

Stephen Tanzer's INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR



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Steve Tanzer's International Wine Cellar On-line, March 2008

Focus on the Mâconnais (2006 vintage)

Josh Reynolds

CHÂTEAU DE BEAUREGARD

This large estate owns more than 36 hectares, with 19 of them spread across the Pouilly-Fuissé appellation, plus 7 in Saint-Véran and another 8 in Beaujolais. (There are also negociant wines produced under the Joseph Burrier label, but I did not taste these with Frederic Burrier in November.) Sixty percent of the estate's sales are to restaurants in France. Burrier, like all of his colleagues, is extremely pleased with his current vintages. He told me that "2005 and 2006 are both excellent vintages, but they are completely different: 2005 was sunny but quite cold in August, which slowed maturity down and helped the grapes maintain acidity, which is about 4.5 grams per liter in the finished wines. The pHs runs from about 3.15 to 3.2 in the warmest sites." **These are wines intentionally built for the long haul**, and to prove his point Burrier opened some older bottles. The 2003 Pouilly-Fuissé Grand Beauregard "Hommage à Joseph Burrier" was far fresher than most examples from that blazingly hot vintage, while the 1996 Pouilly-Fuissé "Aux Charmes" was fresh and lively, with impressive mineral lift and tangy citrus flavors. And a bottle of 1961 Pouilly-Fuissé, deep gold in color, offered strong smoky truffle and orange aromas complicated by blond tobacco and bay leaf. It was shockingly fresh, with a stony, citrus and herb-dominated character reminiscent of a great Alsace riesling. For a 46-year-old wine it was simply remarkable. "This is how I hope, and suspect, my 2005s will turn out," said Burrier.

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "VERS CRAS"

92

Bright gold. Intensely floral nose offers a seductive bouquet of orange, pear, nectarine and pungent magnolia, along with a strong mineral understone. Salty minerality brightens the ripe citrus and pear flavors, with floral honey and sweet butter nuances adding depth. Finishes firm, dry and precise, with outstanding breadth and persistence. **This is a very grown-up style.**

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "AUX CHARMES"

91

Yellow gold. Exotically perfumed bouquet of musky pit fruits, iodine, toasty lees and pungent flowers; **smells like a top Chassagne-Montrachet**. Fleshy citrus and orchard fruit flavors are firm by dusty minerality, which adds energy to the long, spicy finish. **This is delicious.**

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "LA MARÉCHAUDE"

90

Medium gold. Ripe, full-blown bouquet offers orange, melon and smoky minerals. Tighter lemon and lime flavors are complicated by anise and quinine, leading to a finish that features youthful grip and lingering stoniness. This possesses very good material but needs some time to unwind.

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "LES INSARTS"

90

Medium gold. Honeyed pear and apricot aromas convey a ripe, riche personality; I'd have guessed this to be an '05 from the nose. Juicy pit fruit flavors are deep and sweet, but become more firm and mineral with air, picking up a spicy quality. Finishes with bitter lime zest and orange flavors and excellent persistence. Burrier describes this wine, from a parcel located within the Ménetrières vineyards, as "our traditional Pouilly-Fuissé".

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "VIGNES BLANCHES"


90

Vivid yellow. Smoky orange, mineral land floral scents are sharply focused and gently kissed by a pungent herbal quality. Silky in texture, with juicy citrus and melon flavours supported zesty acidity. Fleshes out with air and becomes riper, picking up sweet melon and nectarine flavours, as well as a late licorice note. Finishes with striking clarity and very good persistence.

POUILLY-FUISSÉ "VERS POUILLY"

89

Bright gold. Fresh tangerine and sweet butter on the nose, with a gentle floral honey quality building with air. Buttered apple and toasted brioche flavors are deepened by iodine and lees, with good finish lift and cut. There's nothing heavy or loose about this riche, powerful wine.

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