



Saturday 12 September 2009
Day Five

Grand crus at the half-way point

The harvest is now in full swing under the bright and still-clement sky. Only the persistent wind and chilly nights give an indication of the approaching fall. The harvest will be finished next Saturday.



Today, the Côte de Beaune team set to work on the smaller plots. They finished up the **Pommard Les Petits Noizons** which were started yesterday, and then the old vines of **Beaune Premier Cru Les Grèves**, **Corton-Charlemagne** and **Corton Clos du Roi**. Les Grèves provided us with the finest *vendange* on the Côte de Beaune to-date with superbly deep-colored grapes and very advanced maturity. The Charlemagne, where the vines are over 40 years old, offered equally fine fruits with a few patches of powdery mildew further down. But this plot's steep rows delivered up their translucent gold whose bare pips could be seen inside the grapes glowing in the early morning sunshine. The Clos du Roi is 58 years old and offered bunches with good *millerandage* at the top of the plot like tiny grains of caviar.

On the Côte de Nuits, the pickers finished up the magnificent **Vougeot Premier Cru Les Cras** which also revealed a lot of *millerandage*. This hostile limestone terrain brings out the best of the vines as they produce their finest grapes when located in unwelcoming environments such as this. At first glance, the yield seemed greater than normal but still remains modest, estimated at 38hl/ha.

In Gevrey-Chambertin, the **Charmes-Chambertin** of the **Mazoyères** plot and **Les Bonnes Mares** which straddles Morey-Saint-Denis and Chambolle-Musigny, were then tackled one after the other. The same springtime storm saw them both pelted with hailstones and they both bear the same scars. This won't change the wine though as the affected bunches simply didn't ripen and are left on the vine. Once again the grapes bore such wonderful *millerandage* that half of the Charmes-Chambertin will be vinified partially destalked and a third of Les Bonnes Mares. Then the pickers headed over to cut the grapes of **Les Condemeines**, one of four plots that make up our **Chambolle-Musigny**. The day ended close by in **Musigny**, where 60 half-crates were filled from the six rows of this precious plot. Musigny is the Domaine's rarest wine, limited to two or three *pièces*, the traditional Burgundian barrel which holds 228 liters. This translates to between 600-900 bottles per year – almost nothing! This treasure enjoys a special and unique treatment.



The **winery** is in full swing too, with 15 of the 31 wooden vats now full and kept at a constant 14°C for the cold prefermentation maceration. This is when the juice becomes loaded with aromatic elements and other good things for the future. Pierre decided to leave all habits behind and dispense with the customary preliminary clarification of the white juices at his stage. Only the first two batches of Clos Blanc were clarified and since then, the juice has matured and clarified naturally. Analysis confirms ideal turbidity. We'll see if the next white – the Beaune – will be the same. Each wine is unique and must be hand-crafted according to its personality.

Tomorrow is Sunday and the pickers will rest up while a reduced team will carry on in the winery. But today was a tough day and the winery doors didn't close until 10pm.