

Domaine William Fèvre 2019

Another year, another brilliant set of wines from Domaine William Fèvre!

In Allan Meadows' Burghound there is a section called Burghound.com's "Don't Miss" Wines – this contains all the finest Chablis of the vintage, for 2019 there were 13 wines listed, 5 of those were from William Fèvre. The producer with the next most listings, 4 in total, was François Raveneau, a producer who's wines are almost impossible to secure on release and sell for many times the price of Domaine William Fèvre.

Régisseur Didier Séguier called 2019 "another hot and dry vintage that was even drier than 2018 as even the winter didn't have much rain. Spring continued the trend and it's not surprising that by the time summer arrived with its hot days, the vines, and particularly the young vines with less well-developed root systems, had trouble coping. There were also certain sectors that suffered frost damage and between that and the dryness, the floraison passed with difficulty. On the plus side there was no disease pressure to speak of and a small pre-harvest rainstorm that dropped around 20 ml of water really helped the vines achieve their final maturities as well as plump out the drying fruit. We chose to begin picking on the 11th of September and continued through to the 20th. The fruit could not have been any cleaner and we had relatively few sunburned berries. The reason for this is partially because the bunches were so small that the leaves helped "hide" them from the penetrating rays of the sun. Just to provide an idea, Chablis bunches typically weigh around 100 grams but in 2019, mostly came in between 50 and 60 grams, which is very light. In the end, yields were around 40 hl/ha for the villages wines yet only 20 to 30 hl/ha for the 1ers and grands crus while the Mont de Milieu gave us only 15 hl/ha. Potential alcohols were very good, ranging from 12 to 13.5% so nothing was chaptalized. Acidities were also remarkably good given the heat as the post-malo pHs came in between 3.2 and 3.25. The alcoholic fermentations presented no problems though one aspect of note is that they finished with less than 1 gram of unfermentable sugars, which is very dry. This contributes to the impression of the 2019s as being particularly dry. As to the wines, they're ripe yet largely classic in style and their concentrations and acid backbones should permit them to age for a very long time.

2019 Chablis

£170 c/s In Bond – 10 cases available (12 bts per case)

This is aromatically similar to the Champs Royaux with a slightly more pronounced mineral reduction character. There is however better density and intensity to the focused yet opulent medium-bodied flavors that exhibit impressive power for a villages level wine on the slightly warm finale. Worth a look.

88-91 Points, Burghound

From 50 year old vines, with a yield of 46 hl/ha in 2019. Pale lime green. The Domaine version of William Fèvre Chablis offers a classical nose, leaner than, some, yet with intensity on the palate., some of the iodine character is present, but strong fresh citrus fruit too. Exceptional length. Lemongrass acidity.

88-90 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis 1er Cru Vaillons

£170 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case)

£65 per magnum In Bond – 3 magnums available (Individual wooden case per magnum)

A slightly riper and quite dense nose features notes of white pepper, quinine, mineral reduction and a combination of orchard fruit compote scents. There is excellent volume to the sappy and powerful flavors that, somewhat surprisingly, flirt with rusticity on the noticeably warm bitter lemon-inflected finish. Like the Beuroy, this is not a Vaillons of finesse, but it certainly cannot be faulted for a lack of frank character. (89-92)/2024+

89-92 Points, Burghound

Just racked, so this has not fallen clear. Mostly from central Vaillons itself, the 2019 starts quietly, but then shows real weight behind, before the typical lemon freshness of the finish. The fruit through the middle is richer than Vaillons used to be, now with, some peachier notes. The bouquet maintains a touch of the smokiness, but with ripe fruit intruding. Long and complex.

90-93 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis 1er Cru Montmains

£170 c/s In Bond – 10 cases available (6 bts per case)

£135 per double magnum (3L) In Bond – 1 available (Individual wooden case)

An exuberantly floral-suffused nose evidences background notes of citrus rind and enough Chablis typicity to be interesting. There is really lovely intensity to the powerful and super-saline middle weight flavors that terminate in a very dry and sleek finish. This needs to develop more depth but if it is allowed a few years of cellar time, it should progressively develop.

