields in the region. We did everything we could to limit yields but the vines just wouldn't listen. It's pretty clear that they were compensating for the low yields we had in 2003. Overall, we had yields of around 55 hl/ha with sugars ranging between 12.6 to 13.4%. There was some hail in July, mainly in and around Vergisson but it extended as far as La Roche-Vineuse and then again in August up around Viré-Clessé. The grapes had a lot of malic acid though the malos went smoothly and they were done in our cellars by February." As the range of wines under the *négociant* side of this operation (called Bret Brothers), I have divided the wines between Domaine La Soufrandière and Bret Brothers. Note that in all cases, the Bret Brothers' wines are made from purchased grapes manually harvested and not from purchased must or wine. On both sides, there can be found outstanding wines and if you haven't yet tried an example, I highly recommend them for both quality and value. (A Becky Wasserman Selection/Le Serbet, Beaune, France - sbw@wanadoo.fr; Morris & Verdin, UK).

La Soufrandière:

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles: Pretty, ripe and expressive green fruit and floral aromas combine with nicely dense and sappy middle weight flavors that culminate in a racy, almost zippy finish. I like the freshness and punch here. (86-88)/2007+

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Longeays": Strong reduction makes the nose but the edgy, almost nervous flavors are also very fresh and finely detailed with a clear sense of underlying minerality. This is awkward today but the material here is of real quality. (87-89)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts": (from vines between 40 and 65 years of age). Stylistically, this is consistently my favorite wine in the La Soufrandière range as its elegant and mineral-driven character is always beautifully balanced yet with real depth of expression and superb length. The 2004 version is no different and the cut and delineation coupled with the brilliant minerality are a striking combination. Highly recommended. (89-92)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts" Cuvée Millerandée: (*millerandage* is a condition where there are many small berries mixed in with normal size berries; these small berries are highly prized because they are rich in sugar and add concentration to the must because of a very high ratio of dry extract to liquid). As it always is, this is bigger, richer and riper than the regular *cuvée* but not any finer or more elegant. There is serious volume and power with excellent depth and superb length. Stylistically, I prefer the regular *cuvée* but there's really no difference qualitatively as both are outstanding. (89-92)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles Cuvée X Mûr: (a late harvest style wine that was not harvested until November 11th and it will have on the order of 200 grams of residual sugar when it is finally bottled). This was still fermenting at the time of my July visit and will not be formally reviewed but I will observe that the flavors are incredibly ripe, thick and luxurious. It should make a fantastic dessert wine when it's finally bottled. Not rated.

2003 Pouilly-Vinzelles: Exuberantly fruity and exceptionally bright and vibrant with fat, powerful, intense flavors built on a base of pungent minerality and a lovely finishing buffering sweetness. Usually, I find sweet flavors in supposedly dry wines annoying but the acidity and minerality here more than offset it. In a word, delicious. 87/2006+

2003 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts": (from vines between 40 and 65 years of age). A lemon custard nose is followed by outstanding flavor authority with ample concentration, richness and power. This wine always displays an intense minerality and while it is big and powerful, it remains refined and pure. Lovely stuff that really coats the mouth. 88/2006+

2003 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Quarts" Cuvée Millerandée: (*millerandage* is a condition where there are many small berries mixed in with normal size berries; these small berries are highly prized because they are rich in sugar and add concentration to the must because of a very high ratio of dry extract to liquid). The aromas are slightly riper and include a touch of the exotic but the densely concentrated and opulent flavors are bigger and more powerful with an appealing succulence and finish sweetness. Indeed, there is clearly a touch of residual sugar on the mineral-infused finish. This is a dramatic wine that is impressive if not elegant. 88/2006+

Bret Brothers:

2004 Mâcon-Uchizy "La Martine": Bright, ripe and fresh citrus and green fruit aromas merge into rich but racy middle weight flavors that possess good detail and fine finishing punch, all wrapped in a complex and slightly toasty finish. (86-88)/2007+

