

John Gilman
A View From The Cellar
January 2023

Domaine Joseph Voillot

Etienne Chaix has made an excellent lineup of wines in the 2021 vintage. He noted that their Meursault holdings were hit the hardest by the spring frosts, with eighty percent of the crop lost to the three nights of sharp, freezing temperatures in April. Consequently, he will not commercialize any of his lovely Meursault “Chevalières” in 2021, as there is only a half barrel of the wine and he will simply keep it back to share with his workers during the harvest or for his extended family to drink. As he has a bit bigger parcel in Meursault “les Cras”, this wine will be offered to clients. The frost damage was also equally severe in the domaine’s holdings in the Beaune premier cru of aux Coucheries, as Etienne notes that “the vineyard is one of the warmer microclimates in Beaune and consequently, the vines were already quite advanced when the frosts hit that first week of April.” The domaine’s other vineyards did not fair all that much better, as yields were down by seventy percent in Fremiets, Caillerets and Champans in Volnay, the same in les Epenots and sixty percent in Pézerolles and Rugiens in Pommard. Monsieur Chaix noted that if not for the three weeks of splendid weather at the end of August and the start of September, it would never have been possible to finally end up with such beautiful ripeness in the remaining bunches and such really fine wines. As he noted, the 2021s are the kind of wines he likes to drink, in comparison to the more muscular wines brought about by the heat and drought of the three previous vintages. He made a lovely analogy that “2021 was a marvelous vintage for a winemaker, as one could make the kind of wines that he likes, whereas in 2018 and 2020, during the winemaking it was more like driving a car and always having to step on the brakes to slow the vintage down- in 2021 you could drive anywhere you wanted to go.” His wines have turned out splendidly in this vintage, with beautifully pure and gently sappy fruit tones, coupled to absolutely pristine expressions of their underlying terroir. The red wines, like so many of his most successful

neighbors up and down the Côte, have svelte structural chassis and will age long and gracefully, but with fine-grained tannins that will probably make them accessible and quite tasty before they reach their plateaus of peak maturity. The Bourgogne rouge was the only wine that had already been bottled, but everything else in the cellars had already been assembled in tank for bottling beginning in early January. A superb range of wines at Domaine Joseph Voillot this year!

Vins Blancs

2021 Meursault “les Cras”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 Meursault “les Cras” from Domaine Voillot has turned out very nicely, despite the severe frost damage here in April. This wine is lovely on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet offering up scents of apple, fresh almond, a lovely base of chalky soil tones, white lilies and vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is bright, full-bodied, complex and revels in its lovely core of ripe fruit, with good soil signature, bouncy acids and a long, well-balanced finish. Good juice. 2023-2040. **91+**.

Vins Rouges

2021 Bourgogne Rouge “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

This wine had been bottled at the end of July and is still a bit tight after the *mise*. However, with a bit of coaxing the nose offers up a pretty and red fruity blend of cherries, strawberries, woodsmoke, *pigeon* and a nice base of soil. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and bouncy, with a very respectable core, tangy acids and a long, soil-driven finish that is perked up by just a touch of tannin. This will drink beautifully with a year or two in the cellar. 2024-2035. **88**.

2021 Volnay “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

Both village wines from Etienne Chais are of fine quality in 2021, and both are very much emblematic of their respective communes. The 2021 Volnay “Vieilles Vignes” is very elegant in personality this year, offering up a complex bouquet of red plums, cherries, cocoa powder, *pigeon*, a lovely base of soil, woodsmoke and just a touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused and nicely transparent, with a fine core of fruit, suave, moderate tannins and good length and grip on the complex finish. Good juice. 2028-2065. **90**.

2021 Pommard “Vieilles Vignes”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 Pommard “Vieilles Vignes” from Domaine Voillot is also an outstanding example. It shows a bit more depth on both the nose and palate than the Volnay, but also a bit more tannin, as befits a proper Pommard. The bouquet is really enticing, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, pomegranate, woodsmoke, gamebird, raw cocoa, a hint of mustard seed and a nice, gentle framing of new oak. On the palate the wine is deep, pure and full-bodied, with a sappy core of fruit, fine soil signature and grip, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, well-balanced finish. I love the synthesis here of the vintage’s inherent elegance with the depth of Pommard. 2031-2065+. **90+**.

