



Thursday 10 September 2009
Day Three

Partial destalking

Halleluiah! Cellarman Jean-Luc has fixed the press and by 8.30am, the part was replaced with the membrane intact. We breathed a sigh of relief, Pierre smiled again and the press purred back into life.

Today is a “root” day in the lunar calendar to accentuate the *terroir* - a clear collusion between heaven and earth. It is a dazzling time in terms of the advantageous **constellation** for harvesting, the magnificent weather and the splendid grapes. This year everything seems to have fallen marvelously into place. Pierre is finally being rewarded for his efforts after three tricky vintages over which he still managed to triumph. 2009 should live up to his expectations.

But if everything seems perfect, nothing is so simple in reality. The key now is to harvest when the grapes are at optimal maturity – no easy task. You mustn't wait too long in case the grapes overripen which would reduce the level of acidity that is essential for the longevity and sophistication of the wine.



As every year, before selecting which plot to harvest, our young winemaker samples the grapes. This year, the berries, pips and stems are all very ripe. This complete phenolic maturity has incited Pierre to extend his tests with partial destalking carried out last year. These partially-destalked *cuvées* proved to be a great success so he has decided to extend the technique to the *cuvées* from the Côte de Nuits. An evolution if not a revolution, that's for sure.

So half of the harvest carried out today on our *monopole* of **Vougeot Clos du Prieuré** red, which offered precious *millerandage* with very small and separated berries in each bunch, was placed in the vat whole, interspersed between two layers of destalked grapes. The idea is to bring greater aromatic complexity to the wine and give rise to some astonishingly airy, floral notes for the reds like shades of faded rose in addition to the more classical aromas of fruit.



A few steps away on the other side of the wall, the team then set to harvesting another *monopole*, also surrounded by a magnificent stone wall. This great white set within great reds like a “diamond set within rubies” is, for those who don't already know, **Le Clos Blanc**. Here, the rows of vines which form the base of the triangular plot, run alongside the edge of Les Cras. A harvest of 300 more crates here is the equivalent to three press-fulls and six hours of pressing

Another 300 cases came from **Savigny-Lès-Beaune Les Marconnets** this morning and the same again this afternoon. The *vendange* is demanding very hard work but offering a lot of joy.

And a happy surprise from the UK today came in the form of a great wine pro and friend of the Domaine who brought us the Trophy from the prestigious **International Wine Competition** for the “organic wines” category, won by Le Clos Vougeot 2006. This in addition to three other Trophies for best Red Burgundy, Best Pinot Nor and Best Red Wine!