



Maconnais

Mâcon

Saône River

Viré-Clessé

Saint-Véran

Pouilly-Fuissé

Saint-Véran

■ MÂCON

Pouilly-Loché

Pouilly-Vinzelles

Mâcon-Villages

# THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF WHITE BURGUNDY

AN ADVENTURE GUIDED BY PETER WASSERMAN



The Wine Education Council is a nonprofit educational organization that supports the development and effectiveness of wine professionals by providing high-quality training programs and enrichment opportunities. This event was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Veritas Fund.

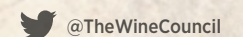
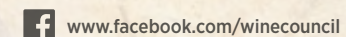
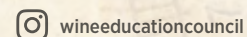
## The Hidden Treasures of White Burgundy



**September 17, 2018**  
Bluxome Street Winery  
San Francisco



**September 18, 2018**  
Spago Beverly Hills  
Los Angeles



## Lecture Overview

Students recognize that many vineyard sites in Burgundy have been appreciated for centuries, often by the Celts even before the arrival of the Romans. Occasionally, however, some gems of *terroir* have been obscured, even forgotten, by the capricious whims of history. Such is the case with the southern region of Burgundy known as the Mâconnais.

The wines of the Mâconnais were traditionally regarded with the same esteem as their cousins in the Côte d'Or. Louis XIV and his court delighted to barrels of Mâcon shipped to Versailles on the advice of the royal physician, Fagon.

Today's seminar will delve into the historical vagaries that caused the waning of the star of Mâcon, and then focus on the current renaissance of the region. Most specifically, Peter Wasserman will discuss the upcoming reclassification of the Crus and explain why many top domains in the Côte d'Or are prospecting for gold in this rediscovered El Dorado.

### Flight One

1

2015 Mâcon,  
*La Roche Vineuse, Vieilles Vignes*  
(Dom. Olivier Merlin)

2

2015 Viré-Clessé  
(Les Héritiers du Comte Lafon)

3

2015 Pouilly-Vinzelles,  
*Les Quarts*  
(Dom. Soufrandière)

4

2015 Pouilly-Loché,  
*La Colonge*  
(Bret Brothers)

### Flight Two

1

2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Secret Minéral*  
(Dom. Denis Jeandeau)

2

2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Tête de Cru*  
(Château-Fuissé)

3

2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *En Carementrant*  
(Bret Brothers)

4

2013 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Les Brûlés*  
(Château-Fuissé)

5

2007 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Clos Reyssié*  
(Dom. Philippe Valette)

### RECEPTION WINE

## Crémant de Bourgogne, Blanc de Blancs Brut (Parigot & Richard)



*Parigot & Richard* is among the best established and most traditional houses that produce Crémant de Bourgogne. It is also one of the few houses that is actually located in Burgundy and almost certainly the only one that still hand-riddles every bottle. The Domaine employs organic methods.

*Crémant* is defined in French law as a fine sparkling wine made outside of Champagne (but within only 8 defined appellations) by *méthode traditionnelle*: the process by which sparkling wines obtain their bubbles from a second fermentation inside the bottle, then age for months on the spent yeast cells left behind. Among the eight regions permitted to produce Crémant, it is often suggested that Crémant de Bourgogne is most similar to champagne, possibly because the terroirs and grape varieties are most similar.

The constituent grapes (80% Chardonnay, 20% Aligoté) of the Blanc de Blancs Brut are manually harvested and transported in small, shallow baskets. Each parcel and variety is separately vinified. The grapes are meticulously sorted, crushed, and fermented for 10 days in stainless steel tanks over indigenous yeasts. Following alcoholic fermentation, the wines undergo malolactic fermentation, also in stainless steel, for a period of 21 days. The wines are then blended, lightly filtered, and bottled. The wine rests *sur lattes* for 18-36 months, during which time it is riddled in the traditional, laborious manner: by hand. The dosage (via traditional *liqueur d'expédition*) is 6g/L.

## 1 2015 Mâcon, *La Roche Vineuse, Vieilles Vignes* (Dom. Olivier Merlin)



Although he makes no claim to descent from the sorcerer of Arthurian legend, Olivier Merlin is indeed a magician of the Mâconnais. Since the late 1980s, Olivier has been crafting superb wines and has most certainly been in the vanguard of achieving new renown for the region. Domaine Olivier Merlin today comprising 14.7 ha. in Mâcon and Beaujolais, is managed by Olivier, together with his wife Corinne and their two sons, Théo and Paul.