2021 Beaune “aux Coucheries”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 aux Coucheries from Etienne Chais is quite black fruity in personality this year, offering up a lovely sense of sappiness in its bouquet of black cherries, sweet dark berries, bonfire, dark soil tones, *pigeon*, dried flowers and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a very good core, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex finish. This seems to have just a touch less backend bounce and vitality than the other premier crus this

year, but perhaps this is just a reflection of it having been racked at a different time and not yet having recovered from the *assemblage*? It is certainly deep, complex and classy. 2033-2075. **92.**

2021 Volnay “les Fremiets”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

I do not taste Volnay “les Fremiets” with anywhere near the same frequency as I used to back in my wine merchant days, when the Fremiets bottling from Jacques d’Angerville always graced my shelves. I really like this *terroir* and the 2021 from Domaine Voillot is an absolutely classic example of this fine premier cru, offering up a refined and pure bouquet of black plums, dark berries, coffee bean, a complex base of dark soil tones, a nice touch of new oak and plenty of upper register smokiness. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant in profile, with a superb core, lovely soil signature, ripe, suave tannins and a long, vibrant and complex finish. Fine, fine juice. 2033-2080. **93.**

2021 Volnay “les Champans”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 les Champans from Etienne Chaix is also a simply stunning example of this fine premier cru vineyard. The beautifully elegant nose wafts from the glass in a blend of red and black plums, cherries, spit-roasted quail, a complex base of soil, woodsmoke, coffee bean and a deft touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and shows off superb depth at the core, great soil signature, ripe, fine-grained tannins and a long, nascently complex and very promising finish. This is a touch more reserved on the palate than the Fremiets and will take a bit longer to blossom, but it is going to be stellar. 2034-2085. **93+.**

2021 Volnay “les Caillerets”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

By a very small margin, the 2021 Caillerets is the finest of these three outstanding Volnay premier crus in the Voillot cellars this year. The bouquet delivers an aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, black plums, Caillerets spice tones, gamebird, bonfire, dark soil tones and a nice touch of oak. On the palate the wine is deep, complex and full, with a gorgeous core of fruit, excellent mineral drive and grip, fine-grained tannins and a long, impeccably balanced finish. Classic Caillerets. 2035-2085. **94.**

2021 Pommard “Clos Micault”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

Like the Pommard old vine AC bottling, the 2021 Clos Micault also offers up a beautiful combination of the elegance of 2021 and the depth and potential longevity of premier cru Pommard. The lovely, refined nose jumps from the glass in a mix of black cherries, black plums, dark chocolate, a complex base of soil, woodsmoke, gamebird and cedary oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, well-balanced and shows off excellent depth in the core, with ripe, buried tannins, fine focus and a long, complex finish. Fine juice. 2035-2085. **93.**

2021 Pommard “les Epenots”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

Like the 2021 Clos Micault, the les Epenots from Domaine Voillot is also quite black fruity this year. The nose delivers a superb, precise mix of black plums, black cherries, dark chocolate, *pigeon*, a superb base of soil tones, raw cocoa, vanillin oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is complex, full-bodied and nicely reserved out of the blocks, with a fine core of fruit, excellent transparency and grip, ripe, buried tannins and excellent length on the seamlessly balanced finish. 2037-2090. **93+.**

2021 Pommard “les Pézerolles”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 Pézerolles from Etienne Chaix is a stunning young bottle of Pommard. The wine is elegant, deep, pure and sappy, offering up scents of sweet dark berries, black plums, gamebird, bitter chocolate, dark soil tones, woodsmoke, violets and a nice touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with superb soil signature, ripe, buried tannins

and a very long, soil-driven and complex finish. This is very, very elegant young Pommard! 20235-2090. **94**.

2021 Pommard “les Rugiens”- Domaine Joseph Voillot

The 2021 Domaine Voillot Rugiens is yet another outstanding and classical example of this great *terroir*. The bouquet is a shade deeper and more complex than any of these other Pommard premier crus this year, wafting from the glass in a mix of red and black cherries, plums, smoked meats, bonfire, a complex foundation of minerality, a nice touch of spice, vanillin oak and a floral topnote redolent of violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and properly structured, with a great core of fruit, fine focus, ripe tannins and a long, well-balanced and nascently complex finish. This is going to be a dynamite wine! 2037-2090. **94+**.