90-92 Points, Burghound

Fine pale lemon colour. This has a beautiful nose from the very start. A large third comes from, butteaux, for minerals, 20% from Forêts for elegance, and the remainder from Montmains for weight and structure. Classical chalky nose, absolutely perfect weight of fruit and tension here, very long finish. This will please the purist and the punter alike, says Didier (in translation). Very long aftertaste.

93-95 Points, 5 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis 1er Cru Mont de Milieu

£205 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case)

Slightly honied aromas of exotic white and yellow peach are laced with moderate amounts of classic Chablis character. Interestingly, the medium-bodied flavors are not quite as dense as those of the Les Lys though they are still notably powerful while offering just a bit more depth on the sneaky long, sappy and serious finale. At least some patience will be necessary.

91-93 Points, Sweet Spot, Outstanding! – Burghound

Lemon and lime colour. A little sunny grapeyness to this, attractive, very old vines, the class shows once the wine is in the mouth, building steadily in weight through to the back. Plenty in reserve here and the weight of ripe fruit is sufficiently balanced by the acidity.

92-94 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis 1er Cru Montée de Tonnerre

£240 c/s In Bond – 8 cases available (6 bts per case)

Pale color. An admirably pure, airy and decidedly cool nose features notes of acacia, citrus zest and mineral reduction. The wonderfully refined, chalky and stony medium weight flavors possess really lovely underlying tension and fine detail while delivering excellent length where the only nit is a touch of warmth. This too will need to add depth, but the quality of the underlying material appears up to the task.

91-93 Points, Sweet Spot, Outstanding! – Burghound

Still cloudy having just been racked, and the wood shows a little. Powerful on the palate, the spices are hard at work, massive concentration, the sunshine of Chapelots to the fore. Rich yellow fruit with, some white stone fruit notes beneath, juicy, but especially spicy. A powerful bottle not to be drunk young.

92-95 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis 1er Cru Vaulorent

£275 c/s In Bond – 10 cases available (6 bts per case)

Séguier calls this their “baby grand cru” as specific barrels are selected for vine age, concentration and power. This could be from nowhere else but Chablis with its equally cool, elegant and airy aromas of white-fleshed fruit, floral, iodine and subtle passion fruit scented nose. The super-sleek, refined and energetic medium weight flavors possess both ample minerality and a caressing texture, all wrapped in a slightly more complex, very dry and impressively long finale. Lovely.

91-94 Points, Sweet Spot, Outstanding! – Burghound

Lots of marl here, good for the weight of fruit and the acidity, as it keeps the, soil cooler. The nose is quite restrained and refined, but the wine starts to sing on the palate, the promised acidity along with real weight of fruit., some ripe citrus along with a bit of grenadine

92-94 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Bougros

£285 c/s In Bond – 8 cases available (6 bts per case)

A ripe and beautifully layered nose consists of notes of green fruit, citrus, iodine and mineral reduction. The powerful, rich and voluminous big-bodied flavors possess fine mid-palate density that coats the palate with sap before concluding in an austere, long and vaguely rustic finale. This is an imposing Bougros that should age effortlessly over the next decade plus.

92-94 Points, Don't Miss! – Burghound

The Bougros vineyard is the most challenging from the viticultural point of view, Didier tells me. It requires a team of nine people for a total of 1800 man hours out there with their pickaxes. The results are excellent though. One of the palest colours. A discreet nose, but there is, some power of white fruit lurking behind. Dynamic tension on the palate, with excellent grip, a little spice, with a dancing deep concentration of white fruit. And properly Chablis.

92-95 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Valmur

£385 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case)

A classic Chablis nose features notes of pear, green apple, iodine and sea breeze. The dense, serious and overtly powerful big-bodied flavors flash a sleek muscularity on the textured, sappy and youthfully austere finish that exhibits outstandingly length. This bad boy of a Valmur won't win any awards for refinement but it is beautifully constructed and clearly built-to-age for a very long time.