The Domaine follows organic principles but is not certified.

The Merlin parcel of *La Roche Vineuse* comprises 3 ha. and was planted in 1955. From an elevation of 230-280m., with a 5%-20% slope, the vineyard faces south/southwest. The soil is predominantly limestone and lies over bedrock of Bathonian and Bajocian limestone.

The grapes are manually harvested, then pressed directly. After light settling, barrel fermentation occurs over native yeasts in barrel (15% new). The wines are then aged 12 months in barrel and 3 months in tank.



## 2 2015 Viré-Clessé (Les Héritiers du Comte Lafon)



The famed Meursault winemaker Dominique Lafon founded this estate in 1999, thereby focusing world attention on Mâcon. Presently consisting of 14 ha. of vineyards, Lafon continues to produce some of the most exciting wines from the region.

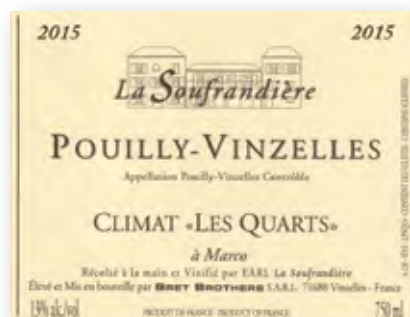
Viré-Clessé, comprising more than 390 hectares of vineyards, was created as a separate appellation in 1999. Viré-Clessé is situated in the northern part of the Mâconnais, just north of the town of Mâcon.

Lafon's Viré-Clessé derives from several parcels of vines planted between 1950 and 1990. Aggregating 6 ha., the vines are generally situated mid-slope, east-facing from about 250m, with a 15% slope, on a clay-limestone soil over a base of limestone.

The grapes are manually harvested and fermented over indigenous yeasts in neutral oak 45-48hL *foudres* and 500L *demi-muids*. After 9-10 months of aging on fine lees, they are racked and bottled.



### 3 2015 Pouilly-Vinzelles, *Les Quarts* (Dom. Soufrandière)



This family estate was founded in 1947 and is today managed by the founder's two grandsons, Jean-Guillaume and Jean-Philippe Bret. Situated in Vinzelles, in the Mâcon region of South Burgundy, La Soufrandière is certified organic and biodynamic by Ecocert and Demeter.

The *climat Les Quarts* is among the most noteworthy in Pouilly-Vinzelles, a 52 ha. appellation situated in the Mâconnais subregion of Burgundy. Pouilly-Vinzelles is adjacent to the much larger Pouilly-Fuissé (757 ha), and just south of Pouilly-Loché (32 ha).

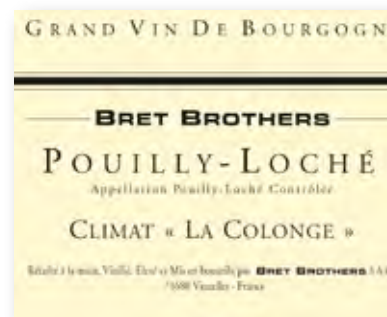
Soufrandière's 2 ha. parcel of *Les Quarts* comprises vines aged 50-80 years old. Facing southeast from an elevation of 250 meters, with a 20% slope, the soil is an admixture of ferrous clay and limestone, over a base of Bajocian limestone.

The grapes are manually harvested and the whole berries are pressed and fermented over native yeasts. Following malolactic fermentation, the wine is racked into 228L old oak barrels and aged 11-18 months. After 6 additional months in stainless steel tanks, the wine is bottled during the waning moon.



#### TASTING NOTES

### 4 2015 Pouilly-Loché, *La Colonge* (Bret Brothers)



Brothers Jean-Philippe and Jean-Guillaume started Bret Brothers in 2001 with an objective to create terroir-driven wines from the Mâconnais. They were neither the first nor only winemakers to do this, but they are assuredly among the most successful.

At 30 hecatres, Pouilly-Loché is the smallest appellation in the Mâconnais. The Bret Brothers parcel comprises .35 ha and is situated in the *climat La Colonge*. With vines planted in the 1980s, and now certified organic, the east-facing vineyard lies at an elevation of 230m, with a 5% slope. The soil is chiefly clay-limestone with a noticeable amount of silt.