2004 Mâcon-Vinzelles: Subtle hints of vanilla and *pain grillé* frame elegant and fruity aromas with delicious and firm barely middle weight flavors that culminate in a forward and slightly sweet finish. There is good balance here though the flavors are a bit on the simple side. (85-87)/2006+

2004 Mâcon-Cruzilles: (from 35 to 70 year old vines). High-toned wafts of floral and ripe peach lead to round, rich and nicely concentrated flavors that possess an opulent character with solid detail and fine length. The richness is buffered by firm but not aggressive acidity and the overall impression is clean and fresh. (87-89)/2007+

2004 St. Véran "En Combe": This is still somewhat raw on the nose with pungent fermentation aromas though the rich, intense and impressively well delineated flavors carry an almost palpable sense of minerality and excellent length. This is very promising as it possesses excellent material, especially for what this is. (87-89)/2007+

2004 St. Véran "Les Fournaises": (from a site where there is almost no topsoil). Strong reduction completely hides the nose yet the supple, round and sweet flavors possess good vibrancy and fine complexity with a bit more finishing richness than the En Combe displays. (86-88)/2006+

2004 Viré-Clessé "Sous les Plantes": (50 to 70 year old vines). This is distinctly different from the La Verchère with a reserved and tight nose that offers up only glimpses of the ripe citrus-infused aromas though the flavors are delicious, racy and quite pure with good minerality on the firm, crisp and persistent finish. This is very fresh and attractive though not necessarily particularly complex. (86-88)/2006+

2004 Viré-Clessé "La Verchère": Distinctly riper aromas of orchard fruit and herbal notes introduce subtly sweet medium full-bodied flavors that retain a good sense of detail and a sappy finish that delivers good cut and pop. (86-89)/2007+

2004 Pouilly-Loché "La Colonge": There are real aromatic fireworks here with a strikingly expressive nose of cool lemon and lime notes with obvious underlying minerality that introduces delicious, intense and punchy flavors that possess real verve and finishing energy. This is built on a base of firm minerality, which gives the finish real lift. Lovely stuff. (88-90)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Vinzelles "Les Longeays": This too displays more than a touch of reduction though there is concentrated, intense and beautifully defined flavors offer excellent cut and a fine sense of underlying balance. This is a lovely effort that has a chiseled effect on the long backend with plenty of energy that does a slow build from the mid-palate. (87-89)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Fuissé "La Roche": Ripe, bright, fresh and elegant aromas of straw, peach and citrus give way to rich, full and mouth coating medium-bodied flavors that are complex and taut with superb volume yet terrific finishing detail. This is notably refined with ample minerality and superior balance that should permit this to drink well over the next decade. (89-91)/2008+

2004 Pouilly-Fuissé "Carentrant": Already a deep yellow color. An expressive nose of ripe orchard fruit leads to opulent, rich and very concentrated full-bodied flavors that offer superb depth and completely stain the palate with an impressive amount of dry extract. But it's the youthful intensity that distinguishes this wine though I suspect it will come around a bit sooner than the La Roche. The best of these Bret '04s. (89-92)/2007+

2003 Pouilly-Loché "La Colonge": Ripe and exotic notes of pineapple, mango and apricot precedes supple yet precise middle weight flavors that offer plenty of punch and a bone dry finish. I very much like the style here as the sappy flavors are unusually pure and rather than the typical pop and weight of '03, there is real finesse here. 87/2006+

2003 Pouilly-Fuissé "La Roche": Classic wet stone and white flower fruit aromas highlight pure, beautifully detailed and very concentrated flavors that deliver a lovely sweetness on the punchy, medium length, slightly warm finish. While the flavors stop short of being *surmature* there is a very ripe fruit compote quality to them that suggests early drinkability. 87/2006+

2003 Pouilly-Fuissé "Carentrant": Leesy and overt exotic orchard fruit aromas combine with extremely ripe, sappy and mouth coating flavors and a nicely long finish. The flavors are rich to the point of opulence and there is a lovely textured quality but this possesses only just enough buffering acidity to avoid heaviness. Delicious but particular. 86/now+