92-95 Points, Sweet Spot! – Burghound

They have the plot along the road that divides the steep slope from the crest, which plateaus out and gets E/SE/SW exposure. Pale lemon colour, rich sunny nose, chalky undertones. This has the backbone, it has the shoulders, and finishes on classical Chablis, with just an additional touch of all-spice. Back comes the acidity to complete the job.

92-95 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Vaudésir

£385 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case) – **SOLD OUT**

(from two separate parcels of vines, the larger of which is in the heart of the “amphitheater” from which the finest examples of Vaudésir originate). A riper and mildly exotic nose is still appealingly elegant while offering equally good Chablis character. The pure, refined and almost painfully intense middle weight flavors are much fine if at the expense of power on the almost pungently mineral-driven finish that is shaped by grapefruit-tinged acidity. This excellent, bone dry and chiseled effort should also age effortlessly and is a wine that's going to need it.

92-95 Points, Don't Miss! – Burghound

Beautiful pure very pale primrose, even a colour to fall in love with. Magically balanced crystalline Chablis. On the palate the wood shows prominently at the moment, but the purity of the finish suggests that this will integrate extremely well. A lean lime infused thread maintains the fresher approach, but there are still, some more voluptuous fresh peach notes in the background.

94-96 Points, 5 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Les Preuses

£405 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case)

£140 per magnum In Bond – 3 magnums available (Individual wooden case per magnum)

This too could be from nowhere else except Chablis with its citrus-tinged aromas of tidal pool, white flowers and shellfish. The racy, intense and painfully intense larger-scaled flavors possess cuts-like-a-knife delineation on the bone dry and super-saline finish where a distinct bitter lemon quality slowly emerges. This is very classy juice and also built-to-age.

94-96 Points, Don't Miss! – Burghound

This has not fallen clear yet. Didier likes the marriage between the two parts of Preuses, i.e. both the, southerly slope and the section, which slopes gently to the north. Generous ripeness. Greater warmth and roundness than Côte Bouguerots, but still a good line of tension through the middle, with a useful slight bitterness at the finish – les jolis amers. Grand cru weight and impressive length bringing out the saline character at the end.

93-96 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Bougros Côte de Bouguerots

£415 c/s In Bond – 4 cases available (6 bts per case)

This too offers a wonderfully broad range of classic Chablis elements that include mineral reduction, iodine, ocean breeze and quinine on the citrus-infused nose. The racy, detailed and beautifully textured and focused flavors deliver outstanding length on the balanced, saliva-inducing and sneaky long finish. This is also quite classy and if not quite as complete as the Preuses in 2019, it's close and with time in bottle, it may well catch its stablemate.

93-95 Points, Don't Miss! – Burghound

Brisk mid lemon colour. Steely nose, perhaps a waft of ripe lemon with it. Just 25 hl/ha produced. Very pure, intense white fruit, but with its electric backbone of steel, and exceptional intensity with its usual brilliant white fruit character. Coats the teeth and excellent length.

93-96 Points, 4 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

2019 Chablis Grand Cru, Les Clos

£505 c/s In Bond – 10 cases available (6 bts per case)

£175 per magnum In Bond – 3 magnums available (Individual wooden case per magnum)

£375 per double magnum (3L) In Bond – 2 available (Individual wooden case)

If Kimmeridgian could be distilled, it would likely smell exactly like the nose of the 2019 Les Clos with the additions of wet chalk, citrus zest and oyster shell. There is equally good delineation to the snappy, painfully intense and overtly stony large-bodied flavors that deliver superb length on the balanced finale. This elegant and classy effort is also built on a base of almost pungent minerality and a wine that is indisputably going to age effortlessly for years.

93-96 Points, Don't Miss! – Burghound

2ha of Les Clos were planted by Maurice Fèvre between 1947 and 1952, a time when much of the hillside was bare. The 2019 yields just 25 hl/ha and had recently been racked, so had not fallen clear. The bouquet is immense. Keep sniffing, and it keeps offering more. This year Les Clos has a dimension over and above all the others. Not just density, but amazing depth. A little touch of bitters too, which we like at this stage. Such great length!

95-97 Points, 5 Stars, Jasper Morris MW, Inside Burgundy

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Wines available for delivery summer 2021.

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