The fruit is picked manually and the whole berries are pressed. Following alcoholic fermentation over indigenous yeasts and malolactic fermentation, the wine is racked into used oak barrels (228L) and aged for 11 months before bottling.



#### TASTING NOTES

## 1 2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Secret Minéral* (Dom. Denis Jeandeau)



Denis Jeandeau is one of the “young wolves” of southern Burgundy. As a fifth generation winemaker, and following an oenology degree, and prestigious internships, he founded his own domaine in 2006. With less than 1 hectare owned, and purchased fruit from an additional 4 hectares, Jeandeau wines are snapped up by the French domestic market,

principally by Michelin-starred restaurants.

The agriculture and winemaking are entirely organic, with half of the vineyards fully certified. Denis does everything manually, including plowing by horse.

Jeandeau’s Secret Minéral derives from a blend of parcels from three *climats*: *En Carementrant*, *Vers La Roche*, and *Les Tillets*. The parcels aggregate 1 ha. of vines averaging 46 years old and are situated on hills above the villages of Vergisson and Solutré. With southern and western expositions, the parcels lie at elevations between 350-400m in soil composed of marl and limestone from the Triassic era.

Jeandeau hand harvests the fruit into small 20 kg baskets when the grapes reach full ripeness, as measured by his palate. Whole berries are ferment over indigenous yeasts, then racked into Damy and Moreau *barriques*, 10-15% new, in which they age on fine lees for 18-22 months. The wines are bottled unfinned and unfiltered. The finished wines contain less than 18mg/L of free sulfur.



### TASTING NOTES

## 2 2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Tête de Cru* (Château-Fuissé)



Château Fuissé, dating back to 1604, has been in the Vincent family for five generations. Today the domaine is run by Antoine Vincent, and consists of 40 ha. spread over 5 appellations, including 25 ha. in Pouilly-Fuissé.

The *Tête de Cru* is a blend of 40 separate parcels of Pouilly-Fuissé, which together comprise 17 ha. of vines planted between 1965 and 1985. The vines are trained single

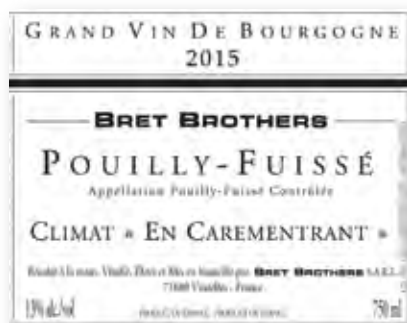
Guyot and planted to a density of 9000 vines/ha., with an average yield of 50hL/ha. The soils vary from parcel to parcel but are predominantly clay, with 75% of the parcels located on the South slope of Mt. Pouilly. 25% of the parcels are in Solutré-Pouilly, where the soils contain a higher proportion of limestone.

The fruit is manually harvested and each parcel is vinified separately. After whole berries are pressed pneumatically at a maximum pressure of 2 bars, the must is decanted into stainless tanks for settling. After 12 hours, the clarified must is racked off the gross lees. 75% of the young wine goes into barrels (25-30% new), and 25% into stainless tank, where the must undergoes alcoholic fermentation over native yeasts, followed by malolactic fermentation. Antoine employs *batonnage* (stirring the lees) to impart richness. Prior to bottling the wines are blended in tank, fined with bentonite, and lightly filtered.



### TASTING NOTES

### 3 2015 Pouilly-Fuissé, *En Carementrant* (Bret Brothers)



Brothers Jean-Philippe and Jean-Guillaume started Bret Brothers in 2001 with an objective to create terroir-driven wines from the Mâconnais. They were neither the first nor only winemakers to do this, but they are assuredly among the most successful.

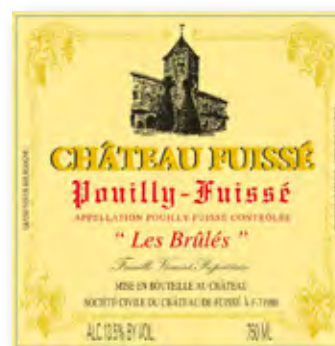
The *climat En Carementrant*, which ranks among the top *lieux-dits* in Pouilly-Fuissé, lies at an elevation of 350m just under the majestic

cliff of Roche de Vergisson. The soil is clay-based but with a very high limestone content. The south-facing Bret parcel comprises .55 ha with vines planted in the 1950s and 1960s.

