

Domaine des Lambrays 2019

This is the first vintage made entirely by Jacques Desvauges, the famous winemaker previously at Clos de Tart.

The vineyard is now completely organic and will be completely biodynamic in the coming years.

Whilst quality is exceptional, yields were way down in 2019, just 15 hl/ha for the Grand Cru, compared to 36 hl/ha for the 2018 vintage, so there is very little to go around.

Jacques has also changed the distribution for these wines, and incidentally has doubled the price!

It's the same price as last year, for half the number of bottles!

There is already movement in back vintages this morning, inquire if you would like some before prices rise too much...

“I think in 2019 we made many changes. But you have to be careful what you change. You have to respect that, and yet every domaine has to challenge itself to do better than the year before. With 2019 we made a couple of important changes, the most important in the vineyard. We converted to 100% organic - no more chemicals. For us it has been hard because the vineyard is steep and the rows are perpendicular to the incline. It is better to spray the two sides [of the vine] at the same time, but since one side [of the ground] is higher than the other, there is no tractor that can do that. [It would topple over – a risk that has taken the life of more than one winemaker over the years.] We found a factory in Mâconnais that could build a specially made sprayer for us and this was first used in 2020. We also plough all the vines and that has been a huge amount of work because the tools are manufactured for use on flat land. So at least once a year every vine must be dug by hand.” We then discussed how they approach the vineyard in terms of sub-plots. “You can walk through the vineyard and feel the diversity between different sectors in terms of altitude, soil and geology. I wanted to understand this diversity better and I introduced a parcellaire approach, vinifying separate sub-plots in small tanks. Clos des Lambrays used to be fermented in 84-hectoliter tanks and barrelled down as one cuvée, whereas now there are now 11 cuvées that will be blended just prior to bottling. These changes were inspired by old bottles of Clos des Lambrays such as the 1918, which is spectacular. I also believe in using all the vineyard in the final blend except the 30 rows of young vines under 20 years old.”

Jacques Desvauges, Winemaker, Domaine des Lambrays

2019 Clos des Lambrays, Grand Cru

@ £1,080 c/s IB – 7 cases available (3 bts per case)

This definitely represents a new beginning for the Clos des Lambrays, beginning with a dizzying array of aromas that range from high-toned red fruits to ripe, plummy black fruit, all touched with spice, and a suggestion of wild herbs and fresh flowers. After blending there was an average of 80% whole cluster fermentation. The texture on the palate is concentrated but not heavy, and there is a charming, silky aspect to it so, despite the tannin and density, the overall impression is one of finesse and elegance. Drink 2029-2049.

98 Points, Decanter

The 2019 Clos des Lambrays Grand Cru was tasted both as separate parcels per vine age and as a final blend, which is 13.6° alcohol. This year the whole bunch contribution is 80%, matured in 60% new oak, which is a little more than it used to be and from various cooperages (hitherto it was exclusively François Frères with very light toasting.) This has an intense bouquet, initially very tightly wound and requiring aeration, gradually revealing predominantly black fruit, crushed limestone, graphite and pressed iris flower aromas. Very fine delineation but certainly aromatics that will require bottle age. The palate confirms this. It is very fresh on the entry with a much subtler influence of the stems compared to those under former winemaker Thierry Brouin. There is a light tang of white pepper and tobacco, very fine tannins with a poised, almost understated finish that is silky smooth in texture. Swallowing a mouthful (it was the finally tasting of the day) there is persistence that I think was lacking in recent vintages. This balletic, "Margot Fonteyne of Morey-Saint-Denis", will pirouette across your senses.

95-97 Points, Neal Martin

Offered subject to remaining unsold and final written confirmation.

Wines to be shipped autumn 2021.

Delivery charged at cost.