The grapes are manually harvested and pressed whole berries. After alcoholic and malolactic fermentation, the wine is racked into 228L old oak barrels for 18 months, then into stainless steel tanks for an additional 5-6 months before bottling.



### 4 2013 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Les Brûlés* (Château-Fuissé)



Château Fuissé, dating back to 1604, has been in the Vincent family for five generations. Today the domaine is run by Antoine Vincent, and consists of 40 ha. spread over 5 appellations, including 25 ha. in Pouilly-Fuissé. The viticulture is *lutte raisonnée*.

Mâcon is notable at present as the only region in Burgundy without any of its *climats* classified as Premier Cru. Château Fuissé currently produces three cuvees from single *climats*, including two, *Les Brûlés* and *Le Clos*, which the INAO is

considering elevation to Premier Cru status.

Les Brûlés is a *climat* within the Pouilly-Fuissé appellation that likely will soon be granted Premier Cru status. The parcel belonging to Château Fuissé comprises .7 ha. of vineyards of steep, south-facing vines. The vineyard sits directly behind Château Fuissé and adjacent to *Le Clos*. The deep soils are of Bathonian origin and are composed essentially of marl and blue clay.

The fruit is manually harvested and whole berries are pressed pneumatically at a maximum pressure of 2 bars. After 12 hours of *débourbage*, the clarified must is racked off the gross lees into oak barrels (100% new) where the must undergoes alcoholic fermentation over native yeasts, followed by malolactic fermentation. Antoine Vincent employs *batonnage* (stirring the lees) twice monthly. The wine is aged for 12 months. Prior to bottling the wines are fined with bentonite and lightly filtered.



## 5 2007 Pouilly-Fuissé, *Clos Reyssié* (Dom. Phillippe Valette)



Phillippe Valette is the third generation of *vignerons* managing and producing wine from this 8.5 ha estate in Chaintré, in the southern section of Mâcon, just north of Beaujolais. Phillippe has been farming organically since the 1990s and is known as one of the pioneers of natural winemaking in the Mâcon. He is particularly renowned for his exceptionally long barrel-aging.

The *climat Clos Reyssié* is the most celebrated terroir in the village of Chaintré, one of the four villages in the Pouilly-Fuissé appellation. The old vine (60+ years) parcel

belonging to Valette lies on a soil of clay and limestone over a limestone base.

The manually harvested whole clusters are pressed directly and slowly, then fermented over wild yeasts. The wines are then aged on their lees for 72 months in old barrels, then settling in stainless steel tanks for an additional 2 years. The wines are bottled without fining or filtration with only minuscule amounts of sulfur.



## Peter Wasserman

**PETER WASSERMAN** was born in Philadelphia in 1964 and moved to Burgundy with his family in 1968. As a young boy, he was schooled in wine tasting and pairing around the family dinner table, where nightly guests included such Burgundian luminaries as Aubert De Villaine, Hubert de Montille, Guy Roulot, and Charles Rousseau.

Becoming completely bilingual by the age of 5 he was often tasked with providing translation for English-speaking guests. Moreover, since Peter was then relatively short, he was easy to carry around in a tote and not expensive to feed.

He was initially educated in France, but later decamped to California to study at the Brooks Institute of Photography. He then worked as a filmmaker until 1996, when he went to work, first, for a prominent New York retailer as Burgundy buyer, and subsequently, for a small New York based importer. Peter currently serves as the US-based consultant for his family company, Becky Wasserman & Co. In addition, fully committed to wine education, Peter manages a company (along with Allen Meadows, Jasper Morris, and Anthony Hanson) which specializes in weeklong, intensive seminars on Burgundy.



# Mission Statement

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The Wine Education Council is a non-profit, educational organization that promotes the development and effectiveness of wine professionals through formal study, post-graduate training, and advanced, enrichment opportunities. Our diverse activities include the support of wine programs at institutions of higher learning, the sponsorship of specialized seminars, grants to assist publication of academic works, and the promotion of educational experiences that help students and wine professionals learn about and engage in various sectors of the wine community.

Recognizing that the consumption of wine is vulnerable to abuse, we are committed to providing resources and supporting programs that promote moderate and responsible alcohol use and guard against social problems associated with inappropriate consumption.

As an environmentally and socially conscious organization, we are sensitive to the human and economic impact of wine on our community and remain dedicated to promoting within the global wine community the responsible use of the earth's resources and the implementation of mechanisms that promote economic justice.